Theorizing Ethnography

TRANS VITALITIES

MAPPING ETHNOGRAPHIES OF TRANS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL COALITIONS

Elijah Adiv Edelman

Trans Vitalities

This book applies a framework of 'trans vitalities' through an ethnographically-anchored exploration of trans coalitional labor and activism in Washington, DC. Specifically, it considers how trans social justice work at the local level exemplifies why and how the notions of 'trans community' or 'trans rights' must be reconfigured. Trans vitalities, as a framework developed in this volume, functions in three particular ways: 1) to disrupt and rethink what valuable, viable, or quantifiable quality of life looks like; 2) to shift our understandings of community towards 'coalition'; and 3) as a methodological, theoretical, and application-based set of tools that integrates a radical trans politics and community-based approach towards addressing trans lives. *Trans Vitalities* incorporates one-on-one interviews, community map-making projects, and an analysis of the DC Trans Needs Assessment, produced through trans coalitional labor.

An accessible case study for both how to research trans-specific topics and how to apply a framework of trans vitalities, this book is valuable reading for those who research or instruct on LGBTQ topics as well as activists, policy makers, and law makers.

Elijah Adiv Edelman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Rhode Island College, USA. Edelman's work focuses around—and is anchored in—models of trans coalitional justice across the United States and the Global South.

Theorizing Ethnography

Series Editors: Elisabeth L. Engebretsen, E.J. Gonzalez-Polledo, and Silvia Posocco

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Trans Vitalities

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Elijah Adiv Edelman

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This book is dedicated to all the trans people who will never read it, who will never benefit from it, or whose labor and life is further erased by it. May this text incite readers to action, to question the validity of academic expertise, and to commit meaningful resources towards both.

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Preface

In their work 'Bound,' DC artist and trans activist JD suspends a small bundle of sticks, held together by tightly stretched twine. The sticks are rendered immobile through the tension provided by nails affixed at the top and bottom of the canvas. Pea-sized and irregularly shaped fragments of sea glass—rolled smooth from the longshore drift process—dot the twine, punctuating its grip with glimmers of bright blues and greens. Much like each stick of birch, which once was a part of something different and likely substantially larger, the sticks become something whole in this moment—something new. The meaning-making of this now fixed whole is only made possible through the tension provided by the twine that binds them. However, if one were to remove even one element of the bundled whole, the twine would lose the very tension that sustains its grip. The pea-sized forms of sea glass—like the bundled sticks—were also once a part of a larger whole. Sea glass is transformed not just by the ocean but by a complex process known as longshore drift. Prevailing winds force the glass-carrying waves to hit the beach at a particular angle. Backwash—the water moving back out to sea—carries these materials back down over the beach. As a result, sea glass is transformed and remade by this process of wind, sand, and water clashing. Each fragment becomes something new, specific to the conditions through which it formed (Corcoran 2010).

As I prepared this manuscript, and as I considered why 'Bound' seemed to so potently depict what I was struggling to describe with any clarity, I thought more about my own interpretation. I thought about my interpretation of the piece and of how strongly I felt it depicted the significance of coalitional work and activism in supporting us and each other. As I thought about the work more, I found myself growing increasingly anxious, if not mortified, at reading support into a piece that could just as easily depict crushing control. I felt ashamed that I had derived so much enjoyment from a piece that could have been about suffering. When I sat down with JD to discuss their work I learned that, perhaps like most conclusions I make about my understanding of the world, my 'reading' of the piece wasn't wrong; however, it wasn't the intended meaning. And so, while Bound could be 'read' as a wholesale celebration of diversity and support, it could just as easily be understood to represent the entanglement of autonomy and self against the totalizing power of single ideas.

This is the framework through which we can understand what might constitute trans vitalities.

While this book should not and does not function as a form of salvage ethnography—to capture the fleeting experiences of a community of practice that somehow no longer exists—it is a snapshot of what trans coalitional activism looked like and felt like between roughly 2006 and 2015, the time period in which I was at my most active in trans coalitional activism in DC. That is to say, how trans coalitional activism functions or is discussed in this text is no longer an accurate depiction of DC today. Nor does this text capture all potential experiences of trans coalitional activism during this time period. This is not to suggest that something has been lost; rather, the opposite may be true. Change is a necessary feature of activist work—it is often the goal. My purpose in this text is to consider how trans coalitional activism provides insight into how we make our lives worth living, even if we have, by some metrics, failed to thrive. I consider trans vitalities here as one framework in which to make sense of the messiness and incoherencies of lived experience.

Works cited

Corcoran, Patricia L., Katrina Packer, and Mark C. Biesinger. 2010. "First-Cycle Grain Weathering Processes: Compositions and Textures of Sea Glass from Port Allen, Kauai, Hawaii." *Journal of Sedimentary Research* 80, no. 10: 884–894.

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The words and experiences explored and discussed in the following pages are culminations of conversations, energy, and labor that without this book would not exist. It is not possible to acknowledge these exchanges—or the gratitude I have for being in some way witness to or part of them—through text alone. Nonetheless, I list here only a snapshot of those whose labor and lives facilitated the production of this text.

First, I must acknowledge the profound role the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC) served in my life as an individual, an activist, and, of note here, an academic. One of the largest projects to come out my role with DCTC was the DC Trans Needs Assessment Project (DCTNA). Importantly, the DC Trans Needs Assessment Project discussed in this book was the product of coalitional labor of which I functioned as principle investigator and project manager. The 2015 report produced from the project, 'Access Denied,' was co-authored also through a collective. I wish to acknowledge the work of those who both designed the survey and completed analysis and the final report: Ruby Corado, co-investigator and survey collection manager; Elena C. Lumby, PhD, lead statistician; Roberta H. Gills, community outreach manager; Jona Elwell, lead report layout designer; Jason A. Terry, resource management coordinator; and Jady Emperador Dyer, cover designer. Members of the DC Trans Coalition Needs Assessment Working Group include contributing authors, survey distributors, and interview coordinators: Jeffery Bingenheimer, PhD, MPH (quantitative consultant), Nachale (Hua) Boonyapisomparn, Andrea Bowen, Earline Budd, Jennine Carmichael, Arli Christian, Dane Edidi, Hannah Everhart, Tyler Grigsby, Darby Hickey, Patrick Hodgens, Lourdes Ashley Hunter, Elliot Imse, Jeff Light, D. Ártemis López, Debbie McMillian, Laya Monarez, Amy Nelson, Kiefer Paterson, Ari Pomerantz, Tonia Poteat, PhD, Nico Quintana, Teresa Rainey, Sara Staggs, Jason Terry, Shannon E. Wyss, Levi Wolberg, Meredith Zoltick, and Sadie. I would also like to thank our partner organizations, roundtable hosts, and survey distributors: Casa Ruby, DC Area Transmasculine Society (DCATS), HIPS, SMYAL, Transgender Health Empowerment, Inc. Financial support for the DCTNA was secured in large part through individual donors. We received grant support from the DC Center for the LGBT Community, the Diverse City Fund, and the Williams

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Finally, I must acknowledge the entirely invisible labor and patience of my partner, Jason, for sticking around even when I have spent more time questioning reality than time with him.

Abbreviations

DC	Washington, DC
DCTNA	DC Trans Needs Assessment Project
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

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Introduction

Tracing entangled trans desire lines—vitalities and geometries of motion

In thinking about resistance and the transformative potential of oppressive power, Sara Ahmed reminds us,

> when you stray from the official paths, you create desire lines, faint marks on the earth, as traces of where you or others have been. A willfulness archive is premised on hope: the hope that those who wander away from the paths they are supposed to follow leave their footprints behind.
>
> (Ahmed 2014, 21)

'Bound' is as much about desire lines as it is the paths we are supposed to follow. In this book, I explore what we might frame as trans coalitional 'desire lines' towards a framework of 'trans vitalities' as a necessary shift in disrupting normative expectations of trans identities, practices, 'resilience,' and, ultimately, that which is understood to constitute the 'LGBT community.' I argue that a framework of trans vitalities functions in three specific ways: 1) to disrupt and rethink what valuable, viable, or quantifiable quality of life looks like; 2) to shift our understandings of community towards 'coalition'; and 3) as a methodological, theoretical, and application-based set of tools that integrates a radical trans politics and community-based approach towards addressing trans lives. This book applies a framework of trans vitalities through a focus on what constitutes 'trans community' and life-making through an ethnographically-anchored exploration of trans coalitional labor and activism in Washington, DC. Specifically, in this text I consider how trans social justice work at the local level exemplifies why and how the notions of 'trans community' or 'trans rights' must be reconfigured. Building from ethnographic texts that directly address communities of practice that identify as trans (Blackwood and Wieringa 1999; Kulick 1998; Sinnot 2004; Wieringa et al. 2007; Valentine 2007), as well Dean Spade's formulation of a radical trans politics (Spade 2015), I focus in this text on how reworking of space and belonging, as expressed through map-making by trans communities of practice, and 'needs,' as expressed in a community-produced trans needs assessment survey, render visible what constitutes trans coalitional life in DC. Ultimately, *Trans Vitalities* links spatial ideologies to inequality, necropolitical landscapes, and spaces of trans vitalities.

As a case study, this book shifts a monocular and uncomplicated view of trans lives into a politically and socio-economically anchored discussion of 'trans' practices, identities, and experiences in Washington, DC. This book explores trans lives and coalitional activism in present-day DC as they articulate with historical legacies of race and class, as well as the emergence of the notion of an 'LGBT' community, which inform and shape trans social justice work. Conceptually, this book emphasizes and calls for a focus on rethinking the notion of 'trans community' towards dynamic—and inherently unequal—'trans coalitions.' That is, while the acronym LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) is commonly used to refer to identities or practices that are sexual or gender minorities, this kind of ideological work may function as a form of violent exclusion of those who may identify as 'trans,' rather than as a form of meaningful inclusion. Instead, the maps, narratives, and survey data (Edelman et al. 2015) collected from participants in this project reflect a deep structural *disconnect* between and among trans lives and mainstream LGBT social and political frameworks. A framework of trans vitalities, following Spade's radical trans politics, fundamentally seeks to:

> create and practice a critical trans politics that contributes to building a political context for massive redistribution. A critical trans politics imagines and demands an end to prisons, homelessness, landlords, bosses, immigration enforcement, poverty, and wealth. It imagines a world in which people have what they need and govern themselves in ways that value collectivity, interdependence, and difference. Winning those demands and building the world in which they can be realized requires an unyielding commitment to center racial, economic, ability, and gender justice. It also requires thoughtful, reflective strategizing about how to build leadership and mobilization in ways that reflect those commitments. Our demands for redistribution, access, and participation must be reflected in our resistance work every day—they can't be something we come back for later.
>
> (Spade 2015: 68–69)

My project in this text is to identify the ways in which a radical trans politics is, as Spade emphasizes, not simply a theoretical paradigm or epistemological framework but rather central to both unpacking trans lived experiences and addressing the immense inequities striating the 'trans community.' Specifically, in this text I explore what might constitute a radical trans politics, as expressed by the trans activists and community members discussed in this text. Moreover, I apply a lens of radical trans politics to both the analysis and discussion of qualitative and quantitative data.

In this book I respond to Biehl and Locke's call for anthropologists to "resist synthetic closure and totalizing explanation and to keep our focus on the interrelatedness and unfinishedness of all human life—indeed of all life and of the planet itself—in the face of precarity and the unknown" (Biehl and Locke 2017, 11). In doing so, I hope to continue the important questions posed by

both activists and academics regarding the continued erasure and disposability of trans feminine bodies of color, but also the violence and erasure enacted through the use of such terms as 'community' to frame an imagined shared experience for all trans persons.

Insofar as a text written and published in this manner can, my goal here is less to simply add to a string of theoretical paradigms in trans studies and rather to call attention to the idea, and perhaps demand, that academics, theorists, activists, and general populations working with, studying, or learning from/about communities identified as trans fundamentally question the capacity of their labor to effect change. In any number of ways, this would include myself, my own work, and even this text as perpetuating the notion that referring to, theorizing, or discussing inequality and change is, itself, a basis for shifting, destabilizing, or removing the structures of power and inequity that I refer to in this text. Rather, my hope is that, building upon the many activists, community members, and academics that predate this text and those discussed here, this is a call to question our own work in ways that may very well render a book like this not just redundant but unwelcome. In short, I encourage the reader to critique and question how or why we would expect or anticipate that a text written by an academic would serve to further radical trans politics, which is the foundation of many of my arguments here. To that end, I have organized each chapter to conclude with how the data discussed articulates with the kind of decentering required to change both the field of 'trans studies' and 'trans rights' frameworks.

Finally, I find it necessary to call upon the reader of this text to question it, to question the methods I have used, the conclusions I have come to, and to my own position as the author of a text that purports to offer a way in which to approach trans lives. A field that cannot bear critique yet itself builds upon the notion that critique is central to enacting change either in or outside of academic work is a field that must change. Academics and theorists that call for new paradigms must be willing to have paradigms emerge that displace or render their ideas dated, ineffective, and even offensive. As such, while I, like any author, would hope that my labor here has use and meaning, I also hope that it will function as merely one step, a foothold, or just a page in a much larger trajectory of textual and non-textual production towards trans lives. While this text more likely than not engages in the very forms of trans studies that it questions, I no less find value in critique and, fundamentally, a call to question a field that may very well be populated by those who do trans-specific research, public health work, or activism while refusing to contribute to the momentum of change necessary for the current state of trans academic work to grow.

Bodies and space: trans coalitions, bodies, and experience in the nation's capital

At the core of this book is the exploration of how transgender, transsexual, and other gender-non-conforming (henceforth 'trans') identifying persons

organize socially and politically as members of immensely diverse and discontinuous 'trans coalitions'[1] in Washington, DC, a city wherein neoliberal processes continuously destabilize and rework landscapes of social and political policy, work, home, and opportunity. Like many cities in the late-modern, globalizing moment, Washington, DC constitutes a dynamic and ever-changing terrain shaped by technologies of neoliberalism including multiple forms of urban restructuring (Manning 1998; Williams 1988). Sexuality, gender, and embodiment, while seemingly removed from elements of geographic concern, are instead central to understanding how these terrains are regarded, navigated, and understood by the very population traversing them. As evidenced in the events surrounding the well-publicized 1998 death of trans woman Tyra Hunter, wherein DC paramedics ceased life-saving measures following a car accident upon discovery of her 'male' genitals, an understanding of trans experience is beyond mere desires for sensitivity in health care. Though this is not to imply that race, class, and sexuality are eclipsed by gender transgression, as Hunter's treatment was invariably complicated by being a black woman and from an assumed lower-class status, the danger posed by visible or unexpected gender transgression, whether consensual or forced, becomes a central feature in unpacking trans lived experiences in DC.

To be clear, class, race, and access to resources heavily impact trans experience in the city. As such, trans persons who are upwardly mobile, white, gender-normative, and in a secure and well-paying job should not necessarily be expected to identify with issues impacting those who are lower-income or are affected by racialized otherness. That said, this is not to foreclose the importance of *other* issues, such as job security, daily public hostility, or access to and utilization of representative private documents. In this text I attend to this difference and, rather than either marking each 'community' as discrete or as one in the same, I trace the complex tapestry that makes up trans coalitions of practice in DC, held together by the thin threads of 'trans' continuity, yet brought together in both imagined and very real utilitarian purposes.

Geographic specificity: the paradox of Washington, DC

Washington, DC, as the capital city of the United States, metonymically indexes the highest power of the nation-state. This power is expressed through DC's many historical monuments and the housing of the federal government as well as the majority of the nation's most powerful non-governmental agencies. As a result, governmental and non-governmental agencies work in conjunction to impact the social and political climate for those living and working within the city. Though Washington, DC is home to many of the nation's LGBT civil rights groups and boasts one of the most inclusive and progressive human rights laws for public accommodations and employment nationwide, the application of these policies to lived experience is uneven, at best. Unexpectedly, Washington, DC, as representative of the US nation-state, also has the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the US, which, at the time of this writing, are considered to be at

'epidemic levels.' Thus, the relationship between public policy, opportunity, and health in Washington, DC is particularly relevant in unpacking inequality in 'LGBT' communities of practice. Among the hardest-hit populations in Washington, DC are trans persons of color (particularly African-American/Black, Latinx and Chicanx). Additionally, while some trans persons struggle within gray and black economies to subsidize basic living expenses (Alliance for a Safe & Diverse DC 2008), other trans people are among the top paid in their professional fields. In this text I attend to these disjunctures of opportunity and lived experience among this extremely diverse and divergent 'community' of persons.

Within DC, the kinds of class and race stratification marking the broader landscapes of inequality in the city are also clear in the navigations and understandings of space within different trans experiences. To be certain, Washington, DC may be best understood as two cities in one: one of which is largely white and transient, which serves the government and juridical power of the nation-state through governmental and non-governmental agency work, and the other a small town composed of DC natives who function to either support the other city through service economy work or are kept separate altogether. Trans persons living and working in DC are found across these sub-cities and are members of various communities of practice. Not all trans persons are the same nor are their needs and rights of equal standing. To be clear, my project here does not attempt to describe an imagined cohesive experience of a 'trans community' working, living, and traversing the streets of the city; rather, my aim is to highlight the ways in which this extraordinarily diverse grouping of identities and practices articulates in lived experience.

Trans coalitions of persons in Washington, DC are brought together through both proximity within the city but also through health care and social and political needs as they relate to trans lived experience. Particularly within the context of limited health care resources in DC, trans persons living in the district who seek any kind of trans-sensitive or aware medical care, whether transition-related or otherwise, often must utilize the same resources, bridging together a radically diverse and otherwise entirely unrelated community in unexpected ways.

Methodology: community map-making, needs assessment, and the DC Trans Coalition

Methodologically, this text makes use of both 'traditional' modes of anthropological research—participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and survey analysis—along with 'non-traditional' techniques of map-making. These maps (108 collected in total), produced in both one-on-one interviews and group discussions, were framed around DC as a 'trans city' (paralleling, although markedly different, productions of a 'gay city' in Leap 2005, 238 and 2009, 205). As an element of the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, I asked interviewees to draw and describe a map that depicts DC through a 'trans' lens. This process

of mapping transcends normative cartographic methods of GIS and 'objective' scientific means and, instead, utilizes community conceptualizations of space and place in which to visualize the city (Geltmaker 1992, 234; Bhagat and Mogel 2007, 6). Those producing maps through group discussions engaged in a similar activity and were asked by myself or a community member moderator (in the case of one group discussion) to produce a map of DC as a 'trans city,' which was followed by a group conversation about the maps.

In early 2010, members of the DC Trans Coalition, including myself, trans community members, activists, and advocates, began what would become a three-stage process to produce the United States' largest city-based, trans-specific community-produced trans needs assessment project. During the first stage of the project, we held a series of community roundtables, facilitated by members of the community. At these roundtables we asked participants to map Washington, DC as a 'trans city.' We followed this activity with a discussion about these maps. We closed each roundtable collecting questions community members wished to see asked on the survey. At the close of this phase, lasting between 2010 and 2011, we reached a total of 108 trans community members. We based the language of the needs assessment survey on issues raised during the roundtables, as well as those employed in national LGBT-specific surveys, such as the joint 2011 survey produced by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, federal census questions, and community-produced surveys used in local needs assessment projects, such as the 2007 Virginia Transgender Health Initiative Study and the 2000 Washington Transgender Needs Assessment Survey. Finally, in collaboration between academic researchers and at-large community members, members of the DC Trans Coalition Needs Assessment Working Group provided input and evaluation of the quality and potential of questions used in the survey. After two rounds of internal testing, in both English and Spanish, the survey was released in both electronic and paper form in May 2012 and was closed in May 2013. Upon closing, 624 surveys had been completed, with a total of 521 surveys qualifying for inclusion in the data analysis. In November 2015 we released "Access Denied," a 104-page executive summary examining the survey data (Edelman et al. 2015).

I utilized this kind of map-making as a methodological tool, as well as the collection and analysis of the associated narratives produced though the mapping process, for three primary reasons. 1) This allowed for a multi-dimensional form of data collection that explicitly includes various milieu, including verbal and visual expression and narrative; 2) this provided subjects with an opportunity to reclaim space as, specifically, their own; and 3) this identified key places of trans interest or concern (e.g., 'safe' versus 'unsafe' spaces). These maps, as situated in the embodied knowledge of the subject, can in turn be used to produce a far richer understanding of how trans subjects and coalitions of practice view DC as a city for trans subjectivities. This becomes of particular importance to local LGBT rights organizations and other advocates when critiques or notable exclusions of particular groups over others emerge.

Additionally, I also utilize in this project a public anthropological approach along with the notion of 'radical cartography' as a means by which to engage creatively with participants but also to "actively promote social change" with the resulting research (Bhagat and Mogel 2007, 6). Importantly, through map-making, the power afforded to maps collected from a number of trans subjects can be utilized by the activists and advocates to identify resources, space, and experiences most valued by different trans persons living and working in the city.

Expressions and articulations of trans rights: the DC Trans Coalition

In addition to semi-structured interviews and map-making, my participant observation included my active membership in local trans activist and social groups from August 2006 to early 2015. I spent the greatest amount of time with the trans advocacy and activist group the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC). The DCTC is unique as compared to other advocacy or activist groups in DC. The DCTC is constituted entirely of volunteers, who represent a diverse array of both trans-specific and non-trans-specific progressive activist and advocacy groups in DC (such as Different Avenues, Just Detention International, Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive, and so forth), and remains collectively run with no formal structure.

The DCTC was formed in early 2005 as a working group of trans people and allies, representing different community groups, governmental offices, and organizations, of whom all had a vested interest in improving the treatment of trans or trans-appearing persons living in the district. The DCTC's persistent campaigning has led to DC's adoption of trans and gender-transgressing protections in the district's Human Rights Act, which has become the grounds for legally mandated gender-neutral single-stall bathrooms in public spaces, the creation of guidelines for fair(er) treatment of trans inmates, and trans-sensitive Metropolitan Police Department trainings. The DCTC's campaigns also include the identification of local businesses in non-compliance with the Human Rights Act and working with the Office of Human Rights to contact these businesses (the 'Pee in Peace' campaign), the aiding and advocating of trans persons in prison filing of complaints, holding regular meetings with city council members and representatives of the Department of Corrections, and providing 'Know Your Rights' trainings and pamphlets. These pamphlets and trainings are available to local LGB and trans groups and other interested organizations as a way to explain the current laws affecting trans people in accessible language and through field questions, in the case of the trainings.

Moreover, my participation in the DCTC's deployment of the first completely inclusive trans needs assessment in DC's history has provided me the opportunity to interact not only with an immensely diverse array of trans-identifying subjects but also to work alongside and with other social researchers. As the DCTC meets bi-monthly at the district's only, yet problematic, trans

medical service provider, Whitman-Walker, my participation with the DCTC has also placed me in the middle of trans activism and advocacy in Washington, DC, as well as having provided me with crucial contacts needed to access numerous members of the trans community.

As my primary research goal was to attend the multiple spatial, social, and political implications surrounding the multiple subjectivities that compose trans experiences of the city, my outreach methodology was diverse and multi-faceted. Acknowledging the success this approach has yielded for other Washington, DC-based trans reports (Alliance for a Safe & Diverse DC, 2008; Xavier et al. 2005), I integrated input and involvement from trans persons and allies from the initial stages of the project to the final stages of analysis and write-up. I have drawn upon the central concepts in 'community-based research,' which bridges together academics and non-academics "with the purpose of solving a pressing community problem or effecting social change" (Strand et al. 2003, 3). All paper materials distributed during the course of this project, as well as the structure of the mapping projects, were shared with DCTC members, along with other groups invested in trans issues interested in reviewing the material. I did this for three reasons. 1) With coalition involvement this project is better informed and guided; 2) the success of outreach and data collection is enhanced with coalitional efforts; and 3) analysis and discussion build from "community knowledge as a building block in the development of the research agenda" (Alliance for a Safe & Diverse DC 2008, 25).

My core outreach tactics included 'snowball'-style participant collection, flyer distribution[2] in key trans areas and events, which were partially identified through preliminary research and were further developed through community polling in community meetings, as well as through direct inquiry with potential participants at community events. While those I interviewed independently of DCTC projects did not receive any financial compensation, those who participated in the DC Trans Needs Assessment project, of which I am affiliated and which emerged as an element of the preliminary stages of my own text research, received a $25 grocery store gift card for their participation.

The results from the DC Trans Coalition Needs Assessment provided an outline of documented 'needs' for trans communities living in Washington, DC. Approximately 63% of survey respondents identified as trans or gender-non-conforming and were assigned male at birth, and approximately 37% identified as trans or gender-non-conforming and were assigned female at birth. The racial demographic breakdown for the survey was approximately 59% respondents of color and 41% white respondents. Over 46% of respondents reported earning below $10,000 a year, compared to only 11% of Washington, DC residents. Trans persons of color, particularly trans women of color, reflected the greatest economic hardships of those we surveyed, with 57% making below $10,000 a year. White trans persons were six times more likely to have secured a higher-education degree than trans persons of color; 16% of whites reported experiencing financial hardship in higher education, while 25% of Black and 70% of Latinx trans students reported similar hardships. Of trans masculine persons,

71% reported attaining a higher-education degree, compared to only 29% of trans feminine individuals.

The survey also reflected disturbingly high rates of assault and harassment. Of those surveyed: 74% had been verbally assaulted, 42% had been physically assaulted, and 35% had been sexually assaulted; 57% of trans feminine individuals had been assaulted compared to 17% of trans masculine individuals; 47% of trans feminine individuals had been sexually assaulted compared to 14% of trans masculine individuals. Experiences of assault were more common among trans persons of color compared to white trans persons; 54% of Black and 60% of Hispanic trans persons had been physically assaulted compared to 21% of whites; 47% of Black and 56% of Latinx trans persons had been sexually assaulted compared to 14% of whites. Among Black trans persons, 62% of trans feminine individuals had been physically assaulted compared to 14% of Black trans masculine individuals. Among Latinx trans persons, 70% of trans feminine individuals had been physically assaulted compared to 27% of trans masculine individuals.

Finally, the survey documented an ongoing health crisis for trans persons living in DC. While 8% of the general population of Washington, DC was uninsured in 2012, twice as many trans persons were uninsured, and more than one out of every four with insurance relied on public sources, such as Medicare and Medicaid. Although many respondents reported 'good to excellent' general health, reporting 'poor to fair' health was associated with high rates of poverty and past discrimination. As the primary modality for trans persons to get trans-specific medical care, discrimination from providers is particularly important. Among those who had seen a doctor, 19% had been denied medical care at least once due to being perceived as transgender. Unlike many other categories of experience, there were no statistically significant differences in denial of medical care based on gender identity or race/ethnicity. Each gender identity reported similar rates of discrimination. However, a significant association was found between medical discrimination and perceived quality of health. Among those who had been discriminated against, 24% rated their health as poor to fair, compared to 13% of those who had not been discriminated against.

Importantly, of those surveyed, 65% had undergone hormone treatment or body enhancement for the purpose of transitioning. Another 23% had not yet had a procedure, but wanted to, and 12% did not wish to have any procedures. As such, given many of the barriers to accessing treatment through licensed providers, the use of unlicensed care is particularly important when considering trans health needs. Among those who had undergone treatment, 30% reported having received procedures from an unlicensed practitioner or source (e.g., the internet). Use of unlicensed sources differed significantly by gender identity and race/ethnicity. Trans feminine individuals and persons of color were more likely to use at least one unlicensed source or provider compared to trans masculine individuals and whites.

In addition to physical health, the mental health status of trans populations is often ignored beyond official DSM diagnostic concerns. Suicide remains the

tenth-most-common cause of death in the United States, with roughly 3.7% of the general population reporting suicidal ideation in the past year, with 0.6% having made an actual suicide attempt; 60% of surveyed individuals reported having seriously considered suicide at least one point in their lives; 34% had attempted suicide in the past, with 10% having attempted within the 12 months prior to the survey—20 times higher than the rate of the general population.

Space(s) of coalitional meaning-making: a call to reject 'community'

When we review the data collected as part of this project we might be tempted to frame these bodies as unilaterally suffering. We might also find it tempting to discuss those that occupy a less subjectively precarious life as more 'resilient.' However, when we place this kind of data alongside how health is self-identified, how those interviewed describe belonging in place, and what kinds of spaces provided 'care,' we see a far more complex rendering of livable life. Importantly, while the survey yielded exceptionally important data regarding the profound needs of trans persons living in Washington, DC, it was during the community map-making roundtables that how, and where, individuals accessed necessary care were discussed.

Historically, maps have served as a way to silence and erase devalued experience and notions of space (Piper 2002, 2). In many ways, map-making serves as a way to make visible the felt experiences of negotiating the world as an embodied subject. Lefebvre discusses this dialectic between space and the body, noting that "the capacity of bodies that defy visual and behavioral expectation to disrupt the shared meaning of public space" reflects the multi-directionality of meaning-making (Brown and Knopp 2003, 315, citing Lefebvre 1991). Bodies do not move through vacuums of space but rather are always already engaged in and through discourses of power. Here participants were not asked to merely produce a map of the city but rather to produce a map from their perspectives as persons with trans identities or subjectivities. This kind of 'territorialized knowledge' provides a degree of information that is lost in hegemonically situated maps. Instead, the maps collected in this project emerge from a lived experience of space and place. Trinh Minh-ha situates this kind of 'territorialized knowledge' as one that "secures for a speaker a position of mastery: I am in the midst of a knowing, acquiring, deploying world—I appropriate, own and demarcate my sovereign territory as I advance" (Minh-ha 1999, 260). To claim space, however marginalized or ignored, as one's own, is a claim to territorialized and embodied knowledge. Specifically, in the case of the maps produced during the course of this project, it was made clear that spaces of care were measured in terms of trans coalitional labor rather than officially designated spaces of biomedical, psychosocial, or community 'care.'

Finally, my own participation in the cultivation and creation of a 'unified' coalition should be noted, in both the sense of my deployment of the term 'trans' and my use of map-making in exploring space. As scholars researching 'trans' subjectivities have noted (Stryker 2008, 24; Valentine 2007, 22), it is the

academic that 'creates' a cohesive trans experience through utilizing a singular term to index an immensely diverse group of persons. Indeed, many trans persons interviewed here may not consider themselves 'trans' or as members of a trans coalition of practice, yet may have felt compelled to participate in the project; conversely, persons identify as having had a 'trans history' may not have readily chosen to participate in this project at all. Additionally, numerous trans persons who may identify as trans yet did not take part in this project may not have their narratives and life experiences reflected here. To be clear, my intention is not to produce an ethnography of all trans and gender-non-conforming identities and practices in DC. Rather, my interest here rests in how 'trans,' as an analytic and discursive category, becomes identified with, experienced somatically, organized around, and deployed in discussions and experiences of space.

There is no single, unilateral form of 'trans' experience that can be meaningfully called upon to define all those classified within this 'community' without eliding difference. It is through practices of elision that issues such as inequality, systemic abuse, and violence are rendered invisible. With these concerns of inequity in mind, my project here disrupts the notion of a singular trans 'community' in Washington, DC. My use of 'community' here represents a "symbolic totality as well as a practical multiplicity" (Miller and Slater 2000, 16). That is, while there is no singular 'trans community,' many participants of this project index the 'symbolic totality' of the phrase and refer to themselves as belonging to or concerned about 'trans community.' In this project I acknowledge the meaningfulness of a 'trans community' to participants while also focusing on what constitutes the 'practical multiplicity.' I account for the significance of this variability through displacing the concept of a static community with the explicit multiplicity of coalitions.

As such, my decision to utilize 'trans' as a gloss for all gender-transgressing experience and identities also demands discussion. The modifier 'trans,' as a way to mark gender transgression, functions to both elide difference and as a meaningful and productive category of identity. For the purposes of this project I invited the participation of any person who felt a research project focusing on 'trans' experience resonated with their own identity or practice. I utilize 'trans' throughout this text to index a range of subjectivities, practices, experiences, or identities marked by modalities of gender transgression that trigger a personal resonance, on the part of the subject, with trans-spectrum identities or practices. This project ultimately included a very wide range of gender identities, practices, and experiences and included persons who identify along trans-spectrum identities and those who do not. At no point did I find it necessary or productive to 'police' the identities of those who shared their experiences with me. My interest in this text is to discuss how gender transgression that could be framed as 'trans,' visible or historic, impacts one's lived experience in Washington, DC; to attempt to define the bounds of 'trans' functions to inevitably erase liminal identities and practices I may not personally be aware of or sensitive to.

While I continue to utilize the term 'trans' in this text as a gloss for a diverse and complex multitude of expressions and identities, I have chosen to shift away

from the artificial boundedness of 'community' and, instead, utilize 'coalition' as a frame of reference to the participants of this project. As anthropologist Vered Amit cautions, 'community,' as an analytical category "always require[s] skeptical investigation rather than providing a ready-made social unit upon which to hang analysis" (Amit 2002, 14, and particularly with regard to gender see Young 1995, 189). The use of 'community' here erases differences among trans experiences; indeed, even that which binds together these subjects, a gender-discordant past or present, is itself a variable and complicated experience. Thus, a general use of 'community' renders unclear who or what is being discussed and, ultimately, privileges hegemonic categories of practice. To be certain, the terms 'trans' and 'community' both function to discursively eliminate inequities and difference, which in the context of this text are precisely the features that I seek to draw attention to.

Rather than employ 'community' in this text to capture the relationships between and across trans-spectrum-identifying persons, I instead use 'coalition,' noting the diversity and dialectics of experience of my research populations. I use 'coalition' intentionally as a referent to the relationships between trans experiences or identities of, specifically, those who participated in this project. My use of this term builds from a basic definition, wherein a coalition is composed of people of varied backgrounds, such as "local government officials, non-profit agency and business leaders, and interested citizens who align in formal, organized ways to address issues of shared concern over time" (Zakos and Edwards 2006, 351). Importantly, Zakos and Edwards' definition primarily frames difference through one's relative relationship to decision-making power. Additionally, this explanation implies a degree of formality in coalitional structures and goals. In contrast, my use of coalition is not to elaborate on particular striations of difference or to identify coalitional goals. Following the claim that "in practice, *coalition* rather than *community* is key to understanding contemporary political movements" (Walby 2001, 120, emphasis added), I utilize 'coalition' in this text as a way to continually bring attention to the differences within, as well as the collaborative nature of, 'community' production.

I also use coalition in this text to highlight how the data collection and methodology in this project produced a collaborative environment, and shared goal, for those involved. Health researchers have long noted the beneficial role of a 'coalition,' composed of various members of a community or allies to that community, in functioning to better represent needs in research (Lachance et al. 2006, 46; McMillan et al. 1995, 701; Braithwaite, Bianchi, and Taylor 1994, 409). This research has affirmed that coalitions function to produce better policies and also empower those traditionally excluded from decision-making practices. Coalitions, as intentional collaborations between multiple invested parties over a common goal, have the "ability to create linkages with community members as active participants in setting health priorities, making decisions, and planning and implementing strategies to achieve better health" (Peterson et al. 2006, 58). Moreover, these collaborative efforts also provide a platform for these excluded voices to more meaningfully participate in, and ultimately produce,

more effective policies, outreach campaigns, and general health management. In the context of this project, the participants' active co-constructions of DC as a 'trans city' represent a coalitional effort to produce an understanding of what a 'trans community' may refer to.

Finally, my distinction between coalition and community as a way to refer to the relationships *between* those who participated in this project is also reflected within participants' narratives. For example, many participants in this project included in their discussions of a trans DC issues of sex worker rights while not identifying as sex workers themselves. That is, while we could situate gendered experience as collectively 'trans,' participants were nonetheless aware of and actively commenting upon the gendered, socio-political, and material differences that differentially impact trans persons.

