

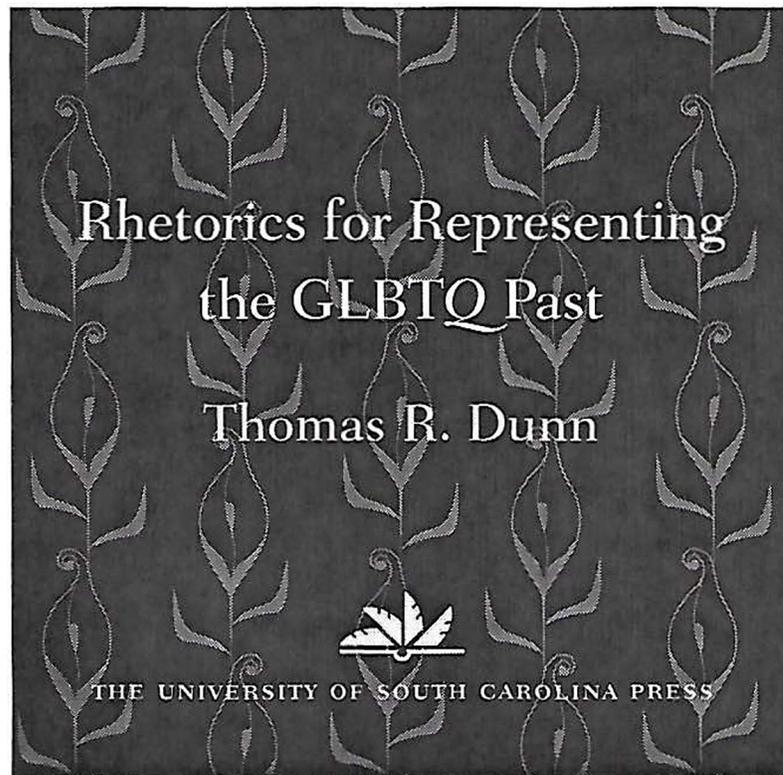
Queerly Remembered



Rhetorics for Representing
the GLBTQ Past

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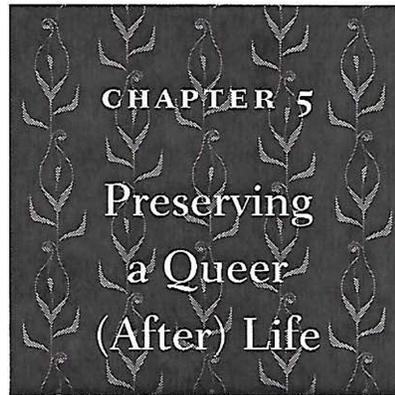
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Naturalizing Lesbian Love in the Garden



Sixteen years after Matlovich's gravestone was placed in Congressional Cemetery, New York sculptor Patricia Cronin installed her own grave marker in a distinguished public cemetery to sanction her and her partner's legacy as same-sex lovers in marriage. The statue is entitled *Memorial to a Marriage* and features the sculpted bodies of Cronin and her real-life partner (artist Deborah Kass; Kass and Cronin legally married in 2011) naked and embracing one another beneath the covers of their heavenly bed in eternal rest (fig. 8). In design the statue is influenced by several sources. In part its subject matter and title are a homage to the famous *Adams Memorial* designed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens which Henry Adams commissioned in memory of his wife Clover Hooper Adams, both to mediate upon her traumatic suicide



FIG. 8

Patricia Cronin's
*Memorial to a
Marriage* (2002).
Courtesy of
Patricia Cronin.

and to celebrate their marriage after her death.⁹¹ The design of the piece itself also relies heavily upon the work of lesbian artist Harriet Hosmer, a prominent nineteenth-century female artist of whom Cronin is both an admirer and a student. Some ascribe much of the influence on the design to Gustave Courbet's painting *The Sleepers* or *The Sleep* (1866).⁹²

However, despite the influences on the sculpture, *Memorial to a Marriage* is distinctly its own and a prominent example of the turn to queer monumentality in the last twenty years. The original installation is one piece of white Carrara marble, carved by the artist herself using advanced twenty-first century technology. At eighty-four by forty-two by twenty-seven inches, the installation is larger than life-size, giving the memorial presence to compete within the cemetery's visual smorgasbord but not so much as to exaggerate the figures and their realistic qualities. In addition to the memorial itself, the grave markers that surround the installation are of extraordinary

importance. The installation is located in a small valley at the base of a slowly sloping hill, dotted with diverse kinds of markers. While there are several small headstones directly in the vicinity of *Memorial to a Marriage*, the gravescape is dominated by a series of mausoleums and epic statuary, along with a large number of trees and shrubs.

Like Matlovich's gravestone, *Memorial to a Marriage* derives a great deal of its rhetorical effect from its circulation as an iconic image. The piece itself has been featured prominently in several gallery shows (both national and international), circulated on the Internet, and reproduced on the cover of artistic periodicals such as *Sculpture* and popular queer publications such as the *Gay & Lesbian Review*. The piece has also been prominently discussed and displayed in more "mainstream" forums, including the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, the *Village Voice*, and the *Houston Chronicle*.⁹³ While it is doubtless that this circulation has reached and affected numerous individuals in the heterosexual public, it is likely that the vast majority of viewers of these reproduced images would consider themselves to be homosexual or their allies; therefore, photography of the memorial alone cannot explain its wider rhetorical impact among nonhomosexual audiences.

However, unlike Matlovich's grave, *Memorial to a Marriage* resides in an entirely different kind of gravescape, thus relying upon a completely different rhetoric to produce a powerful queer public memory (fig. 9). *Memorial to a Marriage* was originally installed in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, what is known as one of the United States' premier examples of the garden cemetery movement. The Woodlawn and Congressional gravescapes share much in common: their purpose, their renown, their proximity to major urban centers, and their age. However, in contrast to the gay and lesbian graves in Congressional Cemetery, the successful disruption of heteronormativity within the garden gravescape does not rely upon heavily marking or making visible same-sex desire. In Congressional Cemetery heteronormativity is ensured by exclusion, by leaving all other alternatives unmarked. Hence, a rhetoric of visibility was appropriate and effective.

Yet in the case of the Woodlawn Cemetery, it is not visibility that is at issue but rather the rhetorical performance of that visibility. Because Woodlawn is a gravescape that provides greater creativity to the individual, exclusion is not the preferred or sometimes the possible option. Rather, it is by visually marking a grave within the gravescape as valuable in its social hierarchy that heteronormativity is ensured. In this gravescape "valuable" is equated with the rhetoric of the natural. As Morris reminds us, it is by creating highly natural graves that the deceased demonstrated their value and in the process warded off unnatural expressions within this sacred space.⁹⁴ In this vein it is by marking the grave as both queer *and* natural that heteronormativity can be disrupted.



FIG. 9



Memorial to a Marriage in Woodlawn Cemetery's garden gravescape. Courtesy of Patricia Cronin.

