The Politics of Brokerage and Transnational Advocacy for LGBT Human Rights

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of
the requirements for the DPhil in Anthropology**

**Trinity Term
2011**

ABSTRACT:

In this project, I look at the work of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) and the role that brokers at the organization play in constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing a body of LGBT human rights. While a great deal is being written about the diffusion of LGBT politics and human rights discourses from the Global North, there are few ethnographic analyses of who is doing the exporting, how, and toward what ends. Based on a year of fieldwork in IGLHRC's New York and Cape Town offices, I look at the history of IGLHRC, the interactions among brokers and how these shape their daily work, how brokers understand their mandate and the hybridity that it so often requires, and how partnership with groups in the Global South, the production, verification, and circulation of information, and the possibilities and constraints of the formal human rights arena all shape the work that brokers do. Ultimately, I conclude that human rights advocacy must be understood holistically if it is to be understood at all. Such advocacy always necessarily involves a degree of theoretical elaboration, promotion, and codification by human rights defenders and NGOs, and focusing exclusively on one or another of these aspects paints a skewed portrait of what it means to work within a human rights framework. Drawing from the anthropology of sexuality, queer theory, literature on brokerage, and interdisciplinary studies of transnational advocacy networks, this project aims to deepen understandings of how LGBT NGOs and the brokers that animate them regularly engage in the construction, promotion, and institutionalization of particular understandings of sexuality and the claims that can be made by sexual subjects globally.

WORD COUNT: 102,546

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Glossary of Acronyms:

AAA: American Anthropological Association
ACHPR: African Commission on Human and People's Rights
ACT-UP: AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power
ADEFHO: L'Association pour la Défense des Droits des Homosexuels
ADP: Asylum Documentation Program
AFHRO: African Human Rights Organization
AI: Amnesty International
AIDS: acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AIMLGC: Amnesty International Members for Lesbian and Gay Concerns
AJWS: American Jewish World Service
AMEC: Africa, the Caribbean, and the Middle East
amfAR: American Foundation for AIDS Research
AMSHeR: African Men for Sexual Health and Rights
API: Asia and the Pacific Islands
AU: African Union

BDSM: bondage, domination, and sadomasochism

CAL: Coalition of African Lesbians
CAT: Convention Against Torture
CCM: Country Coordinating Mechanism
CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEDEP: Centre for the Development of People
CGE: Council for Global Equality
CHA: Communidad Homosexual de Argentina
CHOGM: Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CHR: Commission on Human Rights
CHRR: Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation
GID: gender identity disorder
CMHR: Charter of the Ministry of Human Rights
CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSW: Commission on the Status of Women
CUNY: City University of New York
CWGL: Center for Women's Global Leadership

EAC: East African Community
ECHR: European Court of Human Rights
ECOSOC: Economic and Social Council
EHAHRDP: East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defender Network
ERN: Emergency Response Network
EU: European Union

FARUG: Freedom and Roam Uganda
FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation
FIERCE: Fabulously Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment
FTM: female to male

GALCK: Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya
GALESWA: Gays and Lesbians of Swaziland
GATE: Global Advocates for Trans Equality
GEAR: Gender Equality Architecture Reform

HIV: human immunodeficiency virus
HRC: Human Rights Council
HRF: Human Rights First
HRW: Human Rights Watch
HURCLED: Human Rights Clinic and Education Center

IAB: International Advisory Board
IACHR: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IACtHR: Inter-American Court of Human Rights
ICASA: International Conference on AIDS and STDs in Africa
ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ICJ: International Commission of Jurists
IDAHO: International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
IDUs: injection drug users
IGLHRC: International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission
ILGA: International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association
ILGA-Europe: European Region of the International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association

KEMRI: Kenya Medical Research Institute

LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean
LBL: Landsforeningen for Bøsser og Lesbiske
LeAP: Lesbian Advocates Philippines
LEGABIBO: Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals of Botswana
LGBT: lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
LGBTIQ: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer
LSVD: Lesben und Schwulenverband in Deutschland

MAP: Movement Advancement Project
MARP: most at-risk population
MENA: Middle East and North Africa
MERCOSUR: Common Market of the South
MSM: men who have sex with men
MTF: male to female

NAMBLA: North American Man-Boy Love Association
NGO: non-governmental organization
NOR: None on Record: Voices of Queer Africa
NSP: National Strategic Plan
NYU: New York University

OAS: Organization of American States
OCCUR: Japan Association for the Lesbian and Gay Movement
OHCHR: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSI: Open Society Institute

PLWHA: people living with HIV/AIDS
PSI: Population Services International

QEJ: Queers for Economic Justice

SASOD: Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination
SIDA: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMUG: Sexual Minorities Uganda
SOGI: sexual orientation and gender identity
SRLP: Sylvia Rivera Law Project
STDs: sexually transmitted diseases
STRAP: Society of Transsexual Women of the Philippines
SUR: state under review

TDoR: Transgender Day of Remembrance
Third Committee: Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee

UCT: University of Cape Town
UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN: United Nations
UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNGA: United Nations General Assembly
UPR: Universal Periodic Review
US: United States
UU-UNO: Unitarian Universalists' United Nations Office

WILPF: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WSW: women who have sex with women
WTO: World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

A. Contestability, Opacity, and the Construction of LGBT Human Rights

On a warm spring evening during my fieldwork, I sat in a sparsely-filled lecture hall at a university in Washington, DC, listening to the keynote address at a conference on sexuality and transgression. The speaker was discussing the complicity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) organizations in perpetuating anti-immigrant stereotypes and practices in Germany, where Lesben und Schwulenverband in Deutschland (LSVD) had built upon its legislative and judicial victories with a series of campaigns to promote tolerance of LGBT persons. These involved putting posters in ethnic minority neighborhoods of two men, two women, and a man and a woman kissing, re-routing Pride parades through these areas, and incorporating acceptance of homosexuality into the criteria for immigration into the country.

The episodes vividly illustrated how sexual politics intersect with politics of race, ethnicity, immigration, gender, and class. They also demonstrated why the agendas set by NGOs matter. The speaker pointed to LSVD's advocacy around hate crimes, arguing that a hate crimes bill, if passed, would likely disproportionately impact those young, poor, and migrant populations who were already the most targeted by the police in Germany. Such legislation was, the speaker asserted, a cornerstone of the agenda being promoted by a transnational LGBT movement that considered the passage of hate crimes legislation a marker of progress in any advanced democracy.

The assertion gave me pause. It was not that the critique of hate crimes legislation was far-fetched; in the US, the Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP) and other self-identified progressive or radical organizations offered similar justifications for declining to support the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes

Prevention Act.[1] Nor was it the implication that transnational NGOs advance a culturally or politically controversial agenda. Many critics have convincingly argued that LGBT human rights advocacy reproduces Euro-American assumptions and priorities (Massad 2002 and 2007; Spurlin 2006; Hoad 2007; Haritaworn et al. 2008; S. Long 2009). Both objections were familiar and persuasive.

Instead, I paused because hate crimes legislation had recently been a topic of prolonged internal debate at the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), the NGO where I was conducting fieldwork amongst activists promoting LGBT human rights transnationally. There, advocacy around hate crimes, a priority of the LGBT movement in the US, was met with considerable skepticism. I recalled a meeting where the Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific Islands (API) raised the issue of hate crimes legislation and suggested that staff should clarify an institutional position.[2] She noted that IGLHRC had no clear policy about asking "for criminalizing, what kind of criminalization, and for whom" with regard to hate crimes. She had struggled with this ambiguity when she worked on a submission to the Special Rapporteur on Health about hate crimes laws in India, something for which local partners of IGLHRC in India had voiced support.[3]

As IGLHRC's Research and Policy Associate noted at the meeting, the discussion raised two questions: whether IGLHRC *generally* supported criminalization of anti-LGBT persecution under the law and whether IGLHRC would

[1] The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act added disability, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity to federal legislation in the US that dealt with hate crimes committed on the basis of race, color, national origin, and religion. Among its provisions, the Act gave state and local authorities an extra $5 million per year to investigate and prosecute these crimes, authorized federal authorities to investigate when state or local authorities were unwilling or unable to do so, and required the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to collect data on crimes committed on the basis of gender and gender identity. The Act did not contain any penalty enhancements for hate crimes, though such enhancements do exist under the Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994.

[2] The heads of IGLHRC's programs were hired at different times and thus had slightly different titles, for example, the Middle East and North Africa Program Coordinator, the Regional Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific Islands, the Program Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Africa Program Coordinator.

[3] Within the United Nations (UN), Special Rapporteurs are experts tasked with researching, analyzing, and reporting on a particular country or thematic area.

specifically support hate crimes legislation in particular country contexts. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Program Coordinator responded that a case-by-case approach would make more sense than an overarching policy. Since IGLHRC's partners had different positions on the issue, he pointed out, it would not make sense for IGLHRC to have a global policy, particularly when the issue invited backlash in places where such laws are interpreted to mean that LGBT rights are "special rights." The Program Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) agreed, noting that Brazil was the only country in his region with such a law, which he partially attributed to the historically high rate of crime targeting minorities but also to the ongoing debate over crime rates in the country more generally. Most people, including the staffer himself, were said to personally oppose such laws.

The meeting ultimately failed to reach any conclusive position, for reasons that were logistical as well as philosophical. Some staff wanted to coordinate further with activists and groups in their regions. The Executive Director was traveling, and those present felt his input was necessary to form a position. More mundanely, bandwidth problems in the office were scheduled to be fixed that afternoon, and multiple staffers were repeatedly dropped from Skype or unintelligible for portions of the call. The regional staff eventually agreed to submit position papers from their regions so the Regional Coordinator for API could compile these for further study.

The assertion that hate crimes legislation is part of a particular kind of LGBT agenda is not at all false. Such legislation has long been a priority of organizations in the US, resulting in the Matthew Shepard Act being passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in late October 2009. Activists from South Africa to the Philippines have prioritized similar legislation. International lobbies have insisted on hate crimes laws, too, including the European Region of the International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe), which works closely with LSVD (Swiebel and van der Veur 2009).

The meeting suggested, however, that Northern agendas and ideologies are not always neatly reflected in transnational advocacy. Staff at transnational NGOs can and do absorb a wider range of perspectives. In this instance, they condemned

violence against LGBT persons, but were reluctant to press for hate crimes legislation even as their partners actively campaigned for its passage. The decision was shaped by institutional priorities, the politics of staff, a commitment to partnership, and a broad vision of human rights, all of which affect what IGLHRC does and why.

Yet discussions of human rights, and particularly LGBT human rights, often become polarized, with defenders insisting on their universality and detractors dismissing them as Western inventions with little applicability elsewhere (Sikkink and Smith 2002: 35). During my time at IGLHRC, I was struck by two points that troubled this polarity – firstly, the extent to which the category of LGBT human rights remained undefined and contested, and secondly, the degree to which the processes and politics that shaped that category were opaque to outsiders.

In my fieldwork, this raised two crucial research questions. What *did* LGBT human rights entail, and how were they constructed, promoted, and institutionalized by transnational NGOs based in the Global North?[4] Staff at IGLHRC simultaneously engaged in all of these processes. They *constructed* rights by delineating their scope, assigning responsibility for them, and demanding redress when they were violated. They *promoted* rights by publicizing them and drawing attention to instances where they were not respected. They *institutionalized* rights by encouraging NGOs, governments, and intergovernmental bodies to recognize them and incorporate them into their mandates. Exploring these processes requires attentiveness to the ways that human rights advocacy is undertaken and shaped by groups of human persons with their own goals, backgrounds, and politics.

[4] The terms "North" and "South" plot global inequalities in the wake of the divide between "East" and "West" that predominated throughout the Cold War (Reuveny and Thompson 2007: 557). They originated as economic terms, but are fairly widely used in human rights – including by my informants, whose advocacy largely focused on transnational institutions and institutions in the Global South.

The Contestability of LGBT Human Rights as a Category in Flux

The concept of "LGBT human rights" has been among the most contentious in contemporary human rights debates, both in Northern and Southern domestic politics and in the formal arenas of international law. Jack Donnelly has suggested that "for the purposes of international action, 'human rights' means roughly 'what is in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' [UDHR]" (J. Donnelly 2003: 22). The terms "LGBT," "sexual orientation," and "gender identity" do not appear in the UDHR or in any UN treaties, although they have been read into these by treaty bodies and taken up by a variety of Special Procedures (ICJ 2006, 2010). In the past decade, references to sexual orientation and gender identity have sparked acrimonious debates about Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) and the mandates of Special Procedures, and have repeatedly divided the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee (Third Committee), and General Assembly (UNGA).

Given this contestation, activists had strong incentives for insisting that LGBT human rights were inviolable, non-negotiable, and universal. Staff at IGLHRC worked to ensure that these rights were recognized and respected, and their efforts appeared to be bearing fruit. In 2008, when a statement affirming the human rights of LGBT people was presented to the UNGA, approximately one-third of states voiced support, one-third issued a counter-statement objecting to the recognition of such rights, and one-third abstained or opted not to take a position (ARC 2008). On December 10, 2010, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon publicly and unequivocally expressed support for the recognition and protection of LGBT human rights at a groundbreaking event before the UNGA. Ban's statement followed years of increasing support for LGBT people at the UN, perhaps most consistently at the Human Rights Commission and then Human Rights Council (HRC) under High Commissioners Mary Robinson, Louise Arbour, and Navanethem Pillay. Support from a sitting Secretary General was hailed as momentous by LGBT human rights activists. On March 22, 2011, another statement was presented to the UNGA, with an unprecedented 85 states voicing support (ARC 2011). On June 15, 2011, the HRC

passed the first resolution at the UN expressing concern about violations on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity (A/HRC/17/L.9/Rev.1). This narrowly passed amid heavy lobbying, with 23 members voting in favor, 19 against, and three abstaining. These milestones point to real shifts in support, but also illustrate that the recognition of LGBT human rights remains controversial.

LGBT human rights have also been contested within states, where they are invoked in assertions of nationalism, morality, or sovereignty vis-à-vis hegemonic powers. As Martha Nussbaum has suggested, formulations of sex, gender, and the family frequently stand in metonymically for culture, making contests around them potent sites of resistance to globalization (Nussbaum 1999: 15-16). Homosexuality itself has been rejected outright by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (AFP 2007), labeled "un-African" by Presidents Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania (Hoad 2007: xii; Engelke 1999: 294), and deemed contrary to "Asian Values" by the government of Singapore (Offord 2003: 133-137). In the Americas, Australia, and parts of Europe, political leaders similarly invoke national and religious traditions in their opposition to LGBT marriage and adoption (Fisher 2009; Goldberg-Hiller 2009). In the North and South alike, governments regularly use debates about sexuality to sharpen and define national identity, whether through their insistence on the preservation of a heterosexual order or assertions of tolerance and diversity (Stychin 1998; Puar 2007; Butler 2009).

At their root, these debates generate profoundly ethnographic questions. Which same-sex practices, relationships, and identities exist in different places, how are these embedded in social structures and roles, and how has the globalization of capitalism, of media and technology, of sexual health, and of the human rights regime reshaped what it means to be a sexual subject? Indeed, anthropologists have long been influential in these discussions. Ethnology played an influential role in early explanations of the prevalence of same-sex activity and affect; Sir Richard Burton famously hypothesized that a propensity and tolerance for homosexuality prevailed in a "sotadic zone" spanning North and South America, a large part of Asia, and a small band of southern Europe and North Africa. Ethnographers have also

placed same-sex sexuality beyond the bounds of some cultures. As Stephen Murray and Will Roscoe remark in their anthology on African homosexualities, "[a]mong the many myths Europeans have created about Africa, the myth that homosexuality is absent or incidental in African societies is one of the oldest and most enduring" (Murray and Roscoe 2001: xi; see also Epprecht 2008).

Evidence of same-sex sexuality has now been produced in virtually every corner of the globe. While homosexuality itself has been widely documented, the emergence of "gay" and "lesbian" identities and the politics associated with them are nonetheless the product of historically specific developments in Europe and North America (D'Emilio 1983; Halperin 1990; Katz 1996). The foreignness of these same-sex identities has not prevented LGBT advocacy from taking root in other contexts, however. Even in sub-Saharan Africa, where anti-LGBT animus has been heavily publicized, "gay rights organizations have been allowed to develop, if not to flourish, in many southern African countries in recent years – LEGABIBO in Botswana, GALESWA in Swaziland, Sister Namibia and the Rainbow Project in Namibia among them" (Epprecht 2004: 7). At present, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa not only have a national LGBT organization, but a growing multitude of groups with a range of distinctive identities, agendas, and priorities. The proliferation of these NGOs is accompanied by diversity among them as human rights approaches are complemented or supplanted by those focusing on gender, health, development, religion, and media.

Despite this proliferation of LGBT NGOs, anthropologists have rarely grappled with the politicization of sexual identities and behaviors, focusing instead on the specific textures of sexualities and genders in the South and how these trouble Northern frameworks. The bulk of anthropological scholarship on same-sex sexuality has explored queer and "Third Sex" subjectivities and the distinct ways they are embedded in sociocultural systems (Herdt 1994; Nanda 2000; Wikan 1977; M. Johnson 1997; P. Jackson 1997, 2000; Kulick 1998; M. Johnson et al. 2000; Besnier 2002). When this work engages with the politicization of sexuality, it is usually to illustrate the ways in which concepts like "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," and "transgender" overlook the nuances of sexual subjectivities in the South (Tan 1995;

Lewin and Leap 1996, 2002; McLelland 2000; Blackwood 2002, 2005; King 2002; Boellstorff 2003).

This is not to say that the anthropology of sexuality is wholly depoliticized. A number of anthropologists have begun to explore the founding and development of local, national, and regional LGBT NGOs in the South (Chao 2000; T. Wright 2000; Howe 2002; Patton 2002; Epprecht 2004, 2008; Lorway 2008; Currier 2009). Many of these ethnographies focus on the dilemmas that LGBT activists face in applying Northern frameworks to their own identities and struggles in any meaningful way, and the adaptation and hybridity that is necessary to do so (Drucker 1996, 2000; Manalansan 1997; Murray 2000; Howe 2002).

These analyses have invited reflection on the globalization of sexual identities and politics, especially the diffusion of a "Global Gay" identity and the processes by which particular sexual subjectivities circulate and become hegemonic as they travel around the globe (Donham 2002: 419). This is usually attributed to the enormous political, economic, and cultural power of the "West" in general and the US in particular (Altman 1996; Drucker 1996; see Leap and Boellstorff 2004: 2-3, 5-7). The spread of networked technologies (Heinz et al. 2002; Berry et al. 2003; McLelland 2003; Berry and Martin 2003; Mullally 2003; Offord 2003), the circulation of mass media (Boellstorff 2003), the reach of transnational NGOs (Spurlin 2006; Hoad 2007), the incorporation of gender sensitivity, family planning, and sexual health into development programs (Bedford 2005; Pigg 2005), and the broader changes wrought by globalization (Chabot and Duyvendak 2002) all constitute mechanisms by which sexualities circulate globally.[5]

In these otherwise textured descriptions, the complexity of sexual subjectivity and politics in the North and in transnational networks tends to be glossed over or ignored. The instability of "LGBT human rights" as a category is similarly obscured in a blitz of adjectives that dismisses these rights as individualist,

[5] Some analysts have persuasively argued that sweeping changes in ideas about sex and society – and not LGBT movements per se – have in fact been the primary engines of sodomy law reform globally (see Frank et al. 2009).

neo-liberal, juridical, punitive, secular, colonizing, and firmly grounded in identity politics that do not resonate in the South.

What much of this tends to neglect is the extent to which LGBT human rights are far from defined, and activism around those rights is not a purely homogenizing process in the North or South. The multiplicity of LGBT groups internationally, the information and resources with which they operate, and their particular constituencies, funders, and sociolegal contexts have produced strikingly divergent understandings of what LGBT human rights might mean. Activists interact with a vast array of legal institutions around the globe, producing a patchwork of "rights" and "repressions" that make this category ambiguous and contestable. Courts in Uganda, for example, have recognized the constitutional rights of LGBT people who have had their homes raided (*Ooyo and Mukasa v. Attorney General of Uganda* 2008) and whose sexuality has been sensationally publicized in the media (*Kasha Jacqueline, Pepe Onziema and David Kato v. Giles Muhame and the Rolling Stone Publications Ltd*. 2011). The courts have maintained the legality of criminalizing same-sex activity, however, and legislators have constitutionally prohibited the recognition of same-sex relationships and proposed draconian restrictions on the assembly, expression, and privacy of LGBT persons (HRW 2005; AHB 2009). Similar patterns of drawing and redrawing the boundaries of LGBT human rights have taken place in virtually every country around the globe. Amid a patchwork of statutes, rulings, and public statements, the category of LGBT human rights remains legally and normatively dynamic.

In these contests, law has emerged as a privileged site of struggle over gender and sexuality. As Jean and John Comaroff observe, in the postcolony law "has become the medium in which politics are played out, in which conflicts are dealt with across otherwise incommensurable axes of difference, in which the workings of the 'free' market are assured, in which social order is ostensibly erected and the substance of citizenship made manifest" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006: 22). In the US and EU, too, law has been one of the primary frameworks through which LGBT social movements have sought to advance their claims (Rosenberg 2008: 339-429; Merry et al. 2010: 122). In the North and South alike, the universality and supposed

finality of law, and particularly human rights law, have made it an attractive resource for marginalized groups that are explicitly or symbolically defined outside the boundaries of humanity. The spread of hate crimes legislation is an example of this; such legislation is attractive because it seems to transform the routine mistreatment of LGBT persons into a legal problem with a legal solution. The fact that these claims are made in and through the law has concrete effects on the shape they take.

Rather than seeing LGBT human rights as an essentially Northern framework that is imported wholesale, then, anthropologists must interrogate understandings of human rights, and where and how they are negotiated. Ethnographies of human rights have focused primarily on the ways in which these are globalized, vernacularized, or resisted in particular contexts around the globe (Merry 1997, 2006a; Goldstein 2007; Leve 2007; Speed 2007; J.E. Jackson 2007). A number have also focused on spaces where human rights are developed, from the debates that shaped the UN Human Trafficking Protocol (Warren 2007) to the operation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (Merry 2006b) to the work of NGOs like Amnesty International (AI) (Hopgood 2006) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) (Modirzadeh 2006). These studies explore what Mark Goodale calls "the practice of human rights," or how actors "talk about, advocate for, criticize, study, legally enact, vernacularize, and so on, the idea of human rights in its different forms" (Goodale 2007: 24).

Focusing on the practice of human rights follows Richard Wilson's suggestion that intractable disputes about universalism and relativism might be usefully set aside to consider how actors deploy human rights and the legal, normative, and discursive work that they actually do (Wilson 1997a: 14; Goodale 2007; Merry et al. 2010: 102). What this focus threatens to leave behind, however, is an ethnographic understanding of the processes by which particular human rights are themselves universalized or relativized, and the roles that activists play in these processes. Wilson has more recently drawn attention to these processes of "legalization," noting that, "[t]o state it in legal terms, human rights organizations seek to make an ever-widening set of claims 'justiciable'" (Wilson 2007: 351). A large part of what

human rights activists do is the deliberate construction, promotion, and institutionalization of particular ideas about human subjectivity and the rights and responsibilities that inhere within it.

The ongoing contestation over LGBT human rights offers critical insights for anthropologists studying globalization and the politicization of sexuality. It is equally important for legal anthropologists, however, and draws attention to the contentious *processes* by which actors universalize their claims to the legal and normative protections of human rights or relativize those claims to sap them of their legitimacy. This raises a series of questions: Why do some human rights claims become controversial? What role does law, or the semblance of law, play in these debates? How is legitimacy sought by proponents of rights, and how are they delegitimized by their detractors? The insistence that LGBT human rights are universal in an ontological sense has too often precluded any acknowledgement that the boundaries and content of this category remain contested, or that human actors are influential in these debates. As one of the most controversial topics in contemporary human rights discourse, the rights of LGBT persons are helpful in understanding why and how human rights are universalized or relativized in practice.

The Opacity of Processes and Practices of Human Rights Development

If proponents of LGBT human rights have stressed their universality, critics have emphasized their cultural specificity. This takes a variety of forms; opponents deny that same-sex practicing people exist in some areas, assert that sexuality is not a universally relevant aspect of selfhood, or argue that same-sex sexuality should be cured or discouraged rather than protected by law. The relativist position sees LGBT rights as decidedly Euro-American, and tends to see NGOs exporting them globally as part of an imperialist project. What is evident from the hate crimes discussion, however, is that even if LGBT human rights are constructed, it is often unclear who is doing the constructing, how, and why. While these struggles have been

strategically framed within a human rights framework, there is little understanding of *how* this is being done, and what remains possible in a framework in flux.

A number of critical analyses of transnational LGBT NGOs have been undertaken by postcolonial, literary, and social theorists who focus on the ideological and political foundations upon which these projects rest (Hoad 1999, 2007; Massad 2002, 2007; Puar 2007). These analyses often highlight the "Western" assumptions that are enmeshed in the ideology and work of these NGOs. The "Western" aspects of their work are typically those which are individualistic, rights-based, and rely on a particular brand of identity politics; and the diffusion of these models is often attributed to NGOs in the North engaging with those in the South.

At its core, however, the distance between ideology and praxis in activism is an empirical question, and benefits tremendously from grounded ethnography (Gellner 2009: 10; Sperling et al. 2001: 1158-1159; Cowan 2003, 2006: 21; Mills 2003; Bhattacharya 2010). As Stephen Hopgood observes, few analyses have given prolonged attention to the dynamics of transnational human rights NGOs and the factors that shape their work, and, as a result, there are few textured depictions of what they actually do and why (Hopgood 2006: vii-viii). The same is true of LGBT NGOs, which have rarely been examined ethnographically (Doyle 2008: 210). Critical analyses of transnational LGBT NGOs insightfully show how they might shape political and cultural systems in which they operate. Lacking ethnography, what that they are ill-equipped to show, however, is the reverse, namely, how broader political and cultural systems might shape these organizations and their staffs, and how individuals animate them with their own beliefs, politics, and goals.

Phrased in the dramaturgical vocabulary of Erving Goffman, what most analyses have tended to explore is the *frontstage* of organizational work, particularly the campaigns and publications that are produced for a wider public. What they rarely see is the *backstage* of organizational work, including the different perspectives and skills that staff bring to their advocacy, the projects that never reach fruition, and the dynamics that shape how decisions are made and priorities are determined (Goffman 1959). As a result, the work of these NGOs is discussed in profoundly theoretical terms, focusing primarily on the frameworks they use, the

populations they target, and the impacts of their interventions. Scant attention has been paid to processual aspects of *doing* human rights advocacy on behalf of LGBT and same-sex practicing persons.

Analyses of the complex dynamics of privilege, hegemony, and imperialism in transnational work are critical, but rarely take into account the daily motivations, frustrations, and disruptions that shape the form and content of the work that staff at NGOs actually do. Ethnography is indispensable in this regard. As Lisa Markowitz suggests, "[g]rounding research in the day-to-day work of NGO staff allows identification of the ways quotidian matters and interorganizational relations affect the design, presentation, and implementation of projects, and the assumptions embedded within them. Such attention to situated practice also provides an antidote to the generalizations made about NGOs by their advocates and detractors" (Markowitz 2001: 42; see also Macdonald 2001).

The processes of constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing human rights can be approached from a number of levels, from explorations of the systemic influences that shape how claims are made to fine-grained analyses of why key actors promote the ideals and goals that they do. In the widest view, the study of social movements, networks, and transnational advocacy has illustrated how NGOs and other organizations "operate in a wider context which both provides them with the aims they pursue and sets limits to the way they may operate" (Hirsch and Gellner 2001: 4). As institutional ethnographers have so deftly shown, disciplinary or professional conventions can be profoundly influential on what organizations do and how people function within them (e.g. Latour and Woolgar 1986). In the human rights field specifically, a number of conventions heavily shape programming and advocacy work. These include everything from practices of documentation and reporting to language use to the subtle ways in which victims must be rendered "innocent" to justify intervention (Wilson 1997b: 134-160; Hastrup 2003; Merry 2007: 195; Phillips 2009: 354-359). Advocacy within a human rights framework involves particular ways of recognizing and addressing problems; actors may resist or subvert them, but they inevitably structure how practitioners operate.

These modalities are internalized into the practice of NGOs in myriad but identifiable ways. They shape mission statements, narrations of organizational histories, and strategic plans, as well as informal aspects of institutional culture. Indeed, NGOs provide useful venues for study because they can neither be subsumed into the wider society in which they operate nor reduced to the politics of their staff or volunteers at any given time. As Hirsch and Gellner note:

> Organizations have a view of themselves, both for internal and for external consumption. This means that organizations are not just the sum of their participants' interactions: organizations acquire a life and a momentum independent of the people who make them up. Much organizational time and effort goes into controlling and disciplining those on the inside. (Hirsch and Gellner 2001: 12)

IGLHRC not only projected itself as a singular entity with a mission and principles to governments, funders, and partners around the globe. It was also defined as an entity *by* these parties, the media, and the government of the US, where it was registered. Staff were conscious about speaking on behalf of and representing IGLHRC, distinguishing their own views from the organizational line. All of these give good reason to focus on IGLHRC as a site and arena of political worldmaking, while still recognizing its fictiveness as an agentive actor in itself.

Nonetheless, a valuable contribution that anthropologists can make to the study of NGOs is to give texture to this fictive agency and grasp the human element of organizations, that is, how they are animated by human actors whose values, goals, and preoccupations all shape how the NGO functions. This element of humanity can be lost in studies of social movements, networks, and transnational advocacy, and risks being obscured when NGOs are treated as monoliths (Escobar 1992: 70-71). While no account can completely capture the human elements of social movements, ethnography is indispensable in tracing some of the ways that human interactions shape agendas and advocacy. Each person at IGLHRC had their own beliefs, priorities, and style, and ethnography is critical in understanding how they worked together on a daily basis to pursue the open-ended goal of advancing LGBT human rights.

A useful framework for this type of inquiry is provided by Norman Long, whose actor-oriented approach has been used to foreground the roles played by those who plan, implement, and negotiate development programs in practice (N. Long 1992a). At its core, the actor-oriented approach foregrounds "the study of intermediary actors or brokers operating at the 'interfaces' of different world-views and knowledge systems, and reveals their importance in negotiating roles, relationships, and representations" (Lewis and Mosse 2006: 10). The emphasis on "brokers" has been prominent in development anthropology, but has not been widely used to analyze the anthropology of sexuality, human rights, or transnational advocacy. In LGBT human rights advocacy, however, brokers play pivotal roles by developing relationships, transmitting information, and negotiating priorities among heterogeneous actors. The actor-oriented approach is particularly useful in this and other fields which are typically cast in ideological or principled terms and where the work of activists and their networks goes unremarked or is poorly understood.

This should not, however, foreclose analyses of larger structural phenomena. Critics of the actor-oriented approach argue that it offers an unrealistic assessment of the agency that actors enjoy, ignoring structural constraints that limit their ability to affect change (N. Long 1992b: 21; Lewis and Mosse 2006: 10-11). To acknowledge these, it is necessary to employ different approaches to understanding advocacy. When deployed fully, the actor-oriented approach is fundamentally a social constructionist approach, recognizing that wider systems shape, but are also shaped by, actors operating with particular beliefs, habits, and motivations (N. Long 2001: 24). This resists the determinism of solely socio-historical analyses while acknowledging structural constraints on agency and resistance. A truly holistic approach to social movements must attempt "to recognize more causal pathways and relevant phenomena than is usually the case in political science; to proceed from a more fragmented understanding of culture than is usually found in history; and to combine ethnography with more attention to political actors than is often the case in anthropology" (J. Rubin 2004: 108; see Edelman 2001: 309). The core of this approach is anthropological, but it invites other forms of inquiry as well. In

understanding the activity of brokers at transnational LGBT NGOs, these might include law, politics, economics, history, sociology, development studies, area studies, and postcolonial, feminist, and queer theory, among others. This is especially important for understanding brokers operating transnationally, who mediate among a variety of social and political systems in pursuit of their goals.

As the hate crimes discussion attests, brokers have complex politics and motivations for what they do. By resorting to "lawfare" to achieve their goals, however, their legal and political victories can have unintended and lasting consequences (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006: 31). It is perhaps unsurprising that LGBT rights have culturally specific roots, but the backgrounds, motivations, and dilemmas of those who work to promote them cannot be taken for granted. To understand why and how LGBT human rights are constructed, promoted, and institutionalized, anthropologists must engage deeply with those brokers who advocate for them on a daily basis.

B. IGLHRC as a Site of Legal and Social Production

My interest in the contestability and opacity of LGBT human rights gradually developed as a result of my engagement with brokers promoting them in the Global North and South. This project was inspired by my own prior experiences on the periphery of LGBT human rights NGOs, and was sharpened by the lingering ambivalence I felt about my past anthropological work on LGBT advocacy.

I first became interested in transnational LGBT human rights NGOs during the summer of 2006, when I interned at the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA) in Brussels. I arrived expecting to campaign, work on policy, and change laws during the summer. In reality, much of my time was spent doing the kind of network maintenance that Annelise Riles has described, for example, translating documents, preparing items for websites and newsletters, and designing projects that had not yet been funded or fully defined (Riles 2000). I was one of four people in the office, only two of whom were full-time staff, and was

struck by how under-staffed and under-resourced ILGA was relative to the scope of its international mandate.

A similar dissonance between the image and the reality of advocacy struck me during my later fieldwork on post-apartheid legal mobilization in South Africa and on the ways that LGBT activists in the Philippines set agendas and advocated for queer people living in poverty. In my research, I was struck by the extent to which scholarship on the globalization of sexuality pitted fine-grained analyses of sexuality and politics in the South against a broad caricature of advocacy in the North. Criticisms of NGOs and frameworks as individualist, neoliberal, statist, and often aggressively white, Western, and male rang true to an extent, but left little room for the diverse approaches reflected in the work of Northern groups like SRLP, Queers for Economic Justice (QEJ), or Fabulously Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment (FIERCE). In the absence of ethnographic engagement, these often conflated the frameworks within which activists putatively worked with the values they held and the interventions they actually made in practice.

With these ambivalences in mind, I made arrangements to spend a year conducting doctoral fieldwork at IGLHRC, one of the most prominent transnational NGOs in the field of LGBT human rights. As a research fellow, I spent ten months with the headquarters in New York and three months with the Africa Program in Cape Town looking at how brokers advanced particular visions of LGBT human rights. IGLHRC provided a unique vantage point from which to examine the politics and practices of transnational LGBT human rights advocacy. It was among the first NGOs in its field, and marked its 20th anniversary during my fieldwork. It had been influential in pressuring AI and other NGOs to address the persecution of LGBT persons as a human rights issue. IGLHRC was well-known globally, and I encountered its work in both of my projects on LGBT advocacy in South Africa and the Philippines. Over two decades, IGLHRC's brokers and partners had been prominent actors in the globalization of sexual politics and the development of LGBT human rights.

The advocacy of brokers at IGLHRC spoke to broader questions about the ways in which rights and responsibilities were claimed transnationally. Some

involved the institution and the brokers who animated it, for example, what influenced their advocacy, what projects they planned and implemented, and the challenges they grappled with as they did so. Others involved the sociopolitical systems in which they were situated, for example, who populated the terrain on which ideas about humanity and rights were contested and which kinds of rights were likely to prove persuasive in political struggles. The complexities of work at IGLHRC illuminated the obstacles and opportunities that affect how human rights are promoted in practice. Developing a more textured understanding of how and why brokers at IGLHRC construct, promote, and institutionalize particular rights is fundamental both for critics of human rights advocacy and for those seeking to do this work more effectively and responsibly.

C. Methodology and the Anthropology of Advocacy

My prior engagement with transnational LGBT advocacy generated a number of questions before my fieldwork began, but a series of anthropological insights were critical in developing a framework and methodology for investigating the grounded, processual aspects of LGBT human rights advocacy. Three of these – on the field, the method, and the challenges of political ethnography – heavily shaped my approach to the anthropology of advocacy and merit further discussion.

My choice of field site was primarily influenced by the desire to give the same level of critical scrutiny to prominent, well-resourced LGBT NGOs in the North as anthropologists have given to LGBT NGOs in the South. In many ways, this was informed by scholarship exploring the utility of "fieldwork at home" and the changing nature of "the field" itself in a globalizing world (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Hannerz 1996: 113). More specifically, it was inspired by Laura Nader's injunction to "study up," and her insistence that anthropologists should not only pay attention to the most marginalized populations, but to those influential people and institutions that disproportionately shape our worlds. As she suggests, a narrow focus on the most marginalized affects anthropological theory as well as practice: "The consequences of not studying up as well as down are serious in terms of

developing adequate theory and description. If one's pivot point is around those who have responsibility by virtue of being delegated power, then the questions change" (Nader 1972: 7).

Within the field of LGBT human rights, NGOs like IGLHRC are among the most bureaucratic, institutional, and powerful actors globally, and focusing on them does shift the "pivot point" that Nader identifies in a real and meaningful way. Anthropological analyses have overwhelmingly focused on how sexual subjectivities and politics in different locales trouble hegemonic frameworks from the North. When viewed from the position of those who are implicated in advancing these frameworks transnationally, other questions are brought into view. Instead of asking how groups depart from a presumptively Euro-American baseline of gay and lesbian sexuality or human rights, one might question how and why Euro-American paradigms are constructed in particular ways, how their advancement happens, and whether there is room for creative maneuver that is not evident to those who only see frontstage performances of advocacy.

Given those questions, a second set of considerations involved methods. Even inside NGOs, the work that brokers do on a daily basis is often opaque. It was impossible to track what everybody was doing at any given time, or to be privy to the many different emails, phone calls, and conversations that shaped IGLHRC's work. Every broker at the organization was involved in their own projects, frequently behind closed doors, and often outside the country in which they worked. It would have been impossible for me to follow brokers working in the US, Argentina, South Africa, and the Philippines on trips to Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, the Gambia, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, and the many other places they traveled during my fieldwork.

Given these limitations, any ethnography of civil society will inevitably offer a "partial truth" of what staff and NGOs do (Clifford 1986: 6). What I found invaluable in developing this as fully as possible was what Hugh Gusterson calls "polymorphous engagement," or using multiple and various approaches to get the richest possible understanding of activists and their advocacy. The method involves

"interacting with informants across a number of dispersed sites, not just in local communities, and sometimes in virtual form; and it means collecting data eclectically from a disparate array of sources in many different ways" (Gusterson 1997: 116).

The idea of polymorphous engagement can include participant observation, but necessarily engages actors and resources beyond one's own field site. For this project, I interviewed staff members, but also donors, partners, former staff members, and colleagues at other NGOs. I read the writings of past and present staffers, including poetry, plays, and fiction as well as interviews, journal articles, book chapters, theses, and essays, to see how they expressed their views in forums outside their work. I looked through archived materials in New York and was given access to the personal archives of former employees. I monitored press coverage of IGLHRC, as well as disputes over sexual rights as they unfolded in Senegal, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, and Kenya. I went to fundraisers to observe how staff promoted their work, and scrutinized the analytics for the website to see where and how they disseminated their materials. I read all of IGLHRC's past publications that I was able to access, as well as a number of popular and academic critiques of the organization and the broader field of LGBT human rights organizations of which it was a part.

Of course, classic fieldwork techniques were deeply important to the project. Virtually all of the brokers at IGLHRC had given considerable thought to transnational LGBT advocacy. The motivations, ambivalences, and insights they brought to their work were not always fully apparent by scrutinizing their behavior or their outputs, and interviews proved extremely helpful in getting brokers to pause and dialogically reflect on their enterprise.

While the analysis that follows is informed by months of casual interactions, I also conducted formal interviews with brokers, their partners, and past employees of IGLHRC. All of these were digitally recorded with the consent of the interviewee. In my daily work, however, using a digital recorder threatened to stifle or materially alter the work that brokers undertook. Instead, I used my field notes to preserve anything I found interesting and potentially relevant to the ethnography. In meetings, I took detailed notes to recall the topics that were on the agenda, the

major points that were made, and any particularly interesting dynamics that arose. My inbox preserved a rich archive of interactions, but one that I opted not to use in any direct way. Quoting from emails struck me as functionally akin to surreptitiously recording interactions with co-workers. As with conversations, I made a note when an exchange seemed particularly interesting, and this impressionistic approach proved wholly sufficient for writing up this ethnography.[6] For this purpose, I had a field notebook in the office along with the steno pad I used for my research work. I jotted down notes after particularly striking conversations, but wrote up the vast majority of my reflections after leaving the office at the end of the day.

A more recent anthropological imperative that I found helpful was discussing the ideas in the dissertation with my informants. During my fieldwork, I routinely floated ideas and nagging questions by my co-workers, including early iterations of the themes that structure Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6. Months later, as I finished writing, I asked brokers at IGLHRC to review drafts of the ethnography. I initially contacted each broker I had interviewed to ask if they thought their views were fairly represented in the quotes from their interviews that I planned to use. Only one broker asked if we could discuss her quotes, and we spoke over the phone. As it turned out, she primarily wanted to acknowledge that IGLHRC was increasingly addressing at least some of the concerns she had about human rights work. I explained that the ethnography was based on the period of time I spent at IGLHRC, and together, we agreed that a workable solution would be to acknowledge the dynamism of an organization like IGLHRC in a footnote and in the Conclusion. The only portion of a quote that she asked me to excise had to do with an episode where translation proved difficult for a specific set of activists, and I agreed. The situation described in the quote involved a lot of nuance that the quote did not fully capture, and I felt that the underlying point could be just as effectively conveyed by an analytical discussion of the limits of language in transnational work.

[6] The emails I discuss in later chapters are primarily press releases or emails sent to public listservs that are readily accessible to a wider public. I focus on the argument they make as an anthropological object, and not the identity of the person who sent them.

Other brokers read the work more fully. I sent a version of Chapter 4 to both the Program Director and the Executive Director, and presented it at a conference where other activists and scholars engaged in transnational LGBT networks offered helpful perspectives on the partnership principle. As I finished writing, I sent a draft of the full ethnography to the Communications and Research Director, the Research and Policy Associate, and the Operations Manager, all of whom had expressed interest in reading the draft when it was close to completion. The Communications and Research Director was the most responsive, and we engaged in nearly four hours of rich conversation about IGLHRC, the theory and practice of human rights, and anecdotes or unremarked dynamics that she considered relevant in refining or reframing the issues in the ethnography. She was especially helpful in prompting me to explain more fully what I thought "human rights" meant, both historically and normatively, which was particularly helpful in clarifying my ideas early in the ethnography. The Research and Policy Associate offered useful feedback as well, particularly with regards to the finer points of IGLHRC's work at the UN. The Executive Director and Program Director both replied when I sent them their quotes to review, but neither offered any substantive feedback on Chapter 4. I expected them to respond to the draft, as both had thought a great deal about the politics of transnational LGBT advocacy, and both were presumably invested in whether I said anything especially damning in the ethnography. Given the demands on their time, my guess is that they appreciated receiving the drafts but were busy enough that they did not find time to read them. Still, their feedback as I was doing my fieldwork greatly enriched the analysis, and was helpful in producing the ethnography itself.

What I ended up finding most productive, however, was just doing the work that brokers do. This is what Gavin Brown calls "observant participation," a term he uses to describe his own engagement with radical queer groups in London (Brown 2007: 2686; see Mosse 2001: 161; Moeran 2007: 13-15). Brown places a heavy emphasis on the value of his own intimate engagement in activist work, noting:

> This level of personal involvement is important to the direction that this work has taken – a less involved observer would be unlikely to appreciate

> the embodied thrill of participating in cooking in a communal café for a hundred people, building a sadomasochistic play space out of found objects, or facing a line of riot police dressed in pink and silver gender-ambiguous drag. This work is the result of observant participation – rather than the more conventional and detached ethnographic method of participant observation – that engages with the materiality of the practices that constitute these activist networks and spaces. (Brown 2007: 2686)

In ethnographic work on institutions, Brown's shift in emphasis from seeing to doing is a critical one (Mosse 2001: 161). As far back as the Manchester Shop Floor Studies, where ethnographers immersed themselves in daily work in an industrial setting, hands-on engagement has been used by anthropologists to gain a different perspective on the work that people do within institutions. Notably, it also enables the perspectives gained as a participant and as an observer to be productively held in tension (Wright 1994: 11; Emmett and Morgan 1982: 142). The shift builds on insights from researchers in other disciplines who argue that participatory research into lived problems produces very different forms of knowledge and solidarity than the application of external or foreign models (Fals-Borda 1985: 94-95).

Being conscious of my limited time and dual role at IGLHRC put me in a different position than those who were there as human rights professionals. Nonetheless, as an observant-participant, I also gained a visceral feel for the work that was necessary to understand some of the fears, desires, and pressures that influenced brokers in their advocacy. I grasped why brokers insisted upon boundaries between personal and professional life when the Executive Director called me over Christmas and told me to contact the French Embassy about two dozen men arrested at a party in Senegal. I understood logistical frustrations during a conference call with activists in Uganda that cost hundreds of dollars, which ended when half did not call in and half refused to use landlines for security reasons and were thus unintelligible. I felt the emotional investment that people had in their work when a report on Senegal, which had been my primary project from October to February, was unexpectedly shelved on the eve of its release. That intimacy with the work not only shaped how I understood what brokers do, but forced me to think critically about my own political involvement in the project.

A third set of considerations therefore involved the epistemological challenges of studying activists, especially given that a primary attraction of the project was its relevance to my own political and theoretical preoccupations. As Nader suggests, this is not necessarily a liability. Instead, "the normative impulse often leads one to ask important questions about a phenomenon that would not be asked otherwise, or to define a problem in a new context" (Nader 1972: 2). In this project, my interest in the theoretical and political questions raised by LGBT advocacy encouraged me to be an active and inquisitive researcher, and my desire for robust understandings of LGBT human rights advocacy led to a deeper engagement with the work itself.

The possibilities for an anthropology of advocacy have been strengthened by work that rejects the presumptive neutrality of the ethnographic gaze. My interest in how LGBT human rights NGOs work, what needs and pressures motivate brokers, and what models implicitly or explicitly guide their practice is, in many ways, political. I identify as queer, and am alarmed by abuses inflicted on sexual subjects by governments and private actors. At the same time, that is only part of my politics, and I also worry about how claims about LGBT rights are made and advanced – for example, how these are invoked as a measure of "civilization," how they are co-opted to justify anything from withholding aid to aggressive forms of repression, and how they close spaces for forms of same-sex eroticism and relationality that cannot be glossed as "LGBT." While I do believe that questions of justice are at stake, I often doubt that the human rights framework is the best tool to use in responding to them.

A series of productive and controversial interventions defending politically engaged anthropology have been made by Nancy Scheper-Hughes, whose calls for ethical militancy, "barefoot anthropology," and engaged acts of witnessing challenge "two sacred cows that have prevented anthropologists from participating in the struggle: the proud, even haughty distance from political engagement and its accompanying, indeed, its justifying ethic of moral and cultural relativism" (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 414). Ethnographies of human rights often implicitly draw on Scheper-Hughes' notion of "witnessing," whereby anthropologists not only observe

injustices but seek to understand, theorize, and ultimately respond to them. As she writes, "Witnessing, the anthropologist as *companheira*, is in the active voice, and it positions the anthropologist inside human events as a responsive, reflexive, and morally committed being, one who will 'take sides' and make judgments, though this flies in the face of the anthropological nonengagement with either ethics or politics" (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 419; but see Spencer 2007).

I want to suggest in this ethnography, however, that witnessing need not *only* be in the active voice, and that anthropologists might usefully reflect on responses to injustice, think about the ways that claims are made, and challenge those who are committed to justice to think critically about their work. This is in many ways influenced by my own experience at IGLHRC. Staff spent months trying to publicize and protest the draconian provisions of the proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda in the hopes that they could help Ugandan activists bring pressure on the government to stop its passage. Toward the end of 2009, the story gained momentum internationally as it appeared in media outlets, world leaders spoke out against the Bill and publicly chastised President Museveni, governments threatened to withdraw badly needed development aid, and activists in the North scrambled to say or do something regarding the Bill. The role of many activists working on the issue transnationally subtly changed as they found themselves trying to tamp down sensationalized coverage, foreground the voices of Ugandans, and direct attention away from misinformation and counterproductive campaigns. In instances like these, witnessing not only involves documenting injustices against marginalized persons. The problem was precisely the opposite; fetishizing injustice and rushing to respond are themselves dangerous, and anthropologists are well-positioned to explore how and why responses might be made more self-critically and responsibly. While engaged anthropology is laudable, something important is lost if its focus is limited to the brutalized, the tortured, or the disappeared and not also to the letter-writers, the petition-signers, and the placard-holders whose attempts at solidarity are also part of those struggles.

Of course, the anthropology of advocacy involves its own dilemmas and entanglements, and three of these are important for understanding the work that

follows. The first was whether I could fully appreciate what is interesting about IGLHRC after being involved in other sexual rights campaigns in the US and transnationally. I entered the project with a familiarity with many of the terms, frameworks, and touchstones of the wider transnational LGBT movement; while this greatly enriched my understanding, I risked taking things for granted that may have seemed interesting or surprising to an outsider (Chapman 2001: 26). This was not only true of the rhetoric and practice at IGLHRC; it was also true of the foundations of LGBT politics, of human rights, and of the particular setting of an NGO in New York. Before starting, I could offhandedly use acronyms like "LGBTIQ," had some grasp of the rights enshrined in the ICCPR and ICESCR, and understood why a consultant had to fill out a 1099 form before she could be paid for her work.

This familiarity demands self-consciousness about the ethnographic encounter and one's own position within it, which is rendered more transparent by tools like self-analysis, a diary, and autobiography (Okely 1992: 39). In this project, self-reflection was invaluable. Prior to my arrival at IGLHRC, I made a list of things I might take for granted, and revisited it regularly. These included what terminology meant and how it was used, who the organization appealed to in its advocacy and why, and what internal and external pressures staffers felt obligated to comply with. I was surprised to find that the work itself helped considerably in decentering what I took for granted. By working in the same sphere as groups with different backgrounds and politics, things that brokers at IGLHRC – myself included – took for granted were thrown into sharp relief. In one incident, a feminist activist from Lebanon criticized IGLHRC's "Export Hope, Not Homophobia" stickers on a blog, asking, "how about 'don't export anything; fix your own hypocrisy' instead as a lobbying message to the American government?" (Nadz 2010). Many brokers considered the criticism unwarranted or unfair, while others understood the sentiment behind the critique. These kinds of ruptures routinely and helpfully stripped away the veneer of any unified, politically homogenous agenda within transnational networks.

What makes this dilemma inevitable in the anthropology of advocacy is that some basic familiarity with an organization's work is typically necessary to gain

access and be permitted to do fieldwork in the first place. I was only able to spend a year at IGLHRC because I could offer to do research and writing without being a net drain on the staff's time, energy, or resources.[7] Even then, it took a fair amount of persistence to finalize the arrangement. Somebody seeking to simply observe brokers as they worked would almost certainly have been denied the kind of deep, lengthy access I enjoyed.

The depth of my involvement made a considerable difference to my research. More than I realized, brokers at IGLHRC (and probably most small NGOs) are incredibly busy, and are subject in no small way to the crises that arise unexpectedly in their work. Scheduling interviews or being present for a shorter period of time would have been difficult and misleading, if not impossible (Macdonald 2001: 88-90). By being present for a year, I witnessed a full cycle of board meetings, donor visits, grant proposals, departmental retreats, fundraisers, and budgeting, as well as staff birthdays and the holiday party. I was there as plans were made and executed for annual events like World Human Rights Day, the Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO), the city's parade for Pride, and the annual Celebration of Courage fundraisers in New York and San Francisco. I was also present for functions at the UN, including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), submissions for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and meetings of ECOSOC. My familiarity and the duration of the fieldwork that enabled inevitably gave me a different – but hopefully richer – understanding than those analyzing it from afar.

That immersion raises a second challenge, which is the set of affinities and entanglements that develop as anthropologists of advocacy form relationships with particular colleagues, projects, or NGOs. This aspect of "studying up" is explored by Lisa Markowitz, who suggests that the ethnography of NGOs often requires

[7] A grant that I secured from the R. Scott Hitt Foundation enabled IGLHRC to take on an additional staffer for the period of time that I was in New York. When I left for Cape Town, IGLHRC paid me $2200 per month to work on their volume on blackmail and extortion of LGBT persons in sub-Saharan Africa, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 3.

"studying over," that is, looking critically at those who one might consider colleagues, like-minded allies, or friends. As Markowitz notes:

> The aspect of NGO fieldwork I find ultimately most unsettling is in what I have come to think of as studying over: conducting ethnography among NGO staff. I intentionally chose to affiliate with a well-esteemed GSO, doing work I admire, filled with people I like. This choice also came out of the normal ethnographic opportunism based in long-term acquaintance. Some of the staffers in this GSO and other alpaca sector NGOs are fellow social scientists, and some are now friends. Participant observation among them involves chatting in the office, jolting about in pickup trucks, talking politics, and swapping stories in the evening. They also act as key informants in explaining regional NGO turf wars. I find myself, not surprisingly, assuming their point of view: good NGOs are those with whom 'my NGOs' collaborate. (Markowitz 2001: 43)

Over a year of working with people in a small organization, it is difficult not to form opinions of people and forge relationships with them. Some inevitably opened up to me more than others, allowing for deeper discussions about their work. I shared drinks with coworkers, attended dinner parties in their homes, and marked birthdays, engagements, and personal losses with them.

After spending time writing up away from the organization, I have become less concerned about the impact that these relationships have had on my assessment of IGLHRC's work. Brokers were thoughtful about their advocacy and often acutely aware of the critiques and limitations of the frameworks they used (Macdonald 2001: 77; Cunningham 2000: 585). The strong relationships I had with people within the organization were often precisely those that allowed me to question or critique their work without appearing to attack their motivations.[8] If anything, working within IGLHRC gave me a far better understanding of the multiple pressures, whether explicit or subtle, which shape the work beyond any one person's culpability – something that brokers understood quite well, and often complained of themselves. While I have tried not to shy away from critically

[8] The size of IGLHRC and the regular interactions among its staff in New York may be part of the reason for this amity and understanding. At larger NGOs, this may not have been the case – consider the strong dissatisfaction within AI with parts of Stephen Hopgood's ethnography, *Keepers of the Flame*.

interrogating the approaches taken at IGLHRC, I have also tried to consistently show why they are taken and how they are implemented. I was told by the Executive Director at the outset of my fieldwork that nothing happens at IGLHRC that those who implement it would not be able to explain or defend. I hope that conversations with the staff during the writing-up of this ethnography permit me to adhere closely to that spirit.

Most of all, though, I have tried to be as transparent as possible with my data, so that others can disagree and draw different conclusions from it (Spencer 1989: 151-152). Having worked alongside brokers at IGLHRC, I know I am more prone to sympathetic readings of their advocacy than other critics – but then again, my aim is to understand who they are and why they do what they do. I have tried to present the ethnography in such a way that others can read it and ground their analyses in the incidents that I describe, adding nuance and specificity to the scholarship being produced on these critical questions.

A final challenge of the anthropology of advocacy is a classic difficulty in anthropology at home – the likelihood that informants or people who recognize your informants will read what you write about them. In this case, like others, that accessibility can have personal, professional, and political consequences (Hirsch and Gellner 2001: 10; Mosse 2006: 937). In the middle of my fieldwork, I remember reading Faye Ginsburg's piece in the *Pleasure and Danger* anthology, which describes the contentious debates over abortion and reproductive rights in a small Midwestern town (Ginsburg 1984). Although Ginsburg declines to name the town throughout the piece, there is a full page of exposition about it: with its sister city across the river in another state, it has a population of about 100,000, is surrounded by rural farmland, and boasts three universities. It is also the largest city in the state where Lawrence Welk was born. I immediately recognized the town as Fargo, North Dakota, where I grew up. I was obviously predisposed to recognize the town despite the anonymization, but decades after the publication of the piece, the internet makes it increasingly easy for anyone to quickly check where Lawrence Welk was born and know precisely what community, what clinic, and potentially what staff or volunteers Ginsburg was writing about.

I grappled with this a great deal because very few restrictions were placed on my research at IGLHRC. I was not asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement upon my arrival or departure, and staff did not seem particularly concerned about what I would do with my information. This did not mean they were not aware of my dual role; the MENA Program Coordinator regularly cracked jokes about the staff being guinea pigs, and at particularly dysfunctional moments, it was not unusual for somebody to raise an eyebrow and tell me to take notes for my dissertation. I suspect brokers had different motivations for this laxity. Many were more dedicated to their career or their advocacy than to IGLHRC per se, and did not regard their position at IGLHRC as a final or permanent one. Others had no plans to leave, but were quite reflective about their work and recognized why I might analyze or critique their advocacy (Macdonald 2001: 77; Pulman-Jones 2001). The Executive Director was the only person who half-jokingly told me in front of a donor that he was putting a lot of trust in me, and that I had better not let him down. Of course, it helped that I was free labor, and with more than enough work to go around, I was warmly welcomed into the office (Hine 2001: 64). More than that, however, I think perceptions of my fieldwork were fairly decisively shaped by my personality and politics. From the outset, I was a diligent worker, had feminist and queer politics that closely resembled those of others on staff, and was measured in my criticism of brokers and their advocacy. By contrast, other brokers at IGLHRC were vocally critical of decisions they disliked, and the wider networks in which they worked were often intensely antagonistic. Frankly, I was probably one of the more agreeable and non-threatening individuals with whom many brokers interacted.

Although brokers put enormous trust in me, it would be impossible and unproductive to anonymize IGLHRC and still write about the work it does. IGLHRC is unique in the field of transnational LGBT NGOs, and it would be a superficial gesture to hide its identity but still describe its history, its mission, and its work. If the ethnography itself did not give telling clues to those in the know, a quick search for my name on the internet would immediately reveal that I was at IGLHRC for a year. Instead, I suspect that anonymity would function as an excuse to avoid grappling with political repercussions and to write in a more speculative and less responsible

way. Should donors or governments read my account, there would be political implications whether I made a token gesture toward anonymity or not. For that reason, I chose to speak openly about IGLHRC and grapple with the implications of the ethnography as I wrote it.

What I opted not to do was identify brokers, giving pseudonyms to those who preferred them. It is possible to figure out who worked at IGLHRC at any point in time, but with high turnover and no public history of the staff, this is harder than it seems, and would take significant effort on the part of the investigator. When brokers have been openly critical of the organization's practice, I have used my judgment in anonymizing their comments, giving only as much detail as I feel is relevant in understanding what they are saying and why. While I am aware that this saps some of the texture from the commentary, brokers placed a great deal of trust in me during our conversations, and I feel obligated not to jeopardize their positions in the presentation of the data.

As a final caveat, it is important to point out that there were times during the fieldwork where I found myself having to assess what I wanted the project to look like, and where alternatives might have produced a very different ethnography. It is worth mentioning some of these crossroads to give a better understanding of my vision for the project and why I focused on the aspects of advocacy I describe throughout this ethnography.

The first dilemma involved the work that I was tasked to do and how it affected what I came to understand best while at IGLHRC. Following two departures at the start of my fieldwork, the Communications and Research Department was short-staffed with myself, another research fellow, and a web designer. I was given the responsibility for finalizing IGLHRC's upcoming publications, particularly a report on homophobia and transphobia in Senegal, a report on LGBT community centers in sub-Saharan Africa, and an edited volume on the blackmail and extortion of LGBT people in sub-Saharan Africa.[9]

[9] I describe these reports in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

This is a common challenge for organizational anthropologists, where "in order to carry out the research he or she may be employed in the organization and therefore have to write reports and carry out tasks like any member of the organization" (Hirsch and Gellner 2001: 10). And indeed, this was a challenge. A great deal of the critical scholarship on gay imperialism interrogates the implicit assumptions of Northern sexual politics that are embedded and exported in the practice of transnational NGOs. Much of the evidence for this is based on the material output of these NGOs, particularly their reports, training kits, and press releases. I worried that writing those materials for IGLHRC would inevitably introduce my own paradigms and language into them, and would partially foreclose any critical engagement with that aspect of the organization's work. I contemplated requesting not to do the publications, which would have been an early and jarring break between my roles as an anthropologist and as a research fellow.