The concept of trans vitalities is, thus, not simply a refusal or disavowal of projects of normalization or the commodifiability of 'trans rights,' but rather a vigilance towards the violently homogenizing expectations of the heterogeneity of lived experience. *Trans Vitalities* calls upon those who produce research and provide services, trainings, or programming on LGBT issues—or even trans-specific practices—to be asked and to answer who benefits from that work. This is not a means of simply identifying lapses in benefits but, rather, is one of the first of many steps to clarify labor and outcomes. However, unlike the 'cruel optimism' promised by 'resilience' or 'normative' models of care, wherein a failure to thrive is the failure of the object of trans bodies to produce ideologically valued forms of production, the subjects of trans vitalities are trans lives and the objects are those researchers and metrics that have been empowered with defining power. Within a framework of trans vitalities, the failure is with the measurement; it is not with the body that fails to reify and produce the proper citizen-subject, but rather the researcher, the academic, the social service worker, and the LGBT rights organization that has sustained systems of inequity.

Rather than appealing to discourses of 'success' or 'struggle,' frameworks of trans vitalities call for a rethinking of value and process. Time, space, bodies, and action are all variables that cannot be overlooked or merged to fit scalable 'rights frameworks.' What this means, logistically, is that projects that seek to attend to trans communities of practice must integrate, if not be overtly supportive of, ways of doing and being that go beyond the perceived impacts of gender transgression. Rather, agencies and laws seeking to tend to the imagined 'trans community' and related 'resilience' must simultaneously integrate bodies and practices that mainstream civil right groups abandon as reflecting equally 'resilient' strategies in managing systemic anti-blackness, xenophobia, misogyny, the absence of universal and comprehensive physical and mental health care, poverty-level wages, and the hyper-criminalization of trans feminine persons of color. In other words, a framework of trans vitalities, as a means of replacing resilience, resituates a passive disavowal of bodies that have been marked as disposable towards an intentionally disturbing recognition that we directly facilitate which bodies to dispose of. If we are upfront and foreground the key

narratives that guide US socio-political discourses of salvage resilience, we will always keep in our analytic that these discourses also prioritize accumulation of capital—social and material—above life. These discourses prevent, rather than facilitate, a grounded celebration of desire lines, of explorations of livable life, of the unimaginable possibilities in approaching all life as sacred. What I explore in this book is, instead, a profound and radical disinvestment of hierarchies of worth towards an approach that may very well undermine the appearance of innovation of my own work; however, if my own work can in some way eventually render itself useless, I can think of no better outcome or expression of care.

In Chapter 1, 'Trans studies and anthropologists studying "trans people",' I provide a brief overview of trans studies as defined by the study of experiences, identities, and practices of transgender, transsexual, trans, or gender-non-binary communities of practice. Specifically in this chapter I explore how anthropology has addressed this relatively new area of focus across the four subfields. Historically, anthropologists who have conducted research or examined gender practices that do not fit within a traditional Western sex-gender binary have done so outside of the context of North Atlantic populations, with the exception of indigenous communities. Much of this literature emerged out of a focus on non-heterosexual sexual practices or identities. Moreover, older scholarship on gender transgression did not necessarily reflect the words or experiences of those being researched but rather relied on and reflected the markedly eurocentric and ethnocentric approach from the researchers. As such, much of modern trans-specific research conducted in anthropology relies heavily on interdisciplinary texts for both historical and theoretical orientations.

In Chapter 2, 'Washington, DC: depicting trans spatialities,' I discuss the maps and associated narratives produced during the initial stage of the DC Trans Needs Assessment project. As background for that discussion, I begin with a brief exploration of mainstream maps of Washington, DC as they are generally constructed by commercial companies and through a tourist gaze. These commercialized maps reify Washington, DC as both the hub for national and international politics and as devoid of local meanings and histories. In contrast, the maps collected in this project depict DC urban spaces as personal and dynamic, rather than as fixed destinations for consumption. Additionally, participants of this project do not limit the focus of their maps to only one segment or area of DC, as mainstream maps often do. Rather, I explore here the most common features participants included in their maps, which I have grouped within ten primary themes. Finally, I consider how the commonality of certain themes over others reflects material differences between different trans coalitions of persons participating in this project.

In Chapter 3, 'Mapping as method: articulations of bodies in place,' I discuss how map-making and maps, two of my primary methodological tools in this project, provide a novel means of documenting and discussing lived experience by expressing the complex dialectics between life-making, social embodiment, space, and place. I begin by exploring how theories of embodiment function as

a way to situate the somatic indexicality (i.e., the ways the body is referred to) of the texts and maps collected in this project. The somatic indexicality of features within these maps provides insight into how socio-political projects, such as gender, and even the notion of 'safety,' are expressed visually and felt. Second, I consider the role of maps and map-making to social science research, as well as how maps are situated within power structures and ideology. Finally, I discuss how critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides a tool to unpack both interview data and the map text. This approach provides insight into the somatically laden indexicality of a text and, in turn, what particular maps can tell us about bodies and experience. Both the process of community map-making and the maps themselves directly raise issues of inequality as linked to both trans liminality and 'danger.' Importantly, in contrast to prevailing models for understanding experiences of 'LGBT safe space,' the maps and narratives addressed here reflect safety and support as contextualized complex mediations of space rather than as merely places where 'LGBT' people might be found.

Extending previous chapter's foci on place and space, in Chapter 4, 'Mapping ideology and embodied practices: approaches to documenting and discussing lived experience,' I explore how maps (and the process of map-making) along with spoken interviews serve as means to trace how processes like gentrification have displaced or erased bodies and place. The maps produced as a part of this project, and their associated narratives, provide a conduit for understanding how networks of support and 'safety' function for trans persons in DC. Additionally, these maps illuminate how space and place can be differentially utilized and experienced by various members of similar trans coalitions of practice. The relationships between theories of the body, such as biopolitics and phenomenology, and representations in the map are clearly evidenced in many of the maps collected here.

In Chapter 5, 'Measuring vitalities,' I explore the background and core findings of the DC Trans Needs Assessment survey, the largest locally based trans-focused survey in US history. In particular, I explore how the impacts of the illusion of a consolidated trans community operate in both a figurative sense and literal sense in how trans lives are imagined. Through an exploration of the findings I juxtapose these multiple forms of data as illuminating and providing further texture to the complexities of what might constitute trans lives.

In Chapter 6, 'Towards a generative politics of life: trans vitalities through spatialities of social justice,' I reflect upon how the lives and experiences of those who shared their time with me throughout this project have led me to question what the 'T' in 'LGBT' truly means. That is, while the acronym LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) is commonly used to refer to identities or practices that are sexually marginalized (such as gay identity), I consider here how this kind of framing may function to harm the capacity for trans persons to live lives they deem livable. Rather, as supported by the maps and narratives collected from participants in this project, as well as the DCTNA findings, a framework of trans vitalities offers a new way in which to rethink viable and valuable life.

Notes

1 I use the term 'coalition' here, rather than 'community,' to index not a lived experience of boundedness or communal belonging but rather to highlight the ways the nation-state, the medico-legal establishment, and other social powers identify this group of persons collectively and how this, in turn, becomes expressed through the narratives of those included in this text.
2 It should also be noted that one of the most neglected cross-sections of the trans community includes non-native speakers of English. As such, flyers and outreach materials were translated into Spanish by trans native Spanish-speakers. Roundtables held among trans Latinx persons were conducted in Spanish by a trans native speaker of Spanish.

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1 Trans studies and anthropologists studying 'trans people'

Trans studies—or research on or about the experiences, identities, and practices of transgender, transsexual, trans, or gender-non-binary communities of practice—is a relatively new area of focus within the discipline of anthropology. Anthropologists who engage in trans-specific research may do so in any geographic location and across the primary subfields of the discipline: sociocultural, biological/physical, archeological, and linguistical. Historically, anthropologists who have conducted research or examined gender practices that do not fit within a traditional Western sex-gender binary have done so outside of the context of North Atlantic populations, with the exception of indigenous communities. Much of this literature emerged out of a focus on non-heterosexual sexual practices or identities. Moreover, older scholarship on gender transgression did not necessarily reflect the words or experiences of those being researched but rather relied on and reflected the markedly eurocentric and ethnocentric approach of the researchers. As such, much of modern trans-specific research conducted in anthropology relies heavily on interdisciplinary texts for both historical and theoretical orientations. Additionally, trans, as a category of analysis, has itself undergone shifts in usage and meaning, which continue to evolve as the field grows. Finally, authorship and representation are important features of trans studies in anthropology as many of those who have had access to the capacity to conduct research and publish texts are not members of the communities that they represent.

Trans studies in anthropology has relied on both interdisciplinary research and also, importantly, has emerged from a focus on sexuality or 'queer studies' within anthropological research. Importantly, as Boellstorff et al. (2014), Stryker (2017), Stryker and Aizura (2013), and Towle and Morgan (2002) explore, the categories of queer and transgender must be problematized as they are applied to populations for whom these are not salient identities or categories of practice. As such, a great deal of attention has been paid to distinguishing how queer studies in anthropology might differ from trans studies, as Boellstorff (2007), Hines (2006), and Davidson (2007) examine. Trans studies, as distinct from queer studies, are the focus of both Denny (2013) and Serano (2016).

Trans studies in anthropology builds on theories introduced by both older texts that theorize gender, such as Kessler and McKenna (1978), as well as more

modern texts emerging out of other fields, such as Halberstam (2005) and Puar (2017). Importantly, critiques of how 'difference' in trans experience and studies has been overly simplified or addressed, or overly represented by non-trans people, are the focal points for Namaste (1996), Irving (2008), Mog and Swarr (2008), and Roen (2001). Stryker (2004) provides a historical context for understanding how and why trans studies has been subsumed in queer studies. While socio-cultural approaches in anthropology have typically produced more trans studies work than other subfields in anthropology, the specificity of those approaches is nonetheless important and distinct from non-anthropological trans research. Blackwood (1998) notes how gender and desire among West Sumatran 'women' differ from models used in the West. Similarly, and echoed in Howe et al. (2008) and Tan (2014), Ocha and Earth (2013) focus on the ways in which gender models used in the West to frame trans experience do not necessarily work in the context of Thai sex workers. Echoed in Conner and Sparks (2014), Di Pietro (2016), Dutta and Roy (2014), and Khan (2016), Stryker (2012) identifies how the notion of 'transsexuality' emerges as a distinct form of Western anglophone discourse.

There are few monograph-length ethnographies that focus explicitly on trans communities of practice. The monograph-length anthropological works that explore gender transgression as an identity category, such as Driskill (2016) across Cherokee nations, Gaudio (2011) in northern Nigeria, Ochoa (2014) in Venezuela, Reddy (2005) in India, Sinnott (2004) in Thailand, and Swarr (2012) in South Africa do so in tandem with discussions on sexuality. Other texts, while not explicitly produced by anthropologists, such as Najmabadi (2013) in the context of Iran, Raun (2016) in trans online communities, and Namaste (2011) in Canada, provide additional monograph-length explorations of trans studies in practice. Bolin (1998) and Valentine (2007) reflect the only ethnographies produced by anthropologists that focus solely on communities that identify as trans. Edited volumes and anthologies constitute one of the primary avenues for publication of trans studies in anthropology. Older texts, such as Blackwood and Wieringa (1999), Jacobs et al. (1997), and Lewin and Leap (2002), feature texts that are among the first to discuss trans communities of practice in anthropology. Newer texts, such as Driskill (2011), Johnson (2016), and Kuntsman et al. (2014), offer significant contributions to trans studies in general, while still emerging out of anthropological work.

The issues of human rights, social justice work, violence, or maltreatment constitute a large segment of research and discussion in trans studies. Spade (2015) and Currah et al. (2006) provide historical and a contemporary analysis for broad trans political work. Similarly, reports such as Edelman et al. (2015) provide a focused outcome for trans public anthropological work. These texts also include more theoretical discussions on trans rights work, such as Hines and Santos (2018) in the UK and Portugal, Papantonopoulou (2014) in occupied Palestine, Peña (2010) in the Miami-Cuban diaspora, and Vincent and Camminga (2009) in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Trans studies and embodiment

Throughout this text I highlight the importance of the physical, sensate, and biopolitically regulated body in trans experience and practices. As such, in order to explore how trans subjects navigate the terrain of the nation's capital as a 'trans city,' I simultaneously attend to both the phenomenology of the body (i.e., personal lived experience) as it is expressed through lived experience as well as the political, economic, and biopolitical significance of embodied gender-discordant pasts and presents (e.g., the pathology associated with transsexuality or with expressions of trans femininity). I situate the data emerging from the maps—where one goes in the city—within the Washington, DC wherein various social and legal ideologies shape mobility.

While my fundamental question here is how trans persons navigate, discuss, and assign meaning to Washington, DC as a city they live and work in, I tie these discussions to an overarching theme of 'trans vitalities.' Specifically, I explore the notion of vitalities through what Elizabeth Grosz frames as a body/city dynamic as 'complex feedback relation,' wherein:

> [T]he body and its environment, rather, produce each other as forms of the hyperreal, as modes of simulation which have overtaken and transformed … the city is made and made over into the simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, 'citified', embraced as a distinctly metropolitan body.
>
> (Grosz 1992, 242)

In other words, affect and emotional and physical sensation cannot, and should not, be divorced from the exploration of trans lived experience (as emphasized by Rubin 2003, 30), particularly in how one's knowledge about their body potentially guides and drives the discretionary logic that frames the narratives of DC as a 'trans' city.

While the study of trans experiences has historically overemphasized the body, biological and medical anthropologists have identified how the biomedical sphere articulates with notions of the body and cultural production in significant ways. Importantly, these texts do not focus on the bodies of trans people as a source of deviance or as a way in which to typify gender but rather as belonging to social actors that are impacted by heavily regulated medical technologies. Bucar and Enke (2011), Bucar (2010), and van Eijk (2014) identify how accessing biomedical technologies by trans persons may be used to identify a place or space as ideologically valuable. Durban-Albrecht (2017) explores self-narrated Haitian trans experience through environmental and embodied fractures, while Franklin (2018) contrasts medical legislation in Brazil intended to provide trans health care to ultimately devalued forms of trans care. Plemons (2017) focuses on the ideological weight assigned to surgical practices that seek to 'feminize' the bone structure of the face in the United States. Geller (2005)

considers how skeletal remains are gendered as a cultural, rather than biological, practice. Jarrín (2016) highlights the ways in which biomedical intervention may be inappropriately assumed to be desired by travestis in the Brazilian context. Similarly, Zengin (2014) argues that it is the medical establishment in Turkey that requires a desire for specific embodiments rather than the trans persons seeking care.

The few texts that do reflect a geographically situated exploration of trans lived experience (Valentine 2007; Stryker 2012; Namaste 1996) do not attend simultaneously to multiple lived and experiential bodies but rather focus on specific groups or identity categories. Those that attend to a feeling and embodied trans body do so productively through phenomenological approaches (Rubin 2003, 27) and through the embodied narratives of lived experience (Prosser 1998; Cromwell 1999, 32), but do not attend deeply to the broader socio-political structures framing those experiences. In this project I attend to situated trans lived experience that both takes into account intersecting subjectivities as well as the somatic and sensual body in the political-economic conditions of its production. This project shifts the focus from just the body or the space and explores the conversation emerging with that dialectic—how meaning is produced and felt by the subject and in the place.

With this in mind, the role of medical and psychological diagnosis places a particular burden on trans persons attempting to gain access to capital and cultural productivity. In the US context, deeply infused with assumptions of neoliberal political economy, this productivity is linked to the capacity to maintain stable employment, to fit normative gender roles, and other normalizing technologies. To secure employment in the formal economy, one must first produce documents detailing one's citizenship, such as a driver's license or birth certificate, and thus candidacy for employment; for the gender transgressor, the process of acquiring these documents is lengthy, potentially costly, and demands ascription to particular racialized, heteronormative, and classed-based gender hegemonies (Meyer et al. 2002; Roen 2001, 511; Stryker 2008; Finn and Dell 1999). Vis-à-vis fulfillment of medico-legal definitions of gender pathology as outlined by the medical establishment, a trans person can gain access to technologies that 'repair' this mind-body discordance, and thus access to legal documentation of one's citizenship (Meyer et al. 2001). These technologies, such as hormone treatment and surgery, 'correct' both the political demands made of trans subjects to be 'normal,' and result in very real discomfort felt by many trans subjects. At present one must secure a diagnosis of 'Gender Identity Disorder' (the official diagnosis term used at the time of this research as defined in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM)) or 'Gender Dysphoria' (the diagnosis term that replaced GID in the 2012 version of the DSM) to access medical and legal resources. This evaluative demand, or even the mere labeling of one's experience as 'transsexual,' works to demand an erasure of variability in gender expression and identity and apply pathology to vastly different kinds of bodies and experience. That said, this 'diagnosis' nonetheless responds to a very real, and valid, embodied experience among persons

who do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. Not all trans people identify as having GID or as being trans, yet they all tend to experience, to varied degrees and in multiple ways, a sense of gender discordance, which in turn becomes politicized by the nation-state.

It is through a 'successful' body transformation, wherein one has produced an image of having 'shifted' perfectly from one hegemonic gender category to another in physical form, that trans subjects may acquire the documents that prove their citizenship and thus authenticate their ability to be productive (Irving 2008). What is key here is that this 'recourse to normativity' erases or prevents the formation of any kind of salient political or social difference, which, again, serves to both unite and segment trans coalitions as a whole (Aizura 2006, 302). That is, in order to appease both the medical professionals and the nation-state one must strictly reproduce a particular kind of raced and classed gender normativity; to be a person of color, queer, gender queer, a communist or a socialist, or engage in 'gray or black' informal economies defaults one's potential claims to citizenship. In short, attempts made by the medical establishment, infused by a neoliberal ethos, to make sense of gender-transgressing bodies and identities work to provide a platform of unity to an otherwise-unrelated cross-section of people. Yet, these same platforms of potential unity also simultaneously work to obscure the profound difference that remains active in the lives of those 'artificially' (through medical discourses) brought together under the same umbrella terminology.

Legal and trans studies scholar Dean Spade raises the follow key questions about trans politics.

> What is the relationship of trans political strategy to the strategies of the lesbian and gay rights work that has garnered so much attention in the last three decades? What role should law reform play in trans political strategy? How will forming nonprofits focused on trans issues impact trans people's lives and trans resistance politics? Who should lead and what forms of leadership should trans politics utilize? What relationship does trans politics have to other political movements and issues? Specifically, how does trans politics interface with anti-racism, feminism, anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism, immigration politics, and disability politics?
>
> (Spade 2015, 13–14)

In agreement with Spade's concern that trans rights frameworks are "recapitulating the limits of leftist, lesbian and gay, feminist, and anti-racist politics that have centered legal recognition and equality claims," I explore in this text how we can at least partially address these issues through shifting our approaches in research. Specifically, rather than simply approach trans communities as singular objects of study, or as a discrete and distinct grouping of 'trans woman of color,' we must engage in continuous critical reflectivity. Trans vitalities encourage us to approach trans studies as interrogating the structures of power marginalizing trans people, rather than as what trans communities of practice must be doing

to become marginalized. Moreover, a framework of trans vitalities intentionally critiques resilience frameworks as a means of, again, shifting the attention of subjugation from the capacity of the subjugated to 'overcome' hardship to identifying what frameworks, discourses, and, importantly, organizations are producing the conditions that subjugate racial, gendered, sexualized, embodied, (dis) abled 'Others.'

Following Tsing, I posit trans coalitional labor as a form of trans vitalities as foregrounded by the knowledge that "collaborations create new interests and identities, but not to everyone's benefit" (Tsing 2015, 13). Rather than solely employing 'community' to capture the relationships between and across trans-spectrum-identifying persons, I instead use 'coalition' here, noting the diversity and dialectics of experience of trans populations and the inherent inequities across and among different positionalities. I use 'coalition' intentionally as a referent to the relationships between trans experiences or identities of, specifically, those who participated in this project. My use of coalition is not to elaborate on particular striations of difference or to identify coalitional goals. Following the claim that "in practice, *coalition* rather than *community* is key to understanding contemporary political movements" (Walby 2001, 120, emphasis added), I utilize 'coalitional' spaces as a way to continually bring attention to the differences within, as well as collaborative nature of, 'community' production.

Multiple studies of trans health discursively, or literally, mark particular trans persons or bodies as both 'at risk,' or as engaging in 'high-risk' activities (Garofalo et al. 2006; Operario et al. 2013; Poteat et al. 2015; World Health Organization 2012). While risk/resilience frameworks engage in a profoundly necessary intervention towards identifying structural inequities, particularly among trans women of color, in this text I consider how we might rethink concepts like risk perception to a modality of systemic risk expression wherein risk and resilience are metonymically the same form of the pathologization of difference. Specifically, I focus here on how 'risk' and the emergent 'resilience' as constituted by actions modulated by a subject's agency or structural limitations, such as through 'behavior' (Clements-Nolle et al. 2001; Herbst et al. 2008; Nemoto et al. 2004; Sevelius et al. 2009) or 'vulnerability' (Kenagy and Hsieh 2005; Wilson et al. 2009). Importantly, situating risk, or the overcoming of risk, through 'resilience,' as active 'behaviors' or passive 'vulnerability,' operates as both an erasure of intertextual subjectivities (Hamilton et al. 2007; Hall 2005; Milani 2015) and as an obfuscation of the very structures that potentiate negative health outcomes for trans persons. As such, this allows us to explore alternative models of trans vitalities for reconfiguring the risk/resilience binary towards models of radical care as employed by both informal trans social networks and harm reduction agencies in Washington, DC. I focus here on the *vitalities* emergent within the fissures even within the 'death worlds' of trans coalitional spaces. Specifically, these vitalities articulate within and across social justice movements, which ultimately provide an alternative conduit to stability otherwise traditionally locatable through restrictive models of normativity. In short, I discuss here how the personal and political transformative power of

coalition-based trans social justice work functions as a productive life force for many of the participants of this project, in both micro and macro contexts.

In recent years, models of resilience have emerged as a trope within academic fields and activist and social media circles, with calls for self-care and adaptation as a means of resistance. While human and bio-ecological resilience is certainly advantageous, this text considers the: 1) implications of resilience as a force that obscures and diverts attention away from relational and structural forms of violence (social, political, economic); and 2) how directing attention towards self-determined 'viabilities' and 'vitalities' illuminates how communities identify fissures or ruptures in the continuity of oppressive structures, pedagogies, policies, spaces, places, and laws. Indeed, resilience is broadly appealing in that it offers individuals and groups the opportunity to celebrate ingenuity and survival that advance subject agency. Yet, resilience is also implicated in the reproduction of one's own subjectification. Rarely is group 'resiliency' prioritized against more individualized forms of adaptation even though it has been noted that group resilience is far more "powerful as a buffer for transgender individuals when they are faced with overwhelmingly bleak social and environmental circumstances" (Breslow et al. 2015, 262). Importantly, the fetishization of resilience results in a failure to identify and call for an end to systems that produce the very inequities that the resilient subject is to overcome. In other words, resiliency is rendered possible when the structures and systems themselves are designed to preempt other viable possibilities for life-making.

Trans vitalities, in contrast to concepts like resilience, are subject-centered life-making strategies. I argue that forms of trans vitalities function in three distinct ways: 1) to disrupt and rethink what valuable, viable, or quantifiable quality of life looks like; 2) to shift our understandings of community towards 'coalition'; and 3) as a methodological, theoretical, and application-based set of tools that integrates a radical trans politics and community-based approach towards addressing trans lives. Finally, I position trans vitalities as following Berlant's 'cruel optimism' in that it is

> like all phrases, a deictic—a phrase that points to a proximate location. As an analytic lever, it is an incitement to inhabit and to track the affective attachment to what we call 'the good life,' which is for so many a bad life that wears out the subjects who nonetheless, and at the same time, find their conditions of possibility within it.
>
> (Berlant 2011, 27)

Rather, in defining the potential transgression of radical care, this

> negates the dictates of the norm and yet paradoxically reinforces the norm's effects (by not simply refusing the norm, but rather negating it, transcending it and completing it). It exceeds a limit but in its excess verifies the limit itself.
>
> (Berlant 2011, 27)

When applied to normative expectations of viable trans life, as articulated by the capacity to seamlessly integrate oneself into hetero- and cis-normative life-worlds, we see that normativity is that which creates, rather than promises relief from, suffering.

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2 Washington, DC

Depicting trans spatialities

Celebrating the US nation-state and the annual high-heel drag race: considering mainstream and LGBT maps of Washington, DC

Mainstream maps of Washington, DC generally frame the city as a space for national interest and consumption. These maps, as seen in Figure 2.1, are often limited in range spatially and depict only the 'downtown' portions of the city, typically including national monuments, government offices, and other historical points of interest.

The memorials and points of interest included in this map (such as the White House, the Washington Monument, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and even the FBI) work to resignify Washington, DC as the capital city of the US nation-state, rather than as a city inhabited and understood through the experiences local citizens. Lonely Planet's interactive map (one of the few websites directed towards tourists that features a dynamic map, available at www.lonelyplanet.com/usa/washington-dc), limits its legend categories to 'sights,' 'shopping,' 'restaurants,' and 'entertainment.' Thus, map users are encouraged to either read DC as a static memorialization of the US or as a dynamic platform for forms of consumption. This interactive map, while providing the user with the ability to zoom in and out and shift the gaze of the map, is initially oriented to a closely cropped portion of downtown DC, literally carving off east of the river Anacostia through visual displacement.

In these tourist and 'official' maps of Washington, DC, the only important part of the city appears to be this downtown area. The 'official' tourism website for Washington, DC (http://washington.org) also directs viewers seeking a map of DC first to a map that focuses exclusively on the Capitol Hill and downtown areas of the city. The points of interest depicted in these maps include national monuments and other features of national concern, but do not make clear that few Washingtonians live or spend a great deal of time in these areas, outside of those employed by offices in this area. The near-ubiquitous exclusion of other parts of the city, such as the areas east of the Anacostia River, encourage a reading of DC as simply where the president works and as an

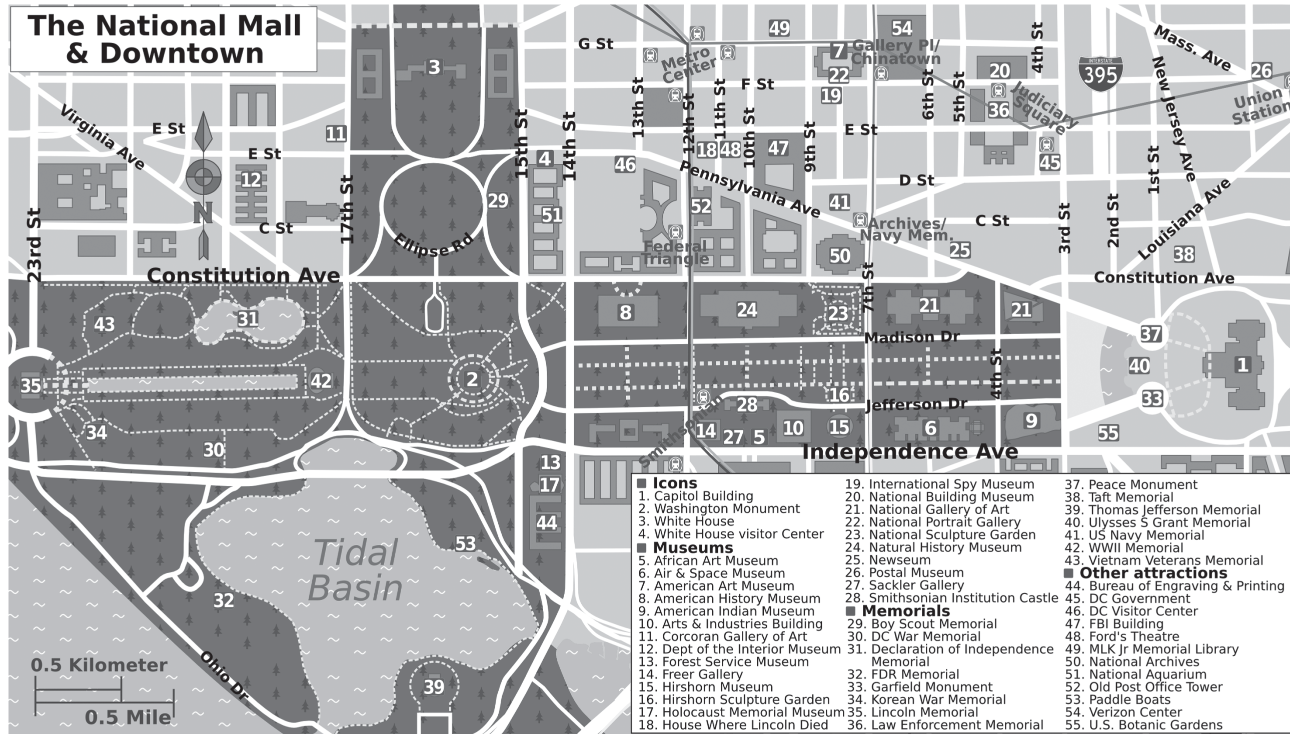

Figure 2.1 Map of Washington, DC

Source: Wikipedia: Peter Fitzgerald. CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22746779

entirely consumable, nationalist-inspiring 'fun' place, ripe for tourist inquiry. Any sense of the rest of DC's equally rich history, as a sleepy southern town transformed into the nation's capital through the occupation of the federal government, is entirely erased.

Interestingly, the official DC tourism site also features a section dedicated to a 'GLBT DC.' This page explains why the potential LGBT tourist should come visit.

> Washington, DC is a town—neither northern nor southern, sometimes urban, sometimes country and often soulful—where gays and lesbians, bisexuals and trans people actually live, work and play with our families and friends and co-workers. Just a 10 minute walk beyond the monumental corridor and government buildings will allow you to discover hometown Washington: a thriving, gay, lively and cultured capital city.
>
> From people watching in Dupont Circle and Georgetown to power watching on Capitol Hill; from the high-heeled drag race on 17th Street to the drag-queen brunches of Adams Morgan; from the crazy funky stores of U Street to the crazy happy hours at JR's, Washington, DC has unique windows and doorways for the GLBT visitor.
>
> (http://washington.org/visiting/experience-dc/pride-in-dc/glbt-home)

This guide to a 'gay' DC is woefully unclear. This passage contains an ambiguous reference to the city as "often soulful" and is especially unclear where one should start or end in the "10 minute walk" to the "gay, lively and cultured capital city" it refers to. It is safe to assume 'hometown' DC does not exist in the far reaches of the remainder of northwest DC, or at all in the northeast, southeast or southwest quadrants of the city. Instead, the areas around 17th street (northwest, which is left unmarked in this passage) and 18th street northwest are situated as the epicenter of the 'crazy' fun available to 'GLBT' tourists (who will assumingly feel 'at home' in the primarily white, and occasionally gay, affluence of the surrounding the Dupont circle, Logan circle and Adams Morgan neighborhoods). As with the Lonely Planet and Washington.org depictions of a mainstream DC, 'GLBT' space is framed in terms of modes of consumption, whether in the forms of alcohol at bars or within the 'funky stores' of the U-street corridor. Alternative forms of community engagement, political action, and other ways 'GLBT' identity can be experienced or expressed are entirely excluded.

Other 'special interest' LGBT maps of DC often make use of the interactive, 'Google map' feature to allow consumers to interact dynamically with the map itself. The 'Fun Maps' depiction of DC makes use of this feature and maps out points of importance including bars, restaurants, and hotels along with a scant listing of four 'community resources' that describe national GLB political groups. As highlighted in Leap (2009, 218–219), this depiction represents

a traditional view of an LGBT citizenship, wherein the capacity to consume constitutes the 'good gay citizen' and thus focuses on areas wherein this kind of homonationalist project can be realized. Moreover, these interactive maps are displayed in terms of pure functionality—a very traditional use of maps—wherein the importance of a map is to get between particular geographic points.

The 'gay cities' website (http://washingtondc.gaycities.com/bars/) engages in a similar homonationalist project and displays bars according to 'type' or gender and sexuality subcategory, as well as special interest, such as 'leather.' These categories refer to the particular specialty of the bar (whether it is themed) as well as to less ideologically productive categories (such as which bars feature 'back rooms' or are permissive of 'nudity').

Significantly, the places and spaces discussed in any of these maps rarely, if ever, appear on the maps included in this project, further highlighting the disconnectedness of mainstream maps of DC from local projects and interests. Moreover, in these 'GLBT' depictions of the city, trans-spectrum experiences or identities are absent and no subcategory exists for areas considered particularly accepting or supportive of 'T' experience. It is likely that this erasure is not representative of intentional exclusion by map creators but rather hints to a much larger invisibility of trans-spectrum identity or practice within LGB social and political organizing.

Noting the ways maps function as visual forms of text, this exclusion belies a deeper erasure and invisibility of trans lives not only from mainstream non-LGBT tourist maps of DC but also from within 'LGBT' living. Recalling the power of representation of the map, as well as the stories it tells us (Harley 1989, 21; Keith and Pile 1993, 3; Perkins 2008, 152), gender transgression (visible or otherwise) appears to not exist in LGBT lives. Rather, gender transgression appears only in the contexts of drag performance, or as a form of consumption that, in many cases, has little to do with trans lived experiences. This kind of inclusive exclusion of representation of general trans practices or experiences fails to represent meaningful spaces, such as those included in the maps produced in this project.

Washington, DC as a 'trans city': mapping lived experience

Contrasted to these mainstream maps, the spatial depictions collected in this project via physical maps and verbal discussion focus primarily on spaces that are commonly organized around broader concerns of safety, risk, and support. Among the maps collected in this project I identified ten common organizing themes for the types of space and places participants included.[1] In this section I explore these themes: sex work(er) strolls; bars, clubs, and restaurants; parks and malls; community organizations; friends' homes and participants' homes; depictions of violence; online resources; police, jail, or courthouse; and work. The number of maps visualizing these themes, as well as the overall

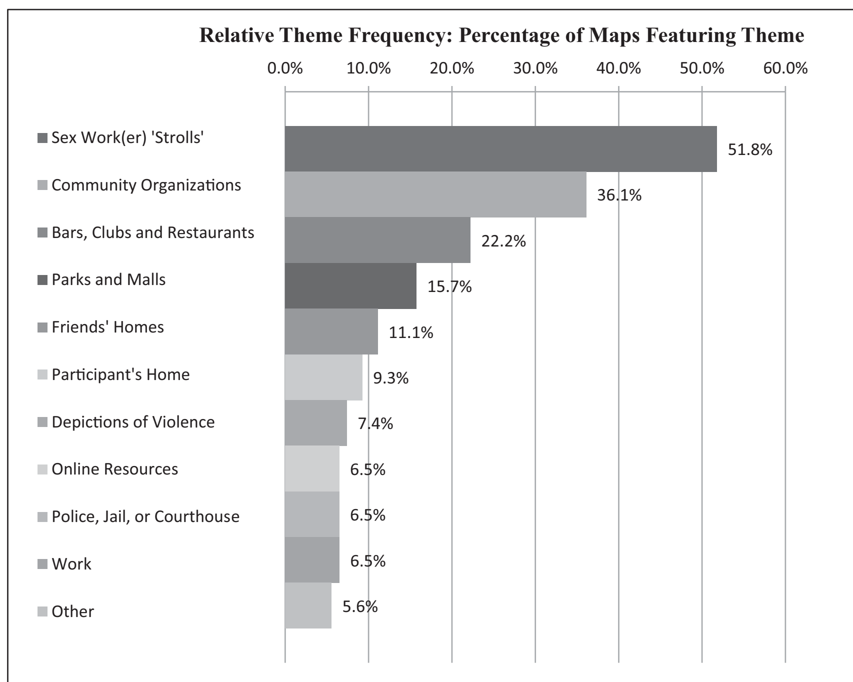

Figure 2.2 Trans DC maps: relative theme frequency

percentage of inclusion across the maps, are depicted in Figures 2.2 and 2.3, respectively.