To achieve this both/and effect *Memorial to a Marriage* relies upon monumentality to grant its message meaning and durability; however, a significant degree of its success lies in turning to tactical and ephemeral rhetorics as well. In this case a tactical appropriation of the visual rhetoric of the gravescape, married with a monumental form, becomes the key rhetorical approach of the Cronin memorial.⁹⁵ At the core of this approach lies the postmodern technique described by Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Jeffrey T. Nealon, and others as “repetition with a difference.” Utilizing a rhetorical “repetition with a difference,” *Memorial to a Marriage* turns the rhetoric of the hierarchical and exclusionary forms of heteronormativity against itself to embrace a queer potential and to create a space for queer public memory.⁹⁶ Through appropriation of the cemetery’s style, the memorial also appropriates its visual rhetoric, rendering the queer condition of its figures within the security of the natural landscape. To put it another way, while *Memorial to a Marriage* is a “monument,” it is also a tactical act in line with de Certeau’s usage of the term.⁹⁷ Just as Wilde used heterosexual history to excuse his own queer behavior, Cronin uses heteronormative grave designs to shroud her queer incursion. *Memorial to a Marriage*, therefore, uses visual trickery and guile to invade the traditional space of heteronormativity. By entering this

queer form into the cemetery landscape in stealth, the memorial seeks simultaneously to make space for queer alternatives and disrupt heteronormativity.

To succeed in this undertaking, the death display must first represent the queerness of the grave. The most obvious and visually striking choice Cronin makes to represent the homosexual relationship between her and her lover is to embody them within the memorial. However, it is not just the existence of the bodies that do this work. History has demonstrated effectively that the mere presence of two women's bodies in proximity can easily be reasoned away as platonic if such an interpretation is not within the interest of the desiring (supposedly male) viewing subject. Rather it is the fact these bodies are engaged in a form of visual, same-sex affection that leaves little room to question their queer propensity. This queer visibility is especially keen in acquiring rapt, if not favorable, attention and infusing that attention with rhetorical consequence. As Charles E. Morris III and John M. Sloop have argued in relation to queer public kissing, putting representations of queer affection of display in the public sphere can have a radical political effect because such displays "constitute a 'marked' and threatening act, a performance instantly understood as contrary to hegemonic assumptions about public behavior, and the public good, because it invites judgments about . . . *deviant sexual behavior* and its imagined encroachments, violations and contagions, judgments that inevitably exceed the mere fact of their having a mutually affirming encounter."⁹⁸ While Morris and Sloop suggest that these displays are especially powerful when they include kissing, men, and media, I would suggest that the highly charged sexual connotations of the memorial beyond kissing, in conjunction with the touristic qualities of the cemetery, make the fact that this display features lesbians equally, if not more, significant in furthering a queer political act.⁹⁹ Certainly, the blissful and intimate embrace shared by these two naked women's bodies in the memorial can easily be read as sexual, serving (in a visually compelling way) not only to hail the attention of the passerby but also to mark the object of their gazing as intensely queer. Thus the memorial functions, within another visual frame, as a "*queer juggernaut*."¹⁰⁰

Simultaneously, the memorial identifies its participants as queer by failing to take part in the heteronormative logic of space within the visual field. Spatially, the memorial is isolated in the middle of a lush green bed of grass. Though there are other more traditional grave markers near it, contrast in colors, the orientation of the grave, and a few intentionally placed plants clearly mark *Memorial to a Marriage* as separate from these others. This isolation is unusual in that the excessively elaborate styling of the grave is not a central marker around which familial others are organized. This effect is visually heightened by the assortment of family mausoleums that flank the

grave on all sides. Their presence makes it abundantly clear that a more familial orientation is an option within the gravescape; just not the option selected by those to be buried here. The memorial also suggests this nonreproductive rhetoric by not having a connection to ritual upkeep by the living family. As Doris Francis, Leonie Kellaher, and Georgina Neophytou outline, garden gravescapes, with their exotic plant life, ornate designs, and welcoming atmosphere, created a cult of visitation to cemeteries by the deceased's family to keep up the grave and commune with their loved one.¹⁰¹ However, Cronin's design breaks this bond. Indeed, this design requires little upkeep. No plantings adorn the plot. No flags need to be placed or gates secured. The memorial is very much monumental—self-contained and perpetual, preventing at the material level the need for a lineage to maintain it. In lieu of participation in the material structuring of graves to duplicate biological kinship patterns, the grave of the two lovers is alone. Visually isolated, unencumbered by the organization of familial plots, the memorial positions Cronin and Kass as persons outside the logic of reproduction and, therefore, outside the compulsion to heteronormativity.

While the absence of reproductive imagery and organization in *Memorial to a Marriage* serves to rupture heteronormative gazing, the way in which the memorial visualizes the queer alternative, particularly what Edelman calls the queer "death drive," is also a powerful rebuke. The death drive refers to the Freudian compulsion to start anew (or to die), a product of an excess of signification.¹⁰² Drawing from Freud, Edelman situates the death drive not within individual psychologies but within the social at the level of culture. For Edelman, the queer represents the death drive within the social world: a manifestation not focused upon the perpetual reproduction of itself into an endless future (as represented by the "child") but rather focused upon the present moment, the maximization of the existent, the reliance upon the past and the now rather than always looking toward the future.¹⁰³ To feature this highly controversial form of queer ethics within her work was likely not Cronin's desire. However, Edelman might suggest that any representation of the truly queer signals the death drive over the child. If this is true, then, representationally the rhetorical work done by the memorial is intended to answer the question posed by T.S. Eliot in "The Waste Land" and reanimated by Edelman: "What you get married for if you don't want children?"¹⁰⁴

Memorial to a Marriage suggests that there is much to desire within a (queer) marriage minus children. This is highlighted first by the highly sexual yet totally nonreproductive quality of the subjects it represents. Clearly, the sculpture can be read as two lovers in the aftermath of a sexual encounter. This reading is reinforced if the viewer takes into account Cronin's characterization of the sculpture depicting her and her lover in a moment of "post-coital bliss" (rather than as two slumbering women).¹⁰⁵ In this case the

sexual nature of the scene is clear; but so is the fact that this sexual quality is not reproductive (by virtue of it involving two women exclusively). Thus sex here is represented, rhetorically, not as something with an end goal of reproduction (future) but a present goal of pleasure (present).

In addition, not only is this scene nonreproductive (in terms of procreation); it is also frozen in time. It is out of chronological time, a moment taken from an (at the time) unrecognized marriage and left suspended in animation to be cherished by those who view it. While describing a grave display as frozen may sound ridiculous—aren't all graves frozen?—the key here is not that the figures do not move but that the viewer believes that they could have and now are not. Rather than representing a face in a static state reflecting death, Cronin's *Memorial to a Marriage* reflects live bodies frozen in a moment of time. Such a distinction does not encourage the viewer to ask what might happen next but rather to linger in the queer moment. In all these ways the rhetoric of the piece shifts from the deliberative to the epideictic genre. The monument is no longer proscriptive as to how the viewer should choose to live life—that is, heterosexually with the intent of reproducing biologically—but descriptive, praising an alternative cultural value that should be enacted in the present. Thus by combining a presence of queer sexuality while intentionally effacing more traditional markers of compulsory heterosexuality, *Memorial to a Marriage* leaves the viewer in a new mode of viewing.

Finally, the death display positions the two lovers as queer in a unique way: by literally not placing their bodies within their shared grave. This is no radical act of queer deception: it is simply the case that Cronin and her now legally recognized spouse are not dead yet. Indeed, not only are they alive but they are both young (Cronin created the piece at age thirty-nine) and might expect to live for many more decades together before either one's remains would be interred where their marker exists. Such a situation is not highly unusual. Many thoughtful individuals make arrangements for death well in advance of their actual passing. In the case of shared graves or family plots, it is common that gravestones are simply reinscribed with the names of new members as they pass away. Indeed, Matlovich and several of the gay and lesbian graves that populate Congressional Cemetery were created and installed well before any bodies were placed there. Simultaneously, this approach is beneficial in preempting any efforts less-GLBTQ-affirmative next of kin might make to normalize or minimize the deceased's identities.