After much deliberation, I decided to take the assignment and work on the publications during my time at IGLHRC, and they constituted my primary projects throughout my fieldwork. All of them had been conceived and drafted before my arrival at IGLHRC, and my role was that of an editor and the author of supplemental content. By working on the publications, I found that I gained a deeper insight into what issues and framings one was expected to present in documentation and writing reports; which language was preferred, which language was avoided, and why; and how legalism and particular sets of human rights were used in making political claims. By running ideas and drafts past local activists, regional staff, and management in New York, I witnessed the backstage politics, compromises, and decisions that ultimately produced IGLHRC's public, frontstage outputs (see Macdonald 2001).

I worked on smaller projects as well. The bulk of these were in Communications and Research, where I wrote or worked on letters to the governments of Uganda, Turkey, and Malawi, on updates on events in India, Indonesia, Tanzania, Uganda, and CEDAW, on action alerts regarding episodes in China, Uganda, Turkey, and Malawi, and on op-eds with IGLHRC's Executive Director on Senegal and Uganda. I also helped organize the protest against the Anti-

Homosexuality Bill outside of Uganda House in November 2009, put together panels on law, society, and sexuality at the City University of New York (CUNY) and New York University (NYU) in February 2010, and spoke about IGLHRC's work on panels at Harvard Law School, Rutgers Law School, Johns Hopkins University, and the UN NGO Committee on Human Rights. I helped with research for the 45th Session of CEDAW, participated in focus groups and reviewed documents for regional staff, and worked with a number of faith-based groups on a campaign to prevent Lou Engle, an evangelical pastor from the US, from holding a rally in Uganda at the height of the debate over the Anti-Homosexuality Bill. More mundanely, I edited funding proposals, volunteered at benefits in New York, San Francisco, and the Hamptons, monitored press clips, and helped revise the employee manual.

All of these tasks raised their own dilemmas of complicity and the complexity of research within an NGO, but these were not, I think, that different from the dilemmas that face any participant-observer navigating their partial embeddedness in a group of people. I could not have spent a year at IGLHRC without being involved; the staff would have had neither the time nor the inclination to explain what they do and why they do it, and I would not have grasped the practicalities of their work. Instead of declining projects, I actively participated and observed throughout my time at IGLHRC, and in the following chapters, I make my role as transparent as possible to demonstrate why that approach was insightful.

The second dilemma was location. One of the more difficult questions in formulating the project was whether it should be multi-sited, and, if so, where it would be productive to conduct additional research. When I worked on a report on Senegal, for example, I considered leaving IGLHRC early to finish my fieldwork working with activists in that country to examine the politics of that particular project.[10] Similarly, as the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda became the highest-profile LGBT human rights issue that brokers could remember, I almost relocated to Kampala to study the shape that global interventions took and the impact that these had on organizing within the country.

[10] The project and the politics it involved are discussed at length in Chapter 4.

Ultimately, I opted not to relocate the project away from IGLHRC. A number of social scientists were already focusing on these dynamics in the Global South, and I crossed paths with some of them during my fieldwork. What few people were positioned and able to examine at length, however, was how these issues were being debated and responded to by those in the Global North. I felt that it was important to complement the work being done on sexual politics in Uganda and Senegal, particularly that of Ugandan and Senegalese researchers, by critically examining the dialogues and processes in play to support that work transnationally.

What did seem important was to get a broader understanding of the ways that IGLHRC itself operated, one which could not be fully obtained by staying in the headquarters in New York. IGLHRC had steadily moved toward a regional model, in which the world was divided into six regions – sub-Saharan Africa, LAC, API, MENA, North America, and Europe – and managed accordingly by different brokers, who were ideally based in the region in which they worked.[11]

My research at the organization ultimately focused on its work in sub-Saharan Africa, for a variety of reasons. Firstly, IGLHRC's new Executive Director had previously been the Senior Regional Specialist for Africa in Johannesburg and then Cape Town, and the research being done from New York was largely about LGBT issues in sub-Saharan Africa. Secondly, the incidents that became high-profile during my year in the office were overwhelmingly in sub-Saharan Africa, most notably the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, the arrest of Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza in Malawi, and mob violence against a clinic providing services to men who have sex with men in Kenya. Brokers in New York were typically involved in program work when there was a crisis or a product was needed. During my fieldwork, this meant that they and I were more involved with IGLHRC's work in Africa than with advocacy in the LAC, MENA, or API regions. Thirdly, funding for work in Africa was more plentiful than for other regions, giving IGLHRC the capacity to undertake a broader range of work. As a result of these factors, the research and advocacy of the organization and my own tasks as a research fellow were

[11] At the time of my fieldwork, there were no staff members dedicated to work in North America and Europe.

disproportionately focused on sub-Saharan Africa during the course of my fieldwork.

Given my past fieldwork in South Africa, I abandoned my initial plans to focus on IGLHRC's API work and focused instead on its work in sub-Saharan Africa. After ten months in New York, I spent three months in the office in Cape Town, where I worked with the four brokers who ran the Africa Program. This allowed me to preserve my institutional focus, gain familiarity with the work of a regional office, and grasp how concepts like movement building were realized in practice. Instead of devoting a chapter to my time with the Africa Program, I have woven those insights throughout the ethnography.

The methodology and the dilemmas for this project could have been addressed differently, and a different ethnography would have been produced as a result. The opportunity to engage with brokers at an NGO creatively using the human rights framework was a rare one, and I opted to get as holistic a view of their work as I possibly could. My hope is that that approach sheds light on processes that are not always visible outside of transnational NGOs doing this work, and that it will be productive for those taking other approaches to related questions.

D. A Note on Terminology

One of the most difficult aspects of transnational LGBT human rights work is the politics of language. Increasingly specific terms for genders and sexualities are challenging or impossible to translate accurately. The presumptive universality of human rights work leaves little room for nuance and specificity, too, particularly when describing classes of people whose behavior, identity, and socially-ascribed labels align and diverge in kaleidoscopic ways.

There is no language that accurately encompasses the diversity of sexual and gendered subjectivities around the globe. One of the most difficult aspects of engaging with these subjectivities transnationally is that referents shift in a way that eludes exactitude. The term "LGBT" is widely understood to be a Northern construction, but to what extent are heterosexualities and notions of courtship,

marriage, family, and divorce also shaped by the North, and can the proliferation of sexual identity be disaggregated from these shapings? Does the shift from identity to behavior typified by the emergence of the term "men who have sex with men" deprive people of the ability to inhabit an identity that goes beyond sex to affect, relationships, and community, and does this reinforce a gender binary that renders gender variance and diversity invisible? Are local subjectivities "queer" when they resist the hegemonies of heterosexuality and the gender binary but fit into locally-specific patterns of community and belonging? Where does one draw the line between terms that are used politically and terms that purport to capture some innate and meaningful truth about the self?

The slippery nature of labels is a theme that recurs throughout this ethnography, but it is still important to give a loose sketch of the terms I use and why. Following the lead of the majority of my informants, I typically use "LGBT" or variants like "LGB people," "LBT women," or adding "Q" for "queer" or "I" for "intersex." These variations tend to reflect regional or organizational preferences for different forms of the LGBT moniker. As I discuss in Chapter 3, "LGBT" is the umbrella term that is used in most of the advocacy work undertaken by IGLHRC and other transnational, regional, and national NGOs. When a case merits specificity, I narrow this acronym as much as possible and use the terms "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," and "transgender," "transsexual," or "trans."

When I wish to avoid using identity-based terminology and prefer to describe behavior, I use "men who have sex with men" (MSM), "women who have sex with women" (WSW), or "same-sex practicing." These terms were coined by public health practitioners to avoid assumptions about a person's sexual identity (and the stigma that may be attached to it) in their work. In a similar but slightly different vein, NGOs working in the human rights arena have been careful to avoid uncritically using the terms "gay," "lesbian," or "LGBT." Staff are aware that these do not encompass all genders and sexualities, and are conscious of the political and social meanings they often carry. To expansively refer to anyone whose gender or sexuality might be considered non-normative, some activists use the term "queer," while others speak of "sexual minorities." NGOs in particular have adopted the

categorical terminology of "sexual orientation and gender identity" (SOGI). Where MSM and WSW may be useful for public health practitioners, human rights advocates frequently refer to "those marginalized on the basis of SOGI," a category that can be expansively understood to refer to a far wider group of people. All of these approaches encompass a range of sexual subjectivities that are not easily reducible to labels like "gay," "lesbian," or "LGBT."

The terms and translations that activists at IGLHRC opted to use and the various reasons why they did so are explored at length in Chapter 3. For my purposes, I tend to use "LGBT" or reference specific subjectivities like *bakla*, *hijra*, or *meti* when that is the descriptor used by the individual or group in question, use "same-sex practicing" when all that is known is that the individual or group engages in same-sex activity, and use "queer" as an etic term to describe all those who diverge from a normative sex/gender system (Elliston 2002: 290). Navigating the complexity of how a person defines themselves vis-à-vis sexual behavior, identity, and communities, to whom, and when is difficult to do, and I do not purport to get it right in every instance. My terminology should be read with some degree of flexibility, acknowledging that all of these categories have their limitations and that there is no language that accurately captures the myriad nuances of sexual and gendered realities.

E. Chapters and Themes

Many of the themes in this introduction are carried throughout the ethnography. Above all, there is a conscious effort to add specificity to discussions about what transnational LGBT NGOs do, how, and why. My aim is not to give any authoritative assessment of IGLHRC's work and its import transnationally. Instead, my goal is to provide a clearer view of what actually happens within a transnational NGO in the North, offering my own account of the rationales and pressures that shape transnational LGBT human rights advocacy but doing so in the kind of detail that allows others to constructively analyze, critique, or expand the material and my interpretation of it.

In Chapter 1, I look at the history of IGLHRC and the growth of a transnational LGBT movement over the two decades since it was founded. I reconstruct some of the early principles and campaigns that defined IGLHRC, and trace the growth and shifting mission of the organization through a variety of transformations up until the present day. I suggest that three shifts have been crucial – from a grassroots, volunteer organization in San Francisco to a professionalized NGO with a regional presence, from a focus on specific countries to a broader mandate on behalf of LGBT and same-sex practicing people everywhere, and from working directly with at-risk individuals to working primarily with the activists who defend them and advocate on their behalf. I suggest that IGLHRC as it exists today is the product of a very specific history, shaped by a number of pressures within and without the organization that gave it its contemporary structure and mission.

In Chapter 2, I look at brokerage and daily work at IGLHRC. I describe how IGLHRC's staff, offices, structure, and funding shaped its advocacy, and draw from life history interviews, participant-observation, and archival research to consider the ideological and political positions from which brokers did their work. I contextualize this within a much wider network of NGOs, funders, journalists, and governments focused on issues of sexuality and human rights, noting how other actors enabled and constrained advocacy at IGLHRC.

Chapter 3 explores the very specific way that staff defined IGLHRC as "an LGBT human rights organization," and how they understood their mission given the putative constituency and framework with which they operated. I look at who was and was not included under the "LGBT" umbrella, the adjustments and reservations that brokers made to the rubric of "human rights," and finally, at the creative possibilities that tacking between sexual politics and human rights was and was not able to generate.

After exploring how brokers constructed LGBT human rights, I turn to the ways that brokers promoted and institutionalized these specific understandings in their work. Chapter 4 focuses on the idea of "partnership," which constituted the cornerstone of IGLHRC's relationships with Southern groups. I explore what brokers

meant by "partnership," and the qualities that distinguished strong partners from "the only game in town." I then consider the political or ideological differences on which partnerships routinely ran aground and the ways these were resolved in practice to restore a workable equilibrium.

Chapter 5 looks at IGLHRC's role as a node in networks where information about LGBT human rights was circulated. I consider how brokers produced, verified, and transmitted information about gender, sexuality, and human rights, and analyze instances where this traffic in information was a decisive part of the political work in which they engaged. Drawing on the concept of power/knowledge, I look at the forms of mutuality that this created between IGLHRC and the groups with which brokers worked in the Global North and South.

In Chapter 6, I draw on the earlier chapters to look at IGLHRC's formal institutionalization of claims about gender, sexuality, and human rights at the UN, regional mechanisms, and other arenas in which laws and policies are forged and given the imprimatur of authority. I explore how the ambiguity and nuance of daily work at IGLHRC were transformed under the intense pressures of these spaces, and the ways that broader values and priorities were altered in the process. Ultimately, I suggest that IGLHRC's work has been less about legal and political transformation than about norm-creation and the normative power of human rights, something that nonetheless has concrete effects.

I conclude by returning to questions of universalizing and relativizing practices and their impact on the construction of a transnational LGBT human rights apparatus. I argue that brokers who invoke universal human rights on behalf of marginalized groups – persons who are LGBT, but also indigenous persons, disabled persons, and children – necessarily construct, promote, and institutionalize rights in a simultaneous and mutually constitutive way. I suggest that grounded ethnography exploring who NGOs are trying to serve, why, and how is indispensable if we are to meaningfully understand this work and its broader implications for human rights.

F. Conclusion

I began this project thinking it would fit within a body of scholarship on the anthropology of sexuality. I wanted to better understand the extent to which transnational human rights NGOs were in fact white, Western, and male, and the effects this had on their advocacy and practice.

Instead, the themes that emerged in the ethnography speak much more to the anthropology of human rights and the anthropology of transnational advocacy networks. In large part, this is because people at IGLHRC do not think of their work in terms of globalizing sexuality, and given the minor role they play relative to governments, mass media, the internet, and development, public health, and religious institutions, this is probably a fair assessment. Instead, they think of themselves as building movements, of developing human rights protections for LGBT persons, and of calling attention to abuses when and where they occur. These projects are what brokers themselves thought they were undertaking, and what in many ways preceded any impact they had on the globalization of sexuality.

The themes of the ethnography reflect this recognition. On the broadest level, the chapters that follow suggest that the development of an LGBT human rights regime is a contingent process, one shaped by particular actors, politics, and pressures that might have developed very differently under other circumstances. More specifically, they find that human rights advocacy necessarily involves a complex blend of constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing rights, and that what is often understood as human rights advocacy neglects the inherently multifaceted and creative nature of this work. These processes look quite different from classic models of transnational advocacy networks, and illustrate how rights claims become "universalized" in practice.

CHAPTER ONE: IGLHRC and Transnational LGBT Networks in Historical Perspective

A. Introduction

The formalization of a human rights arena where claims about humanity, rights, and responsibilities are articulated and codified is a relatively recent phenomenon. Contemporary understandings of rights have antecedents stretching back for millennia, but the passage of the UDHR in 1948 created an apparatus to standardize, monitor, and advance human rights internationally as universal principles (Ishay 2008: 6-7). Since then, a number of marginalized groups have framed their claims in the rhetoric of human rights. These include LGBT and same-sex practicing persons, who have asserted their place in the halls of the UN, regional mechanisms like the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), and domestic judiciaries and human rights institutions on every continent.

IGLHRC, formed in 1990 from relationships its founder had with friends and activists in the Soviet Union, was one of the first organizations devoted to transnational human rights work on behalf of gay and lesbian persons. By its 20th Anniversary, IGLHRC had 18 full-time staff in New York, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, and Manila, a budget of over two million dollars, and influence from the grassroots to the UN. IGLHRC's longevity, relationships, and prominence all put brokers at the forefront of grappling with the intrinsic challenges of transnational advocacy around gender and sexuality. Of course, IGLHRC was also a resolutely specific site in which to do fieldwork. As a pioneer in LGBT advocacy, its internal dynamics have both reflected and affected the broader sociopolitical climate in which claims about the human rights of LGBT persons are articulated.

In this chapter, I look at IGLHRC's growth over the past two decades and the ideological, political, and structural changes that shaped the organization. I explore how IGLHRC's mission, priorities, and tactics have shifted under pressures that were both internal and external to the organization. The contingent processes by which these shifts occurred are crucial to any understanding of IGLHRC as a site for the construction, promotion, and institutionalization of rights and norms, and of the effects these practices have on a wider politico-juridical field. Claims about LGBT human rights advocacy are regularly couched in defined, static terms, and I counter that any understanding of that advocacy must recognize the contingency of different mandates, terminology, and tactics throughout history.

B. IGLHRC's Founding and Early Mission

It is highly likely that an organization with IGLHRC's mission – loosely, to address the adverse treatment of LGBT persons using the human rights framework – would have emerged at some point in history. Many LGBT movements swiftly adopted rights discourse to lobby for disparaged and marginalized constituents. In the US, for example, the largest LGBT organization remains the Human Rights Campaign, which seized the rhetorical potency of human rights but eschewed any mention of sexuality in its title when it was founded in 1980. Globally, human rights approaches (and law more generally) have provided cover to LGBT movements while endowing their demands with respectability and legitimacy (Bernstein et al. 2009: 1). This is even true of domestic lobbies like the Human Rights Campaign, which do not work within the human rights arena. In a globalizing world, the advent of an organization that sought to address the human rights of LGBT persons transnationally was something of an inevitability.

IGLHRC was among the first organizations to emerge in this arena, and formed under very particular circumstances. IGLHRC was the brainchild of Julie Dorf, who founded the organization in 1990 and served as its Executive Director until her departure in 1999. When I met with Dorf at her home in San Francisco, she

cited a complex blend of personal, domestic, and international politics that ultimately inspired her to start IGLHRC.

Dorf's interests in transnational work grew when she studied languages as an undergraduate at Wesleyan University, where she majored in Soviet Studies.[12] When she visited the Soviet Union as a student who identified as bisexual, Dorf met a number of gay and lesbian individuals who had faced arrest or harassment at the hands of the state. Josef Stalin had banned same-sex sexuality between men under Article 121 of the Criminal Code in 1933, and during Dorf's time in the Soviet Union, the law was still selectively used to prosecute gay men and suspected dissidents.

Dorf was active in the international solidarity campaigns with Latin America and the anti-apartheid movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and her fusion of these transnational models with personal experiences gave birth to IGLHRC. After the Bhopal disaster in 1984, Dorf and other students went to protest Union Carbide's headquarters, which were a short distance away from Wesleyan. The protest immediately drew attention; they found themselves being interviewed by the Associated Press and addressed by company spokespeople. Over 25 years later, Dorf remembered the episode as a striking example of how transnational solidarity could matter:

> It was just one of those moments where everything came together and we just happened to be kind of lucky. The Yiddish word would be *chutzpadik*, you know, to have enough balls to just talk about something we knew *nothing* about. And I get quoted saying, "We demand that Union Carbide takes account for these horrible actions for the people of India," or something like that, right? All of a sudden, about a month later, I start getting all these letters in my postbox [to] "Julie Dorf, Wesleyan University, Connecticut, United States." Like, that's all the information they had from these reports. I started getting letters from people in India, saying thank you for caring. For me, the particular juxtaposition of that action and the solidarity, anti-apartheid stuff really made me feel like I personally needed to devote my activism with real people, who I knew were going to benefit from the activism we did in the United States, and where that link was strong enough that I could not just reap the rewards of their appreciation [laughing], but know that this was the right thing to do. Which was a

[12] This was itself incidental; Dorf found herself choosing between Japanese and Soviet Studies but opted for the latter because of her political sympathies and the department's habit of serving vodka at its functions.

> disconnect I had with the anti-apartheid movement – I trusted the leaders of the movement, but I personally didn't have that. Where did I have it? I had it in the Soviet Union, that's where I knew people.

Dorf's recollections indicate just how influential other transnational campaigns of the time were in IGLHRC's founding. IGLHRC emerged from what Sidney Tarrow has dubbed a "cycle of protest," or a series of successful social movements that provide discursive and tactical models for others seeking to achieve their goals (Tarrow 1998: 163; Snow and Benford 1992: 133). Often, a cycle of protest produces resonant "frames," or "schemata of interpretation" used "to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in [their] terms" (Goffman 1974: 21; see Snow et al. 1986: 464). Many solidarity campaigns of the late 1980s and early 1990s adopted a human rights frame, linking their demands to those of other movements winning over publics around the world.

Early interventions by IGLHRC also incorporated tactical repertoires being used by LGBT activists in the US, especially those of direct-action groups like the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT-UP). In IGLHRC's 20th Anniversary Video, Dorf recalls that the organization was "started by a bunch of ragtag street activists and immigrants who really came out of that era in the late 80s and early 90s of ACT-UP and Queer Nation to fight for LGBT rights, in the United States and out." Formalizing IGLHRC was partially done from necessity; Dorf's activism rang up thousands of dollars in telephone bills, and IGLHRC made this advocacy sustainable.

The fusion of transnational and domestic influences in IGLHRC's work has been a theme throughout its history, and this was certainly true in its early initiatives.[13] IGLHRC's first projects, coordinated by volunteers working from kitchens and living rooms, were a Gay and Lesbian Conference and Film Festival in Moscow, a campaign to pressure AI to include gay and lesbian people in its mandate, and protests against restrictions on the freedom of expression in Mexico and Argentina. Dorf recalled of these projects:

[13] I discuss this in depth in Chapter 3, where I examine what the framing of IGLHRC as an LGBT human rights organization – and its juxtaposition of the human rights framework with particular strains of sexual politics – permits brokers to do in their advocacy.

> Those initial campaigns were the things that helped define us and forced us to learn to couch the issues in human rights terms, for our own identity as a human rights organization… Every human rights organization I know was started by human rights lawyers. We were started by folks who knew how to do posters and chants in front of embassies. But that constellation of stuff is how we ended up deciding who we were and what we wanted to accomplish.

From these defining campaigns, IGLHRC began to take shape as an institution. In 1991, IGLHRC moved into a one-room office on San Francisco's Castro Street and registered as a charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, which allowed Dorf to fundraise more aggressively. In its early days, activists primarily responded to incidents in the Soviet Union or Latin America that were brought to their attention. In 1992, US Representative Barney Frank and activists from IGLHRC went to Russia to lobby officials to repeal Article 121. When they did so in 1993, Masha Gessen, a volunteer, went to Russia to ensure that prisoners detained under the law were freed. The trip produced IGLHRC's first book-length human rights report, *The Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men in the Russian Federation*. Connections with Latin America were also influential at that time. IGLHRC helped Communidad Homosexual de Argentina (CHA) become a registered non-profit in 1992, worked with activists in Mexico, Brazil, and Ecuador, and collaborated with Juan Pablo Ordoñez on the report *No Human Being is Disposable: Social Cleansing, Human Rights and Sexual Orientation in Colombia*.

Brokers' relationships were also critical in compiling information on conditions facing gay and lesbian persons abroad, which began to be used for asylum proceedings. In 1992, brokers at IGLHRC provided documentation for a gay man from Argentina seeking asylum in Canada, who became the first person known to be granted asylum on the basis of sexual orientation. Their first major victory in the US occurred in 1993, when a judge in San Francisco granted asylum to Marcelo Tenorio, a Brazilian, ruling that sexual orientation could constitute membership in a persecuted "social group" under US immigration law. That year marked the beginning of a formalized Asylum Program, which would become one of the

hallmarks of IGLHRC's work throughout the 1990s and early 2000s. At its peak, the Asylum Program processed nearly 1000 cases per year, and kept voluminous country files for asylum seekers and lawyers seeking scarce information about conditions for gay and lesbian people outside the US.

These early campaigns were largely conducted outside of the human rights arena. In part, this was because the UN and regional mechanisms provided little space for this kind of work. Before 1993, the only direct references to anything "sexual" in intergovernmental documents were Articles 19 and 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), regarding sexual abuse and exploitation (Girard 2009: 317-318, citing Stoler 1995: 6-7). IGLHRC's engagement with formal human rights mechanisms increased markedly in 1994, when brokers prepared for the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Preparations for the summit were spearheaded by Rachel Rosenbloom, an intern from the University of California at Berkeley's Human Rights Program. When Rosenbloom was hired to work for IGLHRC full-time, she produced *Unspoken Rules: Sexual Orientation and Women's Human Rights*, a compilation of testimonies from women in 30 different countries (Rosenbloom 1996).

Even in these endeavors, however, brokers primarily agitated from outside the halls of power. In Beijing, they crafted a petition with 6,000 signatures to "put sexuality on the agenda," ran the Lesbian Tent at the NGO Forum, and fought for the inclusion of language regarding sexual rights and sexual orientation in the Platform for Action (Girard 2009: 331).[14] Although IGLHRC pressured governments at Beijing, its primary role was that of an agitator seeking entry into the system. The sheer volume of work that went into securing language on sexual rights and sexual orientation – and its perceived importance as precedent – suggested a movement seeking a seat at the human rights table.

[14] References to sexual orientation were deleted on the last day of the conference, but references to sexuality were retained. Paragraph 96 read: "The human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. Equal relationships between women and men in matters of sexual relations and reproduction, including full respect for the integrity of the person, require mutual respect, consent, and shared responsibility for sexual behavior and its consequences."

It also hinted at the influence of the women's rights movement on early LGBT advocacy at the UN. During this period, brokers explicitly situated their work in the broader sexual rights movement (Dorf and Pérez 1995; Rosenbloom 1996), and worked with activists like Charlotte Bunch of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) to advance sexual rights through a variety of channels. Brokers at IGLHRC also borrowed frames and tactics for their own advocacy from women's rights advocates. One example was the Beijing Tribunal on Accountability for Women's Human Rights, a quasi-judicial hearing organized by NGOs to give voice to women who were subject to human rights violations. IGLHRC arranged for Daphne Scholinski of Des Plaines, Illinois, who was diagnosed with gender identity disorder (GID) and institutionalized as a teenager, to testify. IGLHRC later replicated this tactic with the International Tribunal on Human Rights Violations Against Sexual Minorities, held in New York for the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the UN. There, Scholinski testified alongside individuals from Zimbabwe, Romania, the Philippines, El Salvador, India, Turkey, and Argentina about violations they experienced based on SOGI.

IGLHRC deepened its regional programming in the years after Beijing, with new hires playing a decisive role in defining regions and carrying out projects. In 1996, the first regional staff position was created, with Mary Sigaji initially focusing on Africa and the Middle East before becoming Regional Specialist for Africa, the Caribbean, and the Middle East (AMEC). Shortly thereafter, Daniel Lee was hired as Regional Specialist for Asia and the Pacific, Scott Long was hired as Regional Specialist for Europe, and Mirka Negroni was hired as Regional Specialist for Latin America, Canada, and the United States. These regions were repeatedly realigned in kaleidoscopic ways, primarily reflecting the competencies of new staff. With Sigaji's departure, Kamal Fizazi became the Regional Program Coordinator for Africa and Southwest Asia, and the programs were reorganized again when Long became Policy Director and Negroni left IGLHRC. By the end of the decade, IGLHRC hired Alejandra Sarda to operate remotely from Buenos Aires as the Program Officer for LAC, a move that would be replicated as regional offices were established in the 2000s.

Alongside these programmatic changes, IGLHRC also evolved to reflect the changing politics of gay and lesbian movements. From its founding, IGLHRC's title identified its constituency as "gay and lesbian." In San Francisco in the early 1990s, brokers also dealt fairly extensively with HIV/AIDS. This was reflected in descriptions of their advocacy; IGLHRC's 1993 Annual Report specifically refers to their work on behalf of "lesbians, gay men, and people with AIDS and HIV." Characterizations of IGLHRC's constituency expanded by 1995, when its publications stated: "IGLHRC advocates for a world in which the fundamental human rights of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people, and people with HIV/AIDS are respected and accorded the protection of international human rights law." The acronym "l/g/b/t" first appeared in the 1996/1997 Annual Report, although "gay and lesbian" or "sexual minorities" were usually used to describe its constituency. By the 1998/1999 Annual Report, however, IGLHRC used "LGBT" as a standardized acronym in its outputs.

IGLHRC's mandate also underwent subtle changes during these early years. In 1997, outputs stated that "IGLHRC responds to human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV serostatus through monitoring, documentation, and advocacy." In 1998, IGLHRC's mission was "to protect and advance the human rights of all people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status." These formulations mark an expanding understanding of IGLHRC's mandate; this is evident in the shift from gay and lesbian identity toward categorical understandings of sexual orientation, gender identity, and serostatus, but also in descriptions of IGLHRC's activity. In its earlier mission, IGLHRC gathered information and sought to *respond* to violations, something it most often did by mobilizing its Emergency Response Network (ERN) to write letters and stage public demonstrations. In its later mission, IGLHRC sought to *protect and advance* human rights, signaling a more proactive understanding of its role in developing policy and programming for LGBT persons.

This shift was evident in the tactics that brokers used and emphasized as the organization grew. In IGLHRC's publications toward the end of the decade, a description of its constituency and tactics was appended to its mission, which read:

> IGLHRC's mission is to protect and advance the human rights of all people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status. Our constituency, therefore, includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and anyone living with HIV or AIDS. Established in 1990 as a US-based non-profit, non-governmental organization, IGLHRC responds to such human rights violations around the world through documentation, advocacy, coalition building, public education, and technical assistance.

IGLHRC's tactics were never strictly limited, and brokers always used a variety of methods both inside and outside of the human rights arena to press their claims. The list of interventions at the end of the statement above combines a number of these, however, and demonstrates the hybrid space that IGLHRC came to occupy. The standard human rights tactics of "monitoring, documentation, and advocacy" emphasized in IGLHRC's early work were eventually supplemented by "coalition building, public education, and technical assistance," marking a fusion of traditional human rights models with more aggressive forms of social movement mobilization.

The ability to undertake this broader spectrum of transnational work was greatly enhanced by IGLHRC's robust fundraising throughout the 1990s. Just ten years after it began as a volunteer operation, IGLHRC had an annual income of $864,367. Its sources of funding also shifted markedly; in 1993, IGLHRC received 60% of its revenue from individual donations, and just 15% from foundation and corporate grants. By 1999, individual donations only constituted about 40% of its revenue, while 57% was secured through grants. This enabled IGLHRC to plan longer-term projects, but also made IGLHRC accountable to a different set of actors in the human rights field.

On the eve of its tenth anniversary, IGLHRC was poised to change in a number of ways. With a growing staff and regional presence, increasing access to policymakers and the UN, and its first large grant from a major human rights funder,

the Ford Foundation, IGLHRC was on the cusp of major changes to its staff, structure, and advocacy.

C. IGLHRC's Growth and the Dynamism of Transnational LGBT Human Rights Networks

In 1999, Dorf announced her resignation as Executive Director of IGLHRC to spend more time with her family. Dorf's departure triggered a search for a new leader, and the following years were characterized by a high rate of staff turnover that has persisted to the present day. To complicate matters, a number of geopolitical trends that tentatively began in the late 1990s became decisive in the 2000s. IGLHRC's institutional priorities shifted based not only on the backgrounds and politics of its staff, but the wider political opportunity structure in which they operated.

After a brief period with an interim Executive Director, the first person to lead IGLHRC after Dorf was Surina Khan. Khan had first worked at a gay and lesbian newspaper in Connecticut, *Metroline*, and then at Political Research Associates (PRA) in Massachusetts, where she researched right-wing movements in the US. When she took the helm at IGLHRC in April 2000, Khan was 32 years old, and her background was primarily in domestic LGBT and leftist activism rather than human rights advocacy. This shaped her approach to IGLHRC; as she noted in a letter to supporters in the 1999/2000 Annual Report, "While some of the specifics of the human rights framework have been new to me, its underlying principles of justice and respect for the dignity of all people remain familiar and compelling." In outlining new directions for the organization, Khan stressed, "I believe that IGLHRC has much to gain from developing our connections with progressive organizations that challenge the right wing in the US." In different respects, these priorities shaped IGLHRC's work in the following years.[15]

[15] In this chapter, I pay particular attention to the different Executive Directors that have run IGLHRC through its history. This is for two reasons, Firstly, informants themselves focused on the role that various Executive Directors played in defining IGLHRC's advocacy and working environment. Secondly, IGLHRC has always been a small NGO, and Executive

As the first Executive Director after IGLHRC's founder, Khan faced a number of challenges that were institutional as well as programmatic. As she recalled in an interview:

> There were challenges that were internal to the organization, in terms of the challenges that come with following a founding director. The staff were somewhat traumatized, I would say, when I got there, and so there was a lot of work to do to strengthen the organization from an internal perspective. And then I think externally, the challenges were some of the dilemmas we were facing around what was going to be our major identity, in terms of a human rights organization or an organization that was doing movement building work. So there were some big conversations there that were happening.

The tension between formal human rights work and the desire to build movements globally has persisted throughout IGLHRC's institutional history. During Khan's tenure, there was a decision to amplify IGLHRC's work at the UN and other human rights mechanisms. As she recalled:

> Ultimately, when I got there, we started to do a strategic plan, and decided to really remain focused on the human rights aspect of the work, because that's where we had our expertise and history. In hindsight, I do think it would have been good to really further explore the movement building role of IGLHRC because of the limitations of the human rights framework.

The most high-profile instance of this increasing assertiveness in the human rights arena was in 2001, when Karyn Kaplan, IGLHRC's HIV Program Officer, was invited to speak at a roundtable at the UNGA Special Session on HIV/AIDS. Kaplan had been invited to participate in the discussion by UNGA President Harri Holkeri of Finland, but was barred from doing so when the delegations of Egypt, Iran, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Syria objected and threatened to walk out of the session in protest. In response, Argentina, Canada, and Norway filed their own motion objecting to Kaplan's exclusion, triggering the first debate about a gay or lesbian issue in the UNGA (Berlo 2001). Ultimately, following an action alert and

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Directors have been primarily responsible for hiring staff, liaising with major donors and the board, and setting the organization's priorities.

lobbying by IGLHRC, Kaplan was reinstated by a vote of 62-30-0 and addressed the Special Session. Overnight, IGLHRC was able to mobilize supporters, and to force a discussion of MSM as an at-risk population in the pandemic.

During Khan's tenure, IGLHRC's entry into the human rights arena also accelerated in more subtle ways. Brokers engaged with Special Procedures, sending a letter to UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women Radhika Coomaraswamy on family and state oppression of lesbians and non-conforming women. They facilitated a meeting between Argentinian transgender activist Lohana Berkins and UN officials in Geneva in April 2001; the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Abid Hussain, followed this up by meeting with three transgender groups in Argentina in June 2001. By 2002, when Khan announced her departure, a groundbreaking opinion had been issued by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention condemning detention based on sexual orientation, the first of its kind from the UN (see E/CN.4/2003/8/Add.1, 68-74). The Human Rights Committee had also begun including questions about sexual orientation in its list of issues to address when reviewing countries. IGLHRC participated in litigation as well, and was a co-petitioner in the first case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) directly addressing homosexuality, in which an incarcerated Colombian lesbian sued for her right to receive conjugal visits. These formal interventions were seen as central to IGLHRC's mission at the time, even as the idea of movement building gained internal momentum.

This is not to say that brokers were not working with local movements. They were, and Khan also remembered that as a legacy of her tenure. Brokers focused heavily on Asia and Africa, on gender and the needs of those who were less visible than gay or same-sex practicing men, and on power and questions of representation within LGBT movements. To this end, in Khan's three years at IGLHRC, brokers worked on a number of campaigns with local groups. In what they then called Southwest Asia, brokers met with groups in Lebanon, Tunisia, and Morocco, attended international conferences for Arab women and gay Muslims, and helped mobilize a response to the threatened closure of a gay-themed internet portal in

Lebanon. In Asia and the Pacific, brokers supported groups trying to maintain protections for LGBT persons in Fiji and trying to secure anti-discrimination legislation in Hong Kong and the Philippines. They also worked closely with the Japan Association for the Lesbian and Gay Movement (OCCUR) on its successful campaign to reintroduce sexual orientation into Tokyo's human rights guidelines. The Senior Program Officer for Asia and the Pacific, Daniel Lee, met with more than 75 activists in India to determine how IGLHRC might best support a legal challenge to Section 377, the law prohibiting same-sex activity between men. In Africa, brokers mobilized a public outcry (and the US State Department) to secure the release of a gay man arrested in Uganda after the president called for a "crackdown" on homosexuals. During this period, IGLHRC worked with HRW on the documentation for *More Than a Name: State-Sponsored Homophobia and its Consequences in Southern Africa*, published in 2003. In the LAC region, brokers advocated for legal reform in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, and helped the first LGBT organization in Panama fight for legal recognition. They also publicized murders and death threats in Brazil and Argentina and petitioned the Salvadoran police to provide protection to activist William Hernandez. In this work, brokers continued to look beyond exclusively gay and lesbian issues, protesting the abuse of transgender individuals in Venezuela, Argentina, and Guatemala and generating a public outcry against a mayor who sought to expel sex workers from downtown Veracruz, Mexico.

This work was situated within a conscious effort to pay attention to power dynamics and the needs of local activists. As Khan recalled:

> I'm not sure of this, but my perception is that when I was at IGLHRC, we really – I really – tried to take very seriously the values that we articulated in the strategic plan, [that] those that are most impacted by problems in their communities are the ones that are coming up with the solutions on a daily level and should be the ones to really lead in those efforts. And I'm not sure that that was a value that was recognized by IGLHRC or one that was there before.

This emphasis on local leadership supported from the North became a central part of IGLHRC's philosophy, but also drew attention to marginalization that was not primarily juridical. Brokers began to publish a short-lived newsletter, *Asia/Pacific Bridges*, to build networks in the Asia-Pacific region. With "Representing a New South Africa," they raised funds to commission artwork with gay and lesbian themes for the newly-repurposed Constitutional Court building in South Africa. To counter right-wing appropriation of "the family," IGLHRC released *Conceiving Parenthood*, a report on LGBT parents, their children, and their rights.

Indeed, many of the issues that IGLHRC became most famous for during this period had little to nothing to do with formal human rights advocacy. As Khan promised at the beginning of her tenure, brokers made common cause with self-identified progressive groups and embraced wider understandings of social justice and human rights. In 2000, brokers spoke on a National Gay and Lesbian Task Force panel exploring why the death penalty is a queer issue, and after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, IGLHRC was one of the first US-based LGBT organizations to take an anti-war position and publicly oppose the bombing of Afghanistan. The latter position attracted a considerable amount of publicity, much of it negative, after Khan expressed it in an interview with *Bay Windows*, but IGLHRC's staff and board affirmed it in the months that followed.

Notably, during this time, IGLHRC also maintained its focus on HIV in a way that remained distinct from its programming for LGBT people. Kaplan's hiring as the HIV Program Officer created an institutional point person for this work, and she spent five weeks interviewing injection drug users (IDUs) in three provinces of Thailand for a joint harm reduction project with Thai HIV/AIDS activists. IGLHRC also produced two action kits around trade barriers, intellectual property law, and HIV, and engaged in advocacy at the XIII World AIDS Conference in Durban and the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle. All of these initiatives took IGLHRC beyond any narrow understanding of LGBT human rights advocacy and toward more expansive understandings of the conditions that denied justice to marginalized populations.

What was scaled back near the end of Khan's tenure, however, was the Asylum Program, which was renamed the "Asylum Documentation Program" (ADP). The 2002 Annual Report explained that the move was designed to return the Program to its original focus; that is, focusing on documentation and advocacy and "forward[ing] all calls for direct assistance to immigration attorneys and advocates." Dusty Araujo, the long-time head of the Asylum Program, continued to compile and disseminate packets of country-specific information about the treatment of LGBT people in different locales.

Khan left the organization in December 2002 to move with her partner, an academic who had just taken a job at the University of California, Irvine. Given its increasing work within formal human rights mechanisms, the possibility was raised that IGLHRC would move to New York. Khan opposed any move, believing it would sap IGLHRC's institutional memory and expend valuable resources that could be better spent on movement work. With a new Executive Director, however, the move became a real possibility.

To replace Khan, the board hired Paula Ettelbrick, a well-known civil rights lawyer, academic, and activist in New York who had been instrumental in the development of a legal strategy around family law for LGBT people. As when Khan started, there were both institutional and programmatic challenges facing IGLHRC. As Ettelbrick recalled over coffee near NYU, where she taught law:

> I didn't have a deep human rights background, but I had a longstanding international background in terms of doing some of the work. So when I came to IGLHRC, I was sort of recruited there mostly because the organization was in a tremendous transition and needed somebody who just, structurally, knew the donors, knew how to run organizations. You know, on some level, my job was to hire the human rights experts, but to make sure there was an organization to hire them to, at that point.

Ettelbrick's tenure was similarly marked by key shifts at IGLHRC, which were tied to her background and priorities as much as any overarching ideology. Ettelbrick was not only open to moving IGLHRC to New York – and did, in 2004 – but embraced the programmatic priorities that justified such a move. As she remarked:

> That was just a necessary move. The only reason IGLHRC existed in San Francisco was because that's where Julie lived, and she was the founder. She was the first to say that. That's why they were there, but they should always have been in New York. You just can't do this work in the US and not have a very strong base, if not your base, in New York. Because that's where everyone comes in and out of, it's the UN, it's the missions, it's the US. It's everything. You're down to DC easily. It just made no sense not to be.

Beyond this, Ettelbrick also placed a high premium on regional expansion, and on the placement of brokers in the regions in which they worked. This moved IGLHRC away from amorphous, fluid redefinitions of regions based on the competencies of staff in New York and toward a more permanent carving up of the globe into distinctive regions with brokers operating within them:

> The thing I wanted to do, which I did, was to move us from being a US-based organization with US-based staff, to an international organization with international staff of and from the regions. I mean, as a microcosm in the US, if you really want a national group, you've got to also deal with people in the states and cities across the country. You can't have New Yorkers speaking for people in Alabama, obviously. I really wanted a chance to do that, and that was my vision that I brought to the organization, that we really needed to expand, we really needed staff from the regions. We had one staff person at the time I started working out of Latin America, Alejandra Sarda, but she didn't really necessarily have an office, there was no established office. She was a very, very good activist, and such. But I wanted to replicate that in other parts of the world.

Under Ettelbrick's leadership, the first regional office opened in Argentina in 2004. In 2007, IGLHRC opened another office in South Africa headed by Cary Alan Johnson, who had fundraised, supported, and served as a board member for IGLHRC while working with NGOs across Africa. The same year, IGLHRC relaunched its API Program with brokers in the US and the Philippines.

Despite these shifts, much of the programming continued during Ettelbrick's tenure as it always had. In keeping with the decision to move to New York, IGLHRC's advocacy at the UN and with foreign embassies and missions accelerated. This work saw a milestone in 2004, when diplomats from Brazil re-introduced a non-binding resolution to recognize that SOGI renders people vulnerable and to call upon states

to promote and protect human rights for all persons, regardless of SOGI. IGLHRC claimed a leading role in pushing for the passage of the Brazil Resolution; it brought the largest delegation of LGBT activists – nearly 50 – to lobby the UN Commission on Human Rights (CHR), assembled an advocacy kit, held strategy sessions, and worked in coalition with other groups seeking passage of the resolution. While the effort was ultimately unsuccessful, the coalition continued to cooperate on other UN initiatives, including the development of non-binding statements of support at the UNGA.

At the UN, brokers at IGLHRC assisted Helem, a group from Lebanon, with the production of a shadow report for CEDAW. They also funded an activist to visit New York to present the report's recommendations of decriminalization of abortion and same-sex activity, the introduction of comprehensive sex education, and anti-discrimination legislation in Lebanon. In the LAC region, brokers assisted with Chilean and Brazilian submissions to the Special Rapporteur on Education and with an appeal to the Human Rights Committee on Nicaragua's sodomy law. Brokers themselves submitted a briefing to the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, highlighting the vulnerability of those who vocally stood for LGBT rights. After the rape and murder of FannyAnn Eddy of the Sierra Leone Lesbian and Gay Association in 2004, this weighed heavily on the minds of transnational activists.

Brokers intervened at regional mechanisms as well. In Latin America, they secured civil rights attorneys to support Karen Atala as she brought her custody dispute before the IACHR, and provided documentation to Honduran groups who filed a case with the IACHR and were finally registered by their government. They also sought to develop regional jurisprudence on LGBT rights; brokers helped secure a landmark declaration from MERCOSUR's human rights body recognizing and seeking to end discrimination on the basis of SOGI. IGLHRC also participated in the Campaign Toward an Inter-American Convention on Sexual and Reproductive Rights, which was active throughout the 2000s. In Africa, staff began submitting shadow reports and briefing papers to ACHPR Commissioners, and brought the first openly lesbian individual, Sybille Nyeck of Cameroon, to address the body.

Within the US, the ADP continued to play a role in developing jurisprudence on immigration, asylum, and refugee claims. Attorneys using documentation provided by the ADP argued a case on behalf of a transgender person being threatened with deportation to El Salvador. In a landmark ruling, the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit found that asylum claims do not require that the asylum seeker be harassed by a government agent, but simply that the government encourages or permits the abuse of people on the basis of their sexual identity. Like feminist jurisprudence seeking to hold states accountable for so-called "private" violence, these precedents were both impactful for clients and reshaped the ways that laws and obligations were understood by governments (Romany 1994).

In addition to these appeals to political and judicial institutions, brokers trained activists in various regions to take advantage of the human rights apparatus themselves. In 2004 alone, IGLHRC organized trainings in India, Uganda, Hungary, Thailand, Canada, Paraguay, Brazil, Mexico, Macedonia, the Netherlands, and Peru. In 2005, staff held a first-of-its-kind Activist Institute with transgender and intersex activists in the LAC region, co-hosted trainings and strategy sessions with HRW in Porto Alegre, Brazil and Colombo, Sri Lanka, and had trainings or workshops for activists in the Balkans and China. In 2006, IGLHRC hosted trainings on human rights documentation and a discussion on Pride in Eastern Europe with ILGA-Europe. In 2007, it held its second Activist Institute on lesbian and bisexual women's issues in the LAC region.

Beyond these formal interventions and trainings, IGLHRC's work on emergency response and movement building continued in a variety of forms. IGLHRC galvanized its 6,000-person-strong ERN to pressure the government of Nepal to release 39 *metis* who had been arrested in Kathmandu, wired money to supply food and water to the detainees, and provided documentation and advice to support a local group, the Blue Diamond Society, as it sought registration. In under two weeks, the detainees were released. Another high-profile campaign was conducted in Cameroon, where 17 individuals were detained at a nightclub purportedly frequented by gays and lesbians. Eleven of the detainees were kept in custody under Section 347 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes same-sex activity

with up to five years in prison. In the absence of any known LGBT organization in Cameroon, IGLHRC found a lawyer for the detainees, supported their defense, and worked with the Human Rights Clinic and Education Center (HURCLED), African Human Rights Organization (AFHRO), and Trauma Rehabilitation Center in Cameroon on their case.

A broader feminist and social justice perspective was explicitly incorporated into much of this work, particularly with the hiring of Susana Fried and Sangeeta Budhiraja in October 2003. During these years, Alejandra Sarda also worked with groups in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, and Mexico to draw attention to the ways that discrimination negatively affects the economic situation of lesbian and bisexual women. The research was compiled and released in the report *'Unnatural,' 'Unsuitable,' Unemployed! Lesbians and Workplace Discrimination in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, and Mexico*, released in 2005.

The mission of the organization also subtly changed throughout the mid-2000s. From 2004 to 2008, the Annual Reports transcended IGLHRC's prior commitment to "protect and advance" human rights to state that:

> The mission of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission is to secure the full enjoyment of the human rights of all people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual orientation or expression, gender identity or expression, and/or HIV status.

Just shy of Ettelbrick's departure, the formulation set forth in the Strategic Plan of February 7, 2009 stated that:

> Our mission is advancing human rights for everyone, everywhere to end discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

By that point, IGLHRC fully embraced universality in its stated goal of "advancing human rights for everyone, everywhere." At the same time, IGLHRC tactically dropped its longstanding commitment to addressing discrimination on the basis of HIV status, which animated many of its campaigns in the 1990s and its work on

IDUs and trade barriers in the early 2000s. This was reflective of larger changes at IGLHRC; the HIV Program Officer position did not follow the organization when it moved to New York, and its work had begun to focus almost exclusively on issues related to SOGI. Intersex advocacy also largely ceased around the time that Mauro Cabral, a consultant focusing on trans and intersex issues, left IGLHRC.[16]

IGLHRC's tactics remained in flux, too, blending human rights advocacy with an emphasis on movement building. After setting out IGLHRC's mission, the Annual Report for 2007-2008 explicitly stated: "We believe that realizing this vision requires the development of strong human rights movements globally; building partnerships is at the heart of what we do." The report laid out three ways this was done, explaining that "as partners, we work hand-in-hand with local activists to: respond to emergencies… expose human rights violations… and strengthen capacity."[17]

Programs that were not compatible with that approach were cut; most notably, the ADP was eliminated after over a decade of work to focus more intensively on advocacy and movement building. A survey of international groups from 2008 linked IGLHRC to seven of the ten forms of advocacy listed, namely, international/UN advocacy, regional advocacy, national advocacy, local advocacy, documenting human rights abuses, responding to human rights abuses, and legal representation and referrals. IGLHRC did not report work in health/service provision/referrals, media, or general public education (MAP 2008: 11). These tactics were regularly revisited, including during my fieldwork.

After six years, Ettelbrick left IGLHRC on March 1, 2009, when Johnson moved from the office in Cape Town to the headquarters in New York to assume the position of Executive Director. Under his leadership, much of IGLHRC's work has focused on Africa. IGLHRC's recent emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa helpfully

[16] Notably, the acronym "LGBTI" was used consistently throughout the 2007 Annual Report, but then dropped. From 2008 onwards, "LGBT" was overwhelmingly preferred.
[17] The concept of partnership, which was expressly highlighted in numerous places in this Annual Report, became a core part of IGLHRC's approach to advocacy and is explored in depth in Chapter 4.

illustrates the complex ways that personal, political, and structural factors combine to shape agendas and advocacy.

Prior to IGLHRC, Johnson worked for a number of NGOs in Africa, including the Margaret Sanger Center International, Africare, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He also held an MA in International Affairs and a certificate in African Studies from Columbia University. As the former head of IGLHRC's Africa Program, Johnson was well-connected in the region, and had on-the-ground experience there that Dorf, Khan, and Ettelbrick did not have when they became Executive Directors. As a result, he was able to turn to his networks to get advice, forge partnerships, carry on unfinished projects, and assist grassroots work.

Johnson brought a number of projects from the Cape Town office to New York, most notably, reports on blackmail and extortion, community centers, issues facing transgender Africans, and religious and state-sponsored violations in Senegal and Cameroon. Politically, these gained new salience in light of a series of developments in late 2009 and early 2010, including the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, reports that Rwanda was considering criminalizing same-sex activity between men, the arrest of Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga in Malawi, and mob violence against MSM in Kenya. IGLHRC's focus on these episodes was simultaneously due to their scope and severity, the attention paid to them by governments, and a media narrative that made each incident instantly prominent.

These factors were exacerbated by structural conditions priming NGOs to focus on human rights violations in Africa. At the time of my fieldwork, available funding for human rights and public health was disproportionately targeted at sub-Saharan Africa. Groups working with MSM in particular were able to take advantage of considerable amounts of money devoted to combating HIV/AIDS in the region. IGLHRC was the beneficiary of some of this money in the form of a $600,000 grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), which was specifically allocated to work on Health and Human Rights in Africa. This money allowed Johnson to hire a staff member in the Cape Town office and to allocate resources that were less readily available for regions like Asia or the Middle East.

Of course, this collision of factors opened some avenues of work and implicitly foreclosed others. Johnson's background was primarily with activists and grassroots groups in Africa. He was not a lawyer – indeed, when he took the helm at IGLHRC, none of the top management positions were occupied by lawyers – and human rights law and navigating the UN and regional mechanisms were not his primary areas of expertise. Under Johnson, brokers again revisited whether they would focus on human rights advocacy per se or on building LGBT movements globally; when asked, most identified movement building as their primary function.

Of course, in each of the regions, the human rights framework tended to structure any movement building that brokers undertook.[18] It was notable, however, that IGLHRC was no longer a lone voice in the wilderness on LGBT human rights, and brokers, funders, and the board recognized that the landscape of the movement was changing. Johnson openly questioned whether IGLHRC had any role to play in documenting human rights abuses; those at the grassroots had more proximity to events as they unfolded, and large NGOs like AI and HRW had more resources to do thorough documentation. Beyond these NGOs, donors, journalists, and foreign missions were increasingly documenting human rights abuses for their own purposes, and with greater flexibility and precision than IGLHRC's small staff could. With the demise of its report on Senegal, which I discuss in Chapter 4, management at IGLHRC openly suggested that IGLHRC's role was not to do documentation, but to assist and train activists on the ground to do documentation, and to build local movements' capacity to do this work themselves.

A number of other considerations made movement building an ascendant priority. Brokers in New York voiced concern that IGLHRC lacked focus, that staff were overworked, and that work at the UN was too costly, too slow, and too technical to be an organizational priority. With ARC-International coordinating shadow reports to the UPR and leading a coalition for initiatives in the HRC and the UNGA, IGLHRC's role was not clear-cut. Brokers who were committed to advocacy at the UN insisted that IGLHRC still played a valuable role by acting as a conduit for

[18] In Chapter 2, I look at the many different campaigns in which brokers were engaged during my fieldwork.

groups around the world. Since ARC-International was based in Canada and Switzerland, IGLHRC was uniquely poised to access the UN, monitor proceedings, and meet with foreign missions in New York. The Research and Policy Associate, who had a law degree and was personally invested in this work, and the regional coordinators in Asia and Latin America played important roles in assisting groups with preparing and submitting shadow reports to CEDAW, securing consultative status for IGLHRC at ECOSOC, and rallying support to restore the phrase "sexual orientation" to a standing resolution on extrajudicial executions. Thanks in large part to their insistence and initiative, IGLHRC's work at the UN continued, albeit amid a broader shift toward movement building as its primary concern.

D. IGLHRC in the Broader Environment for LGBT Human Rights

Observers looking back at IGLHRC's history are correct in pointing out that some of its core commitments have stayed intact amidst these shifts. IGLHRC's title reflects dual commitments to an LGBT constituency and to the human rights framework, both of which have evolved at times but remain central to its work. Structurally, too, IGLHRC has remained a US-based organization, operating mainly in English, and using particular tools and technologies, including faxes, the internet, and social networking, to pursue its goals.

This is all the more notable given the major shifts in the environment within which IGLHRC operates. A number of these shaped global civil society in the 1990s and 2000s, including uncertainty about the role of transnational NGOs as donors began directly funding groups in the South, the increasing number of NGOs engaged in advocacy, and a shift from campaigns and service provision to capacity building with Southern partners (Lewis 2007: 22, 77-78). IGLHRC could be productively analyzed as a case study in relation to any of these trends. As I suggest below, brokers have largely surrendered campaigning work to in-country partners, and have focused instead on building movements. Other interrelated pressures have impacted their work, including the need to secure funding, to professionalize, and to

account for their advocacy to academics, activists, and journalists who are critical of their work.

What IGLHRC does has been shaped by the rise of a wider network of actors engaged with LGBT issues transnationally, as well as the increasing visibility of their concerns in the human rights arena. When IGLHRC was founded, there were virtually no transnational human rights NGOs advocating on behalf of LGBT persons. Since then, one of the major changes in the political environment has been the incorporation of LGBT concerns by AI and HRW, and the emergence of many other actors devoted to the well-being of LGBT persons worldwide. This was partially a product of IGLHRC's influence. Dorf and IGLHRC publicly pressured AI to adopt LGBT issues into its mandate, and although discussions were already underway internally, this public pressure made it increasingly difficult for large human rights organizations to ignore violations against LGBT people. In the US, IGLHRC began a productive relationship with HRW that resulted in multiple co-produced studies and publications. After Long, IGLHRC's Policy Director, left in 2003, he became the founding director of HRW's LGBT Rights Program in 2004.

While these large human rights organizations are among the most prominent players in the field, other smaller organizations have taken specialized approaches to LGBT human rights. ARC-International has been primarily proactive in terms of advocacy at the UN. ILGA and its regional branches (ILGA-Europe, Pan-African ILGA, ILGA-LAC, ILGA-Asia, and ILGA-Oceania) have organized confederations of LGBT groups around the globe whose work is not necessarily or exclusively grounded in a human rights framework. Staff from a number of these organizations have participated in a semi-formal group that primarily served to share information and coordinate efforts at the UN. A number were involved in the crafting and launching of the Yogyakarta Principles, a set of guidelines launched in 2007 to clarify the applicability of binding international law to safeguard the human rights of all persons, regardless of SOGI.

Other groups have periodically engaged with IGLHRC on projects and proposals, including Human Rights First (HRF), Heartland Alliance, Global Rights, and the Unitarian Universalists' United Nations Office (UU-UNO), which sponsored a

number of convenings to respond to the exportation of religious homophobia from the US. Organizations continue to emerge. In late 2010, a group of activists launched an online platform for LGBT equality, AllOut, with the goal of building a grassroots movement that was more broadly galvanizing than the highly technical advocacy of existing organizations.

In the past few years, regional networks have also begun forming to coordinate national and local initiatives in particular areas of the globe. ILGA-Europe, an autonomous branch of ILGA funded by the European Commission, was perhaps the best-resourced of these, and boasted a larger budget than the rest of ILGA combined. Other regional networks include Asia-Pacific Rainbow, the Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL), and African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHeR). As I discuss in Chapter 4, these networks posed new challenges to IGLHRC's model of North-South partnership and raised questions about its continued relevance in regional advocacy.

These organizations have radically transformed the political landscape that Dorf sought to populate by founding IGLHRC in 1990. The Movement Advancement Project (MAP) observed in 2008 that "[m]ost international LGBT organizations and programs are relatively new. Nearly 90 percent of specialist organizations and mainstream human rights programs have been established since 1990" (MAP 2008: 9). A major catalyst of these groups has been increasing material support for their work. In 2008, the largest and best-resourced LGBT programs were IGLHRC, with a projected budget of $1,785,000, followed by ILGA with $749,000, Heartland Alliance with $600,000, the HRW LGBT Program with $582,000, INTERIGHTS with $480,000, ARC-International with $400,000, and Global Rights with $347,000 (MAP 2008: 9). Part of IGLHRC's prominence in networks of transnational LGBT NGOs has been due to its large budget relative to other players in this field.[19]

[19] Of course, HRW, AI, and other large human rights NGOs have resources that IGLHRC does not have. Staff in their LGBT programs can not only draw on in-house legal, media, and publishing resources, but have greater reputational resources that allow them to more easily disseminate and publicize their work.

IGLHRC's own funding shaped the organization's work in a number of ways. In contrast to ILGA-Europe, IGLHRC had a longstanding policy to refuse money from governments to avoid any influence over its advocacy and programming. During my fieldwork, this was revisited, and the board agreed to accept funding from governments so long as this was not more than 49 percent of IGLHRC's budget and brokers remained able to respond to abuses by the state. Throughout the duration of my fieldwork, however, IGLHRC received a relatively small portion of its funding through governmental sources. The notable exceptions were grants from SIDA and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which each supported IGLHRC's work.

Instead, the bulk of IGLHRC's funding came from a number of foundations based primarily in the US and Western Europe. At the time of my fieldwork, 77 percent of IGLHRC's revenue was derived from foundations, with less than 10 percent from individual donors. Established relationships with foundations generated multi-year commitments that enabled brokers to predict the funding they could expect each year with some accuracy. In 2011, this included $500,000 from a regular anonymous donor, $300,000 from SIDA, $275,000 from various parts of the Open Society Institute (OSI), $200,000 from the Arcus Gay and Lesbian Fund, $150,000 from the Ford Foundation, $125,000 from the Sigrid Rausing Trust, $50,000 from the Arcus API Institute, $50,000 from Atlantic Philanthropies, $35,000 from HIVOS, and $25,000 from the Levi Strauss Foundation. (Notably, the Executive Director of the Levi Strauss Foundation was Daniel Lee, IGLHRC's former Asia-Pacific coordinator.) Other foundations gave $90,000, comprising $1,800,000 of IGLHRC's $2,345,550 in revenue for the year.