As indicated in these charts, the spatial element most common to these maps was the depiction of areas I group together as 'sex work(er) strolls,' which were featured in a little over half (51.8%) of all maps. I identify depictions of 'strolls' in this project to refer to the particular streets or areas of the city identified by participants, or by police, as streets or areas where sex workers may connect with potential clients. Importantly, this is *not* how the participants of this project defined these areas. Rather, these spaces, while generally acknowledged by participants to be areas of sex work, were defined as multi-layered, as spaces of work, to meet up with or support friends, of police harassment and of organizational outreach. The second-most common feature that participants included in their maps consisted of health clinics, direct-service organizations, and other community organizations ('community organizations'), which were featured in roughly a third of all maps (36.1%); 22.1% of participants included bars, clubs, and restaurants in their maps and 15.7% included parks and other similar types of spaces for public recreation, such as malls. The home of a friend, or one's own home, was featured in 11.1% and 9.3% of maps, respectively. All remaining themes, while still relatively common features, were included in less than 10%

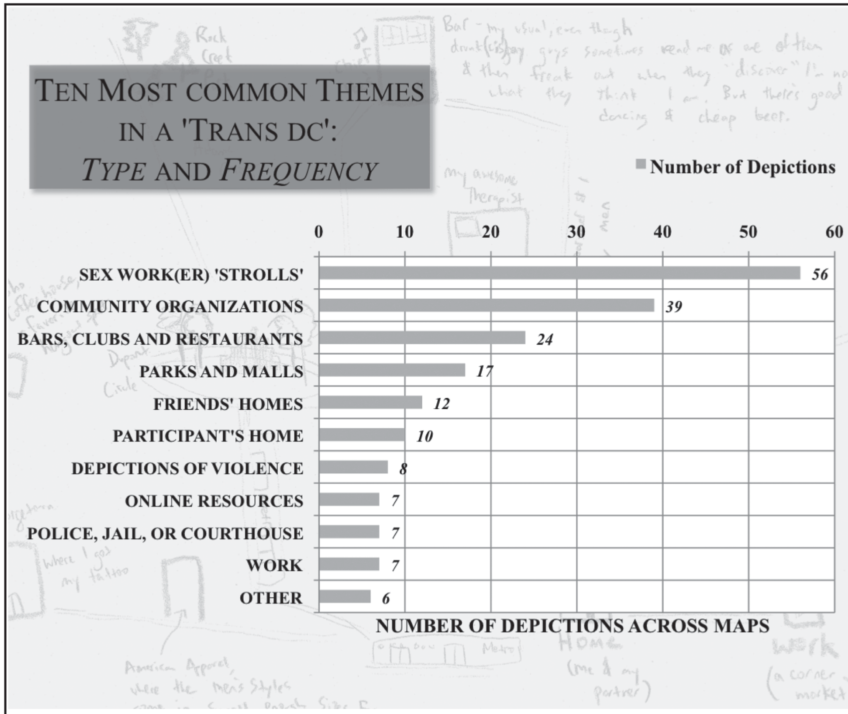

Figure 2.3 Trans DC maps: theme and type frequency

of participant's maps. I include in the category of 'other' those themes common to three or more maps (such as one's gym or school) but not substantial enough a depiction to necessitate inclusion in the graph individually.

I highlight here three maps collected from the roundtable discussions. Derek, a white trans man in his mid-twenties, segregates DC into three different levels of experience: 'virtual,' 'formal trans DC,' and 'informal trans DC.' Derek's map features many of the organizations participants included in this category.

Among the virtual elements he includes organizations that utilize email correspondence and websites as their primary vector of communication (such as DCATS and DCTC). His 'formal trans DC' includes 'established orgs' such as Whitman-Walker, his personal doctor, HIPS (a sex worker empowerment organization that uses mobile outreach as its primary method of operation and that also functions as a place of volunteer work) and a church where the Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) has been held. He qualifies these as the 'formal' elements of a trans city, while the informal elements include his friends' homes and places where he knows trans persons live. Thus, in his map, a 'formal' trans city is largely governed by spaces that are accessible and applicable to many within trans coalitions of practice, while an 'informal' trans city

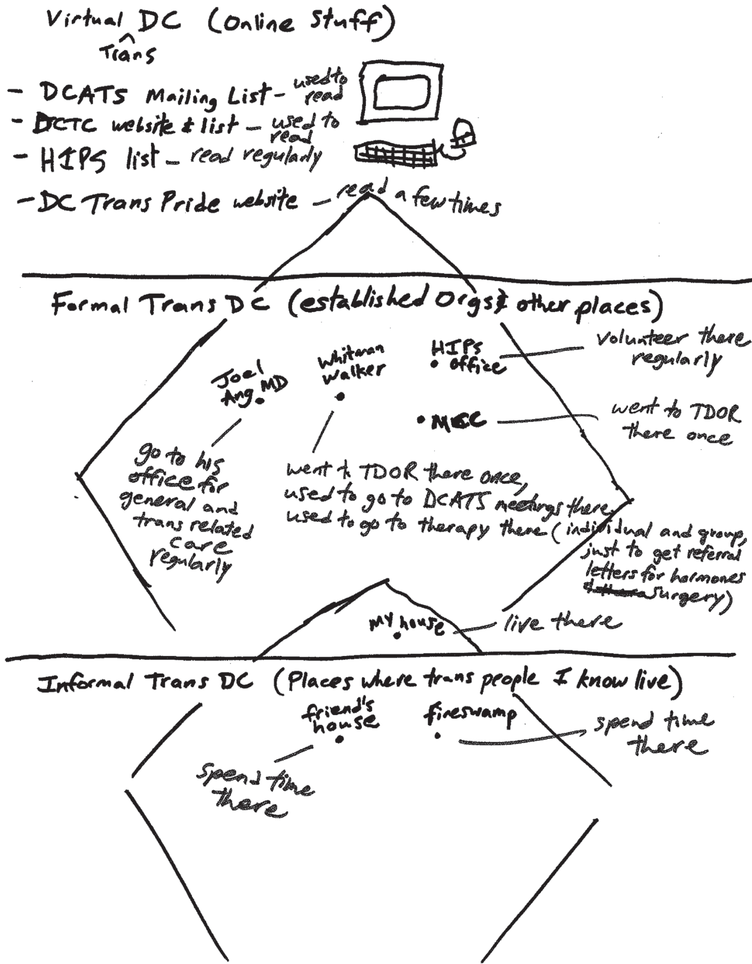

Figure 2.4 Derek's map

is applicable only to him or those within his immediate circle of trans support networks.

In contrast, Joan, a trans woman in her early twenties, does not differentiate between different levels of space in her depictions of community groups. Instead, she links together community organizations and clinics with friends' houses and her home into one seamless web of interconnectivity of 'Trans DC safest places' (Figure 2.5). For Joan, these same community activist organizations exist within a larger network of support. Whitman-Walker, which she marks as where she can access hormones, represents a 'safe' place but is located within a web of friends' homes, her gym, and her school. Her map reflects the significance of

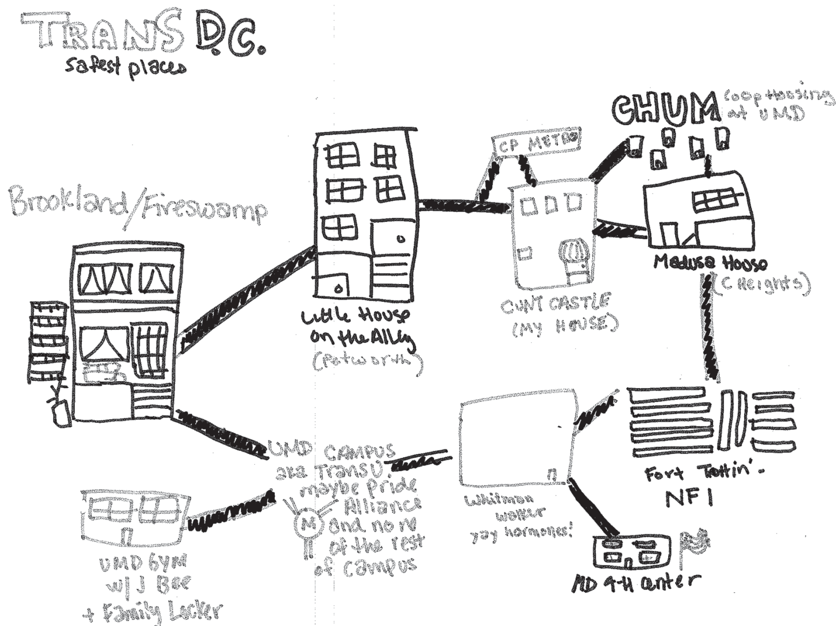

Figure 2.5 Joan's map

trans activist work in her 'trans' life as both an embedded element of importance but also as one that serves a particular function. That is, the 'safety' provided by Whitman-Walker may be through the vector of accessible health care while the safety offered by her gym may be through accessible facilities to work out in. In turn, these networks function as ways she can gain access to support and mobility but also where she, as a friend or activist, can function in a similar manner. A friend's home, in this context, may serve to index broader structures rather than merely where a friend may reside.

Importantly, many maps resemble Naomi's map (Figure 2.6), where a short list of 'official' bars and clubs is provided along with the home of an individual where, in this context, Latinx trans persons new to DC are able to access resources.

Contrasted to these mainstream maps, the spatial depictions collected in this project via physical maps and verbal discussion focus primarily on spaces that are commonly organized around broader concerns of safety, risk, and where to access trans-specific care. Among the maps collected in this project we identified ten common organizing themes for the types of space and places participants included. The spatial element most common to these maps consisted of depictions of areas I group together as 'sex work(er) strolls,' which were featured in a little over half (51.8%) of all maps. 'Strolls' in this framing refers to the particular streets or areas of the city identified by participants, or by

Figure 2.6 Naomi's map

police, as streets or areas where sex workers may connect with potential clients. Importantly, this is *not* how the participants of this project solely experienced these areas. Rather, these spaces, while understood to also be areas of sex work, were defined as multi-layered, as spaces of care, in which to meet up with or support friends, of police harassment, and of organizational outreach.

The second-most common feature that participants included in their maps was the location of health clinics, direct-service organizations, and other community organizations ('community organizations'), which were featured in roughly a third of all maps (36.1%); 22.1% of participants included bars, clubs, and restaurants in their maps and 15.7% included parks and other similar types of spaces for public recreation, such as malls. The home of a friend, or one's own home, was featured in 11.1% and 9.3% of maps, respectively. All remaining themes, while still relatively common features, were included in less than 10% of participants' maps. I include in the category of 'other' the themes common to three or more maps (such as one's gym or school) but that were not substantial enough a depiction to necessitate inclusion in the graph individually.

Data collection and demographics

The data for this stage were collected through both one-on-one interviews with persons identifying with trans-spectrum identity and practice as well as during 'community' roundtables. These roundtables—primarily held in the

offices or spaces of trans-specific organizations, groups, or meetings—were held as a component of a needs assessment project conducted by myself in conjunction with the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC), a local trans activist and advocacy organization. While I began conducting one-on-one interviews for this project in August 2010, it was in March 2010 that I began collaboration with the DC Trans Coalition to utilize mapping and map-making as a data collection tool in a DC-based needs assessment of trans-spectrum-identifying persons living and working in Washington, DC.

Between March 2010 and November 2010, I, along with other DCTC members, conducted extensive outreach to the various trans coalition spaces in DC, soliciting participation from trans-spectrum-identifying persons as well as donations from community groups and individuals to subsidize honorariums for participants. Outreach included distributing information about the assessment, along with a flyer in English and Spanish detailing the project, to over 200 local LGBT social, support, and political groups in the DC area. Groups that were reached out to included a number of online DC trans-spectrum groups, clinics where trans-spectrum-identifying persons may seek care, along with snowball-style distribution from interested participants to persons they knew. Moreover, we were successful in gaining media support through articles in several local LGBT blogs, newsfeeds, and print papers. Additionally, we secured roughly $4,000 for the project from fundraisers and organizational and individual donations.

Between December 2010 and April 2011 we held a total of six 'community' roundtables, reaching a total of 108 trans-spectrum-identifying persons living and working in Washington, DC. Five of these roundtables were held with trans-specific organizations or groups with a large number of trans-spectrum-identifying clients/members: Latin@s en Accion, the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC), Transgender Health Empowerment (THE), Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS), and the DC Area Transmasculine Society (DCATS). One of these roundtables was held at a DCTC volunteer's house for other unaffiliated participants to meet. These roundtables were co-moderated by a member of the community group in question and by myself. Each roundtable lasted roughly two to three hours, was audio-recorded, and participants received a $25 gift card to either Giant or Safeway, the only grocery store chains available in all four quadrants of DC, as an honorarium for their time. The funding for this element of the needs assessment came entirely from individual donations and with institutional support from Whitman-Walker, HIPS, THE, DCTC, and DCATS.

The time during each roundtable was split up into three primary sections: map-making, discussion, and needs/survey questions. During each roundtable we had participants draw maps of DC from their perspective as a 'trans city,' or a place where they see themselves as 'trans persons' living and working in the city. The act of map production encouraged participants to consider how they fit within the city, both physically and metaphorically, as trans-spectrum-identifying persons. Following the map-making activity, we

held a discussion about the maps and what participants had included in their depictions. At the conclusion of each roundtable participants were asked to identify issues they felt were important to trans-identifying populations living in DC. Additionally, they were asked to sample questions they would want to see included in a formal survey-based needs assessment of trans-spectrum populations living in DC.

During the data-collection process of this project a total of 108 trans[2] and trans-spectrum-identifying persons were reached; 18.5% of participants (20) disclosed they were male-identified, FTM, or identified within a trans-masculine spectrum; 75.9% of participants (a total of 82) disclosed they were female-identified, MTF, or within the trans-feminine spectrum; 5.5% of participants (6) did not disclose a particular gender identity or affiliation or identified as 'genderqueer' or in some way gender-transgressive; 75% of participants (81) identified as people of color,[3] while 20.3% (22) identified as white; 4.6% of participants (5) did not disclose a particular racial identity or identified as both a person of color and white (in one instance). Among those that identified as persons of color, 41.9% of participants (34) identified as Chicana or Latina and 58.0% identified as African-American or Black (47). The reported ages of participants ranged between 18 and 83, with a mean reporting age in the mid-thirties.

Theme discussion

As suggested by the high rate of sex work(er) strolls and community organizations expressed in Figure 2.3, many of those participating in this project discussed issues of safety and support in the context of what they included in their maps. Discussions about these themes often referred back to concerns about physical and emotional safety and support, joblessness/job security (and a lack of employment opportunities), accurate personal documentation (both for those who qualify for 'legal' documentation and those who don't), and a lack of secure access to medical/mental health resources. These concerns were articulated both verbally and within the maps. Recalling the utility and knowledge production made possible through a personal map-making (Pinder 1996, 405; Perkins 2003, 345; or, in a 'queer' sense, Halberstam 2005), what is included, and even excluded, from these maps frames how trans-spectrum lives are lived.

Sex work(er) strolls

As noted, the spaces represented most among the maps collected in this project were areas known to be sex work(er) strolls. These areas were depicted in 51.8% of all maps collected in this project. Importantly, project participants did not discuss these areas of the city as simply where sex work takes place; rather, these were spaces where one could offer up support to friends, find new friends, or simply hang out.

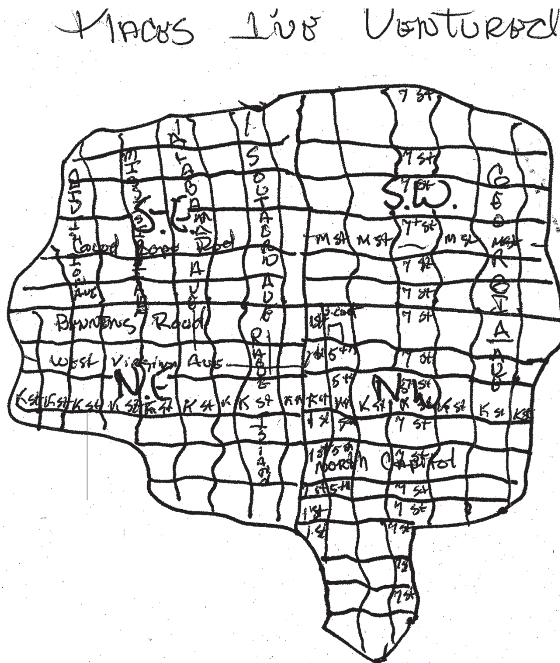

Figure 2.7 J's map

J, a newcomer to DC and a younger trans person of color, reveals that she, in the relatively brief time she has been in DC, has, significantly, spent the majority of her time along streets known as the trans 'strolls' in the district (Figure 2.7).

At first glance, her map appears to roughly depict the typical four-quadrant sectioning of DC, crosscut by numbered, lettered, and named streets; 1st, 5th, and 7th Streets represent the only numbered streets, and fairly high-traffic streets such as Georgia Avenue, Benning Road, and North Capital Street, and lesser-traffic roads such as Alabama Street and K Street, represent the named and lettered streets. But, with closer inspection, we see that her map does not follow along the lines of any traditional maps of DC. In her map we see that she places the southeastern quadrant of DC in the upper-left corner of the map, a 'flip' of the traditional map of DC, wherein the northwestern quadrant of DC sits in the upper-left corner of the map. J is a resident of southeastern DC and has produced a layout of DC that would align with a visual perspective from someone living in this part of the city. Moreover, the relatively grid-like lay out of her streets are not representational of how these streets articulate with each other physically. For example, 7th Street and Georgia Avenue are actually the same streets as they travel through the northwestern quadrant of DC. Her

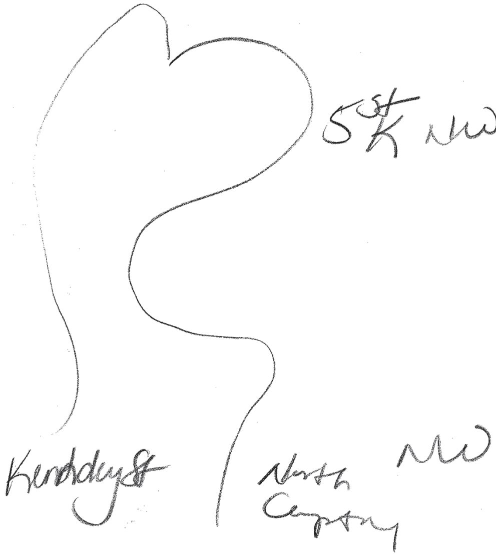

Figure 2.8 Alison's map

depiction of DC, and the ways the city is set up, does not match the type of interactive maps of DC discussed at the beginning of this chapter, which focus upon the functionality of visual depictions. Instead, her map reflects a concentration of experiences on the streets that she has spent the most time on, such as 5th and 7th Streets, where, as they intersect with K Street, represent some of the most heavily policed 'sex work(er)' areas in Washington, DC.

Similar to J, Alison's bare-bones map of DC (Figure 2.8) focuses entirely on sex work(er) strolls.

Alison, a 26-year-old Black trans woman, depicts DC as one long road that connects all the important streets or intersections together. Her path across the city is dynamic—filled with twists and turns—and takes one to locations (such as 5th Street and K Street Northwest) known as areas frequented by sex workers or policed as such. But, like many other participants in this project, Alison does not discuss her map as where she works. Instead, she frames these locations as where she hangs out with friends and, most simply, where she has met many of the women in the room. While she makes no mention of whether she has or does engage in sex work, her discussion about her map, and why she included what she included, provides insight into the complexity of spatial usage. Indeed, while at face value this map would appear to simply be a depiction of sex work hotspots, her description of her map reveals the dangers of assumption and, perhaps even more importantly, the overlapping of hyper-policed space with intra-community support networks.

Community organizations, clinics, and support groups

Community organizations, clinics, and support groups were also particularly salient features of the maps collected in this project; 36.1% of participants (39 maps) included either one or more of these representations in their maps. Significantly, while a little over half of all participants of the project featured the very public places of streets and street corners in their maps as elements of their trans city, only slightly over a quarter included the relatively private spaces of community organizations, clinics, or support groups. This gap in rates of inclusion serves to question the kind of conventional wisdom an LGBT tourist map employs, wherein private space is the most important space.

While community organizations (such as DCTC, a trans-specific rights group) function in ways that are distinct from a clinic (such as Whitman-Walker, which offers trans-specific/sensitive mental and physical health care services), there is a blurring across these categories in the ways these spaces are discussed among the collected maps. For example, La Clínica del Pueblo, a health clinic that services Spanish-speaking communities in DC, functions primarily as a clinic, but it also offers support groups for Latina trans women. Similarly, while a group such as HIPS is a direct-service organization offering support to sex workers, many trans-spectrum persons are also clients of support groups it offers.

Within this category, the Whitman-Walker Clinic was featured the most, making up 15% of all representations. Significantly, Whitman-Walker is one of the few places in DC to accept most health insurance plans—including publicly subsidized plans—offer trans health care, and provide spaces for support groups (such as DCATS) and community organizations (such as DCTC) to hold their meetings. The next-most frequent depiction was of Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS), an organization specializing in outreach and risk reduction for sex workers in DC (6%, or 6 maps). The remaining groups were featured as a lower percentage, ranging from 6% to only 2%: La Clínica del Pueblo, a clinic in DC specializing in outreach and treatment of native Spanish speakers in DC (6%, or 6 maps), the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC), a trans community activist group (6%, or 6 maps), Transgender Health Empowerment (THE), a community organization dedicated to helping trans women of color out of sex work and drug abuse (5% or 5 maps), the Andromeda clinic, largely servicing the Latina/o population in DC (3%, or 3 maps), DC Area Transmasculine Society (DCATS), a support group for trans-masculine, FTM, and male-identifying trans people (3%, or 3 maps), and the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL), a community organization supporting LGBT youth (2%, or 2 maps).

Returning to Derek's map, as noted in the introduction it features many of the organizations participants included in this category (Figure 2.9). Derek, a white trans man in his mid-twenties, segregates DC into three different levels of experience: 'virtual trans DC,' 'formal trans DC,' and 'informal trans DC.'

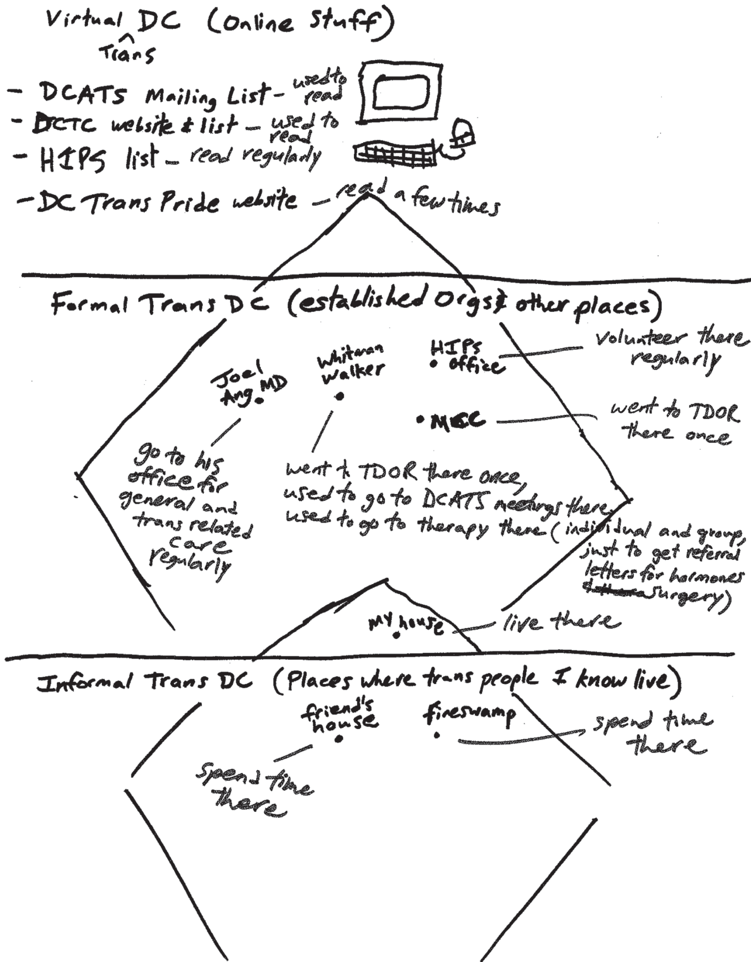

Figure 2.9 Derek's Map: A closer look

The organizations he includes are remarkable in that they are not necessarily serving him but rather the trans communities with which he aligns himself.

In contrast, Joan, a trans woman in her early twenties, does not differentiate between different levels of space in her depictions of community groups. Instead, she links together community organizations and clinics with friends' houses and her home into one seamless web of interconnectivity of 'Trans DC safest places' (Figure 2.10).

For Joan, community organizations exist within a larger network of support. Whitman-Walker, where she gets hormones—"yay hormones!"—represents a 'safe' place but is located within a web of friends' homes, her gym, and her

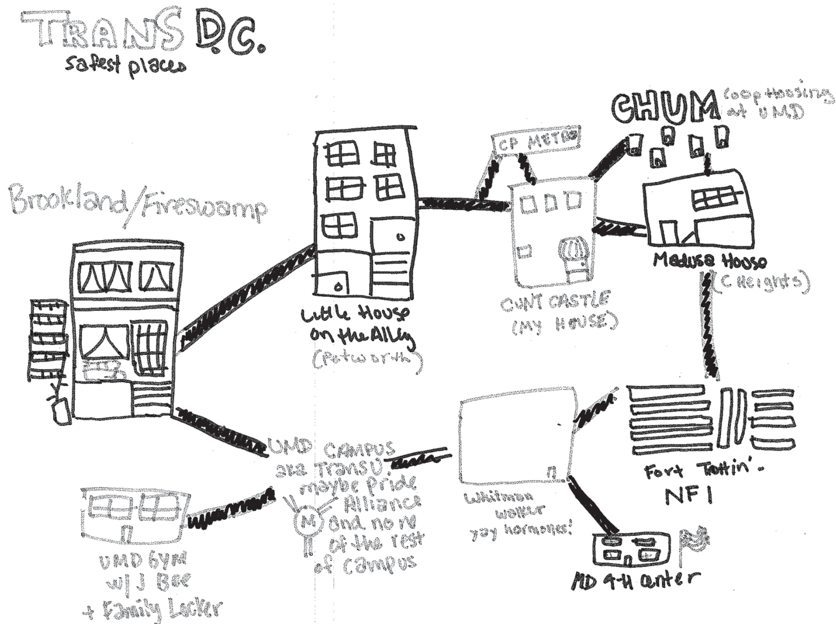

Figure 2.10 Joan's map

school. Her map reflects the significance of a community organization in her 'trans' life as both an embedded element of importance but also as one that serves a particular function. That is, the safety provided by Whitman-Walker may be through the vector of accessible health care while the safety offered by her gym may be through accessible facilities to work out in.

The organizations included, as well as excluded, in the maps collected in this project reflect sizable disjunctures between LGB and T political and material practices' in-group affiliation. DC, like many major cities in the US, has a number of LGB organizations, support groups, and other activist-oriented projects. But, focusing only on the organizations and groups included in these maps, trans-spectrum-identifying persons appear to identify primarily with groups that have services catering to trans subjects or affiliate themselves with organizations with similar political or religious practices (such as a food co-op or church group). Just as the 'T' was invisible from 'LGB' mainstream tourist maps, sexual subjectivities do not emerge as central organizing concerns with which group participants affiliate themselves. In a socio-political climate where many LGB groups are clamoring to reach out to and support trans-specific issues, their absence from these maps suggests their outreach, and possibly even programming, still fail to adequately appeal to or meet the needs of participants of this project.

Bars, clubs, and restaurants

Bars, clubs, and restaurants, LGB and otherwise, were featured in 22% of participants' (24) maps. Unlike the imaginary, all-inclusive, color- and gender-blind LGBT community the tourist maps of DC would create, the maps collected in this project reflect complex identities that are simply not reducible to sexual or gendered subjectivities. This is particularly evident in many of the bars and restaurants featured among the trans Latina participants of this project yet excluded by other participants. Often the clubs and bars included were either neighborhood bars or coffee houses but also, more commonly, were spaces that regularly hold special events that cater to LGBT Latina/o communities (such as Fuego or Apex). Coco Cabana, a Latina/o bar not linked to LGB bar culture, was also featured numerous times across trans Latina maps and was described simply as where they, as trans Latina women, can go.

Interestingly, while many participants described bars and clubs as spaces of fun, other participants qualified this 'fun' as requiring a careful negotiation between safety and pleasure. As highlighted in Drake's map (Figure 2.11) his favorite bar is both a site of fun but also danger; the harassment he faces based upon assumed embodiment and performance co-exists with the 'fun' (affordable drinks and dancing) he experiences in this space.

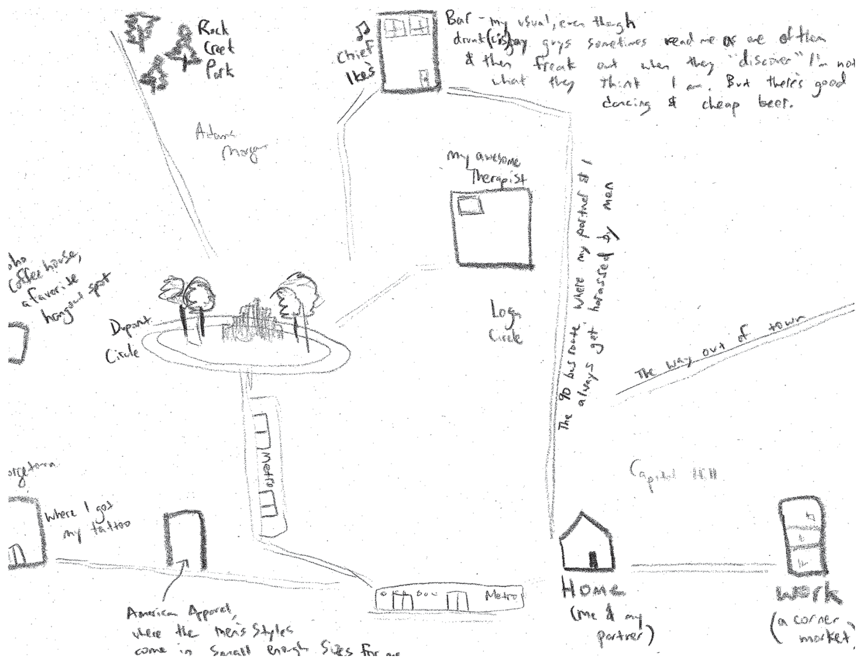

Figure 2.11 Drake's map

Drake, a 23-year-old trans man, has lived in DC for two years; his map features four themes common to the majority of the trans maps: fun, risk/danger, unsafe space, and safe space. Bars featured on his map display an intermixing of danger and fun. He explains in the captions within his map that a bar he commonly frequents is his 'usual,' "even though drunk (cis) gay guys sometimes read me as one of them & then freak out when they 'discover' I'm not what they think I am. But there's good dancing & cheap beer." That is, while the danger of gay cisgender men 'freaking out' about his trans history or present is very real, it is balanced by the fun offered by 'good dancing' and affordable beer, a rare find in the majority of DC bars. Attending to this statement more closely, what composes safe versus unsafe space is rendered clearer.

001 drunk cis (gay) guys
002 sometimes read me
003 as one of them
004 and then freak out
005 when they 'discover'
006 I'm not what they think I am

In this statement, space is rendered dangerous and unsafe when Drake's sexual subjectivity and gendered embodiment are destabilized. Cisgender gay men are the source of danger in this situation (001), which comes from their 'discovery' (005) to Drake's trans history or present, representing a key turning point in which the safe becomes unsafe. The 'unsafe' in this situation is both the potential for danger from cis men's reactions to him, as well as the context of that 'discovery.'

Ana, a trans Latina woman in her mid-thirties, also includes bars, clubs, and restaurants on her list of places where trans people go or can be found[4] (Figure 2.12).

Figure 2.12 Ana's map

Ana, like many of the Latinx-identifying trans persons participating in this project, listed restaurants and bars catering to the Latinx community, such as Coco Cabana and Fuego, a Latinx night held at a gay club in DC. As compared to many of the maps collected from most trans men and non-Latina trans women, Latina trans women largely listed restaurants as hang-out places, as well as both straight and gay bars catering to the Latinx community.

Ana notes in her map (Figure 2.12) that these spaces are not necessarily statically accessible or supportive. She indicates that one can find 'them' (other trans Latina women) in the restaurants Sabor latino, Molienda, Salvadoreno, and Tropico, but not all the time. She marks this temporality of space with "*Sabados y Viernes en la Noche*" (Saturday and Friday nights) following these references. This focus on Latina/o space, which also functions in this context as a space for trans persons, highlights the complex subjectivities of trans-spectrum persons and of the spaces that they inhabit. That is, participants of this project are not simply 'trans.'

Significantly, in addition to bars and clubs, Ana also includes the courthouse, which refers here not to a bar or restaurant that goes by this name, but rather to *the* courthouse that processes those charged with a crime. Many members present during the Latin@s En Accion meeting expressed concerns about not only the criminalization of sex work but of the legal precariousness of immigration and documentation statuses.

Parks and malls

16% of participants (17) included representations of parks and malls in their maps. Significantly, parks and malls were included primarily in the maps produced by trans women of color. While many trans Latina women included places such as their friends' homes, many of these participants featured parks and malls as places where trans Latina women go or can be found. Importantly, malls are also public spaces where one can congregate without fear of police intervention, an issue one may face with parks during certain hours and on the open streets of DC.

Andrea, a trans Latina woman in her mid-thirties, lists primarily restaurants and parks as places where she exclaims "we can find them!!"—in this case, trans Latina women (Figure 2.13).

Andrea lists Meridian Park ("*Meridian Parke entre la 15st y 16th st*") and the park within the circle at Dupont ("*Parke dupont Circol*") as spaces where trans Latina women can be found. Unlike the Latin American-themed restaurants she lists, these parks are not primarily utilized by or targeted at any given population.

Just as malls serve as public meeting places that are free from direct police intervention, parks, during daytime hours, are spaces where one may congregate without fear of immediate police regulation. Moreover, parks serve an additional purpose of providing a space where one can locate potential sex work clients (similar to the trans strolls along certain streets in DC). This dual

We Can find them!!

in-Sabor latino restaurant / Sabados y Viernes en la noche

in-Molienda restaurant "

in Salvadoreño restaurant "

in-tropico restaurant "

14th St

Meridian Parke entre la 15st y 16st

Parke dupont Circol

Clinica del Pueblo

Gay clubs

Andrea Williams

Figure 2.13 Andrea's map

purpose of park use was further highlighted during the Latin@s En Accion roundtable wherein 'Pigeon Park' was mentioned multiple times as a park of relative importance. While no park in DC is officially named 'Pigeon Park,' it was revealed to me with further explanation that this was the slang term used for a particular park bordering the historically Latina/o neighborhoods of Columbia Heights and Mt Pleasant, known as a hotspot for hook-ups for clients. The use of 'Pigeon,' in this context, does not refer to the bird found in many DC parks, but rather borrows from the slang use wherein 'pigeon' refers to 'penis.'

Public parks are not featured in the same degree in all maps collected in this project. However, I don't believe this absence functions to suggest that only Latinx-identifying trans persons go to parks or that the other participants of this project don't also appreciate parks. Rather, I would argue that the kinds of support and functionality parks offer to those that included them are spatial

cognates to other spaces participants did include in their maps. For example, sex work(er) strolls functioned in a similar supportive capacity for those that included them. Moreover, as I explore in the next section, the ways participants explain their inclusions of the home of a friend in their maps also suggests these function in similarly supportive ways. The specificity of where one captures this support is worth noting; there is a material difference between locating support in a private home versus a public park or along a hyper-policed stroll. As I explore in greater detail in the following sections, this differential appears to follow along lines of class, racial, and gender identities; few white and trans-masculine-identifying participants included strolls or parks as where they locate support.