However, the effect of the absence of physical bodies in a highly publicized grave serves to position Cronin and her lover as queer figures in the broadest sense of the term. They are outsiders—literally outside of their graves—able to question their deaths and their representations in death with a perspective that can only be considered “ghostly.” While this reality is likely often lost on viewers of the memorial in the gravescape, for those in

the know the death display becomes an even more powerfully queer device, a place, a “positionality vis-à-vis the normative” from which a queerer way of life and death might be envisioned.¹⁰⁶

Yet making the queer memory of the Cronin-Kass marriage visible is not the end of this rhetorical endeavor. To disrupt the visual rhetoric of the gravescape effectively without being written off as a failed death display, *Memorial to a Marriage* had to maintain its lesbian representations while aesthetically participating in the natural style revered in garden design. To do this Cronin adopted a number of different approaches to appropriate and configure *Memorial to a Marriage* within the rhetoric of the natural.

Several aspects of the design contribute to giving *Memorial to a Marriage* a garden-style imprimatur. First, the color and kind of stone used in the memorial are highly traditional to garden gravescapes generally and to Woodlawn Cemetery in particular. White marble was a traditional stone used in nineteenth-century monument making. Cronin uses a similar marble to reflect this style, despite the fact that marble is today largely not approved for monument making because of its soft texture and ability to be worn down.¹⁰⁷ Yet by going to extra lengths to use a stone that visually matches the gravescape, the memorial becomes a seamless part of the cemetery’s visual frame. (It is worth noting the new iteration installed in 2011 is much darker in color and no longer made of same substance).

Not only the substance of the memorial but the style of the design as well are what one would expect within a garden gravescape. The memorial features a number of qualities that harken to the representational field of a natural rhetoric. Most of these are represented in the bodily aesthetic on display. Despite the fact that these two bodies are traditionally viewed as unnatural by their default existence in two feminine forms, each body individually displays attributes in tune with a communion with nature. The flowing hair of each woman is a prominent flourish on the grave, mimicking both living forms as well as designs often seen in Art Nouveau that focus upon nature and the natural as sources of inspiration.¹⁰⁸ The almost complete nakedness of the two women’s bodies highlights their natural state while also serving to draw attention and incite queer visibility. The postcoital imagery of the scene represents the very natural act of human sexuality, despite the fact that it may not necessarily represent a reproductive act. This stylistic imagery aided in conferring naturalness upon the otherwise “unnatural” figures, securing for *Memorial to a Marriage* a comfortable place within the logic of the garden gravescape.

In addition to the aesthetic and imagery, by featuring women *Memorial to a Marriage* emphasizes a theme found in other garden gravescapes. Women were a common representative form within these cemeteries. By choosing the imagery of women to make a commentary on queer desire—as

opposed to two male forms, a transgendered form, or three or more forms that would exceed a traditional monogamous couple—Cronin makes a rhetorical selection that, while meeting her representational threshold, also raises the fewest visual hackles possible.¹⁰⁹

Finally, the memorial also exudes pathetic appeals at the core of garden commemoration. As opposed to memento mori gravescapes that focus upon the mind, the garden gravescape's gesture to the emotions—specifically romance, grief, mourning, and melancholy—can be seen in *Memorial to a Marriage*. The embodied figures exude intimacy, nestled together and clearly representing a substantial emotional bond. Their faces revel in emotion, somewhere between desire and happiness, as they lie in each other's arms. In a pose reminiscent of a long line of nineteenth-century art, the figures represent sleep, a state powerful not only for its metaphoric resonance with death but also for the emotional trust required for two people to share that state together. By embracing pathos *Memorial to a Marriage* replicates the natural emotional bonds between the deceased and their loved ones visible within numerous death displays on the Woodlawn Cemetery grounds.

By hewing closely to the conventions of the rhetoric of the garden gravescape, *Memorial to a Marriage*, at least to some degree, manages to insert itself into the rhetoric of the cemetery as a whole. The seamlessness of this insertion within such a renowned cemetery is compelling, as described by the art critic Jerry Saltz: "Here, among the tombs and temples, amid the urns, broken columns, inverted torches, medieval Celtic castles, carved weeping women, forlorn angels and heartbroken figures, *Memorial to a Marriage* doesn't stand out, it blends in. So much so that it's almost invisible—just another monument to death, love and loss in this amazing garden of graves. Only when you think about why *Memorial* blends in does it stop being conventional and start being insurrectionary."¹¹⁰ It is the combined use of monumental rhetorics of materiality and tactical rhetorics of appropriation that makes this insertion so seamless.

The effect of this powerful combination can be seen in *Memorial to a Marriage*'s reception among heterosexual audiences. Upon its initial reveal the heterosexual public expressed sentiments that were both worried and condemnatory. Yet despite these outbursts, the Cronin-Kass memorial has become the third-most-visited statue in the cemetery grounds behind the memorials to Duke Ellington and Miles Davis.¹¹¹ However, the reception that it receives when it is visited is not always so clear, as demonstrated by an anecdote from the *Village Voice*: "When I asked a clean-cut, twenty-something couple who they thought the carved women in Cronin's sculpture were, the young man said, 'mythical people or saints'; the woman, 'angels.' I said, 'I think they're lesbians, and that they've just had sex.' The couple peered down, widened their eyes, tottered slightly, then began shaking their

heads back and forth. I don't know what, only that *Memorial* did something to them."¹² Such responses are to be expected and, indeed, hoped for, by this powerful act of queer public memory. In a garden cemetery, with the rhetoric of the natural as the locus of attention, Cronin's display speaks with two voices, each heard differently by different audiences. The first is a disruptive rhetoric that challenges the unequivocal prayer to unity through nature by revisualizing and materializing a heretofore unconsidered characterization of the natural. For the visitor to the cemetery closed-minded to the possibilities of alternative conceptions of joy, love, and happiness imagined in *Memorial to a Marriage*, the memorial serves as a visual flashpoint to destabilize the idea of the heterosexual individual as the sole bearer of the natural, both as culturally performed by the other memorials in the gravescape and those repeated within the performance of heteronormativity in the individual constructs of everyday life. In all conceivable ways this memorial performs a very militant queer rhetorical vision.

In contrast, for a more inclusive viewer who looks upon the gravescape, the memorial does not signal a challenge to the rhetoric of nature but a life-affirming recharacterization of what is natural. Within the loving, emotional embrace of the two women's bodies is manifested a rhetorical hurrah previously only articulated in speech—that the love between people of the same sex is not unnatural but something of humanity, granted by God, or a part of nature.