The structure of IGLHRC's funding streams shaped where money was spent and why. As suggested above, the size and capacity of IGLHRC's programs in different regions was not solely the result of ideological priorities, but was decisively shaped by the funding available for work in different regions. During her tenure, Ettelbrick recalled, "European foundations couldn't care less about Latin

America. They were all into Africa during that particular timeframe. A little bit into Asia, but not even so much there."[20]

The priorities of funders were mediated by the fundraising competencies of various staff. Ettelbrick also noted:

> The problem I faced more than anything was the inequity – well, not inequity, the different styles. Marcelo just wasn't a fundraiser, isn't a fundraiser. I mean, he could do it, he made an effort, he went to the Ford Foundation. Whereas Cary, as an American, is a great fundraiser. My problem was that I had all this money coming into the Africa Program, not as much into these other programs. Grace Poore is not a fundraiser. She's not going to raise money for the Asia Program. She's a great activist. That was one of the reasons the programs grew differently, because of who was in charge of them.

This remained true during my fieldwork. In our conversation about the large sums of donor funding specifically earmarked for Africa, the Deputy Director of Development observed, "I think a large part has to do with, certainly, the region, but I think a large part actually is Cary, and his conceptualization of projects in the region, and his willingness and his experience working and cultivating foundations."

The same factors shaped the feasibility of projects that brokers wanted to undertake. Some were deemed too costly or difficult for funders to support, and this frustrated brokers who wanted to assist groups in Asia and the Middle East with long-term needs that were neither inexpensive nor immediately impactful. The demand for demonstrable outcomes and outputs meant that cultural work, dialogues with hardliners, and individual cases were difficult to fund, whereas things that fit in a more traditional human rights framework – documentation or litigation, for example – were often much easier.

Of course, pursuing funding also involved renegotiating priorities, which I explore in Chapter 3. When money came with strings attached, brokers both

[20] This was still evident during my fieldwork. The Africa Program had the largest budget – just under $400,000 per year – with funding from SIDA, Atlantic Philanthropies, and other major donors. The LAC Program received $25,000 from Overbrook for their LAC Institute, the MENA Program was funded by general operating funds pending a decision by OSI on a funding proposal, and the API Program applied for money from UNIFEM without much success and passed funding from the Global Fund for Women directly to its partners.

expanded their advocacy into new areas and framed existing advocacy within the guidelines for that funding. The SIDA funding, for example, not only allowed IGLHRC to hire a staff person to focus on health and human rights in Africa and expand that work. It also meant that a component on the intersection of health and human rights was almost always added to projects in the Africa Program.

Since the bulk of IGLHRC's funding was multi-year, unrestricted, and somewhat predictable, however, the biggest pressure from funders was to define and concretize IGLHRC's mission. As one broker observed of IGLHRC's funders:

> They really drill us, but they drill us for a reason. They don't just drill us and leave us hanging. They helped fund the monitoring and evaluation facilitators for our retreat, and they're now asking us to put in a one-year proposal just for monitoring and evaluation, in addition to our general operating expenses. […] I think part of it is, they want us to figure it out, in a way. [The anonymous donor] really wants us to narrow our focus, and that's what he's pushing us to do – not to just pick one of our four strategies, but to really strategically think about those four, or any other strategy... We're only a staff of 20, and we need to be able to make an impact.

In part, this was because the same handful of funders supported IGLHRC's regional, national, and local partners as well. In one of my interviews, a major funder estimated that donors sent $220,000 to fight Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill in the year after it was tabled. Of that total, another broker estimated that just $15,000 was supplied by IGLHRC, whose support was not primarily financial.

Indeed, brokers regularly reiterated that IGLHRC was "not a funder," and limited their monetary support of partners to particular kinds of projects. During my fieldwork, this support included money to bring activists to conferences and venues like the UN, hold convenings or trainings, do research or writing for reports, hold conference calls and collectively strategize, and reach, rent, or support safe houses during crises. IGLHRC did not generally give grants to groups for their own projects; this was particularly true since brokers recognized that their own funders increasingly supported their partner groups directly.

As ethnographers of other transnational advocacy networks have cautioned, "[a]n overly narrow view of resources as merely financial may also distort the

picture of how transnational organizing works. Resources certainly include money but may also include access, reputation, influence, and other intangible benefits" (Sperling et al. 2001: 1159). Indeed, IGLHRC provided significant non-monetary capital to partners; although it was not a funder, IGLHRC helped activists access international forums, publicize their research and advocacy, and be visible to other NGOs, funders, and governments in transnational LGBT networks.

Notably, IGLHRC's role in financing Southern groups was also limited by practical constraints. The external firm that Johnson procured to do IGLHRC's accounting introduced exacting standards to comply with US financial regulations; brokers were told that they could not disburse money to third parties to support activist work, and that receipts were required to account for all money sent abroad. This made it more difficult to send funds to activists who did not have bank accounts, or to supply funds for urgent needs that could not be documented, for example, informally paying an official to help an activist recover a confiscated passport. MoneyGrams, too, required that recipients hold state-issued identification and a name that matched that identification, which was particularly problematic for transgender brokers and those trying not to draw attention to their ties with LGBT groups in the North.

In addition to NGOs and funders, brokers increasingly worked with supportive governments around the globe. The work of groups like IGLHRC, ARC-International, ILGA-Europe, and the Council for Global Equality (CGE) has legitimated the espousal of LGBT rights as human rights and their recognition by international, regional, and domestic actors. Brokers operating within the UN system have worked closely with foreign missions in a number of different countries, and a few, including Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, France, Gabon, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Sweden, the US, and the EU, have been reliably supportive of LGBT NGOs. The EU has incorporated LGBT rights into its understanding of human rights and its criteria for accession, and the US State Department now includes violations on the basis of SOGI in its annual human rights reports. The supportiveness of these governments has created openings for IGLHRC, but has also created complex entanglements. Brokers face challenges in distancing

themselves from government positions that they consider counterproductive or ill-advised, and governments must temper their support of NGOs which endorse a broader range of sexual and reproductive rights than they themselves recognize.

All of these actors shaped the field in which IGLHRC operated, and the way it defined its mission with and against others in its networks. As other NGOs have expanded their advocacy and programming, brokers have had to redefine and clarify what IGLHRC's role in the movement should be. This has been heavily shaped by competition for funding and the need to justify the organization's presence and prominence in the field. It also has been partially shaped by novel opportunities, particularly by governments and intergovernmental bodies, and the demand for trusted, credible intermediaries who can advise those who shape laws, policies, and practices.

E. Trends and Trajectories at IGLHRC

Since it was founded in 1990, IGLHRC has tacked between different visions, priorities, and tactics in this dynamic environment. Questions about what IGLHRC is, for whom, and how it should operate have remained unsettled amid perennial discussions of IGLHRC's role in providing direct services, documenting and reporting violations, working within the formal human rights arena, and building movements from the grassroots. While the answers are far from clear, three broad trends have nonetheless persisted through the series of Executive Directors leading the organization, and are helpful in contextualizing IGLHRC's advocacy and programming during my fieldwork.

The most obvious trend is IGLHRC's growth and professionalization as it shifted from a largely volunteer operation to a bureaucracy with a budget of approximately $2 million per year. When IGLHRC began, it drew primarily on the passion and relationships of its founder and volunteers. As Dorf recalled, the name "International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission" was chosen precisely to give the ragtag group an air of credibility when it had no office, staff, or funding.

Throughout its history, and certainly, by the time of my fieldwork, IGLHRC professionalized as it expanded and gained prominence. This bolstered its fundraising considerably and allowed brokers to expand their programs and develop a regional presence in the US, Argentina, South Africa, and the Philippines. It meant that IGLHRC was increasingly recognized by policymakers, diplomats, and officials at the UN and regional human rights mechanisms as a legitimate stakeholder. As such, brokers were not only able to lobby these groups as outsiders, but were able to supply information, research, and expertise to influence policy behind the scenes.

Professionalization also complicated IGLHRC's mission in unexpected ways. Upper management expected brokers to produce polished, high-quality work, and Johnson often spoke of the need to "be rigorous," "step it up," or "take it to the next level." The hierarchy and rules that accompanied this often seemed arbitrary to brokers, and drew divisions in the workplace that they found unclear and uncomfortable. Nonetheless, many brokers very much regarded their work at IGLHRC as a job. As one broker commented when asked what brought her to IGLHRC:

> I just got tired of being poor. [Laughs.] To put it bluntly! There was no noble reason. I just got sick of it! [Laughs.] I'm like, man, I can't deal with this anymore. I need health insurance, I need to get a paycheck, I need to move to a bigger apartment. And just as I was just burning out… somebody mentioned this job at IGLHRC.

Although the brokers during my fieldwork all had activist backgrounds and were passionate about their work and broader questions of justice, many of them came to IGLHRC with the expectation that it would be a stable, professional job. They were often clear about the need to have boundaries and separate their personal and professional lives. While they frequently put in extra time on projects they were invested in, they were frustrated by requests to stay beyond the end of the workday or postpone work for others. As IGLHRC professionalized, it expanded the scope of

the work that brokers undertook, but also introduced the tensions and stresses of a workplace.

A second shift at IGLHRC was a growing emphasis on universality. Over time, brokers expanded their focus from gay and lesbian persons to LGBT persons to the categorical protection of anyone facing adverse treatment on the basis of "actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression." IGLHRC's focus also contracted in key ways; people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and intersex persons were variably included in its mandate. Still, brokers worked far beyond the lesbian and gay constituency specified in IGLHRC's name. During my fieldwork, its tagline, "Human Rights for Everyone, Everywhere," was perhaps the best testament to the broad scope of its work.

IGLHRC has also moved toward geographic universality. Initially, brokers focused on key countries where they had personal relationships or expertise. If they lacked these, there was a conscious effort to compile country files and build a knowledge base about the conditions LGBT people experienced in specific places. With the move to New York, these stayed in San Francisco with Araujo, and with the elimination of the ADP, they moved with him to a new position at the Heartland Alliance.

Without the ADP, IGLHRC lacked a permanent base of institutional knowledge about different areas. By the mid-2000s, brokers criticized the tendency to speak out or take action when an issue came to IGLHRC's attention, with or without any grasp of its political intricacies. Notably, when the website was restructured, it was designed to cover every country globally. Each country had a page on the website with links to articles, news from local partners, reports, press releases, action alerts, and any other information on its treatment of LGBT persons and sexual rights issues. For countries like Argentina, the Philippines, or Uganda, these pages of links were updated regularly. For the vast majority of countries, however, these links were updated infrequently, if at all. Countries like Mali, Macedonia, and the Seychelles had no information, and many others had not been updated in years. This framework with global coverage was symptomatic of a larger

emphasis on comprehensiveness at IGLHRC which has grown with the organization and its resources.

This is not to say that IGLHRC did not focus, or did not have target countries where it had strong partnerships and intensive, impactful strategies. A focus on priority countries was still nominally present in its strategic planning, but when I asked, brokers were frequently unable to remember which countries those were. Instead, they typically adjusted their programming in response to opportunities and challenges that arose in their work. For the most part, the countries in which brokers worked on a daily basis were not those identified in the strategic plan, but were those where conditions were worst, where emergencies arose, and where brokers felt they could make a difference with their expertise or relationships.

A final shift was evident in the gradual elimination of direct service provision for those who were not considered activists or advocates for LGBT communities. In its early days, IGLHRC was heavily involved in refugee and asylum work, and this remained a centerpiece of its work for most of its existence. With the decision to move to New York and focus on institutional advocacy and regional work, the ADP was deemed extraneous to the organization's mission.

This shift from direct, one-on-one engagement with at-risk individuals toward engagement with movements and human rights defenders was evident in IGLHRC's formalized goals. The Strategic Plan for 2009-2014, which was operational during my time with the organization, outlined four strategic goals for IGLHRC: to "advocate for the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, support the enactment and implementation of anti-discrimination laws, policies, and practices, reduce family, community, and state-sponsored violence, and promote economic, social, and cultural rights."

In practice, these strategic goals were pursued by means of what brokers called "defending the defenders." Instead of intervening directly, brokers tried first and foremost to ensure that those in regional, national, and local LGBT movements were safe and empowered to defend individuals or groups at risk in their area. By the time of my fieldwork, the vast majority of IGLHRC's daily work was oriented toward the structural conditions by which LGBT movements might flourish globally

rather than direct interventions into incidents that arose at a local level. As groups emerged locally, regionally, and transnationally that were able to deal with incidents in a nuanced, attentive way, IGLHRC reevaluated its mandate and refocused on the concept of movement building. As I suggest in later chapters, this involved a whole slate of challenges and possibilities of its own.

These shifts tend to go unremarked at IGLHRC, but memory does play a role in the way that brokers imagine their mandate and the work that they do. The way that IGLHRC's history is remembered by brokers and subsumed into its current mission was perhaps most evident at the annual Celebration of Courage fundraiser, where IGLHRC celebrated its 20th Anniversary during my fieldwork. In a video, Dorf, Ettelbrick, Johnson, the two board co-chairs, Barney Frank, and many of the people IGLHRC had worked with over the years spoke of the importance of IGLHRC's work and the pioneering role it played in particular venues and regions.

The narrative of the video understandably omits any mention of internal tensions at IGLHRC, staff who resigned or were fired, and disagreements about the organization's mission and tactics that have made it take very different shapes over the past two decades. While IGLHRC's name suggests timeless emphases on work that is international, focused on gay and lesbian persons, and uses a human rights lens, it has proven profoundly dynamic. The organization changed from a grassroots group of volunteers in San Francisco to a professionalized, bureaucratized NGO with full-time staff in New York, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, and Manila. It has expanded from its early focus on a small number of countries to a putatively universal focus on LGBT and same-sex practicing people anywhere around the globe. And finally, it has largely ceased to work directly with individuals at risk, working instead to support human rights defenders who mediate their claims and advocate on their behalf.

The way that these emerging goals are put into practice is similarly influenced by the brokers who animate IGLHRC as an entity, and of the internal and external pressures that shape their work. In the following chapter, I use the concept of "brokerage" to explore the ways that staff actively shape the work that IGLHRC undertakes and the degree to which their advocacy is overdetermined by broader structural factors, which shape the work they do in complex ways.

CHAPTER TWO: Brokerage and the Politics of Advocacy at IGLHRC

A. Introduction

While IGLHRC's mandate has evolved considerably since its creation in 1990, commentators have typically written of transnational LGBT human rights advocacy in monolithic terms. In politics and the media, references to a "gay agenda" or a singular "gay rights movement" are ubiquitous. Often, this is reproduced in otherwise exemplary scholarly work. Joseph Massad, for instance, lumps ILGA, IGLHRC, and virtually any proponent of LGBT human rights into what he dubs "the Gay International," a vast array of "missionary tasks, the discourse that produces them, and the organizations that represent them" (Massad 2007: 161). Under these glosses, proponents of LGBT human rights are presumed to share particular frameworks, motivations, and goals by virtue of their involvement with NGOs and networks.

Anthropologists usefully object that NGOs, like cultures, are neither bounded, static, nor whole (Hannerz 1996: 67; Lewis 1999: 79; Mascarenhas-Keyes 2001: 215). It is critical, however, to demonstrate *how* this is true, and explore the dynamism and diversity of NGOs engaged in transnational LGBT advocacy. As David Lewis has suggested, anthropologists can critically develop assessments of civil society by "*revealing* (exposing areas of the third sector that presently receive little attention); *widening* (opening up important nonwestern perspectives on third-sector organizations); and *deepening* (a distinctive critical perspective on third-sector organizations and their contexts)" (Lewis 1999: 75).

IGLHRC was internally heterogeneous in many ways. The staff itself was in flux, with high turnover throughout its history. At any given time, they were prone to disagree, to compromise, and to take up projects of their own volition that were

independent of any organizational agenda at IGLHRC. In part, this was because management preferred to hire activists, who brought their own politics and relationships to their advocacy. It was also because staff operated as brokers, liaising among a raft of coworkers, partners, officials, journalists, and academics who shaped their work. IGLHRC's institutional positions were often understood rather than explicitly stated, too, allowing them to negotiate how they would carry out advocacy.

In the case of LGBT NGOs, revealing, widening, and deepening assessments must necessarily explore the role that brokers play in animating organizations, the dissent and disjunctures introduced into the field as a result, and the way that heterogeneity is or is not overcome to pursue common agendas. In this chapter, I look at brokers at IGLHRC, the spaces in which they interacted, and how their approaches were shaped by pressures internal and external to the organization. Throughout, I highlight the different styles, politics, and practicalities that decisively shaped advocacy at IGLHRC. These factors made IGLHRC's work entropic, even when organizational structure, countervailing pressures, and the habitus of brokers undercut alternative forms of political praxis.

B. Brokers at IGLHRC

Work at IGLHRC was undertaken by brokers who animated the organization. Although they shared commitments, each broker was unique. They not only brought distinctive politics and ideologies to the table, but their own management styles, relationships, and personality traits.

The most prominent was the Executive Director, Cary Alan Johnson, who had been involved with IGLHRC since its founding. He pressed AI to take up LGBT rights as part of Amnesty International Members for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (AIMLGC) in the early 1990s, fundraised for IGLHRC in its early days, and served on IGLHRC's International Advisory Board (IAB) before heading its Africa Program. His background was not exclusively in human rights, but in a wider range of development and public health initiatives. This expertise was reflected in his work

in the Africa Program, where he spearheaded efforts to bring LGBT and MSM activists to the International Conference on AIDS and STDs in Africa (ICASA) in Dakar, Senegal in 2008, and authored the report *Off the Map: How HIV/AIDS Programming is Failing Same-Sex Practicing People in Africa*.

Johnson himself answered to IGLHRC's board. The board, comprised of roughly a dozen people, was primarily responsible for ensuring that IGLHRC remained functional and fiscally solvent. It was almost exclusively American; a former Executive Director explained this was because its roles were to fundraise and manage the organizational needs of a US-based NGO. Its members were not closely involved in the day-to-day work of brokers, who very rarely interacted with them. Johnson did ask board members with expertise in specific movements or institutions to comment on drafts of publications or strategies, although this feedback was largely advisory rather than binding. As current and former staff observed, the board rarely became involved in staffing or programmatic issues at IGLHRC, even when brokers drew their attention to crises within the organization. For strategic advice and guidance, the board was accompanied by the largely symbolic IAB, made up of prominent activists from around the globe who were not often utilized in practice.

During my fieldwork, IGLHRC was in a perpetual state of transition. I had arranged my research with the Program Director, Adrian Coman, who left to work for the European Parliament shortly before I arrived. A consultant, Debra Schultz, was hired as Interim Program Director until a permanent replacement could be found. Schultz co-founded and worked for ten years as the Director of Programs at the Soros Foundation's International Women's Program, and had taught history and women's studies at the New School and Rutgers University. (Schultz, like Johnson, grew up in Brooklyn, and the two had attended high school together.) Schultz was well-liked as a warm and sympathetic manager, particularly by the regional staff.

Of the regional programs she oversaw, the LAC Program was the most established. The Program Coordinator for LAC, Marcelo Ferreyra, joined IGLHRC during Ettelbrick's tenure. Ferreyra was a founder of Biblioteca Gay Lésbica Travesti Transexual Bisexual and Gays y Lesbianas Por Los Derechos Civiles, and helped

secure language protecting sexual orientation in the Buenos Aires City Constitution. The Program Associate for LAC, Fernando D'Elio, had trained as an accountant, but advised a number of Argentinean NGOs working on LGBT issues, women's rights, and HIV/AIDS.

The Africa Program was the one with which I became best acquainted. The Africa Program Coordinator, Esther Kilonzo, joined IGLHRC in June 2009. Kilonzo, who was Kenyan, held an LLB from the University of Nairobi and LLM from the University of Pretoria. She had previously worked in the Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), and had written and litigated cases on women's rights, reproductive rights, and minority groups in Africa. Kilonzo was particularly well-connected to the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya (GALCK), although she did not identify as gay or lesbian, and alternately identified as a heterosexual ally or as bisexual. She had a longtime partner and two children. Even after leaving the ICJ, she maintained close contacts with human rights professionals across Africa, including a network of former students of Frans Viljoen of the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria.

Other staff were hired by Johnson himself, and remained in the office through the transition in leadership. Bradley Chapman, the Africa Office Administrator, joined IGLHRC in 2008 after working for nearly two decades for the Department of the Premier of the Western Cape. He identified as heterosexual, and was married with two children. Victor Mukasa, the Program Associate for the Horn, East, and Central Africa, was a Ugandan activist who had been involved in the founding of a number of influential groups, including Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), Freedom and Roam Uganda (FARUG), and the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defender Network (EHAHRDP). Mukasa identified as a transgender lesbian, and was the only openly transgender broker at IGLHRC. The last addition to the office was Chivuli Ukwimi, the Health and Human Rights Program Officer, who was hired during my fieldwork in January 2010. Ukwimi, whose background was in biological science, had previously worked at Population Services International (PSI) in Zambia on HIV and human rights, particularly male circumcision and expanding outreach and

service provision for MSM. Ukwimi, who was Zambian, was also active in Zambia's LGBT group, Friends of Rainka, and served on the Executive Committee of AMSHeR.

The API Program had no office, but was run jointly by staff in the US and the Philippines. Grace Poore, the Regional Coordinator for API, was a Malaysian activist and filmmaker who had focused primarily on issues of sexual abuse and child abuse. Ging Cristobal, the Project Coordinator for API, was based in the Philippines, where she co-founded Lesbian Advocates Philippines (LeAP) and was a member of Ang Ladlad and Asia-Pacific Rainbow. I originally met Cristobal when I interviewed her for my MPhil, and she remained tightly linked to domestic and regional LGBT movements in the region.

The fledgling MENA Program was run by Hossein Alizadeh, the MENA Program Coordinator, who began working for IGLHRC in 2006 after the ADP assisted with his asylum claim. Alizadeh, who was Iranian, closely followed movements in Iran and Iraq but worked as IGLHRC's Communications Coordinator until the MENA Program launched in 2009. Alizadeh held MAs in International Relations from the National University in Tehran and in International Peace Studies from the University of Notre Dame. As he himself observed, that training inclined him to situate and understand LGBT advocacy in a wider sociopolitical context.

My work was initially based in New York. With Coman's departure, I worked most closely with Rebecca Clarke, the Communications and Research Director, who joined IGLHRC in September 2007. Clarke was born and raised in the UK and studied at Cambridge before getting her doctorate in Political Science at Columbia. Clarke had written on a number of feminist and LGBT issues, including adoption and LGBT families, been an adjunct faculty member at Columbia, CUNY, and Rutgers-Newark, and worked as Senior Policy Analyst and Editor of Democracy Dispatches at Demos, an organization that focused on voting rights. Clarke was the only parent in the office, but was frequently the first person in the office and the last to leave. She was extremely well-liked, especially by those she managed, and was regarded as a particularly warm, understanding figure in an environment that was often tense and tumultuous.

The Communications and Research Department had two other staffers at the beginning of my fieldwork. The Research and Policy Associate, Sara Perle, was 25 years old and was the broker with whom I worked and socialized most closely. As a law student, she had interned at IGLHRC in 2007, interned at the Center for Reproductive Rights in 2008, and then returned to IGLHRC after graduating in 2009. Perle identified as bisexual or queer, was a passionate feminist, and was deeply interested in technology, social media, and advocacy at the UN. The web designer, Laura Thomas, had not primarily worked in LGBT or human rights advocacy, but was referred to IGLHRC by a cousin who was among its first employees. Thomas was easygoing and likeable, but balked at injustices she perceived in the world around her, and struck me as somebody with a well-developed social conscience. We spent a lot of time together early in my fieldwork, as she began working at IGLHRC the week before I arrived and our desks were initially stationed next to each other.

Other brokers in New York were less involved in programmatic work but more engaged in IGLHRC's day-to-day operation as an organization. The Operations Manager, Michael Hartwyk, was one of IGLHRC's longest-serving employees, having been hired in August 2007. He was 29 years old when I began my fieldwork. In college, he concentrated in Structures of Opportunity and Inequality, and his previous activism focused on sexuality, race, and class. IGLHRC's fundraising and finances were also managed in New York. The Deputy Director of Development, Tanya Ampatuan, had been at IGLHRC since Ettelbrick's tenure. Ampatuan, a Filipina-American, had worked with Ettelbrick at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, where she was a research fellow, before accepting her position at IGLHRC in May 2006. When I arrived, Ampatuan oversaw Colleen Kane, IGLHRC's Development Associate. Kane joined IGLHRC after graduating from Seton Hall University with a BA in Diplomacy and International Relations, and had been on staff since July 2008. She was the youngest person in the office when I arrived, but was also the most animated and outspoken, and was fiercely protective of other employees.

Within the New York office, some relationships were evidently strong when I arrived. Kane and Hartwyk were particularly close friends, and Perle was close to

both of them, due in part to their close proximity in age. The three of them were also the brokers who I bonded with most quickly, although I became closest to Perle, who I sat next to, worked closely with, and spent time with outside of work. Thomas and Alizadeh had known each other prior to IGLHRC and developed a close friendship, and brokers in Communications and Research in general formed a tight-knit group.

The ties among the staff solidified in the first few weeks of my fieldwork, when Johnson announced that Clarke was being let go from the organization. This triggered a noticeable shift; when I arrived, brokers talked about how dysfunctional IGLHRC had been in the past, but after this incident, brokers complained that things were just as dysfunctional as they had always been. Clarke was one of the most well-liked people on staff. On the heels of the downsizing of a financial staffer whose job was outsourced to an external firm, which then hired her to continue working part-time at IGLHRC, the decision to fire Clarke upset many brokers in New York.

Thus, for the first four months of my fieldwork, IGLHRC lacked both a full-time Program Director and a full-time Communications and Research Director, distorting a hierarchy with virtually no middle management between the Executive Director and the program staff, researchers, and interns. Schultz was in two or three days a week as Interim Program Director, and Perle, who had been employed at IGLHRC for less than six months, became Acting Director of Communications and Research. The development staff was cut in half when Kane, who was particularly incensed by the firings, found a job at a nearby suicide-prevention NGO and put in her two weeks notice in early December.

As the year progressed, some of this volatility subsided. Kane helped hire her replacement, Robert Smith, a recent graduate of Brown University. Smith grew up in a socially conservative black Baptist family, and became active in intersectional race, class, gender, and sexuality politics through his involvement with Brown's Third World Center. After moving to New York, Smith volunteered with a number of queer leftist organizations, including the Audre Lorde Project and the Ali Forney Center for homeless youth. He recounted in our interview that he applied at IGLHRC because

he badly needed a full-time job and thought he would be good at event planning, but thought he might ultimately go back to school to become an historian.

Other positions were also filled over time. In the fall, Emily Jones was brought in as a consultant to help with a fundraising proposal for the MENA Program, and was hired as Program Director in December 2009. Around the same time, Sam Cook was hired as Director of Communications and Research. Jones started work in January 2010. Cook, who lived in New York but was South African, was unable to start until February 2010 as the process to obtain a work permit dragged on.

Both Jones and Cook were particularly influential in IGLHRC's advocacy and programming, as they managed brokers in their departments but also held sway with Johnson in a way that few of the less senior brokers did. As Program Director, Jones worked most closely with regional staff. Notably, she was also the only broker at IGLHRC whose professional background was squarely in the field of LGBT human rights. Jones received a master's degree in Human Rights from the London School of Economics, and became the first full-time researcher for HRW's LGBT Program, where she worked with former IGLHRC Policy Director Scott Long. As a consultant, she had advised other human rights NGOs on LGBT issues as well.

Despite this background, Jones was among the most critical of the human rights framework itself, and of what it was and was not well-suited to do. In our interview, she commented:

> I don't believe in a one-size-fits-all human rights approach, I don't believe in a one-size-fits-all internationalist approach… I'm very concerned with the focus on civil and political rights. And I understand how it's constantly replicated in human rights work, for all of the obvious reasons, but I feel like one of the challenges I always have is how to get beyond arbitrary arrests, how to get beyond violence, and talk about the *huge* range of economic, social, and cultural rights that actually influence our lives. I'm also very concerned with inequalities within the LGBT community. I feel like it's very easy to set the agenda based on the normative politics of your big LGBT organization, be it middle class, or white or male – whatever it is in that given context. And I feel like if I wanted to work with normativity, I shouldn't be working in human rights.

Jones's acknowledgment of the limits and omissions of human rights approaches was influenced by her queer and feminist politics; she was skeptical of the willingness and ability of powerful institutions to deliver meaningful justice to the most marginalized. Cook also took a measured approach to the human rights framework, which was equally influenced by her personal and professional background. Cook received her law degree from the University of Cape Town (UCT) and her LLM from Columbia, and was one of the only brokers at IGLHRC with formal legal training. Prior to IGLHRC, she was the director of the PeaceWomen Project at the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), where she worked on UN advocacy and issues of women, peace, and security. She had been involved with a number of groups that looked broadly at issues of gender and violence, both within and without the human rights framework, for example, Rape Crisis, the Law, Race, and Gender Unit at UCT, and the Women's Legal Center. In general, however, Cook's ideas about identity politics and human rights were formed in a very different sociopolitical context than many of her colleagues in New York. As she recalled in a life history interview:

> I have a very fierce and clear sense of what I think is just and not, and about my being entitled and almost obligated in some circumstances to pull things out. I think growing up as a white South African, and my father being very clear on the need to recognize your own privilege – it's not enough to say racism is wrong. It's also important that you recognize where you've been privileged. And I'm much, I think, more comfortable talking about race than many people in the US… I think being in South Africa and growing up as a white South African and all of the many, many conversations and fights and really quite awkward situations in student politics have, one, toughened me up, and also, taught me that if I'm doing something because I believe in a principle, and not because I'm trying to "help" other people, and not because I'm being condescending, then I should speak. And I know that that voice has been appreciated.

Cook was indeed strong in her convictions, and tended to be more direct than most of her colleagues. At the same time, she disliked hierarchy and placed a premium on the happiness and well-being of those she supervised, two things that quickly endeared her to those of us in her department. Although this reflected her principles, she recounted to me that it was also shaped by her own burnout:

> Everyone I know in activism who's good at saying, "I can't, and I've made a decision ahead of time that I can't do x or y," and sticks with it, you dig around in their past, and they've got to a point where they're physically a mess, where they're at the doctor all the time, they have some serious illness, they can't sleep, they've put on weight, lost weight, whatever, and they're a mess. And you're like, ah, yes.
>
> [Have you ever hit that point?]
>
> Yeah. Hence, my very good boundaries.

Cook was pragmatic about the limitations of brokers at IGLHRC. She was frequently the first to say that a project was not feasible or that staff were stretched too thin. She was also acutely aware that Perle, Thomas, and I would readily stay late to finish projects left to us at the last minute, and gently insisted that we develop better boundaries for the sake of our own happiness and well-being. As I discuss below, this sometimes proved definitive in deciding which projects brokers undertook.

The last major hire during my time at IGLHRC was Michael Linares, the Executive Assistant. Linares had recently graduated from Yale and taken a series of temporary jobs as a graphic designer and waiter. He had done queer activism, but was most recently active in studying and promoting drug policy reform. Linares found that IGLHRC "feels like it's very much a culture of inefficiency," and as Johnson's assistant and "a big efficiency kind of guy," he sought to correct that. More subtly, he functioned as an intermediary between Johnson and the rest of the staff. Combined with the arrival of Jones and Cook, this greatly streamlined the somewhat anarchic system for managing projects.

During my fieldwork, three defining characteristics of brokerage at IGLHRC were especially evident. The first was the high rate of staff turnover. When I arrived at IGLHRC, nobody had been there longer than five years. After Clarke departed, the three of us left in Communications and Research collectively had less than eight months of work experience at IGLHRC. Brokers usually left with less than a month's notice, taking their expertise and relationships with them and leaving partially-finished projects that languished with colleagues. In a particularly memorable

incident, a broker who had been working for a year on IGLHRC's ECOSOC accreditation was frustrated to accidentally discover that a whole series of files related to the project not only existed, but were being stored, unbeknownst to her, inside her desk.

The suddenness of many departures also disrupted the transmission of knowledge from old to new employees. It was rare during my time at IGLHRC for outgoing employees to overlap with their successors, much less train them, and there were few codified instructions detailing the priorities of the organization, preferred terminology, or the logistics of deploying particular tactics in IGLHRC's arsenal. As one new hire commented about their training:

> You would expect that there would be the rules; [you] come on time, you have this many sick days, or these are our goals, this is what everyone's working on, this is what this person is supposed to do. I have no idea. I've kind of been osmosing it little by little.

My experience was similar; I did not receive training, and was asked to start writing updates for the website on my first day. Although it was particularly acute for younger staff, brokers at every level of the organization observed that much of their work was learned by simply doing. I figured out how to write action alerts and letters to governments by copying older examples, and only bothered to look at the strategic plan because I was ethnographically interested in it. Much of this was conveyed through practice, and not through explicit policies that could be contested or refined by brokers.

The second characteristic was the homogeneity and heterogeneity of brokers. IGLHRC's management expressed a preference for hiring activists, who tended to bring their own distinctive ideals, politics, and tactics into their work. This was especially notable because "activist" did not necessarily mean "LGBT activist." One theme in life history interviews with brokers was that relatively few had primarily worked in LGBT advocacy, particularly transnationally, prior to IGLHRC. Most had worked in other movements, some of which heavily overlapped with LGBT work and some of which were quite distinct. Brokers were involved with anti-racist

work, voting rights, public health, suicide prevention, rape counseling, reproductive rights, homelessness, drug policy, and academia, but only Jones had primarily worked in transnational LGBT human rights.[21] This diversified the staff, but also explained the tendency that brokers had to think beyond LGBT issues about broader issues of justice.

This was evident in a number of instances. Prior to my fieldwork, it profoundly shaped IGLHRC's response to reports of men being hanged in Iran on charges of rape, which many activists in the North read as being hanged for being gay. As Poore recalled:

> We're not a traditional old-fashioned human rights, male-dominated organization. We use different frameworks… This happened with Iran, when they hanged, or when they were going to hang, or when they had hung those young men, young boys, and we wrote this piece. And Paula, Hossein and I worked on it, and I had to say, we're saying that the government is wrong to hang these people, frame them, even if they did what they did. But there's somebody else's voice that we're not looking at. If these young men *are* rapists, their victims – who speaks for them? And I don't think I'm going to be able to write an article supporting them without also speaking for their victims. Because what, we're suddenly going to just ignore it? Because yeah, it's true that they may be framed – I mean, Hossein kept saying, they're framed, they're framed. Yes. But in the event that this is not a frame-up, we need to at least acknowledge that as an organization, we do not condone rape. As an organization, we *do* want to say that victims of rape are always silenced, and they can't come out, because they may be penalized. We at least need to say that, before we say we're totally against the fact that these guys are being penalized.

And indeed, the language in the final piece reflected these concerns. During my fieldwork, brokers took expansive approaches to other LGBT issues. Cook, who spent years focusing on women, peace, and security, was understandably diffident about movements spending time, money, and energy so LGBT people could serve in the military, calling it "militarist and patriarchal." Jones, a signatory of the "Beyond

[21] At times, this gave brokers a fresh perspective on human rights. One manager was frustrated by references to "arbitrary detention," and complained that there was nothing "arbitrary" about targeting people on the basis of SOGI. This exasperated those in the office with legal training, who explained that it was a legal term, but also suggests how framing shifts when advocates for specific populations adopt the rhetoric of universal human rights in their advocacy. I discuss this further in Chapter 3 and the Conclusion.

Marriage" manifesto and board member of QEJ, remained skeptical of marriage as an institution even as she spoke supportively of inclusion as Program Director.[22]

The heterogeneity of the staff and their politics raised the question of whether IGLHRC's work was truly "dominated by white Western males," as some critics have charged (Massad 2002: 361-362). Taken literally, this was dubious. Of the 18 brokers employed full-time by IGLHRC, ten identified as male, only seven might be considered white, and only seven were "Western" in the sense that they were from the North. The only brokers in New York who were white, Western, and male were the Operations Manager and myself, a visiting anthropologist. Even these enumerations, however, tell us little. How should one classify the daughter of a domestic worker in the Philippines whose employer funded her study at a private university in the US? Or an Iranian asylee settled permanently in New Jersey who focuses on sex work in Turkey? Or a male-identified activist who also identifies as a transgender lesbian?

In many of these cases, identity-based categories are fairly empty and unable to capture the richness of individual experience. What is typically meant by critics who charge that IGLHRC is white, Western, or male is that its operative *ideology* is implicitly white, Western, or male. Indeed, many aspects of IGLHRC's practice are legacies of a tradition of human rights developed in the West. Brokers generally operated with the belief that SOGI are meaningful and universal aspects of personhood and that there are rights that all people can and should be able to claim (and states must guarantee) by virtue of their humanity. This was true even when they were quite cognizant that sexual subjectivity is more complex than the "LGBT" moniker suggests, or skeptical of the utility of the human rights framework in pursuing meaningful justice.

What often goes unremarked in discussions of race, nationality, and gender in human rights advocacy, however, is the role that class and privilege play in shaping the professional stratum inhabited by brokers. Brokers at IGLHRC tended to think of themselves as professionals as well as activists, and particularly in New

[22] Ettelbrick also publicly voiced concern over the focus on marriage (Ettelbrick 1989; Ettelbrick and Shapiro 2004).

York, they were highly-educated, often at elite institutions. The youngest staffers had graduated from Harvard, Yale, Brown, the University of Pennsylvania, Seton Hall, and Vassar, with interns from Yale and Columbia.[23] The "white, Western, and male" labels fail to point out that the most consistent commonality among IGLHRC's brokers was that they were middle-class, something that is less often remarked upon in critiques of LGBT identity politics transnationally. The educational and professional backgrounds of staff tended to make them fairly critical of rigid identity models and assimilationist politics. Nonetheless, these backgrounds also shaped the tactics they – and I – thought to adopt. In crises as well as systemic work, much of the work at IGLHRC was focused on being legitimated by powerful actors, whether at the UN or by Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) and governments designing National Strategic Plans (NSPs) to combat HIV/AIDS. This is a very particular kind of advocacy, which brokers problematized but still reproduced in their interventions.

The final thing to note was that brokers often expressed frustration that their roles and the hierarchy of the organization were not clearly defined. When I first arrived at IGLHRC and reviewed my contract, a senior staff member told me in all seriousness that I should rip it up, as I would be working on a wholly different set of projects that had become institutional priorities. In practice, the size of the staff, the high turnover, and the diverse skills that brokers brought to IGLHRC meant that they were regularly tasked with a variety of projects. I was a research fellow, but found myself picking up activists at the airport, co-organizing a protest at Uganda House, and representing IGLHRC in a coalition of faith-based groups supporting LGBT rights. Similarly, although Perle was in Communications and Research, she largely coordinated advocacy at the UN. Brokers repeatedly demanded job descriptions, which few had in any recognizable, codified form. Those in Cape Town were frustrated by mixed signals about the chain of command in New York, and felt

[23] This was brought to my attention at the holiday party, when staff went bowling at Port Authority. After breaking into teams by departments, somebody commented that the staff could divide evenly along gender lines, and somebody else commented that it could also divide evenly between Ivy League and non-Ivy League graduates.

torn between their own work and the writing and fact-checking requested of them by other staff. While brokers resented doing tasks they did not consider to be part of their job or found the chain of command unclear, they also balked at the imposition of bureaucracy and hierarchy.

The high turnover of the staff, their backgrounds and politics, and the fluidity of their roles all shaped what was and was not done at IGLHRC. In daily tasks as well as more specific work around partnerships, knowledge production, and institutional advocacy, brokers drew on their personal and professional repertoires to pursue IGLHRC's mission in a variety of ways. Many of their interactions took place within the walls of their offices, where they negotiated politics and priorities on a daily basis.

C. IGLHRC's Office Environment

During my fieldwork, IGLHRC's headquarters and the bulk of its staff were based in New York. The Africa Program had its office in Cape Town, and the LAC Program had its office in Buenos Aires. The API Program was run by Poore in Washington, DC and Cristobal in Quezon City, an area of Manila in the Philippines, who both worked from their homes. The revamped MENA Program remained in New York.

The office in New York was housed in an aging skyscraper in the city's Financial District, just a stone's throw from Wall Street. It shared a floor with two domestic NGOs, the Trevor Project and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. They were literally feet from each other, but I rarely witnessed interactions between the staffs of the three NGOs.

Visitors were greeted by an etching on the door depicting IGLHRC's logo, a globe with continents composed of tiny silhouettes of people. Through a door locked with a keypad was a small, tiled sitting area with a rack of publications. Throughout my fieldwork, it still proudly displayed newsletters from 2008, when Archbishop Desmond Tutu accepted the OUTSPOKEN Award at IGLHRC's Celebration of Courage fundraiser. To the left of this area was a small kitchen with a refrigerator, coffee pot, toaster, and microwave, and a shelf of mugs, plastic containers, and snack food.

Just ahead was the workspace for the staff, an open-space plan with desks for ten people running along pastel yellow walls. A bank of file cabinets occupied the center of the room, draped by a rainbow flag and littered with a stereo, magazines, and food supplied in an *ad hoc* fashion by the staff. The space was lit by fluorescent fixtures and a bank of windows along one wall, with cabinets holding old files, publications, and office supplies running above the desks. Along the wall were a small office shared by Jones and Cook, a larger office for Ampatuan and consultants working on finances, and a mid-size office occupied by Johnson. On the far end was the conference room, a somewhat cool, muted space humming with recycled air where brokers held meetings, met with visitors, and made private or sensitive calls.

The office in New York was casual, and its open-plan design facilitated staff joking and chatting with each other intermittently throughout the day. Linares offered a telling impression of the office in our interview, conducted shortly after he was hired:

> I walked in and immediately I was like, okay, I'm in a non-profit office. There are wheelie chairs, people use them liberally, there's a pot of old coffee, the beat down fridge, you know, the three computers that nobody wants to use but sometimes have to, the one nice computer. You know? People walking around laughing and joking, confusion, vague chaos.

In its layout, décor, and the way it was inhabited, the office felt like that of a non-profit; despite moments of tension and urgency, the atmosphere was generally informal and relaxed. The layout facilitated camaraderie among less senior staff, who were spatially segregated from staff with semi-private offices. Brokers freely came and went with a variety of commitments that kept them from the office; some had standing medical appointments, some were regularly out to attend meetings at the UN, other NGOs, or universities in the city, and many met with activists for coffee or lunch when they passed through New York. There was little oversight of when people were physically in the office, and given the distractions of the physical space, many preferred to work outside the office when something required intensive

attention. Amid this constant traffic, projects were often prolonged or delayed until relevant people could sign off on them.

The Cape Town office was also an open-plan space, situated on the top floor of a building just around the corner from Parliament in the Central Business District. Upon climbing the stairs, visitors entered a small, shaded conference room, which opened into a kitchen and bathrooms on one side and a large, airy workspace on the other. In the workspace, the four staff members had desks facing the walls in their respective corners, and worked with their backs to the center of the room. I occupied a rarely-used desk under a bulletin board with years-old notes pinned to it, situated along the wall between Mukasa and Ukwimi.

The Africa Office was the only regional office that was regularly used. The LAC Office was used primarily for meetings since both brokers preferred to work from home, and Cristobal did not have a physical space in Manila. Even in Cape Town, however, it was rare during the three months I worked from the office for more than one or two brokers to be present. Brokers met with other activists in the region, traveled to regional or international conferences, or were out for personal reasons. In part, this had to do with interpersonal dynamics; there were tensions regarding management styles and the delegation of tasks in the office, and brokers interacted as little as possible. When present, they sat facing the wall with their backs to each other, usually in silence, which likely exacerbated the tensions among them.

The office itself shaped advocacy; my time at IGLHRC was punctuated by days where work virtually ground to a halt because of a broken thermostat, fire drill, or prolonged lack of internet connectivity. Brokers also inhabited the offices in distinctive ways, which shaped the work that they did. Jones preferred to work with her door closed; Cook, who shared that office, preferred to work with the door open, and frequently came to sit and visit with myself, Perle, and Thomas. The open office plan facilitated bonding among myself, Perle, Thomas, Alizadeh, Hartwyk, Smith, and Linares, but also facilitated the spread of gossip and discontent beyond the earshot of management. It also meant that conversations were public, such that brokers were occasionally alienated or offended by comments from colleagues.

While sexual banter was common and usually unremarkable, brokers occasionally voiced discomfort about sexual comments that colleagues considered innocuous (Parker 2001: 143). Remarks that dealt in stereotypes also triggered grumbling but not outright conflict, for example, that lesbians would be good with tools, that the office needed a lesbian who dressed well, or that a colleague who was under the weather looked "like a tired whore." In the Africa Program, tensions were exacerbated by a spatial arrangement which discouraged face-to-face interactions. With brokers coming and going from both offices, too, their ability to share information, work cooperatively, and reach consensus was impeded.

D. IGLHRC's Advocacy and Outreach

The backgrounds and politics that brokers brought to IGLHRC were influential, and defined the interventions made in the organization's name. Each tactic they used provided opportunities for brokers to assert particular viewpoints and negotiate ways of carrying out advocacy. Here, it is important to understand how brokers animated IGLHRC as an organization, and what work they undertook. The program staff worked most directly with partners around the globe, providing different forms of assistance, turning to them for information, and collaboratively promoting LGBT human rights. The communications staff researched issues facing LGBT people globally, publicized human rights violations, and called for supporters and governments to take action. The development staff promoted IGLHRC's work and ensured there were funds to underwrite and expand its programs. Within these broad mandates, specific interventions were designed and pursued by brokers with distinctive priorities, who determined what advocacy was carried out in IGLHRC's name.

Program Work

Over half of the staff was specifically tasked with program work, and the rest assisted with their projects in a variety of ways. What this involved was different at

any given time. Brokers juggled a multitude of short- and long-term projects, which were subject to the vagaries of funding, unexpected crises, and the calendars of bodies like the UN, IACHR, ACHPR, and various human rights commissions. Nonetheless, some projects were focal points for program staff during my fieldwork, and these hint at the differences among the offices and what they regarded as the bedrock of their work.

The Africa Program was primarily engaged in supporting local activists in a number of prominent cases that arose in late 2009 and early 2010. Brokers were involved in different ways with the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, the proposed criminalization of same-sex activity in Rwanda, the arrest of Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza and the harassment of human rights defenders in Malawi, mob violence and the constitutional reform process in Kenya, trainings and HIV/AIDS work in Zambia, and emergency response to raids, arrests, and detentions in Tanzania, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe. Kilonzo regularly engaged with the ACHPR, promoting the inclusion of LGBT issues, monitoring activity that was hostile to LGBT people and their defenders, and networking with other civil society groups. Ukwimi coordinated presentations by LGBT and MSM activists at the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna, and worked with partners to ensure that same-sex practicing people were represented in CCMs and NSPs responding to HIV/AIDS. Mukasa was heavily involved in supporting LGBT refugees, returned repeatedly to assist activists in Uganda, and helped spearhead the first conference of transgender activists in Lusophone Africa, held in Mozambique in the summer of 2010.

The API Program was involved in response work as well as a number of more proactive, larger-scale projects. Poore in particular was invested in responding to incidents in China and restrictive laws proposed in Aceh, Indonesia. Cristobal primarily worked with the movement in the Philippines on issues like the renewed push for the Anti-Discrimination Bill, the accreditation of Ang Ladlad, an LGBT political party, and the recovery efforts after Hurricane Ondoy. As I discuss below, a major initiative was their Activist Institute and multi-year research project on domestic violence against LBT women in Asia. Poore was also finishing a documentary about the Yogyakarta Principles and LGBT advocacy in Asia, *Courage*

Unfolds, which was released to commemorate IDAHO in May 2011. Both also had initiatives they wanted to undertake. Poore was eager to develop a cross-regional project on fundamentalisms after witnessing an escalation in anti-gay religious rhetoric in the Philippines, Japan, and Indonesia. Cristobal, who worked in a country that sent massive numbers of overseas foreign workers abroad, planned to look at the lives of LGBT migrants rendered vulnerable by their multiple marginalizations.

The LAC Program took on a number of localized cases of homophobia and heterosexism by police and state agents during my fieldwork. With local partners, brokers issued action alerts drawing attention to attacks against a transgender man in La Matanza, Argentina, the arrest of LGBT people in Caracas, Venezuela, the murders of trans people in Guatemala, the murder of a young activist, Walter Tróchez, and three travesti women in Honduras, discrimination against students in Belize, and the abduction of a lesbian in Paraguay. Brokers held the first-ever strategy workshop with trans activists in the Caribbean, and participated in a fact-finding mission to Haiti in April 2010. They also lobbied intergovernmental bodies, continuing their coalitional advocacy at the IACHR and strategizing around the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

The MENA program had just begun when I arrived for my fieldwork, and was in a fairly exploratory stage throughout the year. Alizadeh was deeply skeptical of the utility of aggressive advocacy in the region, and felt it was crucial to listen to the needs of movements and find constructive ways to support them. To do so, he and Jones toured the region to meet with human rights activists and NGOs to develop a strategy for the program. This was supplanted by media monitoring, and Alizadeh tracked when and where relevant issues were being raised in the media and politics. Where movements were actively engaging the government, more aggressive action was occasionally taken. Alizadeh worked closely with activists in Turkey on multiple interventions, urging officials to change the vague and widely-abused Law of Misdemeanors, overturn an order to close Black Pink Triangle in Izmir, and protect trans people at heightened risk of assault and murder.

Much of this work was contingent on what happened on the ground, but much of it was also contingent on the backgrounds of brokers themselves. It is

notable that the API Program focused on women, migrants, and sexual rights, reflecting the backgrounds of Poore and Cristobal and the movements in which they operated. The same was true of tactics; Poore, a filmmaker, used visual media to produce *Courage Unfolds*, while Ferreyra and D'Elio preferred to use action alerts and did so at a rate that far outpaced the rest of the regions. Alizadeh, whose background was in politics and international relations, was skeptical of whether conventional human rights tactics were politically strategic in his region at all. These preferences were similarly apparent in some of the programmatic work in which brokers engaged before and during my fieldwork, including emergency response, movement building, and public education.

Emergency Response and Movement Building

One of the difficulties brokers faced at IGLHRC was the routine occurrence of short-term emergencies, which often put their long-term interventions on hold. The least predictable and most reactive form of program work was emergency response. This took a variety of forms, for example, wiring money for safe houses, giving material or political support to activists to get passports, visas, or transportation, visiting detainees, strategizing with activists, helping to procure lawyers or other professionals, intervening with sympathetic authorities, and rapidly transferring funds when they were urgently needed. Typically, regional staff worked with activists in-country to determine their needs and formulate any response. When necessary, requests for material support were forwarded to the office in New York for approval.

The pressure to say or do something about high-profile emergencies was often acutely felt by brokers. As Jones observed, this was exasperating for those who were also conscious of the systemic marginalization queer populations faced:

> I have to say, this is a source of frustration for me at so many levels… The high-profile stuff is a crisis, you know? People want to talk about the arrest that just happened in x city and they want to talk about the horrible bill that happened in y city, but they don't want to talk about the trans women in

> Nepal who do sex work every day. Which is totally fine, but they do sex work because they have no employment options, because they're kicked out of school, because employers won't give them an interview. Which is much more influential in their lives than when, you know, once and awhile, police target *metis* – which happens, and is very serious, but the systematic issues are employment discrimination, gender conformity, legal documents, all of these issues that you can *never* work on in an emergency framework.

Jones's comments reflect an awareness of the limits of emergency response, and indeed, staff in every region consciously tried to engage in proactive interventions. Brokers planned programming to build regional and national movements, including convenings, trainings, and Activist Institutes. The Africa Program historically held a number of convenings, which generated new declarations, organizations, networks, and research projects.[24] During Johnson's tenure as Senior Regional Specialist, convenings were held on advocacy at the ACHPR, defining a transgender movement in Africa, and commissioning research on blackmail and extortion of LGBT and same-sex practicing people. As he recalled in an interview:

> I knew that what had to happen first was that we needed to identify who the players were in African LGBT communities, and bring those folks together… And so I think we played a really important role in catalyzing the African LGBT movement. A lot of the convenings around which people started getting a sense of themselves and their power and their potential, I think, we convened… These convenings don't always have concrete outcomes, but I think they are spaces in which people develop political community, and know each other, and know where to go for help, and develop a sense of what the possibilities are.

In these convenings, IGLHRC catalyzed forms of exchange and particular discourses around sexual politics, typically resulting in advocacy in which IGLHRC played a central role.

Brokers from IGLHRC also hosted human rights trainings, albeit seemingly less often than when there were fewer large, established movements in the 1990s.

[24] Of course, this does not always work. A transgender conference held in Barcelona in the spring of 2010 did not result in any kind of declaration, despite the efforts of major backers like HRW. Attendees were hostile to the declaration that was proposed for them to sign, and insisted that they had not been given sufficient opportunities to participate in the drafting and get support from the constituencies they represented.

The largest took the form of Activist Institutes, which brought activists in a region together to strategize around a topic or issue. During my fieldwork, Poore and Cristobal hosted an Institute on violence against LBT women in Asia, which built on a previous consultation to launch a multi-year research project on the topic. In an interview, Poore remembered that first meeting:

> IGLHRC convened about 20 activists from, I think, 11 countries in Asia. At that consultation, we were basically trying to figure out, look, we've heard repeatedly that violence is a big issue, and that groups don't have the resources to do the level of documentation, and again and again, people have said, you know, we want to do documentation, and we need to get trained, and we need the resources so that we can provide hard data so that people can take our claims of violence seriously. So the consultation was to find out what people were finding out in their countries about the problem – what kinds of research they had already done, what were the models of research that they had either experienced or had participated in and hated, you know? And all the problems with it, and why.

Brokers accepted applicants from five countries, who gathered in Manila to develop a methodology. As Poore recalled, multiple criteria shaped who was invited to participate:

> That was a little mini-controversy, because Ging felt that we needed to build the capacity of our partners while they were doing the research. I felt that we couldn't afford to do that. I felt that the people who were going to be undertaking the research needed to be people who could deliver, so we would be building their capacity in other things – for instance, doing the level of documentation that maybe they didn't do before, or doing the kind of outreach that they were not comfortable doing, pushing them beyond the comfort zone, or grounding them in the human rights framework, or helping them to think about end use so that they can develop the advocacy project. So yes, we were building capacity, but not at the one-on-one level. I felt like we needed to be at a higher level, you know? We needed to start at a level where, these are people who knew what research and documentation was. They may not do analysis and they may not do research, but they certainly had done documentation in their groups and stuff. And I think Ging's concern was that, well, then we are going to limit the pool of people who were going to be able to partner with us, because we were asking for too much, we were asking for certain criteria.
>
> But I'm glad that we stuck with it, because out of the 11 countries, we had seven countries come forward and we chose five. And the choice was mutual, meaning that one of the countries, we had to talk to them, and we

> said, look, you know, this is what we expect, this is the amount of commitment, you need to be available, you're a very, very small group, you're the leader of this group, you travel so much internationally, so are you really sure you're going to be able to undertake this? And so then she herself said, yeah, you're right, I don't think we're going to be able to. And the other group, other country, they really wanted to be part of it, but we had to drop them because their follow-through was so poor. And so finally we had five, and we thought we might have six, with China – we really pursued China – but at the last moment, they were already so overcommitted with their projects, and to take on something at this level, the group that could have done it was so overcommitted. And the people who were asking us to partner with them didn't have the capacity to do it.
>
> So in Southeast Asia, we have Philippines and Malaysia, in South Asia, we have Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and then in Northeast Asia we have Japan. Those are the five countries. So when they came to the Activist Institute, they already knew that they were coming in for human rights documentation training, and they were going to be spending a lot of time reviewing the methodology that we hired a consultant to work on, and reviewing it – now, see, that's the partnership part. In other words, we spent hours and hours and days going over it. And I was committed to that. I'm like, I don't care if we have to revisit this discussion five times. But we're going to have to do it. Because if we don't do it, they're not going to buy into it, and we're going to have problems down the road. So we may start at this place, and they may start at this place, but we've got to come together.

As participants worked to develop a methodology, politics inevitably arose. Trainings and Institutes were places where IGLHRC did utilize a particular model of human rights, along with all of the political and ideological presumptions that entailed. As Poore recounted, the Institute triggered pushback against the utility of the human rights framework for documenting violence, and a broader understanding was negotiated:

> We were basically saying, okay, we're going to want our partners on the ground, the five countries who're going to be on this big three-year project with us, to use a human rights framework to do the documentation. Well, of course, we got resistance. People said their objections, all kinds of stuff. So basically, we asked them, okay, what are your objections? And what are the advantages? Except for one group, one country, I think everybody else said these are our objections, but we realize that for practical purposes, we need to use the human rights framework, because of the end use for the data. Many of them were wanting to use the data with lawyers who would want that kind of human rights documentation. They were going to use it with legislators. So they felt that to be taken "seriously" – which is kind of sad, you know, to be taken seriously – they needed to use the human rights

> framework to do their documentation. So what we did was, we said, so let's acknowledge what are the weaknesses of the human rights framework, and let's figure out how we are going to be expansive. And we had to, given that it was about women, given that it was about violence, which was mostly taking place in the private sector, given that the state was usually not the perpetrator, which is what the human rights framework usually focuses on and given that some of the violations were not even considered to be human rights violations, meaning that they might not be physical abuse, physical violations – it might be psychological, or verbal, or mental, or not immediate, you know, down the road. Which, the human rights framework doesn't deal with all of those kinds of things. It does with torture, but then even torture has a very limited definition of torture. So given that we were feminists who believed in the sexual rights framework, we basically said that we're going to meld both, so that we're going to use the sexual rights framework, expand the human rights framework, for this project, because it makes sense to do so. And so it was fine. It worked. So I don't know what other people do who don't have a sexual rights framework, or the women's framework. Because the human rights framework is very limiting. It is extremely limiting.

Brokers in every region were conscious of different limitations of the human rights framework, and frequently opined that it was only one of many useful tools for LGBT advocacy. As the API Institute suggests, interventions were often built around topical issues in a region – for example, transgender and intersex issues, religious fundamentalisms, or violence against women – that troubled the limitations of a traditionally state-centric human rights framework. In working with local groups on these issues, the aim was generally not to apply existing jurisprudence, but to creatively invoke human rights to make a compelling case against the maltreatment of LGBT individuals.

Communications and Research

Much of IGLHRC's publicly visible advocacy, however, was conducted through the Communications and Research Department in New York. Brokers produced a diverse array of outputs, including action alerts, letters to governments, and reports. Each of these was used for different purposes, but all of them shaped sexual politics by producing and mobilizing particular forms of knowledge about LGBT human rights. While I discuss IGLHRC's role in producing knowledge in greater detail in

Chapter 5, it is worth reviewing here how brokerage shaped the development and use of these tools.

Action Alerts

One tactic that depended heavily on brokerage was the use of action alerts, the standard tool used to call public attention to an issue and mobilize a response. During my fieldwork, IGLHRC had email addresses for 22,000 people, and 12,000 had responded to one or more alerts. Although they existed in various incarnations throughout IGLHRC's history, there was no formal template for how alerts should be designed. Typically, they followed a semi-standardized format that brokers learned by copying previous alerts – namely, a short subject line, the right or rights that had been violated, a description of the incident and any relevant information, a requested action, a list of contacts to whom appeals should be sent, and a sample letter.

Throughout my fieldwork, the utility of action alerts was a topic of frequent discussion, and their use varied depending on the politics of the office. When I arrived, IGLHRC routinely issued action alerts on a range of topics. In the first two months, from early September to early November, three alerts were approved by Clarke and Schultz. In the next three months, from early November until early February, Perle issued nine alerts, a particularly sharp increase given that the office was closed for the holidays for part of this period. In the last eight months, from early February until late September, Cook and Jones were responsible for vetting and approving potential alerts. IGLHRC issued just one alert in this period, regarding a lesbian from Paraguay who was abducted and assaulted by five family members and a family friend with no response from the government. Johnson told me that he felt that alerts "need to be about issues that rise to a certain level… or they need to be about a pattern." He felt that IGLHRC should release no more than two alerts per month; in practice, brokers in New York were conscious that flooding supporters with emails would be counterproductive, and regularly weighed disparate incidents in different countries to decide where they would speak out.