Home and where friends live

Among participants, 10% included their homes on their maps (11), 6% included the locations of friends' homes (7), and 6% included both their homes their friends' homes on their maps (7). M, a white genderqueer-identifying person, largely frames their map in terms of where they can find their friends, including the locations of their homes, as well as places they go with their friends, such as the gym, or to local parks and gardens (Figure 2.14).

Unlike Derek, but like Joan, M does not distinguish these home spaces and community spaces as either 'formal' or 'informal;' instead, they frame their map in a way that is largely organized in terms of where one can see and spend time with their friends, whether in public or private settings.

In contrast to many of those who include their home in their maps, Trey, a white trans man in his thirties, explicitly defines his home as 'boring' (Figure 2.15).

Also, unlike many of the maps collected in this project, his map does not focus upon geographic specificities (most clearly evidenced by his labeling of the Potomac River that separates the district from northern Virginia as 'that river thing'). Instead, his map is punctuated by bars, his work place, and his home—areas that he qualifies as 'more fun' versus 'more scary,' along with a category of 'don't know/no data.' Notably the epicenter of that which is both fun and scary is also the space with the highest concentration of bars, in which physical and psychic danger and fun intermix. In short, while he identifies his home as a 'boring' place it is also one of the only places on his map that is static in nature: it occupies neither a dangerous nor a fun space.

When a participant does include their own home in their map, it often functions to situate the participant geographically in the space of the city (which can also be inferred through how one frames their map, as J did in her map) as well as socially. While sometimes this inclusion is discussed as mundane, in a third of all depictions this was a way to frame interconnectivity between their home, as a group house, and other group homes. In particular, it is the functionality of these connections that frames their inclusion.

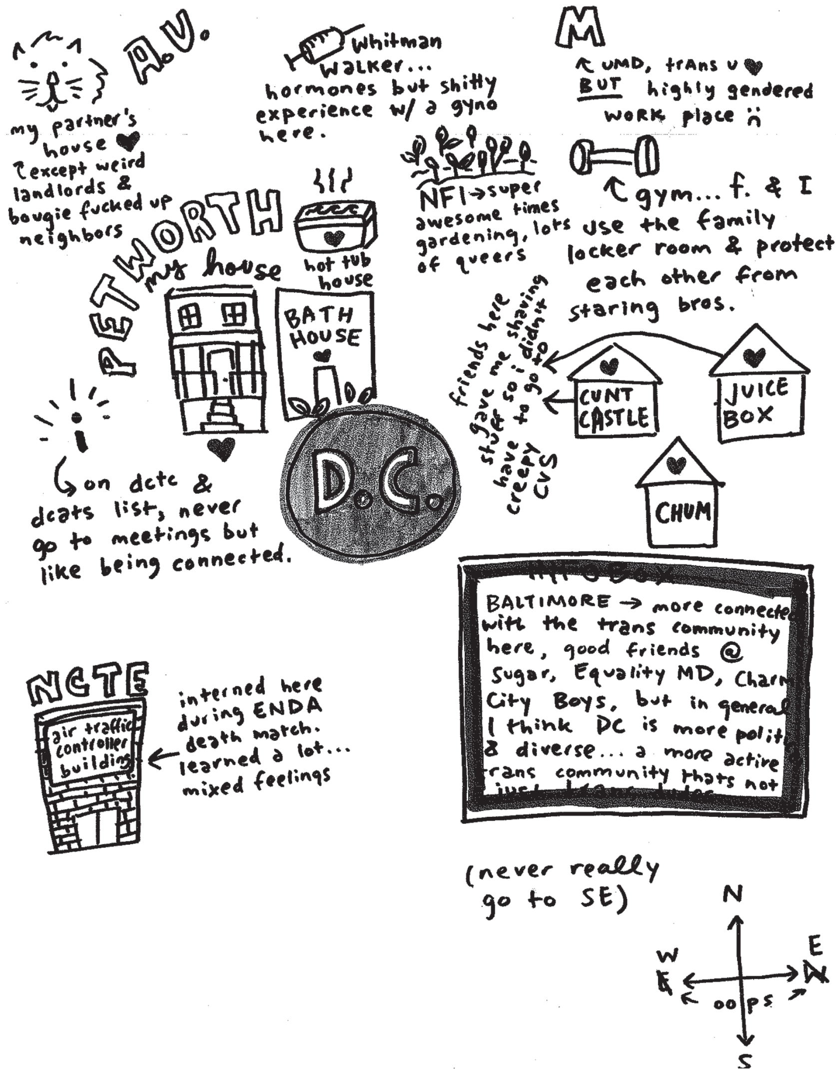

Figure 2.14 M's map

One such group home, the 'Cunt Castle,' is featured in M's map as where "friends here gave me shaving stuff so i didn't have to go to the creepy cvs." The Cunt Castle is also featured in Joan's map, but as her own house. Many of these group houses[5] are identified through titles such as 'Juice Box,' 'Chum,' and 'Brookland/Fireswamp.' These group homes are primarily rentals of older houses in need of partial or complete refurbishing, thus providing cheaper rental

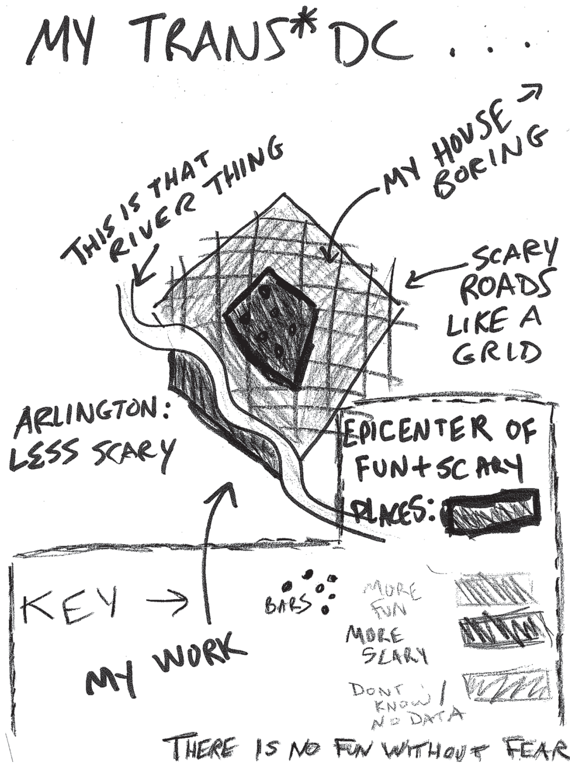

Figure 2.15 Trey's map

cost opportunities but often at the expense of living in substandard housing. Often not all occupants are on the lease and, as is the case with the Fireswamp, occupants may stay for only several weeks to several months. This form of co-habitation also deflects the traditional demands of securing housing, such as providing one's legal name, a source of stable and verifiable income, and a clear and positive rental and credit history. As discussed during the roundtable held in one of these homes, many of the occupants of these group houses do not have the kind of financial or legal stability to qualify for housing in other contexts. Moreover, to live in one of these homes was described as 'empowering' for a number of participants as it provided an opportunity to live communally with other queer and gender-transgressing persons.

Depictions of violence, criminalization, and work

I group in this last category the themes that were represented in 7% or less of the maps. While not necessarily linked, 7% of participants listed where they work (7), 7% listed online spaces to meet other trans people or access trans

resources (7), and another 7% included visual depictions of violence against trans persons (7), with another 7% including a police presence, the DC courthouse, or jail (7). It is perhaps a bit disconcerting that where one works, the internet, and the prison-industrial complex occur at similar frequencies within the participants' representations of DC. This said, those who included where they work on their maps did not also depict police, jail, and the courthouse. As previously noted, this would suggest vested interests are not unilateral across communities and negotiating the prison-industrial complex may prove to be a greater issue for some members of different trans communities than for others.

While references to danger and violence were implicit in many of the maps (suggested through the many qualifications of space as 'safe' or 'safer'), and explicitly referred to during all the discussions held as a component of the roundtables, only 7% of participants spatially encoded this violence (8). This exclusion is logical when contextualized along with what *was* included in the greatest rates: areas of safety, comfort, and fun. That is, it is not surprising that the majority of participants, who framed their maps in terms of where trans people can or would like to go, would choose not to depict what they were contrasting their maps against.

Louise, a trans Latina woman in her mid-twenties, is one of the few to explicitly refer to violence in her map (Figure 2.16).

Louise's map locates the area of greatest positive experience as Whitman-Walker, indicated by a plus sign and a smiley face. The remainder of her map features areas of two known assaults against trans women, heartbreak, and her home, which is only 'so-so.' Also featured on her map is the image of a person jumping off of a cliff and the 'stress and alienation' at her university, George Washington University. While the figure jumping, or possibly falling, from the cliff could be read as a figure escaping from the negativity associated with the remainder of the map, I find it more plausible to understand this figure to indicate the danger of the 'unseen' not depicted in the map. The unknown in this case can prove to be of greater danger and risk than that of the known—of little comfort to Louise.

The exclusion of many of the poorer areas of DC by the LGBT white-focused tourist maps, situated alongside a concomitant lack of attention to many of the wealthier, white-dominated areas in the maps collected in this project, race and class emerge as particularly salient issues in these maps. Those interviewed here include members of multiple racial, class, and gender identities, all of which are differentially regarded and regulated by institutional powers. But, while many share similar concerns about the city, not all face similar consequences stemming from these concerns. Many trans women of color, particularly African-American trans women, are targeted and profiled as sex workers by police officers within the district, particularly along known trans strolls. Following the recent release of prostitution-related arrest records to the DC Trans Coalition, it was revealed that during the report period (January 2008–March 2010), there were 106 "impersonators" (the term used by officers to designate a trans woman) arrested for sex work. Of those, 103 were of

Figure 2.16 Louise's map

African-Americans, and the other three were of Latinas. While no numbers exist comparing the number of trans women of color to white women engaged in sex work in DC, or the general relative number of trans women of color to white trans women, it is fair to say that judging from these arrest records white trans women are either facing a lesser impact of the criminalization of sex work and/or fewer are engaged in sex work. It is likely that both elements are true, and that white trans women experience some—while minimal—degree of privilege in securing either gainful employment or alternative sources of financial support that a number of trans women of color are not privy to.

Significantly, a little over half of all arrests, 55%, were of trans people 25 years old and younger. Disturbingly, as exemplified by J's experiences, and supported by Alison's singular, interconnected road, younger trans-feminine persons may find themselves particularly profiled while in the pursuit of meeting up with friends. Risk here, for many trans-feminine persons of color, becomes a

management of various modalities of violence, including police harassment, robbery, or general attack.

Conclusions: inclusions and exclusions

DC, as a trans city constituted by the data collected from maps produced by 108 participants of this project, does not align with either mainstream tourist maps of DC or mainstream LGB maps of the city, which are governed by monuments and clubs. A 'trans DC' is no more a singular shared experience of space than trans identity as a singular kind of experience. Importantly, what these maps and their associated narratives reflected is zones of intense marginality (such as sex work(er) strolls and the areas in and around Prostitution-Free Zones, public parks, and particular restaurants). Community organizations and clinics to one's home or friends' homes all are features of a trans city. But, as highlighted in participants' maps, not all spaces or places, or what I define as themes among the maps, are represented commonly, or in the same ways, as others. Moreover, these figures do not elaborate on *how* these themes are articulated by the participants in their maps.

Perhaps of greatest difference between the mainstream maps of DC and the maps collected in this project is the focus on the role of support, whether organizationally or from friends. Mainstream maps of DC focus on the capacity to consume: the places a tourist interested in consumption can go. This isn't to argue that trans-identifying people are all implicitly counter-culture subjects incapable of and resistant to neoliberal tropes of consumption and production. Instead, when framing their experiences in DC through a lens of trans-spectrum practice or identity, the participants of this project carve away those places trans subjects are not actively accepted or welcomed in.

Additionally, as suggested earlier, what is excluded from a map is as informative as what is included. Just as the mainstream maps of an LGBT DC excluded the 'T,' the 'LBG' is, similarly, absent from the maps collected in this project. The 'LGBT'-specific community centers or groups represented among these maps focus almost entirely on trans-specific activist or advocacy groups or those that primarily serve trans persons (such as HIPS). The bars and clubs that the Lonely Planet website situates as hotbeds of queer life are featured in less than 1% of the maps collected in this project. Moreover, when the areas discussed in Lonely Planet's guide are included in participants' maps, their inclusion is one of negative evaluation.

Notes

1 I began the process of identifying major themes by first going through each map while listening to the audio-recorded associated interview or roundtable, taking note of how participants described features included in the maps. I then went through each map again and created a list of included features in a data worksheet, tracking both the general type of feature (such as a 'clinic') along with specific information

when available (such as 'Whitman-Walker'). Following this process, I identified and grouped together features under themes that framed these characteristics with similar functional characteristics (such as clinics with community organizations offering direct services). Finally, I tabulated the rates of theme inclusion across the maps, which resulted in an overall percentage of inclusion of the theme. For each theme, I repeated the process so that I would have both overall percentages of inclusion as well as rates of inclusion for sub-themes (such as the number of times 'Whitman-Walker' was included among those who included community organizations in their maps).

2 As noted in the introduction to this text, I use the term 'trans' or phrase 'trans-spectrum' as a way in which to index an assortment of practices and identities that include transsexual, transgender, 'genderqueer,' 'TG,' 'aggressive,' 'butch,' and so forth. I use this term intentionally, utilizing the ubiquity of the term in social, political, and medical discourses for a broad coalition of persons, while recognizing that this term serves as a discursive place-holder rather than as a term of one-to-one representation.

3 I include in this category any identity that was not specifically 'white.'

4 All maps and data included in this chapter from Latina/o trans people were collected over the course of several roundtables, with the majority of trans Latina/o participants at one particular roundtable, held for the members of the trans Latina/o support and activist group Latin@s En Accion. During this roundtable, conducted almost entirely in spoken Spanish, many of these participants vocalized feeling frustrated by creating a spatial map due to a lack of knowledge regarding geo-spatial elements of DC. As a result, my co-moderator, a leader within this group, recommended participants draw whatever was easiest for them, which resulted in many turning to creating lists as their 'map,' which I include as an element of their mapping process here.

5 The group house I live in was also referred to in two maps, known as the 'Bunny House/DCTC House' for our pet rabbit and the functionality of the address as the DC Trans Coalition's official mailing address.

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3 Mapping as method

Articulations of bodies in place

Visualization: the utility and analysis of maps and map-making

In this particular project, I asked trans-identifying persons to produce a map of DC as a 'trans city.' This provided the participant with an opportunity produce a visual image of DC as a lived and embodied experience. These maps then served as additional sources of 'text' to the narrative of the interviews, which provided the groundwork for what would become the DC Trans Needs Assessment Survey (DCTNA). While the maps collected here are, no doubt, a reflection of a prompt to articulate DC through the lens of what constitutes 'trans' experience, these maps nonetheless still confer meaning not only about space and place but also about experience, affect, the body, and power. Maps always "reinscribe and resituate meanings, events and objects within broader movements and structures" (Harley 1989, 9). And, in this project, these maps serve as visual forms of text as well. Rather than understanding maps as simply forms of direct representation, I consider here maps as texts that serve a multitude of projects and purposes, such as giving us visual, textual representation of lived experience (Cosgrove 1989) and reclaiming knowledge about space (Mogel and Bhagat 2008, 1). That is, maps provide insight into personal experience but also represent broader socio-political discourses of where trans people should or should not go, as well as physical experiences. In many ways, we can situate maps as serving as both visual forms of knowledge and experience but also as depictions of temporalized embodied movement through space. This depiction then provides us with a dynamic dimension to otherwise relatively static narratives about space and place.

Indeed, "to read maps as texts highlights their social construction and their potential for multiple interpretations by both producers and consumers, and the landscapes that maps represent themselves, for some, written and read as texts" (Blunt and Rose 1994, 10). Utilizing Blunt and Rose's expansive definition of the composition of personal maps, I would additionally suggest that maps provide an insight into lived experience as any narrative might, but do so through the visual situating of physical and mental space in ways a normative speech-based interview may not. This platform provides a mode of expression

that allows for those more visually inclined to articulate their experiences in ways otherwise inaccessible.

Building upon Harley's definition of a map to include the 'reinscription and resituation' of bodies in space, I want to stress the productivity of map production. Indeed, maps "actively construct knowledge, they exercise power and they can be a powerful means of promoting social change" (Crampton and Krygier 2006, 15). To this I would add that the 'promotion' of social change can take place in the (re)situating of maps and narratives as mutually constitutive of each other.

Power: mapping and space/place

> Space can now be recognized as an active constitutive component of hegemonic power: an element in the fragmentation, dislocation and weakening of class power (Harvey), both the medium and the message of domination and subordination (Massey) … it tells you where you are and it puts you there!
>
> (Keith and Pile 1993, 37)

Space, place, where we go, and what we do when we get there are articulated through and by power and ideology. When considering maps and map-making it is equally important to turn attention towards the language used to describe the spaces and places that emerge as features of importance during the process of map-making. Specifically, I consider here the terminology historically used to describe elements within a map, either physical or mental: space and place.

While there are arguments with regard to how space and place should be discussed and defined, often 'space' has been situated as "a natural fact—a collection of properties that define essential reality of settings of action—and place as a social product, a set of understandings that come about only after spaces have been encountered by individuals and groups" (Dourish 2006, 2). This definition would situate 'space' as outside of pre-human discursive interaction. To contextualize this kind of claim, let us consider an example of a hotel, or a 'space' wherein individuals may rent a room at a nightly fee. In this context, the individual would then construct the meaning of 'place,' such as where one goes to sleep for a night when visiting friends or where one goes to engage in the sex work trade. This kind of formulation is problematic as to situate a hotel, or any space, or *place* for that matter, as pre-discursive, or as potentially without human interaction, would be to ignore how something like a 'hotel' comes to be. Hotels, and any space, are afforded that meaning only because of human intervention into the lived world. Instead I would suggest we avoid a "myth of spatial immanence and a fallacy of spatial relativism" (Keith and Pile 1993, 6) in the unpacking of space and place and rather pay attention to the nuances that exist between power structures emerging in discussions of either place, space, or a hybrid of each. In this project, I am more inclined to situate space

as "interpreted in multiple ways but only after its construction in the minds of those perceiving it," necessitating a situated and contextualized reading of space/place according to local and community-based understandings (Blunt and Rose 1994, 12). Moreover, space is "fragmented, multi-dimensional, contradictory and provisional … certain political projects construct spaces according to their strategic context and needs" (Blunt and Rose 1994, 7). That is, even if we were to situate space and place as categorically different, spaces are constantly in flux and, however hegemonic or arbitrary, are as unstable in meaning as 'place' even in the absence of distinctions of public versus private (Leap 2009).

Avoiding this kind of logic, this project attends to space and place as similarly constructed: as real or imagined sites of social interaction. These 'spatial forms' that link individuals to "the social world, providing the basis of a stable identity" serve as a basis for understanding lived trans experience in a dynamic fashion (Zukin 1992, 223). The theoretical differences afforded by alternative readings of space and place will not be lost here, however, as I do attend to the multiple meanings that space and place confer. That is, I attend to hegemonic notions of how space/place is or should be used (a potential alternative definition for place) along with other liminal uses of space. These liminal spaces run alongside, against, or deviate from hegemonic, dominant modes of space/place utilization (a potential alternative definition for space).

While I collapse meaning here in my choice to use space and place interchangeably, my analysis still includes differentiations of spatial evaluation as they are situated through hegemony and, alternatively, by the subject. For example, while a hotel has hegemonic uses that are actively understood to mean a place in which individuals may rent rooms at a nightly rate, that meaning is created in the mind of the subject doing the encoding and decoding. For some trans persons, particular hotels represent a kind of trans space in that it is a space that is rented for purposes of sex work in-calls and as a kind of 'home base' for otherwise homeless trans subjects.

'Trans' spaces, as evaluations of spaces according to personal experience or expression of gender transgression, represent potential spaces of liminality. To clarify, what I define as 'trans space' here encompasses the spaces and places those interviewed here identified as pertinent to their identities, practices, and experiences as members of different trans coalitions of practice. In many ways my goal here is to look at how 'liminal spaces,' as Keith and Pile would define, building upon the urban studies work of sociologist Sharon Zukin, are "ambiguous and ambivalent, they slip between global markets and local place, between public use and private value, between work and home, between commerce and culture" (Keith and Pile 1993, 7). A mall, a grocery store, or a public park is no more a purely trans space than it is a space of purely public consumption. The places mapped and discussed in this project, such as a public park or a shopping mall, are not simply noted for their dominant hegemonic uses, but rather for elements of personal value (such as a public park as useful for cruising or a shopping mall as a space to meet other trans women). At times the transfiguration of space into trans space is through counter-hegemonic

organizing, such as utilizing the space of the clinic to build a political action movement that may poorly evaluate the clinic itself.

Calling upon my earlier discussion of bodies, the ways trans bodies and trans embodiment, as variable and multiple as they are, play into the production and discussion of trans spaces is particularly important to this project. Throughout this research, participants have framed safety in their discussions of where they can and do go. This safety is often tied to the identification and decoding of their bodies as 'trans' bodies, or as bodies that read as out of gendered and physical place. To be clear, there exists no singular 'trans body' nor are there clear markers of gender transgression on individuals with trans histories or presents that would promote the decoding of their bodies or identities as specifically trans. Significantly, even for those subjects who do not feel they are at risk of being (mis)read as gender-incongruent, many 'trans' spaces are framed according to the risk of being decoded as cisgendered or trans, which, in turn, renders those spaces either 'safe' or 'unsafe,' respectively.

Mapping, resistance, and power

While many traditional maps available in grocery stores and through internet searches can operate to reproduce mimetic depictions of hegemonic notions of space (such as a tourist map of Washington, DC might depict), maps of this sort (those that produce mirror images of geography) differ from those collected in this project. Here participants were not asked to merely produce a map of DC but rather to produce a map from their perspective as a person with a trans identity or subjectivity. This kind of 'territorialized knowledge' provides a degree of information that is lost in hegemonically situated maps. Instead, the maps collected in this project emerge from lived experience. Trinh Minh-ha situates this kind of 'territorialized knowledge' as one that "secures for a speaker a position of mastery: I am in the midst of a knowing, acquiring, deploying world—I appropriate, own and demarcate my sovereign territory as I advance" (Minh-ha 1999, 260). To claim space, however marginalized or ignored, as one's own is a claim to territorialized and embodied knowledge about a space. Specifically, in the case of trans narratives in maps of safety, to mark a space as 'safe' for themselves as a body potentially decoded as trans indexes an embodied, phenomenological, and territorialized knowledge of space.

Importantly, the process of map-making, and the maps themselves, elucidates the ways power and value articulate with space. While "cartographers manufacture power … it is power embedded in the map text" that remains of primary importance, thus allowing even those outside of the official cartographic role to produce a 'valid' map (Harley 1989, 21). The areas included in the maps collected in this project and as discussed during the follow-up interviews often serve to elucidate power structures and the ways liminal spaces exist along gradients of marginalization. Spaces of marginalization, or of heavily contested

meaning, "haunt the imagination of the master subject, and are both desired and feared for their difference," resulting often in devaluation and, subsequently, hyper-policing and gentrification (Blunt and Rose 1994, 16). That is, the spaces of greatest marginalization are those that the 'master subject,' or hegemonic gazes of space or spatial representation, has deemed 'bad.' Throughout this project, spaces like this emerge, rendering clear how power, regardless of origin or extent, is at play in lived experience of space and place. Indeed, these "spaces need to be 'mapped' so they can be used by oppositional cultures and new social movements against the interests of capital as sites of resistance" (Keith and Pile 1993, 3).

Mapping, the body, and embodiment

In many ways, map-making serves as a way to make visible the felt experiences of negotiating the world as an embodied subject. Lefebvre discusses this dialectic between space and the body, noting that "the capacity of bodies that defy visual and behavioral expectation to disrupt the shared meaning of public space" reflects the multi-directionality of meaning-making (Brown and Knopp 2003, 315, citing Lefebvre 1991). Bodies do not move through vacuums of space but rather are always already engaged in discourses of power in even the most basic act of movement. In this project, I highlight how embodiment has a particularly meaningful relationship to mapping exercises. The subject's experiences, as the product of a dialectic of space and body, provide a visual means to unpack where trans persons may go but also how they physically feel when they get there (e.g., biopolitical situating versus phenomenological experience).

Additionally, space, like the bodies moving through it, is dynamic. As described in this project, public space, such as a public park or a mall, may shift from value and use through changing associations with the bodies moving through that space. As an example, several trans Latina women remarked upon such experiences, listing particular public parks as 'trans sites.' Upon continued discussion it was revealed that the use of these particular spaces, by virtue of their past presence, represented an opportunity to engage in sex work; their bodies were decoded as objects of sexual desire and ultimately approached as such. Thus, not only does the utility of a public park shift in this discussion but also how particular public parks may afford better opportunity than others.

Maps, queer space/place, and Washington, DC

Historically, maps have served as a way to silence and erase devalued experience and associated notions of space (Mogel and Bhagat 2008, 2). Map-making, in the context of this research, reworks historical deployments of maps and allows persons typically disenfranchised from knowledge production to (re)

characterize that space, to depict the cityscapes meaningfully and from their own positionalities.

The participants in this project were able to include or even center gender and sexuality in their depictions of DC. This is in direct contrast to popular map use. While it is true that "no two women live, in a daily and detailed way, in identical spaces created by identical ranges of the concept of Woman" (Blunt and Rose 1994, 2), space mapped along lines of identity and experience reflects information about gender and sexuality. In this case, the mapping of various modalities and practices of trans experience reveals both difference and *similarities* in experience. As noted, the majority of those who participated in this project overwhelmingly discussed the geography of DC in terms of safety, regardless of whether the areas they drew overlap in each other's maps.

Historically, 'gay' cultural geographies have been structured around discussions of where 'gay' people *lived*, specifically gay ghettos (Jackson 1989, 120), commercial locations (Ingram, Bouthillette, and Retter 1997) as areas of political or social importance (Mason 2001, 26; Retter 1997, 327), as terrains of depoliticized 'play' (Leap 2009, 205), or as areas of queer ambiguity (Provencher 2007, 43). These maps, and the spaces that subjects mark as important or key to them, are as contextual as the lived experience itself.

Most broadly, Washington, DC, as the nation's capital and popular tourist site, should be regarded as dynamic, as both produced and consumed by its inhabitants and visitors. Building on the concept that the city is dialectically linked to "very physical expressions of social relations, movements and ideologies" (Hackworth 2007, 79), I consider here how trans persons, as a coalition of persons living and working within the cityscapes, conceptualize Washington, DC as, specifically, a 'trans city.'

Importantly, corporeal and emotive experience, the way we feel physically and emotionally, both in that moment and in the past, are called up in our understandings and perception of space. One's experience of the city "is the product both of immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience, and it is used to interpret information and to guide action" (Lynch 1960, 4). In a city wherein violence against trans persons is an on-going struggle, the related somatic or affective trauma often emerges within the map-making and narrative portions of this project.

Sexuality and gender are intimately linked to social exercises of power and to highly individuated experiences of desire that, themselves, are interlinked and variable across time and space (Brown and Knopp 2003, 313; citing Foucault 1990). Indeed, "from the closet to the body, to the city, to the nation and to the globe, new queer cultural geographies show us that a variety of subjectivities are performed, resisted, disciplined and oppressed not simply in but through space" (Brown and Knopp 2003, 322). Provencher notes this in his own readings of queer French maps, wherein "gay culture translates unequally both across national borders and among the various constituencies that coexist" within Paris (Provencher 2007, 43). While the maps collected

in this project are of a 'trans DC,' their discontinuities should not only be expected but closely attended to as representations of difference in trans lived experiences.

Evaluation of maps

> In this myriad of different ways of thinking about mapping, attention shifts onto processes, institutions, social groups, power, interactions between different elements in networks, emotions at play in mapping, the nature of mapping tasks and a concern with practice, instead of focusing on one aspect of how an individual processes combinations of visual symbols on a screen, mobile device or paper sheet.
>
> (Perkins 2008, 152)

Situating maps as forms of text, embedded in systems of power but also as representations of experience, demands a careful and close reading in order to fully understand their significance. Rather than see the map as a 'mirror of the world' I situate maps here as forms of power (Harley 1989, 135; Rocheleau 2005, 327–328) as well as texts that index somatic and affective experience. Perkins also reminds us that "a focus for cultural research into map use might shift towards participation and observation of real uses, as well as interviews, focus groups and read aloud protocols" in the process of map-making and map evaluation (Perkins 2008, 152). This project has taken special note of this suggestion. Many of the maps produced as a part of this project were done so in community roundtable settings, where trans subjects created their own maps and came together at the end of each roundtable to discuss core features of importance. This kind of community mapping represents a 'democratized mapping' that "offers new possibilities for articulating social, economic political or aesthetic claims" through shifting knowledge production from the individual to the community (Perkins 2008, 154; see also Mogel and Bhagat 2008).

I evaluated the data emerging from these maps as situated forms of text and as extrapolated upon through community discussion. Following each roundtable (for those maps collected in a group setting) participants discussed their maps, highlighting similarities and differences, when they arose. Importantly, this process of discussion clarified areas of ambiguity, such as 'Apartmento de luz Clarita,' featured in Naomi's map in Figure 3.1, a site common to many of the maps produced by trans Latina women from the same community group. It was revealed through these maps, and associated group discussions, that Clarita is an important supportive figure to those present at the roundtable.

Additional otherwise ambiguous sites, such as gay clubs, were highlighted in maps and discussed as spaces where both danger and pleasure intermix into a complex web of 'safety' and the 'unsafe.' It is important to note that these kinds of complexities only emerged as part of a group conversation and group

Figure 3.1 Naomi's map

context and where the individual map became a part of a larger whole of trans-spectrum experiences.

Texts and evaluation: critical discourse analysis and indexicality

Texts, as forms of "actualized meaning potential" (Halliday 1994, 24) in oral, written, and map form reveal a rich source of knowledge about not only social experience but also about systems of hegemony and structures of power. This project attends to texts in their multiple forms, as well as narratives, or "a report of a sequence of events that have entered into the biography of the speaker by a sequence of clauses that correspond to the order of the original events" (Labov 1997, 396). Narratives are forms of texts that tell a story. These stories are often rich with meaning and information about not only the individual but broader discourses. My discussion here attends to these multiple indexed sites and unpacks how, and why, they emerge in the ways that they do. Specifically, I include in my analysis how speaking subjects are both feeling and embodied, and use language to convey embodied experience. Just as indexicality focuses on the multiple levels of meaning possible across language use (Silverstein 2003, 195), I focus here on how language and depictions of space convey multiple, and potentially conflicting, meanings.

I offer here a reading of language as both a 'pointer' towards lived and felt sensation, in some cases fear, in others safety and comfort, in the context of

the trans maps collected in this project. Moreover, I offer that the reading of written text, such as the map, in conjunction with spoken text, further align and situate the body as feeling and felt object of linguistic value. To be clear, I utilize interviews in conjunction with maps produced as a data source to understanding embodied, sensual experience. Narratives of safety and risk further elucidate the ways in which these texts highlight and index the body and psychic self, as either threatened or supported.

Critical discourse analysis

Most essentially, critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides us with an entry point and contextual anchor in unpacking what and how people say what they say. That is, discourse refers to a larger structure of meanings, tangled together to make up what we understand to be real, and, perhaps more importantly, valid (Bloomaert 2005, 5). Language indexes and draws from these circulating discourses, or ideologies, in order to make meaning. Specifically, a 'discourse' "designates the broadly semiotic elements … of social life (language, but also visual semiosis, 'body language' etc)" (Fairclough 2001, 2). Discourses are forms of knowledge that influence and articulate with how we make sense of our world verbally, but also physically and somatically. Maps, the process of map-making, and the narratives included in my interview data all draw upon discourses in their construction and narrative formation.

CDA is most broadly the interrogation of the "relations between discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and position of the discourse analyst in such social relationships." (van Dijk 1993, 249). CDA requires a very close reading of texts, and the situating of these texts within specific socio-political moments. CDA interrogates "the complex interrelations between discourse and society [that] cannot be analysed adequately unless linguistic and sociological approaches are combined." (Weiss and Wodak 2003, 7). My application of CDA includes the approach that "discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned … discourse is an instrument of power … and CDA aims to make it more visible and transparent" (Bloomaert 2005, 25). This process of making visible and transparent involves contextualizing what one says, and how one says it, or, in the case of maps, what one draws and how one discusses that drawing. One of the primary features of CDA "centres on exploring the socio-political aspects of contemporary social practices … [that regard] broad social domains as discursive phenomena" (Iedema and Carrol 2010, 71). That is, CDA provides us with a tool to unpack and situate what one says, the texts and narratives, alongside the discourses that these narratives emerge from within; indeed, discourse "acts as a banner for work that seeks to challenge taken-as-given practices and associated understandings about, and perspectives on, the real" (Iedema and Carrol 2010, 71).

I utilize CDA here within both interviews but also within maps produced by subjects. Through linking what is said, or what is drawn, to broader

political and discursive socio-political statements or beliefs I can more accurately reflect and situate the experiences of those shared with me. For example, Sam's inclusion of the Megabus, at face value, may have little to no meaning outside of a broader socio-economic context. Situating that inclusion within a knowledge base that the Megabus is a bus line that takes one, most commonly, to New York City, among other northern cities, for often less than five dollars helps us understand Sam's experience in a clearer fashion. Indeed, he is not taking the train (an expensive task within the northeastern corridor), nor is he flying or driving. While this does not necessarily situate him as living in poverty, or as living without a car, it makes clearer his choices to take cheaper public transit in order to leave the city, or in his words "escape," a far more powerful way of qualifying his trip. To be certain, his word choice of 'escape' indexes his evaluation of DC as possibly negative, or at least at times overwhelmingly unbearable to the degree of requiring he assign a clear and calculated way out.

Further investigating Sam's map and linking this text to broader discourses, during our discussion he mentioned safety and space but did not explicitly mention his own corporeality or body. That said, within the map itself are inferences, indexes, to his own body (as decoded as 'male' or 'female') and the bodies around him (whether they be 'scary' or otherwise). The churches he lists offer affective and spiritual comfort, as do co-ops offering similar political positions to his own. Situating these written, and oral, narratives as situated within discourses that index the body provides a complex and embodied reading of his map. His body, decoded as female or male, has a literal impact on the spaces he draws out as salient to him as trans space, given their potential for 'clocking,' or the reading of a body as kind of trans body.

Captured in this passage of our discussion, Sam clearly verbalizes this spatial element of embodied danger, as well as embodied escape, to which another participant agrees. He describes this escape through an 'icon' on his map, understandable to the reader of the map as a point of interest or importance, and labels it 'my escape.'

SAM: The largest icon that I made was for the Megabus with an arrow pointing north that's labeled 'my escape.'
ELIJAH: Wow! Escape route!
GREG: I also drew the way out of town.
GROUP: (laughter)

Breaking down his statement into smaller segments of self-contained meaning, which connote specific ideologies or discourses, allows for a closer and situated reading of his statement:

Through cutting up his statement into highlighted features of importance the reader is better able to unpack and situate his statement within broader discourses. Sam declares a clear understanding of the mapping project in front of him (noting his use of an 'icon' in 001, a common feature on maps that serves

001 The largest icon
002 that I made
003 was for the Megabus
004 with an arrow pointing north
005 that's labeled
006 'my escape'

Figure 3.2 Sam's escape

as a source of important information for the reader). Moreover, he identifies the avenue and vector of his 'escape' (006): the public transportation (003), 'the Megabus' and the 'north' (004), most commonly associated with more progressive socio-political agencies and communities than the relatively small District. For the reader, 'Megabus' and 'north' are most commonly associated with the New York City-bound buses, for which Megabus has gained its most popularity. Greg's uninvited affirmation of a way 'out' further situates the importance getting away from DC, and the punctuated areas of safety and danger, for places that go unnamed, yet are destinations in which one can literally remove oneself physically from the landscapes of DC. While Sam's statement (Figure 3.2) most simplistically reads as a comment about getting away from DC, further unpacking and situating of his comment along with his map, wherein there are 'scary people' in certain parts of the city (as discussed further in Chapter 4) and few areas wherein his body is decoded as accurately male, we have a far more nuanced representation of his lived experience, punctuated by affective, physical, and somatic safety and fear.