Conclusion



While earlier acts of queer resistance relied solely on tactical and ephemeral efforts to ensure the viability of queer legacies, both the gay and lesbian graves currently spreading through Congressional Cemetery and the contribution by Cronin in Woodlawn Cemetery have shifted attention to acts of queer memory making with more enduring features. The people responsible for these monumental memory rhetorics have much to hope for if current receptions among heterosexual audiences are any evidence. While the number of graves already marked visibly queer in Congressional Cemetery is already substantial, new graves are purchased every day. Indeed, in 2012 the nonprofit organization the National Veterans LGBT Memorial purchased ten plots abutting Matlovich's grave to install a memorial as "a place of honor for LGBT veterans and their families." This new memorial, expected to be dedicated in a few years, will further enhance the existing public memories' already prominent message.¹³ Indeed, after years of neglect the gay and lesbian graves of Congressional Cemetery are now regularly visited, particularly by GLBTQ military veterans, their allies, and supporters.¹⁴ At the same time other cemeteries in the United States have become marked by similar

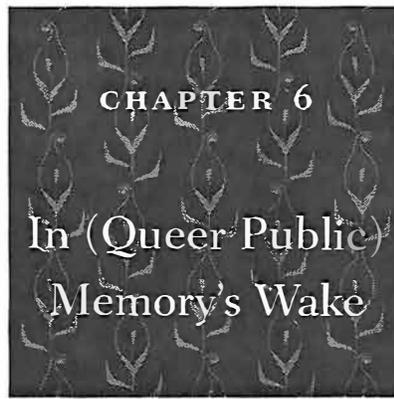
funerary projects. Both Palm Springs, California, and Phoenix, Arizona, have created their own visibly queer markers to honor gay and lesbian veterans in public cemeteries.¹¹⁵ With the reproductions of the graves in media and material form in recent years, the likelihood of preserving Matlovich and his compatriots' queer afterlives seems even more assured.

While one should perhaps not expect the same level of reproduction for such a unique work of art as *Memorial to a Marriage*, here too the rhetoric of queer public memory has been largely successful. In line with the gravescape in which it occurs, Cronin's memorial's success stems mostly from its acceptance as appropriate and desirable within the existent cemetery space rather than from its replication or visibility. At the time of this writing, it seems that the initial grumblings of some visitors to the memorial have largely passed without incident. With the exception of one year during which the original marble piece was absent before it could be replaced with a more durable duplicate, *Memorial to a Marriage* is now one of the most-visited sites within Woodlawn Cemetery.¹¹⁶ It is important to note that most of its visitors are of a more diverse heterosexual nature rather than an audience limited to homosexual admirers. And much of this success can probably be attributed to the continued interest in the piece as it has been displayed in several more exhibits since its release in 2002. Yet perhaps the best measure of Cronin's rhetorical success is how favorably *Memorial to a Marriage* has been incorporated into the regular tours offered by Woodlawn's professional staff, particularly the "Beautiful Women of Woodlawn" tour.¹¹⁷ Clearly, despite the important difference *Memorial to a Marriage* brings to its representation of queer death and memory, its repetition has been viewed favorably enough not only to include it with its ilk, but to reappraise what the cemetery's viewers conceive of as "natural."

Beyond the measure of effects, both Matlovich's and Cronin's efforts to construct a queer afterlife raise important theoretical concerns for doing queer public memory and queer monumentality and for the larger concerns of the present study. First, if queer memory projects—particularly those that adopt monumental form—are successfully to affect the judgments of the heterosexual public, a more sophisticated view of heterosexual power and its deployments is needed. While earlier efforts to remember queer lives have focused on the language of remembering/forgetting to justify and plan their rhetorical preservations, such a view of the heteronormativity that plagues queer memory is simplistic at best. Like other intersecting forms of power, queers require a postmodern view of heteronormativity if they are to find actually existing modes of resistance. This suggestion calls into doubt the already dubious claims to success advocated by more traditional forms of queer visibility. In this argument visibility in and of itself is the key to queer empowerment. Yet, as work cited earlier by both Phelan and Berlant and

Warner demonstrates, visibility is only one means of affecting resistance. In facing the threats of postmodern heteronormativity, queers must employ a series of simultaneous and potentially contrary approaches to memory making in order to generate longer moments of resistance, safety, and security. Thus the visibility politics that have been successful in Congressional Cemetery must be joined with the pseudo-invisibility politics of *Memorial to a Marriage* and to a collection of other such approaches if heteronormativity's "manifold relations of power" are to be deftly resisted. Analyzing these postmodern forms of heteronormativity and theorizing and producing these additional methods of resistance thus becomes a familiar focus for scholars, newly amended to represent the shifting realities of contemporary queer politics.¹¹⁸

Second, and related to this point: if a postmodern heteronormativity requires an array of attendant postmodern queer methods for generating acts of resistance, the iron-clad distinction between tactical/ephemeral memory rhetorics practiced during much of the last century and more recent monumental queer rhetorics cannot stand. Indeed, while there are real distinctions between the two which can be productive for describing previous eras of queer public memory and their shifts over the last three decades, the case studies above illustrate significant opportunities may be lost if we see them only as contradictory approaches to the past. While Matlovich succeeded in creating an enduring space for a visible queer memory within Congressional Cemetery that might be best labeled an act of queer monumentality, his success was largely made possible by tactically recognizing both the strange official/unofficial status of Congressional Cemetery in representing the nation and its persuadable leadership during the time he purchased the lot as opportunities to make advances that would normally be forbidden. Similarly, while *Memorial to a Marriage* excels at claiming and remaking the rhetoric of the "natural" in Woodlawn Cemetery to include same-sex desire by inserting a (now) durable monument in this heteronormative space, it is not by an imperialistic crusade but rather by a shrewd tactical appropriation of form and style that such an accomplishment was achieved. If we draw from these examples and take them as serious starting points, we may begin to conceive of more ways in which monumentality and tactical/ephemeral memory rhetorics can be used in coalition. The coalition described here resulted in obvious rewards: securing several queer legacies meaningfully in the public sphere. But if we take these prospects further to begin to conceive of a new kind of queer monumentality, we may find our way to even more effective means for combatting heteronormativity's multifaceted and entrenched tools of oppression.



CHAPTER 6

In (Queer Public)
Memory's Wake

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Queerly Remembered

The Value of Queer Public Memory

Queer public memories offer powerful rhetorical possibilities to contemporary rhetors, and these possibilities are deeply constrained by a variety of forces aligned in urging that this past be forgotten. A turn toward more monumental forms of queer public memories may provide recourse against heteronormative impulses to forget in ways that offer hope for a more inclusive and secure GLBTQ future.

The case studies in the preceding chapters highlight the ability of queer public memory to do valuable rhetorical work to shape public audiences and affect social change. In each case study a diverse array of GLBTQ rhetors used monumental queer public memories for distinct rhetorical goals. For instance, the Alexander Wood statue served a vital public purpose: creating both a triumphant historical image and a durable gay democratic space in which new forms of GLBTQ citizenship might be practiced while ensuring that, despite the trend toward gentrification within the Church-Wellesley area (and similar former gay ghettos), the presence of the queer past will always persist. Wood's memory also serves as a vital symbol over which community members debated their identification with one another and with Wood himself. In the example of Matthew Shepard, both gay and lesbian and queer counterpublics used reiterative memories, affective affiliations, and malleable meanings circulated within and between publics to prevent Shepard from being forgotten and to help persuade heterosexual audiences that bias crime legislation was necessary to protect GLBTQ people from harm. Simultaneously, remembering Shepard offered these differing counterpublics an opportunity to argue over the stakes of anti-GLBTQ violence, the state of GLBTQ people as a whole, and whether Shepard was capable of representing a community much wider and more diverse than himself. The California curricular reformers also used an array of GLBTQ historical imaginings to argue for legislative changes that could produce powerful effects for GLBTQ and heterosexual youth and urge heterosexual citizens to re-imagine how they constitute their sense of community to include or exclude GLBTQ people. Meanwhile, Patricia Cronin, Leonard Matlovich, and other gay and lesbian veterans, artists, and activists used their diverse monumental and ephemeral/tactical memory rhetorics to make expressly epideictic claims about who they are and how they should be remembered in the future. By their examples Matlovich and Cronin also helped steel GLBTQ people for ongoing debates surrounding same-sex marriage and GLBTQ military service. Each case testifies to the diverse ways in which queer memory rhetorics can be used to shape public life. If one way we might choose to determine an act's rhetoricity is by the effects it has on public beliefs, perceptions, values,

identities, and laws, then these projects demonstrate the potent rhetorical potential within the ongoing queer “*turn toward* memory.”¹¹