Fluctuations in the focus and number of action alerts under different supervisors suggest how much leeway can be exercised by different individuals in IGLHRC's advocacy. Some programs were deeply skeptical of the impact of action alerts, and rarely used them. As Alizadeh objected in an interview:

> [T]he action alerts are actually a very interesting yet very problematic thing for me… We find this, god knows how we found this email address that doesn't even work half the time, and then we ask people to send an email to the president of Uganda. I don't even know if the president of Uganda has email, but we send an email to the president of Uganda, and five hundred people email him. How do you measure the changes? Does it really change things, or is it to make people feel good about themselves? And if so, how is that impacting our partners? Are we blowing smoke up their ass, or doing something that is really changing things for them? I know I'm being very frank, but that is the truth. Because your partners, even if you think of them as partners, rely on you for change, because they think you have something that they don't have. And if all you have to offer is this nonsense email that nobody reads, and everybody deletes, then how does that make change? Do we have a strong lobby? This is what we don't know.

Other programs experienced pressure in the other direction. Brokers in the LAC Program, in particular, proposed a number of action alerts that were viewed skeptically by brokers in New York. The issues they tackled were not obviously systemic, for example, a single person being murdered or facing expulsion from a school, and it was unclear whether and how international pressure would be a relevant and proportionate response. Nonetheless, partners and regional staff were passionate about producing them, and brokers in New York complied.

Even when the utility of petitions or calls to action was granted, questions remained. One was length. Some brokers, particularly those concerned with response rates, felt that alerts should be brief, engaging, and compelling enough that people would send letters to the designated targets. Others, particularly those with a human rights background, argued that alerts needed to explain what had happened and detail the specific rights that had been violated. Questions of length and depth were implicitly linked to assumptions about whether the primary audience for the alerts was the people who received them via email or the policymakers to whom the many faxes, emails, and letters were being directed. If it was the former, the primary

goal was to get them to actually send a message. If it was the latter, the primary goal was to describe what had been done in such a way that persecution of LGBT persons would be clearly understood to be a human rights violation.

In general, staff felt that action alerts were most appropriate when they were requested by partners on the ground or when they served to publicize abuses that would otherwise be ignored. At the same time, brokers acknowledged other motivations for issuing them, for example, to feel like something was being done, to make IGLHRC's donors and mailing list feel included, and to balance out the focus on particular parts of the world to ensure that sparsely covered countries (like China) received attention. While brokers were critical of any motivation other than the efficacy and impact of the alerts, they frequently weighed these other pressures while planning their advocacy.

The role of others in the network also shaped IGLHRC's practice. Notably, the decline of action alerts in the latter part of my fieldwork may have been linked to the imminent launch of AllOut, an online movement for LGBT equality. AllOut was created by a founder of Avaaz.org, a campaigning website, and gained credibility in February 2010, when Avaaz's petition against Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill was signed over 450,000 times in just two weeks. IGLHRC's own alert from October 2009 had generated less than 1000 faxes to officials in Uganda. Avaaz's petition revived internal discussions about whether alerts were the best use of IGLHRC's time and resources, and whether IGLHRC might still produce alerts that were substantively different and deeper than AllOut's. The shifting use of action alerts was due in part to these debates within IGLHRC about their impact and the possibility that other NGOs were increasingly able to do this kind of advocacy more effectively.

Letters to Governments

One type of intervention that was less visible was IGLHRC's letters to governments. These were usually sent privately, although some were discreetly posted as a link on the sidebar of a country's page on the website. Brokers sent letters when they

believed that a direct appeal to the government would improve a situation or, at the very least, signal that somebody was paying attention, and suspected that this would be more strategic than publicly pressuring the government with an alert.

In the spring of 2010, the processual ambiguity regarding letters came to a head over a three-week period when a letter was being written to President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi. A letter was sent for a number of specific reasons. A variety of state and intergovernmental representatives were aggressively and vocally speaking out against the imprisonment of Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza, a couple arrested for participating in a commitment ceremony, as they approached their sentencing. Brokers at IGLHRC were worried about other violations that were receiving less press, and for which the state could be held directly accountable. Coverage of the iconic couple rarely mentioned, for example, that an LGBT-friendly NGO, the Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP), was raided just weeks before their arrest. There was only fleeting coverage of an activist reportedly arrested for putting up posters proclaiming that "Gay Rights are Human Rights," an elderly woman allegedly expelled from her village for lesbianism, and a man reportedly charged with sodomy. IGLHRC itself had been largely silent on these issues; although I saw scattered reports of the incidents and Jones heard of them from a colleague in Europe, Ukwimi had not heard any reports of them from CEDEP, which could not verify them and did not foreground them in its work with IGLHRC.

When CEDEP did raise concerns about human rights violations that went beyond Chimbalanga and Monjeza's imprisonment, it was over a conference they held on HIV and the human rights of MSM. Police arrived to question participants during the first day of the two-day conference, intimidating many of them enough that they did not return for the rest of the proceedings. The raids and questioning by police suggested that the state was deliberately cracking down on homosexuality, and arguably, more so than in the arrest of the couple, which only occurred after the media sensationalized their ceremony as a gay wedding.

Brokers were obviously concerned for the well-being of the couple. They also worried about the precedent their sentencing could set. If Chimbalanga and Monjeza were sent to prison despite the lack of evidence against them, pre-trial abuses they

suffered, and strong intervention from the international community, it would set a dangerous precedent elsewhere in the region. This was especially true because wa Mutharika was the head of the African Union (AU) at the time, and arguably had the most credibility to speak for the region on the very controversial topic of LGBT rights.

For all of these reasons, IGLHRC opted to write to wa Mutharika directly, signaling that there were NGOs tracking the events in the country beyond the well-publicized trial of Chimbalanga and Monjeza. The process of writing a letter was not well-defined; Jones and Cook both felt that these communications should be produced by regional staff rather than those in New York. In this case, the process involved a considerable amount of back-and-forth between myself in New York and Ukwimi in Cape Town, who was new at IGLHRC and thrust almost immediately into the day-to-day work on the arrests in Malawi. Jones was also involved in the process, overseeing the work that both of us were doing, often simultaneously, to finalize a version that could be sent relatively quickly.

After Ukwimi sent the first draft of the letter from Cape Town, Jones emailed me to ask if Communications had a template for writing letters to governments, or if I could find past letters that I considered exemplary. There was no template; as with other outputs at IGLHRC, the technique was a kind of institutional knowledge that was garnered by copying past versions of outputs and getting feedback from other brokers as it was approved. In compiling and surveying past letters, however, I noted that they shared some common features. The letters typically described the situation, specified the rights that were being violated and the domestic, regional, and international commitments that were being breached, and then proposed clear recommendations for what governments should do to remedy the situation.

Nonetheless, these finished products showed little of the processual work that went into writing letters to governments, which became apparent as Ukwimi and I wrote multiple drafts of the letter simultaneously. The way this was done produced a number of gaps that were arguably evident in any documents written collaboratively from multiple vantage points.

Ukwimi composed the first draft, which expressed concern about wa Mutharika decrying homosexuality as "disgusting" and "un-Malawian," the harassment of conference participants, and the incarceration of Monjeza and Chimbalanga. In his version, Ukwimi cited the non-discrimination provisions of both the African Charter and the ICCPR in full, concluding that "your direct attack on the gay community violates this innate right that the AU and UN pledge to uphold." Ukwimi then cited Article 20 of Malawi's Constitution, which prohibits discrimination, and the Human Rights Committee's ruling in *Toonen v. Australia*, and argued that these incidents violated both domestic and international law. He concluded that "To fulfill its obligations under international law, Malawi must drop any charges against Tionge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza and protect the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, to peaceful assembly and association, and to promote human rights of all people in Malawi including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people."[25]

Upon receiving the draft, Jones forwarded it to me for rewriting. In retrospect, my draft departed from this baseline in a number of ways. It described all three incidents in more detail, then emphasized that they violated rights to privacy, freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and freedoms of assembly, association, opinion, and expression. I first cited provisions of Malawi's Constitution, explaining how Articles 19, 20, 21, 32-35, and 38 were violated by the incidents that had occurred. I then invoked the African Charter, ICCPR, ICESCR, and *Toonen v. Australia* in the broadest of terms. Finally, I made a more specific demand, stating that "We ask you to swiftly and publicly reaffirm the human rights of all Africans – including LGBT Africans – to life, privacy, and freedoms of assembly, association, opinion, and expression. We also ask that you demonstrate your commitment to those rights by investigating police harassment of the recent conference in Liwonge, reprimanding any wrongdoing by the police, releasing Monjeza and Chimbalanga, and repealing all discriminatory laws which target LGBT Malawians and deprive them of their fundamental rights."

[25] The different spellings of Chimbalanga's name are explored in Chapter 5.

My draft was then edited by Jones, who added information on prison conditions such that the letter more closely resembled the detailed documentation produced by mainstream human rights NGOs like HRW and AI, where she had previously worked. Although wa Mutharika's comments were made on April 23, 2010, the back-and-forth editing between Ukwimi, myself, and Jones meant that the letter was not released until May 11, 2010 – a lengthy period that was not uncommon as drafts bounced between those who were liaising directly with partners, those who identified relevant laws and finessed messaging, and those who were ultimately responsible for approving outputs and ensuring they made all the relevant arguments. While Jones produced a series of steps for producing these letters in the future, this process was usually fairly ad hoc depending on the issues and brokers involved.[26] As a broker in Communications observed, brokers were good at formulating guidelines, but far worse at actually applying them. There was always an exception, time constraints, or another reason to work outside those guidelines, and this regularly produced ambiguity, delays, and frustration among those involved in the process.

Reports

One of the most iconic and influential outputs of human rights organizations is the human rights report. The construction of a report involves an economy of knowledge all its own, one that blends research, partnership, publicity, and advocacy in its creation, launch, and use. The ways reports are developed and deployed vary by organization, and their design and presentation legitimates particular kinds of knowledge. As Richard Wilson has argued, reports produced by

[26] The steps were as follows: the primary person drafts the materials, their supervisor edits their work, the primary person incorporates those edits, a draft goes to the Director of Programs and Director of Communications and Research simultaneously, and those Directors or somebody in Communications would liaise with the primary person and work collaboratively until a final draft was produced. In practice, one or more of these parties was often absent or unresponsive, other parties would be brought into the process, or the Executive Director would ask to see and approve the output, usually requiring further edits by one or more parties.

major NGOs tend to reduce intimate violations of the person to "bare facts," stripped of any context and social embeddedness (Wilson 1997b). AI, for example, produces reports with a factual, dispassionate feel, which describe horrifying or traumatic atrocities in the most straightforward way possible. In order to appear neutral and impartial, few adjectives or adverbs are used to convey the suffering of the people whose experiences are presented. While I was told by a broker at HRW that the protocol for constructing reports is far less formulaic and rule-bound than outsiders usually suppose, they almost always include documentation as well as recommendations for the governments or stakeholders in question to remedy the alleged violations. As ethnographic work by former staffers has so vividly described, these too are ideological in the terminology they use, the paradigms they adopt, and the inconsistencies they tacitly paper over (Modirzadeh 2006).

IGLHRC's reports were slightly different, and varied in their origins, process, and purpose even within the organization. During the period of my fieldwork, a number of reports had been proposed, partially finished, and left to languish in different stages of completion. The reports in the pipeline were all developed by brokers prior to the arrival of Cook, Perle, Thomas, or myself, who were charged with revisions, editing, and "getting them out the door." Like *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear: Human Rights Violations and Challenges to the LGBT Movement in Senegal*, which I discuss in Chapter 5, these projects often spanned multiple years, with multiple researchers working on them. Just before my fieldwork began, IGLHRC released *Equal and Indivisible: Crafting Inclusive Shadow Reports for CEDAW*, a guide for groups submitting shadow reports on LBT women's issues to the CEDAW Committee. In addition to *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear*, which was conceptualized, researched, and partially drafted before its author abruptly departed from the Africa Program, six reports remained in the pipeline during my research. They focused on trans people in poverty in the LAC region, trans people in sub-Saharan Africa, LGBT community centers in Africa, blackmail and extortion of LGBT people in Africa, SOGI-based human rights violations in Cameroon, and the challenges for LGBT people in post-disaster contexts, based on interviews conducted during a week-long trip to Haiti in April 2010.

The history of each publication illustrates how personnel changes, institutional priorities, and the likely reception of the reports all shape their development and deployment. The first report, initially issued in Spanish and titled *Trans Latinoamericanas en Situacion de Pobreza Extrema*, was released in May 2009. Under the title *Transgender People Surviving Extreme Poverty*, the English version of the report was the subject of lengthy discussions with partners, who felt strongly about particular terminology – for example, "trans" rather than "transgender" – and asked to remove their names from the translation if their suggestions were not incorporated. Management at IGLHRC concluded that the report was not yet at a publishable standard, and doubted further work would be possible given the sensitive politics of writing and translating the report. At the same time, Perle, who was deeply involved in work at the UN, was reluctant to scrap the report altogether because its introduction was written by the UN's Independent Expert on the Question of Human Rights and Extreme Poverty. Perle believed the introduction was a useful tool which could lend prominence and legitimacy to the issues in the report. Ultimately, Jones and Cook opted to find ways to use the introduction but shelved the report.

Another report on transgender issues, *Voices from Trans Africa*, was equally fraught with difficulties, though there were discussions about it and plans to release it throughout my fieldwork. The report initially emerged from a convening to help define and plot a path forward for the burgeoning transgender movement in Africa. It included stories from trans individuals in Africa and sought to analyze the conditions they faced. During my fieldwork, it was not felt to be at a high enough standard for publication by those in New York, but Mukasa, who helped collect the stories and was a colleague and friend of many of those who contributed, was eager to see it launched and felt IGLHRC needed to publish the report for the sake of those interviewed. When Mukasa unexpectedly left IGLHRC, brokers were unsure how to proceed, and the impetus to release the report was lost.

Johnson, who had initiated many of the reports in the Africa Program, was also eager to see them published. The bulk of the work was done, and as the person who secured funding for the reports, he was eager to show finished products to

funders. Other brokers were less enthusiastic, and doubted whether the reports remained relevant. The report on community centers, for example, was initiated in 2008, when brokers arranged for activists from GALCK to take a study tour of centers in South Africa. Following the study tour, five community centers participated in two conference calls about their operations. IGLHRC hired a consultant to send follow-up questions to participants about the work they were doing, the design of the centers, the populations they served, the programs they offered, and the challenges they faced. A draft was produced by Johnson and two consultants, which then sat for a year before I was tasked to revisit and complete it as a research fellow. By 2010, however, the consultant was no longer working with IGLHRC, and her notes, the recordings of the calls, and other documentation had been lost. My own edits were mostly cosmetic, and involved reorganizing the report into thematic discussions of advocacy, service provision, and community building. After inconclusive discussions about whether the report could be safely released given its detailed descriptions of centers and their work, the report was privately sent to participating centers in October 2010 but never publicly released.

The report on blackmail and extortion of LGBT people in sub-Saharan Africa was also the result of a consultation that Johnson organized, held in Johannesburg in October 2007. The consultation brought lawyers, academics, and activists together to define blackmail and extortion, to survey what was known and what groups were doing to respond, and to commission a series of studies to get some sense of the scope of the problem and how it might be addressed.[27] Chapters were commissioned from researchers in Zimbabwe, Ghana, Cameroon, Malawi, and Nigeria, most of whom had close ties to IGLHRC's partners in the region. The pieces were collected by brokers at the Africa Program and this report, like the others, was added to the backlog of reports given to Clarke. The chapters needed heavy editing, some rewriting, and standardization before they could be published, but this work had stalled since the initial submissions were received. I inherited this as my

[27] As I discuss in Chapter 3, this also involved a redefinition of blackmail and extortion as human rights violations, an active and inventive process of redefining an ill-defined criminal violation within a human rights framework that has almost never addressed it.

primary assignment while in Cape Town, and the volume was published as *Nowhere to Turn: Blackmail and Extortion of LGBT People in Sub-Saharan Africa* in January 2011.

While it is certainly possible to deconstruct the terminology and frameworks used in the report, it is impossible to do this fully and accurately without also understanding the structural pressures under which it was developed and released. The funneling of half-finished and unedited reports from the various regions to New York placed tremendous pressure on Cook, who was tasked with conducting follow-up interviews, research, and fact-checking on a wide variety of topics, editing what was already produced, getting feedback from reviewers, board members, and the partners who participated in the research, arranging for the design of PDFs and negotiating the printing of the final report, and setting up the press releases, publicity, or advocacy that would accompany each release.

In practice, it was difficult to get widespread consensus on any language other than "LGBT" in the reports. Johnson and Jones both told me they disliked the term "sexual minorities" because it implied a "sexual majority" they found problematic. Johnson avoided "LGBTI" because he felt it was inaccurate given the minimal attention IGLHRC paid to intersex issues. The phrase "LGBTI and same-sex practicing," which I proposed for *Nowhere to Turn*, was changed to "LGBT" shortly before the volume went to print. This was partially because it was not the formulation used at the original convening in 2007, but also because it was not a gloss that researchers had used when conducting their surveys and interviews.

I was not involved with two of the reports, which I nonetheless read in different stages and followed as they rose and fell. The first was the report on SOGI-related human rights violations in Cameroon, which was co-written by HRW, IGLHRC, Alternatives-Cameroun and L'Association pour la Défense des Droits des Homosexuels (ADEFHO) (HRW et al. 2010). The NGOs released the report as *Criminalizing Identities: Rights Abuses in Cameroon Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*, published shortly after my departure in late 2010.

The final project had been conceptualized as a potential report for a long time. In my interview with Ettelbrick, she recalled wanting to write a piece on the

way that LGBT people fared after major coups and upheavals, partially in response to reports of targeted killings of gay men in Iraq following the US invasion in 2003. She recalled that this was a project that she, Johnson, and a research fellow had planned to write together, but that the research fellow had not ultimately gotten involved and it had failed to materialize.

The concept was revised after the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010, when Johnson wanted to write a report on how members of a partner organization, SEROVIE, had been affected by the earthquake and overlooked in the humanitarian response. The plan faced strong pushback from Cook, who noted that the backlog of reports was unmanageable, and that more thought needed to be given to which ideas became reports and why. During the first year of Cook's tenure, her priority was finishing the existing, half-finished reports so brokers could fully think through the rationale, methodology, and advocacy strategy for any future reports. As it was, the reports being produced had all been commissioned, researched, and drafted years earlier, and brokers were often unsure of their relevance to the work IGLHRC was now doing.

At the end of my fieldwork, the report was in limbo. Johnson visited Haiti and wanted to release some tangible output from the trip, whether in the form of a full report or a white paper on the topic of LGBT populations in the face of social upheaval. The intern who accompanied him on the trip, Samara Fox, was also invested in seeing the research published. Fox was leaving IGLHRC to spend a summer working for the Special Rapporteur on Health in Mumbai and planned to focus on health and human rights during her JD at Harvard Law School, and wanted to have a published piece she could point to in that field. Nevertheless, Cook effectively vetoed any intensive work on the project until after the backlog of old, unfinished reports had been dealt with. When the Haiti Report was most topical, Cook and I were racing to complete the community centers report and *Nowhere to Turn* before I left IGLHRC, and Jones and Kilonzo were under pressure from HRW and other NGOs to finalize their portion of the report on Cameroon. Under those circumstances, it was not until late March 2011 that the findings were released in the form of a briefing paper produced in conjunction with SEROVIE in Haiti. The

history of this report, like others, hints at the complex blend of personal, institutional, and logistical factors that brokers negotiate which are rarely apparent to outsiders.

Development

The other aspect of brokers' work was development, which had subtle but marked effects on IGLHRC's operation as a whole. IGLHRC's work was funded by a $2 million budget, and a great deal depended on the performance of the two full-time brokers who fundraised for its work.

As noted in Chapter 1, IGLHRC's revenue has increasingly been raised through foundation grants, to the point that these made up 77% of the budget for fiscal year 2011. This sparked internal conversations at IGLHRC. On the one hand, the emphasis on foundation grants made IGLHRC's budget somewhat regular and predictable. Many donors funded a range of LGBT organizations, and some were increasingly involved in strategizing around how funds could be best spent. On the other hand, some brokers and board members at IGLHRC felt that more attention needed to be paid to supporters, who remained largely untapped as a donor base. Brokers used direct mail appeals, house parties, and other tactics to reach individual supporters. Ampatuan and Smith also sought to rebuild a grassroots donor base with the Global Dignity Fund, through which small donors would be charged a monthly sum of $10 or more to support IGLHRC's work.

In general, however, the historical shift toward foundation funding was such that forgoing that funding would be impossible in the short term, and brokers continued to seek large grants to fund their work. Often, this was done by engaging donors and seeking ways to expand relationships into new initiatives like the MENA Program. At times, however, it was done by pursuing new sources of funding and, at times, proposing new programs. In these instances, IGLHRC's projects in particular areas were partially or wholly contingent on the success of funding proposals. At least two of these, a massive project to address SOGI-related persecution as a form of torture and a training packet on LGBT rights and HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa,

were proposed during my fieldwork. Both were ultimately unsuccessful, and the projects were not realized as a result. While IGLHRC's core support from foundations meant that it did not have to chase money to operate, brokers nonetheless engaged in identifying and developing proposals that would have moved IGLHRC into new areas and given it different emphases in its work.

E. Conclusion

In all of this work, it is evident that advocacy was not simply the mechanical pursuit of a formulaic agenda, but was highly contingent on the dynamics of an organization and the backgrounds and priorities of the brokers who animated it. There is a tendency in discussions of human rights NGOs to treat them as agentive entities, which act and speak to bring about sociopolitical change. This is not inaccurate; this is how IGLHRC sought to portray itself to the world and how it was often perceived by outsiders. To understand how and why IGLHRC intervened in particular ways, however, it is helpful to recognize that the organization also functioned as a dynamic arena, populated by brokers who brought their own backgrounds, politics, and tactics into their work. The shape of that arena, the people who inhabited it, and their interactions all affected IGLHRC's advocacy and, in some small way, how the broader category of LGBT human rights has taken shape. IGLHRC's work still heavily depended on the strengths and weaknesses of individual staff members negotiating the routine challenges of a small NGO with a large mandate but relatively little power. Recognizing the ambiguity and dynamism this generates is critical to understanding how LGBT human rights are emerging transnationally.

CHAPTER THREE: IGLHRC as an LGBT Human Rights Organization

A. Introduction

When asked about its mission, brokers routinely referred to IGLHRC as an "LGBT human rights organization," a formulation that also appeared in its promotional and advocacy materials. While this seems self-evidently descriptive, the conjunction of these two qualifiers – a focus on LGBT people on one hand, and the use of the human rights framework on the other – set IGLHRC apart from most other NGOs. While human rights NGOs like AI and HRW actively engaged with LGBT issues, this work was only part of a larger institutional apparatus devoted to protecting and promoting human rights. Conversely, the Human Rights Campaign in the US, Stonewall in the UK, and other nationally-based NGOs overwhelmingly focused on domestic LGBT advocacy. IGLHRC remained the largest transnational NGO specifically calling itself an LGBT human rights organization and working on issues affecting LGBT and same-sex practicing people using a human rights toolkit.

By specifying a constituency and an approach, this framing circumscribed the advocacy undertaken by brokers at IGLHRC. Brokers openly acknowledged the limitations of the human rights framework and, at different times, found their work constrained by a style of gay and lesbian politics that largely originated in the North. Often, brokers adopted a sexual rights framework, which foregrounded bodily autonomy and violations by non-state actors to counter the historical blindnesses of human rights approaches. This gave brokers the ability to engage in advocacy that fit comfortably in neither the traditional human rights framework nor the regnant politics of Euro-American LGBT movements. At times, however, brokers fell back on these dominant models, focusing on LGBT populations and promoting the most basic and widely accepted human rights.

IGLHRC publicly advocated "Human Rights for Everyone, Everywhere." In practice, however, brokers had to determine who their partners would be, which cases merited attention and intervention, and where resources, time, and energy should be spent. Often, they were guided by the experiential needs of LGBT and same-sex practicing people, which were not always easily situated within the traditional confines of the human rights framework. In practice, advocacy forced brokers to regularly navigate these tensions and figure out ways to frame and pursue agendas (Hertzfeld 1992: 69).

How did understandings of IGLHRC's mandate affect how brokers went about constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing particular norms and rules? In this chapter, I look at what it meant for brokers to define IGLHRC as an LGBT human rights organization. I explore the ways they incorporated, adjusted, and resisted aspects of both LGBT politics and traditional human rights praxis in their work. I suggest that hybridizing frameworks has not only encouraged creativity and innovation, but subtly shaped the construction of LGBT human rights as a category.

B. Universality in Mainstream Human Rights Advocacy

With the UDHR in 1948, diplomats at the newly-created UN sought to codify a set of rights that all people were supposed to enjoy by virtue of their humanity. In anthropology, this fueled protracted debates about the universality and specificity of legal norms, rules, and entitlements. Concerns were raised as early as 1947, when the Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) issued its "Statement on Human Rights," principally authored by Melville Herskovits. The Statement, crafted in response to the drafting of the UDHR, objected to the notion of universal ethical or moral principles by which all cultures could be judged and governed:

> Ideas of right and wrong, good and evil, are found in all societies, though they differ in their expression among different peoples. What is held to be a human right in one society may be regarded as anti-social by another people, or by the same people in a different period of their history. The saint

> of one epoch would at a later time be confined as a man not fitted to cope with reality. Even the nature of the physical world, the colors we see, the sounds we hear, are conditioned by the language we speak, which is part of the culture into which we are born… The rights of Man in the Twentieth Century cannot be circumscribed by the standards of any single culture, or be dictated by the aspirations of any single people. Such a document will lead to frustration, not realization of the personalities of vast numbers of human beings. (Executive Board of the AAA 1947: 542-543)

A commitment to universality necessarily underlies the human rights project; human rights are the entitlements persons enjoy by virtue of being human. It is widely recognized that human rights are products of specific historical trajectories, however, and resonate more strongly in some contexts than others. Whether they should is an open question which has produced distinctive understandings of the universality of human rights (Josephides 2003: 233). Strong proponents insist that human rights are normatively desirable, and provide a baseline to which states should be held legally and morally accountable. Others have sought universal or near-universal foundations for human rights in the commonalities of different traditions of ethics and justice, from retribution and proportionality to human dignity (Renteln 1990; An-Na'im 1992). Still others acknowledge cultural specificity, but insist that very basic rights cannot be abrogated in the name of cultural difference in any nominally democratic or liberal polity (Chanock 2002: 60-61). Each approach underlines core entitlements that should be enjoyed by virtue of being human.

Although human rights are purportedly universal, debates have regularly arisen as advocates specify which populations they protect and how. Efforts by and for women, children, indigenous persons, disabled persons, migrants, refugees, various ethnic, national, and religious groups, and, of course, LGBT persons have all had complex effects on the universality of human rights. On one hand, these interventions have bolstered universality by turning to the supra-national mechanisms of regional or international law as ultimate arbiters of justice. The willingness of human rights defenders to circumvent their community or state demonstrates the power of standards that transcend belonging or citizenship to rest instead on one's humanity. On the other hand, interventions on behalf of

marginalized groups have caused skeptical governments to balk at what they perceive as human rights gone amok. As defenders insist that states respect the human rights of aliens, criminals, prisoners, terrorists, sex workers, and LGBT persons, officials have drawn distinctions between what they consider legitimate and illegitimate rights claims. In countries where same-sex activity is criminalized, they typically insist that same-sex practicing persons surrender their rights by violating the laws of the polity. Elsewhere, they assert that recognizing the rights of LGBT persons necessarily infringes on the rights of others, or that rights themselves must be weighed against larger responsibilities to family, faith, or the nation.

With time, the invocation of universal human rights by marginalized groups has subtly expanded human rights jurisprudence. Interventions by those who are not male, heterosexual, able-bodied, or members of dominant religious or ethnic groups have stressed that traditional human rights protections – for individuals, at risk from and as citizens of the state, whose civil and political rights are paramount – fail to safeguard those who are part of persistently marginalized groups, those who face mistreatment by their family, community, or other non-state actors, and those who consider access to shelter, education, and work at least as important as assembling or voicing opinions (wa Mutua 1995-1996; Falk 2000: 127). By rooting claims in the lived experiences of women, children, disabled persons, indigenous persons, and minority groups, advocates have brought new concerns to the attention of human rights practitioners and organizations, and have drawn on the human rights framework for a more expansive understanding of injustice than that which is strictly prohibited by the UDHR.

Of course, it is far from agreed-upon that aspects of humanity like childhood, indigeneity, disability, or SOGI are cross-culturally recognizable, much less that groups marginalized on these grounds should be protected rather than controlled for the good of state and society. Questions of specificity underlie debates about whether human rights defenders in the North can legitimately or helpfully advocate on behalf of those in the South (Mohanty 1991). Although LGBT rights are not directly analogous to women's, children's, or indigenous rights, their defenders have similarly struggled with questions of representation, legitimacy, and responsibility.

Brokers regularly encountered these tensions as they struggled to define a constituency and determine what the human rights framework enabled them to demand on its behalf.

Since 1990, brokers at IGLHRC have grappled with questions about who their constituency included and what form the organization's advocacy would take. During my fieldwork, the organization's title was a source of both pride and frustration. IGLHRC had amassed a tremendous amount of name recognition, authority, and credibility, which facilitated much of the work that brokers undertook. At the same time, brokers were conscious of the limitations placed upon them by their identification with a gay and lesbian constituency and their grounding in the human rights framework. In the sections that follow, I look at how IGLHRC's title introduced specific approaches into its programming and advocacy, how staff acknowledged the weaknesses and limitations of these approaches, and how these approaches were productively hybridized to enable innovative interventions.

C. Whose Rights? Negotiating the Complexities of Sexual Politics

Since its inception, IGLHRC has promoted the rights of gay and lesbian persons at risk of marginalization or ill-treatment. The boundaries of this constituency have shifted over the years, influenced both by evolving understandings of gender and sexuality and dominant trends in domestic and transnational LGBT movements. In this section, I look at how brokers at IGLHRC distinguished who they did and did not defend, both in the theoretical understandings that grounded their work and in the practical considerations that shaped how different labels and approaches might be deployed.

Brokers at IGLHRC were conscious of the limitations of mainstream LGBT politics. They worried that being known as "gay and lesbian" limited the work they were able to do, both with queer populations who did not fit within those categories and in contexts where that level of visibility was dangerous. As Johnson commented on the name:

> I think our name has a lot of currency, as the name of any group that's been around for twenty years does, so I think it would be a mistake to abandon it, but there may be ways to tweak it – adding a coda, or a subtitle, you know. I'm not sure yet, but I'm conscious of the fact that, one, our name gets us stopped at the airport. Two, there may be groups that are uncomfortable working with a group that's as visible as ours. And three, we're not as inclusive of transgender or bisexual individuals in our name. So maybe there need to be some shifts there.

Like Johnson, brokers were uniformly quick to point out that "gay and lesbian" did not accurately describe the populations on whose behalf IGLHRC conducts its programming and advocacy. Like many gay and lesbian non-profits founded in the late 1980s and early 1990s, IGLHRC's title omitted bisexual and transgender persons, who are otherwise visible in the "LGBT" acronym that brokers typically used in their work. Notably, brokers at IGLHRC were also quick to point out that even "LGBT" was not necessarily fully inclusive of the forms of sexual subjectivity they sought to represent. As Khan recalled of her tenure in the early 2000s:

> I think we certainly had a broader analysis around lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, though that was not and still isn't really reflected in the name. But that was our focus in some ways, and we understood that the identities, that sort of framework of LGBT, does not resonate around the world. So we were increasingly using a sexual rights framework that was one that encompassed the LGBT identities, but also would include people who didn't use that identity, but maybe identified themselves as men who have sex with men, or women who have sex with women, but did not think of themselves as lesbian or gay.

Johnson reiterated this point, echoing that IGLHRC's interventions were not limited to those who self-identified as LGBT:

> I think the important thing is that we don't believe… that the only people that we're working for or talking about are LGBT people. That there's a whole bunch of people on whose behalf we need to be concerned who aren't LGBT. To give you a quick example, I was in a bar in Joburg one night with a guy who's from Nigeria, married to a woman in Nigeria, married to a woman in South Africa, mainly for his papers, engaging in sex work with men, you know, engaging with men for sex for fun, in a bar, that is ostensibly gay, but would probably never identify itself as a gay bar so that it can stay open in that part of Joburg without too much violence. And I said to myself, what's the relevance of calling this guy gay, or bi, or anything like that? It's

> irrelevant in this circumstance. And today, he's involved in one set of behaviors, next year, he may be involved in a completely different set, based on choice, necessity, finance, you know, political realities, location. So as long as we recognize that while our main stakeholders and those with whom we work might be those people who choose to define as LGBT, you know, those are likely to be the activists, the people who run organizations, but not even always in that case… I think LGBT for us, it's just a lens. It may not have been when we started out, it really was much more of that identity and we were working with people who claimed and operated under that identity, but now, I think it's much more of a lens through which we see ourselves. You know, we used to refer to ourselves much more as a sexual rights organization, and I don't know if you've noticed this, but I try to keep that language alive. But we don't really subscribe to it the way we used to. And I think that was one of the ways in which we rose up above our name, and above LGBT identity, by identifying with a much broader and inclusive sexual rights movement.

Both Khan's and Johnson's assessments highlight that identity politics were not always helpful, and could actually obscure the complex array of factors involved in any contextual understanding of sex and sexuality. A number of cases that IGLHRC engaged with during my fieldwork were not self-evidently about LGBT people, but about human rights violations that persons experienced because they transgressed gender norms, engaged or were suspected to engage in same-sex activity, or simply advocated for the rights of LGBT persons. In interviews, every Executive Director of IGLHRC, from its founding to the present, highlighted the relevance of a sexual rights framework that is not predicated on identity, but on the dignity and bodily autonomy of all persons.

In spite of this embrace of a wider sexual rights framework, however, IGLHRC's name and mission regularly functioned to restrict the scope of its work. Although different brokers sought to expand IGLHRC's programs and advocacy, their efforts were routinely deemed to be peripheral to, or outside the scope of, the mandate of an LGBT organization. Precisely what this mandate implicitly included is illuminated by looking at ongoing debates where it became salient for brokers.

"LGBT" and the Origins and Specificity of Sexual Identity Politics

IGLHRC's geographical and historical roots grounded its staff, board, and supporters in a particular epistemology of sexual subjectivity. A number of scholars have charted the growth of sexual identity politics in the North, particularly the US, and their global diffusion. As a result of these processes, there are discourses, icons, and goals that are broadly recognizable hallmarks of a transnational LGBT movement. Among the most basic underpinnings of "Global Gay" identity are identity politics that separate LGBT persons from heterosexual or cisgender persons and the presumption that SOGI are stable, meaningful parts of human selfhood (Serano 2007: 12; Gross 2007; Waites 2009).[28] Even where local specificity prevails, a number of tropes in Northern LGBT movements have been appropriated transnationally, for example, the idea of "coming out" and variations like "unmasking" or "unfurling one's cape" (Chabot and Duyvendak 2002: 711-712; T. Wright 2000: 92-94, 96; Chao 2002: 382; Murray 2000: 63-64; Garcia and Remoto 1994). Commemorations of New York's Stonewall Riots in 1969 have diffused around the globe to the extent that virtually every major metropole has an annual march or parade to celebrate Pride, which prominently feature symbols like the pink triangle or the rainbow (Altman 1996). While these have distinctive resonances and have often been vernacularized by activists operating in different contexts, they have also contributed to the visibility of a transnational LGBT movement. Of its hallmarks, it is perhaps the acronym "LGBT" itself which has most aggressively spread across the globe.

The uncritical adoption of LGBT agendas that take the premises and goals of Northern movements for granted has drawn criticism from activists and academics alike. This includes the risky assignation of labels like "gay" and "lesbian" to those who may not adopt them themselves (Massad 2002, 2007; S. Long 2009), the

[28] Julia Serano defines "cissexual" as "people who are not transsexual and who have only ever experienced their subconscious and physical sexes as being aligned." The terms "cisgender" and "cissexual" were coined by transgender and transsexual activists who drew on the vocabulary of molecular chemistry, where molecules are held together with either cis- or trans- bonds.

pursuit of legislative and judicial victories at the expense of sociocultural change, and the valorization of goals that will likely reinforce other social inequalities (SRLP 2009). The reproduction of Northern LGBT agendas is not only controversial because they emphasize identity politics, but because of the broader politics they replicate and legitimate.

The words "gay and lesbian" in IGLHRC's name conjure up a specific epistemology and agenda with historical roots in US LGBT movements. In many ways, these did in fact shape IGLHRC's praxis. Brokers focused primarily on LGBT people, used a rights-based strategy to secure formal protections from governmental and intergovernmental bodies, and fought for recognizable goals like decriminalization, freedom from persecution and violence, non-discrimination laws, freedoms of expression, assembly, and speech, and recognition by the state. For brokers, the most resonant model of human sexuality and sexual politics was one that originated in the North and widely globalized. Nonetheless, brokers were very conscious of the limitations of these models, and actively sought to expand them in their work. Where brokers positioned themselves in this milieu – being familiar with the terms and epistemological bases of LGBT identity and community, but consciously embracing a more open-ended model of human sexuality and sexual politics that was not so firmly rooted in the North – was considerably more complicated than their identity politics might suggest.

While brokers used the LGBT acronym and viewed this as an expansive and flexible, if not neutral, umbrella term for those marginalized because of their sexual identity, practices, or affiliations, there has also been a shift away from identity politics that was evident at IGLHRC. It was rare for brokers to refer to a person as "gay" unless that person was known to be publicly self-identified as such. While this was not always the case in private conversation, this principle was taken very seriously wherever public statements were concerned. Brokers occasionally referred to people as "LGBT" if they were in some way queer but their specific identification were unknown, and it was not at all uncommon for brokers to talk about the LGBT *movement* in a particular country, regardless of whether or not the known leaders of organizations in that country specifically identified as LGBT.

Brokers might not have been comfortable identifying a particular person as LGBT, but presumed that there were LGBT persons in a country, and that those persons were at risk of human rights violations.

The "LGBT" moniker was regularly used by every broker at IGLHRC and tended to be the identifier of choice in their public outputs. Potential alternatives were considerably more controversial and sporadically used. In some instances, however, these were employed to limit adherence to identity politics and maximize the neutrality and transnational applicability of IGLHRC's reach, a move fraught with political implications of its own.

Constructing a Basis for Universality: Sexual Minorities, SOGI, MSM and WSW, and Intersex and Queer People

While "LGBT" had become the standard gloss for the constituencies of most domestic organizations in the US, brokers at IGLHRC worked across a number of political domains and found alternative framings useful at different times. As Perle commented to me one afternoon, "Sometimes, it's about identity, and sometimes it's really not." Brokers frequently worked on cases where the persons involved did not necessarily identify as LGBT or queer, but were persecuted for behaving or organizing in ways that were deemed unacceptable by those around them. It thus proved difficult, if not impossible, to do transnational human rights work using a single lens for understanding sexuality.

The limited applicability of identity politics spawned a number of strategies used by transnational NGOs to be maximally inclusive. For a long time, the term "sexual minority" was used to describe those who may or may not identify as LGBT, but are subject to policing because of their sexuality. As Jack Donnelly noted, the term was broadly inclusive, "being open to any group (previously, now, or in the future) stigmatized or despised as a result of sexual orientation, identity, or behavior… Furthermore, the language of minorities explicitly focuses our attention on the issue of discrimination, and at least the possibility of political action to eliminate it" (J. Donnelly 2003: 229).

During my fieldwork, however, upper management at IGLHRC was largely reluctant to use the term and actively scrubbed it from press releases and outputs. When it was publicly used, this was done reservedly; when Johnson referred to sexual minorities to describe the diversity of queer populations in Africa at a briefing at the US Congress, he made air quotes around the term to demonstrate his reservations. As Jones put it in an interview:

> There are places where it's not possible to say we do LGBT work, and so we need another entry point. We could use another framework, but any framework has its limitations. I mean, for a while you heard a lot about sexual minorities, which thankfully, we hear a little less of today. But that, to me, is not particularly appealing, because I don't want to reduce us to our sexualities. And I also don't want to construct us as always being sort of oppositional to another, or put the emphasis on a kind of minority identity, which suggests there is a majoritarian set of behaviors – which actually, when you talk about sexuality, is a debatable point. There's lots of shades of grey, at the very least.

In human rights networks, a popular alternative was to talk about those marginalized on the basis of SOGI. The concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity are categorical; like race, religion, sex, nationality, or other enumerated categories of non-discrimination law, they encompass majorities and minorities alike. SOGI presumes universally relevant aspects of personhood – that everybody has a sexual orientation and a gender identity – but allowed brokers to tactically avoid ascribing any *specific* orientation or identity. By discussing a person's "real or perceived" SOGI, brokers could remain agnostic about a person's actual attractions or identifications.

While "SOGI" was helpful, it often proved unwieldy in practice. Firstly, SOGI was difficult to use in shorthand references to actual people. It was categorical, and had to be couched in formulations like "people marginalized on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity." This was plausible at the UN, but far harder to do in press releases and interviews. Secondly, SOGI primarily functioned in the negative. It was easy to talk about those marginalized on the basis of SOGI, but much rarer to hear people talk about people *united* by SOGI, or to identify forms of

commonality among them. While this language was usefully broad for contexts like the UN, it was not particularly descriptive of the day-to-day work of activists working to build domestic and transnational communities. Finally, and perhaps most persuasively, SOGI did not discretely define *which* sexual orientations and gender identities it was referring to. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick notes in *Epistemology of the Closet* that sexual orientation is typically understood to refer to the gender of one's sexual or romantic object rather than other aspects of people or things to which one might be sexually oriented (Sedgwick 1990: 35). As I describe in Chapter 6, IGLHRC's use of "SOGI" to be as inclusive as possible became something of a liability when Egypt regularly insisted at the UN that "SOGI" would also protect sexual orientations like pedophilia, necrophilia, and zoophilia (TVC n.d.). Brokers continued to refer to "SOGI," but some frustrated supporters began to suggest that states might be more supportive of rights for a narrower, more familiar category of "LGBT people."

Other critics of identity-based classification have long suggested that transnational advocacy would be better served by a focus on sexual behavior (Katyal 2002). This has been partially realized by public health practitioners who use "MSM" and "WSW" to highlight contingency and avoid the connotations associated with "homosexuality" or "LGBT."

The adoption of "MSM" and "WSW," or the gender-neutral "same-sex practicing," was difficult at IGLHRC for a number of reasons. Most obviously, brokers did not know whether an activist or person facing human rights violations was sexually active, or who that person was sexually active with. Often, brokers also did not know the gender identity of the person in question, and whether they actually identified as a man or woman at all, something that was particularly difficult in areas where transgender movements were young or non-existent. In many contexts, "gay" was locally understood to mean a male-bodied person who was effeminate or female-identified, where "lesbian," "tomboy," or other emic terms were understood to mean a female-bodied person who was masculine or male-identified. For public health professionals who dealt specifically with sexual behavior, these terms were not necessarily impossible to work with. For human

rights professionals who did not always know who they were working with or how they and their real or potential partners identified, such terms were rife with potentially problematic assumptions. Importantly, they also failed to resonate with brokers as a result of their own cultural contexts. Jones, for example, commented that the behavioral descriptor "homosexual" had archaic, clinical connotations that she instinctively disliked.

Some brokers at IGLHRC also expressed concern that terms like "MSM" and "WSW" erased forms of identification that activists in particular *did* find deeply meaningful, including their ability to be recognized as LGBT (Young and Meyer 2005). The tactical use of behavioral terms has been particularly widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, where activists have used the prevalence of HIV among MSM to press for the decriminalization of same-sex activity and the improvement of services to that population. As Kilonzo noted in an interview:

> There's a discomfort that has been voiced, and I share it deeply, that HIV resources are… stripping people of their identity, because you end up using words like MSM, WSW instead of LGBT for various political reasons… At the end of the day, if countries still fail to recognize that the rights of LGBT are at stake, and they're only interested in men who have sex with men, then you're reduced to sex, and your life is oriented around having sex. Or as men, or as women, so what happens to the trans people? And even to gay people or lesbian people, their lives are not just sex only. There's a lot more in the package. It's your whole identity. It's your visibility… It's being hidden now within the discussion of MSM, and for me, that's a bigger loss than not having MSM at all or not having the resources at all. Because the working of governments has been to acknowledge that there is a certain degree of resources that are needed to address HIV in terms of men who have sex with men, but they have totally refused to acknowledge that there is an LGBT community in their country, which, to me, is the worst loss.

As Kilonzo suggests, terms like MSM and WSW have limitations of their own, including their dependence on a binary gender system that has been roundly criticized by transgender activists. As bisexual and transgender people have mobilized to expand the focus of gay and lesbian organizations, "LGBT" has come to connote a wide range of genders and sexualities that make it more expansive and provisional than "gay and lesbian" alone. These are among the reasons that, despite

its narrowness and roots in the North, “LGBT" has become the *de rigueur* term in transnational advocacy.

Other movements globally have continued to expand this acronym, which IGLHRC has been reluctant to do. Particularly in Africa, “LGBT” has been replaced by “LGBTI” in recognition of intersex people and the relevance of their issues to sexual rights movements. The term “queer,” which paradoxically functions as both an anti-identitarian adjective for subversive behavior and an umbrella term for subversive identities, has also been used independently or appended to make the acronym “LGBTQ.”

Brokers at IGLHRC use these terms conversationally, but have resisted their institutional adoption, albeit for different reasons. Brokers occasionally appended the “I” when it was immediately relevant or when working with self-identified LGBTI groups, but because intersex issues were rarely the explicit focus of IGLHRC’s work, Johnson maintained that it was disingenuous to promote IGLHRC as an LGBTI organization. IGLHRC was not oblivious or hostile to intersex issues; it produced internal discussion papers on trans and intersex advocacy, and the LAC Program devoted its Activist Institute to these topics in 2005. Still, it did little to explicitly focus on intersex issues the way that it did with gay, lesbian, and transgender issues. While most of the brokers in New York used the term “queer” quite frequently – indeed, many identified as such – they rarely appended it to the LGBT acronym. It was scarcely used by groups that IGLHRC worked with in the human rights arena, whether NGOs or governments, and brokers saw little point in appending it to an acronym that was already felt to be flexible and provisional.

In light of these alternatives and the limitations surrounding their use, brokers at IGLHRC primarily operated on behalf of a constituency they glossed as “LGBT.” Of course, this was not always true; brokers used “MSM, “WSW” or “SOGI” in contexts where behavioral or categorical classifications were preferable. They recognized that “LGBT” was identity-based and historically specific, but deemed it more inclusive and empowering than potential alternatives. “LGBT” also had the benefit of being widely recognizable to partners around the globe, who overwhelmingly used the acronym or variants thereof in their own descriptions of

their work. Following their lead, brokers primarily used "LGBT" to describe groups and movements that self-identified as such, but were careful about that terminology when talking about specific incidents and individuals.

The Boundaries of "LGBT" Issues: Adultery, Sex Work, and Public Sex

As comments from past Executive Directors have suggested, IGLHRC's advocacy was occasionally characterized not simply in terms of human rights, but specifically in terms of sexual rights. In their scholarship, feminist and women's rights advocates theorize sexual rights as a subset of human rights that takes issue with, and seeks to correct, the presumptive maleness of the human rights project. The concept of sexual rights has been elaborated over the past decade to include a wide range of rights and autonomy over one's own body, sexuality, and reproductive capacity. Sexual rights advocates highlight violations of basic freedoms and capabilities by families, communities, and non-state actors, as well as differential access to resources and controls over bodily integrity through laws and norms that disproportionately affect women and girls (Petchesky 2000). Brokers working on the human rights of LGBT people have situated their advocacy within this framework, stressing that sex between consenting adults and the freedom to express one's gender identity should be understood as part of the sexual rights project.

At IGLHRC, brokers found sexual rights approaches especially helpful for two reasons; firstly, they offered a corrective to limitations of the traditional human rights framework, and secondly, they offered a helpful platform on which to find common cause with brokers working in other movements. The importance of the sexual rights framework was heavily stressed by brokers who had been active in feminist or women's rights movements prior to their work at IGLHRC. Ettelbrick, for example, stressed that:

> I think feminism has brought a really important piece to the idea of human rights, and defining them in the context of sexual rights, in which there are

> traditions and cultures around sexuality in particular that tend to abuse people based on certain aspects of their lives. It's around gender, it's around sexual orientation, it's around sexual behavior, it's double standards, it's a whole lot of things. That, I think, is a framework we needed to create to get out of the state versus the individual action and get more into the social norms that define the lives of women and gay people, et cetera.

Ettelbrick's comments highlight one critical component of sexual rights approaches, which is their insistence on the state's responsibility to address violations by non-state actors. A second component, the broad resonance of sexual rights and bodily autonomy, was perhaps best described by Alizadeh:

> [With human rights, you] are talking about a very specific framework that works in the West, and in some contexts also may be relevant, but in others is not. So there are countries in the region, they decided they don't want to talk about gay rights, they want to talk about civil society, personal space, basically. That's the hot debate in Morocco; they want to talk about "personal rights," because they feel that this is a better framework. There are models they prefer to talk about, basically, sexual rights, but not LGBT rights. There are other countries where you talk about punishments for crimes and what that means, like legal reforms. And then you have other activists who have chosen to go use a medical framework. Now, whatever works for them, this is my view. If you feel your way of thinking provides enough protection and support – there are two factors, protection from the government and the mob that's waiting for you and support from civil society – then I think you have to use that discourse. And it's not my job to tell people, oh, well, then you're irrelevant, because you don't work within my framework. Who am I to tell them? I mean, how valid is my framework to begin with?

This kind of flexibility was not uncommon, and brokers routinely incorporated other frameworks or more expansive understandings of human rights into their advocacy. The sexual rights framework in particular helped brokers find commonality with movements working on women's rights, HIV/AIDS, sexual health, reproductive rights, sex work, and other related issues.

In practice, however, brokers nonetheless made distinctions between sexual rights that fit within their understanding of IGLHRC's mandate and those they considered themselves unable to deal with. Although these were not laid out in writing, they were often insisted upon in practice.

The most obvious distinction drawn by brokers was that their advocacy and programming almost always focused on violations against those who were either not heterosexual or not gender conforming. Laws regulating heterosexual ages of consent, premarital sex, restrictions on partners within marriage, adultery, polygamy and polygyny, divorce, and the rights of widows or widowers were never the primary concern at IGLHRC during the period of my fieldwork, either privately or in its public outputs. Whether the focus was on LGBT persons in particular or on SOGI more broadly, it did not practically include restrictions on heterosexuals who were recognizably male or female.

Even where a wider perspective might be taken, the line between LGBT and other issues was typically drawn eventually, either by program staff or by management in New York. One example was IGLHRC's response to the adultery law in Aceh, Indonesia, which was revised on September 14, 2009. The update posted on IGLHRC's website represented a rare instance of other forms of sexual rights violations being raised as cause for concern (IGLHRC 2009a). In large part, this was due to the insistence of Poore, who crafted the statement and consciously sought to go beyond the issues affecting LGBT people directly. As she recalled:

> I think that usually, whenever there's a backlash, the backlash hits many people simultaneously. Say if it's a law, or say if it's an enforcement of a policy, it has to do with autonomy. And when you talk about autonomy, it doesn't only affect LGBT people. It usually affects women, it usually affects people who are not following the prescribed codes of behavior, whatever it is, you know, having one partner, or having sex within marriage, or drinking alcohol, or smoking, all of those kinds of things. That law is going to hit people, right? Sometimes, I think that what IGLHRC does is we get so focused on LGBT rights, you know, SOGI, that we don't realize that… Let me give an example: the Aceh situation, the adultery law. Now, when you look at that law, it's a horrible law. True, they have now included homosexuality as an act of adultery, therefore punishable under Sharia. And they consider it premarital sex, because you're having – [laughing] I don't know *how* they come up with this stuff – *pre*marital sex, so therefore, you will come under the category of heterosexual premarital sex, which is whipping, and jail, and fines. A hundred lashes with a cane. But if you're heterosexual, and you commit adultery, forget about the caning and all of that, you get stoned to death. And so, you know, it became a little frustrating for me when I was working on that thing, to get all, to get so focused on homosexuality. Because I'm like, heck, if you're a heterosexual, you're going to be stoned to death!

> We should be actually fighting with them to get rid of the law! And that's what they were doing in Aceh…
>
> I was troubled by that, you know, I was really troubled… I never wanted to work on gay rights, you know. In fact, I feel a bit strange. And the way that I do my work is to not think about it as gay rights. I'm not working on SOGI rights, I'm actually working on all of the rights. I'm working on the fact that all these other rights are taken away, simply because somebody at the very basic level is not given this right. That's how it makes sense to me. That you feel entitled to take away housing, and take away safety, and discriminate, and violate, and do all kinds of stuff, simply because you feel this person is not human and therefore has no rights. That's it. That makes sense to me. But in this country, for instance, in the US, this whole push for these identity-based rights, that is very, a little bit sickening to me, actually.

Poore's reticence about IGLHRC's framework was one that was voiced to some extent by virtually every broker at the organization. Brokers at IGLHRC were engaged in broader struggles for bodily autonomy, sexual health, and reproductive rights, and many of them did regularly invoke "sexual rights" to protest other forms of bodily control. When asked about the personal politics of brokers at IGLHRC, Poore agreed that the sexual rights framework was one that people felt to be helpful, but failed for a variety of reasons to put into practice:

> I think IGLHRC has the framework, but we don't practice it so much. We don't have it in our culture, in our organizational culture. We're a little too focused on the LGBT stuff. And then, when you bring it up, people will say, well, that's because we're an LGBT organization. And I'm like, but we're not. We're a human rights organization. Yes, we are defending the human rights of LGBT people, but does that mean that we're an LGBT organization? I find that there is a distinction there. So then the whole thing is, well, we can't be everything to everybody, and we can't do everything, and we can't – you know, this is what our funders fund us for. It's like any kind of justifications to not think cross-issue, to think intersectionally. I think it'll make us stronger, you know. Heck, that's what people on the ground are telling us in Asia. The Japanese lesbians are saying, we have to work with other movements, because we're trying to push this. Hong Kong people are saying, the only way we got this law passed, was we worked with so many other movements! Same thing in Indonesia, they're saying it. So if people are already saying it, I think we need to live it…
>
> I don't know, for some reason, we, as an organization, as a board, as funders, we seem to fall back on that whole identity-based kind of organizing, which is so old fashioned. People of color communities in [the US] have walked away from that, have realized that, hey, you want to fight police violence,

> you better start doing cross-movement work. And we're still holding on this old way of doing it… I feel like we, who are at the front line of knowing how this works – because we're not a traditional old-fashioned human rights, male-dominated organization. We use different frameworks.[29]

Poore's comments highlight a number of reasons brokers offered for focusing on issues directly targeting LGBT people. Some pointed to the name, saying that IGLHRC is by definition an LGBT organization. Others pointed to funders and the need to be accountable to them; funding for LGBT human rights advocacy is miniscule relative to funding for other human rights work, and many of IGLHRC's funders specifically provide support for LGBT advocacy. Poore also hinted at brokers' tendency to fall back on tried and true forms of advocacy and assumptions about their constituency, especially when they were pressured to act quickly by the board, their supporters, the media, or other NGOs with which they competed for publicity, funding, or relevance.

The issue became considerably more complex when it was LGBT people whose human rights were being violated, but the violations were not immediately related to SOGI. This was evident in a second instance where lines between LGBT and non-LGBT issues were drawn – namely, sex work and the rights of sex workers. In general, brokers at IGLHRC voiced strong support for sex workers, seeing them as a population that was also at risk of marginalization and violence. Institutionally, there were a number of instances where IGLHRC supported calls for sex workers' rights, for example, when brokers posted a call from Akina Mama wa Afrika to support their right to meet at the African Women's Leadership Institute for sex worker rights activists in East Africa (IGLHRC 2010a). In other instances, brokers privately placed relationships with governments on the line by refusing to repudiate LGBT activists who engaged in sex work because of their precarious social position.

Nonetheless, sex work was not specifically incorporated into IGLHRC's mandate in any proactive way. This posed a particular difficulty where LGBT people

[29] As I was writing up this ethnography, IGLHRC adopted a new strategic plan that directly addressed some of these concerns. As Poore pointed out to me, this went a long way in foregrounding intersectionality and the interconnectedness of human rights struggles. I discuss this strategic plan and the way it shaped IGLHRC's praxis further in the Conclusion.

were engaged in sex work or where LGBT movements drew explicit connections between the violations faced by individuals because they were LGBT and because they were sex workers. Brokers at IGLHRC grappled with this in particular in Turkey, where LGBT activists drew explicit connections between the kinds of structural and material marginalization they faced, particularly as transgender women, and the pressure this placed upon them to enter into sex work for survival.

As Alizadeh pointed out, this raised complex questions about agency and structural violence that seemed to fit within the mandate of a human rights organization:

> Again, we have this politically correct attitude – oh, if they are sex workers, that's their choice, we'll respect that. I'm all with you on that. But if there's structural violence that's happening in a society that does not allow individuals to have any other option but being sex workers, then I have a problem with that, you know. So you have to start thinking about how you want to address this issue and highlight the fact that even the sex workers, which is the lowest kind of job in that society that you can get, you still don't have that guarantee. Because even among sex workers, you're being discriminated against because of who you are. I mean, that is the serious problem. You have to start from there and take it to the next level.

While staff thought critically about these issues, many were frustrated by a perceived inability to turn this commitment into practice. Kilonzo specifically bemoaned the inability to make common cause with other movements in our interview at the end of my time with the Africa Program, pointing specifically to IGLHRC's limited advocacy around sex work during the proposed revisions to Rwanda's penal code:

> [E]very time I'm attending an African Commission session, LGBT activists, we all keep to ourselves. We rarely interact with the mainstream, so that when people are discussing women's rights, that is the space where lesbians ought to go and articulate their issues. When people are talking about global warming and other natural calamities, that is the same space where everybody within the LGBT movement should be. But now, there is a tendency to cluster on our own. And when you're on your own, you end up talking to yourself repeatedly, you know, venting out your anger to yourselves and not being heard beyond the room where you're speaking from. So there is still that challenge of getting out and endearing yourself to

> other people, because if people keep on clustering in their corner, then you, you, you end up being the odd one out all the time… Because at the African Commission, that's the marketplace for you to market your ideas. And I see other groups like indigenous people, they're all over, they're in all thematic groups. I see people with disabilities, they're in all thematic groups. When you're discussing HIV, when you're discussing the environment, they're in all groups. So it's that challenge first of all, building a critical mass for it to be present and be able to be in all thematic areas and not just clustering as LGBT, because you end up being labeled that group, the LGBT group that only seeks their own rights but they're not supporting other people when they're articulating their agenda.
>
> And this was more pronounced when we responded to the crisis in Rwanda, when Parliament was about to review the penal code to include same-sex relations. Right now, it's not criminalized; Parliament wanted to review the law to make it criminal. The sex workers' movement came on board and supported the LGBT movement very well. Very well. But soon after that succeeded, we retreated to our own safe spaces. And when the sex workers needed support, because their article was next, was following soon after the article against LGBT, we were nowhere to support them. And that taught them a bad lesson.... that we want everybody around to support us, but when it's our turn to give support to other people, we are not there. So in future, I don't know what we will do when we need support from a country like Rwanda.

At the same time, brokers in Cape Town were forced to draw these lines in their work as well, and did not always err on the side of maximal inclusion. On one occasion, they were contacted about an incident in an East African country where there had been a spate of arrests of LGBT people, and were informed that two transgender or gay sex workers had been arrested and detained. The pair was requesting financial help from IGLHRC, but did not want brokers to intercede with the government on their behalf for fear of repercussions. In a discussion of the case, brokers clarified that they could not help sex workers if they were arrested as sex workers, and that if they were not arrested on SOGI grounds, their arrest fell outside IGLHRC's ambit.