As another example, I turn here to Dennis' discussion of his map and feelings about the map-making process. Dennis, a Black 31-year-old trans man, framed his map in terms of safe and unsafe space, but only after first expressing hesitancy and frustration about the process.

ELIJAH: So, what did everyone think of that? [the process of mapping]
DENNIS: It was really enlightening. It didn't feel good. It just … I wanted to put a big void in the center of it, y'know? Because I was like, yeah, 'where is DC trans space?'; where is that?

Considering this in conjunction with his map (Figure 3.3) we see clearly why his immediate reaction was to draw a void: the majority of his 'trans space' is where he is 'stealth,' or where his trans history or present is not known to those around him (Edelman 2009).

His comments about the places he lists reveal this 'void.' His work place, his neighborhood bar, and his gym are all places wherein he is not known to have a trans history or present, which others have coded as 'safe.' He further mentions that the showers at the gym are 'awkward,' wherein his naked form is revealed to those around him, further denoting the embodied element his map takes on, and the ways in which trans bodies may attract unwanted attention.

Only Whitman-Walker, a mental and physical health clinic serving the LGBT and low-income communities, which also houses the meeting where this roundtable discussion took place, and the Smithsonian, a series of museums free to public, are left unlabeled.

In the following chapters I discuss the primary data sources for this project: maps produced by trans-spectrum-identifying persons living in Washington, DC, of the city as, specifically, a 'trans city.' As background for that discussion, I begin with a brief exploration of maps of Washington, DC as they are usually constructed by commercial companies and local residents. Often these maps are framed in alignment with tourist desires, typically focusing on the downtown portion of the city and generally only including heavily traveled roads and nation-state-based points of interest. In contrast, the maps collected in this project depict DC urban spaces as personal and dynamic, rather than as fixed destinations. Moreover, participants of this project don't limit the focus of their maps to only one segment or area of DC, as mainstream maps often do. I explore here the most common features participants included in their maps, which I have grouped within ten primary themes. Finally, I consider how the commonality of certain themes over others reflects material differences between different trans coalitions of persons participating in this project.

Safety and Washington, DC: ideology, inequality, and locating trans space(s) in DC

Prior to exploring experiences of trans-safe(r) space in DC, I first want to emphasize that Washington, DC is an ideologically regulated space, with those that enter it as subject to these kinds of ideological evaluations. Leandra, a 51-year-old African-American trans woman, directly attends to this kind of ideological regulation in her discussions of belonging and the capacity to belong. As opposed to many of those interviewed in this project who explored various kinds of space in their maps and discussions (as documented in the prior chapter), she defines DC as offering up *no* place for certain kinds of trans people. In her map, Figure 3.3, she draws a circle, partitioned into multiple circles.

In her map we see a label of 'DC' in the upper-left corner and surrounding the outside perimeter of the circle are five human figures. There is nothing within the circle. During the community roundtable held at HIPS, where she was a participant, Leandra shared with us this map and was eager to offer up her description of it.

LEANDRA: I put the transgenders[1] on the outside looking in and can I iterate on why I said that?

ELIJAH: Sure, of course.

LEANDRA: I wrote… In many ways transgender have a multitude of opportunity and rights that were not afforded [to] our ancestor community. Populations are more accepting of our needs to please our inner desires and of our plights ourselves to be who we feel we really are; for me it's always

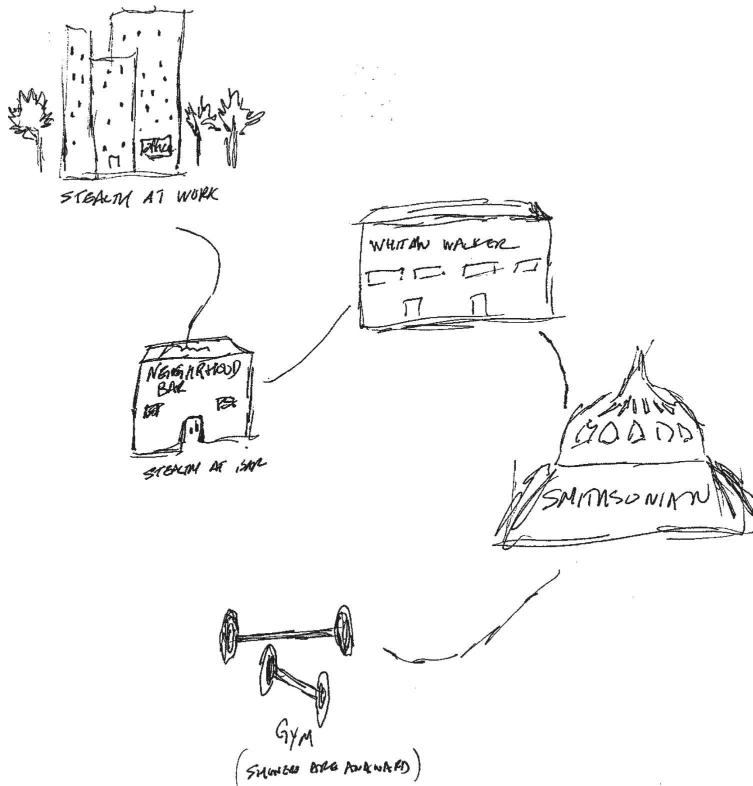

Figure 3.3 Dennis' map

> been a natural feeling, one that I embraced whole-hearted, but in my conquest to be me in my early years, um, I've… led to many battles and confusing strifes. However I've survived… I drew a circle with transgenders just looking out around on the outside looking in. They're just on the outside looking in and they are ok with it… I applaud girls that go to school and want to better themselves and put themselves in a functioning society.

For Leandra, DC has excluded the trans community from its 'functioning society' but, as she comments, without any particular resistance from the transgender community. Looking closer at her statement about her map and the trans community we see a binary emerging between her community and the rest of DC.

> 001 I drew a circle
> 002 with transgenders just looking out around
> 003 on the outside looking in.

004 They're just on the outside looking in
005 and they are ok with it…
006 I applaud girls that go to school
007 and want to better themselves
008 and put themselves in a functioning society

Leandra situates here a binary between the 'transgenders' (002), on the 'outside' (003–004), and 'functioning society' (008), which is left unmarked within the circle of DC. She stresses this binary, referring to the 'transgenders' on the outside three times in this passage. The boundary that separates them is both the physical border of DC (depicted in her map, Figure 3.4) but also as one of education and other ways to 'better themselves' (007). Thus, entry to DC (which indexes 'functioning society' in her statement) is dependent not on DC changing but on the willingness of the subject, the 'girls' (008), to change and get a formal education, which is directly linked to self-betterment (007).

Thus, rather than see Leandra's map and discussion as a refusal to engage with the task at hand, we see clearly that Leandra views her younger trans affiliates as fundamentally excluded from the kinds of ideological value (i.e., biopolitical worth) that maintaining a claim to space within the city demands. Simply put, Leandra is directly noting the fact that systemic and structural inequalities keep the majority of her community from finding place within the city, or that keep the city from allowing them space. Moreover, she highlights the kinds of extra demands made of her community, wherein to be a member of a 'functioning society' a trans person must first have higher education. The physical and psychic exclusion of trans women of color from the metaphorical and physical

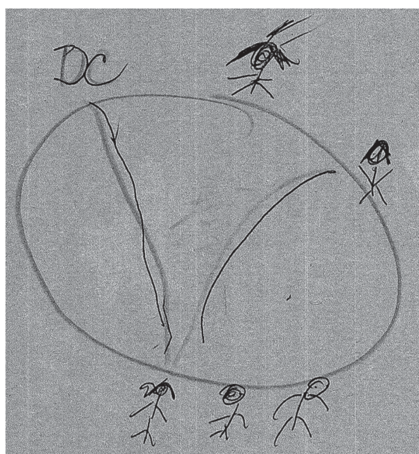

Figure 3.4 Leandra's map

landscapes of DC is clearly illuminated here and so is the embodied experience, and the necropolitical regard of their bodies as ideologically and capitally unproductive.

These remarks coincide with the attack and arrest of 25-year-old trans woman Chloe Alexander Moore and the ideological regulation of biopolitically 'unproductive' bodies associated with those events. According to a news report (Chibbaro 2010), on December 1, 2010, Moore, walking along one of the sex work(er) strolls discussed in the previous chapter, requested a light for her cigarette from an approaching man, who, incidentally, was an off-duty police officer, Raphael Radon. According to Moore and two additional witnesses, Radon proceeded to hurl transphobic insults at Moore before throwing her to the ground. In self-defense, Moore sprayed pepper spray into her attacker's eyes. When police arrived upon the scene, rather than charging Radon with assault, they instead *arrested Moore* for simple assault, as well as initially refusing to offer medical treatment for her wounds received during Radon's attack. While Radon maintains Moore's self-defensive pepper-spraying was unprovoked, he readily admits to engaging in violent transphobic insults against her. In many ways, this incident elucidates the ways in which trans women are always already marked as criminal, even in situations in which they are clearly the victims of violence, even at the direct hands of the state.

Safety and safe space

Leandra's map and its parallel in Moore's attack both call into question what represents safety, or a 'safe space,' when the spaces traditionally described as 'safe,' such as home or with friends, can just as easily be sites of violence. Safety, whether physical, mental, or metaphorical, is a dynamic, often space-based dialectic built upon the subjects occupying or traversing the place in question. It is important to note that safety is "realized in everyday practice, not in the dissemination of generalized knowledge repackaged as safety guidelines or practice regulations" (Iedema and Carrol 2010, 69). That is, safety is dialogic, fleeting, and localized to the space, time, and bodies present. Safety is "*situated* in the system of ongoing practices, has both explicit and tacit dimensions, is relational and mediated by artifacts, that is, it is material as well as mental and representational" (Gherardi and Nicolini 2000, 330).

Conversely, 'safe space' is a relatively static metaphor and qualifier of space that, while referring to a multitude of meanings and uses across disciplines, uses, and categories, represents a kind of place or space in which one's subjectivity or experience is a non-issue. The concept of 'safe' versus 'unsafe' space assumes "1) we are all isolated 2) our isolation is both physical and psychic and 3) we can become less isolated by expressing our diverse individuality" (Boostrom 1998, 398). That is, to characterize certain spaces as inherently 'safe' implies a kind of qualitative difference from 'unsafe space' as it relates to one's subjectivity. Importantly, Boostrom's definition of safe space requires a degree of

self-expression of one's subjectivity (or whatever the locus of difference may be), wherein the acceptance of this kind of 'difference' represents a litmus test of the safety of that space.

Safe space is a slippery term when applied in dynamic, multi-dimensional spaces of loaded, and at times conflicting, meanings. Safe space is most commonly discussed in relation to education (Ludlow 2004; Toynton 2006) as well as within LGBT organizing and community (Pardo and Schantz 2008, 2–4; Hanhardt 2013). Hunter defines safe space as having several potential qualities: safety from bodily harm, freedom from metaphorical harm ("discriminatory activities, expressions of intolerance or policies of inequality"), and comfort and familiarity (Hunter 2008, 8).

Put into biopolitical and phenomenological terms, safety could ostensibly be measured by one's biopolitical value in that space, which would in turn impact one's phenomenological experience. But, as evidenced by the clear overlapping of a sense of trans belonging to spaces where certain trans bodies have a negative biopolitical value, there is not necessarily a clear formula for depicting the relationship between experienced safety and external safety. Importantly, space is "experienced in terms of the personal" wherein "the carnal, the emotional, the cognitive and the cultural are indistinguishable" (Hughes and Paterson 1997, 335–336). That is, the 'cultural,' in this case one's biopolitical worth in a given space, does not necessarily emerge in ways that are distinct from one's felt experience in that space. In other words, how a person feels in a given space is both informed by the reception of their presence and their own perception of their reception in that space. A person may very well feel 'safe' in space that devalues certain expressions or bodies or feel unsafe in a space that 'values' those expressions or bodies.

LGBT 'safe space'

The notion of LGBT 'safe space' builds upon a "concept of a psychological sense of community" in the experiences of safety (Campbell et al. 2004, 258). That is, 'safe space' is rendered 'safe' through a dual belief that one belongs to a particular community and that this community can be found in that particular space. I focus here on a notion of 'safe space' most heavily relied upon by mainstream LGB community political and social organizing. In short, these 'safe spaces' are areas in which LGB, and the often uncritically included 'T,' subjectivities are 'safe.' LGBT safe space is thus where one's sexuality or gender identity and expression does not "pose a physical or psychic threat" (Boostrom 1998) to oneself. That is, an 'LGBT' safe space is framed in terms of the acceptance of the visibility of one's sexual subjectivity or practice and/or gender presentation. Importantly, as the maps collected in this project make clear, applying mainstream LGB 'safe spaces' to trans 'safe' space fails to account for fundamental differences in various modes of trans-spectrum experience or practice. That is, while a queer safe space may be situated around one's ability

to be visibly queer, safe space for the participants of this project is framed in terms of where one can locate support, whether this be in the streets or in the privacy of a friend's home.

LGB safe spaces exist is a variety of physical locales, serving different purposes, but often these kinds of spaces exist "to create visible allies" (Beemyn 2001, 43). That is, some 'safe spaces' are established by non-LGBT persons in order to publicly suggest their acceptance and support for LGBT subjectivities. In school and care-giving situations, common locations for the circulation of 'safe space' discourse, faculty, and staff are encouraged to create a "safe, trusting and unbiased setting" through the use of gender-neutral pronouns and avoiding the assumption of heterosexuality (Kreiss and Patterson 1997, 271). Safe space in this situation regards the avoidance of potential conflict; rather than affirming or rejecting an identity, a safe space here is deployed as a 'neutral' space where the gender of one's sexual object choice is erased. Moreover, they suggest that one display 'gay and lesbian' books and flyers within one's office to provide a visible confirmation of one's lack of judgment. Similar to Beemyn's definition, the locus of 'safe space' for the LGBT community here rests within the creation of a space that allows for visibility of one's sexual or gender identity in the absence of any kind of danger.

In contrast, the maps collected in this project demonstrate that there are no unilaterally 'safe' spaces. As space, bodies, and identities are engaged in a constant dialectic that produces the moment's meaning, to declare a particular space or place as a static and continuous 'safe space' represents a theoretical, and material, impossibility. Moreover, a conjoined 'LGBT safe space'

> implies a universal gay experience in relation to homophobia and heterosexism … [and] fails to recognize how heterosexism and homophobia are always inflected with race and gender and fails to recognize that queers who are marked 'other' by race and gender experience such oppressions differently.
>
> (Fox 2007, 498)

To be sure, trans-spectrum experience is also far from unilateral in experience, and to propose a trans 'safe space' comes with its own failures to account for inherent privileges afforded to particular bodies and practices, however broadly marginalized.

As discussed by Jacob, a gay white trans man in his mid-twenties, the very spaces that are expected to be LGB 'safe spaces' (e.g., offering an environment of allowed and encouraged queer visibility) are, in fact, the very spaces that emerge as 'unsafe' to trans subjects (Figure 3.5).

Jacob includes the trans sex work(er) strolls in his map along with the public transit he takes to get around the city (in this case, the red line of the metro system). He takes care to note several major streets (14th Street Northwest and Georgia Avenue Northwest) where the HIPS van travels (the mobile outreach vehicle HIPS utilizes for the distribution of condoms and lube, syringe

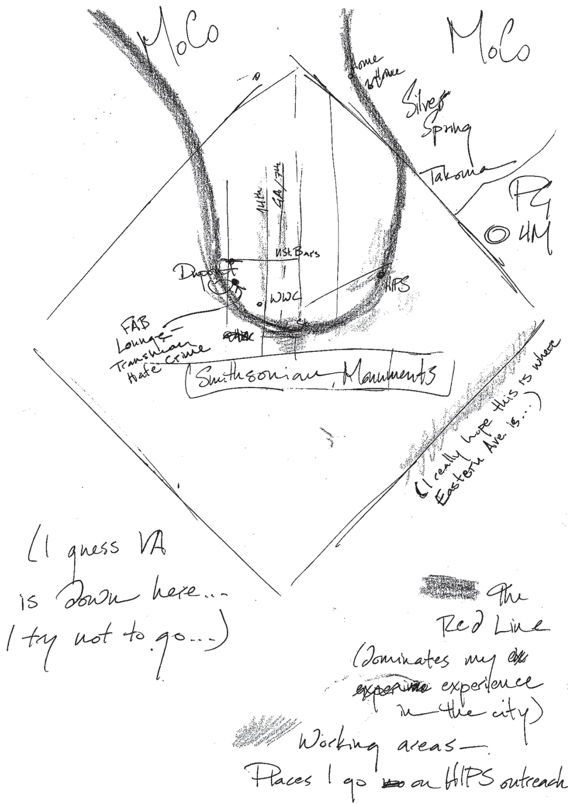

Figure 3.5 Jacob's map

exchange, and HIV testing) and the areas that border DC (e.g., 'MoCo' or Montgomery County, Maryland and Virginia (VA) to the south). His map is dominated by his volunteer work with HIPS, with the Whitman-Walker Clinic receiving a brief notation. The only 'LGB' element clearly denoted on his map is the location of Fab Lounge, a gay and lesbian bar located just north of Dupont Circle. He highlights this space not as a bar he goes to (as many have in their own maps) but rather to note it for the transphobic violence that has occurred there. Jacob shared this map with us during the roundtable held at the DCATS meeting, a space limited to only trans-masculine-identifying persons. He discussed his map with us, and, in particular, explained his inclusion of Fab Lounge.

JACOB: People were talking about, like, places where they don't feel safe, but, like, that doesn't really happen for me very often, but one place, like, always

> gets my attention is Fab Lounge because, like, that's the only place that I can think of off the top of my head that this is some place, like, where trans guys were victims of hate crimes because they were trans, kind of thing. Which is, fairly unusual, like, that its bad enough to make the news. I don't go there. I just know where it is, in Dupont.

We can unpack this statement further.

> 001 People were talking about, like,
> 002 places they don't feel safe but, like,
> 003 that doesn't really happen for me very often
> 004 but one place, like,
> 005 always gets my attention is Fab Lounge
> 006 because … this is some place, like,
> 007 where trans guys were victims of hate crimes
> 008 because they were trans kind of thing

While Jacob identifies himself as experiencing no direct violence on account of his trans present or history, he nonetheless still lists areas that are known to have been sites of danger, attack, and violence against people like him. The 'one place' (004) that stands out to him when thinking about trans space is where other trans men were 'victims of hate crimes' (007). He admits that while he, himself, does not experience these kinds of issues he still identifies them as a feature of his own trans space. Simply put, even as a gay man, the LGB 'safe space' of the LGBT bar fails to confer that which it is expected to: safety from psychic or physical danger.

The notion of 'safety' here thus demands closer attention. In many ways, trans safety, as Jacob describes it, stands in direct contrast to the kinds of 'safety' offered by gay bars and spaces of consumption to LGB persons. Safety, in the context of mainstream gay and lesbian maps (such as those discussed at the beginning of the previous chapter), references spaces and places that are specifically 'gay-friendly' (read: largely white cisgender gay male). That is to say, these spaces offer up support, whether implicitly or explicitly, to only particular formations of publicly performed LGB subjectivities and practice (e.g., ideologically productive). In contrast, 'safety' for the participants in this project often refers instead to areas wherein one's trans history or present is *not* necessarily of public knowledge. That is, one's safety as a trans person is may be secured through invisibility, rather than the freedom of visibility afforded to particular queer bodies in queer-friendly spaces. This particular formation of safety is echoed in a number of the maps included in earlier chapters: Drake's map, M's map, and Trey's map. For each of these participants, 'safety' is framed in terms of where one can travel or go without being (mis)read as a trans-spectrum person (such as where Drake can safely get drinks, or where M can safely work out).

Danger and risk

In considering the notion of 'safe space,' Boostrom asks 'safe from what?' (1998, 400), and in the context of this project I would suggest 'danger.' Within the maps collected in this project, what subjects define as a threat to safety (ranging from other passengers on the bus to interactions with police officers) as well as what is *excluded* from the maps articulate what danger is composed of. In other words, while some map-makers chose to frame their maps in terms of where they were not safe, others chose to do the opposite and discussed areas that were specifically safe, thus providing a template within which to consider conspicuous exclusions (e.g., such as the overwhelming exclusions of mainstream LGB bars, community centers, and activist groups in deference to trans-specific organizations). This may suggest that LGB populations may pose as much of a threat to safety as straight populations to trans-spectrum populations.

In many ways, the participants of this project situate their trans spaces as existing only through risk management, or, framed differently, through processual danger. Building on Hunter's notion of a 'processual' safe space that moves "beyond the sense of protected, cathartic, or insular space" (Hunter 2008, 7), I would argue that safety and danger are both dynamic processes. That is, what is a safe space one moment may be entirely unsafe in the next, or wherein one subject may feel safe yet another feel threatened. Just as the LGB community is immensely diverse, so is the trans 'community' and thus what qualifies as safety to a gender-normative trans person who is not actively questioned with regard to their gender may be very different from someone whose presentation is decoded as non-normative in some fashion.

As safety and risk are dialogic in nature

> we must engage safety as a process through which we establish dialogues that create and re-create the conditions in which queer folks are more free from the physical and psychic violence of those normalizing processes through which we all move and operate in our quotidian experiences.
>
> (Fox 2007, 506)

Indeed, it is the day-to-day, quotidian activities that are called upon in these maps. Moreover, risk and perception "incorporate temporal aspects as part of a dynamic process of interpretation and reinterpretation" (Skinner 2000, 163). In other words, safety and risk are not static but rather extremely dynamic and experiential.

Importantly, risk and "its inverse, safety, is embedded in social structure—in the 'social fabric' … Risk and safety and safety are not objective conditions 'out there' simply waiting to be perceived by citizens or calculated by professional risk analysts" (Stallings 1990, 80). That is to say, what is risky, dangerous, or unsafe is not merely an objective truth but rather an element that emerges from within the individual's evaluation (Lupton 1993, 425). The concept of

risk may be ubiquitous, and meta-discourses may render certain undesirable bodies and places as 'risky,' but the conceptualization of what is 'risky' to the subject is within their abilities to decide. Indeed, the assessment of risk does not "exist independently of human observation nor do they interpret themselves" (Stallings 1990, 91). The framing of space as either 'safe' or 'unsafe' requires a personal evaluation (Wildavsky and Dake 1990, 42). Otherwise, the grounds on which space is determined as 'safe' or 'unsafe' may remain entirely without subjective basis. Interestingly, and perhaps disturbingly, the concept of LGBT 'safe space' relies upon the notion of safe space as statically and *a priori* safe in the absence of clear evidence in support of this.

Boostrom argues that a person in an 'unsafe space' feels "isolated physically and metaphorically, yearning for comfort, struggling to cope" (1998, 405). That said, this kind of clear division between that which is 'safe' versus that which is 'unsafe' does not appear in the maps collected in this project. Rather, space exists in gradients of safety, wherein risk is a common, if not expected, element of moving through the cityscapes.

Risk, as a threat to one's physical safety, is highlighted most heavily in maps collected from Latina and African-American trans women. Issues of having accurate, or any, legal documentation, the regulation of known sex worker strolls, such as 5th and K, Eastern Ave., and other high-profile areas, as well as general harassment all emerged as points of concern for these communities. As explored in the previous chapter, the overlapping of community space and criminalized space (e.g., the Prostitution-Free Zones) has profound impacts for those interested in connecting with other trans-spectrum persons. Within the space of the Prostitution-Free Zone the police are empowered to disperse or arrest any persons believed to be engaged in prostitution or prostitution-related activities. In short, one may face criminal charges in the absence of actual criminal activity. Because so many of the trans women interviewed in this project associate with at least one person who has been criminalized for sex work, these individuals face similar prosecution merely by association within these spaces.

Frederick, a 22-year-old trans person of color, took a slightly different approach in his mapping project in considering what constitutes 'safe space' for him and utilized a list to characterize space and place to supplement his discussion (Figure 3.6).

His map is largely organized around an indexing of particular popular areas in the northwest quadrant of DC: U-Street, Dupont Circle, Columbia Heights, and Adams Morgan and the 7th Street/Convention Center area. He then frames these locations according to issues of bathrooms (another site wherein bodies begin to 'matter') and his (in)ability to use the restroom. In this map, Frederick's organizes the city around where he can relieve himself and where he has been harassed because of his appearance. As he discusses about the 7th Street/Convention Center area: "Once got harassed/made fun of by a group of young women for my appearance at the metro, felt afraid they would start following me … Didn't feel safe." While his concerns about safe space echo

U Street - Generally pretty okay, have yet to have any issues walking around and such
- Never had issues at the Black Cat, staff always friendly. Never had customer issues yet at shows or in bathroom (though I wish there was a co-ed/unisex one).
- Busboys and Poets: Not okay, had an issue there about a year and a half ago. I was confronted/questioned by an employee in the men's room.

Dupont Circle - I feel less safe there than before because it isn't really the "queer area" any more. Am pretty unsure about restrooms in most of the restaurants

Columbia Heights and Adams Morgan - Some of the chain restaurants (like Starbucks) have started to comply with the restroom law, not sure if the Burger King has. Have yet to have any issues walking around (though I try to stay away from places where hoards of drunk college kids are).

7th St/Convention Center - once got harrassed/made fun of by a group of young women for my appearance at the metro, felt afraid they would start following me... Didn't feel safe.

Figure 3.6 Frederick's map

those of others, his concentration on bathrooms is unique as a focal point for his map. It should be noted that for one to focus so heavily upon where one can relieve oneself—an unavoidable and necessary activity essential to human living—should raise concerns about the role bathrooms, seemingly mundane, play in the lives of various constituents of trans coalitions. We see this same kind of threat in the bathrooms where others may face issues or in the showers where one faces discomfort. In short, it appears the 'threat' here, in unsafe, risky, or scary places, stems from a similar place: to be known as having a trans history or present. That said, this alone does not appear to be the actual threat; rather, it is the potential reactions of others that invokes fear.

Conclusions: what is 'trans' space?

Gradients of safety are actualized in moment-to-moment lived experience. Stories of violence, such as called upon by Jacob in his recollection of violence

at Fab Lounge or of Moore's recent attack, serve as embodied reminders of the psychic, and at times psychical, violence offered up by even the most mundane tasks of life: using the restroom, riding public transportation, walking from home to work. To be clear, these maps serve as visual representations of largely phenomenological experience, which is sensually experienced through biopolitical, and necropolitical, frameworks. Fear, and the modulation of fear through risk-taking, becomes a daily sensation, articulated here through the visual medium of map-making.

Notions of 'safe space' that circulate in the mainstream LGBT community (such as the gay bar or the 'LGBT' community center) are often only referenced in the maps collected in this project for their lack of actual safety. Indeed, the processes of deeming safe versus unsafe space are not purely individualistic as much as they are linked to broader discourses circling within the trans community and larger organizational efforts with regard to where 'safety' exists. If "our ability to live a free life depends on our ability to move out of the text and into the margin" then many members of the trans community may fail to live a 'free' life (Boostrom 1998, 403). Indeed, this 'freedom' is lost in many of the maps, wherein the "places" people want to be are both dangerous and fun. The inflexibility of the margins of text in this case keeps trans community members going to the spaces offering the greatest degrees of safety, or comfort, even in moments wherein that safety is fleeting.

Thus, can we characterize specifically 'trans' safe space as being characterized by accessibly gender-neutral bathrooms? Clubs or bars that are trans-positive? Health clinics and political centers that are concerned with the lives and needs of different trans communities? Based upon the maps collected here, there exists no singular, static 'trans' safe space. Instead, as highlighted by the maps collected in this project, there are gradients of safety, often inflected with danger, discomfort, and instability. Rather than latch onto antiquated and problematic notions of 'safe space' as a kind of static formation of the lived environment, I would offer up a definition that relies upon the dialogic nature of spatial construction. A trans safe space may be an area free from police harassment, an area where one can have a beer and not fear harassment, or even where one can hold down a job without the threat of transphobic disciplinarity and job loss.

The templates provided by gay maps, which place consumption as a conduit to identity performance, fail both in theory and practice to provide spaces of comfort or relevance to the trans subjects interviewed here. While some trans subjects interviewed here listed the occasional gay bar, the relative lack of appearance articulates the invisibility of trans lives in LGB settings. Interestingly, the narratives typically associated with 'danger' and the 'unsafe' within, specifically, an urban area are not those referred to in these maps. That is, fear of getting mugged or getting lost in unfamiliar places do not appear to be specifically trans concerns. Instead, the unsafe is about the potential to be 'outed' or known as an individual with a trans history or present and of violence pursuant to being identified as a trans subject.

Perhaps the most overlooked are generational differences in trans experience, particularly for very young trans people and much older trans people. The discussions held at HIPS (Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive) as well as THE (Transgender Health Empowerment) were framed largely in terms of generational difference and, specifically, how the public treatment of trans women of color has changed over time. The oldest participant in this project, aged 83, recounted numerous times during the roundtable discussion at THE how trans women had been regarded over time, at one point being termed full-time drag queens and facing arrest for merely being in public in women's clothing, to being able to ride the bus without the guarantee of violence. While many of the older women, those over the age of 40, at both the roundtables held at HIPS and THE discussed how radically different, and relatively positive, changes to the DC social and political landscapes have been towards trans people, many of the younger trans women respectfully disagreed with their elders. Rather, they conveyed that while the violence their 'mothers' had experienced was, indeed, horrific, they too faced daily discrimination. Many of those interviewed throughout this project complained of a lack of gainful employment, leaving few choices outside of gray and black economies. Moreover, the role of police intervention proved to be a major element of their lives.

In many ways, access to secure employment opportunities articulates heavily with the capacity to mitigate risk. The first nation-wide report of its kind, conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 2009, reported grim findings as to the life experiences of the trans population. Respondents experienced twice the rate of unemployment compared to the general population, with 97% reporting harassment or mistreatment on the job due to their transgender status. Moreover, according to this study, 15% of trans respondents reported living on $10,000 a year or less, a proportion twice as high as for the general population. Finally, 19% have been or are homeless; 11% have faced eviction; 26% have been forced to find temporary space. The 2008 California Transgender Economic Health Survey found that one in four trans people in California engaged in street-based sex work for income due to the high levels of housing and job discrimination (Davis and Wertz 2010, 467). A study of 392 transgender women and 123 transgender men in San Francisco, California found that 32% of participants engaged in sex work in the past six months (Clements-Nolle et al. 2001, 915). To be certain, these statistics are a stark reminder that many trans community members do not have the same kind of access to employment that other members of the LGB spectrum may enjoy. Moreover, within the multiple trans coalitions of practice in DC, trans-spectrum persons of color, particularly trans women of color, are likely to find themselves turning to street-based work in order to survive and are more likely to experience victimization as a result, whether from the general population or from police.

Perhaps of greatest importance to attending to the inequities discussed here is the need to approach the notion of 'trans experience' as murky and

unclear. Building upon the data collected in this project, it would be fair to say that, to some extent, violence, either psychological or physical, establishes a degree of continuity among multiple members of the trans communities. However, what this violence looks like, how and where it is enacted, and the extent to which that violence is recognized requires a refusal to categorize any one experience, identity, or practice as 'trans.' This violence is *not* of the same quality and quantity across community and identity lines, as the violence the white, gender-normative trans men report is not necessarily the same as that faced by trans women of color. The violence of transphobia, or the fear, hatred, discrimination of gender-transgressive or non-normative bodies or practices, impacts all of their lives and, not surprisingly, this fact is not lost on them. Their recollections and stories about violence, whether faced in being denied access to a bathroom, in lackluster or psychically violent treatment in a medical setting, or experienced at the hands of a police officer, share the thread of violence. To be clear, this is not to gut each narrative and experience of its impact on the body, nor is this to claim that the violent impact possessing a criminal record has is comparable to that violence experienced when being denied fair medical treatment. Rather, this is to maintain that safety, and risk, permeate the lives of trans community members in ways perhaps not previously understood. The ways violence have organized these maps, and related conversations, demands pause. The formations of this violence require a deeper investigation into the conditions of life, particularly for those most excluded from mainstream narratives of normativity and from the most basic lifelines of employment, housing, and institutional support. Importantly, DC, like many major cities in the US, is home to a number of LGB organizations, support groups, and other 'activist'-oriented projects. But, focusing only on the organizations and groups included in these maps, trans-spectrum-identifying persons identified care as emerging through spaces with similar social justice, political, or religious practices (such as a food co-op or church group). In other words, 'LGBT' rights organizations failed to be included as functional spaces of care. Echoing this sentiment, among those taking the survey, 50% of those who had reported interacting with an LGBT-specific organization had a negative experience; 40% of those with negative experiences reported an LGBT organization or group to be unwelcoming to trans persons or in addressing trans issues; 45% of those reporting experiences, both positive and negative, with LGBT organizations also reported the need to educate the organization on trans issues or needs. Only 32% of those reporting experiences with LGBT organizations also reported that an LGBT organization was both welcoming and prepared to address trans-specific issues or needs. The 'LGBT'-specific community centers or groups represented among these maps focus almost entirely on trans-specific activist or advocacy groups or those that primarily serve trans persons (such as HIPS).

'Safety' links these major themes together in ways not featured in mainstream maps in that we see where one does or does not feel safe, but also how

profoundly subjective it is to feel safe. What need further discussion are the ways 'safety' is differentially understood among the participants of this project in contrast to the ways mainstream LGBT efforts define 'safe.' Safety is a phenomenological experience (e.g., felt and embodied). However, the dialectic between the felt subject and the ideologically regulated object work in tandem to produce one's experience of materiality. This dialectic also emerges as a core organizing subtext binding together the features included in the maps collected in this project. The spaces included, and excluded, in the maps of those collected in this project represent where project participants *experienced* safety, even in objectively 'unsafe areas,' such as along the intense liminality of the strolls. In many ways, spaces that participants identify as where they have or can access care stand in direct contrast to the kinds of 'safety' offered by gay bars and spaces of consumption to LGB persons. LGBT safe space, then, is better understood as catering to white, gender-normative, and upwardly mobile persons' wants and needs rather than many of those who participated in this project. That is to say, these spaces only provide support, whether implicitly or explicitly, to particular formations of publicly performed LGB subjectivities and practice. In contrast, 'safety' for the participants in this project often refers instead to areas wherein one's trans history or present is *not* necessarily of public issue.

Notions of 'safe space' that circulate in the mainstream LGBT community (such as the gay bar or the 'LGBT' community center) are often only referenced in the maps collected in this project for their lack of actual safety. Indeed, the processes of deeming safe versus unsafe space are not purely individualistic as much as they are linked to broader discourses circulating within the trans community and larger organizational efforts with regard to where 'safety' exists. The inflexibility of the margins of text in this case keeps trans community members going to the spaces offering the greatest degrees of safety, or comfort, even in moments wherein that safety is fleeting.

In short, based upon the maps collected here, there exists no singular, static 'trans' space of care. Rather, instead, as highlighted by the maps collected in this project, space is a contextualized experience that is reliant upon broader social and political interrogations of power rather than simplistic categories of gay space as 'safe space.' As these maps reflect, and to return JD's work 'Bound,' trans 'life-making' may exist more in contexts wherein the individual's needs are both limited by structures of power yet possible through larger projects of activism, as transformative and affirmative collaborations redirect a need for support as a function of lack to a need for affirmation as a function of compassion and energy. Spaces of trans life-making, in this context, may actually more accurately refer to the quotidian forms of care that a framework of trans vitalities unhinges from dichotomies of established value systems that trans coalitional activism has always already been excluded from. In other words, normative support structures, or the care offered outside, beside, underneath, and perhaps even above normative outlets, is perhaps also the care that refuses a logic of cruel optimism.