The case studies in this book also illustrate the enormous challenges GLBTQ individuals and institutions face in their attempts to remember the queer past. In its own way each case corroborates scholarship that identifies an array of obstacles—both within heterosexual history and GLBTQ historical imaginings—for doing productive queer memory work, including heteronormativity, homonormativity, mnemonicicide, willful erasure, HIV/AIDS and survivor's guilt, the subjugation of GLBTQ knowledges, and the questioning of GLBTQ evidence.¹² However, the present study also raises challenges particular to public memories in the era of queer monumentality. As camp viewers of the Wood statue have demonstrated, the Church-Wellesley Business Improvement Area's embrace of monumentality in order to remember Wood both limited and calcified his identity and the identity of the community. Because this is so, the statue makes static what, if more queerly understood, should be a highly fluid, intersectional continuum of being. The decision to rally around Shepard was calculated to make inroads into wider heterosexual culture but illustrated the propensity of monumental rhetorics to select “safe” figures from the GLBTQ past who can confine much of the community to the closet. The debate over California textbook reform illuminates that, despite the promise in adopting textbooks and curriculums as sites for queer memory, entering monumental forms and spaces already occupied by heteronormative forces commonly requires making difficult choices. In this case reforms resulted in troublesome forgettings that made GLBTQ politics unimportant, antigay violence unremarkable, and same-sex desires and acts inconspicuous. The examination of death displays also poignantly demonstrates how easily the heteronormative apparatuses of death can reterritorialize out and proud GLBTQ persons after death when they are no longer able to speak for themselves. Thus we must recognize with open eyes that, while queer public memories may be a valuable rhetorical tool, deploying these memory rhetorics is never without risk, cost, or restriction.

Despite these risks, the present study validates the turn to monumentality within queer public memory. While most thinkers and advocates rejected monumentality as too prone to exploitation in the wake of the horrors of World War II and the twentieth century's many fascist regimes, beginning about 1980 GLBTQ people and institutions saw latent potential in the concept for overcoming their erasures from memory. Among these virtues, monumentality's durability, epideictic energy, power, and opportunities for expansion are critically important.

Durability has been perhaps the most firmly asserted value in the case studies above. Within monumentality, queers have capitalized on durability over and over again, cognizant that a GLBTQ past long unable to endure the

slings and arrows of heteronormativity might find significant and sustained advantage by giving their subject matter the ability to persist. Perhaps not surprisingly, durability has often been achieved in the queer turn to monumentality through the creation of enduring material monuments. The Wood statue perhaps most directly illustrates that a queer public memory encased in stone might have the best chance of outlasting hostile criticism from heterosexual culture, playful detractors armed with graffiti and ill-intent, and even socioeconomic trends that are increasingly pushing GLBTQ people out of the neighborhoods they long claimed as their own. The ongoing erection of queer monuments across the globe, the gravescapes depicted in chapter 5, and the LGBT theme study described above only further confirm that materiality is a compelling feature of monumentality that is well equipped to fix a queer problem.

While materiality is a vital means for achieving durability, durability can also be accomplished through nonmaterial, but still monumental, forms of public memory. In the Shepard case, by continually reiterating alternative, affective, and malleable memories of Shepard within queer counterpublics and ultimately communicating those memories to the wider heteronormative public sphere, GLBTQ rememberers sought to give Shepard's memory a durable position within society. Given that Shepard's image today continues to grace legislation, hate-crime discourse, and political debates in the wider public sphere in ways closely aligned with those articulated by various gay and lesbian counterpublics, it seems that materiality need not be the exclusive means for imbuing GLBTQ pasts with a durability that can withstand the annihilating impulses of heteronormativity.

Another great advantage that monumental memory rhetorics hold over their tactical and ephemeral counterparts is their ability to more fully empower GLBTQ people themselves as tellers of their own pasts. This newly empowered GLBTQ relationship to the past provided by queer monumentality is confirmed through the monuments profiled in this book and their relative independence from heterosexual history. The independence of our monumental case studies is particularly distinct from the queer bricolage of earlier decades. For many years the queer past was able to emerge within the public sphere only when it could be made from the detritus of heterosexual history. Oscar Wilde claimed Michelangelo, Shakespeare, and Plato as like himself not because they were known homosexuals, but because they were already represented in history and, if read queerly, could be turned to his advantage. This "making do" offered Wilde a powerful, yet temporary, counterargument against heteronormativity. But because these figures were derived from heteronormativity—because dominant culture was deeply invested in reading these men as heterosexual—Wilde could make no lasting claim on them. It would only be a matter of time before each of Wilde's representative

anecdotes would be returned to the heterosexual fold. Thus tactical and ephemeral memory rhetorics such as bricolage are limited in their independence and, as a result, their power.

However, the many rhetors we have seen adopt queer monumentality were able to act differently. They selected and built public memories around figures that were not already heavily tied to heterosexual history. In doing so they identified valuable and important GLBTQ people in the past and built public discourses around them. This independent nomination process in queer monumentality obviously posed its own problems: Matthew Shepard was not representative enough, Alexander Wood's morals were questionable, and many figures in the textbook debate distracted from important parts of the community. However, these figures each also granted queer public memory a greater degree of independence in their articulation. In selecting their subjects, rhetors inclined toward monumentality foregrounded queerness as a value in itself, not a fortuitous and secondary "making do." Equally, because these subjects were notably queer, heterosexual history had less incentive to patrol their sexuality. The memories erected around these monumental figures could be articulated, controlled, and shaped almost exclusively by the GLBTQ community itself, relatively free of the fear of reterritorialization. By conceiving, creating, and generating queer memories from our own raw materials, not the scraps of heterosexual history, GLBTQ people can further enhance their own powerful positions in a still-heteronormative world.

Highly intertwined with independence and power is the epideictic value inherent in queer monumentality. As we know, monumentality is not just about sending a lasting message through time but a meaningful message that transmits a profound statement about what communities of the past valued. This is largely achieved through identifying great heroes and heroines of a given age and marking their value through grand, ornate, and elaborate display. To be fair, the examples of queer monumentality herein do not readily match the most noted instances of monumental epideictic we see elsewhere in our society. This is particularly true in the grandeur of queer displays: no case study in this book is as opulent and visually poetic as the Palace of Versailles or the Lincoln Memorial. This is for good reason: these grandest examples of monumentality in heteronormative culture have significantly more resources and assurances behind them that GLBTQ people may only have begun to access with the National Park Service initiatives discussed above.