This was not merely a decision by program staff, but one that was reiterated at different times by management in New York. As Johnson noted in one interview:

> I mean, I think we need to use our history and our affinities as our filter. I don't think we should work broadly on the rights of female sex workers who are engaged mainly in heterosexual transactional sex. That's not what I think

> we should do. But when the human rights challenges that female sex workers are experiencing overlap, and are emblematic of the kinds of challenges that MSM sex workers are involved in, and we can bring added value to the struggles of those female sex workers, then I think we should be doing it. I mean… do we bring something to it? We have a community, I don't ever want to, like, deny that, or be ashamed of it. We have a community that we embrace, and that embraces us. And so that's who we're working for. I think we need to be broad and understand the connections between what happens to us and how we live our lives and ways in which *all* other people live their lives and are circumscribed around their sexuality, or challenged around their bodies and their sexual choices, and their gender expression. We need to make those connections, but we're still… we're unabashedly queer.

Johnson's quote reflects the kind of pragmatism about cross-sectoral struggles that Poore appeared to find frustrating. Brokers were readily able to draw connections between disparate forms of sexual policing, but were reluctant to devote limited time, energy, and resources to issues that were not immediately about SOGI.

At times, there were subtle hints of other political and tactical considerations. As Oliver Phillips has pointed out, same-sex sexuality, sex work and other affronts to regnant norms pose a difficult challenge for those appealing to the human rights regime for protection. The most sympathetic claimants in human rights advocacy are those who can be portrayed as innocent victims, particularly those who are targeted based on something they cannot change (Phillips 2009: 357-359). It is considerably harder to advocate for sex workers and others who fall outside of what Gayle Rubin has described as the "charmed circle" of sexuality, or that which is "Good, Normal, Natural, and Blessed" (G. Rubin 1984: 267; Miller 2004). The boundaries of the charmed circle and what is inside or outside of its circumference vary cross-culturally, but the principle remains the same. To the extent that sex work is denigrated, it is difficult to posit sex workers as the innocent victims that human rights organizations so often strategically construct.

These considerations of history and innocence are again illustrated by a final category that brokers grappled with privately but rarely emphasized publicly. Many brokers at IGLHRC were sympathetic to those who engaged in public cruising or were arrested for public sex, understanding that a lack of private space, social

hostility, and moral rigidity all served to push same-sex activity into the so-called "public sphere" and then demonize it when it was discovered.

In practice, however, public sex was subject to the same pressures and qualifications as sex work. Brokers did not forcefully decry laws against public sex as unjust, and hesitated to foreground cases of LGBT people arrested on these grounds. One such arrest for public sex between two men in Dakar was brought to my attention during the production of *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear*, IGLHRC's report on homophobia and transphobia in Senegal. On November 12, 2009, two men were reportedly arrested for publicly engaging in same-sex activity on the grounds of Amadou Barry Stadium. When I mentioned reports of the arrest to a supervisor in New York, I was told not to put it on the website, as the two were technically arrested for public sex and not same-sex activity. While IGLHRC had been actively involved in other cases of arrests in Senegal – assisting with asylum claims and resettlement, securing legal representation, and visiting arrestees in prison – this particular case was neither publicized widely nor investigated privately by staff.

This is not to say that brokers were indifferent to invasive controls on heterosexual sexuality, were unsympathetic to sex work, or were uncomfortable with public sex. To the contrary, most brokers seemed quite sympathetic on these issues (or joked about engaging in them) and were far more sex-positive than IGLHRC's public advocacy and interest in other sexual rights issues might have suggested. Despite these sympathies, brokers felt compelled to draw lines in the sand regarding the constituencies that they were able or supposed to serve as an LGBT human rights organization, or indeed, even as a sexual rights organization. What kept them from speaking out more forcefully on other sexual rights was the sense that these were not part of their mandate, that they were too scarcely resourced to adequately cover them, or that relationships with donors, supporters, and governments would be jeopardized by expanding into these areas of work. As a result, the sexual rights framework that emerged at IGLHRC focused on violations that were tangentially linked to the targeting of LGBT persons, for example, the expansive law in Aceh, the proposed restrictions in Rwanda, or the persecution of

transgender sex workers in Turkey, but brokers rarely, if ever, campaigned on other sexual rights issues in a proactive way.

D. Which Rights, and Where? Defining a Category of "LGBT Human Rights"

Negotiations of sexual rights and the constituencies IGLHRC served are not simply about identity politics or Northern ideas about gender and sexuality. Brokers at IGLHRC also operated with particular understandings of the broader category of human rights, which both drew upon and expanded traditional understandings of that project.

The category of LGBT rights is among the most politically controversial in contemporary debates around human rights. Skeptics routinely cite LGBT rights to illustrate how absurd or expansive human rights discourse has become (Dunton and Palmberg 1996: 9-10). In large part, this is because these rights not only undermine governments' authority to regulate morality for a purported social good, but challenge beliefs and norms that are deeply rooted in a wider social fabric. As Jack Donnelly has observed, "homosexuality is widely considered – by significant segments of society in all countries, and by most people in most countries – to be profoundly immoral" (J. Donnelly 2003: 233). Unlike human rights regarding torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment and other *jus cogens* norms, which met with widespread moral and political disapproval prior to their institutionalization in global human rights agreements, the protection of SOGI has often preceded, or only been tentatively situated in, public opinion. The seeming specificity of these rights has further entrenched the view that they are "special rights" or "new rights," framings that have proven persuasive in debates in the North and South alike (Collet 2006: 6-8). By using the rhetoric of new or special rights, opponents implicitly contrast them with universal human rights and make them seem relatively unimportant or selfish for advocates to spend their time, energy, and resources pursuing.

It is notable, then, that brokers working within the human rights arena have made a subtle distinction between "LGBT human rights" and "the human rights of

LGBT people." While the former suggests a strain of rights that are specific to LGBT people, the latter evokes a framework of universal rights that LGBT people, like others, must enjoy. Brokers at IGLHRC frame their work by suggesting that they are not focusing on *new* rights, but simply seeking to ensure that the human rights of all persons, as laid out in widely ratified international and regional agreements, are equally protected for those marginalized on the basis of SOGI (Yogyakarta Principles of 2007; Thoreson 2009).[30]

Since 1948, however, a dizzying range of rights have been identified under the umbrella of the human rights project. What IGLHRC opts to promote as the "human rights of LGBT people" is not self-evident, and is determined both by the politics of brokers and by the opportunities they have to be recognized in the human rights arena.

A large portion of IGLHRC's work focused on the legitimation of the human rights of LGBT persons by officials and mechanisms of the human rights apparatus.[31] As described in Chapter 1, early interventions at the UN faced intense skepticism toward the concept of LGBT human rights. Even during my fieldwork, brokers strongly emphasized the universality of human rights and the need for all persons to be able to secure redress. To make inroads with reluctant governments and to curb the worst abuses, brokers stressed those human rights that were least controversial and most firmly established in international law. As a result, IGLHRC's work has been particularly focused on decriminalization and non-discrimination, especially as the latter relates to freedoms of assembly, association, and expression. IGLHRC's reading of transnational rights guarantees has been a very specific kind, one which seeks to solidify the recognition that LGBT people must enjoy the most fundamental human rights, rather than rapidly and aggressively expanding those rights to the full range that might be recognized in some contexts. Indeed, brokers have not been

[30] This strategy is best embodied in the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, which take the most basic obligations of states under international human rights law and insist that these must be observed regardless of SOGI.

[31] In Chapter 6, I consider how brokers have worked in subtle and explicit ways to institutionalize particular ideas about gender, sexuality, and human rights into international law.

particularly vocal about rights that are increasingly articulated and codified in parts of the world, most notably, the right to marry and form a family of one's choosing.[32]

The focus on decriminalization and non-discrimination had two political implications. The first is that it located IGLHRC's focus and the vast majority of its resources outside of the North, where the most glaring violations were less frequent and were addressed by domestic groups who already had recourse to functional judicial mechanisms. The second is that it permitted very little ambivalence or hints that the human rights of LGBT people might be subject to qualification. The focus on gross violations and the politicized terrain on which these arguments were set forth meant that IGLHRC's public statements were typically unequivocal. Brokers had precious little space to engage in conversations about balancing rights or acknowledge situations where two rights, or two rights as they are understood in a particular context, may be intractably opposed (Call 2002: 127). Like others in this field, brokers at IGLHRC downplayed or omitted any mention of provisions in regional and international law that allow for exceptions to or qualifications of rights (see Goldstein 2007: 54). The ICCPR, for example, repeatedly qualifies rights for purposes of "national security, public order (*ordre public*), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others," and Article 27(2) of the African Charter states that rights should be exercised "with due regard to the rights of others, collective security, morality, and common interest" (ICCPR 1966; ACHPR 1981). Instead of engaging with accusations that the human rights of LGBT people are an affront to these wider communal concerns, defenders of such rights tend to dismiss or pointedly ignore them.

While this is understandable, it creates awkward tensions insofar as the rights of queer individuals are perceived to, or actually, conflict with the norms of a wider community. It is notable that, in Africa, the ACHPR specifically recognizes a duality of rights and responsibilities, in a formulation that is not as explicit in other regional or international charters (ACHPR 1981). In many ways, such a formulation

[32] It is notable that same-sex marriage is not included in the Yogyakarta Principles, as the authors concluded that the right to marry and found a family of one's choosing is only tentatively recognized in international law.

means that the straightforward assertion of rights in the North fails to hold in other parts of the globe. This tension was evident in work on crises in Uganda and Malawi. In Uganda, where Article 37 of the Constitution protects the right to culture, tradition, and religion, the rights of LGBT people were challenged by recourse to the rights of a wider community. Opponents cited the freedom of speech of those calling for violence, the freedom of religion of those seeking to ban homosexuality, and the rights of children who were said to be duped or seduced into homosexuality. In Malawi, this rhetoric took a more balanced tone, but was similarly prevalent. In a comment republished in the *Nyasa Times*, Deputy Minister of Finance Frazer Nihorya clarified that, "This is a tricky matter because issues of rights have corresponding responsibilities… It is the popular opinion of Malawians which will influence government's position on the matter" (Khanje 2010).

The idea that rights are predicated upon, and intertwined with, responsibilities to others is known and acknowledged internally within transnational NGOs, but it is difficult to articulate these nuances in the middle of crises where they are reliably redeployed against defenders of LGBT human rights. The stakes have risen in recent years with the passage of a resolution at the HRC recognizing the importance of "the traditional values of humankind," promulgated by states that have thus far been hostile to any recognition of LGBT human rights (Sheill 2009). In highly polarized settings, NGOs have been reluctant to engage in disputes about balancing rights. Instead, they insist that rights can be simultaneously enjoyed, often in such a way that individual rights implicitly take precedence over the preferences or norms of the wider community.

Again, this does not mean brokers are unconscious of these dilemmas. Following a round of questioning during IGLHRC's application for consultative status to ECOSOC, a senior broker repeatedly wondered aloud if a project grappling with the issue of conflicting rights might be worth undertaking. Amid the other priorities competing for time and resources at IGLHRC, however, there were few opportunities and little impetus to look critically at whether rights may necessarily trade off with each other, and virtually no opportunity where doing so would not

potentially endanger other advocacy efforts with partners or within regional mechanisms.

These two aspects of IGLHRC's focus on the most egregious violations of the human rights of LGBT people paradoxically seem to bolster many of the assessments of skeptics of the LGBT human rights project. By focusing on violations that largely occur in the South and which allow for very little acknowledgment of complexity, brokers make a strong case to those who are actually or potentially supportive, but seem uninterested in dialogue to a bloc of states that are hostile to their claims.

E. Hybridity and the Problems and Possibilities of LGBT Human Rights Organizing

The kinds of incidents that brokers felt demanded a response rarely permitted long-term, strategic development of the human rights framework for LGBT persons. Amid the incidents that garnered high-profile attention, however, brokers were also involved in thoughtful and theoretical projects that sought to shape how LGBT issues were treated within a human rights framework and how human rights mechanisms were utilized by LGBT communities. Indeed, much of the intellectual and programmatic work at IGLHRC carried on the tradition that Dorf began when brokers pressured AI to address SOGI-based persecution. This and other campaigns drew attention to the many ways that LGBT persons were tacitly denied recourse to the full range of universal human rights. At the same time, brokers have called attention to unique forms of persecution that LGBT people face, and fought to get them taken seriously in the human rights arena. In this proactive work, IGLHRC's identification as an LGBT human rights organization allowed brokers to tack between two frameworks, that of LGBT politics and that of human rights, that other advocates mobilized separately. The juxtaposition of these two frameworks has enabled work that would not be possible in either one alone.

IGLHRC as an LGBT Human Rights Organization

Brokers were quite conscious of the limitations of different frameworks, and many valued that their approach differed from other human rights NGOs that were not LGBT-identified. Jones, whose background was very much in the human rights arena, noted:

> [S]ome of my frustrations with Human Rights Watch and Amnesty, are, you know, they're amazing organizations that I'm so grateful for having had the opportunity to work for, and I'm so glad they exist, but there's something to be said for working for an LGBT organization. It gives you a different kind of access to the community, and also, IGLHRC, for better and worse, can be scrappy, and I actually think that's what movement-based work requires a little bit of. You need to be flexible enough to have lots of different strategies, and recognize that when you're working with community-based organizations, just focusing on documentation and reporting is not going to be enough… [B]y virtue of being an LGBT organization, there are times when it's also easy to distance ourselves from the human rights framework, because part of the relationship with queers seeking rights is to say let us in. And that can be a challenge in using the human rights framework, and it's certainly a challenge when you're trying to talk about non-state actor violence. But it's also a strength that we have, because when I worked at Human Rights Watch, I had the mantle, for better and worse, of that methodology. And by being marked as queer, there's always a level of difference or distinction.

For as often as they used the human rights framework as a tool, it was notable that many brokers at IGLHRC were not wed to it ideologically or in their advocacy. In an interview, Johnson was frank about this point:

> [T]he average person, I'd say, doesn't enjoy their human rights. The average person in Africa doesn't… and I don't think it matters, rural or urban, but in general, human rights are a luxury in most people's lives. And so to use them as an argument, to use that framework as a place to start when trying to explain to your neighbor why you should be free as an LGBT person, I don't think it's the best approach. I think it's an approach. It's certainly an approach you take with government, with government institutions.

Both Jones and Johnson's comments illustrate how, by identifying as an LGBT organization, brokers were able to use approaches that might not necessarily be

used by a mainstream human rights organization. Rather than proceeding from the rights enshrined in international law, brokers at IGLHRC often took their cue from the forms of marginalization experienced by LGBT people globally, and only then fit these into a human rights framework as best as possible.

Many of the best examples of this emerged from convenings and Activist Institutes, which brought activists together to discuss salient issues for LGBT populations in particular regions. Explorations of fundamentalisms, violence against women, and blackmail were not projects that would have obviously derived from a traditional human rights framework. They frequently focused first and foremost on non-state actors, for example, looking at religious groups, violence in the home or community, and blackmail and extortion by coworkers, family, and neighbors. Of course, they were likely to conclude that state-sponsored criminalization of same-sex activity exacerbated non-state persecution, and encourage various forms of legal reform as part of a proactive solution. Still, at their core, these projects took the experiences of LGBT persons as their primary impetus, then sought to fit these into the human rights framework by creatively invoking its guarantees. Three projects demonstrate ways that sexual politics provided an entry into working creatively with the human rights framework: the publication of *Nowhere to Turn: Blackmail and Extortion of LGBT People in Sub-Saharan Africa*, a funding proposal on torture and the persecution of LGBT persons, and IGLHRC's work providing disaster relief after the earthquake in Haiti.

The example I was most familiar with during my time at IGLHRC was the research on blackmail and extortion and eventual publication of *Nowhere to Turn*. As part of my fieldwork with the Africa Program, I edited chapters by researchers who studied the impact of blackmail and extortion on LGBT people in Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Malawi, Ghana, and Cameroon.

What was notable about the collection was that it emerged from the felt needs of LGBT groups on the continent, who stressed that blackmail and extortion were among the most prevalent abuses their constituencies faced. This has since been confirmed in surveys by Stef Baral of Johns Hopkins University and a variety of coauthors, who found that 18 percent of respondents in Malawi, 21.3 percent in

Namibia, and 26.5 percent in Botswana had been blackmailed because of their sexuality (Baral et al. 2009a: 4). The proportion of respondents across all three countries who had been blackmailed (21.2 percent) was larger than those who were afraid to walk in their community (19 percent) or seek health services (18.5 percent), had been beaten up by a government or police official (12.2 percent), or were denied housing (6.9 percent) or health care (5.1 percent) (Baral et al. 2009a: 4). Another study suggested that 23.1 percent of respondents in Abuja, Nigeria had been victims of blackmail (Baral, personal communication). Even in South Africa, where same-sex activity is not criminalized, a worrying 10.5 percent of MSM respondents reported being blackmailed in peri-urban townships outside of Cape Town (Baral et al. 2009b). The sense that this was an unaddressed problem in the lives of LGBT persons provided the impetus for IGLHRC's research, rather than the sense that blackmail was self-evidently a human rights issue.

Indeed, a major portion of the work I was tasked to do on the report was research on where blackmail and extortion might be creatively fit *into* the human rights framework. There is relatively little writing about blackmail and extortion from a human rights perspective; these crimes are frequently committed by non-state actors and are at least nominally addressed in domestic criminal law in most jurisdictions. A survey of UN documentation reveals that the rare references by treaty bodies mostly raise concern about the use of extortion to target vulnerable groups.[33] The topic has also been referenced by a small number of Special Procedures, but only the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment specifically referenced blackmail or extortion on SOGI grounds.[34] While these references raise concerns about blackmail

[33] See, for example, reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/15/Add.257, 13 April 2005; CRC/C/PAK/CO/3-4, 15 October 2009), the Committee Against Torture (CAT/C/ZAF/CO/1, 7 December 2006), the Committee on the Elimination of Racism (CERD/C/ZAF/CO/3, 19 October 2006), the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/HUN/CO/3, 16 January 2008), the Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW/C/MEX/CO/1, 20 December 2006), and the Human Rights Committee (CCPR/CO/79/GNQ, 13 August 2004).

[34] The reports are E/CN.4/2004/56/Add.1 of March 23, 2004 and E/CN.4/2005/62/Add.1 of March 30, 2005.

or extortion, they rarely make it clear why these crimes might also constitute human rights violations.

As a result, the Conclusion of *Nowhere to Turn* specifically looked at the justifications that might be used to treat blackmail and extortion as human rights issues. It concluded that there are three grounds upon which this case might be made, including the deprivation of dignity, privacy, and autonomy, the impunity of state and non-state actors complicit in these crimes, and the violation of the right to equality that LGBT persons suffer when they are denied access to the law and formal redress (Thoreson 2011). The publicity surrounding the launch focused heavily on the ways that blackmail and extortion impinge on fundamental human rights, taking the realities of LGBT lives as a starting point to elaborate upon the human rights framework.

Notably, projects like the report were often supported by donors who primarily funded LGBT issues and were not adamant that this work be undertaken within a human rights framework. While donors are often criticized for influencing organizational agendas, IGLHRC's attempts to obtain more support from human rights funders also encouraged creative redefinitions of what might be considered a human rights violation.

A good example of this was a proposal that IGLHRC developed, which was accepted for consideration but not ultimately funded, on LGBT people and torture. The funding body in question was a series of Northern governments seeking proposals from human rights NGOs working on torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment. IGLHRC's proposal sought to define, document, and seek redress for repeated persecution of LGBT persons as a form of torture.

A similar strategy had been used in the 1990s, when feminists and women's rights advocates made concerted conceptual and practical moves to define violence against women as a form of torture under existing international law (Copelon 1994a, 1994b; Coomaraswamy 2000). The strategy was controversial for some human rights activists, who saw this as potentially diluting the potency of a human rights violation that is widely met with grave opprobrium (Crew 2007: 12-13; Copelon 1994b: 127, 139).

The same ambivalence was present among brokers at IGLHRC, who were conscious of the complexity of this approach. A debate about the proposal took place one afternoon in New York after a broker finished a call with a colleague at a large, prestigious human rights NGO. They had been drafting a joint press release on the abuse of transgender women by police in Turkey, which he had described as "torture." He noted with alarm that she had balked at the word, and made it clear that her institution was not able to use the term in that context.

The difference of opinion between the two brokers, and the positions of their respective organizations, revolved around whether "complicity" in torture required active participation or simple inaction when cases of systemic persecution were brought to the attention of state agents. The other NGO, which worked on a range of human rights issues, including the torture of political and social dissidents, aligned itself with the former position. IGLHRC, which was then seeking to frame the systemic persecution of LGBT persons as a form of torture, opted for the latter.

Cook, who was present at the discussion, noted the similarity to debates about violence against women as a form of torture. She expressed sympathy with both positions, noting that she had frequently felt uncomfortable in her personal and professional life with the ways that terms like "genocide" and "apartheid" were used loosely to describe killings and discrimination, but also pointing out that the IACHR had established precedent for a more expansive understanding of torture (IACHR 1987). Perle added that the Convention Against Torture (CAT) also left the distinction open to interpretation, establishing that "consent or acquiescence" could constitute torture under international law (CAT 1975).

The eventual decision was to avoid the term "torture" in the press release, with all brokers present agreeing that a case needed to be carefully made for this interpretation and that casual usage was imprudent. If approved, the project would give them sufficient space to advance this claim more thoughtfully.

The proposal was developed by senior brokers at IGLHRC in conjunction with NGOs with experience documenting and prosecuting torture cases, who would have been co-grantees if the proposal had been successful. Other brokers were aware of the perceived gravity of the distinction between torture and other abuses,

but were nonetheless open to the idea that this could generate much-needed material and symbolic support to deal with the very real persecution of LGBT persons. The proposal was ultimately rejected by the funding body at a later stage in the process, and brokers at IGLHRC declined to press for this expanded definition of torture in other forums.

While both *Nowhere to Turn* and the torture proposal grappled with the expansion or elaboration of human rights from an LGBT perspective, there were also instances of intervention at IGLHRC that simply fell outside the boundaries of the human rights framework but were felt to be both urgent and necessary. A case that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 is particularly illustrative in this regard. When a massive earthquake devastated the Haitian capital of Port-Au-Prince on January 12, 2010, it decimated the headquarters of one of IGLHRC's in-country partners, an MSM group called SEROVIE. The earthquake destroyed the physical space of the organization, killed 14 people who were present at a support group, and left MSM individuals in Port-Au-Prince without an organization that provided them with healthcare, essential medications, and safer-sex supplies.

As news of the earthquake spread, brokers at IGLHRC met and quickly agreed to prepare a fundraising drive to raise money for rebuilding efforts and the restoration of critical services provided by SEROVIE. The appeal was foregrounded on IGLHRC's webpage and promoted in an email blast to supporters, and raised thousands of dollars for earthquake relief. The funds were used to purchase a number of items, including safer-sex supplies, office equipment, and tents to be used as temporary headquarters for SEROVIE. What was notable about the effort, however, was that IGLHRC rapidly shifted into a disaster relief role with relatively little discussion amongst brokers. Throughout this process, what was important was that a partner was clearly in need. Although brokers later went to Haiti to deliver supplies and explore the vulnerability of LGBT people in the wake of disasters, their rights-based analysis was introduced late in a campaign that was overwhelmingly about securing the immediate needs of an MSM population at risk.

Although much of the extant scholarship on transnational LGBT human rights work focuses on the ways that NGOs operate in crisis situations, this is only a

part of what organizations like IGLHRC do. IGLHRC's long-term, proactive planning was also important insofar as it consciously sought to understand a variety of LGBT issues through a human rights lens, and troubled the boundaries of the human rights framework in the process. In this work, brokers also transcended many of the dominant concepts and methods of Northern LGBT advocacy.

IGLHRC as a Human Rights Organization for LGBT People

While brokers expressed reservations about the constraints of the human rights framework and used their LGBT affinities to work beyond or outside it, they also saw human rights as a useful way to transcend the narrow constraints of LGBT politics. Brokers had their own justifications for doing this work within a human rights framework, and the "human rights" aspect of the organization resonated with them in different ways.

Sometimes, the use of the human rights framework was primarily pragmatic. As Jones observed in an interview:

> So human rights gives us an entry point – and this is the spiel I give folks, but it's also something I very much believe in. When you are part of a community or engaged in a behavior that is categorically criminalized, or in some ways defined beyond citizenship, then you have to think beyond national boundaries, and beyond state law. And so it's really important to have a set of international standards that you can turn to, that both have legally binding components but also have the weight of moral authority and international consensus.

Kilonzo echoed this sentiment, noting that it shifts the frame of debate in a way that other frameworks, like sexual health, do not:

> It's a good starting point for everything, because when you employ the human rights framework, you're able to have the most invisible coming on the table… When you're on the table, you're able to bring out your issues, and everyone is able to address them because you are not looking at the numbers, as against if you're addressing a government policy. They want to see the numbers, the demographic data, and what have you, but with a

> human rights framework, it's the one person that is not present that is being considered.

Others specifically noted that the ideological expansiveness of the human rights framework appealed to them, particularly because of the linkages it created with other social movements. Jones echoed the sentiment of a number of these brokers when she recalled:

> I started doing human rights work because I was looking for a way of connecting seemingly disparate issues. I felt like I was working in identity-based silos, and human rights was a way of demanding that if I was working on women's rights, I was also thinking through poverty, I was also thinking through race. And so it was a framework I was really drawn to despite its limitations of being very legalistic, and very alienating to a lot of people.

To some extent, this set their approach apart from other LGBT NGOs whose approach was not specifically based in the human rights framework. As Clarke observed about IGLHRC in an interview shortly after her departure:

> It's very interesting how on a certain level, it's isolated from other LGBT organizations. It's not of them. Staff don't come from other LGBT organizations. Conceptually, there are big differences between the civil rights framework that a lot of the LGBT organizations use domestically and the human rights framework. And on a certain level, you do get a different perspective when you come to this from a different route…
>
> That takes me back to, during the strategic planning last year or the year before, a discussion about the fact that IGLHRC as an organization sought justice beyond equality, and justice within a global context, as opposed to equality. At a certain level, even though they are situated within a social justice framework, equality is the end goal for many domestic organizations. There was a differentiation between that and what we're doing. I think in part – in fact, I know in part – this comes from Paula, who is a feminist scholar herself. When she was writing early on in the LGBT movement, she really wrote of a transformative vision of a movement which was much more akin to radical feminist desires for a transformed universe. So on a certain level, at that stage there were great ties between radical feminist and LGBT movements because of the players within them and I think it was a desire to get back to that, and that was where that perspective came from.

The expansiveness that brokers valued in the human rights framework often placed them solidly outside the mainstream of the domestic LGBT movement in the US. Throughout IGLHRC's history, there have been numerous instances where a holistic conception of human rights fostered a more expansive understanding of social justice. As Khan, who was Executive Director when the US began bombing Afghanistan, recalled:

> I think the thing I was particularly proud of was that IGLHRC took a very early and vocal position that was anti-war. And that was something that happened fast, because all of that happened so fast, I mean, we woke up one morning and there were the buildings going down. We were among the first LGBT groups in the country, if not the first, to take an anti-war position. And we were criticized for that by conservative elements of the gay movement, and I think we were held in very high regard by others for taking such a vocal position when other national LGBT groups were not doing the same thing…. We were a human rights agency, and in times of war, people who are vulnerable already become increasingly vulnerable, and those are certainly LGBT people, and that was our analysis.

A similar view was expressed by her successor, Ettelbrick:

> One of the things I loved about working at IGLHRC is that it was much easier working from a human rights perspective to convince colleagues and our donors and our board that things beyond strictly gay and lesbian issues, and trans issues were important for us to be engaged in. In the US, it's so narrow, and *so* identity-based. For instance, when I was at the Task Force, I kept pushing, pushing, pushing, saying the Task Force should have a position against the death penalty. And people kept saying, how is that a gay issue? Well, internationally, let me just say that there's no question it's a gay issue. You need to look at Iran, you need to look at Nigeria and the Sharia states there, and you need to look at where people can be stoned because they're gay, and in a nanosecond, you see that. But also, as a human rights thing, we work from a broader – instinctively, and by structure – work with a broader set of principles.

This was not an anomaly; Johnson proudly told a group of students during my fieldwork that IGLHRC was strictly abolitionist with regard to the death penalty. Brokers expressed reservations about a number of priorities, for instance, the passage of hate crimes legislation or the recognition of same-sex marriage, that were heavily championed by mainstream LGBT organizations in the US.

The use of the human rights framework did allow for interventions that would be largely unimaginable or difficult in domestic LGBT advocacy in the North. Crucially, the human rights framework set an absolute baseline of treatment that sidestepped epistemological questions; a notable hindrance in Northern LGBT advocacy, particularly in the US, is the question of whether sexual orientation is as innate as race or sex are presumed to be. This not only determines whether sexual orientation receives heightened scrutiny from the courts, but has been pivotal in shifting public sentiment. In both legal and popular advocacy, the advancement of LGBT rights has been heavily dependent on the insistence that SOGI constitute innate and immutable parts of personhood.

While IGLHRC occasionally implied that sexuality is immutable in its public outputs, it remained technically agnostic on this question. Brokers insisted that all persons are entitled to the enjoyment of human rights, regardless of SOGI, and frequently defended those rights in cases where it was unclear whether anything innate motivated same-sex activity. Campaigns for decriminalization and the inclusion of MSM and WSW in public health programs, which often explicitly stress that same-sex practicing persons are not innately gay, lesbian, or even LGBT, are examples of the subtle push for human rights protections regardless of the origins of same-sex sexuality.

The human rights framework offers a lens that includes but transcends questions of SOGI, providing a strong basis for intramovement and intermovement solidarity. It routinely places a heavy emphasis on the indivisibility and interconnectedness of different rights. As IGLHRC's stances on issues like war, the death penalty, the struggle for Palestinian statehood, and other issues suggest, this enables broader coalitions to be constructed within LGBT movements and among other human rights movements – something that LGBT organizations in the US have found challenging within a more circumscribed frame.

The Limits of Hybridity

By tacking between LGBT and human rights approaches, brokers were able to develop priorities and interventions that would be unlikely to develop through either framework alone. While this choice of frameworks could be freeing, there were times when the limits of hybridity became difficult to ignore, and affected brokers' work.

Most notably, by specifically identifying as an LGBT organization, making a case for human rights, or even sexual rights, became more difficult. The introduction of specific subgroups into the wider rubric of universal human rights immediately invited charges that IGLHRC was campaigning for special rights, and sometimes endangered allies who cooperated with the group. This problem was felt especially acutely in the MENA Program. As Alizadeh noted, the use of the term "gay and lesbian" in IGLHRC's title had real consequences that could not be fixed by simply emphasizing one aspect of its approach over another:

> I feel at times it's a liability for us, especially at a time when you have a mainstream movement, you know, that pushes LGBT rights. In many countries, if you start with LGBT, you alienate people and you endanger your partners in countries, by just saying, oh, we work with a gay and lesbian human rights commission. The Middle East is a prime example where you have to be very careful, even about the name. I think that was a very poor choice of name. I understand historically why it was, but I feel that when you finally decide to redefine your mission and your identity, then you have to also change your name, in a way that helps your mission rather than creates problems for you. So I'm not sure why people do not want to walk away from it… I mean, part of this, we never did a branding of our organization, and branding is not just changing the logo and the name. You have to start with the identity, with the basic question of who you are and what you do, and still, we haven't got around it. That's where the problem comes. There are people I know for sure won't approach us, and they told me so, because of our name. They have no problem working with gay people, but if you bring a US-based organization that's called gay and lesbian, that's like the kiss of death for them. They're not going to work with me, and they made it clear, they said, oh, we'll work with Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International, not because they're inherently more capable, but because of the name, you know? And I understand that, and I respect that.

In the chapters that follow, I foreground some of these limitations of identifying as an LGBT organization, particularly who this attracts, who it repels, and how it shapes transnational partnerships. Although the human rights framework provides a theoretical basis for cross-movement work, the reality was that self-identifying as an LGBT organization meant that some groups could or would not work with IGLHRC, despite the best intentions or politics of its staff.

The converse was also true; although the human rights framework helped brokers transcend the identity-based advocacy that is so prevalent in the US and UK, it also imposed its own ideological strictures, which could be off-putting in contexts where human rights were viewed with suspicion. The human rights framework has specific origins, and operates under a number of assumptions about what justice entails and how it might be delivered. The expansion of rights discourse amidst a concomitant failure to deliver tangible justice to the world's most marginalized groups has left a deep-rooted skepticism toward rights in much of the South, perhaps especially toward those, like LGBT people, who appear to be the beneficiaries of special rights and whose suffering attracts swift responses from NGOs and world leaders.

The universality of human rights is philosophical and not empirical. In practice, human rights have been co-opted in a number of reactionary and imperial projects that make them suspect grounds for claims about social justice. IGLHRC's self-identification as a human rights organization not only risked making it too technical and unapproachable to its constituencies, but risked linking it with other forms of geopolitical power. As Alizadeh continued:

> The problem with us really is that we already have a framework, and that's international treaties and international conventions. And nobody gives a damn about what those treaties are where I'm working, the region I'm working on. So you really need to find other means, other ways to approach those people. So if you really want to go there, you need to invest, basically, to understand what the cultures are. That cultural understanding requires some study. Like anything else, you need to be smart about it. You have to understand what they say, what they mean. The listening is half of the solution, and that never comes across… As long as you stick to language that nobody understands, you won't have an ally, you know? But, part one. Part

> two is, it seems to me that human rights has become more or less sort of like a Western, a US-centered and Western-centered business that revolves around the desire and the trends of civil society in this country. So, in the 70s, there were certain hot issues, in the 80s the issues changed, in the 90s… and the same thing has been reflected in international work, what is politically correct, what is politically incorrect, everything should be basically followed based on the US model, and I've got news for you – that's not how other societies function. So what is politically correct here may not be politically correct, it's totally irrelevant.

While brokers were committed to transcending the limitations of the human rights framework, most of their interventions nonetheless reflected faith in the idea that rights were worth defending and promoting. To the extent that the human rights project itself was viewed with skepticism or hostility, there was little that hybridity could offer to circumvent its limitations.

F. Conclusion

As a result of its name and mandate, brokers at IGLHRC were conscious that their work was directed toward a particular constituency, and situated within a particular framework. Throughout my fieldwork, staff grappled with the practical limitations of LGBT politics and the politics of human rights. While these affinities limited their work in some ways, they were also hybridized or held in productive tension to produce innovative interventions in both LGBT and human rights advocacy.

In the chapters that follow, the work that brokers carried out under this banner is explored in more detail. While brokers demonstrated a remarkable ability to flexibly navigate LGBT politics and the limitations of the human rights framework, these moves had implications for their work with partners in the South, their production and dissemination of knowledge about gender, sexuality, and human rights transnationally, and their advocacy with the UN and regional mechanisms. As brokers constructed particular understandings of LGBT human rights, the choices they made had repercussions for the promotion and institutionalization of these rights transnationally.

CHAPTER FOUR: IGLHRC and the Partnership Principle in Practice

A. Introduction

At the time of my fieldwork, a widening field of NGOs were incorporating SOGI into rights-based advocacy, and brokers at IGLHRC were under increasing pressure to distinguish the organization from groups doing similar kinds of work. A major objective of the staff retreat in September 2010 was not only to determine IGLHRC's goals and the tactics necessary to achieve them, but also to identify what was *not* helpful for IGLHRC to pursue. Part of this involved defining a theory of change for the organization, which would determine what actions staff would or would not take.

When I asked what set IGLHRC apart in its institutional ideology and practice, Johnson outlined two aspects of its work:

> I could give you a lot of answers to this. I can give you the stock answer, which is that we highlight and foreground the voices of local activists, and work in partnership, and it's all true. But if I got really honest about it, I'd say what really makes us distinct is that we're broad and comprehensive. You know, I'm very proud, we have programs in four regions of the world at this point, and staff on the ground, and so I don't think *anybody* knows comprehensively what is going on, not in every single country at every single moment, but a sense of what the current overall, overarching situation is for LGBT in Africa, and how to respond. In Asia. In LAC. The Middle East is a new one, and a tricky one. So I think that's what we bring, and if we keep finding ways to funnel all this information and then bring it back out, then I think that's really where we're unique.

In the following two chapters, I look at these forms of promoting human rights in turn – firstly, at IGLHRC's partnerships with groups around the world, and secondly, at its role in producing, disseminating, and validating knowledge about LGBT issues. I suggest that both involve complexities that trouble any simple dichotomy between North and South or even between global and local advocacy. Brokers and programs

negotiated these complexities in their own ways, reflecting their priorities as well as the demands of the networks and sociopolitical systems in which they operated.

B. "Do No Harm" and the Partnership Principle at IGLHRC

During my fieldwork, a number of principles had become *de facto* tenets of IGLHRC's work. Brokers recognized that interference from a US-based LGBT NGO could be counterproductive for activists on the ground, and Johnson remarked that IGLHRC's primary responsibility was to "do no harm" in its advocacy. The principal means by which brokers attempted this was through a rhetorical and programmatic commitment to "partnership."

The emphasis on partnership at IGLHRC took place against a backdrop of wider trends in transnational work. Since the 1970s, the notion of partnership has been widely used by NGOs as a structuring principle for North-South relationships (Fowler 1998: 140; Mosse 2005: 5; Lewis 2007: 77-78). For many Northern NGOs, the rhetoric of helping, protecting, or saving Southerners has been replaced by that of empowerment and capacity building (Fowler 1998; Jordan and Van Tuijl 2000: 2051-2054; Gould 2005: 61; Lewis 2007: 22). In transnational work coordinated from the North, this is often fundamental to claims of legitimacy: "In claiming to act in the interests of others, NGOs that participate in transnational advocacy networks are likely to be challenged to justify their activities, to explain what makes them legitimate advocates" (Hudson 2001: 335). As much as the *impact* of the NGO, the form and depth of its *relationships* make it a legitimate actor: "While few NGOs claim directly to represent the poor, many claim that it is the transnational nature of their activities, their capacity to link micro-level grassroots operational work to more macro-level advocacy work through cross-border networks, that gives them their legitimacy" (Hudson 2001: 332). This has heightened as globalization has enabled Southern movements to speak for themselves, a shift that has powerfully shaped the advocacy of the Zapatistas, opponents of dam and deforestation projects, and others who have skillfully used media and information technologies to develop networks, share information, and rally global supporters (Castells 1997: 106; Sheller and Urry

2003; Keck and Sikkink 1998: 121-164; Jordan and Van Tuijl 2000; Khagram 2002; Kothari 2002).

As the term "partnership" becomes ubiquitous, the dynamics and power differentials of these relationships have come under scrutiny. Critics argue terms like "partnership" and "empowerment" are empty, and typically function to mask massive inequalities in resources, capacity, and power (Crawford 2003; Henkel and Stirrat 2001). Practitioners have responded that partnerships provide space for agendas to be negotiated, however imperfectly, among a network of actors, and should be evaluated empirically (Mallarangeng and Van Tuijl 2004). Both perspectives are partially accurate; partnerships can make transnational work more impactful but also make it more palatable (Mosse 2005: 10). Where partnerships are seen as self-evidently good, a closer examination of their dynamics offers a much richer understanding of power in transnational advocacy networks.

Partnership has been scrutinized in development anthropology, but the concept has also defined public health, human rights, and social justice interventions that span the North and South. The growth of transnational women's rights networks, for example, raised critical questions about power differentials within networks and their decisive effects in shaping agendas, priorities, and strategies (Mohanty 1991). Scholarly work has emerged that is similarly critical of neo-colonialism and paternalism in the work of transnational LGBT NGOs (Spurlin 2006; Hoad 2007: 60-67; Haritaworn et al. 2008). This scholarship has suggested that brokers have no business imposing their politics on the complexities of gender and sexuality in the South, and that doing so is not only culturally imperialist, but triggers violent backlashes against populations which are suddenly rendered visible and vulnerable (Massad 2007: 160-161; see Thomas 2002: 84-85).

Brokers at IGLHRC were aware of these critiques of Northern intervention, and encountered them in their activist and academic work. Occasionally, they were specifically aimed at IGLHRC and its staff, particularly in the mid-2000s. At that time, the increasing focus on the UN and abandonment of direct services to asylum seekers left many feeling that the organization was growing disconnected from the grassroots. Dissent within IGLHRC became public; disgruntled brokers wrote an

anonymous blog describing their grievances and the gay press reported the mass resignation of a number of staff (Weill-Greenberg 2006). Many brokers left IGLHRC, including Alejandra Sarda, who departed after a decade and publicly explained: "The reasons that motivated this decision are my disagreement with the political vision implemented by the current Executive Director and my need to prioritize my work in a South-South context" (Duque 2006).

In this context, the valorization of partnership by brokers functioned both as a defensive maneuver and a practical means of doing impactful work. As Ettelbrick suggested in an interview, partnership was considered necessary to do transnational advocacy well: "I think wherever you come from in the world, if you can build solid relationships, build working relationships with activists, and build the trust, that's key." During my fieldwork, partnership remained a mantra of brokers at IGLHRC, whose politics and past experiences committed them to mutuality with groups in the South.

It is important to stress that brokers typically emphasized partnership out of a sincere commitment to egalitarianism and mutuality. Brokers at IGLHRC had multiple affiliations with academia, development, and human rights practice, and their commitment to partnership was heavily influenced by their backgrounds and politics. (One staff member recalled how, in a previous job, she automatically rejected internship applicants who wrote about "saving" women from sex trafficking or genital cutting.) For many brokers, the idea that local movements should advise and direct any transnational solidarity simply went without saying.[35]

As a result of broad trends in transnational work, pressures on the organization, and the politics of brokers themselves, the ethos of partnership was ubiquitous at IGLHRC. In development, it meant working with local or regional groups when submitting proposals to funders or implementing projects. In communications, it meant consulting in-country activists before producing any calls

[35] It is notable that the term "partner" had a distinct valence in LGBT advocacy. Brokers at IGLHRC and other LGBT NGOs overwhelmingly referred to their significant other as their "partner," and the term carried strong connotations of intimacy, trust, and commitment. This was not necessarily the case in other areas or movements, where "partner" has more contractual or businesslike connotations.

to action in their jurisdiction, sharing and verifying information, and foregrounding local groups' materials on IGLHRC's website. In programs, partnership was realized in myriad ways, but was often expressed in terms of capacity building and technical assistance. Kilonzo explained what that practically meant in an interview:

> With capacity building, different countries are at different levels. Some are just emerging and young. Some have had previous trainings and work with us, so people are at different levels. So [it's] how to organize, to even start off, get support, do a proposal, fundraise, how to document human rights. There are different needs with different groups. So that technical assistance, sometimes it may require you help people with documenting skills, or… if there is a legal issue required, working with lawyers, advising with the various options, even the lawyers themselves having a particular strategy that is sensitive to LGBT issues. And then at a different level, different groups may [need] to issue a press statement, or an alert, or different mechanisms in how to respond to media, so they may need you to even help them with drafting, putting the ideas together. There are different technical supports, people at different levels in different countries.

As Kilonzo's description suggests, brokers had considerable leeway to meet the needs of partner organizations (Lewis 2007: 206-207). What partnerships would practically entail was rarely known at the outset. As in development, "implementation does not mean carrying out an already-planned programme but is a constant process of negotiation" (Bierschenk 1988: 146; see Mosse 2001: 160). Despite their commitment to the principle of partnership, what brokers provided to partners, what they expected of them, and how they responded to conflicts were all negotiated processually. During the period of my fieldwork, it became clear that the commitment to partnership still left a great deal to be negotiated in practice.

Indeed, despite daily references to "partners" and "partnership," these concepts were far from defined at IGLHRC. As Johnson pointed out to me, "partnership is a very broad term, and we don't have formal partnerships, either, so the people with whom we engage in strategic relationships are many." As scholars think beyond partnership about notions of "political responsibility," negotiations that occur within partnerships are critically important (Jordan and Van Tuijl 2000). Who were brokers referring to when they spoke of partners and partnership? What did they feel was owed to them, and what was expected in return? When did

partnership define the work that brokers undertook, and when were the wishes of partners qualified or overridden by other priorities? Brokers were regularly confronted with these questions, and their responses shaped their advocacy.

C. Defining and Developing Partnerships

The partners IGLHRC worked with were not a homogeneous entity, and brokers worked with them for distinct reasons that the term "partnership" elides. As Jones reflected:

> There's different approaches to partnerships. There's the partnership with a comrade who really reflects our politics who we're not embarrassed of, who respects and appreciates our work. There's a partnership with an organization because they're the only game in town, and there's more value to working with the only credible LGBT voice than there is drawback. We partner with incipient activists and organizations all the time.

During my fieldwork, a number of considerations were taken into account in forming, developing, and terminating partnerships. Jones's assessment neatly summarizes three key reasons brokers partnered with Southern groups: a history of collaboration and trust, the pragmatic utility of working with specific groups, and the desire to build movements where they were weak or disconnected from transnational networks. Although these rationales frequently shifted or blurred together, they were all used to justify working with partners at different times.

Partnerships Based on a History of Collaboration and Trust

Many of IGLHRC's partnerships were strengthened by the longstanding personal and professional ties of its staff. As a result of their previous work, many brokers were in contact with activists around the globe whose advice and collaboration they sought on a regular basis. Ettelbrick recalled that "the IGLHRC staff has always been very diverse… We had people from so many different places – different degrees of

connection, I guess, to their countries of origin, but many still very much connected, and able, then, to bring in different perspectives to our work."

The Africa Program provides a good illustration of the significance of these lasting ties. From her previous work with the ICJ, Kilonzo had strong relationships with lawyers, human rights defenders, and human rights groups in Africa whom she continued to draw upon and work with at IGLHRC. These were particularly helpful in her advocacy in regional mechanisms like the AU, the ACHPR, and, to a lesser extent, blocs like the East African Community (EAC). As a Kenyan citizen, Kilonzo was particularly close to various members of GALCK, and served on their board. Ukwimi drew heavily on relationships formed during his time at PSI. He was a prominent figure in the Zambia-based Friends of Rainka and was regionally active in AMSHeR, and continued to work closely with these groups at IGLHRC. Similarly, Mukasa was a founder of SMUG, and an iconic figure in Uganda's LGBT movement. He had been prominent in some of the early victories in the country, particularly *Ooyo and Mukasa v. Attorney General of Uganda*, which established that the rights enshrined in Uganda's Constitution extend to LGBT and *kuchu* persons. As the only self-identified transgender broker at IGLHRC, Mukasa was a key liaison with regional transgender and intersex groups like Gender Dynamix in Cape Town. The importance of personal relationships was also evident among brokers themselves; Kilonzo helped with legal strategy for *Ooyo and Mukasa*, and Johnson hired her as Mukasa's supervisor just two years later.

These relationships were critical in a movement dominated by a number of visible figureheads and their organizations. This was evident in sub-Saharan Africa, where activists, their organizations, and the movement in a given country often functioned virtually synonymously. (In a telling instance, an individual activist visiting the office in Cape Town was half-jokingly introduced to me as "the LGBT movement in Lesotho.") When brokers were close to these figureheads, IGLHRC was often intensely involved as a partner and supporter of their work. When brokers distanced themselves from these figureheads because of political, logistical, or interpersonal differences, it introduced strain that might not have been as trying with alternative partners in an area.

In many cases, these relationships provided shorthand for who brokers could turn to when information and guidance were urgently needed. When international media reported that a man in Uzbekistan had been arrested doing HIV/AIDS outreach, for example, nobody in New York could think of Uzbek groups they had partnered with in the past. In the absence of a direct contact in Uzbekistan, they identified other trusted figures in Central Asia who could be contacted to confirm the arrest and advise whether advocacy might be helpful.

Brokers preferred these established relationships, and trust was often definitive in where and how advocacy strategies were pursued (Annist 2005; Glasbergen 2007: 7-9). The bulk of IGLHRC's publicly visible work in late 2009 and early 2010 was on the tabling of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, the near-passage of revisions banning same-sex activity in Rwanda, the arrest of Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza in Malawi on charges of "unnatural offenses" and "gross indecency," and sporadic arrests and mob violence in Tanzania, Senegal, and Kenya. The incidents were time-sensitive, volatile, and intensely scrutinized by local and international media, and IGLHRC's interventions in all of them could be traced to relationships with in-country partners established before the crises arose.

The Only Game in Town: Pragmatism, Necessity, and Strategy

Although IGLHRC preferred to work with trusted partners, it was not possible for a staff of 18 people to maintain deep and lasting relationships with activists around the globe. When incidents arose where brokers felt they *had* to respond, they often worked with groups with whom they did not have the history of shared trust, respect, or mutuality they might have preferred.

The imperative to respond is in many ways a Northern one, with both professional and personal dimensions. Often, the need to find partners was acutely felt. As an NGO promoting "Human Rights for Everyone, Everywhere," it was difficult for brokers to justify inaction on incidents brought to their attention by activists, other NGOs, journalists, donors, and the board. Upper management had to answer to these groups when IGLHRC failed to speak out against a human rights violation. A

moral imperative to respond was also internalized to some extent by brokers; debates about what IGLHRC should say or do about an incident left room for maneuver, but frequently presumed that something had to be said or done at all. Indeed, on a personal level, many brokers worried that they were morally or ethically responsible for their failure to act to stop apparent injustice. As Cook noted, this was exacerbated by the assumption that a failure to do something could have dire consequences:

> [W]e have to look at certain circumstances, and say, in this circumstance, is letting go really going to hurt anybody? Is it really? Is sending the CEDAW report really going to hurt Argentinean activists the way that it is? Or is it the fear that it might that's driving us, that it might hurt? [...] You're like, if I can do something, I'd rather do something, because I'm scared that if change doesn't happen, I'll look back and go, if only I had stayed up all night once and written the Argentinean CEDAW report, and then all those trans activists in Argentina would be happy because their agenda was achieved. But we have to let go of some of that, because some of it is not our own personal egos, necessarily, but like these kind of meta-activist egos, for social justice activists, where we get into this whole "we can change the world" kind of thing.

In the most sensational and heavily publicized incidents in particular, brokers were pressured to actively seek out and assist NGOs that were leading local responses. These partnerships frequently arose from necessity rather than any lengthy process of mutual accommodation and trust.

A few of IGLHRC's partners were partners because they were considered "the only game in town." Brokers used the phrase in interviews and conversations to explain why they worked with partners whose ideologies differed from their own or from IGLHRC's mission. When partners were dubbed "the only game in town," they were almost always the only self-identified LGBT or pro-LGBT group that was prominent and visible to IGLHRC in a country.

In this formulation, two traits were of particular relevance: that a group identified as LGBT or supported LGBT rights, and that it situated itself in a geographic area, typically a nation-state, and spoke for its inhabitants. Notably, the latter was often the primary criterion for credibility in a crisis situation. Partners

tended to be from the nation-state where a crisis occurred, rather than groups from neighboring nation-states or regional networks who specialized in the thematic issues or complexities at hand.

These partnerships typically lasted for the duration of a crisis but decreased in intensity when the situation had calmed. They were revived in the event of another crisis or fortuitous opportunities for the partner and IGLHRC to work together. Groups considered "the only game in town" that showed promise for long-term cooperation were subtly but gradually encouraged to become stronger partners through capacity building and technical assistance. It was primarily when groups were ethically suspect that brokers kept them at a distance and minimally invested in their growth.

Reaching Out and Building Movements Globally

As outlined in Chapter 1, the idea of movement building has become increasingly central to IGLHRC's mission. During my fieldwork, brokers made concerted efforts to expand the network of pro-LGBT groups with whom they had relationships. This was not simply about making contacts, but about integrating groups into a global movement. Brokers linked activists to potential funders, sponsored their participation in conferences and trainings, and involved them in learning exchanges where nascent groups were paired with established groups in neighboring countries. Partnerships were further strengthened by joint work on grant proposals, research projects, legal challenges, emergency responses, presentations at regional and international forums, and the preparation of shadow reports where NGOs documented and presented information to treaty bodies at the UN.

The concept of movement building was heavily promoted at IGLHRC. In an interview, Johnson recalled his own initial efforts in the Africa Program:

> Of course, there were our files, of who we'd been in touch with over the years. We had a database, and I used it. There were also a couple of established organizations already. A big part of the sort of identification of who the players are has been Behind the Mask. I mean, they have a really

> good network, so I had some conversations with them. I did a lot of travel, where I would go to meet [people]… I think the very first convening we did after I became Africa Program Coordinator was at the African Commission. And it was a big convening, I think we had 25 people. And I didn't know all of them, so I did a lot of calling around, talking to people. Do you know this person? Does she do good work? Does she really represent queer communities? Who's in her orbit? And it's interesting, because if I go back and I look at that list of who came, a lot of them were people I didn't know, but it was a good list. I think we also got to know people through working together on projects.

In this kind of outreach to young or nascent movements, the question of who *became* a partner was an open one. The development of partnerships depended on a complex interplay of structural and ideological factors that primed brokers at IGLHRC to interact with – and partner with – specific groups. Some of these related to ideology and self-identification, and some had to do with the ways that networks legitimated and promoted particular actors.

Firstly, groups were most visible to brokers in transnational NGOs when they framed their work in terms that those brokers could understand and work with. Globally, groups that were most likely to come to IGLHRC's attention as real or potential partners were precisely those that self-identified as "gay" or "LGBT" in their name or their advocacy. They were also those that loosely operated with a rights-based framework, or could do so when necessary. Logistically, groups which were recognizable as organizations and had a name, staff, website, and bank account were better positioned to be supported by transnational funders and NGOs (Carothers and Ottaway 2000: 13; Sikkink 2002: 308-309). Few of the groups IGLHRC worked with were wholly informal or fluid, although brokers did seek the opinions of individuals without a formal role in a group. As Johnson noted, these were not always the most visible players:

> [Y]ou've got your formal organizations and now, more and more, there are more and more formal organizations, but then there are these individuals who are the community gatekeepers – you know, when folks are in trouble, that's who they go to, the *doyenne* of the community. And sometimes, they're not the people who transition into becoming formal leaders, because that's not what they're good at. They're like the mothers, and those people are really important in terms of really knowing what's on the ground, knowing

> when the situation is getting tricky, knowing how to put security issues into play, so they're the formal structures and then they're the informal structures. And then there are the allies, the lawyers, the medical personnel, just the folks who really care and make their resources available.

These people were often difficult if not impossible to identify through formal channels, and required long-term, deep engagement in a particular region to identify and work with.

Of course, these were not insurmountable barriers. Notably, IGLHRC's closest partners during my fieldwork did not use "gay" or "lesbian" in their titles. Both SMUG in Uganda and CEDEP in Malawi operated under different frameworks – the former used "sexual minorities," and the latter used MSM and other most at-risk populations (MARPs). Many of IGLHRC's partners worked with a rights-based framework, but did not solely operate within that sphere; they also emphasized public health implications, particularly where same-sex activity was illegal or heavily stigmatized and appealing to rights rang hollow. In MENA and Africa, where illegality and stigma posed very real challenges for young organizations, many groups with whom brokers worked were neither LGBT-identified nor solely focused on human rights. What these groups were able to do, however, was speak that language; they could deploy terms like MSM, WSW, LGBT, and SOGI to articulate what kind of advocacy they planned to undertake, and to frame that advocacy for IGLHRC and others using a human rights framework. When registering with the government, lobbying politicians, or advertising services, these groups at times chose to foreground different aspects of their work – and within them, individual brokers had different understandings of the centrality or relevance of LGBT advocacy to their mandate.

Secondly, the identification of new partners was powerfully aided by a wider network of activists, NGOs, and funders that collectively legitimated certain groups as the most credible representatives of or advocates for LGBT populations in a particular place. Potential partners became visible by traveling in the same circles as influential donors, academics, and activists, including brokers at IGLHRC. The

density of brokers' networks meant that personal and professional connections could decisively establish the credibility of new or peripheral actors.

In particular virtual and physical spaces, Northern brokers were most likely to meet Southern brokers and form the relationships, whether personal or professional, upon which partnerships were based. Most brokers at IGLHRC were on two mailing lists – a semi-private list for LGBT activists and Euro-Queer, a public list for updates from Europe and beyond. One way for incipient groups to assert their presence in the wider field of LGBT and human rights organizations was to post on these lists, making themselves immediately visible to key players and alerting them of the work they were undertaking. The relationships and resources that facilitated attendance at conferences, convenings, and summits further cemented the place of particular activists and groups in sexual rights networks.[36]

Still other groups emerged incidentally, often at regional and international conferences where gender and sexuality were discussed. Brokers met activists at the CSW at the UN, lunches and discussions sponsored by New York-based groups like the American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR) and the American Jewish World Service (AJWS), and events at Columbia, NYU, CUNY, and the New School for Social Research. Connections were made in summits like ICASA in Dakar in 2008 and the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna in 2010. In these venues, brokers met colleagues who expressed interest in their work.

In one paradigmatic example, brokers were invited to a brown-bag lunch sponsored by a funding body that had just given a grant to a young group from West Africa. The funder was eager to link Johnson with a representative of the group, and I watched as the three strategized about conditions in the country where the group operated, exchanged business cards, and pledged to stay in touch. Thanks to shared membership on key list-servs, I stayed appraised of the grantee's work as he became a regular participant in regional and transnational discussions. A little over a year later, I ran into him at a conference in Johannesburg, where I was launching IGLHRC's book on blackmail and extortion and he was giving a summary of his

[36] IGLHRC was not a funder, but did help facilitate projects and travel for activists, as I discuss in Chapter 2.

group's programs and networking with funders and NGOs on the continent. In these varied spaces, new links were not only forged, but bolstered and legitimated.

Of course, brokers at IGLHRC had individual preferences as to whom they preferred to work with, whom they implicitly trusted, and where they looked for groups to support. As conditions improved for LGBT people, brokers in the LAC Program worked with increasingly friendly governments and the Organization of American States (OAS) to win political concessions. They explored non-state persecution, devoting an Activist Institute to the topic of religious fundamentalisms. Prior to working at IGLHRC, Kilonzo worked for the ICJ when there was widespread skepticism about whether mainstream human rights NGOs should take on LGBT issues. She strongly preferred to build alliances in civil society and work with mainstream NGOs, and was critical of the tendency for LGBT groups to solely or overwhelmingly work on SOGI issues. Alizadeh expressed a strong desire to work with those who were reluctant to publicly associate with IGLHRC, including religious hardliners opposed to its work. He called this "a constant challenge and struggle, because there is a strong desire to choose who the partners are, and I have a tendency to see the other side of the argument." Working broadly made sense to him in a region where visible partnerships with self-identified LGBT NGOs were controversial and risky. By contrast, Poore was skeptical of working with hardliners, seeing little common cause in their interpretations of sexual rights. Instead, she drew on her previous work on violence against women in Asia and preferred to work with feminist groups, particularly LBT groups, to create space for women under the rubric of sexual rights. All of these, and the priorities to which they gave rise, gave the regional programs particular ideas of who might be important partners in their work. Brokers in New York were generally comfortable with this diversity of tactics, deferring to program staff on what was or was not strategic in their regions. Combined with the geographical remove of most programs from headquarters in New York, that allowed for a considerable degree of heterogeneity in IGLHRC's partnerships.

D. The Partnership Ideal in Practice

Although brokers valued partnership and the egalitarianism and mutuality implied by the term, a number of factors prevented this ideal from being fully realized in practice. Some of these were logistical or technical. It was sometimes difficult to get answers or opinions from partners who were busy, were traveling, or could or would not respond to email messages or telephone calls. At times, too, partners gave ambiguous answers, changed their minds, or agreed to campaigns half-heartedly enough that brokers opted not to pursue them.

In many cases, however, the stumbling blocks to partnership were more predictable and regular. In the following section, I look at five ways that the partnership ideal was complicated or thwarted in practice, namely, when there were no clear partners, when partners were unable or unwilling to be visible, when partners had different values, politics, and standards, when there were multiple and competing partners, and when partners were self-sufficient. While each partnership had its own dynamics, these stumbling blocks complicated a best-case scenario wherein there was a stable, visible, compatible, credible, and eager partner with whom to work, and forced brokers to negotiate their commitment to partnership in practice.