Note

1 While throughout this text I use 'trans' or 'trans-spectrum' and other similar qualifiers, Leandra refers here to 'transgenders' as a noun, or as a referent to someone who is transgendered. Throughout the roundtables, these kinds of variations existed and were particularly salient among different demographic groups. While 'transgender' as a noun versus a descriptor in class or racial contexts has been hotly debated in both trans activist and academic settings, I defer here to the language used by the participant.

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4 Mapping ideology and embodied practices

Approaches to documenting and discussing lived experience

Mapping the unmappable: mapping, bodies, and accounting for gendered practice

Sam, a biracial female-to-male trans person in his mid-thirties who passes at white[1] produced a map during our conversation that illuminates the complex relationships between his lived experience as having a feeling body that is politically and socially managed. In this context, map-making serves as a way to make visible the felt experiences of negotiating the world as an embodied subject. Lefebvre discusses this dialectic between space and the body, noting that "the capacity of bodies that defy visual and behavioral expectation to disrupt the shared meaning of public space" reflects the multi-directionality of meaning-making (Brown and Knopp 2003, 315, citing Lefebvre 1991). Bodies do not move through vacuums of space but rather are always already engaged in discourses of power in even the most basic act of movement. In this project, I highlight how embodiment has a particularly meaningful relationship to mapping exercises. The subject's experiences, as the product of a dialectic of space and body, provide a visual means to unpack where trans persons may go but also how they physically feel when they get there (e.g., biopolitical situating versus phenomenological experience).

Moreover, I would agree with De Certaeu that "every story is a travel story—a spatial practice" (1984, 115) and within those space and place-based practices (however they may be defined) are yet more 'stories' about power, practice, and somatic experience. Elizabeth Grosz stresses the importance of this body/city dynamic as 'complex feedback relation' wherein,

> [T]he body and its environment, rather, produce each other as forms of the hyperreal, as modes of simulation which have overtaken and transformed … the city is made and made over into the simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, 'citified', embraced as a distinctly metropolitan body.
>
> (Grosz 1992, 242)

Sam's map does not follow traditional coding in maps, such as organizing around general landmarks or depicting space in geographically accurate

Figure 4.1 Sam's map

positions, but instead reveals his own unique understanding of DC, as informed by his bodily and affective movement through the city. He organizes the city according to where he is 'clocked' (Figure 4.1) as either female, male, or as neither.

Sam's map is also an example of how bodies experience and are impacted by socio-political ideologies. In particular, Sam's map reflects how a biopolitical evaluation of embodied gender production can impact his felt, or phenomenological, experiences in space. Sam organizes his map along gradients of safety in terms of which his gender is regularly decoded. When he is read as male (indexed in his map with the male symbol '♂') he is in what he views as a relatively safe space and when he is read as female (indexed with the female symbol '♀') he sees this safety as compromised (Figure 4.2). He uses a

Figure 4.2 Sam's map (reverse)

combined-gender symbol '⚥' to indicate when his gender is read variably or as gender-transgressing. Importantly, the way his gender is decoded directly corresponds with how he experiences safety. The biopolitical evaluation of his gender (as either productively female, male, or neither) impacts his felt and phenomenological experiences of space (as safe or unsafe). In short, Sam's map provides information about particular spaces and places he goes to (such as a food co-op) but also about how he experiences his body in relationship to space; how he, as an embodied, gendered subject feels and responds to related socio-political evaluations of his gender performance.

The process of mapping in this project also encouraged participants to construct DC in personal and dynamic terms: as a modality of personal expression but also as a form of knowledge production and representation. Sam expresses these dynamics in his map through representations of his movement. In Sam's map, this movement may be both of his own (such as his 'escape' on the 'Megabus,' a bus company providing relatively cheap travel bus options across the Eastern Seaboard) or that of the viewer, who is warned, "this is where you

fall off my map." This warning highlights the explicit discontinuity between his own embodied experience and that of others, but also of embodied movement that transcends the map itself; this is where *you* fall and these are the places *his body* may or may not be decoded in alignment with his identified gender. In marking this spatial rupture, he is making inference to traditional depictions in maps (such as geographical markers and street names) but also how his map is inherently a statement of power, the ability to locate oneself and embodied difference. Sam's map functions to dually impart and limit the flow of information through intentional inclusions and exclusions. To be certain, there is no singular 'trans space' that exists as a specific place that can be clearly labeled or discretely located on a mainstream map. Rather, many spaces that emerge in this project as important to one's trans subjectivity are commonly expressed as punctuated zones of safety and risk, where being known as a person with a trans history or present may pose a threat: affective, psychic, or physical. With this in mind, I have combined mapping with discourse analysis and embodiment theory to build a conjoined biopolitical and phenomenological approach, in terms of which this project explores trans-spectrum experiences in DC. I combine these approaches—each focusing on a different element of materiality—to attend to the complicated ways in which life is experienced. I explore here each theoretical and methodological tool—maps and map-making, interviewing, and critical discourses analysis—and then contextualize how I have utilized each throughout this text.

What maps can say about bodies: mapping biopolitics, necropolitics, and phenomenology

As exemplified in Sam's map, it is clear that both biopolitics and phenomenology are productive analytical tools when unpacking trans-spectrum experiences of DC. Where Sam feels comfortable going is in relationship to where his gender is not undergoing destabilization. Importantly, these two approaches in understanding embodied experience have not historically been situated as mutually informing or even compatible as theoretical lenses. As such, I take the time here to consider what biopower and phenomenology, as materially oriented though ostensibly diametrically opposing modes of theorizing the body, tell us about embodied experience.

Separately, biopower and phenomenology construct the body as a site of ideological interpolation and regulation as well as a culturally contingent ground of action. Biopower, as a way of understanding the body as a site of colonizing sovereign and external powers, attends to complex ways the body is situated in the political-economic milieu. In contrast, phenomenology attends specifically to the body as an experiential entity and the site of cultural production, rather than subjugation. Phenomenology is a deeply personal and individualistic science that concerns itself with the ways in which culture is felt and performed at the micro level. But, as some have argued, a lens of biopower fails to attend to the individual and the personal, thus rendering the feeling body

numb or 'dead,' while phenomenological approaches may be too individualistic (Hughes and Paterson 1997, 334).

In this text I attempt to overcome the shortcomings of each approach through combining the socio-political framing of biopolitics and the subject-oriented expression of phenomenology in this discussion. Separately, each of these approaches falls short of theorizing the body as complexly oriented, as both sensual and political, and as micro-experienced and macro-regulated. Through combining these approaches I am able to render a flat, disjointed image of the human condition into a vibrant, multidimensional sphere. Indeed, at the heart of this project is the wrestling of conflicting yet complementary ways of understanding the body, all geared to "enhance the materiality and social-locatedness of conceptions of the Body, with an aim to teasing out the full political implications of a subjectivity" (Beasley and Bacchi 2005, 350). With this in mind, I bring into conversation here these disparate modes of corporeal inquiry through a brief investigation of their theoretical underpinnings, both in their philosophical contexts and from an anthropological perspective.

The body as object: biopower, biopolitics, and necropolitics

Approaches that utilize biopower as a lens for understanding the body vary but all agree that that, fundamentally, the body is produced, regulated, and disciplined through sovereign powers. Biopower is a mode of understanding relations of power through means that transcend top-down, vertical models of control and submission. Instead, biopower highlights the ways human bodies come to be regarded, manipulated, and regulated by sovereign powers in a quest to (re)produce ideological and capital productivity. Most simply, biopower is "a constitutive form of power that takes as its object human life" (Foucault 1977, 212). That is to say, the human body, in a biopolitical sense, can be situated on par with those of work animals: merely bodies whose physical and intellectual power can be harnessed through proper discipline and regulation. Biopower is dynamic. It is a process through which "individuals *become* subjects capable of self-knowledge and subjects knowable to others" (Hayden 2001, 34, emphasis added). That is, the knowable body is *first* an object and then a subject, rather than a subject and then an object. The subject–object relationship directly underlies the need for frameworks like *Trans Vitalities*; not all trans communities of practice are granted subjecthood.

Necropolitics, as an extension of biopolitics, considers the darker implications neoliberal evaluations of worth have on life and death. In contrast to biopolitics, necropolitics focuses on the implications of differentiation and devaluation on what ultimately become disposable bodies. These divisions, codified through race, gender, class, and other categories of identification, set the stage for necropolitical, as well as biopolitical, interventions "trying to regulate these population dynamics, ranging from health insurance systems and old-age pension, through to rules governing public hygiene" to flourish (Elbe 2004, 6). As opposed to biopolitics, which concerns itself with how bodies can be made productive, necropolitical technologies focus on the productivity of *disposability*.

Indeed, the relative strength of powers and technologies to regulate human bodies "resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (Mbembe 2003, 11). Achille Mbembe, the theoretical innovator of necropolitics, describes it as "the condition for the acceptability of putting to death" (Mbembe 2003, 17). That is, if one were to consider the pressure of limited resources on a given population alongside a biopolitically suspect group, the suffering and mortality of the suspect 'Others' becomes an inevitable, if not 'natural,' consequence. Necropolitics reveals the dangers of biopolitical formations of difference; that is, the function and ramifications of sexism, racism, classism, and other biologically anchored discriminations. This particular disregard, or macabre utilization, of human life has been repeated in both Western and non-Western social and political formations of "subjugations of the body, health regulations, social Darwinism, eugenics, medico-legal theories on heredity, degeneration, and race" (Mbembe 2003, 23). In short, the death, killing, and traumatizing of others have been justified through yoking that violence to biological weakness.

Moreover, those bodies that visibly differ from sanctioned forms, such as bodies read as gender-transgressive, are, through necropolitical interventions, utilized to simultaneously demarcate the limits of valuable bodies from the invalid. These valuable bodies are elements of an imaginary anatomy, "a socially constructed body based upon what is considered ideal at a particular moment in history and what is considered its opposite" (Craddock 2000, 27). Through the course of this text, gender-transgressing bodies, particularly trans-feminine bodies of color, embodying devalued forms of race and gender, come to represent that which is, in Craddock's formation, 'opposite.'

While volumes of literature have been produced theorizing the multiple philosophical questions raised through phenomenology, I focus here on the subject-oriented nature of this approach as a contrast to biopolitics. Phenomenology, most broadly, looks at the "existential beginnings, not of already constituted cultural products," of the body and self (Csordas 1990, 9). In other words, phenomenology situates the body as the site where the capacity for cultural expression begins rather than where culture lands; it is about the feeling, sensual body rather than the ways the outside world may attempt to appreciate that body. Phenomenology interrogates the 'felt world' in which "the carnal, the emotional, the cognitive and the cultural are indistinguishable" (Hughes and Paterson 1997, 336). If one were to situate biopower as marking the body as an *object* that can be used to reproduce meaning, phenomenology would situate the body as the *subject* that anchors meaning. Most importantly, a phenomenological approach views the body as "experienced in terms of the personal" wherein broader cultural narratives only help determine that meaning rather than engender it (Hughes and Paterson 1997, 335).

Theorizing the body, as both political and personal, renders visual the symbiosis between knowledge production at the site of the subjective body and knowledge produced at the foot of the objectified body. This said, biopolitics, necropolitics, and phenomenology, while all providing lenses through which to

unpack human experience from the body forwards, rather than from the outside in, do not function to replace narratives of lived experience. The motivations, affects, and desire of personal experience cannot be easily accounted for through any particular modality of academic inquiry over another. I utilize these frameworks here as a way to contextualize the narratives of participants of this project, not to displace them.

Biopolitics and phenomenology combined: gender as example

My reason for working with maps in this text is not to identify a finite space wherein trans knowledge is produced; rather, I am primarily invested in how bodies are both experienced and regulated according to marked, or unmarked, bodily difference. In particular, I am concerned with how the physical human body engages, resists, and explores technologies of citizenship, including those of capital and ideological productivity, from both a micro and macro perspective. The point of this approach is both "to acknowledge the necessary and ever-present links between bodies and citizenship" and explore how those links are somatically anchored (Beasley and Bacchi 2005, 349).

In this text I utilize biopolitics and phenomenology to unpack the complexity of corporeal experience and practice—ultimately, how we might understand life-making and a framework of trans vitalities. While each approach traditionally locates the site of knowledge production in a different place, I do not find this epistemological problem troubling in its application here. Instead, I am concerned with how living bodies that transverse the crevasses of power experience those climbs. That is, I do not visualize the lived world as a web of power or, in contrast, a plane of existence. Rather, I highlight here the interconnectivity of these spheres. The intersubjective body can be both that which interacts with other somatic entities and can also represent the ways the subject and object rely upon each for that dialectic of meaning production. Indeed, I attend to lived experience and situate people as both "having and being bodies" (Lock 1993, 136). I expound upon Dreyfus and Rabinow's belief that:

> [i]f the lived body is more than the result of the disciplinary technologies that have been brought to bear upon it, it would perhaps provide a position from which to criticize these practices.
>
> (1983, 167)

Turning away from epiphenomenal accounts of life, I focus in this text on corporeal experiences that, in my opinion, demand multidimensional analysis and discussion. In particular, I explore how trans subjectivities are differentially regarded by the nation-state as productive 'citizen-worker' bodies. This evaluation is produced and experienced in relationship to the landscapes of Washington, DC. By 'citizen-worker' bodies I am referring to bodies that are

interpolated and maintained through technologies of the nation-state but that *also* experientially manage and respond to demands for capital and ideological productivity.

As gender is arguably the nexus of difference for trans subjectivities against cisgender populations, I find use in clarifying how biopolitics and phenomenology attend to its production and expression. Gender has been described as a set of relationships (Butler 1988, 528), a form of embodiment (Guidotto 2007, 48; Ziarek 2008, 91) and even the site of denied citizenship (Grabham 2007, 44). Biopolitically, gender is assigned, naturalized to the body, and regulated. In response to Butler's notion of gender as performance, Beasley and Bacchi remind the theorist of the materiality of that performance and that when "the materiality of the body (its substance, limits and particularity) is collapsed into culture, it becomes insignificant. Butler's body is no body at all" (Beasley and Bacchi 2005, 346). They remind Butler, among others, that while unhinging the ideologies of gender practices from their biologically charged social mores, there remains a fleshy instantiation of those 'performances' left behind.

There are corporeal implications of ideologies of gender naturalization. Within the broader Western context, gender is assigned to the body based upon genital configuration. This reduction of the body to genitals, to one particular site of imagined difference, is a model of what Grabham refers to as 'hyper-embodiment,' wherein only one portion of the body becomes the focal point of personhood. As such, the implications for gender transgression (e.g., any deviation from a gender-as-genital configuration) are an issue for both gender-non-conforming and intersexed persons (Guidotto 2007, 59). The maps collected in this project bridge this hyper-embodiment of gender transgression to corporeal experience through visual text.

Theorizing the body through a map also requires attention to the narratives about those maps. Through eliciting stories, and narratives, from individuals we learn something about not only the subject engaged in this production but also about the ideologies framing this experience. As Hannabuss (2000, 402), and Ward and Winstanley (2003, 220), among many other social scientists, would agree, "the underlying premise of narrative inquiry is the belief that individuals make sense of their world most effectively by telling stories" (Bailey and Tilley 2002, 575; and on the articulation with gender and narrative, Linde 2004, 520). Subjects do not move through space as disembodied creatures, but rather as corporeal beings that experience their surroundings in ways that are geographically anchored. This geography provides a critical, and often overlooked, centerpiece in lived experience.

Mapping the urban sphere

The cityscape provides a productive ground upon which to visualize processes of neoliberalism, nationalisms, bio/necropolitics, and, as I explore in this text, vitalities. In the context of trans bodies and practices, particular racialized, classed, and sexualized forms of gender transgression operate as a threat to sex/

gender normativity. For those bodies that fail to be understood as ideologically productive, mechanisms of displacement both metaphorically and literally remove those devalued by the nation-state.

Importantly, zones of exclusion and concomitant projects of 'urban renewal' and 'development' work symbiotically to physically and socio-politically carve out bodies spatially from space. The exclusion of 'undesirables' from the urban terrain "must be seen as part of a broader process by which the law includes, weighs and assesses all urban denizens" (Carr, Brown, and Herbert 2009, 1962). Thus, if we orient 'citizenship' as the "right to access and use specific kinds of space" (Hubbard 2001, 54), zones of exclusion and practices of urban displacement operate to delineate between those that qualify as potential citizens—those that can maintain a claim of belonging to space or place—and those that do not. In other words, the value of a body and the "capacity and potential of individuals and the population as living resources" (Ong 2006, 6) become collapsible features in the possession or dispossession of space and place.

Historically, practices of urban displacement have served a larger structural role to delineate and segregate those bodies deemed pathological, undesirable, and, in some cases, disposable. That is, these bodies come to serve as necropolitical anchoring points, indexing that which is morally suspect and intrinsically disposable, representing "the condition for the acceptability of putting to death" (Mbembe 2003, 17). Zones of exclusion, zero-tolerance zones, and other similar kinds of "exclusionary regimes" emphasize "the undeserving and the unreformable nature of deviants" (Becket and Weston 2001, 44).

Importantly, necropolitical expressions of power are deeply entangled in human management systems of the US nation-state. It is important to note that "the surface and interior of the individual body rather than its social characteristics, such as language, behavior, or clothing" are utilized in the production of difference and, specifically, race (Somerville 2000, 23). Biopolitically, the production and utilization of 'race,' as well as embodied gender, as a distinguishing feature of a given population provides the foundation for recognizing, and denying, citizenship claims and ultimately access to formal structures of life-making. In particular, popular and official perceptions of citizenship rights in the United States continue to position "people of color as 'immigrant,' whether as aspirant minorities or dangerous threats to the liberal nation-state" (Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003, 45). Bodies of color may then be more readily rendered suspect and, by extension, somehow both negligibly productive and prohibitively disruptive.

Within the urban context, the combination of limited space, fluctuating economies, and shifting cash flows literally transforms the physical landscapes into nearly unrecognizable forms of redevelopment. While the 'revitalization' of an abandoned building with multi-million-dollar condos may serve to produce commoditized 'comfort,' this is at the expense of those understood as barriers to capital production. In this example, the role of gentrification, as a tool of both displacement and 'enrichment,' cannot be regarded as merely another element

of multiply intersecting bodies. Rather, it should be situated in the socio-political environment in which it comes to action, wherein particular kinds of bodies or practices are negatively evaluated and displaced by those practices and persons of value to city planners and developers.

Gentrification: bodies in spaces of exception

In many ways, we can conceptualize the violence of gentrification as a way in which necropolitics articulates with space. As opposed to biopolitics, which concerns itself with how bodies can be made productive, necropolitics explores the exceptionality of death among bodies identified as disposable. Indeed, "the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (Mbembe 2003, 11). It is the power to let live and the power to let die. It is these 'biopolitical breaks' that "enable the power to kill" (Osuri 2009, 35). Thus taxonomies of race, sexualized and gendered difference, created through biopolitical technologies, serve to demarcate that which is valuable from that which is not (e.g., the good citizen versus the bad citizen). It is within these zones of exceptionality that the '*homo sacer*,' Agamben's formulation of the body that may be killed with impunity but not in sacrifice (Agamben and Heller-Roazen 1998), is designed. Those bodies marked as ideologically suspect through biopolitical evaluation occupy a state wherein value can only be found within death—occupying a subjectivity that promises neither death nor life.

Gentrification, in addition to the destruction of public services, including affordable housing, clinics, and community meeting space in deference to corporate development, "can be seen as the material and symbolic knife-edge of neoliberal urbanism representing the erosion of the physical and symbolic embodiment of neoliberal urbanism' putative other—the Keynesian activist state" (Hackworth 2007, 98). This is particularly true within the cityscapes, wherein the combination of limited space, fluctuating economies, and shifting cash flows literally transforms the physical landscapes into nearly unrecognizable forms of redevelopment.

Gentrification carves out literal geographic spaces of exceptionality, wherein the management of sovereignty and sovereign bodies does not sit within the nation-state but rather is co-managed by the nation-state and capital investors. It is this relationship between the nation-state and the land developers that creates these 'death worlds' where destruction, erasure, and death can be acceptable. The way necropolitics articulates with bodies in space in gentrifying spaces represents the expression of 'necrocapitalism' (Banerjee 2008). Gentrification, as a kind of necrocapitalistic reformation of space, renders bodies that stand in the way of capital productivity as pathological and malignant tumors in an otherwise healthy expansion of capitally productive landscapes. Specifically, the necrocapitalist "practices of organizational accumulation that involve violence, dispossession, and death" provide the logic that buttresses the destruction of public housing and low-income neighborhoods, as well as the bodies that

once occupied those spaces (Banerjee 2008, 1543). As I explore in this text, it is through unpacking the collusions between the government and private industry in the elimination of unproductive (e.g., immigrant, brown, and queer) bodies that illuminates the queer *homo sacer* of the DC urban landscape.

Spatially and geographically defined, the 'city,' and how bodies come to be regulated by its terrain, is a powerful site of ideological work. In thinking about the particular spaces in which the regulation of bodies at work and place can be visualized, the 'inner city' becomes "soft spot for the implementation of neoliberal ideals" (Hackworth 2007, 13). Most broadly, the 'city' should be regarded as dynamic, as both produced and consumed by its inhabitants and visitors. Building on the concept that the city is dialectically linked to "very physical expressions of social relations, movements and ideologies" (Hackworth 2007, 9). One's experience of the city "is the product both of immediate sensation and of the memory of past experience, and it is used to interpret information and to guide action" (Lynch 1960, 4).

The concept of the map began with a colonizing investment in "overcoming the darkness of primitive territorial organization and establishing sovereignty, as whiteness, as home" (Piper 2002, 12). That is, maps were utilized by administrations and persons in power as a way of legitimating their presence in a space and associated dislocation and relocation of communities living there prior to their arrival. Specifically within the context of the city, maps have been "used in attempts to tame the urban labyrinth, and to represent its spaces as 'legible' and 'knowable' … transform it's messy incoherence's into a fixed graphic representation," which, in its common usage, erases and excludes marginal sexual practices and (Pinder 1996, 407). It is through a 'subversion' of these kinds of maps that the streets and spaces of the city become alive (Pinder 1996, 405; Perkins 2003, 345; or, in a specifically 'queer' sense, Halberstam 2005). Simply put, literal somatic and emotive experience, the way we feel physically and emotionally, both in that moment and in the past, are called up in our understandings and perception of space. In a city wherein violence against trans persons is ongoing, the related somatic or affective trauma undoubtedly comes to bear in the map-making project.

Polices of exclusion, spatial or otherwise, do not reflect an overly criminalizing state but rather are inherent to how 'inclusion' is understood. Exclusion is "necessarily constitutive of politics itself. In other words, the policing of what must remain 'outside' the state is very much an 'inside' activity" (Stevenson 2007, 141). As I discuss elsewhere (Edelman 2012, 2016), Prostitution-Free Zones (PFZs) sit at the intersection of the "juridico-political and the biopolitical" (Mitchell 2006, 102). The exclusion of 'undesirables' from the urban terrain "must be seen as part of a broader process by which the law includes, weighs and assesses all urban denizens" (Carr, Brown, and Herbert 2009, 1962). That is, similar to the cordoning-off of prisoners and other 'enemies of the state,' zones of exclusion work to physically and socio-politically cut off bodies spatially from the general public. Thus, if we situate one of the basic rights of 'citizenship' as the "right to access and use specific kinds of space," zones of exclusion thus

operate to delineate between those that qualify as potential citizens, and those that do not (Hubbard 2001, 54). Additionally, PFZs operate in line with what is expected of a 'post-justice city' in which urban policies are emerging "based on social and racial containment, the purification of public spaces, the subsidization of elite consumption, the privatization of social reproduction, the normalization of economic insecurity and preemptive crime control" (Peck 2004, 225). This kind of spatial governmentality, wherein the nation-state's policies work to "manipulate the spatial order of a regions or community," works to materialize this neoliberal ethos (Sanchez 2004, 262). Thus, PFZs do not actually attend to the crux of the 'crime' or 'criminal' but rather merely shift the practices to a different space not deemed as valuable as that within a PFZ and, in this case, this implicitly refers to racial and gendered practices.

Following Hubbard, I discuss the spaces and places we move through as 'becoming' (Hubbard 2001). While some features of a space or place can be more static in experience, such as buildings or other 'permanent' structures, the ways in which these spaces are regulated, imagined, or experienced are contingent on inherently dynamic features: time, bodies present in the space, climate, and so forth. As such, we must also regard the laws and policies that regulate public space as emerging out of the dynamics of cultural practice. In many ways, pedestrian and other exclusionary policies regulating public space do so in the interest of the discourses about space, rather than the space itself. Moreover, as with the production of laws, the application of laws is also an inherently dynamic practice; laws can only be applied when an authority is present, aware of the legal infraction and choosing to apply the law. Similarly, and as discussed in this chapter, the regulation of bodies in space (where one is expected to go or not go) does not rely only on law. Importantly, while this chapter considers laws and practices that emerge across nation-states and jurisdictions, in which there are different cultural practices, historical practices, and legal frameworks, the focus of the following chapter is on the regulations of bodies in urban spaces and as enacted through a legal framework of 'exclusion.' Importantly, I focus here on zones of exclusion that are not based upon a dominant social practice, such as gender-segregated public spaces. Rather, I focus here on laws and policies that seek to prevent bodies that might otherwise be in these spaces. When placed in broader social contexts, we can then understand exclusionary laws and policies as focused more on identifying bodies that are seen as out of space than as enactments of laws that are focused on space itself.

Note

1 Throughout this text when discussing a particular participant, I utilize the specific language and demographic information provided by the individual. Unless otherwise noted, the details and terminology included here were provided by the participant during the course of the interviews. As context, these details were offered in response to my request that they (the participant) provide: "Any information you

[the participant] think should be included with your map." In many cases participants limited this to racial identification, gender affiliation, or identity and relative age. The inclusion of these demographics, along with the exclusion of others, is certainly striking and undoubtedly reflects assumptions about what a 'researcher' wants to or should know about them. The inclusion of this information along with associated maps or narratives should not act to provide a base for generalizing to populations nor should it be understood to imply information not otherwise included (i.e., sexual subjectivity, political affiliation, ability, and so forth).

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5 Measuring vitalities

DC Trans Needs Assessment Survey

Washington, DC has many of the most progressive and trans-inclusive non-discrimination laws in the nation. However, transgender, transsexual, and gender-transgressing (henceforth 'trans') people continue to experience devastatingly high rates of poverty, under- and unemployment, employment discrimination, and health disparities. As a means to address these issues, members of the community, academics, activists, and volunteers worked together to develop a needs assessment survey that would directly document the issues facing trans and gender-non-conforming residents of Washington, DC. This survey, the "DC Trans Needs Assessment Survey," is, to date, the largest city-based, trans-specific needs assessment in US history, with over 500 participants. In addition to documenting a significant portion of the Washington, DC population (roughly 602,000 in 2013), the process of developing and implementing this survey integrated redistributive justice models of social action and applied academic work, providing fiscal and professional growth opportunities to members of the trans and gender-non-conforming community—in particular trans women of color— in Washington, DC. All funds raised in assistance of this project were funneled directly to those trained to collect surveys, while those with academic and professional affiliations donated labor and expertise. Myself, as the principle investigator, along with a coalition of activists, academics, and community members that came together to do this work, directly attribute the success of this survey to these public and redistributive justice models and implore those making use of this data to employ these same models in their own work. In this chapter I summarize both the process and findings of the DC Trans Needs Assessment Survey (henceforth 'DCTNA'). The DCTNA documents needs and priorities of trans communities working, living, or utilizing resources in Washington, DC.

Methodology

In early 2010, trans community members, activists, advocates, and academics began what would become a three-stage process to produce the nation's

largest city-based, trans-specific community-produced trans needs assessment project. During the first stage of the project, we held a series of community roundtables, facilitated by members of the community. At these roundtables we asked participants to map Washington, DC through the lens of a trans person. We followed this activity with a discussion about these maps, focusing on issues trans folks raised. We closed each roundtable by collecting questions community members wished to see asked in the survey. At the close of this phase, lasting between 2010 and 2011, we reached a total of 109 trans community members. We based the language of this survey on issues raised during the roundtables, as well as those raised in nationally used LGBT-specific surveys, such as the joint 2011 survey produced by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, federal census questions, and community-produced surveys used in local needs assessment projects, such as the 2007 Virginia Transgender Health Initiative Study and the 2000 Washington Transgender Needs Assessment Survey. Jody Herman of the Williams Institute collaborated with us in survey design and background research. Finally, in collaboration between academic researchers and at-large community members, members of the DCTNA Working Group provided input and evaluation of the quality and potential of questions used in the survey. IRB approval was secured for this project by myself, through American University in Washington, DC. Ruby Corado, veteran community activist and founder of Casa Ruby, served as our co-investigator and survey collection manager. Coding and analysis was completed by Elena Lumby, who, at the time, was a doctoral candidate at George Washington University.

After two rounds of internal testing, in both English and Spanish, the survey was released in both electronic and paper form in May 2012 and was closed in May 2013. The final survey consisted of 81 questions and was available in paper format and online. The survey was available in English and Spanish in both formats. Those with literacy problems and those who requested help were supported by hired community members trained to carry out surveys. As a component of our community-based approach, we trained and hired trans persons to work as survey coordinators. Specifically, we focused on hiring trans persons with a large amount of contact with trans communities to distribute and collect surveys from populations with limited computer access. Survey coordinators were provided $20 per survey collected, with those completing the survey in person receiving a $20 grocery store gift card. A link to the online survey was emailed to roughly 200 community contacts and posted on Washington, DC-based organization websites. Funding for distribution of the surveys came through two grants from the Diverse City Fund, as well as numerous individual donors.

The requirements for participation in this survey included: 1) identifying as trans or gender-non-conforming; 2) being at or over the age of 18; and 3) living in Washington, DC or in the immediate metropolitan area and receiving/accessing services within Washington, DC. Upon closing in May 2013, 624 surveys had been completed with a total of 521 surveys qualifying for inclusion

in the data analysis; 404 of the surveys identified as residents of the District of Columbia and 117 as living within the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Due to the extremely high relative cost of living in the District and the limited resources of many trans persons who took this survey, we found it imperative to include surveys taken by those living in the immediate vicinity who also reported utilizing health care, medical services, or employment within the District.

Prior to analysis, survey data were 'cleaned,' or edited, to eliminate questions from respondents who did not meet the study criteria of being over 18, identifying as gender-non-conforming, or living in Washington, DC or the metropolitan area. First, we sought to include only those who were adults. Individuals who responded to the question "Are you 18 years of age or older?" with "Yes" were included. If an individual responded "No," or left the question blank, we checked their response for the question "What is your age?," where they entered a numeric value. If this question was left blank, or the indicated age was under 18, the questionnaire was removed from the sample group.

Next, we addressed trans identity and/or gender-non-conformity. Individuals who responded to the question "Do you now, or have you ever, considered yourself to be transgender, transsexual, trans, or gender-non-conforming in any way?" with "Yes" were included. If the individual said "No" or left the question blank we checked their response to "What is your primary gender identity today?"; individuals who selected, or wrote in, an identity on the trans spectrum were included. If an individual selected only a binary identity, "man" or "woman," we then looked at their answer for "Were you assigned male or were you assigned female at birth?" If their gender identity was the same as their sex assigned at birth, or skipped all of the gender identity questions, their survey was dropped from the sample.

Finally, we sought to include only those who lived in Washington, DC, or in the metropolitan area. First, we identified residents of Washington, DC. If an individual responded "Yes" to the question "Do you currently live in Washington, DC," they were included. If this question was left blank, we looked at the question "What is the five-digit zip code where you currently live or stay?"; If the listed zip code was within Washington, DC, the individual was included. If the individual reported they did not live in Washington, DC, we went to the question "Do you currently live in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, such as Northern Virginia, or Maryland?" If they responded "Yes," they were included in the survey. Through application of the study criteria, we began with 624 surveys, and 103 were removed from the sample. The final number of surveys to be used for the report was 521.

At the end of each section we included a community response and recommendations subsection, which includes responses and methods community groups are current utilizing to attend to issues addressed in this section. These subsections were developed through direct interviews with community leaders, community organizations and groups, as well as members of the community. We emphasized the critical importance of these sections as they

provide practical and useful guidelines for practitioners, government agencies, organizations, and individuals in addressing these issues. In this project we also stressed the importance of employing redistributive justice and community-based models when utilizing these data for program development, grant proposal writing, and academic production. This needs assessment project reflected an immense social, political, and economic divide among trans communities and other community groups with which they are traditionally aligned (such as gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities).

Data analysis and presentation of findings

A total of 624 surveys were completed, with 521 surveys qualifying for inclusion in the data analysis; 404 of the surveys identified as residents of Washington, DC and 117 as living within the Washington, DC metropolitan area. It is important to note that general demographic details collected allowed for complex identity and experiences, and thus, 'totals,' where noted, may reflect frequency, rather than number of participants. As context, as of 2010, Washington, DC's population was 601,723.

Approximately 63% of survey respondents identified as trans or gender-non-conforming and were assigned male at birth, and approximately 37% identified as trans or gender-non-conforming and were assigned female at birth. The racial demographic breakdown for the survey was approximately 59% respondents of color and 41% white respondents: 41% white, 30% Black, 21% Hispanic, 4% American-Indian or Alaskan Native, 2.5% Asian/Asian-American Pacific Islander, 1.5% unknown. As context, Washington, DC's racial demographics (as of 2010) were 38.5% white, 50.7% Black, 9.1% Hispanic, 0.3% American-Indian or Alaskan Native, 3.5% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 3.5% other. (It should be noted that while most of the racial demographic categories are standardized in the US, the survey and DC general population categories differ slightly. Specifically, for discussion purposes here Asian/Asian-American Pacific Islander have been grouped together. However, the DC data presented here disaggregates 'Asian' from Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.)

As compared to the non-trans population of Washington, DC, fewer trans persons have an associate degree or higher; 42% of trans people over the age of 25 in this survey had an associate degree or higher compared to 55% of people in Washington, DC above the age of 25. White trans people are substantially more likely to achieve an associate degree or higher than Black and Hispanic trans people; 66% of white trans people have finished an associate degree or higher compared to 14% of Black and 15% of Hispanic trans people. Trans people lacking an associate degree or higher are three times more likely to be unemployed than trans people with a degree; 16% of trans people with an associate degree are unemployed compared to 47% of trans people who do not have a degree. As compared to non-trans Washington, DC residents with a bachelor's degree, trans people with a bachelor's degree are five times more likely to be unemployed; 14% of trans people older than 25 in this survey said they were

unemployed, compared to 3% of people in Washington, DC older than 25. Trans-masculine persons are three times more likely to have achieved a degree beyond high school than trans-feminine persons; 71% of trans-masculine persons reported attaining a higher-education degree as compared to only 29% of trans feminine individuals. Of participants taking this survey, 111 reported having attended a Washington, DC school while identifying or presenting as a trans person. Out of the respondents who attended high school while in Washington, DC, 49% of those who had been harassed ultimately dropped out of school.

Significantly, nearly half of all trans persons living in Washington, DC earn below $10,000 a year, with trans communities of color experiencing even greater levels of poverty. Over 46% of our respondents made below $10,000, compared to only 11% of Washington, DC residents. Trans persons of color, particularly trans women of color, face the greatest economic hardships of those we surveyed, with 57% making below $10,000. The trans population in Washington, DC faces extremely high rates of unemployment, with 36% reporting unemployment compared to just 9% of Washington, DC residents. Black trans persons had the highest rate of unemployment, at 55%. Even among those with an associate degree or higher, the unemployment rate was still higher (16%) than Washington, DC's overall rate of 7.5%. Roughly half of trans persons who reported being unemployed currently earn income through underground or gray economy work. Over 51% of unemployed transgender persons work at least one job in the underground/gray economy. Those working in the informal economy are significantly more likely to be victims of violence, with over 49% having been physically assaulted due to being perceived as transgender, versus the already high 42% for trans respondents overall.