Nonetheless, every case study we have examined exceeds a threshold for monumentality established in the introduction: lifting exemplary instances out of the realm of everyday life. In doing so, each case demonstrates attention to epideictic's dual interest in virtue and high style. Leonard Matlovich's patriotism, bravery, struggle, and inspiration are deeply foregrounded in his marker while Patricia Cronin has rejected the burial norms of our

contemporary age to produce a grave marker to match the grandeur of a garden cemetery. California curricular reformers secured for their GLBTQ subjects a place alongside the poster children of American nationalism within such a hagiographical genre as the public school textbook. Reiterated characterizations of Shepard as a martyr for the cause and secular saint celebrated not just through everyday talk but also in vigils and speeches that echoed through the streets of New York City and in the walls of the U. S. Capitol building expressly pushed him beyond the typical, even when they lauded his common qualities. Perhaps most conventionally of all, by labeling him a warrior, community leader, and “gay pioneer” in the very conventional form of a statue in a public square (with a “gay flair,” no less), Wood sets a new bar for how a historical queer figure can be proudly commemorated. By embracing both dimensions of the epideictic inherent within queer monumentality, GLBTQ advocates firmly established their own heroes as celebrated inspirations worthy of eternal remembrance.

Last, this inspirational quality apparent in queer monumentality helps us begin to understand the final value witnessed in this recent trend: the capacity for monumental queer memory rhetorics to be replicated and repeated in an expansive undertaking. The Wilde case shows that there is important value in the retelling of tactical and ephemeral memory rhetorics; they give everyday GLBTQ persons important resources for defending themselves and others against the heteronormative oppression in which they reside. Yet these ephemeral rhetorics by their very nature do not provide a firm foundation on which to build. For centuries a momentary retelling of a queer tale from the past has been followed up quickly with haughty laughter, confessional interrogations, corporal punishments, and, understandably, instantaneous retractions. To put it another way, as José Esteban Muñoz reminds us, the virtue of an ephemeral past is that it can evaporate at a moment’s notice; but a self-destructive past always prepared to disappear can never advance beyond itself.

By contrast, when memories enriched with queer monumentality are repeated, both the new memory and the original memory continue to persist. Because they are independent and durable, a fitting and inspirational example from the queer past can continue to arouse energetic interest while its new derivatives can themselves encourage greater repetition. In other words, by virtue of an initial instance of queer monumentality’s ability to gain and hold territory in the public imagination, it acquires ground with an eye toward expansion. We have seen this repetition lead to self-perpetuating advances for the GLBTQ past throughout this book: the Wood memorial was inspired by the model of the *Gay Liberation* statue; the success of the FAIR Act relied on critical insights from debates over S.B. 1437; advocates for other victims of bias crime have used and critiqued Shepard’s memory to raise

attention and broaden the public understanding of antigay/trans violence; Matlovich drew inspiration from the grave of Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein, just as other gay and lesbian memorialists drew inspiration from his Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In each case the capacity of these monumental memories to endure, be remembered, and be deployed in second-generation rhetorical innovations are a key resource for the GLBTQ community to expand the queer past. Chaining out in multiple lines from central rhetorical acts, monumental queer memory rhetorics generate powerful effects, which in turn inspire greater action beyond themselves. Thus queer monumentality allows for substantial gains in power that tactical approaches to the past alone cannot.

These four values of queer monumentality are not an exhaustive list of this trend's potential. I am certain that with a wider scope of analyses, more monumental values will be revealed in time. However, these four values emerge as primary benefits from the case studies discussed above. Collectively, by making GLBTQ memories durable, powerful, epideictic, and expansive, queer monumentality offers important advantages in counteracting anti-GLBTQ forces that may offer some of the best paths forward to social change.

While the recent initiatives by the National Park Service provide an interesting and useful occasion for summarizing the complex possibilities and pitfalls of queer monumentality at this present moment, the current effort does not address every issue needing attention. Also important is the future of queer public memory research and how queer monumentality in particular might be further improved.

The Future of Queer Public Memory



If all acts of public memory are as much about the present and future as they are about the past, it is important to highlight what these collected examples suggests about the future study and practice of queer public memory. In my view key dimensions of this future include the continued turn by GLBTQ people and institutions to memory, vital and ongoing roles for tactical and ephemeral forms of queer memory, and the need to do monumental forms of queer public memory better.

Perhaps the easiest prognostication about the future of queer public memory is that the “*turn toward* memory”—or what I have termed a (re)turn to memory—as a rhetorical resource for GLBTQ people, communities, and institutions will only continue.¹³ The persistent “memory mania” of the last three-plus decades currently shows little sign of abating and interest in the GLBTQ past has intensified. Evidence for this ongoing interest even now exceeds the GLBTQ community itself. President Barack Obama’s inclusion of

the Stonewall Riots in his second inaugural address, the queer past's notable emergence in popular media (for example, *Milk*, *Dallas Buyers Club*, *The Imitation Game*, and HBO's *Liberace* and *The Normal Heart*) and the National Park Service's initiatives all suggest that curiosity about the queer past is growing.¹⁴ Therefore it seems clear that as long as the past continues to be a palatable place to find persuasion, GLBTQ rhetors will continue to mine its resources. Yet it is also likely that, within the "turn toward memory," efforts to embrace monumental forms of queer public memory will persist and, indeed, accelerate. Consider, for instance, that during the first two decades of the memory boom (approximately 1980–2000), only a handful of material GLBTQ monuments were created and installed, many of them requiring years of planning, fundraising, and public engagement. By contrast, more than a dozen prominent, permanent GLBTQ memorials or commemorative sites have been erected or begun in the last fifteen years, the vast majority during the last five years.¹⁵ In line with the case studies in this book, most of these emerging monuments have pointed to earlier GLBTQ monuments as inspiration. Considering GLBTQ culture's penchant for bricolage, repetition with a difference, thoughtful borrowing, and queer monumentality's valuing of expansion, I suspect that GLBTQ people in other communities will continue to borrow from earlier monumental projects to undertake similar work. Because this is so, these monumental queer memories will spawn greater effects, admirers, and imitators in the years to come.

Another (somewhat counterintuitive) claim about the future of queer public memory is that, while the turn toward queer monumentality will likely accelerate, tactical and ephemeral GLBTQ memory rhetorics will continue to play a vital role in remembering the queer past. At the outset of this project, I did not expect tactical and ephemeral memories to play a significant part in the powerful GLBTQ memory displays that were emerging on the public scene. Rather I anticipated that the turn to monumentality would be an undeniably positive contribution to GLBTQ rhetorical action that would make earlier tactical and ephemeral acts of queer public memory outmoded and unnecessary. This presumption is not completely incorrect: I maintain that queer monumentality represents a net positive for queer public memory practice, that it will become increasingly prevalent, and that it holds valuable lessons for those in similarly situated subject positions. However, it has also become progressively clear that tactical and ephemeral acts of remembrance will remain an essential resource for faithfully representing the GLBTQ past for several reasons.