When There Were No Clear Partners

The ideals and commitments of an organization are not only evident in its frontstage advocacy and published outputs, but in what brokers opt *not* to do. This was evident with *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear: Human Rights Violations and Challenges to the LGBT Movement in Senegal*, a report which was researched, written, and published before management in New York decided not to release it on the eve of its launch. The demise of *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear* occurred in a field where IGLHRC no longer had clear, vocal partners, leaving the organization vulnerable to criticism by other stakeholders in the country. When those stakeholders objected to the release of the report, IGLHRC had few options but to shelve it indefinitely.

The report was the pet project of Joel Nana, IGLHRC's Program Associate for West Africa. When Nana abruptly left in 2009, the report was briefly in limbo before being passed to Clarke in New York, who assigned the project to me before her departure at the end of that year.

The completion of the report was complicated by a variety of factors. IGLHRC's institutional knowledge about Senegal (and indeed, West Africa) was largely lost when Nana departed. Records of who had been interviewed and how to reach them were missing, as were many of the citations and any advocacy strategy for the report. I had no contacts in Senegal, did not speak Wolof, and my reading comprehension of French was limited. After Clarke's departure, the project was supervised by Johnson and Schultz, both of whom had multiple demands on their limited time in the office.

In spite of these obstacles, other pressures militated for the report's release. A worrying pattern of abuses had escalated in Senegal, with anti-LGBT rhetoric from politicians and religious leaders increasing steadily. Donors had committed funds to the project, and brokers had commissioned None on Record: Voices of Queer Africa (NOR) to record audio profiles of LGBT individuals in Senegal. A draft was already finished with firsthand testimony, including narratives from same-sex practicing women who were typically absent from research on SOGI in Senegal. Brokers were also aware that HRW was working on its own report on the topic, and faced pressure to be the first NGO to launch its publication. While there were recognizable shortcomings in the project, a great deal of time, energy, and resources had been invested in its completion.

The proposed solution was to conduct additional interviews using Johnson's contacts, to update and revise the text, and to release the report in time to move on to other drafts in the pipeline. The project continued throughout the fall with plans to launch the report in the winter.

In December, an email was sent to individuals who were consulted or interviewed for the report. It included the four-page Executive Summary, which contained key findings of the report and recommendations for the government of Senegal, neighboring governments, human rights NGOs, and religious leaders. In

February, a final message was sent asking about friendly press who might be willing to run a story on the report within Senegal when it was released the following week.

On Thursday of that week, a message was received from a white foreign national living in Senegal, expressing concern that the report's release between two major religious holidays would reignite the anti-LGBT fervor that had put same-sex practicing persons at risk in the past. None of the Senegalese partners had registered any objections, but those of us coordinating the launch of the report – Johnson, Jones, Kilonzo, and myself – discussed the possibility of scaling back any media outreach within Senegal and Francophone Africa.

By Friday, however, I received a message from one of the Senegalese HIV/AIDS service providers who had been interviewed for the report, expressing concern that an international LGBT group issuing criticism of the government's handling of LGBT issues was likely to do more harm than good. Over the course of the morning, a number of HIV/AIDS groups in the US, Canada, and France contacted IGLHRC to let brokers know they had heard concerns about the report, and to request that it not be released at that time.

The concerns piled up as the business day ended. Johnson was away at the Creating Change conference in Houston, Texas. Jones had just arrived at IGLHRC, and Cook, who would normally be in charge of reports, had been unable to start work because of her visa delay. I had contacted almost 50 news outlets, and six of them, including the Associated Press and Voice of America, were planning to run features on the findings of the report on the day of its release. Thomas had spent dozens of hours crafting pages with interactive timelines, mp3s of Senegalese people telling their stories, and a PDF of the report, all of which were about to go live. A launch event was scheduled the following week at CUNY; I had advertised it widely, invited speakers and coordinated their travel, and planned a reception.

Nonetheless, as various actors made their apprehension known, it was unanimously agreed that the launch had to be postponed in light of security concerns being raised by local groups and their wider networks. The decision was made to postpone the release until after the religious holidays. In later discussions,

it gradually became clear that stakeholders preferred the report not be released at all.

Some objected to the content of the report, which they felt clumsily described religious and political dynamics and was obviously not written by a Senegalese researcher. (In fact, the final version had been edited by myself, an anthropologist who was horrified to find himself in the middle of the same dynamics that postcolonial critics of transnational LGBT NGOs had vehemently criticized.) Others hinted at a more political calculation; activists were making inroads on HIV prevention for MSM, and worried that aggressive LGBT advocacy would make them targets for political and religious authorities. Even if the report did not reach officials, the perception that Senegal was actively persecuting LGBT people and imprisoning HIV/AIDS activists would likely jeopardize the large sums of funding for HIV/AIDS prevention that had poured into the country in the belief that it was liberal and stable.

The report, which had cost upwards of $15,000 to produce, was embargoed and brokers were instructed to not let any copies leave the office. In the following weeks, brokers thought at length about what diffuse but insistent skepticism from various stakeholders meant for their advocacy. The partners with whom the report was conceptualized were no longer key players; And Ligeey had disbanded, its leader had died, and its members were in exile. The author of the report, too, was no longer at IGLHRC to work with stakeholders in Senegal.

Instead, IGLHRC was confronted with a chorus of voices, none of which fit the mold for a conventional partner. The individual who registered the initial objection was a foreign national who was not Senegalese, but worked with a coalition formed to respond to an earlier set of arrests in the country. He worried that the report would disrupt the work of those who were trying to frame their advocacy through a Senegalese lens, particularly since it had not been formally clarified or funded yet. He was backed by a service provider who *was* Senegalese, but did not identify as LGBT, MSM, or in any way same-sex practicing. The pair had strong ties, both within and beyond Senegal, that made their voices impossible to ignore. By contrast, IGLHRC's strongest partner from And Ligeey had left the country as a refugee to

Brussels. Another interviewee, a citizen of another West African country who was based in Senegal, angrily emailed IGLHRC arguing that the report should be released and that violations against LGBT people, not simply MSM, should be publicized. The one individual IGLHRC had worked closely with who was Senegalese, MSM, and in Senegal was not part of the coalition, but, when presented with its concerns, did not object to them.

Upper management at IGLHRC concluded they could not justify releasing the report given these criticisms, and indeed, did not feel comfortable doing so given the threat of a backlash against LGBT Senegalese. In Johnson's words, "We did great work on Senegal, but we dropped the ball because we weren't having that kind of communication on a deep level during that period from when Joel left… Even when Joel was here, we were skimming. And it came back and bit us in the ass."

This was true in spite of the fact that, to IGLHRC's knowledge, there was not a single MSM, LGBT, or queer-identified person in the coalition that claimed to speak for those groups. As Jones noted, this spoke to the difficulty of reconciling partnership with a consciousness about power within networks:

> I think Senegal was very revealing on a number of fronts, but one thing that happened in Senegal was, we *were* talking with some of the key LGBT folks, but they're working at a basically underground community level, they're not at the level of setting national advocacy agendas. And so even though we were talking to folks who, in many ways, are the most credible, it wasn't enough to just talk to them, because at the end of the day, they're not going to move an advocacy agenda. That's not where their community is, and fair enough. But to do good human rights work, I think one of the biggest challenges is actually mapping movements, and understanding who has the power, and what kind of power, and what kind of access.

Indeed, one challenge of mapping movements was taking into account those voices that were *not* heard. Strikingly, none of the voices influencing the decision were women. Codou Bop, a Senegalese activist and journalist, has pointed out that this reflects the sexual politics of Senegal, where MSM get legal, material, and symbolic protection from their unwillingness to confront the government. By contrast, women's organizations have been far bolder in vocally criticizing sexism and

heterosexism, challenging the rise of religious fundamentalism, and calling for LGBT rights in the country (Bop 2010). At IGLHRC, brokers were frustrated both by the perceived paternalism of HIV organizations led by white men and straight men who had no incentive to open space for LGBT Senegalese and by the fact that the voices of women in the report would not be heard as a result.[37]

Without knowing which LGBT Senegalese to work with, how to access them, or who spoke for whom, but knowing that a small number of individuals in Senegal had made their objections publicly known, the report was shelved. In the aftermath, brokers reiterated the importance of strong, independent partners. Many were frustrated that those who advised, endorsed, and helped with the report had not vouched for it when it came under fire or expressed their concerns until days before the launch. Citing partnership, however, they concluded they could not responsibly release the report.

When Partners Were Covert

A second complication with partnership arose in instances where partners insisted on being covert given the risks of visibility. This was particularly pressing for the MENA Program, as few groups in the region wanted to openly associate with a US-based NGO explicitly working on LGBT human rights. This led to the formation of covert partnerships, wherein brokers worked privately with groups to understand their needs, develop strategy, and link activists in contexts that were politically hostile to their demands.

The development of covert partnerships where NGOs work with each other secretly is relatively undertheorized in scholarship on transnational advocacy. In the classic "boomerang" model, domestic actors use networks to leverage external pressure and win concessions from their government (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 12-13). This works well when visibility and the exposure of abuses produce moral,

[37] Notably, HRW did release its report in October 2010, without any major repercussions reported in Senegal. The report was developed with many of the same stakeholders, although it focuses exclusively on men who are gay or perceived to be gay (HRW 2010).

political, or economic leverage (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 207-209). In places where that leverage does not exist, or agents of the state actually *gain* political power by denying rights to LGBT persons, this classic model is of limited utility and may easily backfire.

Many of IGLHRC's tactics were premised on the utility of the boomerang model. The bulk of the outputs from Communications – reports, action alerts, updates, letters to governments, submissions to treaty bodies and Special Procedures, and even public condemnations of states – were, at their core, tools to name and shame states that committed or allowed violations against LGBT persons. In these instances, IGLHRC's model of partnership worked fairly well, as brokers consulted local groups about the efficacy of action and the content and targeting of any interventions.

In relationships where visibility was a liability, however, brokers had fewer tools at their disposal. Some criticized the lack of support for partnerships where naming and shaming had to be avoided, and where long-term material support would likely have more impact. As Alizadeh noted:

> We don't have a model for MENA, to be honest with you… Everybody knows more or less what the needs are in the region. But the problem is that nobody wants to accept responsibility for them… [O]rganizations just simply say, oh, well, this is not what we do. But this is what they need. Really! It's like, we're here to help people who are victims of Katrina, but we don't provide water, we don't provide shelter, we don't provide food, we don't provide jobs, we just hold their hands and pray for them. Well, that's not exactly what they need. I feel this is the core of the problem. In the Middle East, you have a very young group of activists who are trying to find their way around. The problem is the oppressive system. And that means that first and foremost, you need protection. And protection comes in many ways, from supporting the flow of refugees, something that nobody wants to accept responsibility for, simply because it's a very expensive operation. The second thing is that you need to lay foundations. The problem with internationals like us is we already think we know what the problem is. You never listen to people. Regardless of what your sickness is, I already have this cure, this pill that cures all sorts of ailments.

In these partnerships, IGLHRC's role was difficult to determine. Partners generally did not want IGLHRC to lobby for LGBT rights or openly criticize governments. For

their part, brokers at IGLHRC did not see their organization as a funder, as an asylum or refugee agency, or as a source of documentation and reporting in the region. Without its tactical arsenal, IGLHRC's role in the MENA region was an uncertain one, and mostly involved privately linking activists to each other and campaigning in contexts like Turkey, where groups regularly invited international pressure.

Covert relationships were also challenging when brokers faced criticism from those who were privy to their frontstage advocacy but not the backstage arrangements they privately made. In some instances, this occurred when brokers appeared to act without the consent of local groups. The blind intervention of transnational NGOs into alleged human rights violations in the Middle East has been criticized for generating backlash and proving counterproductive (Massad 2002; S. Long 2009). To outsiders, it seemed that IGLHRC still risked this from time to time. Brokers periodically issued alerts or press releases without a local group listed as a partner, giving the impression that they were operating independently. In actual fact, this was almost always when partners felt it was helpful to bring violations to light, but *not* helpful to expose activists working to counter them locally. When petitions and letters were going directly to governments, for example, they indicated that international pressure was helpful but should not identify groups in the country. During my fieldwork, at least two high-profile interventions appeared to lack local support, but were privately shaped by partners.

Conversely, brokers were occasionally criticized for failing to act when it seemed morally or politically imperative. A high-profile example was when Michael Lucas, a pornography mogul, was vocally critical of IGLHRC in *Out*, an LGBT magazine, following the Celebration of Courage gala in 2010. Noting his displeasure at IGLHRC's lack of visible advocacy in the MENA region, Lucas said, "They're so afraid to say that it's the Islamic countries in the Middle East and Africa that are responsible for all these death penalties. It's ridiculous, this little piece of shit organization. If you want to speak the truth, speak all the truth" (Morgan 2010: 56). What Lucas failed to realize, and what nobody at IGLHRC could say, was that two brokers from IGLHRC were absent from the gala precisely because they were quietly

meeting with activists and groups across the Middle East, identifying ways that IGLHRC could be a better partner and working to develop a strategy that would be sensitive to the needs of groups in the region.

The juxtaposition of criticisms from postcolonial theorists like Massad and neoconservatives like Lucas indicates how challenging it could be for brokers to espouse partnership and then make political interventions when partners were unable or unwilling to be named. IGLHRC was so avowedly committed to planning its interventions with local groups that exceptions demanded explanation, but these exceptions were precisely where tacit silences were critically important.

Importantly, visibility was not static, and even overt partnerships were strained when exposed to wider scrutiny. These tensions were evident in IGLHRC's work in Malawi. IGLHRC had worked with CEDEP since May 2007, when Johnson and CEDEP's Gift Trapence attended a meeting to launch Pan-African ILGA. Brokers from the organizations then cooperated on presentations at ICASA, advocacy at the ACHPR, research for *Nowhere to Turn*, and lobbying around PEPFAR funding from the US. They continued their work together after December 9, 2009, when CEDEP's offices were raided by police and a staff member was arrested on charges of possessing pornography. It was while IGLHRC's offices were closed for the holidays on December 29, 2009, however, that staff from CEDEP contacted brokers at IGLHRC to share that two individuals had been arrested following media reports of a same-sex engagement ceremony.

Notably, the first statement supporting the couple did not come from CEDEP, but from a group called the Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR). Over the following months, however, brokers at IGLHRC primarily liaised with CEDEP because they had worked together in the past and its staff was known to support LGBT rights. Technically, CEDEP maintained that it worked more broadly. The group publicly insisted that "improving the welfare of minority groups, including prisoners, sex workers, and those in same-sex relationships, is crucial to the health and well-being of all peoples" (CEDEP 2009). CEDEP primarily worked on HIV, and was not specifically an LGBT rights organization, although some staff were sympathetic to or passionate about that advocacy.

As the case made headlines, activists and journalists regularly referred to CEDEP as an LGBT rights organization. This was not simply presumption on the part of brokers in the North; the idea that CEDEP represented LGBT people in Malawi was actively cultivated by its leadership in calmer times, and Northern NGOs that were committed to partnership had come to rely on CEDEP's guidance and expertise. Throughout Chimbalanga and Monjeza's imprisonment, CEDEP's home page focused almost exclusively on the couple and MSM issues, with only a brief mention of prisoners, sex workers, or other at-risk populations in its mission statement. Trapence was vocally supportive of LGBT rights, and was very visible in media inside and outside of Malawi. For all intents and purposes, CEDEP appeared to be a pro-LGBT MSM organization, and few people outside the group had reason to question this impression.

For many rank-and-file members, however, this framing of CEDEP's work was upsetting. As Kilonzo noted:

> All the press alerts and releases, briefings, were like, we are consulting with the only LGBT organization in Malawi. And the members were like, who told these people we were an LGBT organization? Okay, people have known them to be supportive, but they've been in the closet. So the media was busy out here in the world outing them, and you know, they did not take it well, and for different reasons. Some of them have moved into government positions. Some are members of parliament. And nobody sat back to ask, who are these individuals we are calling CEDEP? Because there was only one activist who owned up to all those media reports going around and said, no, I'm gay in Malawi, and I'm fearing for my life. The rest were under the cover, no, no, we're a public health organization.

The crisis proved internally divisive at CEDEP. Many of its members, supporters, and funders were frustrated by the amount of time, energy, and attention the case of Chimbalanga and Monjeza demanded from the leadership. As Kilonzo noted:

> The community in Malawi, for fear of being victimized, they first of all shied away from the stories. They did not want to be quoted directly, and then even the one organization that people knew to be supportive of LGBT, they were internally conflicted – do we do public health, or do we address LGBT? And the organization almost collapsed, because internally, they were like,

> publicly, we cannot tell people we support gay rights, because we are not a gay rights organization, we are a public health organization.

During Chimbalanga and Monjeza's detention, the work CEDEP had done on public health and human rights in calmer times, often working closely with transnational NGOs like IGLHRC, was reconfigured in a time of crisis. Suddenly, the spotlight of the media in Malawi and around the globe was focused on its work, widely and publicly defining it in a way that few of its members were in a position to dispute and forcing an internal crisis among its members about its mission.

Covert partnerships are rarely discussed in analyses of transnational advocacy around women's rights, the environment, or human rights, although groups in these networks may be more or less explicit about their transnational affiliations.[38] In partnerships where groups were not able to publicly affiliate with IGLHRC or grew uncomfortable with their affiliation during crises, however, secrecy was sometimes essential for functional advocacy. Models of partnership that did not leave some room for adaptation and informality were unlikely to make headway in countries where these were necessary tools for work with Northern groups.

When Partners Had Different Values, Politics, and Standards

A third difficulty arose when the values, politics, or standards of brokers at IGLHRC differed from those of their partners. This was less of an issue with trusted partners but was often acutely felt in partnerships forged out of necessity. Brokers were invested in the leadership of local groups, but had other ideological investments as well. When partners did not share commitments to values like inclusiveness or accountability, this introduced tension into a partnership.

The valences of partnership as a concept are critical in understanding IGLHRC's relationships with groups around the world. In transnational work, partnership tends to be used to level inequalities from histories of economic,

[38] Notably, AI and other groups have had to adapt their solidarity model in some interventions – for example, in Guatemala and Malawi – to protect prisoners who were likely to be punished as a result of transnational interventions (Power 2001: 144).

political, and social exploitation in the global system. When partnership was invoked at IGLHRC, it mainly offered a prescription for responsible work along a North-South axis. Brokers could supply resources, support, or even guidance, but the ultimate say on political strategy rested with activists, NGOs, and movements in a country and not with IGLHRC.

Where brokers tended to have difficulty with the partnership principle was, in fact, when its demands clashed with their other personal and professional commitments. The idea that respect for self-determination can sit uneasily with other values is not new (Messer 1997: 304; Okin et al. 1999), but was often lost when non-directive partnership provided the structuring mechanism for transnational work. The implicit association of partnership with self-determination offered little guidance to brokers who found that they philosophically disagreed with their partners' decisions, and elided the real difficulties of negotiating disagreements when they occurred.

One of the most regular issues over which disagreements arose was inclusiveness. Brokers at IGLHRC placed a premium on inclusiveness across the LGBT spectrum; that is, not only representing gay men, but also lesbian, transgender and (less often) bisexual persons. In crises, this became difficult to insist upon. CEDEP, for example, did not identify as an LGBT organization, and its focus on HIV and MSM meant that it did virtually nothing with WSW or self-identified trans populations. Although CEDEP was the best-placed organization for IGLHRC to liaise with regarding Chimbalanga and Monjeza's trial, investment in that partnership was not necessarily an investment in future outreach to LBT women in Malawi.

IGLHRC's partnership in Haiti provides another good example where a crisis raised questions of inclusiveness and the limits of the nation-state as a frame for intervention. On the morning of January 13, 2010, brokers at IGLHRC arrived at work to blanket coverage of the previous day's earthquake and devastation in Haiti. Just four months before, Johnson had visited Haiti and met the leadership of SEROVIE, an NGO promoting HIV prevention, treatment, and care to MSM in the country.

The earthquake had devastated SEROVIE's office in Port-au-Prince and killed a number of its members and clients. In response to a query from Johnson about the aftermath of the earthquake, SEROVIE's Executive Director described the impact:

> We were having our usual support group meeting on a quiet Tuesday afternoon when the worst happened. The sound is unforgettable. I can't even describe the horror as the ceiling and the wall of the conference room started to fall and the chaos started. Fourteen young men were lost forever in the earthquake. Paul Emile, the leader of the group, and Stacy were the only survivors.

Although disaster response was not part of IGLHRC's mandate, brokers met that morning and discussed a range of ways they might respond. Because IGLHRC had a relationship with SEROVIE and, importantly, considered it a partner, there was a palpable sense that something had to be done to respond to the devastation in the country.

Although SEROVIE was IGLHRC's established partner in the region, brokers were also aware that it was specifically geared toward MSM. Many brokers, especially, but certainly not exclusively, the women on staff, suggested that IGLHRC direct funds in equal measure to Colectiva Mujer y Salud, a feminist group in the Dominican Republic that could receive aid and ensure it reached women, including LBT women, in Haiti.

A compromise was reached that was widely supported by brokers in which $500 each would be immediately sent to both SEROVIE and Colectiva Mujer y Salud. An appeal for donations would be placed on IGLHRC's website and "e-blasted" to its mailing list, and those funds would be directed to SEROVIE. Brokers were aware that the appeal had to be worded carefully. Laws regarding financial transparency required that IGLHRC provide the funds to the partner organization specified, and would not have the discretion to redirect funds to organizations that might be equally (or more) capable of reaching particular populations as circumstances changed.

Later, Johnson, Ferreyra, and Fox, a French speaker, went to Haiti to deliver tents, supplies, and safer-sex materials to SEROVIE. In an interview shortly after the

trip, Fox highlighted how the partnership with SEROVIE shaped which communities IGLHRC reached out to following the disaster:

> I think the fact that SEROVIE was an established partner of ours made it easier to connect with the MSM side of this issue. Once we were on the ground, I don't think we did enough legwork in terms of getting in touch with feminist organizations or LBT individuals. And so once we were there, we only ultimately ended up meeting with three LBT civil society individuals, and one OSI staff member who sort of spoke about the feminist and LBT side of the earthquake. And then, not even much trans contact, either.

In this partnership in Haiti, a number of dynamics were in play. A humanitarian impulse was evident among brokers, who also donated to relief efforts outside of IGLHRC. What was remarkable was the insistence that IGLHRC itself had to act. Because SEROVIE was a partner with which brokers had worked quite recently, it was strongly felt that intervention was not just permissible, but necessary. Partnership not only fueled the decisiveness and rapidity of this response, but determined how it was targeted. Brokers generally felt SEROVIE was optimally positioned to provide relief, but not necessarily to the whole spectrum of LGBT people to which brokers were ideologically committed to supplying assistance. Its short-term ability to receive funds, too, had been hampered. Brokers' commitments to equality and inclusiveness were thus incorporated into the initial appeal. When SEROVIE was better equipped to receive funds, however, it was SEROVIE, as a partner and a Haitian organization, that received IGLHRC's donations and hosted its post-disaster visit to Haiti. This affected the subsequent publication on LGBT persons in post-disaster contexts, which was heavily tilted toward the testimony and experiences of MSM.

Inclusiveness was not the only concern brokers considered important, however. Brokers at IGLHRC were broadly committed to a range of other values; they were suspicious of sexism, racism, class stratification, and nationalism, and, in New York, were largely secular. They tended to support reproductive rights and a broad range of sexual rights, including sex work and access to abortion. They voiced objections to hierarchy, hegemony, and assimilation, with many of their domestic

commitments rooted in more radical queer politics. Their most respected partners were those who shared those commitments.

Organizational values like accountability and good governance also shaped these partnerships (Anders 2005: 37; Brinkerhoff 2007: 76). Brokers were reluctant to work with activists who were suspected of misappropriating or misusing funds; in at least one instance, they declined to get involved when an ethically suspect activist called for institutional endorsements of his work to keep himself out of a potentially dangerous situation. Concepts of accountability, representativeness, and good governance were all standards to which partners were held, and self-aggrandizement, patronage, and other practices were viewed with disdain.

All of these potential challenges highlight the limits of partnership as a structuring device for transnational work. Partnership was, at its core, a way of negotiating unequal relationships. Because IGLHRC's partnerships were largely along national lines – for example, with SMUG in Uganda, CEDEP in Malawi, and SEROVIE in Haiti – they provided a channel to level North-South power disparities but sometimes prevented brokers from insisting on their own values, intervening on behalf of neglected communities or issues, or imposing standards to which they expected partners to be held accountable. The renunciation of imperialism, achieved through the staunch commitment to partnership, often made these sorts of complex interventions more difficult.

When There Were Multiple and Competing Partners

A fourth stumbling block arose in countries with multiple activists and groups, where potential partners – and viewpoints – were varied and frequently in conflict. This diversity of actors and agendas can prove difficult to navigate, particularly when the politics of transnational NGOs steer brokers in contradictory directions (Eyben and Leon 2005).

Increasingly, there has been a range of groups advocating on behalf of LGBT persons in any given country. In a crisis situation, brokers at IGLHRC turned to partners with whom they had worked in the past, or, in the absence of such groups,

those who were most visibly identified with LGBT issues. When other groups were involved, however, this history of partnership and preference for particularly visible groups threatened to prevent brokers from working with alternative partners with different assessments of issues, tactics, and strategy.

The choices that IGLHRC made in a field of potential partners were visible in two of the more prominent cases during my fieldwork. The most publicized story of the human rights of LGBT persons internationally in 2009 (and possibly, in history) was the tabling of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda's Parliament. The Bill contained a number of provisions which were not only seen as detrimental to LGBT people, but to human rights defenders and civil society more generally. Legally, both male-male and female-female sexual activity are prohibited in Uganda under the Penal Code Act of 1950, using language which remains virtually standardized in former British colonies.[39] Section 145 specifies that "carnal knowledge of any person against the order of nature" is punishable with life imprisonment. Section 148 states that "gross indecency," whether actual or attempted, in public or private, is punishable with seven years in prison (Ottosson 2010: 20). The Anti-Homosexuality Bill would have further prescribed life in prison for anyone who "touches another person with the intention of committing the act of homosexuality." It would have permitted the imprisonment of anyone who "aids, abets, counsels, or procures another to engage in acts of homosexuality," "promotes homosexuality," or fails to report violations of the law within 24 hours. The Bill drew fire from human rights defenders for provisions which purported to void Uganda's adherence to any treaty or agreement that contradicted the letter or spirit of the law, and rejected any recognition of the concepts of sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual rights, and sexual minorities within Uganda (AHB 2009). It was the death penalty, however, that was most often highlighted internationally. Activists and journalists dubbed the legislation the "Kill the Gays Bill" because of a provision to punish "aggravated

[39] In England and Wales, laws against "gross indecency" remained on the books until 1967, when the Sexual Offences Act decriminalized same-sex activity in private between two men over the age of 21. Scotland and Northern Ireland followed suit in 1980 and 1982, respectively. The offense was previously criminalized under Section 11 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, or the Labouchere Amendment, passed in 1885.

homosexuality," including same-sex activity by a person who is HIV positive or a repeat offender, with death.

The legislation, which was introduced by MP David Bahati as a Private Member's Bill, galvanized a wide network of human rights and civil society NGOs. Brokers at IGLHRC, however, had been working with Ugandan activists for years. IGLHRC was active in *Ooyo and Mukasa v. Attorney General of Uganda*, and Mukasa left SMUG for IGLHRC in its aftermath. Thanks largely to Mukasa's deep ties to the country's movement, IGLHRC raised concern about homophobia in Uganda as early as March 2009 – nearly seven months before the Bill was tabled – after American evangelicals traveled to Uganda to hold a three-day seminar on homosexuality. At the seminar, Scott Lively, Don Schmierer, and Caleb Lee Brundidge described the threat that LGBT persons posed to the social fabric and suggested they could be cured and saved (IGLHRC and SMUG 2009). Activists from SMUG monitored the conference, and SMUG and IGLHRC publicized the meeting globally and warned of the likelihood that anti-LGBT sentiment in Uganda would rise.

Thanks to their prior work in Uganda, IGLHRC and other human rights organizations became aware of the Bill before it was tabled, and were able to quietly obtain a copy of the draft legislation. As a result, IGLHRC, HRW, AI, ARC-International, and other NGOs immediately responded to the tabling of the Bill by releasing a prepared statement condemning the legislation and warning of the negative consequences should it be passed by Parliament. The statement was also endorsed by Akina Mama wa Afrika and the Uganda Feminist Forum, and IGLHRC and SMUG issued another call to action within days. Groups within Uganda were simultaneously responding to the Bill themselves, and formed a broad Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law. The Coalition included a number of Ugandan groups who engaged in the debate to greater or lesser extents and approached the issues raised by the Bill in different ways.

In the following months, IGLHRC sought to give space to the Coalition while working most closely with SMUG, its oldest and closest partner in Uganda. Major donors in the North gave money to an umbrella organization that could then disperse it to members of the Coalition. When this money became tangled in

bureaucratic delays after the person in charge of disbursing funds fell ill, IGLHRC was able to quickly provide SMUG with funds to cover their immediate needs. While the organizations participated in the Coalition's activities, lines of communication also remained open between them.

Through IGLHRC's networks, SMUG guided much of the advocacy from the US. One of SMUG's earliest requests was for a day of concerted international action against the Bill, designed to raise awareness in the North and demonstrate this to Ugandan missions, consulates, and embassies around the globe. The request received some pushback from brokers at IGLHRC, who worried that the date was too soon to organize a large, safe, and well-publicized protest. In response, SMUG altered the original request; it still stressed the importance of international pressure, but extended the period for the actions through most of November. With the African Services Committee, Health GAP, and ACT-UP Philadelphia, I organized a protest outside of the Ugandan Mission to the UN while other groups protested in Washington, DC. Additional protests were hosted by groups in San Francisco, Chicago, London, Pretoria, Beirut, and elsewhere.

Similarly, when right-wing pastor Lou Engle planned to go to Uganda to hold a rally dubbed "TheCall: Uganda," an informal network of pro-LGBT faith groups that formed over the winter launched a campaign called "Stop TheCall to Violence." Engle was known for his charged rhetoric in protesting homosexuality in the US, and brokers worried that a similar rally in Kampala, preceded by weeks of fasting, would trigger a lethal backlash. As IGLHRC's representative in the network, I was asked if Ugandan groups thought a campaign in the US would be helpful or whether publicity would do more harm than good. Rather than reaching out to the Coalition, faith leaders in Uganda, or prominent figures like Sylvia Tamale of Makerere University, I was advised to contact SMUG to get their take on the matter. Ultimately, SMUG was the group with which I worked throughout the campaign to coordinate publicity and messaging, and whose preferences I conveyed to faith-based groups in the US.

This preference for trusted partners in a field of potential allies was not limited to Uganda. In Malawi, Chimbalanga and Monjeza's case triggered sympathetic statements not only from CEDEP, but from CHRR, a broader human

rights NGO. Throughout the arrest, detention, and trial of the couple, CEDEP remained IGLHRC's trusted source of information about their well-being, Chimbalanga's preferred name and gender identity, and the desirability of possible interventions. It was CEDEP who called for a letter-writing campaign to the couple in prison; brokers obliged by launching a postcard campaign as a way for attendees at the annual Celebration of Courage gala to participate in IGLHRC's work.

The partnership with CEDEP was particularly notable because other alliances might have called for different strategies. After Chimbalanga and Monjeza were pardoned, many members of CEDEP were eager to shrug off the notoriety and scrutiny they endured during the unexpected trial of a queer couple and return to their work with MARPs. As Johnson stressed in a post-trial statement, however, the pardon was only a partial victory (IGLHRC and CEDEP 2010). The conviction itself was not overturned, and same-sex activity remained illegal in Malawi. Nothing had structurally changed to make LGBT people any better off in the country. (Indeed, just months later, the government criminalized same-sex activity between women.) Notably, some activists and lawyers in Malawi shared Johnson's view, and argued that NGOs should press ahead with a legal challenge to attempt to have the law against same-sex activity ruled unconstitutional. Deferring to its partner, IGLHRC opted not to pursue that option, to the frustration of brokers who would have liked to see a more robust response.

When multiple partners were visible and viable, partnership was selective. In Uganda, IGLHRC had a trusted partner, SMUG, with which brokers had personal and professional ties, and which guided its advocacy despite the presence of a broader Coalition. In Malawi, IGLHRC had worked with CEDEP on a number of projects, and acquiesced to its strategic advice. In both cases, brokers worked most closely with known partners they considered part of a larger LGBT movement rather than civil society or human rights organizations that were just emerging on their institutional radar.

What this means for "partnership" as a principle is complex. In fields where actors, tactics, and strategies were multiple and conflicting, IGLHRC's preference for trusted partners meant that these groups typically guided its advocacy. At times,

this gave brokers leeway to use tactics they preferred, as trusted partners were usually most familiar and comfortable with the types of pressure they regularly employed. As the field of actors continues to expand globally, however, questions about who IGLHRC's partners are, whether they represent a wider movement, and under what conditions brokers might break with them – or allow input from one or more alternative partners to guide their work – are likely to grow more pressing.

When Potential Partners Were Self-Sufficient

As partnership with different groups in a national coalition suggests, there are times when a variety of partners adds complexity and confusion to a potential campaign. In other instances, however, relevant partners are well-defined, but able to clearly decline Northern offers to intervene.

One of the widely-publicized crises in early 2010 was a raid on the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) in Mtwapa, a small town along the coast north of Mombasa. After a radio station reported unsubstantiated rumors of a same-sex wedding, two religious leaders, Sheikh Ali Hussein and Bishop Lawrence Chai, called for KEMRI to be shut down for providing services to homosexuals. Over the next few days, mobs assembled at KEMRI and attacked individuals in Mtwapa and Mombasa. Victims in many of the incidents were taken into protective custody by police to keep them from being injured or killed by the crowds.

The mobs were reported in a number of African and international press outlets. HRW issued a press release and letter to the government of Kenya demanding a stop to the "anti-gay campaign." IGLHRC remained conspicuously silent. For days, a statement on the website, posted on February 12, 2010, simply read:

> There are conflicting media reports of mob violence and arrests at what was alleged to be a "gay wedding" in Kikambala, Kenya on February 12. IGLHRC is consulting closely with partners in Kenya to respond appropriately to any emergency situations. (IGLHRC 2010b)

The update, however, was not forthcoming. The next item from Kenya followed over six months later, when a local group, G-Trust, launched a new book on gay rights. Behind the scenes, the incidents in Kenya sparked a standard response at IGLHRC. Jones contacted Kilonzo and relevant partners, particularly GALCK, an NGO with which brokers at IGLHRC worked closely since its founding in 2006. GALCK functioned as an umbrella group for a host of MSM, WSW, LGBT, and sexual rights organizations in Kenya, and had worked with IGLHRC on a number of research projects and interventions. In this instance, however, GALCK informed Kilonzo that IGLHRC's intervention would be unhelpful. Instead, they planned to work on their own, liaising with police to set up future response mechanisms when LGBT people were at risk.

From the New York office, I remember sensing frustration as time zones, technology, and conflicting reports made it difficult to understand what was happening, what we could say publicly, and what, if anything, would be helpful or counterproductive. From the Africa Program, however, GALCK's tacit refusal was seen as a triumph. According to Kilonzo, who worked closely with the movement in Kenya:

> When this office started off, there was an issue training that was conducted at the African Commission, in May 2006. At that session, the activists trained on the African human rights system and different mechanisms. People went out to their countries and started all manner of advocacy, organizing, networking. The other day, the team from Kenya telling IGLHRC, there's this crisis, everybody acknowledges there's a crisis, but we would like to respond on our own – I think that was my moment of pride. To see a movement that has grown from its formative stages, taking the World Social Forum in 2007 head-on, a lot of hate speeches followed by them registering and standing on their feet, to a point that they are able to stand on their own and tell the world, hey, hold on here [with] your intervention, we're able to respond. And they did respond. And within a week, the crisis had come and gone. That was superb, and for me, that was showing how a well-organized movement can be able to have mechanisms to respond to the worst of the crises. And it's not dependent on outside support. And when you insist on issuing a statement they will either disown you or tell you to your face to stop being imperialistic, because they know they have learned from you – that is good – but let them now practice what they have learned.

For Kilonzo, who was Kenyan herself and had always worked in an African context, the self-sufficiency of organizations like GALCK was a positive development. It signaled that movements were growing stronger, and were ready to confront challenges that previously had been daunting. For brokers in New York who had to justify their existence to funders and supporters, it raised serious questions about IGLHRC's long-term relevance.

As GALCK grew increasingly empowered to refuse unhelpful interventions, it also generated questions about whether IGLHRC could work with other groups in Kenya. Shortly after this incident, members of GALCK became upset when a broker in New York reached out to an activist at one of their constituent organizations, asking to partner on a project IGLHRC planned to pursue. Members of GALCK were reportedly upset that this overture was made without going through the proper channels; such a proposal was to be vetted collectively, and the money handled by the coalition. If the activist and organization in question took the money, GALCK threatened to expel them. As a result, the project did not proceed. The incident was a valuable lesson for the New York and the Cape Town offices, and seemed to be taken to heart by both. As Johnson pointed out, however, it raised important questions about IGLHRC's autonomy in countries or regions with strong umbrella organizations or networks.

The growth of regional LGBT networks within Africa has similarly generated issues of who can be considered potential partners for which efforts, and which groups or issues are effectively off-limits for one-on-one cooperation with IGLHRC. As Kilonzo described in an interview:

> With a very strong pan-African lesbian organization in the name of [the Coalition of African Lesbians, or] CAL, and now, a very strong gay movement in the name of AMSHeR, they are edging us out and saying, if you want to work on MSM or HIV, we have the network. You can collaborate with us or partner with us, but you cannot go behind our back to start working with the same countries we're working with. We have to be partners in this. You may have the resources in big numbers, but we have the people. So if you need to use your money and big numbers, you need the people who we have. And this has been the challenge. When the pan-African groups don't do much, then how do you check each other? And for us, as an international

> organization, how do we go above the petty politics of individuals and emerging organizations to still be able to offer the technical assistance? The balance is tricky, because these organizations have formed recently. IGLHRC helped in their formation, and sometimes when you have this child who reminds you that you're a bad parent, it's hard to swallow. It's hard to swallow! Or they're like, mummy, daddy, stop doing A, B, C, D, I feel I'm old enough to do that for myself. It's hard for somebody to let go… Obviously, we've wanted to do this LBT violence research, and every time we have to ask ourselves, how will we be viewed by CAL as a pan-African group? Will they like our strategy? Are we likely to go to their members to ask for data? Will they give it willingly? Do we have to bribe, er, to resource them to give us the data? So it's that back and forth questioning of our relevance, but also the challenge that there are certain things that maybe we could have done very well five years ago, but now the presence of other actors that are more legitimate, they have the masses. They may not have it physically, but their word is respected within the region.

As Kilonzo's reflections suggest, the limits of partnership were acutely felt when regional networks were ill-equipped or reluctant to work on issues that IGLHRC and potential partners, whether activists or groups, were eager to work on together. In these instances, a simple dichotomy of North and South was insufficient. There were multiple players with distinctive affinities, priorities, and capacities, and partnering with one of them effectively foreclosed the possibility of partnering with others. In these instances, IGLHRC's stated commitment to partnership proved frustrating for brokers who deferred to groups that claimed national or thematic representativeness, but declined to work with Northern NGOs.

E. Conclusion

Within IGLHRC, a high premium was placed on "strong" partnerships, where groups were typically stable, visible, compatible, credible, and eager to collaborate. Some groups identified themselves for this kind of partnership. Others developed such partnerships gradually, as they and brokers at IGLHRC found ways to mutually accommodate each other's constituencies, politics, and standards. Both were reinforced by ideological and political affinities and a wider network of donors, NGOs, scholars, and journalists who legitimated particular partners by looking to them as representatives of or experts on their area or community.

Challenges to that model triggered a range of responses as brokers sought to uphold the underlying values of partnership. After the Senegal debacle, brokers met with stakeholders to determine if and when IGLHRC could be helpful in the country, and began planning a leadership exchange with the movement in Cameroon. In the MENA region, brokers had ongoing conversations with activists to identify ways of framing and working on sexual rights that were not predicated on identity politics, visibility, and lobbying. In Uganda, ties were forged with new actors besides SMUG, and alliances strengthened through other projects, like Perle visiting Uganda to assist FARUG with a shadow report for CEDAW. All of these approaches suggest that stumbling blocks in partnership are not fatal, but inspire their own tactical shifts in transnational LGBT advocacy.

The inadequacy of rigid, formalized models of partnership in these cases illustrates the need to think critically about broader notions of political responsibility (Fowler 1998: 139-40; Jordan and Van Tuijl 2000: 2053-2054). While partnership was strongly valued, brokers had little guidance when their relationships proved challenging. In most cases, they dealt with a field of partners with distinct backgrounds, structures, and agendas, whose relationships and intra-movement politics were not always immediately apparent. These existed within a wider field of feminist, HIV, and human rights groups in different countries, who occasionally aligned more closely with IGLHRC's ideals of what a good partner might look like. When a group was "the only game in town," brokers had to determine what form their relationship might take, and decide whether to defer to them without pushing back, to address dynamics that struck brokers as problematic, or to work with them minimally or not at all, often at the expense of any advocacy within their country. In rare cases where IGLHRC lacked any strong, independent partners in a country, brokers faced the dilemma of trying to determine how the partnership principle might be upheld, if at all, and what obligation they had to speak up or remain silent about violations as they came to light. In these instances, a narrow focus on partnership along a North-South axis obscured complex and critical questions of power, responsibility, and accountability that brokers implicitly grappled with daily in their work.

CHAPTER FIVE: IGLHRC as a Node in Networks of Knowledge

A. Introduction

On July 5, 2010, Reverend Erich Kasirye emailed activists to report that the disembodied head of a gay activist, Pasikali Kashusbe, had been found in a pit latrine on a farm in rural Uganda. According to the email, Pasikali, a member of the pro-gay Anglican group Integrity Uganda, had been missing for a month prior to the gruesome discovery. About 500 meters away from the latrine, a mutilated torso without genitals also had been found. The story rapidly spread through the blogosphere and was reprinted by high-profile publications like the *Advocate*, where it offered a grisly example of the terror and violence LGBT Ugandans faced during the debate over the Anti-Homosexuality Bill.

What ultimately shocked LGBT communities, however, was the realization that the incident was a hoax. On July 7, 2010, Mukasa contacted Bishop Ssenyonjo, the head of Integrity Uganda quoted in the story, and confirmed that the report was carefully falsified. Authors of the email had used it to seek asylum to Spain, and fabricated facts, quotes, and a police report to do so. Ssenyonjo clarified:

> I have never worked with anyone who goes by the name Pasikali in my organization. I also did not make any comments as quoted in earlier statements made by Rev. Erich Kasirye. Rev. Erich Kasirye no longer has any legitimate connection to Integrity Uganda and the e-mail address integrityuganda@yahoo.com is no longer available as a link to the leadership of Integrity Uganda.

When faced with the suspicious claim, Mukasa intervened to verify what had happened. Having a relationship and open lines of communication with the leader of Integrity Uganda allowed him to detect the hoax and reveal it to the media. After doing so, Mukasa returned to more pressing work, and rarely spoke of it again.

Even so, several questions remained unanswered. Activists offhandedly mentioned that a head *had* been found in a latrine – and was reported in *The Daily Monitor* on June 4 – it just did not belong to an LGBT activist. Whose head was it? Was someone named Pasikali still missing for a month, and was there any news about his whereabouts? Were reports of a pro-gay priest disappearing after a sermon, and the search parties discovering the separated torso and head, themselves true, or also a hoax? And, more poignantly, without the implication that these gristly incidents were linked to the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, who still cared? How were human rights activists, to say nothing of their ethnographers, to get to the bottom of incidents reported in tense, volatile climates, where a great deal was at stake for people both personally and politically?

In this chapter, I suggest that one of IGLHRC's primary, if largely unremarked, roles was disseminating information about SOGI and human rights. I explore how brokers fielded information from partners, how they verified "good enough" knowledge for advocacy, and how structural factors shaped where their outputs circulated and were redeployed. In a cacophonous world where governments, religious figures, legal and medical professionals, the media, and civil society all shaped discourses about LGBT human rights, brokers at IGLHRC generated knowledge through their outputs and omissions. Indeed, this was among the most fundamental processes in which they engaged.

B. Information Politics at IGLHRC

Scholars of transnational advocacy networks have suggested that one of their core functions is the circulation and deployment of information (Khagram et al. 2002: 7; Sikkink 2002: 305-306). As described in Chapter 2, brokers at IGLHRC engaged in a number of classic advocacy tactics that were premised on the credibility of their information. Crafting action alerts, letters to governments, and reports required research, documentation, and verification to ensure that any advocacy they triggered was both warranted and politically savvy. Credibility was a core part of IGLHRC's brand, and brokers stressed to funders and supporters that they were

uniquely positioned to get accurate, timely information from those most proximate to events on the ground.

To policymakers, this was a key source of IGLHRC's utility as a US-based NGO working transnationally. In the organization's 20th Anniversary Video, US Representative Barney Frank made a point of praising IGLHRC for bringing the needs of LGBT populations to the attention of policymakers around the globe. Brokers themselves often highlighted the importance of this role. Indeed, IGLHRC's updates and publications, its convenings, Activist Institutes, and research projects, and its advocacy at the UN and regional mechanisms were designed to produce usable knowledge about LGBT human rights. In their rhetoric and activity, brokers framed this as a unique contribution to the movement.

Of course, this required a deep familiarity with movements and their dynamics. This was hinted at in a comment that Perle made in an interview:

> I think back to our 20th Anniversary Video… and to Barney Frank's little bit about connecting people in government to people on the ground, and I think we're really good at that. Because we're US-based, because we have a certain appearance of professionalism, we're really trusted by people in governments, people in international organizations, and they trust our expertise. And they don't have the resources or the willingness to go to every single group on the ground, and sort out all the different opinions, and the different in-fighting, and the different ways people are doing work. Nobody is going to have the capacity to do that, whereas that's what we do. And we work really closely with people on the ground, and then we can take that information, or take people, or appoint people, or help people get access to these leaders who do actually do things… I really think we're effective in talking to leaders because they trust us. Whether they should or not, I don't know, but they do. And someone has to be in that role. And I think now there are a number of organizations that are, but certainly we're the only US-based one doing that, and one of the few at the UN.

The sentiment in Perle's remarks has been common in transnational NGOs as they shift "away from representation and toward expertise" (Dean et al. 2006: xxvi). In an expanding network, brokers at IGLHRC insisted they were uniquely able to understand events and trends by virtue of their proximity to local movements. To build relationships and gather information required for this role, brokers participated in, and themselves developed, a wider economy of knowledge. While

they provided visibility, connections, and opportunities to activists globally, IGLHRC's small staff primarily relied on partners to supply information for their advocacy, which shaped their work in subtle ways.

C. Producing Knowledge: Power/Knowledge in the Human Rights Arena

Shortly after I arrived at IGLHRC, a small party was held in the conference room to welcome me to the organization. During the party, brokers reminisced about former coworkers and imparted advice about what my work would entail. I had been assigned to work in Communications and Research, and in a moment of candor, one colleague recounted an anecdote to warn me what *not* to do. Brokers regularly fielded requests from reporters asking questions about particular topics or regions that they did not have the immediate competence to answer. These were typically referred to others who might have the expertise to respond. In one particular instance, however, my colleague recalled how a senior manager at IGLHRC received a query from a reporter about the conditions facing LGBT persons in Bermuda. To the horror of other brokers, the manager summoned staff to "Google Bermuda" and find out what was happening. Based on the results, the manager expressed grave concern and called upon the government to respect LGBT rights.

As the broker at the party animatedly recounted the anecdote, those present rolled their eyes and bemoaned the irresponsibility of the response. Brokers were at least outwardly skeptical of their own ability to speak about conditions in other countries except in the broadest of terms. It was rare for them to foreground the role they played in mediating what was or was not known about the human rights of LGBT people worldwide; instead, they tended to highlight their role in elevating and publicizing news from their partners.

As the comments from Frank and Perle suggest, however, IGLHRC's updates, press releases, and advocacy tools were fundamentally premised on brokers' possession of knowledge about conditions facing LGBT people around the globe. Having access to on-the-ground knowledge made IGLHRC a trusted source for policymakers and donors, and IGLHRC's apparent influence with these powerful

actors was crucial in convincing Southern partners to supply brokers with timely information.

That dynamic, in which information and influence were mutually reinforcing, lay at the crux of IGLHRC's advocacy. The concept of power/knowledge has been used by theorists to highlight how both sides of that dyadic construction function in tandem. As Michel Foucault describes the conjunction:

> [I]n a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (Foucault 1980: 93)

The concept of power/knowledge is helpful in thinking about the relationship between information and influence in transnational advocacy. It is also helpful, however, in thinking about IGLHRC's role and relationships in wider networks of knowledge, in which many other actors collected, publicized, and challenged accounts about SOGI, human rights, and the lives of LGBT people.

Although the possession of accurate, timely information was central to IGLHRC's advocacy, brokers frequently operated under conditions of ambiguity and uncertainty. As a US-based organization with limited staff capacity in its regional programs, IGLHRC was not logistically or financially able to cover parts of the world in equal measure. Nobody was assigned to Europe or North America, and in the regions where IGLHRC did work, between one and four brokers covered whole continents with multiple countries, movements, and situations vying for their attention. In light of these constraints, brokers recognized their limitations in making factual claims about conditions in the South. Indeed, from their vantage points, laws regulating gender and sexuality were fairly opaque. It was notable to me as a research fellow that figures on the number of states that criminalize same-sex sexuality and the number of states where such activity is punishable by death,

two perennial indices of LGBT human rights globally, were usually only approximated by brokers at IGLHRC. Some NGOs did attempt to track and document this data with some regularity; HRW's report on sodomy laws was often cited by activists pressing for law reform in the South (HRW 2008a), and ILGA partnered with a researcher to put out an annual survey of laws regulating same-sex sexuality (Ottosson 2010). Little was certainly or comprehensively known, however, about laws regarding dress, blasphemy, hooliganism, loitering, solicitation, or other offenses that were (mis)used to persecute people on the basis of their real or perceived SOGI.

During my fieldwork, IGLHRC did not compile information about what the laws were in particular countries, nor did the organization have a uniform position on how many countries prohibited same-sex activity, what the punishments were in different places, or whether particular areas were better or worse for LGBT people than others. Asking different brokers elicited different responses on each of these questions. When I was preparing to speak to a group of students and asked brokers in New York if IGLHRC had a standardized position on where and how same-sex sexuality was criminalized, I was told to use ILGA's data from that year, with the caveat that there were thought to be some gaps or outdated information in it. As Kilonzo noted, IGLHRC lacked the personnel and resources to gather such information firsthand, whether this was regarding laws on the books or the facts of an alleged violation, and thus relied on its partners:

> It's hard, because if you look at other organizations, they've had to sort of send their own person to the field to either do the research or go and confirm particular facts before they can release that to the world. And that is an expensive venture because sending somebody from Country A to Country B in this particular region is quite expensive – other than having a contact person on the ground, and being in constant communication to verify those grounds. First of all, it adds a lot to legitimacy. It also helps to build the capacity of that person and hopefully the group where they work from, on how to do a press release, how to document the issues as they unfold… So going to the field directly, we do it when it's absolutely necessary. We'd rather work with different activists from different countries. That is more empowering.

Brokers' work depended on the information and insights their partners provided them. Rather than sending a researcher, brokers relied on local partners and relationships, typically mediated through the regional programs, to confirm facts, offer perspectives on strategy, and authorize any interventions by transnational actors. Partners were supposed to be able to supply up-to-date information about developments on the ground, which often differed significantly from media reports. For their part, brokers at IGLHRC were able to raise the profiles of these local partners and link them to opportunities in the North. During my fieldwork, IGLHRC published research by their partners, supported their travel to summits in New York, Washington, San Francisco, Geneva, and Vienna, helped them obtain passports and visas, highlighted their issues transnationally, connected them to policymakers, funders, and diplomats, and mobilized public and private pressure when they were under threat. While brokers routinely stressed that IGLHRC was not a funder, they did control money, status, and support that could be materially or symbolically important for their partners.

In this economy of knowledge, brokers at IGLHRC offered resources and opportunities in exchange for information and insights from local groups. The ways this occurred in practice were structured by incentives to both sides, and the different material and symbolic resources that they could manipulate. As ethnographers of transnational workshops in post-Soviet Russia similarly observe, "[w]hen resources are not understood merely as narrowly economic, it is easier to see that the career and organization-building effects of such transnational involvements are typically reciprocal" (Sperling et al. 2001: 1176). Brokers at IGLHRC were aware of these dynamics, and encountered them on a daily basis. As Fox, the researcher who carried out interviews in Haiti, reflected on that experience:

> It's always interesting for me to see the sort of interaction between the leadership of community organizations in-country and the leadership of international organizations, and what the power dynamic is there. What is it that we have that they want, what is it that they have that we want? Obviously, we both want to work together, but there's still questions of resources and authority that play out.

This was not specific to that trip, however. As Ettelbrick described it, negotiating these dynamics was a routine aspect of transnational work:

> I mean, there's understandable push and pull, often, with local groups who want to be independent. To be honest, I think a lot of them know that they have to work with the US groups because it means money or whatever, and as long as you're aware of that, and you know that that shouldn't be abused, you shouldn't use your ability to make the money thing happen for groups as a quid pro quo. You get embroiled a little bit in the psychology of that kind of almost colonial dynamic.

As both quotes suggest, local groups were also aware of these dynamics, and also used them to their advantage to an extent. As Kilonzo noted, their monetization of information also shaped the economy of knowledge about sex and politics:

> Even when you're asking for information, it's "do you want the cheap one, or the expensive one?" because it's dependent on how much money you are willing to give to get the kind of information that you want. So eventually now, to get the truth, you have to call Person A, Person B, up to, I don't know, up to Person Z to get the story correctly.

All of these testimonies highlight the negotiations that structure power/knowledge in transnational advocacy. The vast majority of IGLHRC's work simply would not be possible without information and reporting from partners in the South, who were called upon to verify facts and, as local NGOs, legitimate any intervention that brokers at IGLHRC might undertake. As with partnership, there were also structural factors that greatly predetermined how this economy of knowledge operated, influencing what sources were consulted, whose input was considered accurate and repeatable, and who was empowered to pass information along. As I suggest in the following section, partners did not necessarily supply clear and operational information, and lingering doubts often remained. Quelling these doubts was itself a fundamental if unspoken part of daily praxis at IGLHRC, and brokers did this in particular ways to enable or legitimate interventions.

D. Doubt and the Production of "Good Enough" Knowledge for Advocacy

The hoax in Uganda is illustrative of the many ways in which doubt complicated LGBT human rights advocacy. In a far cry from 1990, email allowed journalists to contact Kasirye directly, and established groups had no opportunity to question the facts, motives, or repercussions of the story before it spread. With little more than a sensational story and a halfway plausible email address, the perpetrators were able to sow fear through Ugandan and transnational networks and dupe fairly prominent media outlets in a matter of hours. In both New York and Cape Town, these forms of doubt were not the exception, but the rule. Brokers were repeatedly faced with situations where truth was elusive, elaborated, or only partially intelligible to them. In this section, I look at three types of doubt that characterized sexual rights work – doubts about facts, motives, and repercussions – and tactics brokers used to produce "good enough" knowledge for advocacy.

Facticity and Ambiguity in Sexual Rights Advocacy

The hoax in Uganda deftly illustrates the first and most basic problem for activists monitoring LGBT human rights transnationally, namely, the uncertainty and ambiguity that often surround the facts of a situation. LGBT groups in Africa tended to be located in major urban centers, and reports of violations beyond those centers were often relayed secondhand or mediated through the media, police, or other third-party actors. Those who were targeted for engaging in same-sex activity or transgressing gender norms did not always self-consciously identify as LGBT, and were not affiliated with organizations that they might contact. This meant that IGLHRC's partners, who tended to be based in urban areas and usually identified as LGBT or MSM NGOs, frequently received information through their own networks or through accounts in the press, and not initially through firsthand knowledge of the cases in question.

The gulf widened when transnational groups became involved; NGOs like AI and HRW maintained a scattered regional presence around the globe, and staff

members typically divided their focus among a wide variety of human rights issues in an area. At IGLHRC, violations were flagged in two ways; they were either noted by regional staff and then, if necessary, relayed to New York, or they were noted by brokers in New York who then asked regional staff to get details and to determine whether IGLHRC should intervene. On multiple occasions, I learned of major incidents via Twitter, Facebook, or the international press. Accounts of anti-LGBT panics, hostile legislation, and violence were transmitted over global list-servs, where bloggers and journalists learned of them just as brokers did. Often, they demanded that IGLHRC respond to these incidents at the same time that brokers were scrambling to document and verify them with partners in the area.

Establishing what happened was complicated for a number of reasons. Incidents were described in terse, short messages or in the most skeletal news stories, often in panicked or polemical terms. It was regularly unclear what had actually transpired. When KEMRI was attacked by a mob, for example, brokers at IGLHRC were under considerable pressure to say something about the incident. Those in New York grew increasingly impatient as they called and emailed partners and regional staff for guidance. The details were hazy for a number of days, however, as Kenyan activists worked busily behind the scenes with police to ensure the safety of those involved. When they did respond to brokers, the incident was under control, and intervention was deemed unhelpful. The incident thus received only the barest mention in IGLHRC's outputs.

Perhaps the greatest example of factual ambiguity, however, was the case of Chimbalanga and Monjeza in Malawi. For all the international attention the saga received, the amount of indeterminacy was striking. Journalists who broke the story of the engagement called it a gay marriage; this was how it was reported until activists ascertained that Chimbalanga lived full-time as a woman, and that from a Western perspective, the term "transgender" was probably more accurate than "gay." Journalists reported that Chimbalanga menstruated, raising the possibility – which was never really explored by most activists in the North – that Chimbalanga was intersex, and that this was as much a question of biological sex as it was of gender identity. In light of this ambiguity, it was then unclear whether Monjeza

should continue to be labeled "gay." He was engaged to someone who presented as female, and upon his release from prison, he left Chimbalanga and became engaged to another woman. Brokers alleged he was paid by journalists to do so, but again, the validity of this claim was not entirely clear.

Depending on their sexual politics and ties to those visiting the couple in prison, some activists referred to Chimbalanga using female pronouns, some continued to use male pronouns and refer to the two as a gay couple, and some, including most brokers at IGLHRC, awkwardly avoided using any pronouns at all. The Program Director told brokers that an activist at CEDEP had suggested that Chimbalanga preferred to be called "Tionge," a feminine form of her name, rather than "Tiwonge," the masculine construction that journalists were using. Here, too, something appeared to have been lost in translation. Chichewa names are not typically gendered, and there is not traditionally a gendered difference between "Tiwonge" and "Tionge." Nonetheless, following instructions from partners as they understood them, brokers at IGLHRC began to use "Tionge" and different names for the detainees proliferated. The fact that the pair was in prison, had different grasps of sexual identity politics, and that they and their defenders had to worry about the repercussions of their self-identification in court made these questions all the more impossible to answer with certainty.

IGLHRC's reluctance to ascribe identity was mirrored to greater or lesser extents by other NGOs, governments, the Malawian and international press, and the judiciary, making the dynamics of the alleged offense considerably ambiguous. The answer to these questions, however, was potentially important. If Chimbalanga identified as male, allegations of homosexuality would have to be disputed on the grounds that they were unconstitutional or incommensurate with Malawi's obligations under international law. If Chimbalanga identified as female, however, could she be prosecuted under Sections 153 and 156 of the Penal Code, or would those charges be invalidated on the grounds that the engagement was, therefore, heterosexual? Would this be strengthened if Chimbalanga menstruated monthly and would be understood by medical practitioners to be intersex?