Hiring discrimination is an additional barrier for trans persons seeking employment. Over 40% of our respondents had been denied at least one job due to being perceived as trans. Importantly, significantly more trans persons of color had been denied a job (49%) than whites (30%). For trans persons who had been employed, half reported experiencing workplace harassment. Types of harassment included being asked inappropriate questions about surgical status (44%), denied access to appropriate bathrooms (28%), and forced to present as the wrong gender (27%); 13% of our respondents reported having been a victim of physical assault in the work place. Persons of color were significantly more likely to have been sexually or physically assaulted (21%), compared to whites (6%). Those who had an associate degree or higher were less likely to have been assaulted (6%) than those who had some college or less (19%).

Trans persons living in Washington, DC face immense barriers in achieving stable housing, with 20% of those taking the survey reporting that they are currently experiencing homelessness. White and Hispanic trans-feminine and trans-masculine individuals were equally likely to have experienced hardship. Those currently experiencing homelessness are significantly more likely to be HIV-positive (43%) than those with homes (16%). Black trans-feminine individuals were significantly more likely to have experienced hardship (74%) than

Black trans-masculine individuals (29%). Those currently homeless were significantly more likely to be trans-feminine (28%) than trans-masculine (6%). Half of those currently experiencing homelessness reported relying on informal and gray economic work for income (such as sex work). Over a quarter of those that reported experiencing homelessness also report having had sex with people in order to live with them (27%); 70% of those who reported having experienced homelessness also reported having been denied a lease in the past. Half of those who identified themselves as undocumented also reported currently experiencing homelessness. Of those who were homeless, 24% had been physically or sexually assaulted by the police. Of those that reported living in a shelter, 41% had either been physically or sexually assaulted by shelter inmates or staff. Roughly one out of four of survey respondents reported having been denied a lease due to being perceived as transgender. Trans-feminine individuals (28%) were twice as likely to have been denied as trans-masculine individuals (13%). Black (30%) and Hispanic (33%) trans individuals were three times more likely than white (9%) trans individuals to have been denied a lease. Those who were undocumented (58%) were more likely to have been denied than documented individuals (19%). Having been assaulted in a shelter was significantly associated with a history of suicide attempt.

Of those that took this survey, only half reported that they had any form of identification that reflected their gender identity. This includes a passport, a driver's license, a social security card, and/or a birth certificate. Importantly, this rate (slightly above or slightly below 50%) was consistent across racial groups and gender identity. For those that had documents that reflected their gender identity: 42% had a driver's license that reflected their gender identity; 25% had a social security record that reflected their gender identity; but only 19% had a passport that reflected their gender identity and 15% had a birth certificate that reflected their gender identity.

The sexual orientations of those who took this survey varied across a wide spectrum of identities. Importantly, this survey allowed individuals to 'check all' identities that applied to them. The most common identities were 'queer,' with 25% of participants including this among the terms describing their sexual identity, and 'straight/heterosexual,' with 20% of participants including this term. Importantly, individuals may identify as both 'queer' and 'straight/heterosexual.' 'Gay,' 'bisexual,' and 'same-gender-attracted/loving' were included among 19%, 18%, and 11% of terms of identification, respectively. As sexual orientation is inherently gendered (such as 'gay' being used to identify a man who is attracted to other men), how one identifies their sexual orientation is complicated if one's gender identity, or the identity of those they partner with, is fluid. Additionally, sexual orientation may also represent the communities one identifies with, regardless of sexual desire. Thus, this survey exemplifies the complexity of sexual orientation and identity and how it is both independent of gender identity as well as implicitly tied to it.

Importantly, half, or 50%, of all of those who reported having interacted with an LGBT-specific organization reported having had a negative experience.

Twice as many trans-feminine persons reported having interacted with LGBT organizations as did trans-masculine persons; 40% of those with negative experiences reported an LGBT organization or group as being unwelcome to trans persons or in addressing trans issues; 45% of those reporting experiences both positive and negative with LGBT organizations also reported the need to educate the organization on trans issues or needs. Only 32% of those reporting experiences with LGBT organizations also reported that an LGBT organization was both welcoming and prepared to address trans-specific issues or needs.

Echoing the theme of greatest prevalence in the maps, over a third (35.7%) of respondents reported having engaged in sex work, or the exchange of sexual acts for money, housing, and/or drugs, either currently or in the past. Trans-feminine persons (assigned male at birth) and trans persons of color were significantly more likely to have engaged in sex work. Half of trans-feminine persons (assigned male at birth) report having engaged in sex work while only 10% of trans-masculine (those assigned female at birth) reported having done so. Over half of Black and Hispanic trans persons also had a history of sex work, compared to 12% of white trans persons. Individuals experiencing economic challenges were significantly more likely to have had a history of sex work. Those who were currently unemployed, undocumented, homeless, or had been fired due to discrimination were significantly more likely to have been a sex worker than those who were not in those situations.

Those that took this survey reported having experienced disturbingly high rates of assault and harassment. Additionally, of those who reported having been to prison or jail, 116 reported that they had been incarcerated or detained while identifying or presenting as trans. Of those who had interacted with the police, 53% interacted with the police as a trans person with 47% having not interacted with the police as a trans person. Of those that took this survey, 74% had been verbally assaulted, 42% physically assaulted, and 35% sexually assaulted. Trans-feminine individuals were more likely than trans-masculine individuals to have been assaulted; 57% of trans-feminine individuals had been assaulted compared to 17% of trans-masculine individuals; 47% of trans-feminine individuals had been sexually assaulted compared to 14% of trans-masculine individuals. Experiences of assault are more common among trans persons of color compared to white trans persons; 54% of Black and 60% of Hispanic trans persons had been physically assaulted compared to 21% of whites; 47% of Black and 56% of Hispanic trans persons had been sexually assaulted compared to 14% of whites. Among Black trans persons, 62% of trans-feminine individuals had been physically assaulted compared to 14% of Black trans-masculine individuals. Among Hispanic trans persons, 70% of trans-feminine individuals had been physically assaulted compared to 27% of trans-masculine Hispanics.

Defining trans lives, trans needs, and trans rights

Thus far in this chapter I have provided a brief summary of the metrics used to outline trans needs. However, when we contrast this to prevalent notions of

'LGBT' rights frameworks, we are able to quickly identify profound gaps. In this section I provide an overview for how gender identity and transgender rights have been defined in an LGBT rights framework, what international and regional organizations and social actors have defined as fundamental trans rights and, finally, the limitations of applying a homogenizing 'trans rights' framework to a vastly disparate array of gender-liminal subjectivities and practices. First, I define the scope and reach of a 'trans rights' framework as housed within 'LGBT' legal and organizational practices. Next, I outline the key issues that international and regional trans rights activists, advocates, and academics have outlined as central to addressing their own communities' needs. Importantly, while the popularity of collapsing sexual and gender minorities into an 'LGBT' framework would suggest a coherence of shared identities and practices across cultural and regional experience, this framework may, instead, function to elide profound differences in the formation and application of primarily North Atlantic and anglophone understandings of 'rights' and 'needs.' Rather, as discussed in internationally and regionally focused reports, activist needs assessments, and academic work, trans, and gender-liminal rights have been, regionally, best addressed and met by organizations and groups that are not housed within an 'LGBT' framework or organization. Finally, I discuss how approaching 'trans rights,' as a category of mutually understood and identifiable subjectivities and experiences across different communities of practice, may function to bolster shared rights claims while also, simultaneously, delimiting or delegitimizing local understandings of gender experience and expression.

Finally, I revisit the most commonly discussed concerns of those who participated in this project: safety, employment, and support. Additionally, I integrate the data from the DC Trans Needs Assessment to how these narratives articulate a gap between existing legal protections and lived experience. With these gaps in mind, I consider the potential efficacy and impact of employment non-discrimination and hate crimes legislation for trans-spectrum subjectivities as a whole. I then consider how these two policies have been articulated as core issues in trans rights by national-level LGBT groups, which, significantly, are relied upon by many local jurisdictions for policy-based direction.

Gender identity and transgender rights: defining the 'T' in LGBT

At the global level, there exists no single unifying category of 'transgender' experience or identity that could be understood as simply and accurately reflecting the immense diversity of gender expressions within and across nation-states. Gender-marginalized identities and practices—often housed within the umbrella term 'transgender' or 'trans'—are perhaps best understood as referring to a shared experience of being identified as—or as identifying with—deviating from regionally valued or established categories of gender normativity. Increasingly, these categories are understood as occupying a place within a binary wherein one's gender identity and gender expression are to be

aligned with the gender assigned at birth or early in life. This lack of a single shared identity has, however, not pre-empted a globalized definition for gender identity and expression and, importantly, measurable implications for gender transgression.

The Yogyakarta Principles—a set of guidelines emerging out of a 2005 international convening of gender and sexual-minority activists, academics, and legal scholars—reflects a list of mutually experienced and identifiable human rights concerns based on sexuality and gender identity. This document—initially released in 2006 and updated in 2017—provides definitions, general needs, and recommendations for nation-states, non-governmental organizations, and other policy-making and law-making bodies. The 2006 Yogyakarta Principles define gender identity as

> each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms
>
> (Onufer Corrêa and Muntarbhorn 2007)

The 2017 update—The Yogyakarta Principles Plus 10—includes an additional definition for gender expression as,

> each person's presentation of the person's gender through physical appearance—including dress, hairstyles, accessories, cosmetics—and mannerisms, speech, behavioural patterns, names and personal references, and noting further that gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity.
>
> (Grinspan et al. 2017)

These definitions both reflect gender as highly contextual and individual yet composed of features, such as dress or mannerisms or secondary sex characteristics, that, across cultural practices, are understood to be features of how gender is most commonly expressed and understood by others.

Importantly, there exists no global legal code that would compel nation-states or local jurisdictions to integrate or uphold any of the definitions or recommendations outlined in either the Yogyakarta Principles or those issued by the UN Human Rights Council. Instead, these documents have functioned to provide a shared set of goals or common discourses that can then be integrated into local laws and policies by invested stakeholders and social actors. However, given the scale with which these reports are to be applied, the language of these suggestions reflects a fundamental flaw in how primarily North Atlantic, eurocentric, and anglophone-based institutions have understood sexuality and gender identity at the global scale. This application of a very specific understanding of the needs of sexual and gender minorities are readily

apparent among the UNHRC recommendations, which encourage, "new anti-discrimination and hate crime laws, legal recognition of same sex relationships, protection of intersex children, and changes that make it easier for transgender people to have their gender identity legally recognized" (UNHRC 2015, 1). These recommendations overwhelmingly privilege an understanding of sexual and gender minority rights or needs as located within the domain of domesticity and marriage. Moreover, the call for an increased reliance on the criminal justice system to address systemic inequities encourages policies and practices that function to harm—rather than support—trans and gender-marginalized communities.

A brief history of the US LGBT paradigm

Specifically, scholars and activists working on both sexuality and gender liminality within and across nation-states have noted that the 'LGBT framework' has functioned to privilege subjectivities and desires that align with those valued in North Atlantic and anglophone contexts (on sexuality, see Blackwood and Wieringa 1999; Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang 1997; Lewin and Leap 2002; on gender liminality, see Driskill 2011; Kuntsman et al. 2014). As documented in the largest and most comprehensive survey of organizations and groups working on trans rights across the world, the 2017 "State of Trans Organizing" report reflects a pattern of needs that radically diverges from marriage, increased criminalization, or nation-state-level recognition of gender identity. The ubiquity of the 'LGBT rights' model as understood as primarily issues of recognition has, instead, had a well-documented deleterious effect on the rights and empowerment of trans persons across multiple cultural contexts. Importantly, the State of Trans Organizing report also reflects that autonomous organizations led by members of local gender-minority communities were also those far more likely to be attending to, and addressing the needs of, those most marginalized. Specifically, trans rights organizations that were not housed within an 'LGBT' organization reported their constituencies as including

> low-income people (53.6%), sex workers (30.1%), ethnic minorities (27.4%), and people living with HIV/AIDS (24.7%). Smaller numbers also worked directly with migrants and refugees (14.3%), people with disabilities (12.0%), people involved in the criminal justice system (11.9%), [and] intersex people (7.0%).
>
> (Howe et al. 2017, 19)

The subjugation of gender-liminal subjects in lesbian and gay spaces in the North Atlantic context emerged alongside the increased focus on a politics of respectability. Historically, gender-non-conforming, gender-transgressing, and trans-identifying persons—often locating themselves within sexually marginal communities—were a central part of sexually liminal community formation. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the push to include the 'T' in acronyms emerged

simultaneous to larger structural critiques of gay and lesbian rights and feminist projects; while at one time these projects relied on a politics of difference to succeed, the inherent exclusivity of the politics failed to meet the goals of the members (Marotta 1981; Califia 1997; Meyerowitz 2009). As exclusion and a politics of difference shifted to include queer of color critiques and responded to third-wave feminisms, the addition of the 'T' to LGB functioned to express the *inclusivity* of the movement (Green 2004). This 'post-identity' politics maintained that exclusion was a problem but should also be understood as "both illegitimate and politically problematic—coupled with the assumption that any exclusion is equivalent to any other kind of exclusion" (Park 2002, 754). As a result, 'difference' was collapsed so as to avoid the anxieties of addressing complicated structural exclusionary practices. Many formerly LGB organizations began to 'add the T' to their organizational name and mission statement (Devor and Matte 2004, 180; Paisley et al. 2006). Ultimately, the inclusion of the 'T,' along with indigenous forms of gender transgression (such as two-spirit) and other distinct categories of identity and expression, would fulfill only the appearance of inclusion rather than evidence of an engaged and sustained commitment to trans, intersex, and indigenous gender identities. Finally, with the introduction of 'queer studies' into common parlance and activist discourses in North Atlantic contexts, 'queer' came to signify all the letters that were now, literally, erased once again. As a result, LGBT and, at times, 'queer,' in this kind of genealogical deployment, would function to index trans-spectrum subjectivities. In doing so, homophobia, transphobia, and sexism are all conflated into one kind of discriminatory project. Issues of race, class, ability, and pathologized modalities of gender transgression become shadowed by discussions of sexual object choice, obscuring the very differences these forms of inclusion sought to displace (Park 2002, 749). Indeed the violence of homophobic and transphobic projects should be discussed as "mutually reinforcing discourses of oppression, in which neither is fully reducible to the other, though interrelated" (Park 2002, 750). However, in practice, and in the dominant modalities of 'gay rights' as imagined, packaged, and promoted by organizations and funders located in the Global North, homonormative formulations of rights displace other fundamental human rights.

Homonormativity and homonationalisms: projects in erasure and violence

At the heart of the project of homonormativity is the acquisition of the dominant heteronormative 'rights and duties' of citizenship, including, but not limited to: marriage, serving in the military, adoption, and other modes of consumption and (re)production. Most importantly, homonormativity does not strive to destabilize heteronormative values but rather "upholds and sustains them while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption" (Duggan 2002, 179). Homonormativity reproduces the heteronormative

"ideology of American individualistic liberalism" rather than attempting to question oppressive and exclusionary models of the 'good citizen' (Seidman 2001, 323). Thus homonormativity—or the foregrounding of marriage and nation-state recognition of identity—is a mode wherein gays and lesbians can gain access to rights typically withheld only to 'good' heterosexual citizens. As such, homonormativity functions as a framework for citizenship claims, as a set of rules valorizing whiteness, (re)production and consumption, depoliticization, and only privileged, 'normative' forms of gender and sexed embodiment. Trans and other gender-liminal persons, as well as any body or practice falling outside of valued race, class, and gendered bodies, are thus pressed into a 'recourse to normality' that functions to "exclude any kind of embodied or political difference that does not perform the correct responsibilities of the national citizen" (Aizura 2006, 302). In other words, engaging in normativity, whether in a heteronormative or homonormative context, works to elide difference in deference to the dominant ideologies of valuation. Thus, trans issues that are not aligned or capable of being integrated into the imaginary of valued citizenship are trapped behind the reproduction of strict notions of gender and normative productive economies.

For LGBT organizations to support marginalized gendered practices would otherwise limit the capacity of 'queer' to reach nation-state-sanctioned status. This kind of sexual exceptionalism is a form of queer as a "regulatory" ideology wherein the "ascendency of whiteness" occupies a hegemony within LGBT civil rights discourses (Puar 2018). Homonationalism, concerned with the capacity of the queer subject to occupy model citizenship, exemplifies the ideological forces that limit mainstream LGBT activism from achieving a viable conduit for securing the rights of trans and other gender-liminal subjects.

Needs assessment: experiences at LGBT organizations

As this report has explored, the issues facing transgender and gender-non-conforming communities may be different than those facing sexual-minority groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and other queer communities. Reflecting a social shift in the mid-1990s towards inclusivity, many organizations that may primarily focus on addressing the needs of sexual-minority groups have adopted the inclusive acronym 'LGBT' to identify the communities they provide support or services to. However, many organizations or community groups that cater to or provide support for 'LGBT' communities are often ill-equipped to address trans-specific issues or needs. It is also important to note that trans persons may identify as heterosexual or straight.

In situations where an organization is not equipped to deal with, or is hostile to, trans-specific issues or needs, a trans person may then bear the burden of either educating the group on trans issues, risking exclusion, or choosing to make their trans identity, experience, or history unknown. As a part of this survey, participants could identify different ways in which their experience was negative. Participants could also identify whether the organization or group

was ultimately unwelcoming or was receptive to trans-specific issues. As such, the experiences trans community members have in LGBT organizations, such as social justice organizations, support groups, and health care providers, or other groups that may receive private or public funding, is particularly significant when considering how to address the needs of trans communities. Half, or 50%, of all of those who reported having interacted with an LGBT-specific organization reported having had a *negative experience*. Twice as many trans-feminine persons (assigned male at birth) reported having interacted with LGBT organizations as did trans-masculine person (assigned female at birth); 40% of those with negative experiences reported an LGBT organization or group as having been unwelcome to trans persons or in addressing trans issues; 45% of those reporting experiences, both positive and negative, with LGBT organizations also reported the need to educate the organization on trans issues or needs. Only 32% of those reporting experiences with LGBT organizations also reported that an LGBT organization was both welcoming and prepared to address trans-specific issues or needs.

Thus far in this book, I have primarily documented how trans 'issues,' as a conglomeration of concerns specific to different modalities of trans-spectrum identity and experience in Washington, DC, coalesce around issues of safety, violence, and the need for support. Specifically, I have explored how the participants of this project express 'trans space' within their maps of Washington, DC along gradients of safety. Significantly, some spaces, such as sex work(er) strolls, represent a kind of liminal space, where safety and danger are modulated against the relative potentials to give or receive support. Finally, I have noted how different policies and laws, such as the Prostitution-Free Zone, undergird a necropolitical disregard for particular trans-feminine-appearing bodies in these spatial liminalities. In short, the participants of this project have recast Washington, DC as a 'trans city' wherein no singularity of trans experience, embodiment, or identity exists yet where core issues of safety and support emerge as collective concerns. The narratives and maps collected here reveal that for the 108 participants of this project the centerpieces of 'trans DC' cityscapes are dynamic mediations of continuities of danger, threats of assault, and other modalities of violence. Importantly, these narratives and maps also reveal stubborn and committed collectivities of resistance, intra-community support, and trans vitalities, much of which occur within and alongside these planes of danger.

That said, the extent to which those who participated in this project collectively emphasized certain issues or concerns (such as violence and safety) as relevant to their experience as members of a 'trans community' does reflect productive points of continuity and platforms for attending to particular and specific trans needs and rights. As noted in previous chapters, the spatial depictions produced by those who participated in this project, as supplemented by discussions about their maps, focus most heavily on, and are predominantly organized around, themes of safety, fear, and risk. Significantly, the spatial element most common to these maps was the depiction of sex work(er)

strolls, which were included in a little over half of all maps. The associated narratives of those who included these strolls on their maps do not suggest that all of these participants engage in sex work. Instead, these narratives describe these areas as spaces of work, to get and give support, friendship, police harassment, and organizational outreach. The second- and third-most common elements of representation were depictions of organizations (direct-service and community-based, such as health care clinics or HIPS) and homes and friends' homes. These locations, similar to sex work(er) strolls, are also framed in terms of social networking and support. In short, the most popular themes depicted in the maps collected in this project reflect the importance of locating or creating opportunities for support and contact with other trans-identifying persons.

Criminalizing the need for support: sex work(er) strolls

Sex work(er) strolls are parts of the city where many participants of this project identified the opportunity to connect with and support friends. Importantly, unlike one's home or a service organization, sex work(er) strolls are sites of hypercriminalization, violence, and the profiling of trans women of color as sex workers. As highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2, representations of space and place in maps should not necessarily be seen as forms of literal representation divorced from the narratives that accompany them. That is, while one could read the representation of sex work(er) strolls as evidence that the majority of participants in this project are or were sex workers, the narratives collected alongside these maps reveal a far more complex and nuanced use of sex work(er) spaces. Latoya's map (Figure 5.1) depicts this complexity.

Latoya, a Black trans woman in her early twenties, fractures the 'T. World' of DC into seven distinct frames. The strolls are featured most prominently, with 'K Street', 'Eastern Ave,' and 'Westland Dr SE' all occupying their own zones. 'Home', 'Jail,' and the 'Night clubs' of DC complete the periphery of her city, with 'THE' (Transgender Health Empowerment) placed in the center of the city. While these spatial designations do fall roughly in line with which quadrant of the city they are located in, this is not a literal depiction of the landscapes of DC. Instead, like the majority of those who participated in this project, she highlights and includes only the spaces and experiences that are central to her construction of a trans DC. In this context, the strolls, occupying nearly half of her map, are an integral part of her life. THE, as an organization providing support for trans women (predominantly of color) interested in no longer engaging in sex work, is featured prominently in the center of the map. But, rather than evaluating these 'sex work(er)' spaces in the negative, she articulates them as pieces of a larger co-dependent whole; that is, strolls, even for those not necessarily engaging in sex work, are still an important feature for connecting meaningfully with other young trans women of color in supportive and friendship-based ways. Latoya's map suggests that those looking to attend to trans needs and rights, as a diverse array of experiences and issues, should

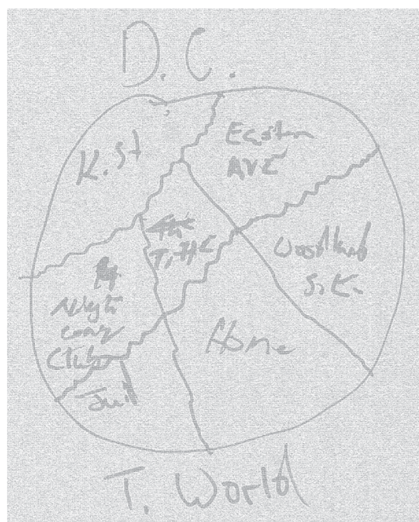

Figure 5.1 Latoya's map

include in their discussion the ways sex work, and sex worker space, function to support networks and friendships.

While many narratives in this project reveal that some participants have done or do engage in sex work, these areas, such as the intersections of 5th Street and K Street Northwest, were also specifically described as spaces where many young trans women of color can locate friendship and support. The strolls, represented in a little over half of all maps in this project, should *not* be understood as *only* the site of economies of sex work. The high rate of inclusion within these maps serves to remind us that supportive 'trans space' does not necessarily index a local LGBT center or group, common examples of sorts of 'community space.' We see this confirmed in a timely *Washington Post* article, published in August 2011, only a week prior to off-duty police officer Furr's attack on a car of trans women. Significantly, this article, following the nightly activities of 'Staci,' a 23-year-old trans woman of color, incidentally documents the way young trans sex workers in DC utilize sex work(er) strolls for community building. Staci participates in this kind of street-based outreach, as someone who engages in sex work at home but not along the strolls, risking her own physical and legal safety to check in on friends and ensure their safety. As the article describes:

> Staci, 23, says she doesn't need to come down here for money. She's got her own clients from her own escort site. Like some other women, she comes to the strip just to say hey. Socialize. See who's got a new look. See who got out of jail. Check up on the girls who can only be themselves on this

> stretch of road at this time of night. Out here she becomes a mother, an aunt and a sister, tossing words of caution and "love yous" to girls whose families couldn't deal with it all.
>
> (Zak 2011, 1)

To be certain, the notion that young trans women of color may go to a sex work(er) stroll for reasons other than identifying potential clients is not generally publicly or institutionally recognized. As discussed in the context of Prostitution-Free Zones, where many young trans women of color report have been falsely detained and arrested for sex work, the lack of this complexity of understanding in public space has profound implications for the women in these areas. As noted, within a Prostitution-Free Zone a police officer is empowered to detain or arrest any person merely *suspected* of engaging in sex work or sex work-related activities. As a result of this 'guilty by association' policy, many young trans women of color in these areas are developing a criminal record for solicitation, trespass, resisting arrest, and other charges that emerge from a resistant 'criminal' subject. These criminal records, set alongside the concern of unemployment, raised by nearly all participants in this project, become additional roadblocks to accessing the formal economy and employment. Remarkably, many of those who were at one point wrongfully charged with solicitation may find themselves with little choice but to engage in sex work to pay for living expenses after finding no inlet into the formal economy.

Access to employment, as one particular trans 'need,' is hindered by the over- and unfair criminalization of those in sex work(er) areas as well as through additional socio-political roadblocks not generally considered when introducing employment non-discrimination policies. Many young trans people may drop out of high school, or even drop out of school at a younger age, to escape bullying on campus, at home, or within their communities and thus may lack a high school diploma—a requirement for nearly any kind of 'formal' employment. Moreover, for some of these trans persons, particularly those coming from or living in poverty, accessible and supportive education may not have been available, further limiting one's capacity to meet the minimum educational credentials to secure a job. In short, the lack of employment for some trans persons may not simply be an issue of job discrimination, but rather, as the narratives and maps in this project reveal, the result of a complex and interconnected system of inequalities. This kind of disjuncture between lived experience and policy intended to attend to the issue results in ineffective if not somewhat useless law.

Lacking legal or nation-state support services, many of those interviewed in this project identify and construct their own support networks. To be sure, the role and importance of support, whether through friends or LGB or T organizations, emerges as a powerful force that strings maps and multiple kinds of trans lived experience together throughout this project. In the context of the variability of trans rights, and what is needed to secure these rights, the issue of support should be carefully considered. Indeed, many of the young trans

women of color who participated in this project felt the benefits of supporting friends and other young trans women along the strolls outweighed the very real danger of police profiling and violence.

Acceptable support: community organizations

While support along sex work(er) strolls is erased through criminalization, the support offered by select LGB and T groups and organizations does not necessarily offer a workable alternative. Community organizations and activist groups, represented in one third of all maps, were framed by participants as potential sources of support, whether emotional, psychic, or physical. This said, not all organizations included in maps were evaluated positively. Some participants listed particular LGB and T organizations for the sole purpose of identifying their insufficient support of trans needs (as seen in maps included in Chapter 3). And some participants did not include organizations that might be expected to be given broader representation.

Significantly, one particularly salient omission in that regard was 'the Center,' a self-touting, all-inclusive LGBT 'community center' for the district, which was included in only one map in this project. Alone this is not significant, but in the context where roughly 40 of these maps were produced in a roundtable setting held in the office of 'the Center,' this omission is particularly noteworthy. In this context, the exclusion of the DC Center, which was not necessarily held in great regard by many of the participants of this project, highlights the failures of some local LGB groups to provide meaningful support or opportunity for the trans-spectrum identities or practices. In this particular context, the exclusion of the Center was a form of negative evaluation through exclusion; the erasure of this space from the collected maps reflects the insignificance this organization has in trans-spectrum lives.

As a result of the failure of larger LGBT-focused groups to provide sufficient support to the participants of this project, the bulk of their 'needs' become addressed through intra-community support mechanisms. This may include visiting friends along the strolls, in their homes, or at trusted LGB and T or sex worker support organizations such as HIPS and DCTC. Importantly, not every trans-spectrum-identifying person experiences the same needs. The varying degree of these needs, such as needing a place to sleep at night, managing chemical reliance issues, or violence, all require different resources to adequately support or address. The impact and stress this internal reliance has had on individuals, as friends of or as a visible supportive figure in trans coalitions, has emerged as an unexpected and overlooked trans 'need.'

Eva, a Latina trans woman in her early thirties, highlights the importance trans women like Lynn play in her life and the lives of other Latina trans women. As discussed in Chapter 3, at the close of each roundtable participants were asked to supply a list of questions or concerns they would like to see included in the next phase of the DCTC Needs Assessment on 'trans communities' living in the city. Eva provided 14 questions she viewed as important to understanding and

1.- What country are you from originally?
2.- do you have a place to live?
3.- do you pay rent?
4.- are you in hormones therapy?
5.- Where do you get the hormones?
6.- do you have heatlh insurance?
7.- are you an american citizen?
8.- if not, do you have legal documents to stay in USA?
9.- do you have a job?
10.- how much do you earn by week? by month?
11.- do you do sex work?
12.- do you attend any support group?
13.- do you have a friend you can count on to borrow money or when you are sick?
14. have you ever been in prison?

Figure 5.2 Eva's map

documenting the lived experience of trans-spectrum persons living in DC. In this list, seen in Figure 5.2, she begins with concerns of citizenship and documentation, which quickly give way to a number of issues pertaining to money, access to trans and health-related resources, and employment, rounded out by questions pertaining to prison and criminalization. The questions that most stand out in this list are questions 12 and 13, which are most concerned with one's connections to economies of support rather than organized around one's *personal* articulation with the nation-state and capital, as the other 12 questions are. In these two questions she asks: "Do you attend any support group?" and, in question number 13, "Do you have a friend to count on to borrow money or when you are sick?"

In effect, Eva is identifying the crucial role of personal modalities of support to the degree that she would identify this issue as among the top concerns data collectors should be invested in. In this context the nation-state operates to limit or allow for mobility, as does access to a stable income and housing. However, it is through the *personal support networks* that one secures mental, metaphysical, and even physical safety.

Importantly, the kinds of support Lynn personally offers, and undoubtedly needs, are technically available through several trans-related direct-service groups in DC. Unfortunately, due to a loss of funding related to DC budget

cuts, the cessation of relied-upon grants, and a late 2011 federal ban on public funds to subsidize syringe exchange programs, the capacity for organizational support has been heavily gutted. As a result, many of the services and programs offered by organizations traditionally responsive to trans-spectrum issues, such as Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive (HIPS) and Transgender Health Empowerment (THE), have been terminated. One such program was HIPS' Diversion Support program, which provided client advocacy in and out of the courtroom for those facing criminal charges related to sex work who generally only had their court-appointed, often-transphobic lawyers to advocate on their behalf. These organizations provide psychosocial, partial medical (in the forms of HIV testing, a source of safer sex, and injection materials), and partial monetary support for those most at-risk for violence and (un/der)employment in DC. Significantly, these groups have lost such a degree of funding that HIPS has lost nearly half of its operating budget and THE has been forced to partially close its limited bed shelter for queer youth, the only shelter of its type in DC. Additionally, one of the only syringe exchange programs in DC was forced to close its doors permanently (Prevention Works) in 2010 due to a loss of sufficient funding. And as a final nail in the coffin for subsidized syringe exchange programs, in December 2011 Congress passed a version of the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget that included a provision to reinstate a ban on allowing federal funds to be used for syringe exchange programs (for entire text see House 2011, 159). At the time of this writing, DC may continue to utilize local funds as it deems fit but the extreme limitations presented by this reinstated policy will only further thin local funds now necessary to make up for federal gaps.

To only further compound the lack of accessible and affordable trans-related health care, one of the only subsidized health care programs in DC, DC Unity, a sub-contracted program of DC Medicaid, has shifted to a privatized model, which now, under the guidance of the highest-bidding corporation, no longer covers trans medical needs, such as hormones. It should be noted that DC Unity is the only contracted health care provider to those housed in DC's jails. Thus, the neoliberal turn in increasing the privatization of the welfare state, such as health care, has served to rob many of DC's poorest and most disenfranchised trans people from the support services they need for survival and, now, from even the most essential of medical care. For those without jobs with associated health insurance programs, there are few options for locating and affording health care.

Unfortunately, the gutting of funding for trans-spectrum direct-service organizations, as well as the shrinking of public programming, has resulted in an unevenness and growing gap in programming and services for lower-income trans-spectrum persons in DC. With few other options, the onus of responsibility and protection of the citizen has fallen back on the nation-state, which, in this context, would refer to policies and laws intended to address inequities. I explore here how the inclusion of gender identity and expression within two particular pieces of legislation—employment non-discrimination and bias crimes—has functioned to close this gap.

Employment protection and hate crimes law: Washington, DC as a case study

Data collected in national and city-specific surveys about trans-identifying populations reveal disproportionate rates of violence and employment discrimination. Thus, theoretically, introducing and establishing law and policy that provide legal protections from employment discrimination, or greater support in cases of violence, would represent a logical goal for advocates. Significantly, at the time of this writing, DC is one of roughly only 140 jurisdictions in the US that provide protection for gender identity and expression in its employment non-discrimination legislation, officially included in 2005 (§ 2-1402.1. Subchapter II, Human Rights Act of 1977). As of 2009, only 13 states in the US identify gender identity and expression as protected categories in hate crimes legislation. Objectively, the early adoption of these laws could be interpreted as the city's commitment to ensuring the safety and vitality of its trans residents. Unfortunately, as evidenced in the narratives collected in this project, as well the outcomes of the particularly brutal summer of 2011 for young trans women of color, the efficacy of either of these laws to provide substantive trans rights is questionable.

DC's Human Rights Act and employment non-discrimination

In 2005, 'Gender identity and Expression' was added to DC's 30-year-old Human Rights Act, providing legal protection for trans and gender-non-conforming people in the work place, along with issues of housing, education, and public space. The core premise of the Human Rights Act is that:

> [e]very individual shall have an equal opportunity to participate fully in the economic, cultural and intellectual life of the District and to have an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of life, including, but not limited to, in employment, in places of public accommodation, resort or amusement, in educational institutions, in public service, and in housing and commercial space accommodations.
>
> (§ 2-1402.01, OHR 2007, 1)

Those included within the protected categories are to be allowed to, without hindrance, participate as full citizens. Not only are they technically granted access to capital productivity, they are to be granted access to ideological productivity, in the forms of 'cultural and intellectual' productions of life. Also included in DC Human Rights Act is a clear statement about the particular economic responsibilities on the part of the employer with regard to the law.

> To fail or refuse to hire, or to discharge, any individual; or otherwise to discriminate against any individual, with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, including promotion; or to limit, segregate, or classify his employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities, or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee.
>
> (§ 2-1402.11,OHR 2007, 1)

This statement, while making very clear stipulations with regard to allowing a natural progression of economic success, does not make any statements with regard to education, work history, or criminal record. These kinds of issues, such as a spotty work history or an inadequate educational background, plague many of the most disenfranchised of trans-spectrum persons in DC. While this law provides a critically needed platform through which trans persons are able to maintain their civil right to engage in sanctioned capital productively unhindered, for those who may struggle to qualify for gainful employment this law falls short. This law is only effective insofar as it protects those who qualify for employment. Ironically, in this case, in order to not face discrimination at the work place, one must first have a work place to speak of.

¿Son Legales?: the other kind of employment discrimination: documentation

Another staggering roadblock for many trans subjects in securing employment is one of documentation. That is, in order for one to legally secure a job in the US one must be able to provide documents that function to identify one's legal right to work, and, subsequently, one's citizenship status. These documents, such as a passport, driver's license, or other state-issued identification cards, all display an identifying photo, one's legal name, gender, home address, and certain phenotypic features, such as height, weight, and age. Unless one desires to make their trans history or present known to their potential employer, one's documentation must align with their gender presentation. The process of changing name and gender markers on these documents, if one even desires to alter their identity documents, can be extremely complicated, often confusing, and, in terms of gender marker changes, at times impossible. The process of changing one's name on a state-issued document, such as a driver's license, is a state-dictated process. Thus, depending on where one currently lives, one may need to only pay a small processing fee to a county clerk or, in other jurisdictions, must hire a lawyer and sit in front of a judge for a name change consideration. Similarly, to alter one's gender on a legal document, such as a driver's license or passport, one must follow the process laid out by the state. In some cases, such as in Virginia, the state immediately to the south of DC and where many people living in DC may have been born, one cannot legally change one's gender on their birth certificate without evidence of having had particular genital

Figure 5.3 Translation of Nicola's question list

surgeries. For trans men born in Virginia wishing to change their birth certificate (and thus their legal gender on their passport) this would be a phalloplasty, a surgery costing upwards of $100,000 that few could afford and or may not even desire. In other words, even for those that are citizens of the US, have a formal education, and are well qualified for a job, a lack of representative legal documentation may keep one from feeling comfortable to apply for a job, regardless of extant legal protections.