The first reason stems from an abundance of caution. Far too often GLBTQ people have acceded to the idea that progress is both inevitable and irreversible. We put our faith in notable accomplishments, content that milestones have been met, change has occurred, and things only "get better."¹⁶ Yet

experiences of GLBTQ people around the world tell another story. Few of the early homophiles in 1920s Germany predicted that their progressive lifestyles would soon be swept away by state-sponsored persecution, imprisonment, and war. Likewise, many urban and coastal gays and lesbians were shocked to see news of Shepard's death in 1998 as a victim of violence reminiscent of a time they thought had past. Egregious, harmful setbacks continue today. How many GLBTQ couples have celebrated their nuptials since 2004 only to have those same unions intermittently nullified by court action, legislation, or referendum? Why should GLBTQ people believe they are secure when, as recently as 2010, Pride events in Pennsylvania were surveilled under direct orders from the state's chief homeland security official?¹⁷ How can the world speak of progress on GLBTQ rights when Russia and Uganda have only recently added harsh penalties for queer speech, acts, and existence where few existed before? Both historical and contemporary incidents illustrate that progress is not irrevocable and repression can come with little warning. Because this is true, the GLBTQ community should be wary of equating monumentality with victory. Though they might be important and durable, memorials can be torn down and textbooks rewritten far easier than we might suspect. GLBTQ tactics generally, and GLBTQ tactical and ephemeral memories specifically, are essential stopgaps against these hopefully overzealous concerns. Disposing of them would be imprudent and potentially complicit in future GLBTQ marginalization.

Tactical and ephemeral queer memories are also needed still because they provide access to historical knowledge not yet readily incorporated into monumental forms of queer public memory. As local, fleeting, and *metistic* forms of action, tactical and ephemeral memories are essential for preserving the diverse, everyday pasts of GLBTQ life. For the moment at least monumental memory rhetorics are (by and large) far too biased toward "great" men and women, normative forms of accomplishment, and accepted spaces of recognition. Indeed, activism and scholarship in queer historiography, homonormativity, and "gay shame" has explicitly expressed similar concerns.¹⁸ Gladly, GLBTQ life, in the past and present, is not found exclusively among people and places amenable to narrow rhetorics of gay pride and monumentality. Everyday GLBTQ people, self-described freaks, gender benders and gender fucks, leather daddies, queens, exhibitionists, outsiders, nonconformists, political radicals, and others continue to permeate the GLBTQ experience. Indeed, it is often through the still-marginalized aspects of GLBTQ life that we renew our queer orientation to the world around us. On the borders of our identities, where diversity and difference are most pronounced, challenges are most felt, and representation costs so dearly, GLBTQ people have innovated to create forms, styles, and epistemologies that by necessity feed their existence. These experiences, acts, people, and

events need to be remembered not because someday they will be incorporated into a more monumental form but rather because that day is still highly unlikely to come. Many of these tactical and ephemeral memories cannot be contained in these more traditional monumental forms; others may wither and die under such constraints. Tactical and ephemeral ways of remembering keep alive the vibrancy of queer life and should be preserved at all cost.

Also, tactical and ephemeral memory rhetorics are crucial for holding monumental forms of queer public memory accountable for its choices. This book is replete with examples of queers questioning the public memories which supposedly represent all GLBTQ people. Using innovative rhetorical acts—graffiti-ing and dragging the Wood statue and foregrounding victims of violence beyond Shepard are just two examples—tactically oriented queers can highlight deficiencies in more-monumental displays of the past. While many rhetors constructing monumental GLBTQ memories might view these critiques as a nuisance, contestations in the era of queer monumentality are essential for serving the greater good of the queer counterpublic. These critiques demand that our visions represent real diversity as present and important; they challenge notions of stable identity when many are highly fluid; they counteract powerful voices that drive blindly toward inclusion; and they recall events that some may find uncomfortable or objectionable but that are central to understanding the GLBTQ past. When these parts of our shared past go unheard or unrecognized, the campy queer potential to raise a ruckus and act out in disruptive ways vibrantly restores the contestation essential to a strong public memory. By keeping these monumental forms of queer memory honest, tactical and ephemeral memories do an invaluable service to the entire GLBTQ community.

A final dimension of the future of queer public memory is that queer monumentality must be done better. This book, along with the work of several scholars and critics of the GLBTQ past, has made explicit the many challenges and costs that have emerged as a result of how queer public memory practice has been conducted in recent years. These challenges include issues of diversity, equity, homonormativity, heteronormativity, forgetting, shame, and static notions of identity, among others. These flaws within queer public memory discourse are serious and should be identified. However, in my experience some critics are too quick to condemn certain practices as problematic and ill-advised without offering prospects for resolving those problems. While I have devoted much attention to highlighting the valuable ways monumental memory rhetorics can promote social, cultural, and political change, I have also pointed to issues that raise concerns. At the same time I have sought to introduce new ideas that address these concerns as well. In imagining the future of queer public memory, those suggestions bear reiteration and expansion.

There are several steps that can be taken to do queer monumentality better. First, in line with Bravmann's characterization of the "queer cultural studies of history," GLBTQ scholars and activists need to be critically aware that our own tellings of pasts are often as contingent and as flawed as the heterosexual histories against which they react.¹⁹ Showing greater awareness of the representational deficiencies within the GLBTQ past and making an effort to include diverse others essential to our communities may greatly enhance the value of these projects, for both our own community and the wider culture. Such awareness can contribute to doing queer public memory better in many ways, but it may be most transformational if Bravmann's methods are altered from a cultural-studies approach to criticism to a form of self-reflexive practice. Clearly, if GLBTQ rhetors build a critical reflexivity into the process prior to designing commemorative sites and memorials, honoring GLBTQ heroes and heroines, and making other representational choice about the GLBTQ past, they may make a great deal of difference in preventing or at least mitigating the more troublesome erasures endemic to queer memory practice so far. Queer monumental rhetorics that result from a more self-reflexive process will be better positioned to unify the community for collective action and challenge other hegemonic pasts at the center of dominant culture.

Second, queer memory makers may do better by specifically embracing more-diverse forms of evidence for understanding the GLBTQ past. It is important to remember that while there are many similarities between history and memory, they are two distinctly different phenomena: memory represents our lived, everyday experiences in the world while history is a collective means for managing our accelerating loss of memory.²⁰ Whether because of memory's loss or history's powerful ideological value, history has often been the default means of understanding the past, including for many GLBTQ rhetors. Without a doubt the GLBTQ history done by thoughtful scholars and made publicly accessible has been highly beneficial to the community. However, by too rigidly embracing history, scholars, activists, and everyday people miss the opportunities to highlight memories that have distinctly different and important views on the past to offer. For instance, consider how our understanding of the GLBTQ past changes if we learned about the Stonewall Riots from archived news coverage (history) rather than from a preserved oral history interview with one of its participants (memory). What do we lose in our understanding and appreciation of Alexander Wood if we examine only his entry in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* or his documents in official archives? How much more might we gain by visiting his statue, "rubbing the bum" in the presence of others, and watching his form be played with in a communal emergence of meaning? How do we come to see the past contrarily with a visit to the Leather Archives in Chicago or the

Lesbian Herstory Archives in New York rather than limiting ourselves to a traditional museum exhibit such as *Becoming Visible* at the New York Public Library? History can be an important and essential basis by which we judge our actions and ourselves; but it can also be a tool used to shape our perception of the past while hiding its own ideological values. Similarly, reliance exclusively upon memory opens the door to the natural frailties of human and collective memory and even (at times) to the rigor of detailed analyses and debate. However, by bringing them together, by augmenting our history with a “*turn toward* memory” and its rich resources—film, pulp, ephemera, scandal, gossip, posters, performance, among others—we are able, in the very best moments, to bring our histories to life and invest them fully with rhetorical zeal. Perhaps more important, when needed most, memories give us recourse to challenge and disrupt the hegemony inscribed by those who practice history thoughtlessly or with open or veiled malice. In either case, by representing the GLBTQ past as memory rather than as history alone, greater opportunities for rhetorical action are likely to present themselves.