In the public arena, these issues were never resolved, including among the transnational NGOs that were involved in advocacy around the case. Up until the verdict, for example, male pronouns continued to be used publicly by CEDEP, Peter Tatchell, and most local and global media outlets. The female pronoun was used privately by some brokers at CEDEP and IGLHRC. Others, like IGLHRC and the ICJ, remained publicly gender-neutral in their assessments, referring to "the two" or "the couple," despite this making it difficult to specify precisely what laws were at stake. For brokers at IGLHRC, Chimbalanga's gender identity was not particularly relevant; the arrest for holding an engagement ceremony, the five months of pre-trial detention in dismal conditions, and the harsh sentence of 14 years in prison with hard labor were all human rights violations whether or not Chimbalanga and Monjeza were technically in violation of the law on the books.

Arguably, these kinds of epistemological uncertainties were not the exception, but the rule. Brokers in the North were quite conscious of the dangers of political and sexual *méconnaissance* in the South, and reluctant to impose identities or intervene incorrectly. As suggested in Chapter 4, brokers quelled doubt by foregrounding partnership, and relying first and foremost on those in the country or region in question.

Simply having partnerships, however, did not legitimate intervention. Brokers relied on partners to tell them what happened and what might be helpful, and often, this was far from clear. Brokers regularly operated with limited factual knowledge and understanding, mediated through regional offices, the media, and the second or thirdhand accounts of activists with whom they interacted over email, blogs, Facebook, and list-servs. Ambiguity was exacerbated by transatlantic time differences, unpredictable telephone, Skype, and internet connections, and countless demands on activists' time and energy that made them unable to respond to queries in a timely way.

Nonetheless, IGLHRC's ability to get information from the source was part of its brand and its justification for regional offices that worked closely with partners. This put pressure on brokers in New York to verify information through brokers in the regional offices, who were engaged in their own work and did not always

welcome urgent requests for verification. The predominant idea among management in New York was that regional staff were responsible for documenting and verifying incidents, and that they were IGLHRC's eyes and ears in the region and part of its claim to have a presence on the ground globally.

The opinion of at least some regional staff was very different. Brokers in Cape Town had a difficult time understanding these requests, muttering that they were not journalists, they were a lawyer, a scientist, and an activist. From New York, regional offices were seen primarily as *regional* offices, that is, as sites that mediated between the transnational NGO and its local partners. From Cape Town, they were regional *offices*, staffed by professionals whose jobs were more complex than simply verifying information and relaying it back and forth from New York to the rest of Africa.

What seemed legitimately frustrating to brokers in New York was that these objections were rarely if ever conveyed in these terms, producing tension and ill-will. As a broker in the Africa Program explained to me, staff in Cape Town dealt with anger by taking a step back, not engaging, and remaining silent for a period of time. To them, this signaled that they were upset or did not like the way that a process was organized. To those in IGLHRC's headquarters, however, it seemed like a dereliction of duty. As they faced pressure to respond to cases that they themselves had just learned of, they urgently sought information from regional staff. When they failed to respond to emails or answer their phones, brokers in New York understood this tacit refusal as a failure to do their job. This not only heightened tensions, but meant that facts remained ambiguous, and became even more opaque when the motives of those involved and the potential repercussions of intervention were taken into account.

Motives and Politics in Transnational Advocacy Networks

The ambiguity that sowed doubt in the minds of brokers was further complicated by doubt about the motives of those involved. Brokers at IGLHRC, at least, treated many reported incidents with a considerable amount of skepticism. Although they

lionized their partners and publicly praised their risky and tireless work on the ground, brokers privately worried about self-interested motives and the agendas of newcomers to LGBT advocacy.

The worry was particularly pronounced among brokers in the Africa Program, who worked in a region where the rapid proliferation of activists and groups made it difficult to gauge the legitimacy, stability, and representativeness of their work. Brokers were conscious that those with ulterior motives, like Kasirye in Uganda, could take advantage of sexual politics for personal gain using little more than a compelling narrative and the trappings of a plausible organization. According to one broker in Cape Town, the peddling of false information was a chronic and serious problem, fueled by the self-interest of particular activists in the region. Any dubious claims these brokers made were difficult to independently verify; the groups that made them were precisely the kinds of local partners who were trusted and relied upon to guide transnational solidarity work. For this reason, brokers at IGLHRC preferred to work with long-standing partners who were trusted to be honest and not self-serving in their advocacy and work.

This worked well in some contexts, but was difficult where there were not multiple groups or long-standing relationships to work with. This became apparent shortly after I arrived in Cape Town, when two brokers heatedly argued about whether or not to intervene in a case that had been brought to their attention. The leader of a partner organization had alleged that two transgender women had been arrested and tortured in prison in East Africa. One broker wanted to intervene, believing that the case fit within the alarming pattern of arrests in the country in question and merited attention. The other complained that the activist who reported the arrests lived in a neighboring country and was unable to verify the incident firsthand, that in-country NGOs had no knowledge of the incident happening, and that the lawyers they had contacted to investigate the claim were unable to come up with any evidence it was valid. More cynically, the broker suggested that the activist who reported the arrests tended to do so whenever she needed money from transnational NGOs, and that, in this instance, it was because she had just broken up with her girlfriend and was now alone and low on funds in a

foreign country. The skeptical broker ultimately pulled rank and told the broker who wanted to intervene to drop the matter, an order that palpably increased tensions in the office.

In this case and others, the ways brokers coped with doubts about motives were instructive. Brokers tended to rely heavily on their own character assessments of other activists, particularly whether they were "good" or "smart" in their work. When activists were referred to as "good," it usually meant they were unselfishly committed to the goals of the movement, effective in their work, and able to responsibly guide transnational NGOs. When they were referred to as "smart," it usually meant they were savvy in their advocacy and thoughtful about the ways they pursued their goals in contexts that were often quite hostile. In both measures of character, a number of traits were used as proxies to determine whether someone was "good" and "smart," for example, whether they were financially responsible, whether they were inclusive and built a community in their work, and whether they were strong enough in their convictions to set a course and defend it. All of these assessments of the motivations of different actors were reinforced by interactions within human rights networks, as brokers publicly and privately shared concerns about the motives of particular colleagues in the North and South alike. Many of the same dynamics that affected who was identified as a partner also determined who was trusted as a source of information – and indeed, whose knowledge justified and legitimated transnational interventions.

Truth and Consequences in Transnational Interventions

Of course, the politics of doubt were not confined to the South; IGLHRC's interventions had transnational repercussions, and brokers had good reason to doubt how their knowledge would be redeployed. The spread of new technologies has made it increasingly difficult for brokers to target their messaging at particular audiences, and public outputs in print and online are typically accessible to supporters, detractors, funders, partners, the media, academics, and hostile governments alike (Cowan 2003: 141; Gellner 2010: 12). The implications of this

were twofold: firstly, the production of knowledge was always shaped by considerations of how it might be taken up and used, and secondly, brokers' awareness of network politics meant that multiple and contradictory accounts were frequently left to uneasily coexist.

Brokers were conscious of the ways their politics and interventions might be misunderstood, twisted, or even used against them by other actors. A lack of firsthand research was not the only or even the primary reason brokers were reluctant to make definitive statements about the state of the world for LGBT people. They were also quite aware of how sloppily that information might be used, or what it might be used to justify. It was not uncommon for brokers to encounter comments via mail, email, or blogs that dismissed whole regions or populations as "barbaric," "uncivilized," or "inhuman," or suggestions that Northern governments should intervene diplomatically, economically, or, occasionally, militarily to improve the lives of LGBT people. From within the organization, I regularly witnessed frustration at the reactionary paternalism, racism, and xenophobia with which allegations of human rights violations were received.

It was difficult for brokers to remain uninvolved in these discussions. IGLHRC's work made it a somewhat visible source for those interested in these issues, including journalists. Working in the Communications and Research Department, I was regularly contacted by reporters about LGBT human rights issues. The protocol was to refer reporters to the regional staff on queries regarding specific countries. The reality of the situation was that with brokers in the regional offices traveling, grappling with time differences of up to 12 hours, or simply not having the time to rapidly respond to a press inquiry from the US, many requests for interviews either went unanswered or ended up being brought back to brokers in New York. When those of us in New York had been working on a particularly high-profile issue like the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, we would occasionally respond directly to reporters.

Concern about how information would be used heavily shaped the way brokers interacted with journalists. This was certainly something I grappled with, and although I was there as an anthropologist, many of my informants complained

about it too. In one incident, I was phoned by a producer from the UK who wanted to film a documentary on the ways that the Christian Right in the US was exporting homophobia to Africa. He mentioned that Uganda would be the centerpiece of the documentary, but that the production team needed two other countries to balance the narrative. As the call went on, it became increasingly clear that the producer knew which countries he considered homophobic – Malawi and Senegal – and wanted me to affirm that they should send film crews to both and provide contacts to make this possible. I was skeptical about Malawi, where the flare-up over Chimbalanga and Monjeza did not seem immediately or meaningfully traceable to evangelicals in the US. I was adamant, however, that it was not a good idea to send a crew to Senegal, where the mere mention of homosexuality had set off mob violence and IGLHRC had largely restricted its advocacy to working with groups behind the scenes. More prosaically, Senegal is 95 percent Muslim, and there are virtually no links with evangelicals in the US; instead, there are strong indications that homophobia has been heightened by pressure from Saudi Arabia, the politicization of religious leadership, and a series of publicized, escalating sex panics in 2008 and 2009. My response did not seem to be what the producer was looking for, and the call grew almost hostile as I tried to dissuade him from sending a film crew.

These sorts of claims are not at all uncommon, and have placed brokers – and certainly, placed me – in the awkward position of having to challenge, ignore, or legitimate particular narratives that would then be broadcast widely. Perle was frustrated that reporters routinely tried to frame IGLHRC's UN advocacy as a conflict between the West and the rest, despite her insistence that states like Colombia, Nepal, Gabon, and Mauritius either lobbied for or supported its interventions. In the case of the documentary, I found myself having to operate with the limited knowledge I had about the wishes of groups in Senegal, and under intense pressure to respond on the spot.

At other times, the claims were more innocuous, but still legitimated ways of understanding the human rights of LGBT persons that brokers resisted. This was especially true during the spate of media coverage in late 2009 and early 2010, when a number of reporters produced pieces on what they dubbed "a wave of

homophobia" in sub-Saharan Africa. Journalists frequently called asking IGLHRC whether homophobia was "increasing" in sub-Saharan Africa, and whether it was "the worst place in the world" to be LGBT. Brokers themselves were hesitant to make any sort of statement about whether homophobia was increasing or decreasing, and were reluctant to draw comparisons between very different forms of homophobia in different countries or regions. (Notably, this was more true of the staff in New York than those in the regions; around the time that I presented a paper criticizing the idea that homophobia was sweeping Africa and a manager called the trope "disgusting," Kilonzo told journalists that reported attacks against LGBT people in Africa had risen by ten percent in the past year.) Brokers responded to reporters fully conscious of how their narratives might be used, and were reluctant to act as an authority on the climate for LGBT people facing heightened repression. It was not difficult for reporters to find examples of how bleak the situation for LGBT people might be in the South, and brokers at IGLHRC routinely worked to add as much complexity and nuance to these depictions as possible.

This did not always work, of course. Brokers were under pressure to take some interview requests, particularly from high-profile outlets. It was said in the office that the board wanted to see more of IGLHRC in the *New York Times*, that is, for the organization to be the go-to source for high-profile stories about LGBT issues outside the US. Although brokers felt a desire – or, in some cases, an unwanted duty – to talk to the media, they tended to be approached by journalists and not vice versa, and this meant that what appeared in print was often considerably different from what brokers actually thought or did.

In many instances, interviews were taken out of context or framed in a way that brokers had not necessarily intended, and found alarming when they saw them in print. When Perle used the acronym "LGBT" in an interview with Reuters, for example, the journalist spelled it out in print as "lesbian, gay, bi and transsexual." The sloppy translation would have been merely annoying, except that Perle was engaged in intensive lobbying at the UN and IGLHRC's terminology was under close scrutiny. A similar incident occurred after *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear* was embargoed, when I agreed to speak to a reporter from Voice of America who had

been planning to run a story on the report. I told him I could only speak about conditions in Senegal in general terms, and, given the political sensitivities, asked to see my quotes before they appeared in print. Although he obliged, the piece then ran with the headline "Activists Criticize Senegal for Anti-Gay Persecution," which was precisely the image I was desperately trying to avoid by embargoing the report and downplaying any direct criticism of the government by transnational NGOs.

I may have been more sensitive to these questions than others, but my educational, class, and political background was in fact very similar to that of many of my informants, who were conscious of the complexity of these issues and regularly expressed frustration about the reductive ways they were discussed. Of course, brokers *did* believe that the violations they dealt with on a daily basis were unjust, and that the mistreatment and violence that people faced on the basis of SOGI was frankly unacceptable. At the same time, many had strong feminist, queer, and postcolonial politics, and did not want their opinions to be misused to advance arguments they found objectionable.

The potential repercussions of interventions in the South thus shaped the sentiments that brokers publicly expressed, and produced a fair amount of self-policing and political positioning. Brokers ruefully recounted interviews where they accidentally agreed that same-sex marriage was a problematically normative institution, worrying that these kinds of frank assessments would anger partners who felt quite differently and jeopardize their tireless work. Privately, strategies which embraced assimilation into the family, faith communities, and the neo-liberal or authoritarian state were often viewed skeptically by brokers at IGLHRC. At the same time, they were often reluctant to disrupt these strategies when they were used in places like Uganda and Malawi, and were conscious that these served short-term ends that challenged some norms while they reinforced others.

Where disagreements *did* regularly break out was within transnational networks, which were often intensely combative, territorial, and polarized. This is an aspect of LGBT human rights advocacy that has largely gone unremarked in academic discussions. A number of schisms, both national and transnational, have shaped the field. Some result from implicit, low-intensity territorialism among

groups like ILGA, IGLHRC, and HRW. Others have gone public in rather spectacular ways, including the open letter from activists in Africa asking Peter Tatchell to cease intervening in their struggles, very vocal critiques in the gay press by Michael Lucas, Michael Petrelis, *Gay City News*, and others who would like to see LGBT NGOs intervening more aggressively, and the libel suits that Tatchell has threatened to bring against critics in the academy. (This has had a particularly chilling effect; Tatchell successfully had the anthology *Out of Place* taken out of circulation because of a chapter that was critical of his work, and won a formal apology from Kenneth Roth and Scott Long of HRW for a piece by Long in *Contemporary Politics* criticizing misguided responses to alleged hangings of gay men in Iran.) Incidents like these had a visibly stifling effect, and made brokers reluctant to take a stance on particular issues or to work with activists they considered particularly toxic. As one broker at IGLHRC described these dynamics:

> [Y]ou have to deal with the politics of the movement – which, by the way, this movement is so *bitchy*. I'm saying that, actually, in all seriousness. Like, really. It's so bitchy. In the women's movement… there's a lot of talking about this and that, but not this bitchiness. […] There's like this kind of almost aggressive, like, watching out for people to fuck up to attack them for it that I'm astounded by. I'm astounded by it. Like, just *waiting* to make the critique... This movement is not going to be successful if that dominates… It really amazes me sometimes, and I really don't know what it's about.

Of course, brokers did correct each other, especially when they had an opportunity to be critical of somebody they had challenged in the past or when they felt misunderstandings were too egregious to let stand. A few indicative examples emerged in quick succession in early 2010. Most brokers I worked with were on two list-servs, a wider, open list called EuroQueer and a semi-closed list of activists run by a small transnational NGO. In early 2010, a prominent human rights campaigner in the UK sent out three press releases that were immediately challenged by brokers in the network. The first of these, sent on January 18, relayed the reported arrests of a number of HIV activists in Senegal. This was quickly corrected by a broker at a large human rights NGO in the US, who pointed out that the arrests had in fact occurred a full year earlier and had been resolved. On February 16, the campaigner

sent another press release with the sensational headline "Execute Gay Scouts, Says Chief Scout of Uganda." The logic of his claim was that David Bahati, a major proponent of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, was also the Chief of the Scout Board of Uganda. The release asserted, "The leader of the scout movement in Uganda is demanding the execution of all scouts and scout leaders who commit repeated homosexual acts," which may have been deductively true, but was still a fairly tortured argument for opposing the Bill. A number of activists voiced discomfort with the strategy, objecting that there were enough damaging aspects of the Bill that inventive approaches were unnecessary, distracting, and counterproductive. On March 9, the campaigner sent another press release demanding that Chimbalanga and Monjeza be adopted by AI. This was quickly followed by a reply from a broker at AI noting that the couple had, in fact, been adopted, and that she had told him as much. In these instances, policing was done within networks to correct obvious inaccuracies and discourage counterproductive strategies before they spread.

At other times, however, the facts were not particularly clear, and contradictory narratives proliferated without being countered and settled. In the case of Chimbalanga and Monjeza, the same campaigner repeatedly and publicly insisted that Monjeza had contracted malaria and was deathly ill in prison. By contrast, partners at CEDEP who were doing prison visits told brokers at IGLHRC that Monjeza had contracted malaria, was quickly treated and recovered, and was doing fine. They complained that claims that Monjeza was on his deathbed were generating criticism in Malawi that they were spreading lies and blowing the whole incident out of proportion, which they did not need as they prepared to defend Monjeza in court. While brokers at IGLHRC explicitly stated in their own outputs that Monjeza was well, they opted not to correct the campaigner for spreading a different view.

In this situation, brokers were placed in a difficult position. On one hand, brokers did not want to be seen to scold their counterparts around the globe. They were aware that feuds would bruise egos and make it difficult to work together, but were also concerned that the press (and particularly, the LGBT press) would seize upon any public disagreements as a sign of infighting among different groups and

persons. On the other hand, partners at CEDEP asked IGLHRC to correct the rumors, as they were being inundated with questions about Monjeza's health and worried that sensationalized reports would damage their credibility and hamper their efforts to free the couple from prison. Rather than escalating this to a matter of dispute within the network, which, judging by historical precedent, would very quickly have made headlines in the gay press and possibly triggered legal action, IGLHRC simply maintained its own organizational line, and the contradictory narratives coexisted.

Brokers did not publicize every piece of information that came to their attention. They regularly grappled with doubts about facts, motives, and repercussions, and used various techniques to minimize these doubts and produce "good enough" knowledge for advocacy. Their assessments about what actually transpired in a given incident, whether those involved were trustworthy, and what they could do with that information all shaped the advocacy that they actually carried out on behalf of LGBT persons. When brokers did release information, it reached some people more directly than others, which is an aspect of their work that I explore in greater detail below.

E. IGLHRC's Role in Releasing and Diffusing Information

In spite of these obstacles, brokers routinely deployed information for political ends. Some of these were tactical interventions – for example, the letters brokers wrote to Special Procedures and shadow reports they helped partners produce for CEDAW and the UPR. Others were theoretical interventions, particularly IGLHRC's thematic reports on issues like parenting (Minot 2000), sexuality in women's rights advocacy (Rothschild 2005), the exclusion of same-sex practicing people from HIV/AIDS programming (C.A. Johnson 2007), and blackmail and extortion in sub-Saharan Africa (Thoreson and Cook 2011).

Beyond these explicit interventions, however, brokers were involved in producing and diffusing smaller pieces of information on a daily basis. IGLHRC's most regular outputs were updates, which were written and put on the website to

assess or publicize violations of the human rights of LGBT persons. The process by which updates were produced was fairly irregular; they tended to be written when brokers felt they were expected to say something about a crisis, wanted to clarify their stance on a new development, or were given information by partners who wanted it to reach a transnational audience.

Updates were part of a larger debate about the function that the website should serve. Brokers disagreed about whether IGLHRC should be a source of information for people interested in LGBT issues internationally, with comprehensive and up-to-date news on human rights violations against LGBT persons worldwide, or whether it should instead aim to provide information to a more targeted audience of partners and human rights defenders. IGLHRC's website was something of a compromise between these positions. A page existed for each of six regions – Africa, LAC, API, MENA, Europe and Central Asia, and North America – as well as the UN and regional mechanisms. A sidebar on each page displayed a list of countries within that region, hyperlinked to pages of links, documents, and resources regarding the human rights of LGBT persons in each specific country. As clicking through these links suggested, however, this information was irregular. Depending on IGLHRC's partnerships and the publicity given to violations in a particular country, some pages were heavily populated with links, while others had scattershot coverage, or, occasionally, nothing at all.

The role of press releases at IGLHRC was less prominent. These were used when news was both timely and substantiated enough to relay it with confidence – conditions that primarily aligned when projects were premeditated, and were rarely met during crises – and when transnational attention was believed to be helpful. Few projects that brokers at IGLHRC worked on independently were so newsworthy that they required a press release. Most were either deliberately subtle and behind the scenes or were covered by other activists or journalists such that IGLHRC's coverage was not necessarily groundbreaking.

Nonetheless, press releases did suggest where brokers at IGLHRC, especially Johnson, Jones, and Cook, felt their work was newsworthy and that press attention was important. During my fieldwork, examples of these interventions included

press releases on the arrest of LGBT rights defenders in Zimbabwe, the imprisonment, conviction, and sentencing of Chimbalanga and Monjeza in Malawi, the Celebration of Courage gala and honoring of Colombia Diversa, UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé, and US Representative Barney Frank, violence against transgender persons in Turkey, homophobia in Swaziland, IGLHRC's support of activism in Nepal, the murder of a young Honduran activist, IGLHRC's side event at the UNGA, updates on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, and impunity in the case of lesbians murdered in South Africa.

IGLHRC's different outputs were the result of competing priorities that brokers weighed in deciding when publicity would be helpful. Updates provided information or analysis to those who visited IGLHRC's website for information, while press releases were targeted at those who might amplify the work of IGLHRC and its partners to a wider audience. Often, press releases seemed to be motivated by the sense that something should be done, and that notifying the press would be helpful (or, at least, not harmful) in putting pressure on those in the US who might productively intervene. These regular outputs were designed to publicize the struggles of LGBT activists around the globe, but also to highlight the ways brokers at IGLHRC supported them. They were critical in establishing IGLHRC's credibility as an up-to-date, dynamic source of information on LGBT human rights transnationally. Where this information was circulated and who received it, however, was subtly shaped by a variety of structural and logistical factors that affected how it took root in practice.

Diffusion in LGBT Human Rights

As suggested in Chapter 3, the fields of human rights and LGBT politics influenced the views of brokers at IGLHRC in complex ways. These were not static bodies of knowledge, however, and were defined and animated by a number of actors. In addition to human rights defenders, these included activists, jurists, policymakers, diplomats, journalists, academics, medical practitioners, faith leaders, artists,

celebrities, and many others who defined, championed, and criticized the knowledge with which brokers at IGLHRC worked.

The diverse actors and groups engaging with LGBT human rights issues were important both because they produced knowledge and because they structured the flows and scapes through which this knowledge circulated globally (Appadurai 2002: 60-62; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002: 701-708). Social movement theorists have pinpointed two channels – interpersonal interactions and depersonalized transmission through media – that shape the transnational diffusion of ideas, tactics, and strategies. Doug McAdam and Dieter Rucht helpfully define these as *relational* diffusion, or "direct, interpersonal contact between transmitters and adopters," and *non-relational* diffusion, or the spread of ideas and artifacts through the media and other impersonal channels (McAdam and Rucht 1993: 59).[40] Brokers engaged in both forms of diffusion on a daily basis.

In terms of relational diffusion, brokers facilitated or participated in a number of forums where information, concepts, and tactics were shared among different groups and activists. Some of these were strategy sessions among different organizations, including those to prepare for the Side Event at the UNGA for Human Rights Day on December 10, 2009, the LGBT/SOGI Human Rights Consultation on Ending the Exportation of Homophobia and Global Criminalization of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity hosted by the UU-UNO on June 14, 2010, and the briefing on LGBT human rights and US foreign policy at the US State Department on June 22, 2010. Others were fairly high-level conferences where host organizations and donors invited activists to attend, make presentations, and network with colleagues. In late 2009 and early 2010, these included the 54th CSW at the UN in New York; the International Congress on Gender Identity and Human Rights in Barcelona; the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna; and a summit to draft a proposal for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria in

[40] Manuel Castells distinguishes "the space of places" and "the space of flows," while Sean Chabot and Jan Willem Duyvendak differentiate "interpersonal channels" from "media channels" (Castells 1997: 123-124; Chabot and Duyvendak 2002: 706). In slightly different registers, each framework distinguishes relational and non-relational channels of diffusion.

Johannesburg. The relational diffusion of information, concepts, and tactics was furthered by the visits of individual activists, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa, to the North during this period. These visits allowed key figures in African LGBT movements, including Julius Kaggwa, Val Kalende, and Frank Mugisha of Uganda, Gift Trapence of Malawi, and Sybille Nyeck of Cameroon, to meet with activists, policymakers, and funders in the US.

What was more regular was the non-relational diffusion of information. A core group of activists, professionals, and donors involved in transnational LGBT advocacy shared information on a list-serv where news, research, calls to action, and job postings were posted on a daily basis. On this and other regional and national list-servs, like Euro-Queer in Europe or QueerTalk in Kenya, the diffusion of news and ideas across borders was strikingly evident. IGLHRC also had its own mailing list, website, and presence on Facebook and Twitter, allowing it to host and disseminate its outputs through its own channels.

Brokers at IGLHRC primarily used the website and mailing list to disseminate information, however, and these were accessed by particular segments of their many potential audiences. The heaviest traffic to IGLHRC's website during my fieldwork was not related to issues like the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda or the trial in Malawi, but to IGLHRC's own contentious bid for consultative status at ECOSOC and the stripping and subsequent restoration of the term "sexual orientation" to a standing resolution in the UNGA on extrajudicial killings. IGLHRC was the primary source for information about its own battles at the UN, and its position was disproportionately visible in discussions of these issues. By contrast, information about other LGBT human rights issues could be found in the press, from NGOs like AI or HRW, or regional or domestic groups that were directly involved.

Of course, other parties have also been influential in diffusion processes. Ideas about gender, sexuality, and human rights are disseminated through a dizzying array of channels which influence activists as well as the wider systems in which they work. The mediums in which IGLHRC set out information were influential, but other determinant factors also shaped the diffusion of knowledge from New York, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, and Manila. Within these larger systems,

what aspects of IGLHRC's praxis shaped who accessed its information and where it was redeployed?

The Linguistic Limits of Advocacy at IGLHRC

One factor that consistently shaped how brokers circulated knowledge was the near-exclusive use of English in their published materials.[41] The regional offices had other linguistic competencies, although they remained stymied by the range of linguistic diversity in their region. In an interview, Kilonzo frankly detailed how this shaped the Africa Program:

> Right now, we're mostly in Anglophone Africa because of the challenge of language, but also outreach in Francophone is quite difficult. And I think we've taken the easier option of not investing in Francophone. There's still need of Lusophone – Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde – but it's on a small scale as against Francophone. We seriously need a West African Anglophone person to just comb the environment there and just advise us on what exactly needs to be done.

Kilonzo highlighted how language served to carve advocacy in the Africa Program into discrete parts, with some regions effectively off-limits to brokers who did not have the necessary linguistic capacity. The multiplicity of languages was even more challenging for brokers in the API Program. The region was rich with languages and dialects, and the finite linguistic capacity of just two brokers from Malaysia and the Philippines had marked effects on their advocacy.

In the MENA Program, Alizadeh saw this not only as a logistical problem, but a political one:

> I have a problem with an organization that only communicates in one language. That simply means that you're not talking to the people. In the Middle East, illiteracy is a huge problem. In countries [where] you have 70 or 80 percent of people illiterate, the knowledge of English is a luxury, limited to a very, very top elite… They speak the language, they play the

[41] Cook was frank about this point, noting in an interview that English "is the lingua franca of this organization."

> game very well, they use the language that is very appealing to the donors and the internationals, so they get all the resources, and they come across as legitimate – the reality is, they have no legitimacy with the people, you know? It is like our branch as McDonald's in Istanbul or Beirut. How is that relevant to the people in the region, you know? They don't relate to that. When you go to their websites, 80 percent of the stuff is in English. I mean, these things are real challenges.

Brokers' awareness of human rights violations around the globe, and, indeed, the day-to-day lives of queer people, was also circumscribed by linguistic dynamics. For brokers to be privy to breaking news about violations globally, they had to be monitoring it regularly and able to comprehend the language in which it was written. What often happened was that news would break and then be relayed by English-language media or an English-speaking activist or journalist, making it less likely that these violations would reach IGLHRC quickly, if at all. The linguistic capacity of brokers affected their work in other, more subtle ways. The partners with whom brokers worked closely were overwhelmingly (if not exclusively) Anglophone, or headed by individuals who were at least reasonably fluent.[42]

Translatability was a routine obstacle at IGLHRC. Brokers acknowledged that the ubiquity of English in IGLHRC's work was problematic, particularly when it made information unintelligible to those it concerned. IGLHRC's outputs were almost always inaccessible to non-Anglophone audiences, and potentially confusing to those unfamiliar with the technical concepts and terminology of the human rights system. Information was particularly limited for groups that were not Anglophone, Hispanophone, or Francophone.

The challenge of translating materials into other languages was a concern that was raised frequently by brokers, who were often frustrated by the financial, personnel, and logistical pressures that made widespread translation impossible. Often, the result was a kind of compromise with the resources available. When *Words of Hate, Climate of Fear* was in production, for example, a volunteer translator notified IGLHRC they would no longer be able to help with the project. The

[42] Notably, this was not true of IGLHRC's partners in the LAC region, who worked with staff in Buenos Aires who were Argentinean and fluent in Spanish.

estimated cost of hiring a professional to translate the report into French far exceeded the amount that had been budgeted. Upon becoming Program Director, Jones argued that it was still important to translate as much of the report as possible into French and, ideally, Wolof. Johnson agreed in principle, but was also conscious of the financial constraints on the report. At Johnson's suggestion, the full report in English was accompanied by a four-page Executive Summary in French that included key findings and recommendations to the government, regional bodies, and NGOs in the region.

This was not an atypical solution. Brokers made a conscious effort to translate materials for the people they concerned; most coverage of Turkey was translated into Turkish, and most coverage of Latin America was translated into Spanish. It was rarely if ever suggested, however, that the same coverage might be translated into Mandarin, Russian, or Thai. While non-Anglophone groups were occasionally able to access materials about their country in their language, particularly when they were involved in gathering or working on them, they were unable to access the full range of IGLHRC's materials to learn about work being carried out elsewhere. The ironic result was that non-Anglophone recipients could access information about their own domestic context, but IGLHRC, an international organization, could not tell them very much about LGBT movements internationally.

IGLHRC most often heard the information, preferences, and needs of those activists and groups who could communicate in English. Most of IGLHRC's outputs, too, were designed for an Anglophone audience. By having to rely on intermediaries in contexts where they lacked linguistic capacity, brokers were forced to grapple with another level of potential misunderstandings and doubt. All of this decisively steered the flow of information toward those in the North, particularly the US, and a few key areas of the South in which IGLHRC worked most heavily.

Access and the Technical Constraints of Cyberspace

What was less often discussed was the impact of particular communications platforms, particularly the heavy use of email and the internet as the main channels

through which information was disseminated to partners and audiences abroad. Most brokers were aware of the limitations of online advocacy in mobilizing a constituency to make a meaningful impact; with action alerts, for example, it was unclear whether email addresses for key officials were valid, whether a sharp influx of emails had the same impact as a flood of physical letters and faxes, or who might respond to any call for action and what messages they might send (McCaughey and Ayers 2003: 6; Lebert 2003: 216; Roy 2003: 189). Nonetheless, brokers continued to use the internet as their primary vehicle for transnational engagement. A few sought to use technology in new ways; Perle in particular was interested in social networking and alternative ways of engaging people beyond IGLHRC's limited web interface. Aside from using Twitter, however, there was little emphasis on mobile technology, even as it outpaced internet use in huge swatches of the South (Mudhai 2006: 109). The analytics for IGLHRC's website reflected these dynamics. Visitors primarily came from the US, China, the UK, Canada, the Philippines, Turkey, and India, reflecting issues of language and accessibility, and, to a lesser extent, the close relationships that brokers like Alizadeh and Cristobal had with groups in Turkey and the Philippines. Most of IGLHRC's outputs were only available through email and its website, and brokers had no immediate plans to disseminate them through alternative channels.

Even in its online advocacy, IGLHRC worked within constraints. Brokers used a web platform their predecessors had contracted years earlier, which significantly limited the website's functionality and the revisions they could affordably make. According to brokers who were on staff at the time, IGLHRC opted to use this particular host because it came recommended by a colleague who knew the people who ran it. Years later, the web platform was routinely frustrating to those who managed it, particularly the webmaster, who found it severely restricted her ability to design pages and arrange content. This made it harder to make IGLHRC's site navigable and accessible from mobile phones and other devices.

The technical aspects of IGLHRC's work had benefits as well as limitations for partners. Advances in technology made it possible to transmit reports and information in a way that would have been unthinkable when IGLHRC did the bulk

of its mobilization with fliers, phone trees, and fax machines. The use of the internet as a technology for activism allowed brokers to reach large numbers of people very quickly, regardless of where in the world they might be located. It also made those who sent or received information less susceptible to raids, harassment, or arrest.

Nonetheless, those benefits were not shared equally by activists around the globe. At IGLHRC, this was reflected in conscious choices about formats and platforms. The vast majority of IGLHRC's documents were in PDF format, which limited their utility for those around the globe without the technology to open PDF files. This was not arbitrary; using Microsoft Word or other formats was said to run the risk of making documents editable by whoever downloaded them, something that could easily be abused by hostile actors. Nonetheless, it affected who could access and read IGLHRC's outputs, and where the knowledge produced by brokers was taken up and deployed.

As analysts of civil society and new technologies have argued, e-advocacy "has tended to focus on the activities of individuals who are empowered to point and click, sign petitions, engage as virtual citizens, and register their opinions on millions of blogs, online forums, list-servs, and newsgroups, using a variety of devices" (Dean et al. 2006: xv). IGLHRC's outputs were not only constrained by pragmatic questions of language and technology, but were implicitly and strategically aimed at particular actors – a dynamic I explore more deeply in Chapter 6.

F. Conclusion

One of the most fundamental yet unremarked activities of brokers at IGLHRC was circulating knowledge about LGBT human rights around the globe. Brokers not only operated with particular understandings of human rights and LGBT politics, as discussed in Chapter 3, but interpreted myriad incidents through those lenses and deployed knowledge about them for decidedly political ends.

Brokers at IGLHRC were quite conscious of their limitations in speaking authoritatively about LGBT human rights globally. This was not unfailingly true;

personal and institutional pressures occasionally goaded brokers into speaking out even when information was recognizably vague or imperfect. Indeed, the difficulty of verifying information about sexual rights when there was so much at stake was daunting. Brokers had their own tactics for sifting through bits of information to find the facts that allowed them to call something a violation of a human right, assign some responsibility to the state, and issue a demand for redress. Their strategies for managing doubt were very much in the service of wider aims, for example, for LGBT people to be recognized as human and treated accordingly. For brokers, doubt was something to be eradicated as much as possible, usually by relying heavily on partners and regional programs to supply credible information. Despite their efforts, structural factors still constrained how knowledge circulated globally.

In all of these processes, it is ethnographically notable that brokers and brokerage played a fundamental role, and their circulation of knowledge transnationally was shaped by the political and structural conditions under which they operated. Although it is important to recognize these factors, it is also important to recognize the ways in which asymmetrical patterns of collecting and disseminating information, multiple and persistent forms of doubt, and the politics of those who animate transnational advocacy networks all also shape whose voices are heard, who hears them, and what they say. This is perhaps particularly true insofar as this knowledge is institutionalized in the UN and other arenas of norm creation and reglementation, which I now explore in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER SIX: IGLHRC as Advocate in the Global Human Rights Arena

A. Introduction

In both crisis situations and long-term programmatic work, brokers at IGLHRC were engaged in the institutionalization of particular ideas and mechanisms related to SOGI and human rights. Institutionalization, or the codification of viewpoints in laws, policies, and practices, has been part of IGLHRC's mission since Dorf sought to have AI incorporate LGBT persons into its mandate in 1990. As analysts of other advocacy movements have shown, institutionalizing processes are crucial in understanding how global norms are produced (Thompson 2002: 96). How this is actually done, however, and the bodies to which brokers appeal – whether for recognition or for more substantive redress – is something that has not been explored at length in analyses of transnational LGBT NGOs.

In this chapter, I look at IGLHRC's advocacy in the human rights arena. I consider IGLHRC's history as an institutionalizing force, the ways brokers strategized and worked within human rights mechanisms, and finally, the impact that their interventions had on the human rights framework. Drawing on previous chapters, I detail how institutionalization was shaped by a variety of factors. The history of IGLHRC and backgrounds of brokers were relevant, as were the ways that brokers constructed a category of LGBT human rights and promoted it through partnerships and the diffusion of knowledge. Under the pressures of the UN and regional mechanisms, their work was also shaped by unique and often competing objectives – for example, to be recognized by officials, to secure maximally inclusive protections, to build consensus among states, or to press for sweeping change – that alternately took precedence in their advocacy.

B. IGLHRC's Historical Role as an Institutionalizing Force

As the history of IGLHRC in Chapter 1 suggests, brokers have always placed a high premium on the recognition of their issues in formal settings. Whether in their campaign for AI to address sexuality or their intensive lobbying to get the phrase "sexual orientation" into the Platform of Action in Beijing, brokers sought to enshrine the view that LGBT people had human rights that were worth protecting and promoting. During my fieldwork, this was still a priority. While the venues and tactics that brokers have employed to institutionalize their views have shifted somewhat over time, the general principle has not, and this advocacy remained a central function of their work.

As the lobbying in Beijing illustrates, however, LGBT NGOs have made sporadic and uneven progress at the UN and regional mechanisms (Walker 1999-2000: 346-348). Brokers faced a number of initial setbacks; in the mid-1990s, the most high-profile example was when ILGA, a membership-based confederation with nearly 300 member groups in 50 countries, managed to win special consultative status to ECOSOC. The group became a source of intense controversy when then-Senator Jesse Helms learned that the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA), a pederastic group, was among its registered members (Osborne 1994: 27). Helms threatened to withdraw US funding for the UN if ILGA was not expelled from ECOSOC, setting off a global firestorm focused on small transnational LGBT NGOs. At the time, Dorf was not only Executive Director of IGLHRC, but a Senior Officer of ILGA, embroiling IGLHRC in the wider conflict between ILGA, the US Congress, and the UN.

As a result of the dispute, ECOSOC passed Resolution 1994/50 on September 16, 1994, suspending ILGA's status. The resolution authorized the Committee on NGOs to explore whether any of ILGA's members condoned pedophilia; the Committee demanded that the federation circulate a questionnaire to all its members asking their names, addresses, aims and purposes, activities, publications, position on pedophilia, and the positions of any subsidiaries on pedophilia

(Committee on NGOs 1995). When responses were collected from every member, the Committee on NGOs would review them and reach a decision.

ILGA responded that this would be impossible; the federation had 300 members, many of whom were not readily reachable by mail, would be putting themselves at risk by sending their address and details, or would simply fail to respond. As a result, ILGA lost its consultative status at the UN, and a host of other LGBT groups were routinely denied consultative status for a full decade until three organizations – ILGA-Europe, LSVD, and the Danish National Association for Gays and Lesbians (Landsforeningen for Bøsser og Lesbiske or LBL) – received consultative status in December 2006.[43]

A number of other disputes shaped early struggles to be formally recognized by intergovernmental bodies in the human rights arena. As described in Chapter 1, one of the most memorable battles was in 2001, when IGLHRC successfully lobbied states to restore then-HIV Program Officer Karyn Kaplan to a UNGA panel on the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In venues like this, IGLHRC became a more regular presence at the UN, offering technical advice and engaging in discussions with its agencies and member states.

In the years that followed, however, LGBT NGOs did plan and advance a number of initiatives to formally enshrine recognition of LGBT rights at the UN. The first of these, known as the Brazil Resolution (E/CN.4/2003/L.92), was a draft resolution introduced to ECOSOC in 2003. Like the Yogyakarta Principles that would be drafted by human rights experts just three years later, the Brazil Resolution "[did] not in any manner create any new rights, but merely affirm[ed] that the existing rights framework should apply regardless of sexual orientation" (Narrain: 2005: 1). At least 20 countries voiced support, but a coalition of governments in the Middle East, backed by the Holy See, threatened to amend the resolution to the point of irrelevance by removing all references to sexuality (Fischlin and Nandorfy 2007: 91). Ultimately, the CHR decided on a vote of 24 to 17 with 10 abstentions to defer consideration of the draft resolution until 2004 (UNHCHR 2003). Brazil vowed to

[43] IGLHRC's own lengthy but ultimately successful efforts to win consultative status are described later in this chapter.

reintroduce the resolution in the next session, but it never moved past this stage. The unflagging political opposition to this type of intervention led one human rights scholar to conclude during this period that "[i]n the short and medium run, there is no chance of anything even close to an international consensus on even a working text for a draft declaration on the rights of homosexuals" (J. Donnelly 2003: 238).

This perspective shifted somewhat in 2008, when another statement was introduced at the UNGA that was known colloquially among activists as the French Resolution.[44] The statement was delivered by Argentina, and its signatories affirmed "that human rights apply equally to every human being regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity" and indicated that they were "deeply concerned by violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on sexual orientation or gender identity" (HRW 2008b). Overall, 66 countries signed the statement, with this number increasing to 67 after the Obama Administration signed on behalf of the US. While brokers saw the statement as a turning point for LGBT rights, it was not without controversy. In response to the statement, Abdullah al-Hallaq of Syria read a counter-statement that was signed by 57 states. The remaining states, constituting roughly a third of those at the UN, abstained from taking a position.[45]

The cooperation between LGBT NGOs and the Obama Administration has been accompanied by a noticeably stronger commitment to LGBT rights throughout US foreign policy. While the Bush Administration remained agnostic on many of the efforts to promote the human rights of LGBT people at the UN, including its abstention from the statement at the UNGA, the Obama Administration has demonstrated a consistent willingness to engage with NGOs on these issues. From its invitation to NGOs to attend a briefing at the White House on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda to a forum at the US State Department commemorating Pride Month in June 2010 to its support of IGLHRC's bid for

[44] France's announcement that it would seek universal decriminalization at the UN came as a surprise to many brokers transnationally, who initially worried that it would backfire and enshrine opposition to LGBT human rights instead (see Sheill 2009: 315).

[45] It has been suggested that new norms come into being when they are supported by one-fourth to one-third of state actors (Khagram et al. 2002: 15). Under this operational definition, these victories at the UN over the past three years do mark a turning point for the normative recognition of human rights regardless of SOGI.

ECOSOC status, the Obama Administration worked particularly closely with IGLHRC, CGE, and other US-based NGOs promoting the human rights of LGBT persons.

Shortly after I left IGLHRC, this was manifest in the unusually strong support that the US showed in its advocacy around a standing resolution on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions. The resolution affirmed the importance of state intervention to respect and protect the right to life, and, as part of this, listed a non-exhaustive list of grounds on which discriminatory killings might be based. For ten years, sexual orientation had been included in these grounds. In November 2010, the resolution was brought before the Third Committee to be renewed. At that stage, the representative of Benin introduced an amendment on behalf of the African Group to strip "sexual orientation" from the text of the resolution. The amendment passed with 79 votes in favor, 70 opposed, 17 abstentions, and 26 states absent.

As the amended resolution was advanced to the full UNGA, the US and other states mobilized to reinsert the phrase "sexual orientation" into the resolution. The lobbying ultimately succeeded, and the US amendment passed with 93 votes in favor, 55 opposed, and 27 abstentions. From there, the full resolution was passed with 122 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 59 abstentions.[46] The vote was notable for many reasons; the US aggressively courted states to support or abstain from the amendment, Rwanda broke from the Africa Group and spoke convincingly about the importance of non-discrimination, and South Africa offered its support after a long period of inaction on LGBT issues at the UN.[47]

These efforts have been among the most high-profile and visible attempts to institutionalize the recognition of LGBT people and issues in the human rights arena. These public manifestations, however, are only a small piece of the work that brokers do with the various bodies and mechanisms that make up the human rights apparatus. Many of their efforts do not depend on the votes of a majority of sovereign states or the need to agree upon common language on sexual rights in the

[46] A notable abstention from the final resolution was the US itself, which regularly abstains from the resolution on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions.
[47] The incorporation of LGBT human rights into a host of other diplomatic and foreign policy initiatives is itself a strong sign of a growing norm (see D'Amato 1982; 1984-1985).

international arena. Indeed, if the UN's inability to agree on an official definition of "gender" is any indication, any consensus on these issues will be a long way off. Instead, brokers have made piecemeal advances in various corners of the human rights arena, slowly building a framework in which the human rights of LGBT people are explicitly recognized by those who interpret and apply international law.

C. IGLHRC and Rights Protections in the Human Rights Arena

When they highlighted incidents, brokers at IGLHRC were conscious of two factors that, held in tension, shaped the approaches they took. The first was whether particular rights could be persuasively read into a situation, and the second was whether a particular body or mechanism might be receptive to such a reading. In the following section, I look at how rights were invoked and the ways that IGLHRC targeted those bodies and officials that might be most receptive to its claims.

Situating LGBT Issues Within the Human Rights Framework

With the whole human rights apparatus to draw upon, brokers had a variety of options in responding to incidents that occurred throughout the world. In IGLHRC's published outputs, the human rights framework was primarily invoked by brokers who linked violations to what appeared to be their correlative rights in international law. With only three law graduates on the staff – Kilonzo in the Africa Program and Cook and Perle in the Communications and Research Department – IGLHRC's responses to human rights violations were only rarely grounded in the binding precedents of domestic or regional courts. More often, IGLHRC's advocacy was grounded in a tacit association of a perceived violation with a perceived standard under the ICCPR, ICESCR, regional mechanisms, or a domestic constitution, regardless of how these textual formulations had been interpreted in practice. Where a student was ejected from a school in Chile for being a lesbian, or Argentina for being transgender, or Belize for being too effeminate, for example, brokers pointed to the right to education as it was variously formulated in different arenas.

In one of the more comprehensive compilations, an action alert in the case of a student named Jose Garcia in Belize stated that:

> All people have the right to education under international human rights law without discrimination based on and taking into account sexual orientation and gender identity (Yogyakarta Principle 16). Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention against Discrimination in Education, all of which Belize is party to, ensure the right to education of all. Additionally, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention Against Torture (CAT), and the ICESCR are explicitly interpreted to include protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Human Rights Committee: Toonen v. Australia; Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment 20; Committee Against Torture General Comment 2).
>
> Furthermore, the right to education without discrimination exists in Belize law as well. The preamble to the Belize Constitution states that "a just system should be ensured to provide for education and health on the basis of equality," and the Education Act dictates that "[s]chools shall be free of gender, racial and other biases (Art. 25 (2))." Jose Garcia's rights to education and non-discrimination under international and Belize law are being violated by his expulsion, threatening all other rights underpinned by equal access to education, including his right to work, to housing, and to health. (IGLHRC 2009d)

These brief and unelaborated invocations of human rights were more developed in IGLHRC's appeals to institutions like governments, regional mechanisms, and treaty bodies and Special Rapporteurs at the UN. Nonetheless, brokers understood that a critical component in these interventions was the decisiveness with which they reified violations against LGBT people as human rights violations. As Ettelbrick noted, this was not inconsequential:

> You don't always win the first time out. These are brand new ideas. Look, our community… gay and lesbian people, no matter where you're talking about, were either vilified or simply ignored everywhere. I mean, it was almost like crabgrass grows, and you've never had crabgrass, and now you either try to kill it or you try to live with it and try to figure out what its beauty is and what it can lend to the landscape. And I think that's been a little bit of the issue. I mean, social change and social justice, it's not about

> whether you win a lawsuit or get a law passed, or whatever. That's certainly a piece of it. But if you only define success based on that, you're always going to be frustrated. You define success based on, have you moved a few people?
>
> At heart, it's about the old-fashioned word "consciousness-raising." That is what it is. Once you are conscious of something, once you are aware of a problem, once you are aware of a situation, you begin to start seeing things. Have you ever had that situation where you read something and it's like, oh, I never knew that, and then all of a sudden, everywhere you look it seems like you're seeing this in a different way? Our whole lives as human beings, we're constantly a little bit refocusing and growing and learning new things. And I think that's very much the human rights process. So in the end, implementation, yeah – would it be great to have some magical wand somewhere that could call on governments and say, you have to do this? Yes. But it's about building a new norm, that's the thing. It is not about Daddy or Mommy coming in and saying you're wrong. It's about building a new norm, a normative way, normative approaches in society, and that doesn't just happen.

Ettelbrick's comments helpfully illustrate that brokers did not necessarily see structural change as the only measure of success. They were just as conscious that they were engaging in a process of norm creation, and the disruption of taken-for-granted understandings of the violability of LGBT persons. With that understanding in mind, virtually any body at the UN could be potentially important, and this offered brokers a considerable amount of latitude in framing and targeting their claims.

Formal Reporting and Recognition in the Charter- and Treaty-Based Bodies

The use of sympathetic or strategic points of entry into the human rights framework constitutes a form of "forum shopping," a practice whereby those seeking redress seek venues where they are most likely to successfully advance their claims (Von Benda-Beckmann 1984: 37). Brokers at IGLHRC were cognizant of which human rights mechanisms were most likely to respond favorably to their appeals, and this shaped how they framed and targeted their advocacy.

The UN has two types of human rights bodies: charter-based bodies, which originate from the UN Charter, and treaty-based bodies, which originate from the legal instruments created and ratified by member states. The former category

includes the HRC and its UPR Working Group and Advisory Committee, as well as Special Procedures charged with investigating country and issue-specific violations of human rights. The latter category includes those bodies charged with monitoring the covenants and conventions passed by member states since the founding of the UN (Department of Public Information at the UN's Dag Hammarskjöld Library 2009).

Brokers at IGLHRC targeted both types of human rights bodies, albeit selectively, based largely on their assessments of where appeals might have the greatest impact. Within the charter-based bodies, some of IGLHRC's most regular and private engagement has been with the Special Procedures, many of whom have signaled willingness or even eagerness to work on SOGI-related issues under their mandate. Brokers occasionally submitted brief reports to various Special Procedures alerting them to violations committed against LGBT persons. These were not usually advertised outside IGLHRC, because they were meant to encourage private and diplomatic investigations, without politicizing the mandate of the Special Procedure. Brokers have, however, publicly stated that IGLHRC submitted reports to the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which subsequently condemned violations in Cameroon and Egypt, and to the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, which subsequently voiced concern about violations in Iran. They have similarly appealed to the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary Executions, the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in the case of a series of vigilante murders of men in Iraq. Brokers also reportedly sent submissions to the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes, and Consequences, the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health, and the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.

As Perle observed in a discussion in the office, the question was not always what rights were violated, but which Special Rapporteur was likely to listen and take action on a particular complaint. Officials like Anand Grover, the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable

Standard of Physical and Mental Health, were outspoken proponents of LGBT human rights, and brokers noticed when they wrote on SOGI issues, spoke at rallies, or privately conveyed their support. The perception that certain Special Procedures were more amenable to claims by LGBT groups – or to broader interpretations of their mandates – encouraged brokers at IGLHRC to frame their complaints under the auspices of particular rights or themes.

This was evident after an incident in Turkey where five activists from Pembe Hayat, a transgender rights organization, were detained and beaten by police. On the night of May 17, 2010, four officers stopped the car in which the activists were riding and accused them of planning to engage in sex work. When the five phoned for help, they were pulled from the car, sprayed with tear gas, and beaten with batons. They were then taken to the police station, held in custody overnight, and released, before being charged with resisting arrest over a month later (IGLHRC et al. 2010).

In addition to working with Pembe Hayat and other transnational NGOs, including HRW, Global Advocates for Trans Equality (GATE), ILGA-Europe, and COC Netherlands, brokers at IGLHRC stressed the importance of bringing the incident to the attention of those who might further investigate it or, at the very least, record it as part of a larger pattern of persecution of transgender women in Turkey. Who that person might be, however, was an open question. It was clear that the women's rights were violated, but the angle from which the case might be reported was not immediately clear. A number of rights or themes covered by Special Procedures at the UN were potentially relevant, including those addressing violence against women, minority issues, or arbitrary detention. As a broker at IGLHRC suggested, however, the most likely avenues were the Special Rapporteurs dealing with arbitrary detention, torture, health, and possibly human rights defenders. This was not necessarily because these were the most thematically relevant, but because

these Special Rapporteurs were most likely to take note of the abuses and potentially raise concerns about them.[48]

The willingness of Special Rapporteurs to regard such incidents as part of their mandate affected where and when LGBT issues were raised at the UN, something vividly demonstrated when Martin Scheinin, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism, submitted a controversial report in 2009. Scheinin explicitly sought "to provide a comprehensive overview of the frequency and nature of gender-based human rights abuses in counter-terrorism measures and to explore the complex relationship between gender equality and countering terrorism," including "the gendered impact of counter-terrorism measures on men and persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities" (UNGA A/64/211 2009: 2). The response from states, NGOs, and the press was swift. Critics seized on particularly controversial aspects of the report, including the assertion that "gender is not static; it is changeable over time and across contexts," and Scheinin's use of the Yogyakarta Principles to insist that identity papers should reflect a person's self-defined gender identity (Abrams 2009; Melloy 2009; UNGA A/64/211 2009: 8). Although the analyses contained in the Scheinin Report were relatively uncontroversial in feminist and queer circles, they were far more aggressive than the positions most brokers sought to institutionalize in efforts like the Brazil Resolution, the French Resolution, or their bids for ECOSOC status. Many brokers felt they had not been consulted sufficiently, if at all; the report was written with the help of professors and students at NYU, and LGBT NGOs were largely included in these conversations after it was written and released. Although many privately approved of the findings of the report, they were compelled to work intensely behind the scenes to contain its fallout and to minimize its impact on their other hard-won gains.

[48] By contrast, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression was deemed a more difficult sell in this particular instance, as the person occupying the position tended to focus almost exclusively on political expression and eschewed more expansive interpretations that might have included gender expression.

Brokers targeted the treaty-based bodies of the UN in a more systematic way. At the time of my fieldwork, there were nine bodies charged with monitoring the human rights treaties: the Human Rights Committee (monitoring the ICCPR), the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (monitoring the ICESCR), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Committee Against Torture, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Migrant Workers, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (Office of the UNHCHR 2010). As a number of authors have noted, these bodies are often opaque and difficult to approach, and NGOs with access to the UN have greatly facilitated their work by helping activists write and submit shadow reports (Byrnes 1994: 207; Cook 1994b: 253).

IGLHRC did not work directly with the vast majority of these treaty bodies at the time of my fieldwork, save for the notable exception of the CEDAW Committee. Just prior to my arrival, IGLHRC published *Equal and Indivisible: Crafting Inclusive Shadow Reports for CEDAW*. The publication provided a guide for activists interested in shadow reporting, a process by which NGOs were invited to submit reports to the CEDAW Committee on the condition of women, or particular groups of women, in a country under review (IGLHRC 2009b). Brokers were actively involved in commissioning, editing, and ensuring the completion of shadow reports, and had a standing item in the budget to bring activists to testify or answer questions at CEDAW sessions in Geneva and New York.

In many ways, the CEDAW Committee was a prime target for intervention. Spaces opened by the women's movement provided opportunities to articulate inclusive understandings of rights, but also encouraged brokers to connect claims contained under the rubric of sexual rights. These included the policing of particular bodies and practices by the state apparatus, abuse or violence in the so-called "private" sphere, and the ways that patriarchy and heteronormativity prevented some persons from meaningfully exercising their rights. Beyond these general connections, however, interventions at the CEDAW Committee drew on a theme apparent in lesbian organizing globally – namely, that it often grew from feminist

movements rather than gay men's movements, and that sex and gender roles were as relevant as SOGI in the multiple marginalizations that LBT women faced. As the prominent women's rights activist Charlotte Bunch noted at the launch of *Equal and Indivisible*, "universality is not the opposite of diversity… intersectionality is the only road to universality" (IGLHRC 2009c). The focus on the conditions of LBT women and subgroups of LBT women, like the elderly, built these bridges and highlighted the complex intersections of different forms of vulnerability.

At the same time, interventions using CEDAW often pressured brokers to adopt a form of identity politics that did not necessarily align with the personal or organizational ideologies of many brokers at IGLHRC. The CEDAW Committee was specifically interested in the conditions for women in a particular country. Brokers who hesitated to use gendered identifiers or identity labels unless they were sure of their accuracy often found that the category of "women" was not necessarily self-evident. This was particularly true when brokers were politically committed to the full range of gender identities and expressions that transgender persons might bring to the debate.

This was apparent when brokers attempted to represent the needs of transgender persons in the reports they helped to write. Often, they included both male to female (MTF) and female to male (FTM) persons in their work, but still used the term "LBT women" (or, more awkwardly, "LB women and T people") in discussing the human rights violations they faced. Brokers doing this work were conscious that debates about the definition of "gender" had proved deeply divisive in the UN in years past, and that their interpretations were likely to be co-opted and misused by forces seeking to undermine the GEAR campaign and efforts to create a unified gender entity at the UN. Indeed, in much of IGLHRC's advocacy at the UN, the desire for protections to be maximally inclusive had to be balanced against baldly political calculations of which framings and interventions would produce the widest support from states.

Brokers' work with CEDAW seemed to have an impact. The CEDAW Committee has highlighted SOGI in reviews of particular states since 1999, both by criticizing those that criminalized same-sex activity and by praising those who

included SOGI in their non-discrimination laws (ICJ 2010: 7). At the 47th Session of CEDAW in October 2010, however, the Committee further codified its stance amid lobbying by IGLHRC and other groups. References to SOGI and lesbian women appeared in two of the Committee's General Recommendations, which it issued periodically to guide states in their implementation of the treaty. In the first, focused on older women, the Committee noted:

> The discrimination older women experience is often multidimensional, with age discrimination compounding other forms of discrimination based on sex, gender, ethnic origin, disability, levels of poverty, sexual orientation and gender identity, migrant status, marital and family status, literacy and other grounds. Older women who are members of minority, ethnic or indigenous groups, or who are internally displaced or stateless often experience a disproportionate degree of discrimination. (CEDAW/C/2010/47/GC.1 2010: 3)

In the second, which focused on CEDAW's mandate more broadly, the Committee explicitly reached a conclusion for which LBT activists had been advocating for years:

> Intersectionality is a basic concept for understanding the scope of the general obligations of States parties contained in article 2. The discrimination of women based on sex and gender is inextricably linked with other factors that affect women, such as race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, status, age, class, caste, and sexual orientation and gender identity. (CEDAW/C/2010/47/GC.2 2010: 5)

And, more forcefully, that:

> States parties have an obligation to take steps to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women. Certain groups of women, including women deprived of their liberty, refugees, asylum-seeking and migrant women, stateless women, lesbian women, disabled women, women victims of trafficking, widows and elderly women, are particularly vulnerable to discrimination through civil and penal laws, regulations and customary law and practices. (CEDAW/C/2010/47/GC.2 2010: 7)

These sorts of public institutionalizations of the human rights of LGBT people were precisely what IGLHRC and other transnational LGBT NGOs sought to achieve at the UN. Of course, the immediate implications of CEDAW's explicit references to SOGI and lesbian women remained to be seen. General Recommendations are not binding, and can only provide clarification and guidance to states implementing CEDAW. What was clear, however, was that brokers at IGLHRC would point to these references to insist that states were supposed to respond to discrimination against LBT persons. As of May 2009, over 186 states were party to CEDAW (IWRAW 2009). Some were supportive of interventions regarding SOGI, some were agnostic, and some refused to recognize the term SOGI at all, maintaining that it was not official UN language (IWRAW 2009). The explicit inclusion of SOGI and lesbian women in the General Recommendations helped brokers in pressuring all of these states; it provided a useful reference for supporters, offered cover to states that might have wanted to institute legal reforms but had to justify it domestically, and undermined the increasingly tenuous argument that SOGI is not recognized as a concept by the UN.