Possessing documentation allowing one to 'legally' work is not an issue limited to trans persons. For immigrants living in DC, documentation is an immense issue and, in many cases, gender transgression further complicates the ability to secure the appropriate legal documentation. Nicola, a middle-aged Latina trans woman, touches on these concerns in her list of questions to be included in a DC needs assessment survey (Figure 5.3).

1) *De que pias son?* (What country are you from?)
2) *Son legales*? (Are you legal[/a documented immigrant]?)
3) *hay algun tipo de asilo?* ([Do you have] any type of asylum?)
4) *medicamentos y hormonas?* ([Do you have/where do you get] medication and hormones?)
5) *problemas con la policía?* ([Do you have] trouble/problems/issues with the police?)
6) *Que necesidades importantes vivienda, ayudo economica, comida?* (What [are your] imporant needs, housing, financial help, food?)
7) *any federal protección?* ([Do you have] any federal protection?)

In this list,[1] Nicola primarily focuses on issues of legal documentation, trouble with the police, and whether one's needs are met. Importantly, she asks whether one is 'legal' as a 'documented' immigrant. To be certain, while lacking documentation that aligns with one's gender presentation is a roadblock to employment, lacking *any* documentation validating one's presence in a country presents a nearly insurmountable obstacle to formal employment. As reflected in her remaining questions, lacking access to formal employment, and risking deportation and arrest from police, issues such as health care and access to basic needs, such as food and housing, emerge as primary issues to be considered. Again, a law prohibiting discrimination based on trans identity serves to protect those already locatable within certain securities of privilege; however, for those most disenfranchised from economies of privilege, such as those lacking marketable skills and those who are undocumented or lack federal '*protección*,' one has little choice but to rely on networks of persons who are either in, have been in, or are supportive of those in similar positions of precariousness for the most basic of human needs.

Uneven distribution: the application of hate crimes legislation in DC

The critique of hate crimes legislation is not unique to this project or a new concern (Crooms 1999; Kohn 2002; and for a particularly detailed genealogy and account see Spade and Willse 2000). Within DC, the utility of the penalty enhancement afforded by hate crimes laws related to gender identity and expression is uncertain, at best. Not only are more violent crimes being reported against trans persons since the protections first came into effect; fewer are being qualified as bias crimes by the MPD. Moreover, as of October 2011, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) reports zero hate crimes motivated by bias against gender identity and expression (MPD 2011). This, in the context of the deadliest and most violent summer against trans women since trans-related hate crimes have been recorded, confounds the very logic that compels the utilization of hate crimes legislation.

In 1989, DC enacted its own hate crimes law (DC Code §§ 22–4001 to 22–4004), which, according to the DC MPD website, "provides for increased penalties whenever a crime is motivated by bias or hate" (MPD 2011). Also available on the DC MPD website is a statement regarding the fracturing capacity of 'bias crimes' in a community.

> Unlike other crimes that target individuals, bias-related acts have a tremendous effect on an entire community. When one person is targeted because of his or her race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or other characteristic, others in the community who were not the direct targets of the hate crime may also feel at risk. Tensions between different communities can also arise as a result of a hate crime.
>
> (MPD 2011)

MPD recognizes through this statement that the violence committed against an individual reverberates across an entire community of persons. Feelings of alienation, a lack of safety, anger, and fear are all fueled by crimes committed against those who may be identified as particularly vulnerable targets.

Importantly, the DC MPD did not begin collecting gender identity- and expression-based bias crime separately from sexual orientation until 2009. In each year since, between only four and ten 'gender identity- and expression'-based crimes were recorded. In contrast, sexual orientation-based bias crimes in the same time period failed to fall below 19 (in 2007) and peaked at 35 (in 2010). Oddly, given the notable murders, robberies, and stabbings of young trans women of color in 2011, the MPD reported no cases of gender identity and expression bias crimes. In contrast, it currently reports seven sexual orientation bias crimes for 2011 (MPD 2011).

Even the proposed benefits of hate crime legislation have been lost in the majority of the most publicized and heinous crimes committed against trans persons in DC. Specifically, the August 2009 murder of Tyli'a Nana Boo Mack, a 21-year-old Black trans woman stabbed to death during a sunny weekday afternoon, was never classified by the MPD as a hate crime despite the testimony of an unidentified witness to the crime, a friend of Nana Boo, who maintains the attacks were motivated by their gender presentation. The most recent murders of Lashai McLean (July 2011) and Gigi/Gaurav Gopalan (September 2011) have also not been classified as hate crimes by the MPD, contrary to evidence that would suggest that malice against transgender identity and expression may have been a factor in their deaths.

While Mack's, McLean's, and Gopalan's deaths may simply lack the evidence needed to classify them as hate crimes, these were not the only crimes committed against trans people in 2011. MPD police officer Kenneth Furr's off-duty brutal shooting of three trans women, and two of their male friends, in August 2011 has also not been identified as a bias or hate-related crime by the MPD. No one claims that Furr hurled transphobic rhetoric at the car as he shot round after round into the captive occupants of the vehicle but his rebuffed attempts to secure sex from either of the trans women he shot at in the car would suggest that bias motivated this attack.

Multiple witness accounts of the event maintain that Furr yelled from the car's hood, after firing into the car and threatening to kill the occupants. This statement, placed in context with an earlier dispute between the trans women and Furr wherein they refused his sexual advances, provides a glimpse into the possible motivation behind his violent attack. Witnesses maintain that after Furr flashed his gun at the victims from his car, they, along with their friends, attempted to get away from Furr in their own car. Furr, after colliding his car into theirs, jumped onto the hood of their car and began shooting at them. At the time of this writing, Furr, after having solicited, harassed, threatened, and shot at five people at close range, currently faces only one count of assault with a dangerous weapon from Department of Justice. This charge carries a maximum

sentence of only ten years and will not include a hate-crime enhancement (DC Criminal Code § 22–402).

Finally, none of the nearly weekly reports of assaults and attempted robberies against trans women of color during the summer months of 2011 were identified as hate-based or bias crimes. If the logic behind maintaining hate crimes legislation is to bring harsher penalties to those who commit crimes against 'protected' classes of persons as a means by which to curb future bias-related violence, the complete absence of any hate crimes qualification in these cases is particularly disturbing. This then calls into question the efficacy of hate crimes legislation if it has failed to be applied to what, by most standards, would be considered a chain of transphobic violence. Undoubtedly, one central issue impeding the application of bias to a crime would be the MPD's unspoken requirement that certain language be deployed during the commission of the crime. If there are no survivors or witnesses present during the crime event, the potential for a hate crime qualification would then be rendered extremely difficult, if not impossible. The letter of the law does not indicate what kind of language is necessary for the crime to be considered committed with 'bias,' but it allows for symbolic non-verbal aggressive acts to fall under a bias category (such as the application of a swastika or the presence of a burning cross). In the cases of the trans women who have been attacked or murdered along known trans sex worker strolls (as with the murders of Mack or McLean) the symbolism of these attacks, as crimes committed against trans women in areas with visible trans women, should not be disregarded as insignificant. If nothing else, the narratives and maps of those who participated in this project make clear that place is sometimes *everything*. To be certain, even if one were to view social justice as emerging from the harsher penalization of offenders of bias crimes, the current limitations in discursive application of the law in DC along with the hesitancy of the MPD to qualify a crime as a bias crime when in relationship to gender identity and presentation renders DC's bias crimes law useless for trans persons under attack.

How to win trans rights: trans needs as identified by national LGBT rights groups

With this emerging crisis of decreasing access and support within DC, the role of national LGBT groups and their mobilizations around 'trans issues' is of importance. Many local-level LGBT groups across the nation base their policy recommendations upon nation-level LGBT campaigns. Having highlighted some of the primary concerns of the participants in this project, and the lack of current policies addressing the need for support, I consider here how these issues have been mobilized around by LGBT groups. Employment non-discrimination and hate crimes legislation is often the cornerstone of any 'trans rights agenda' adopted or implemented by progressive LGBT national organizations. Both laws technically provide legal and policy-based protections for certain trans bodies, practices, and identities. But, as explored in this chapter,

legal policy, and in particular these policies, and material needs and experience don't necessarily align.

As evidenced not only in this project, but documented in a long history of diverse research on trans issues in the US (Denny 1994; Currah et al. 2006; Stryker and Whittle 2006), violence and discrimination, and the ways these issues impact family, school, employment, and housing, are endemic for many trans and gender-transgressing persons. While 'trans rights' (as discussed in Currah et al. 2006) are composed of a number of issues (including access to affordable health care and housing), the most visible campaigns emerging out of groups specializing in 'trans rights' have been focused on two issues: the securing of employment non-discrimination legislation and the inclusion of gender identity and expression in hate crimes policy and law. This trend can be seen most clearly in the largest national groups to subsidize trans specific studies, lobbying events, and civil rights events, the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).[2] Given the degree to which these groups garner public respect and support for their trans inclusivity and mobilizing efforts, I consider here how these two focal points articulate with the issues raised during the course of this project.

As an example, available on the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) website are multiple documents exploring how organizations and individuals can better address the unique needs of trans-identifying persons. This literature offers up solutions to trans-inclusivity through increasing sensitivity to trans 'issues' within the target organization. They identify 'trans issues' as including the use of correct names and genders for trans people, providing gender-neutral bathrooms in the workplace, offering health care that covers transition costs, and not discriminating in their own hiring practices (Mottet and Tanis 2008). While these are, unquestionably, important concerns organizations working to improve their treatment of trans persons should consider, this literature neglects to address how what an organization does (whether this be socially, politically, or capitally) can be shifted to address issues that directly impact trans persons. For example, in order for these suggestions, while important and valuable, to impact trans inclusivity in the workplace, the trans persons in question must first be able to get a job.

Employment non-discrimination legislation as trans rights: requirements for effectiveness

Issues of discrimination in employment practices are among the most well-documented issues facing trans persons from a wide array of gender, class, and racial backgrounds (Koch and Bales 2008; Lombardi et al. 2001; Nemoto et al. 2004). The concern of employment is certainly highlighted in this project but also within the most expansive survey used to date on trans experience in the US, reaching 6,450 transgender and gender-non-conforming people across the nation, conducted by NGLTF and NCTE. This study reports that a staggering 90% of survey participants experienced harassment, mistreatment,

or discrimination at work (Grant et al. 2011, 3). This survey, the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, co-produced by the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, also reveals that white trans people experience double the national rate of unemployment while trans people of color experience four times the national unemployment rate (Grant et al. 2011, 51). Providing protection, particularly at the federal level, for trans people in employment discrimination is, at surface level, an immense step towards providing recourse for those who have been harassed, fired, or denied employment because of their trans history or present. But, importantly, for legislation to be effective in protecting trans people from being unfairly fired, or simply not hired, one must first be 'hireable' in the most general sense. By this I refer to meeting the most essential demands or requirements the majority of employers request of their applicants: the ability to produce identity documents that prove one's legal ability to work in US, as well as possessing the skills or credentials required or desired for the position. Finally, we must also consider the types of jobs a trans person with limited documented or documentable skills may be qualified for. If the service economy, food service, and other low-level waged positions constitute the employment limits for those lacking a formal education or for those possessing a criminal record, we must also consider the financial and emotional sustainability of such positions.

Hate crimes legislation as trans rights: disjunctures in lived experience

Hate crimes legislation, as a cornerstone of the current mainstream LGBT 'agenda,' can be traced back to the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was developed to protect the rights of US African-Americans, at the federal level, to "exercise constitutional rights such as voting, attending public school, utilizing public accommodations, and serving on juries" (Mogul, Ritchie, and Whitlock 2011, 123). While multiple jurisdictions across the country list sexual orientation and gender identity and expression among protected categories in their own hate crimes legislation, in 2009 President Barack Obama signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which provided federal protections for LGBT populations. In short, Obama's administration confirmed, through the passing of this act, the validity and lives of gender and sexual transgressors; the harm that may come to them as a result of their transgression will not be tolerated.

The logic behind hate crimes law posits that harsher sentences for bias-related crimes act as a deterrent for potential offenders. Building upon a criminal justice model that requires increased disciplinarity in conjunction with the relative social egregiousness of the crime, hate crimes legislation makes a bold socio-political statement on the part of the nation-state. This statement is one that recuperates the transgressive 'Other' as valuable—as bodies that, while different and potentially suspect, are not necessarily disposable. That is, through

defining particular 'protected' categories of embodiment, practice, and identity, the nation-state sanctifies this form of difference.

Over time, hate crimes legislation has been developed as a tool by advocates and policy-makers to make both a statement about the unacceptability of particular kinds of hate (e.g., racism and sexism) and as potential deterrent against those considering engaging in a hate-based crime. Rather than existing as a distinct charge, the identification of an act as a hate crime act functions as a 'penalty enhancement' to an original maximum sentence or fine. That is, a person found guilty of committing a bias crime will face a fine or jail sentence that is greater than a crime committed of a similar nature without 'bias.' In DC, one may face up to 1.5 times the maximum fine or jail sentence for a crime found to be committed in bias.

According to the definition on the DC MPD website, a hate crime is, most simply,

> a crime that is committed against a person because of prejudice or bias. Victims of hate crimes are singled out simply because of their perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibility, physical handicap, matriculation, or political affiliation.
>
> (MPD 2011, emphasis added)

In short, according to the MPD, a crime committed against a person because of their placement within one of the listed protected categories could qualify the crime as a hate, or bias, crime. Unfortunately, the application of hate crimes legislation to actual crimes committed is far more complicated. This description is profoundly ambiguous and provides no insight into what must occur during the commission of the crime in order for it to be considered a bias-related crime.

The US Department of Justice's explanation of what constitutes a hate crime fails to provide any additional clarity. As defined in a small booklet produced by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, titled *Responding to Hate Crimes: A Police Officer's Guide to Investigation and Prevention*, a hate crime is "a criminal offense committed against persons, property or society that is motivated, in whole or in part, by an offender's bias against an individual's or group's perceived race, religion, ethnic/national origin, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation" (IACP et al. 2001). While this booklet provides 'practical tips' on how to deal with potential hate crime victims, such as avoiding using 'stereotyped or biased terms,' it fails to explain what literally must take place for the threshold of bias to apply.

Towards trans rights in the US nation's capital: conclusions and next steps

In this chapter I have considered how the 'needs' of 'trans communities' in DC are addressed by the two common national campaigns for trans rights.

A number of disjunctures emerge between policy and lived materiality when attending to the applications of law. Specifically, I considered here how the lack of employment opportunity and increases in violence in DC exemplify the danger of relying upon the existence of a policy or law to correct systemic inequality. In other words, as the historical relationships between law and practice throughout US history support, the adoption of a law does not necessarily shift the material expression of systemic ideologies or lived experience. In particular, I considered here how hate crimes law and employment non-discrimination policy fail to address the issues of chronic unemployment and violence experienced by certain trans persons in DC (e.g., trans-feminine persons of color). Additionally, I addressed how these policies act to hinder alternative approaches for civil rights claims through obscuring systemic racism and classism within juridico-legal projects. Finally, I explored how the potential benefits of these laws (e.g., preventing unfair hiring/firing practices and increasing penalties in bias crimes) may not sufficiently outweigh the ideological and material damage produced through their application (e.g., assuming all trans subjects have equal access to employment opportunities and locating 'justice' through the criminalization of often already marginalized community groups).

In the concluding chapter, I call upon the insights from the narratives and maps collected in this project to explore alternative forms of trans social justice that transcend the failed models discussed here. I explore how groups, such as DCTC, along with other national trans rights groups, utilize alternative economic social justice initiatives, which rely upon empowerment rather than threats of legal action. Additionally, I consider how strategies aimed at restructuring and, ultimately, dismantling of the prison-industrial complex are framed as issues of trans rights and how these projects may be of use in the DC context. I conclude this book with a discussion of viable 'next steps' for trans social justice movements in DC, as well as other jurisdictions.

Notes

1 My thanks to E. Nell Haynes, William Leap, and Esther Lopez for their assistance with this translation.

2 These are not the only two groups in the US working towards trans rights. Moreover, their agendas, as clearly evidenced on their websites, are inclusive of a myriad of 'trans rights' and issues that go well beyond only two projects. I have focused on these groups not only for their success in producing the first national surveys on trans experience in the US but also for their numerous reports explaining, often in great detail, how LGB organizations can integrate trans rights into their agendas and organizations. As respected and successful activists and lobbyists, it is all the more important to note how what they suggest as primary trans concerns are translated into and adopted by the larger LGB mainstream. In other words, what these groups identify as key trans rights to fight for has an impact on larger national, and perhaps international, discourses on that which composes 'trans rights.'

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6 Towards a generative politics of life

Trans vitalities through spatialities of social justice

Interlude: phone call from a friend

I sit staring at the computer screen, fingers frozen and resting lightly on the keyboard, watching the vertical black line disappear and reappear on a white backdrop, waiting for the words to materialize from thought to screen. I feel the vibrations of a phone call against my thigh and I break away from my staring daze to dig my hand into my pocket and retrieve the buzzing machinery. The screen flashes "Lynn." I release a deep sigh and answer the call. Lynn is possibly one of the most dedicated, brilliant, and passionate activists I have ever met. Her work spans across North and South America, on topics ranging from workers' rights to womens' rights, from prisoners' rights to trans rights. I've seen her poetic negotiations silence a room of the angry discontented and her fierce calls to action bring even the most apathetically jaded to movement. She is a trans woman, a single-woman support staff, and a leader in every way. She has mentored, supported, and provided comfort to trans women (among others) in violent relationships, suffering from sexual trauma and general abuse. Most recently, the impact of this work began to take its toll on her. She is now unemployed, homeless, and struggling with depression, anxiety, and a mounting chemical reliance on a growing list of uppers, downers, and in-betweeners. In the past week, she has attempted suicide twice through intentional substance overdosing. Each time she would call me the next day, laugh and remind me she always made sure someone was nearby. "Harm reduction!" she would pronounce, attempting to minimize the gravity of her near-death experiences.

I bring the phone to my ear and shout with all of the auditory support I can muster "Lynn!" "Hello!" She's calling to check on me, she tells me. She says she's been worried about me; the dissertation writing has been slow, I'm anxious about my uncertain future, and she's heard that some of our friends are worried I'm depressed. I thank her for calling, mumble about the bad job market, and attempt to shift the conversation to her in the most delicate way I can. I pause momentarily and ask "How are you, Lynn?" She laughs and replies with an elongated and drawn-out "Baaaaaad." I'm grateful she can't see the visible anguish on my face. She goes on to explain she's decided to leave DC for a while; she has come to the conclusion that she is a threat to herself and needs 24-hour care. She and I both know she doesn't have any health insurance and even with the multiple-month-long waiting list for local rehab programs, none of them would be a good place for a trans woman. She explains she knows about a house with some radical people who can care

for her while she tries to figure her shit out. I shut my eyes, concentrate on the tone of my voice, and attempt to reassure her with an excited declaration that it's so fantastic she has a plan. I casually ask her what bus she thinks she might take out there, trying to keep her on the phone just a moment longer and she says she's not sure but that she thinks she's going to leave today or tomorrow. And as quickly as the conversation began, it ends, with her apologizing and saying she needs to run some errands before she leaves. I tell her to take care of herself and she tells me to do the same. As the brief connection ends, I carefully rest the phone on the surface of the desk, and return my gaze to the heartbeat of the vertical black line on the computer screen. I silently hope this isn't the last time I'll hear her voice.

I begin this reflection with a revisit of the features and issues raised throughout the course of this text project. Building from this summation, I consider how the repeated critique or erasure of 'LGB' space among participants calls into question the use of a conjoined 'LGBT' framework in both academic research and social organizing. Positioning these narratives within a broader time frame, I briefly explore the historical emergence of the 'LGBT' acronym and how it has functioned in social and activist contexts to, ostensibly, build a stronger and more cohesive 'movement.' Yet, as the experiences and narratives of those who participated in this project express, there does not appear to be the kind of cohesion or continuity across 'LGBT' experiences and identities that circulate in the mainstream imagination. Instead, as I explore here, the LGBT acronym has limited its reach to only issues and bodies that are otherwise *valuable* to the nation-state and other socio-political structures, rather than building 'community' across differences. In other words, I consider here how the expansion of this kind of *homonormativity*, or the valuation of only particular kinds of gay and lesbian identity and practice, has functioned to erase and devalue many of the issues raised throughout this project, as well as the participants themselves.

Finally, in this chapter I turn away from the necropolitical frameworks and discussions of loss I utilize in earlier chapters to consider the *vitalities*, or the life-making work, of the participants of this project. Trans vitalities as a framework developed in this text functions in three specific ways: 1) to disrupt and rethink what valuable, viable, or quantifiable quality of life looks like; 2) to shift our understandings of community towards 'coalition'; and 3) as a methodological, theoretical, and application-based set of tools that integrates a radical trans politics and community-based approach towards addressing trans lives. That is, I explore how even along streets where participants have lost friends and loved ones to violence, there remains a spatial and social capacity for support and empowerment. Specifically, I frame these vitalities as the ways coalition- and life-making can, and does, happen alongside and within oppressive frameworks. I consider how these kinds of mobilizations—such as locating emotional support as a trans-identifying person through anti-poverty work—can be discussed as forms of 'queer' social justice work not typically linked to sexual liminality. In short, I discuss here how the personal and political transformative power of coalition-based trans social justice work can function

as a productive life force that, in turn, may provide a functional alternative to normative LGBT organizing movements.

Mapping trans ethnographies: materiality and erasure

Throughout this text I have explored the ways trans-spectrum-identifying subjects organize socially and politically in Washington, DC, an immensely race- and class-segregated city that is best described through incoherent characterizations. In one incarnation, DC is the capital city and decision-making hub of one of the world's most powerful and imperial nation-states: the United States of America. This immense differential of resources as well as their unequal distribution across time and space have had a profound impact on the citizens of the city, particularly those already vulnerable within systems of inequality.

As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, as a component of this research, members of trans coalition-building groups in DC along with myself interviewed and solicited maps from a total of 108 trans-spectrum-identifying persons living in Washington, DC.[1] The majority of these interviews and maps were collected during community roundtables held in conjunction with a community-based needs assessment project. Within this needs assessment project I functioned as a grant writer and fundraiser, co-organizer, and data analyst. Specifically, the needs assessment project was deployed as a means to ascertain and document the issues trans-spectrum persons in DC were concerned with. During each roundtable we—typically myself and another co-facilitator—requested participants draw a map of a 'trans DC' from their perspective. Following the map-making activity, participants discussed their maps, addressing what they drew and, in some cases, explained in great detail why they included what they included. At the close of each session participants were asked to identify the issues or concerns they believed to be of importance when describing the needs of trans-spectrum persons living in DC.

While in this project I explore the ways trans-spectrum subjects living and working in DC organize 'trans space,' I should stress that these depictions and discussions are anchored to a particular moment in time and place of production. To be clear, the spaces depicted in the collected maps should not be understood to represent an exhaustive list of trans spaces in DC, nor are the included features representative of trans-only space. Indeed, the streets of DC, DC's low-cost health clinic, and popular bars and clubs—all elements of a 'trans DC'—are features of the city that many residents would also consider a part of *their* city. Thus, while I discuss the articulation of these spaces in this project as reflections of trans-spectrum experience, the issues raised and spaces identified highlight a particular moment in time, in a specific space, among a limited group of persons. In short, there exists no singular formulation of 'trans space,' in DC or any location, inasmuch as there exists no static and identifiable kind of 'gay' space or 'women's' space beyond those commercially advertised as such. Trans-spectrum experiences, subjectivities, and identifies are variable, complicated, and are but one feature in the lives of those who participated in this project.

The majority of the participants of this project identified as persons of color (75%, or 81 participants) and as having a trans-feminine-spectrum identity or expression (75.9%, or 82 participants). Among those that identified as persons of color, 41.9% of participants (34) identified as Chicana or Latina and 58.0% (47) identified as African-American or Black. Importantly, comparatively far fewer white-identifying persons were interviewed and even fewer with racial identities falling outside of these three primary categories. Additionally, trans-feminine-spectrum-identifying persons (or persons assigned a male gender at birth who now identify in feminine terms) made up the majority of those participating in this project. The lack of 'equal' representation in this project reflects the groups that have historically faced the most visible brunt of violence and structural vulnerability in DC. As a result of the specificity of Washington, DC, the findings may limit the application of this analysis to other jurisdictions and communities. To be certain, trans-spectrum-identifying persons living in rural or even suburban areas may have a profoundly different experience of what it means to be trans.

As indicated in previous chapters, the spatial element most common to maps of DC as a 'trans city' were depictions of 'sex work(er) strolls,' featured in a little over half of all maps. As I discuss in this text these spaces, while generally acknowledged by participants to be areas of sex work, were also defined as spaces of work, where they could support friends, of police harassment, and of organizational outreach. In contrast, the second-most common feature that participants included in their maps was what I have framed as 'community organizations,' or health clinics, direct-service organizations, and other local and national organizations invested in or providing services to sex worker and 'LGBT' populations. This element featured in slightly more than a third of all maps but, importantly, the organizations garnering the most map representations were not groups specifically catering to 'LGBT' issues or populations. Instead, the greatest representations were of groups catering to sex worker populations (such as with the inclusion of Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive and Transgender Health Empowerment), where one can get hormones or trans-spectrum-related care (as with the inclusion of the Whitman-Walker Clinic) or of trans activist-centered groups (such as the DC Trans Coalition and the National Center for Transgender Equality). Organizations such as 'the DC Center,' which advertises its work as supporting DC-based 'LGBT' rights and communities, generally received little attention in the maps and, if included, were often framed in the negative, or as places where the participants did *not* garner the support they sought.

In short, the themes included in maps and mentioned in discussions predominately made reference to areas and experiences of the city that were connected to circulations of friendship, support, affirmation, and struggle, often in contrast to the violence of other elements of the city. In many of these contexts, such as the significant representation of sex work(er) strolls, a lack of access to sustainable employment, and the historical pathologization of feminine of bodies of color coalesced to criminalize bodies viewed as out of space. Importantly, even

for those occupying social and political positions that are relatively supported by the nation-state, the impact of sex work, whether as one's form of employment, the source of criminalization, or as a productive ground from which to organize politically, emerged as a core organizing principle.

Contrasting the maps collected in this project against mainstream LGBT maps of DC reveals disjunctures between what kinds of spaces are valued by trans-spectrum persons and those valued by commercial LGBT depictions of DC. As I suggest in Chapter 1, what is excluded from a representation of space is often as informative as what is *included*. Just as the 'LGB' is missing from the maps of DC as a trans city, the mainstream maps of a LGBT DC exclude the 'T' from their space. As portrayed in the commercially available maps of DC as a city for LGBT tourists, LGBT space is primarily limited to commercial venues, such as nightclubs or bars, or, in some instances, mainstream LGBT rights groups, such as the Human Rights Campaign. As emphasized in Leap (2009, 218–219) this depiction represents a kind of *homonormative* view of LGBT citizenship, wherein the capacity to consume constitutes the 'good gay citizen.' As a result, the mainstream LGBT spaces included in these commercial maps organize space according to homonormative ideals: how to be a good, productive American citizen while embodying a sexual subjectivity that is devalued by normative American ideologies.

Significantly, these tourist maps exclude the poorer parts of DC, such as the northeast or further into the southeast, bringing into focus the ways race and class are managed within homonormativity. That is, they are erased. This is not to suggest that homonormativity, or a homonormative depiction of DC, is 'color-blind,' but rather to point to how when 'LGBT' is flattened into one lens, that lens takes on an implicitly white and upwardly mobile class status. These maps of DC focus on the capacity to consume: the places a tourist interested in consumption can go. In contrast, many of those interviewed throughout this project complained of a lack of gainful employment, with fewer than 1% including any of the bars or clubs listed on the Lonely Planet LGBT guide to DC. Moreover, 'LGBT'-specific community centers or groups that made their way onto Lonely Planet's site were virtually absent from the maps collected in this project. Instead, the maps collected here focus on organizations or community groups that are either trans-specific activist or advocacy groups (such as DCTC) or those that primarily serve trans persons (such as HIPS).

Trans spatialities: specificity and the dangers of LGBT generalizations

Noting the ways maps function as visual forms of text, this exclusion belies a deeper erasure and invisibility of trans lives not only from mainstream non-LGBT tourist maps of DC but also from within 'LGBT' living. Recalling the power of representation of the map, as well as the stories it tells us, trans life appears to not exist in at least commercially driven LGBT maps or ideals of

DC. While the issues raised by participants in their narratives and maps in this project ranged across a wide array of topics and issues, rarely, if ever, did participants express concern over the topics most national LGBT civil rights groups focus on: the right to serve in the military, get married to their loved one, adopt children, or even the impact of hate crimes legislation—all political mainstays for the US' largest national LGBT rights organizations (the Human Rights Campaign, www.hrc.org/issues; Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, as indexed through the repeated use of 'equality,' www.glaad.org/about#mission; the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, as reflected by topics of publications and research, www.thetaskforce.org/reports_and_research/issue_maps; and Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, as issues that relatives and allies of LGBT people should be concerned with http://community.pflag.org/page.aspx?pid=210). Contrasted to these issues, the spatial depictions collected in this project, and the discussions that emerged around them, focused on issues of employment, access to health and legal resources, violence, and trans coalitional support and empowerment**.** Additionally, at the local level, groups and organizations that are intended to support LGBT persons were simply not included or, as with the DC Center, were criticized for their lack of trans specificity or support. Finally, gay or lesbian night clubs and bars were also almost entirely absent, with the exclusion of special events catering to the Latina/o communities or in some cases as examples of where one faces trans phobia.

The templates provided by LGBT tourist maps, which place consumption as a conduit to queerness, or by these mainstream LGBT civil rights groups, which place domesticity and the capacity to serve in the military as the route to 'equality,' do not include or address the kinds of spaces or issues raised by participants of this project. Thus, rather than address here what is included in these maps, as I have throughout this text, I turn now to what is excluded. In this case, the absence of self-described LGBT organizations, bars, and nightclubs when discussing 'trans' experiences in the city is particularly unanticipated. Additionally, this absence, when set in conjunction with the silence of groups like HRC, GLAAD, and PFLAG after any of the mounting number of murders of trans women in DC from 2010 to 2011, requires careful attention.

I argue here that the disconnections between the mapped needs of those who participated in this project and mainstream LGBT activism reflect a larger structural lapse of meaningful and productive inclusion of the 'T' in LGBT. As a result I find it necessary to problematize the use of the term 'LGBT' in academic, social, and political contexts to refer meaningfully to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans-spectrum. In the LGBT model, the material and lived differences between sexual subjectivity and gender identity are collapsed into a single 'community' that is to signify a singularity of needs or desires. This kind of erasure is particularly problematic when discussing socially or politically liminal sexualities and genders that may fall outside of the hegemonic or normative demands of a conjoined LGBT framework.

Towards trans vitalities: generative life in the US nation's capital: resilience and activisms

In many ways, I have anchored this text in discussions of why and how trans women of color have been allowed to let die in DC. But, rather than maintain only a focus on the conditions that precipitate the uselessness of certain trans bodies, I close here with a focus on the vitalities of the lives and practices of those who participated in this project. In contrast to a necropolitics, I explore in these concluding remarks the vitalities emergent in the wake of death and dying. I explore here modalities of generative life and activist projects that secure better conditions for trans-spectrum persons. During a conversation with a fellow 'queer'-identifying social science researcher, I was told that employment and economic issues facing the participants of my research, which in turn exacerbate a lack of access to affordable or supportive health care or housing alternatives, were not LGBT rights issues. Rather, in their words, these were concerns that had far more to do with law and policy regarding poverty and economic disenfranchisement rather than LGBT lives. I close here with a discussion of how Dean Spade's model of a 'critical trans politics' also functions as a model for unpacking lived experience and contextualizing vitality practices through the milieu from which they emerge. Spade articulates a critical trans politics as one that: imagines and demands an ends to prisons, homelessness, landlords, bosses, immigration enforcement, poverty, and wealth. It imagines a world in which people have what they need and govern themselves in ways that value collectivity, interdependence, and difference (Spade 2015).

This kind of critical trans politics is evident in the practices and organizing projects of the DC Trans Coalition, the group I worked primarily with throughout this text project. Rather than discuss the 'failure' of a mainstream LGBT paradigm, I call upon Halberstam's approach to the productivity of 'queer failure': "Failing is something queers do and have always done exceptionally well; for queers failure can be a style … and it can stand in contrast to the grim scenarios of success that depend upon 'trying and trying again'" (Halberstam 2011, 3). I see Halberstam's assertion as providing an alternative way of understanding those that 'fail' at homonormative projects. Rather than understanding these subjects as lacking, this failure can be articulated as a modality to vitality, or a way to produce along one's own terms. This kind of framework thus allows the notion of activism to function as a way to produce life in the face of mainstream LGBT political lapses to meaningfully support.

As discussed here, ultimately, in the context of securing support, safety, and employment for trans persons in DC, hate crimes legislation and employment non-discrimination protection have failed as modalities to secure and maintain all trans lives. Building upon the maps and narratives discussed in the proceeding chapters it is clear that 'trans rights' in DC can be secured only once the structural inequalities in trans lived experience are directly addressed. That is, the conditions that render death and violence against some trans bodies as acceptable, if not also expected, must be critiqued. Rather than identify economic

policy or identity practice as the source of this violence, I find it most productive to consider the complicated nature of inequality production. A lack of formal education may function as the root source of inequality in one instance, yet in others poverty or gender and sexual transgression may inhibit class and social mobility. In short, the most productive form of social justice emerges out of pinpointing a series of articulating issues, rather than a singularity, which serve to only maintain systems of inequality for different trans groups. Indeed, just as trans persons occupy a spectrum of subject positions and experiences, no one central issue can be fully addressed by hate crimes legislation or employment non-discrimination laws. Groups such as DCTC would argue that trans concerns are as fundamentally about prison abolition, anti-racism, capitalist resistance, and anti-poverty work as they are gender practice and theory. As Viviane Namaste reminds us, failing to address the complicated and interwoven nature of structural inequality "leaves intact a political system that constantly invents new mechanisms to organize public and private space according to the interests of those with money" (Namaste 2000, 28). Alternative models such as trans vitalities allow us to understand livable life as constituted by both informal trans social networks and harm reduction agencies in Washington, DC. Trans coalitional spaces provide a glimpse into how vitalities emerge even within the fissures in 'death worlds.' Specifically, these vitalities articulate within and across social justice movements, which ultimately provide an alternative conduit to stability otherwise traditionally locatable through restrictive models of normativity. In short, the personal and political transformative power of coalition-based trans social justice work functions as a productive life force for many of the participants of this project, in both micro and macro contexts.

Note

1 I should also note that participation in this project, and in the series of roundtables conducted through the needs assessment, was self-selecting. As a result, the nature of the project and where outreach took place may have appealed less to those less engaged with social or political activism or those who do not access support through trans-spectrum networks. Subsequently, those that participated in this project may regard a 'trans DC' through coalitional or community-anchored structures more than a trans-spectrum-identifying person who does not participate in trans-spectrum community groups. As such, my analysis and discussion must be situated within this specific data set, which should not be understood as representative of all gender-variant communities.

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