Another means of improving queer public memory is to consider meaningfully less-material instantiations of monumentality. Concerns about the limits of materiality have been a primary factor in the evisceration of monumentality within the wider public sphere. For instance, James E. Young has shown that, rather than preserve memory, some material monuments fail because they “seal memory off from awareness altogether.” In doing so, traditional monuments—made of marble, bronze, and iron—become not insurance that the community will remember but rather an authorization that gives viewers permission to forget.²¹ Similarly, the historian Lewis Mumford argued decades ago that the excessive use of statuary, memorials, and museums in certain commemorative zones could overwhelm their intended meaning, leaving those meant to be remembered unremembered and those living and working among these monuments constrained in the public square.²² In addition, the contemporary architectural scholar Kirk Savage argues that in particularly important representative spaces—such as the National Mall in Washington, D.C.—the perpetual addition of new material monuments to represent an ever-growing list of subcultures, ethnicities, and identities may be counterproductive and unsustainable.²³ Given these concerns, the expansion of queer monumentality focused too heavily on building sites and installing shrines may be a rhetorical approach with diminishing returns. Luckily, as the present study asserts firmly, there are other productive ways to make the past durable beyond the use of physical markers, ways that can counteract these worrisome critiques. Queer monumentality’s possibilities in the digital realm are only one such possibility. Today the Internet, social media, and other digital technologies offer queers a recourse to the monumental that is not as weighty or physical as other monuments. In digital

monuments, mobile apps such as *Quist*, online archives and encyclopedias devoted to GLBTQ history, and important undertakings such as the ACT UP Oral History Project, advocates have found a powerful means to rethink queer monumentality in meaningful ways. If these and similar reimaginings of monumentality are done cautiously, reflexively, and selectively, such undertakings may productively expand GLBTQ memories while addressing some concerns about materiality.

Similarly, we can do queer monumentality better by embracing opportunities presented by other scholars and activists to make monumentality in all its forms more contemporary. By this I mean expressly to take up Andreas Huyssen's search for a monumentality that is "fundamentally informed by the modernist spirit of a fleeting and transitory epiphany, but that is no less memorable or monumental for it."²⁴ A monumentality that is both ephemeral and enduring, tactical and strategic can seem impossible for most communities, a contradiction in terms that cannot stand and therefore must be rejected. But GLBTQ people, familiar with doubt, turned on by failure, and enlivened by contradictions, are not most communities. As we have seen, there are possibilities not only in turning to monumentality as queers but in queering monumentality to serve our needs better. This means adopting a both/and approach that takes the best features of monumentality and marries them to the best qualities of the nonmonumental. While few of the case studies in this book have fully addressed this challenge, we can begin to see the possibilities in the contradictory gravescape memories described above. Without a doubt, Matlovich, Cronin, and their admirers adopted monumentality's durable, epideictic, expansionist, and empowered values in giving themselves a queer afterlife. But, as we have seen, there are crucial tactical and ephemeral memory rhetorics at work here as well. Selecting a crumbling cemetery once at the heart of the heteronormative American epideictic and making it a site of queer monumentality requires ephemeral risks and tactical thinking. Adopting the generic expectations of a (heteronormative) garden gravescape only to subvert them to monumental and queer ends is as much in line with Oscar Wilde's tactics as it is with the Alexander Wood statue's materiality. These instances demonstrate what can happen when doing queer public memory brings tactical/ephemeral and monumental memory rhetorics together not as adversaries with competing visions or to keep each other honest but united in complex, multivocal, simultaneous queer acts. Fleshing out this both/and vision of queer monumentality operating alongside and in common cause with tactical and ephemeral memory rhetorics is work still to be done. We see glimpses of its prospects in the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt's grandeur and softness, the adorning of national monuments with rainbow flags, and the queer kisses in red lipstick on Oscar Wilde's tomb. By taking up these exciting possibilities in the future, we may

find in queer monumentality an even more meaningful path to making sure the queer past survives and thrives.

A final way of doing queer public memory better is recognizing that monumental recognition of GLBTQ lives is not the point of arrival but only a further step in leveraging the GLBTQ past for rhetorical purposes. As we more fully enter a postmodern state of politics, rife with complex and intersecting forces of power that have radically reengineered their methods of normalizing and disciplining queer people and cultures, the future of the queer past will require constant vigilance in order to continue both to exist and to resist. Just as tactical and ephemeral memories have their limitations, monumental queer rhetorics do as well. The coming years will demonstrate heteronormativity's efforts to compromise queer monuments and whether or not they will be successful. Yet working in combination, monumental and tactical/ephemeral uses of the past can be an effective series of rhetorical moves for continuing to claim greater queer empowerment.

While these suggestions may seem difficult to implement at a time when the era of queer monumentality is still in its nascent stages, efforts to refine queer monumental memory practices are already under way. One short example should suffice. In October 2009 a new queer monument was erected to Natalie Barney, a lesbian born in 1879. Barney was an heiress, philanthropist, and writer who published her first book of poems, *Quelques Portraits-Sonnets de Femmes*, in 1900. The poems consisted largely of insights into the lesbian experience, a theme she returned to throughout her life, in addition to political writings in support of feminism, paganism, and pacifism. Though Barney lived most of her life as an expatriate in Paris (where open homosexuality was to some degree tolerated), she was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio, where a large state historical marker bearing her name, her biography, and identifying her sexuality was placed in Cooper Park outside of the Dayton Metro Library.²⁵

In many ways this memory project is similar to the more traditional monumental rhetorics described above: it is a material marker, endorsed by public authority and difficult to ignore. It has also been subject to attacks and attempts to destroy it as other GLBTQ monuments have.²⁶ However, for several reasons this marker is an exciting example of doing queer monumentality better. Barney was a lesbian, and her monument is one of the first in the world to inscribe the word *lesbian* on the commemorative plaque. In addition, Barney was a self-described lesbian, and thus the monument avoids issues of false reclamation or transient identity. Also, what Barney is remembered for is important. As an activist and author, Barney is remembered for her contributions to GLBTQ life and heterosexual life. She is no queer masquerading as a heterosexual but rather a protoqueer radical in her age who inspired and taught others within her literary salons. Perhaps most

telling of all is where this monument is located: Dayton, Ohio. Unlike almost all the public memories described above that emanate from the liberal coasts or gay meccas or that replicate rural queer voices through the urban centers of New York and California, this monument recognizes Barney in a small city in the middle of Rust Belt America. Her memory disrupts the biases of space and beliefs that might mitigate the rhetorical work of earlier projects, instead being remembered in public before an audience perhaps less accustomed to such interventions and hopefully more affected by them. Though still not a flawless GLBTQ monumental rhetoric, Barney's marker is a refined vision of how GLBTQ rememberers in the future can do better. Encouragingly, as I write, more projects to reclaim and recast the queer past with monumental designs and durable effect begin every day. It is in these projects that we look for a better practice of queer public memory to emerge, and it is these projects that we must continue to watch—ever vigilant of the prospects and pitfalls of remembering and forgetting the GLBTQ past with rhetorical intent.