Having won recognition by the CEDAW Committee, it was possible that IGLHRC would turn its attention to other treaty bodies to which it had fewer historical and political ties. As Perle, who partially spearheaded CEDAW work, commented:

> I think where it would be most effective to have someone working at the UN is to try and get issues of sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression tied into other movements working at the UN. We're doing that really well with CEDAW and women's movements, [but] getting us tied into the anti-racist movements, getting us tied into environmental, children's, youth movements – I think we'll be the most effective that way. One thing that I found so surprising in the last session of the NGO Committee was, there was this… anti-racist organization, doing anti-racist work. In their constitution, they had a non-discrimination clause, or in their mission, they had something about non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. And they got tons of questions; almost all their questions were about that. And so you've got anti-racism groups getting held back based on sexual orientation, and a lot of groups that do LGBT work are held back by racism, and a lot of the progressive movements are involved in these anti-racist movements… I know it's really self-evident in stuff we're doing that's not at

> the UN, but I think at the UN, that could be really effective, because there's a treaty about non-discrimination on the basis of race. There's a treaty about disability. We already have a foot in the door with the treaty about women. I think that we can get a lot of work done that way. I'm always so surprised that there's so little, not even like a pinky toe, in the world of the Millennium Development Goals. I've seen a couple of emails about it recently, so maybe somebody's doing something, But women's groups are so involved in those, and we're just not. I'm sure we could find common ground in any of that.

Like the recognition of SOGI by Special Procedures, the incorporation of SOGI by treaty bodies served two functions. Firstly, recognition by treaty bodies formally affirmed that states should recognize and protect the human rights of LGBT people under treaties to which they had already acceded. Sally Engle Merry has written about the painstakingly difficult work of forging consensus in the technical language of UN documents (Merry 2006b: 36-71), and being recognized by treaty bodies allows brokers to bypass much of this process entirely. In a period when LGBT NGOs struggled to get 70 states to sign a non-binding statement in the UNGA condemning gross human rights violations on the basis of SOGI, it was notable that the CEDAW Committee suggested that all state parties interested in fully implementing the treaty should address discrimination on the basis of SOGI in a comprehensive way, recognizing intersectionality and the multiple marginalization that groups face.

Secondly, and just as importantly, explicit mention by the formal mechanisms of the UN set a normative tone by which discrimination against LGBT persons was considered unacceptable under the conventions of international law. As Cook, who had extensive experience at the UN, noted:

> [I]t basically aids what I call the "fake it til you make it" advocacy. You keep saying something until everyone really does believe it's true. If I tell people enough times that a Security Council resolution is undoubtedly, no questions asked, international law that is binding, eventually it will be. By all the other means that international law becomes binding. [Laughs.] Yes. Exactly.

While formal recognition was optimal in advancing this kind of soft-law recognition of LGBT people, it was not the only option. In a number of other interventions, brokers at IGLHRC achieved many of the same ends without institutionalizing any official policy (see Dembour 1996: 19). Instead, they simply maintained a presence

at the UN and worked behind the scenes with its agencies on projects where LGBT persons might be particularly relevant. Given the propensity for courts to initially balk at challenges to long-standing assumptions, this is not insignificant (Herald 2009: 187). Over time, the perspectives of LGBT human rights defenders have become less disruptive and more commonplace to officials and states at the UN. The inroads brokers made with this strategy were often more subtle and less high-profile, but were equally valuable in reinforcing that LGBT people were entitled to the full enjoyment of their human rights.

A Seat at the Table: Visibility and Legitimation in the Human Rights Arena

Brokers recognized that the prerequisite for IGLHRC's tactical interventions at the UN was its discursive recognition as a legitimate actor in the human rights arena. Since Beijing, brokers had been engaged in venues where their immediate goal was not to win structural protections under the binding treaties of international law. Instead, their visible presence in these venues legitimated their presence as stakeholders in debates about rights that occurred in the halls of the UN and elsewhere. By working closely with various branches of the UN that might be sympathetic to their mission, participating in UN forums, and building support among regional mechanisms, brokers managed to make IGLHRC a presence in the wider human rights arena – a critical prerequisite to the formal work with which they were typically associated.

In this legitimating work, brokers still ultimately sought legalistic ends, but did so through decidedly non-legalistic means. To a large extent, their presence was performative; by acting like a stakeholder in the human rights arena – using legal language, obtaining consultative status, speaking in official forums, crafting statements, meeting with authorities, and partnering with UN agencies – brokers entrenched IGLHRC as a relevant body on a variety of issues.

A few examples from my fieldwork illustrate this legitimating work. Brokers collaborated closely with staff at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which supported their work at regional mechanisms in particular. UNDP

staff helped coordinate IGLHRC's meeting and panel of LGBT activists at the NGO Forum before the 45th Session of the ACHPR in May 2009, for example, and collaborated to bring activists from the Caribbean to speak about LGBT rights before the IACHR in November 2010. At times, the UNDP offered valuable public support; during IGLHRC's contentious bid for consultative status at ECOSOC, the US representative read a message from the UNDP to IGLHRC stating, "Your attention to the links between human rights and HIV has opened up conversations, communication and cooperation in communities that are key to achieving crucial public health, human rights and development goals" (US Mission to the UN 2010).

Brokers also worked closely with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). In April 2010, IGLHRC honored UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé with its OUTSPOKEN Award, given to allies who had been vocal advocates for the human rights of LGBT people – and who brokers wanted to subtly encourage in this role. The day of the event, Sidibé said at a luncheon at the UN Foundation that it was "unacceptable" for countries to criminalize same-sex relations, condemned the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, and blamed the criminalization of same-sex activity for the spread of HIV (Associated Press 2010).

Along with other transnational LGBT groups, brokers at IGLHRC placed a high premium on being present and visible at human rights summits, and ensuring that the human rights of LGBT persons were kept on their agendas. One example of this was the CSW, held annually in New York, where IGLHRC coordinated with other LGBT and women's rights NGOs to ensure that LGBT issues were regularly discussed. Their presence took a variety of forms. During my fieldwork, LGBT groups sponsored official panels at the CSW, including a panel on homophobia in schools sponsored by ILGA and a panel on US evangelicals exporting homophobia sponsored by ARC-International, CGE, HRW, and IGLHRC. More subtly, they collectively ensured that activists would be present at virtually every forum at the CSW, asking questions about LBT women, highlighting LBT women's issues in discussions, and engaging with colleagues from around the globe.

With the growth of IGLHRC's regional programs, these interventions were also made within regional human rights mechanisms. The influence and scope of

these bodies varied widely; some exercised quasi-judicial power despite their limited capacity for enforcement, while others monitored and advised governments but lacked any mechanism to hold offending states accountable. In all these cases, brokers at IGLHRC made themselves visible participants when encouraging regional mechanisms to adopt the human rights of LGBT people into their mandate.

One place where IGLHRC had been given a great deal of credit for placing LGBT human rights on the agenda was the ACHPR. As Ettelbrick recalled of early efforts to engage that body:

> [W]e were small, so we needed to find a way to build "a there there" that could bring in as many people as possible, instead of bouncing around… Not that there have been any huge successes at the Commission, which we didn't really expect immediately, but over time, it really did build this connection and understanding of what the Commission did. It gave us a presence there among human rights people. Like, they were supposed to be the human rights people, they're supposed to be the ones who are responding. That, I think, was a really successful set of efforts. You know, sometimes, it's about visibility and it's about the challenge to what has become so accepted. That was Cameroon. If it's become so accepted that you're simply rounding up these guys and throwing them in jail or whatever, with no challenge, that's kind of what happens. The interference with that expectation is part of what we do.

More than any precedent, this visibility has been a guiding principle in regional advocacy. Of course, IGLHRC was also involved in winning structural gains; the LAC Program was one of 24 NGOs that worked for three years to have a resolution on SOGI and human rights passed by the OAS. In most cases, however, IGLHRC's involvement has primarily been to introduce LGBT issues to various human rights mechanisms. In these forums, brokers articulated their positions, conducted trainings for colleagues and policymakers, and provided the necessary financial and logistical support for activists to make presentations, participate in NGO forums, or secure consultative status for their organizations.

IGLHRC was less involved – virtually not at all – with advocacy in Europe, something that was a consequence of both its political outlook and its material realities. Since IGLHRC's creation, there have always been sensitivities around its work in Europe, where ILGA already had a strong presence and worked with

governments in institutionalizing law and policy. This has been particularly true in the years since ILGA-Europe, a subset of the larger ILGA federation, began receiving funding from the European Commission to be a voice for LGBT persons in the region. With its base in Brussels and its specific focus on governments and the wider European institutions, ILGA-Europe has been far and away the primary leader on advocacy and programming in the region.

IGLHRC's focus on the South, however, was also heavily shaped by the theory of change espoused by brokers and the limited resources available for transnational LGBT work. Although Johnson, Jones, and others indicated they would ideally like to do more to hold the US accountable, they also felt this was not the best use of the limited resources available for LGBT work globally. Instead, there was a strong sense during my fieldwork that IGLHRC's resources were best spent building capacity and offering technical assistance to partners in the South.

Nonetheless, brokers at IGLHRC have continued to search for bodies within which advocacy might be carried out. These were not always explicitly human rights bodies; brokers in the LAC Program worked within the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), staff in the Africa Program engaged with the EAC, and brokers explored the possibility of pressuring the Commonwealth to take a firmer stance on human rights. While this was limited given the explicit disavowal of human rights interventions by many of these bodies, brokers were prepared to engage with any that signaled that they might be willing to incorporate human rights into their mandate in a systematic way. In this work, brokers largely sought a seat at the table to make their voices heard whenever potentially relevant issues were being discussed.

In these efforts to be visibly present in the human rights arena, the likely impact of an intervention was not necessarily part of the calculus that brokers made when choosing whether to intervene in a situation or not. Beyond decisions about how rights should be framed and targeted, brokers did question whether a reading by a body or mechanism might lead to practical remedies or set a symbolic precedent. Even when redress was unlikely, brokers still pointed to violations of particular rights and brought their complaints before a variety of high-level bodies

nominally charged with preventing them. In much of their work, brokers simply stressed, repeatedly and forcefully, that the human rights of LGBT persons merited attention from specific bodies and mechanisms.

Indeed, in some instances, IGLHRC directly appealed to governments or bodies that were almost certainly not going to act on the appeal they made. One example was IGLHRC's letter to the government of Iraq, in which brokers raised concerns about militias targeting gay men in Sadr City in Baghdad (IGLHRC 2009e). The post-invasion government of Iraq had criminalized homosexuality, did not have any positive protections for LGBT persons, and consistently voted against the recognition of LGBT rights at the UN. Nevertheless, the public letter, signed by Johnson, cited the Charter of the Ministry of Human Rights (CMHR) to request that that Ministry:

> 1. Actively and thoroughly document cases of human rights abuses against LGBT people and include this information in your annual report on the status of human rights in Iraq for submission to parliament and the cabinet. (Article 3, Section 2, CMHR)
> 2. Prepare a comprehensive report on state, community and family violence based on sexual orientation with concrete recommendations on how to stop such human rights violations. (Article 3, Section 3, CMHR)
> 3. Launch an investigation into the Iraqi legal system – including police, judiciary, and penal systems – to assure the full enjoyment of human rights principles by all people, regardless of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.
> 4. Promote a culture of tolerance and respect for the rights of LGBT people at the tribal level and within the larger Iraqi society. (Article 3, Section 11, CMHR)

Judged from the likelihood that such a letter would succeed in any of the four objectives and provide redress to Iraqi victims, it was arguably not a valuable use of staff time and energy. Judged from its impact in raising the visibility of human rights abuses, maintaining internal consistency within the organization and its concern about the worst abuses wherever they occur, and galvanizing those who can download PDFs and read English to pressure their governments to act, it may have been a valuable tool. As they simultaneously sought recognition and redress, brokers were not *always* looking for resolution of their claims. Instead, they were

often also looking for opportunities to reinforce the unacceptability of human rights violations against LGBT persons. To this end, public letters to the government of Iraq and others were part and parcel of a wider strategy to make the most egregious violations unacceptable and recognized as such by NGOs, governments, and intergovernmental bodies, and to seek long-term inclusion in the human rights framework rather than to secure redress in any immediate way.

IGLHRC's occasional commissioning of shadow reports for the UPR hints at the extent to which the immediate impact of interventions was a flexible consideration. The UPR had no enforcement mechanism, and merely recommended to states where they might change laws, policies, and practices to more closely align with the letter and spirit of the ICCPR. When states complied, they rarely did so in any immediate way. Even when brokers convinced states to make SOGI-related recommendations to a state under review (SUR), they made few efforts to ensure that these were actually implemented, although they often cited them when governments were obviously intransigent. Typically, the UPR involved little engagement with governments outside of the UN itself. In this process, like many others, what was deemed most important was simply being visibly present, and being a vocal participant in discussions about who and what the human rights framework protected.

D. The Politics of Institutionalization: State and NGO Engagement with IGLHRC

Of course, these efforts to be a visible, validated participant in the transnational human rights arena were not without controversy, and brokers frequently clashed with allies, opponents, and NGOs that had different ideas about SOGI and the scope of the human rights framework. The interventions they made were almost always politically contentious, and the positions their advocates and detractors took were often as important as the eventual outcomes.

One of IGLHRC's efforts to be a visible participant in the human rights arena that proved controversial was its high-profile fight to win consultative status of its own at ECOSOC. More than a decade after the ILGA debacle, LGBT NGOs still had an

inordinately difficult time getting accredited by ECOSOC's Committee on NGOs. A guide for LGBT groups seeking the status highlighted its practical advantages: "The accreditation allows NGOs to circulate statements at ECOSOC meetings at a maximum of 500 words, and circulate statements at ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies' meetings at a maximum of 1500 words. Besides this the NGOs can, if they get permission, speak at ECOSOC subsidiary bodies' meetings" (Nielsen 2007). Accreditation also enabled brokers to obtain passes to the UN to be present for deliberations, giving them a voice and lessening their dependence on the goodwill of allies who had a limited number of passes themselves.

What was arguably more important than these nominal privileges, however, was the symbolism that attended to the accreditation of an NGO at ECOSOC. Ever since the revocation of ILGA's status, ECOSOC has been a deeply symbolic venue for LGBT NGOs seeking recognition in the human rights arena. IGLHRC's decision to seek special consultative status at the body was in many ways a momentous one; no US-based LGBT organization had been accredited by the body, and the only transnational LGBT NGO that had been successfully accredited was ILGA-Europe, which primarily worked in the North.

The battle became a prolonged one that illustrated what was at stake for various players as LGBT issues were advanced in the human rights arena. It revealed a great deal about the stances that NGOs and governments had taken over SOGI in the human rights arena, what the political repercussions of their positions might be, and how engagement among different actors shaped particular views of the human rights of LGBT people at the UN.

Even prior to the debate, the push for special consultative status required a conscious framing of IGLHRC's work within the bounds of international law. In the initial application, the aims and purposes of the organization were summarized in the following way:

> International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) is an international human rights nonprofit nongovernmental organization whose mission is to secure the full enjoyment of the human rights of all people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual

> orientation or expression, gender identity or expression, and/or HIV status. IGLHRC implements its mission responsibly, in the spirit of the UN Charter, in a measured fashion, upon request from local human rights advocates, and within local norms. (IGLHRC 2007: 2)

Notably, the final sentence did not appear in other materials at the time, but appears to have been specifically appended to the mission for the purposes of accreditation. The reference to IGLHRC acting "responsibly" was likely in response to charges of pedophilia that staff expected to be an issue after the ILGA controversy in the mid-1990s. The references to local human rights advocates served to refute the charge that IGLHRC was a US organization seeking to spread a US agenda, just as the reference to local norms served to reassure skeptical states that the push for LGBT rights would not ride roughshod over other rights, norms, and values.

The rest of the application was similarly framed, highlighting IGLHRC's engagement with the UN and the various regional mechanisms. It did not adjust or reformulate IGLHRC's aims, but simply reproduced the six strategic goals identified in its three-year plan from 2006 – namely, to "decriminalize sexual and gender expression and behavior, establish free speech, assembly, association and expression for LGBT people and organizations, challenge workplace and other forms of discrimination, promote HIV/AIDS policies that destigmatize same-sex sexual practices, develop human rights principles to address violations related to gender identity and expression, and build and strengthen alliances with other social justice colleagues" (IGLHRC 2007: 2-3).

IGLHRC formally applied for accreditation in May 2007, and the process of answering questions from governments, submitting supplementary materials, and attending ECOSOC meetings ultimately lasted over three years before the final votes were taken on the application in mid-2010. The first set of questions was sent from the NGO Section on May 9, 2008, requesting clarification regarding IGLHRC's finances and registration in the US. IGLHRC sent a response on December 9, 2008. The NGO Section responded by sending another list of questions about the application on February 24, 2009, which requested another financial statement, clarification about the exact dates, countries, and cities in which its human rights

activities had taken place, a summary of how decisions were made at the organization, a list of the number of members by country and continent, and an explanation of how they used the surplus from their budget. IGLHRC quickly sent these clarifications on March 5, 2009.

IGLHRC finally received questions from the governments on the Committee on NGOs on May 11, 2009. The questions were predictable for those engaged in work at the UN; they asked "the basis for using in your application form the terms 'sexual minorities,' 'sexual orientation,' and 'gender identity,' which are not UN terminology," whether IGLHRC pressured governments to adhere to human rights or sought to develop or reinterpret those rights, how IGLHRC was qualified to convey the concerns of Africans as a US-based organization, the nationalities of IGLHRC's IAB members, and what IGLHRC's role was in developing the controversial Yogyakarta Principles. IGLHRC responded on May 12, 2009 (IGLHRC 2009f: 1-8). On May 19, 2009, IGLHRC received oral questions from states. Most questions were friendly; the UK and Romania asked how IGLHRC would advance the work of ECOSOC and requested to hear more about its work in Romania and on HIV/AIDS. Others were more equivocal; Sudan asked how IGLHRC "make[s] sure [it] is not imposing on a country's internal affairs while supporting lesbians." IGLHRC swiftly responded to the requests (IGLHRC 2009g: 1-2). The Committee on NGOs then decided to defer the application, delaying it until early 2010.

Another round of questions followed on February 1, 2010, which were answered by IGLHRC the following day. In this round, the queries became more pointed. Qatar asked whether the organization "believe[s] that individual nations do not have the right to make laws and govern their societies as the people see fit," and took issue with IGLHRC's use of the Yogyakarta Principles and recognition of "homosexuality as a human right." Egypt again objected to IGLHRC's use of the terms "sexual minorities," "sexual orientation," and "gender identity," questioned its stance on the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, asked about its role in interpreting treaties and human rights instruments, and objected to the Yogyakarta Principles and asked if these would infringe on the First Amendment of the US Constitution. Pakistan concluded by asking whether IGLHRC believed the

Yogyakarta Principles to be internationally agreed upon. Perle, Jones, Johnson, and a board member worked together to craft responses, stressing that IGLHRC recognized that the Yogyakarta Principles were not a binding legal instrument, re-enclosing over 300 pages of references to "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" in UN documents, and clarifying that IGLHRC "works to promote respect for international human rights obligations under relevant UN instruments and national laws" (IGLHRC 2010c: 1-7).

As Perle noted, this emphasis on the UN Charter and binding international law required a stepping back from the Yogyakarta Principles, which other groups were simultaneously attempting to use more often in their advocacy at the UN:

> [I]t just makes us a little more careful, or me personally a little careful about the Yogyakarta Principles and how I think about them. Because that's the part they harp on the most, for every sexual rights group. It used to be some sexual rights groups got questions about the Yogyakarta Principles, now it's just all of them. Maybe it's because they're all referencing them, and that's the response. But we have to talk about them, at least to the Committee, very, very carefully… I mean, there's definitely a difference between saying the Yogyakarta Principles is law, and the Yogyakarta Principles is a statement on the application of law. And emphasizing one or the other. And I think at least until we have status, we have to be careful, or at least, to the Committee, we have to be careful in how we conceive of these things.

The questions also confounded understandings of terms like "LGBT," "sexual orientation," and "gender identity," which some states simply refused to use. As Perle recalled:

> [O]ne of Egypt's number one complaints – I'm saying Egypt as a representative of a bloc that opposes sexual rights at the UN – one of their number one ways of framing their opposition to sexual orientation is not that gays are icky or immoral, it's that sexual orientation as a concept doesn't exist, and it certainly doesn't exist in law. So they always say "so-called sexual orientation."
>
> Egypt, Qatar, and Pakistan, they have the same way of talking about sexual orientation and gender identity, where they don't want to use those terms. And they don't want to use the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, because then it affirms those things' existence. So they have verbal tics around them, on purpose. But it backfires, because sometimes they want to

> quote stuff to us, and they quote it to us wrong. I'm like, no, that's nowhere on our website.

In the first vote on IGLHRC's application, taken on June 3, 2010, the Committee on NGOs at ECOSOC blocked the request. When the US, which had strongly supported IGLHRC's application along with the UK, Romania, and other states, brought the application to a vote, Egypt successfully moved to not consider the US motion. The result was that IGLHRC's application was not rejected, but also would not proceed.

The vote garnered a tremendous amount of media attention, and triggered months of intensive networking by Perle, who was spearheading ECOSOC accreditation. By working with governments and circulating a petition that was signed by over 200 NGOs from 59 countries, brokers prepared to press for a reevaluation of IGLHRC's application when the full ECOSOC convened. When the matter was brought to the full ECOSOC on July 19, 2010, the US had a final opportunity to bring the disputed motion for reconsideration by the full body. Amid heavy lobbying, the US motion prevailed, and IGLHRC's application was approved.

The wider repercussions of the vote, however, remained to be seen. There was concern prior to the vote that Egypt's growing frustration with IGLHRC at the UN would be realized in a backlash elsewhere in the world. Brokers at IGLHRC had received word that Egypt planned to introduce a resolution at the ACHPR clarifying Africa's opposition to the recognition of LGBT rights, which, if introduced, would almost certainly pass. As Perle noted in an interview just prior to the ECOSOC vote:

> It's two days before we're supposed to get ECOSOC, or before ECOSOC, possibly on the same day. And I think that's going to affect our work at the UN. Because right now, we have a chance to get some African states to abstain – and they have in the past abstained on votes, at least on organizations getting status. We've got a couple African countries who signed the declaration on sexual orientation and gender identity in the UNGA, and making, very small, but some inroads, and I worry that this would just wipe that out like that. I'm really, really worried about it.

She noted, however, that these inroads in other regional mechanisms had also fed into the work at the UN:

> [I]n the NGO Committee, Colombia cited the Declaration in the OAS… and was like, no, we've signed this and we've endorsed it, and we can't in good conscience allow discrimination on these bases. So they're feeding into each other.

As a result of advocacy, too, Perle suggested that the foreign policy positions of governments vis-à-vis LGBT rights were becoming more internally consistent:

> I think that's the difference between the foreign ministries. They're in the regional governments and they're in the UN, so they're going to be a little bit more consistent… depending on who's watching. And increasingly, more people are watching, so they're going to get a little more consistent, I think.

Interestingly, domestic laws were not necessarily a useful predictor of how states would engage with LGBT human rights in regional or international forums. The most notorious example of this was South Africa, which was the first state to constitutionally prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation but which regularly abstained from or opposed LGBT initiatives at the UN by the time of my fieldwork. By contrast, Brazil, which had much to achieve in its domestic law, was extraordinarily proactive in early efforts at the UN.

Many of these points of contention were also visible when IGLHRC co-sponsored a side event at the UNGA for Human Rights Day on December 10, 2009. The side event was a panel discussion on "Opposing Grave Human Rights Violations on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity," and was hosted by the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN and the Permanent Missions of Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, France, the Netherlands, and Norway, in coordination with IGLHRC, ARC-International, HRW, ILGA, GATE, and COC Netherlands. It was moderated by Hans Ytterberg of the Swedish Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality and brought together five panelists: Vivek Divan, a consultant with UNDP and former activist with the Lawyer's Collective in India, Kapya Kaoma, a Project Director at PRA and the author of the report *Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia*, Mukasa, IGLHRC's Program Officer for East Africa and the Horn, Sass Rogando Sasot, formerly with Society of Transsexual

Women of the Philippines (STRAP) and now Communication Officer in Asia with ILGA, and Indyra Mendoza, coordinator of Lésbica Feminista Cattrachas in Honduras. The speaker lineup alone was a challenge to coordinate, with multiple transnational groups involved in naming, vetting, and signing off on potential speakers from all around the world, ensuring that there was representation from different regions, identities, and perspectives, and identifying alternatives when scheduling conflicts, visas, and other logistical issues got in the way. Settling on a final lineup was a complex and trying process.

The event had the potential to make a number of strategic interventions, though it was not itself tied to any one particular policy or resolution. The most obvious of these was to be a visible presence at the UN in the context of Human Rights Day, something that was replicated in 2010 with a side event featuring Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Permanent Representative of the US to the UN Susan Rice, Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Linda Baumann of Out-Right Namibia, and Vidyaratha Kissoon of the Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD) in Guyana, with another statement read from Buse Kilickaya of Pembe Hayat in Turkey.

Other motivations, however, also factored into the side event. The theme of the panel followed a trend in which governments and NGOs highlighted the most egregious and least controversial human rights violations targeting people on the basis of SOGI, building the broadest support possible among state parties. At the time, that strategy had a special resonance given that many of those same governments and NGOs were vocally objecting to the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, which they warned would seriously undermine the most basic rights of LGBT persons in that country.

The impact of some governments' public statements on the matter was felt to be potentially momentous, particularly that of the Vatican. Prior to the side event, a broker at HRW intensively lobbied the Holy See, which was rumored to be planning a statement opposing grave human rights violations on the basis of SOGI. The opportunity to have this statement made publicly at the UN, where the Holy See had

taken the lead in galvanizing opposition and ultimately blocking efforts to recognize and codify LGBT rights, was seen as an extremely valuable one.

This became especially clear when Mendoza voiced concerns the night before the panel that Opus Dei, a notoriously conservative Catholic sect, was behind some of the killings of LGBT persons in Honduras that had happened in late 2009. When Mendoza stressed the importance of bringing this up at the UNGA, a number of activists seemed visibly conflicted. On the one hand, many seemed to feel that Mendoza's concerns were critical; it was not only important to her and her constituency in Honduras, but important if the injustice was to be brought to light. On the other hand, they were simultaneously conscious of the potential importance of the Holy See's remarks, and worried that singling out the Catholic Church for criticism on the panel would deter its spokesperson from making a precedent-setting statement. Although they voiced both concerns, they ultimately left it to Mendoza and told her she should say what she felt she needed to say in light of these multiple considerations.

The side event itself illustrated how these different concerns were addressed, accommodated, and received by governments, whether sympathetic or skeptical about the overall theme of the panel. Ytterberg opened the session by noting that grave violations of the human rights of LGBT persons happened in all six UN regions, and that all states present had a stake in these issues. The speakers each addressed different issues in their regions, alternately using different terms like "homosexuals," "homosexual persons," "LGBT," "LGBTI," and "sexual minorities" to speak about these issues.

The statements of most governments were predictable; those that spoke after the panel were among the most vocal supporters and opponents of the recognition of SOGI at the UN. France stressed the principle of universality, reiterated the support that states showed for the French Resolution in 2009, and announced the creation of a fund for LGBT defenders around the globe. A representative of the Holy See then made the much-anticipated statement reiterating that the Vatican opposed grave violations against "homosexual persons." Nicaragua stressed that solidarity with "LGTTBI" is critical, and noted that its

government had recently decriminalized same-sex activity and appointed a special prosecutor to deal with violations of the human rights of LGBT people.

At this point, Egypt, which had been the most vocal opponent of recognizing SOGI at the UN in recent years, interjected. Although the representative stressed that the government opposed discrimination, he emphasized that the concepts the speakers were advancing were still controversial, and reasserted that these were not recognized by the UN. He asked the speaker from the UNDP, Vivek Divan, to explain what his role was at the UNDP and what mandate he had to defend sexual rights. He asked which of the 28 sexual orientations the speakers were referring to, presumably referencing the argument that "sexual orientation" might refer to any desire or fetish (for example, pedophilia, zoophilia, or scopophilia) and not simply an orientation toward partners of a particular gender. He then asked panelists what they thought about religious expression and freedom of expression, and whether these would be endangered by the privileging of other rights. The three questions were notable in that they reflected three objections that Egypt consistently voiced in these debates – contesting the redefinition of sex and gender by NGOs and UN agencies, objecting to the introduction of concepts like "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" without these being defined or endorsed by the majority of states at the UN, and expressing concern that LGBT rights might infringe upon the rights of others.

After Egypt, supportive states took the floor once more, with the Netherlands and the US recalling the language of the UDHR and noting the momentousness of holding the panel on the 60th Anniversary of the document. The final statement from the floor came from St. Lucia, however, which reflected the ambivalence of many of the states that were still developing a consistent position on the recognition of SOGI and LGBT persons in the human rights arena. While the representative stressed that St. Lucia believed in the fundamental dignity of every person and acknowledged that all persons are "born with inherent dignity," she was equivocal about what this meant for states, and whether SOGI could be subject to any legal or social sanction.

These public engagements with governments illuminated potential sticking points and assisted brokers in recalibrating their strategy and framing of human

rights issues. Following the side event, brokers questioned its implications for the strategy of the NGOs involved. Brokers had focused on grave violations of human rights to gain the maximum support possible from governments, but wondered whether this strategy stifled a much broader conversation about the full range of human rights at stake. While such a narrow focus was likely to build support among hesitant states like St. Lucia, it did not speak to the wide range of discriminatory practices mentioned by speakers on the panel, nor to the full scope of human rights that most activists and supportive states felt LGBT people deserved. The NGOs had also focused on SOGI to accommodate a wide range of people, behaviors, and identities that did not comfortably fit within an LGBT framework, but Egypt's critique of the ambiguity of "SOGI" called this seemingly forward-thinking move into question. Some friendly governments suggested that NGOs specify that they were talking about LGBT people, foreclosing objections that "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" could include a vast array of sexual desires and practices.

These demands illuminated the many considerations and positions that LGBT NGOs navigate. Most obviously, there are epistemological differences that have been shaped by repeated conflicts at the UN, for example, whether to promote "non-discrimination" as a principle without enumerating specific categories, or to explicitly protect categories like "sexual orientation" or "gender identity" to make these guarantees unequivocal but expansive, or to protect the more narrow and circumscribed population of self-identified "LGBT people." Beyond this question, there were a whole host of other considerations about which rights to demand and the extent to which productive discussions about relativism, balancing rights, and the obligations of states should be consciously discouraged in favor of a simple insistence on the human rights of LGBT persons. All of this was complicated by the fact that the positions that brokers at different NGOs might have privately taken were not necessarily commensurate with the tactical stances that some governments preferred. This made the UN a venue where LGBT human rights defenders sometimes found themselves advancing the most widely palatable and least controversial formulations possible, regardless of their own personal politics. While these questions were not immediately resolved, they suggested that a broad

array of considerations, competing agendas, and strategic options remained in play as these norms were developed and institutionalized.

E. Conclusion

Brokers invested a great deal of time, energy, and political capital fighting to institutionalize the recognition of LGBT people and their issues in the halls of the human rights arena. What did they achieve, and what did they consider valuable about these moves?

Firstly, many recognized that a simple act of institutionalization – that is, the incorporation of SOGI and LGBT persons in institutional mandates – could have profound legal and normative consequences, both immediately and in the long term. As Rebecca Cook has observed with regard to women's rights, "[t]reaty interpretation is not exclusively limited to treaty terms. A text may also be interpreted in a way that advances its goals in contemporaneous circumstances, even if they were not imaginable when the treaty was drafted" (Cook 1994a: 10). A good example of this was the UN Human Rights Committee's ruling in *Toonen v. Australia* in 1994, which struck down a sodomy law in the Australian state of Tasmania on the grounds that it violated the ICCPR. Following the ruling, Tasmania complied and repealed the law. What was more notable in the long run, however, was that the logic of the ruling established that the word "sex" in the ICCPR should be read to include "sexual orientation," something that IGLHRC routinely stressed in its action alerts, letters to government, and advocacy on behalf of LGBT persons. Whether or not states complied, this set a standard to which they were legally bound that would have been difficult to reach by consensus.

This was also true in regional mechanisms. While the long-term impact of IGLHRC's early advocacy at the ACHPR remained to be seen, it was notable that some Commissioners had begun to take issue with the criminalization of same-sex activity in their reviews of member states (Murray and Viljoen 2007: 102-105). As Kilonzo pointed out to me, however, that activity had largely escaped notice, and with little entrenched support at the ACHPR, was unlikely to do much good in the

short term. In the future, if popular support grows, brokers may draw attention to it to argue that adverse treatment of LGBT persons has come under scrutiny in the past, but this will depend on how supportive states have become. Although its invocation will likely be controversial, particularly if members pass a resolution stating that homosexuality is contrary to African values, its quiet incorporation into oral examinations at the ACHPR means that it will very likely influence future debates in some fashion.

Secondly, IGLHRC's work has been deeply symbolic, both literally and figuratively securing a place at the table for LGBT persons in discussions of human rights. When asked about the import of the various statements before the treaty bodies and UNGA, Perle observed:

> I think they've been helpful, if nothing else, in that the states that signed them, for the most part, seem to take it very seriously. And the states that didn't could care less…. But the states are into it. And maybe that means it's too easy, I don't know. Maybe it's something that it's not politically expensive to them. They talk about it a lot, they cite it, it's something you can hold against people, you can hold it up to them. And it sounds official, even though it's not. I think it's symbolic… It's a great symbol. And sometimes, I think the symbols are more important than actually getting stuff into the comments. The Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights comment, that had such backlash that, in a way, that actually could have been worse.

Indeed, IGLHRC's moves to institutionalize the human rights of LGBT people have prompted widespread coverage affirming, for better or worse, that LGBT people have successfully asserted a place in the human rights arena. As one broker pointed out, the most hits that IGLHRC's website had gotten on an article was when the phrase "sexual orientation" was removed from the standing resolution on extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions. The article was viewed 30,000 times, including 5,000 on a single day. Other days of heavy traffic on the website were when IGLHRC received ECOSOC status, generating 1,600 hits, and when the phrase "sexual orientation" was restored to the resolution on extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions, generating 1,700 hits.

Finally, and less obviously, IGLHRC's work at the UN and regional bodies provided a connective tissue that built relationships between grassroots groups, IGLHRC, and policymakers around the globe. This was one of the primary benefits of this work for Perle, who coordinated much of IGLHRC's work with grassroots groups at the UN:

> I mean, the UN, you can argue about whether it's useful, productive, does anything, ever, quickly, but if you believe that it is a useful institution, and that it does some good in the world, [then it's about] being a connector between people on the ground, whether it's that you're speaking for them or helping them speak to people – which, sometimes you can do one, sometimes you can do the other, sometimes you can do both.

By regularly insisting upon the responsibilities of states, brokers built the capacity of local movements to lobby in the international arena. Cook called this the "snackwich approach," in which transnational NGOs played a key role in coordinating pressure from the domestic and international levels simultaneously (see Evans 2000: 240). When governments were sympathetic, brokers were instrumental in building lasting dialogues and relationships, such that highlighting the gravest violations of the human rights of LGBT persons has also gradually built support for laws and policies that are more proactively protective of LGBT populations.

It was not immediately clear whether IGLHRC's successes at the UN during my fieldwork would create lasting precedents or whether political considerations would eventually overturn or undermine them. IGLHRC's interventions at the UN and regional mechanisms have rarely had any kind of direct, enforceable impact on international law, or even on the laws and policies of states. They have, however, fundamentally shaped discussions of LGBT rights in these spaces. More than anything else, IGLHRC's interventions have proven to be remarkable flashpoints to entrench recognition of the human rights of LGBT people, legitimate IGLHRC's presence as a participant in these evolving debates, and galvanize human rights defenders around the globe. Although its efforts remain controversial, the growing visibility and legitimacy of IGLHRC as a participant in these debates has placed LGBT

issues squarely within the ambit of human rights institutions in a lasting and meaningful way.

CONCLUSION

A. Advocacy and the Expansion of the Human Rights Framework

In divisive debates about gender, sexuality, and the law, both proponents and opponents of LGBT human rights have vested interests in reifying claims in particular ways. Proponents frame LGBT rights as uncontroversial questions of dignity and fairness, insisting that universal human rights must be fully extended to and enjoyed by those who are routinely denied them. Opponents tend to construct these rights – and, at times, LGBT populations – as foreign, contrary to local morality and custom, and forced upon them as a result of global power disparities. In highly politicized environments, there has been little space to acknowledge the nuances and partial truths of these positions.

Critically, these contests over SOGI strongly echo familiar epistemological and political disputes over the universality and specificity of particular formulations of human rights. Over the past decade, setting aside disputes over the ontology of human rights to focus on the *practices* of human rights has been a tremendously productive move in legal anthropology (Wilson 1997a: 14; Josephides 2003: 233; Goodale 2007: 24; Goodale 2009: 15). At the same time, the revivification of arguments about universality and specificity in relation to sexual rights advocacy suggests that such a move may also obscure the tactical maneuvers that brokers make as they appropriate the discourse of universal human rights to stake claims on behalf of marginalized groups.

Indeed, throughout the history of human rights, much of the intellectual and practical work done by advocates has been precisely that which expands the promise of universality to groups defined outside its protection. As Olivia Harris observes, "Certain categories of people by such criteria are almost *ipso facto* outside the law, and to a certain extent therefore deprived of the status of legal subject: women, homosexuals, the poorly educated" (Harris 1996: 2). Historically, these categories have also included unpropertied males, slaves, women, laborers,

colonized peoples, and national, ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities (Ishay 2008: 107-116). In recent years, disagreements about the rights of children, disabled persons, indigenous persons, and LGBT persons have continued to divide NGOs, governments, and intergovernmental bodies even as they have reshaped international law (Wilde 2007; Ishay 2008: 293-313).

Advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups frequently appropriates the discourse and legal protections of a universal human rights regime. At the same time, it is resolutely specific, as advocates actively engage in constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing particular understandings of their rights based on the needs and politics of the group in question. Brokers at IGLHRC sought to develop a corpus of rights recognized by actors transnationally. To do this, they specified a mission and constituency, forged partnerships, produced and transmitted knowledge, and navigated the politics of law and norm creation. Rather than simply setting aside debates about the ontology of rights, this advocacy highlights the importance of looking at universality and relativism processually, to understand how ever-widening circles of humanity are absorbed into the masses of humanity protected by universal human rights.

In this Conclusion, I argue that the work of brokers at IGLHRC illustrates the importance of ethnographic engagement with those on the periphery of the human rights arena who are developing and contesting the boundaries of the human rights project. In doing so, I want to draw attention to three aspects of their work that are evident throughout the preceding chapters. Firstly, I look at the complex way that advocates for marginalized groups simultaneously construct, promote, and institutionalize a corpus of rights as they invoke the rhetoric and legitimacy of universal human rights. Secondly, I return to the idea of contestability, and the ways that brokers' insistence on the universality of human rights nonetheless involves disagreement, compromise, and highly political decisions about who and what should be foregrounded in the human rights arena. Thirdly, I look at the concept of opacity, arguing that ethnographic exploration of brokerage is crucial in understanding how human rights might be resolutely specific in origin without necessarily undermining their legitimacy as political claims. In their advocacy for

LGBT human rights, brokers at IGLHRC shape the content of these rights as well as the boundaries of broader rights-based frameworks. Their daily work with partners, networks, and intergovernmental mechanisms is resolutely specific, but sheds light on the complex ways that defenders of marginalized groups – and perhaps all human rights defenders – navigate personal and structural politics to advance their agendas.

B. Foregrounding Construction, Promotion, and Institutionalization in the Anthropology of Human Rights

Throughout its history, IGLHRC has alternately foregrounded formal advocacy and movement building, a phenomenon that arises in part from the dualistic nature of the organization's mandate. On one hand, it is a human rights commission, invested in using that framework as the organizing principle of its work. On the other, it has a putative constituency of LGBT persons and takes mistreatment on the basis of SOGI as a point of departure, co-opting the rhetoric of human rights as a tactical tool to seek recognition and redress (Rothschild 2004: 168-169).

At times, brokers did engage in the types of formal advocacy necessary to make LGBT human rights part and parcel of international law. IGLHRC urged governments and intergovernmental bodies, particularly the US and UN, to speak out or pressure countries where there were clear and immediate threats to LGBT rights. The brokers at IGLHRC engaged in naming and shaming, too, using partnerships and their role in knowledge production to generate action alerts, letters to governments, and shadow reports in conjunction with groups in a country.

For the most part, however, brokers' work was advocacy of a slightly different kind. Scholars have suggested that "[o]ne of the main ways these efforts at transnational collective action work is by creating and enforcing international norms" (Khagram et al. 2002: 13). This normative dimension has been fundamental to human rights advocacy. As John Keane points out, even mainstream human rights NGOs like AI began by presuming "that it was possible to act *as if* viable bodies of global law already existed, that in addition it was possible to create human rights

norms by quietly promoting (in partnership with institutions like the United Nations) new bodies of law, so gradually accumulating global standards of conduct that could tame the hubris of governmental power" (Keane 2003: 58).

The promotion of disabled, indigenous, or sexual rights has a similarly normative thrust, which is thrown into relief – and provokes a strong relativist reaction – by seeming to codify new or special rights. This aspect of IGLHRC's work went largely unremarked in brokers' descriptions of formal advocacy and movement building in the LAC, Africa, API, and MENA regions. Brokers engaged in both strains of work not only by constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing particular LGBT human rights, *but the normative concept of LGBT human rights itself*. For 20 years, brokers at IGLHRC have raised the issue of LGBT human rights in public and private, and have adopted the rhetoric and tactics of the human rights arena to make a case for the well-being and equal treatment of all persons, regardless of SOGI. Insisting upon the humanity of LGBT people is foundational to their overt legal and political work; as Ellen Messer concludes, "[h]uman rights are less a problem of the correct legal formulations of rights and more a problem of human classification, of who is not counted as a complete human being and social member deserving of rights" (Messer 1997: 310; see Dembour 1996: 32-33). The idea that LGBT people are human and therefore deserving of rights has consistently grounded the praxis of brokers at IGLHRC. This explains why their work often fell outside of the boundaries of the traditional human rights framework, for example, in promoting the inclusion of MSM in NSPs to combat HIV/AIDS across Sub-Saharan Africa, or exploring the role of religious fundamentalism in homophobia in Latin America. Often, too, it was not movement building per se; brokers stressed this view in their dealings with the UN, governments, funders and foundations, journalists, other NGOs and social movements, and indeed, in all of the myriad corners of the legal, political, and social worlds in which they worked.

While the preceding chapters have focused primarily on LGBT rights, this is not the only area of legal scholarship with these evident tensions between conventional human rights protections and the needs of specific populations. Anthropologists have looked at a number of other networks using the discourses

and promises of universal human rights on behalf of marginalized groups. Movements for children's rights (Hall and Montgomery 2000; Montgomery 2001; Ennew 2002), disability rights (O'Brien 2003; Stein 2007), and indigenous rights (Gledhill 2003: 211; J. Jackson 2007) simultaneously demand enjoyment of existing human rights and subtly or explicitly seek to develop the human rights framework further. This is particularly apparent in the women's rights movement (Desai 2002). In strategic ways, brokers have not only insisted that women be recognized as human, but have challenged hegemonic understandings of the so-called public and private spheres, culpability for violations committed by non-state actors, and bodily inviolability in relation to rights to life and privacy (Rothschild 2004: 167-168). Importantly, they have institutionalized these understandings more broadly through instruments like CEDAW and rulings like *Jessica Gonzales v. U.S.A.*, in which the IACHR found the US guilty of failing to protect women and girls from domestic violence (ACLU 2011).

In some senses, these struggles are indeed about rights as legal instruments, and about making rights relevant to populations that are denied their full enjoyment. One obvious instance of this is indigenous rights, where the advancement of claims by indigenous persons and their advocates has had epistemological and political effects in the form of a strong articulation of group rights and the assertion of these collective rights within the UN system (Kymlicka 1995; J. Donnelly 2003: 204-221; Goodale 2009: 33, 111-127; see Cowan 2006: 12-15). The creation of legal instruments to ensure or preserve group rights – whether or not they are framed in terms of a "right to culture" – have been contested at the domestic and international level. Nonetheless, they have had concrete effects in a number of fields, shaping political representation, laws regarding dress, education, and language, and the scope of other rights to association, expression, speech, and religion. Arising in part from a commonsense or intuitive understanding of what parts of "culture" are deeply felt and meaningful, group rights have taken the experiences of indigenous or minority groups and transformed them into legal frameworks to which individuals as well as groups can appeal for recourse.

Crucially, though, rights also function in these struggles as normative endorsements of the humanity and desert of particular populations. It is vital to note that rights have become a hegemonic frame through which to discursively assert humanity, such that claiming human rights has practically become a necessary precondition for political claim-making on behalf of marginalized groups. Sonia Correa, Rosalind Petchesky, and Richard Parker allude to this when they point to "the paradox of indispensability and insufficiency" inherent in human rights advocacy, by which they mean that engaging with rights is imperative, even if rights alone are not sufficient to deliver meaningful justice (Correa et al. 2008: 152). The ubiquitous use of human rights as a vehicle for recognition has a domino effect; as groups increasingly invoke that framework, they cement its centrality in sociopolitical struggles (Thompson 2002: 97). The disability rights movement is among many examples in which advocates have not only sought legal protections in their advocacy, but have sought to insist on the humanity of a population and advance ontological arguments about that population through rights-based advocacy (Stein 2007: 121).[49] For groups seeking to be normatively recognized as human, the human rights framework has become a critical channel through which to make their claims.

Thus, brokers in human rights movements not only engage in advocacy, but seek to enshrine particular understandings about rights and the populations that deserve them (Rorty 1993). What this practically involves on a daily basis, however, deserves greater scrutiny. As the previous chapters have shown, brokers seeking entry into the human rights arena have constructed, promoted, and institutionalized their understandings of LGBT human rights as part of their work. This trifecta of practices is especially pronounced in sexual rights advocacy because brokers' tactical maneuvers are so often politicized, but it is arguably common to all

[49] Of course, these attempts at inclusion also tend to produce particular kinds of subjects. As they seek recognition as human, marginalized groups not only locate themselves within fixed juridical categories, but often foreground their most normatively respectable characteristics to demonstrate that they are deserving of human rights (Leve 2007: 80; Speed 2007: 179; Miller 2004).

movements seeking to broaden the enjoyment of human rights. What I want to suggest is that, crucially, the processes of construction, promotion, and institutionalization in which these movements engage are both *simultaneous* and *mutually constitutive*. Each of the previous chapters show that these processes are never wholly distinct, and are inextricably intertwined in transnational human rights advocacy. Precisely because their work was simultaneously legal and normative, brokers at IGLHRC sought to advance the idea of LGBT human rights in a variety of ways. Their operative understandings of human rights, the dynamics of the partnerships and wider networks through which they promoted those rights, and their attempts to enshrine those rights in laws, policies, and practices all inevitably fed into each other in a series of feedback loops.

This is not always apparent, but it has implications for brokers and ethnographers alike. During my fieldwork, virtually none of the brokers at IGLHRC described their work as constructing ideas about human rights and sexual subjectivity. Most framed their advocacy as the application of existing jurisprudence, and saw themselves holding states accountable to an obligation to respect the human rights of all persons, regardless of SOGI, under international law. Generally, brokers tended to see the promotion of LGBT human rights as their primary mission, and, in their discourse and praxis, foregrounded the partnerships and outputs through which they pursued that goal. While some brokers were keen to see IGLHRC stay involved in advocacy at the UN, others were skeptical of its relevance to their mission, seeing it as a massive expenditure of time, energy, and resources with little immediate payoff.

Often, scholarly analyses have similarly focused on strands of human rights advocacy without emphasizing the ways that these wind together into a complex whole. Studies that only look at the discursive or ideological construction of rights neglect the very meaningful ways that these are shaped by the pressures and feedback brokers face as they simultaneously seek to promote and institutionalize those rights in practice. Analyses of the ways that brokers promote rights through partnerships, coalitions, and networks are at their best when they acknowledge the distinctive, historical understandings of rights and long-term objectives that

motivate various actors in those networks (E. Donnelly 2002; Mills 2003). Explorations of formal human rights jurisprudence by intergovernmental bodies too often fail to consider the long history of advocacy in which brokers develop and politicize the concepts that finally become codified in law and policy. Even ethnographers, whose assessments tend to be far more holistic and conscious of the many dimensions of human rights, often take one or another of these dimensions as their primary object of analysis, looking at the construction, promotion, or institutionalization of human rights as a project in itself.

Forms of advocacy and analysis that focus on particular components of human rights work can be extraordinarily effective, and allow for very specific and tactical engagements. What this ethnography suggests, however, is that there is also good reason to highlight the holism of issue-specific human rights movements, and to highlight the ways in which their work is never simply about constructing, promoting, or institutionalizing rights. It is necessarily about all these aspects, as what is understood by brokers as an LGBT human right, foregrounded in a partnership, or tactically advanced at the UN all feed into each other, and help crystallize what is meant by the term "LGBT human rights."

There are innumerable examples of where an analysis of these feedback loops is critical. What was discursively constructed as a human right for LGBT people was very much linked to context, and was contingent on a variety of social factors (Hacking 1999: 11). At IGLHRC, for example, discussions of fundamentalisms were largely inspired by the fact that Poore, Ferreyra, Alizadeh, and Kilonzo all recognized – and heard from partners in their regions – that religious leaders were playing a large role in instigating and spreading animus on the basis of SOGI. The recognition of human rights violations by those leaders, by families, and by others in the so-called "private" sphere made a difference in the way that brokers themselves thought about human rights and about the responsibility and accountability of state actors for non-state persecution. These views were not confined to IGLHRC, of course, but shaped the ways brokers engaged with the UN and other intergovernmental bodies. Brokers highlighted non-state violence and the importance of proactively promoting LGBT human rights in submissions to CEDAW,

the UPR, and Special Procedures. They brought speakers, notably Kaoma and Mendoza, to highlight these issues in the side event before the UNGA. With other transnational LGBT groups, they encouraged bodies like the Holy See to condemn the criminalization of same-sex activity, recognizing its influence as a moral and religious actor as well as a political actor within the UN.

At the same time, the way that brokers perceive LGBT human rights or human rights more generally influence what they choose to promote or advance transnationally. The hate crimes discussion is a strong example of this. While many partners were enthusiastic about hate crimes legislation and saw this as a legal and symbolic asset to their at-risk constituencies, many brokers at IGLHRC were unconvinced that a human rights organization should be advocating sending anyone to prison in countries like South Africa, and were personally uncomfortable making that an institutional priority. Despite the wishes of many partners, IGLHRC did not incorporate a robust position for or against hate crimes or hate speech into its understanding of LGBT human rights, nor did it actively advance the issue with governments or intergovernmental bodies.

Finally, institutionalization profoundly affected what was and was not conceptualized as LGBT human rights and promoted publicly and vocally. Brokers were quite conscious of the sensitivity surrounding everything from sex work and public sex to same-sex marriage and adoption rights globally. It was no accident that brokers tended to most forcefully and unequivocally speak out on criminalization of same-sex activity and discrimination on the basis of SOGI, highlighting the ways that these deprived LGBT persons of their most basic, widely agreed-upon human rights. While they and their partners may have had different understandings of LGBT lives and the rights needed to live them fully, the need to establish and codify a core set of rights to protect the lives of LGBT persons was seen as paramount. What would and would not be politic at the UN and other intergovernmental or governmental forums has always shaped how brokers discuss topics like pedophilia, public sex, bondage, domination, and sadomasochism (BDSM), sex work, marriage, adoption, and the concept of balancing rights to assembly, association, expression, religion, and speech, among other issues. Notably, it also affects how other movements talk about

LGBT issues in the human rights arena; lesbian-baiting has historically made defending LGBT issues a potential liability for groups defending women's rights, for example, and complicated cross-movement work both domestically and transnationally (Rothschild 2005). In all of these ways, the demands of institutionalization subtly shape how LGBT human rights are constructed and promoted by even their most committed defenders.

At its core, much of the political controversy over LGBT human rights has to do with the inseparability of these different parts of transnational LGBT advocacy. Although a large part of what they do is simply applying and extending existing jurisprudence to marginalized populations, brokers *are* simultaneously engaged in defining, advancing, and codifying a body of rights in their advocacy. While critics often point this out to delegitimize these rights as historically or culturally specific, this is, at its core, not very different from the advocacy that has shaped any number of targeted applications of universal human rights since 1948. Every advocacy network in the human rights arena is composed of brokers simultaneously engaging in the construction, promotion, and institutionalization of human rights. While this ethnography suggests that it is productive to look at how these aspects are mutually constitutive within an NGO, it is also critical that anthropologists consider how these competing prerogatives play out in practice.

C. Contestability and the Universality of LGBT Human Rights

Acknowledging that transnational advocacy involves specific legitimating processes is helpful in understanding how and why struggles for rights and recognition might involve disagreement, compromise, and highly political decisions by brokers. Although defenders of LGBT human rights insist they are merely ensuring that existing human rights are equally protected and respected for everybody regardless of SOGI – a strategy best exemplified by the Yogyakarta Principles (O'Flaherty and Fisher 2008; Thoreson 2009) – attentiveness to brokerage also highlights the ways that these rights remain disputed and dynamic.

Returning to a point raised in the Introduction, how and why might universal human rights for LGBT people remain resolutely contestable? Throughout the preceding chapters, the contestability of how rights are constructed, promoted, and institutionalized has been explored at length. Indeed, each of these facets of brokers' work sheds light on different disputes over LGBT human rights.

The first of these, which I explore most deeply in Chapter 3, was the construction of these rights. This has been the subject of a number of analyses by ethnographers and theorists alike, who note the historical specificity of LGBT identification, communities, and mobilization, to say nothing of the tactics, slogans, and iconography that have been diffused through transnational advocacy (D'Emilio 1983; Halperin 1990; Altman 1996). As I discuss, brokers at IGLHRC grappled with the construction of rights on a regular basis. At the most basic level, it was not always evident to brokers at IGLHRC who should be included under the LGBT umbrella, or how they should be identified. Throughout IGLHRC's history, the variable inclusion of people living with HIV/AIDS, of trans and intersex persons, of MSM and WSW, and of indigenous queer subjectivities like the *bakla*, *gor jigen*, or *hijra* that are subsumed under the categorical protection of SOGI all hint at how "LGBT human rights" involved active construction by brokers. Other movements have also struggled with these questions; strategically deciding among "ethnic," "indigenous," or "First Nation" or "youth," "young people," or "children" can mean subtly different things and have distinctive political repercussions (Hall and Montgomery 2000).

Similarly, brokers were actively engaged in deciding what rights these populations enjoyed. Ambivalences about the right to sex work, to public sex, and to marry a partner of the same sex all shaped the work that brokers undertook. This is also experienced more widely among advocates seeking to expand enjoyment of the human rights framework to marginalized groups. As Michael Ashley Stein deftly shows in his analysis of the disability rights movement, different paradigms of disability have been promulgated by activists and governments over time – and these have generated distinctive understandings of rights that should therefore be granted and protected transnationally (Stein 2007). Disputes become particularly

intense when movements collide and contest the boundaries of competing rights. The relatively recent construction of "fetal rights," for example, has not only sought to define the fetus as a human, legal, and rights-bearing entity, but has sparked innumerable contests over the rights that the fetus might plausibly enjoy relative to women, infants, genitors and extended kin, and the state (Heriot 1996; Tan 2004).

The second facet of brokers' work was the promotion of LGBT human rights. In the anthropology of human rights, LGBT human rights are notable in that many traditional tactics of transnational advocacy networks are either of limited utility or are simply counterproductive. In nation-states where public support for LGBT rights is low, political leaders can gain considerable political capital at very little cost by virulently opposing LGBT rights. In these contexts, mobilizing international pressure through the boomerang model, or any kind of naming and shaming, can trigger a violent backlash. These models presume that external pressure or shame provides leverage for activists to press their governments to recognize rights. When leaders instead use that pressure as evidence of neocolonialism and mock attempts at shaming as the frivolous hand-wringing of a decadent West, this kind of transnational advocacy fails – and indeed, plays directly into the rhetoric of its opponents.

A number of the existing studies of transnational LGBT advocacy focus at least in part on this dynamic. Joseph Massad's analysis of IGLHRC's advocacy in the Queen Boat case in Egypt highlights the ways that such intervention constructs "gay" subjects around the globe who can then be regulated and repressed (Massad 2002). Scott Long's exploration of the responses of human rights activists to arrests and sentences in Iran similarly highlights the potentially fatal consequences of misrecognition and poorly-planned interventions by those in the North (S. Long 2009). Brokers at IGLHRC were quite aware of these dangers, and even if they did not always manage to avoid them, their consciousness of these pitfalls reinforced the centrality of partnership, the insistence on verifying facts with trusted activists and NGOs in a region, and the non-directive nature of much of IGLHRC's work.

Finally, the contestability of LGBT human rights is evident in the ways that brokers sought to institutionalize them. Battles at the UN were among the most

high-profile instances in which brokers had to reconfigure their articulations of LGBT human rights under intense political pressures. At a basic level, this meant deciding whether to focus on identity, behavior, or membership in an at-risk category; that is, whether to push for rights for LGBT or LGBTI people, same-sex practicing people, or those marginalized on the basis of SOGI. It also meant, however, deciding which rights to foreground, to whom, and when. Brokers emphasized grave violations of human rights, particularly criminalization and discrimination, in their work at the UN. They regularly forum-shopped, focusing on officials, agencies, and venues – particular Special Rapporteurs, the UNDP and UNAIDS, and the HRC, for example – that were most likely to be sympathetic to their claims. They also timed their interventions carefully, waiting whenever possible to build support among states before reintroducing statements that might tactically consolidate support for LGBT human rights.

All of these interventions took place under the auspices of universal human rights – and indeed, relied heavily on the rights enshrined in the ICCPR and ICESCR. These had been explicitly extended to people regardless of SOGI in *Toonen v. Australia* and in the UN Committee on Economic Social, and Cultural Rights' General Comment 20, as well as the work of treaty bodies monitoring implementation of CEDAW, the CRC, CAT, and other instruments (ICJ 2010: 7). Brokers consciously focused on those human rights that were well-established under international law, which was understandable from a tactical standpoint, but tended to divert attention away from meaningful discussions about socioeconomic rights and difficult discussions about self-determination, sovereignty, and group rights.

The structures in which brokers operated and the decisions that they made highlight how the human rights of LGBT persons, however universal in scope and application, are nonetheless constructed, promoted, and institutionalized in particular ways. While these rights are among the most polemical being advanced in the human rights arena, they speak to phenomena that are in many ways common to human rights advocacy more generally. In a variety of movements, from those focusing on established *jus cogens* norms to those focusing on the full enjoyment of human rights by marginalized populations, the adoption of universal human rights

rhetoric masks tactical decisions about which rights will be stressed, to whom, and when – and the acknowledgment that such decisions often have meaningful effects in shaping a corpus of human rights transnationally.

D. Opacity and the Specificity of LGBT Human Rights

A large part of the reason that the human rights of LGBT persons are controversial is that LGBT identity is a profoundly historical development, which has its origins in a very particular time, place, and set of conditions. That development has obviously overrun any borders, but has done so irregularly, and in such a way that it coexists with a number of forms of homosexuality, homosociality, and sexual policing that are distinct and even contradictory. The assertion of LGBT human rights is such that it is proclaimed even in places where LGBT people are still widely regarded as alien, deviant, sick, immoral, or simply non-existent, and where alternative understandings of sexual subjectivity are still deeply rooted.

Within the academy, too, analyses of transnational LGBT NGOs that couch their advocacy in terms of white Western maleness have been deeply insightful in understanding the historical and political specificity of LGBT rights. Nonetheless, they are ill-equipped to grasp why brokers operate as they do and navigate the many pressures placed upon them by supporters, opponents, partners, other NGOs, donors, funders, governments, academics, and, not inconsequentially, themselves and their co-workers. This opacity is helpfully overcome when ethnographers focus on construction, promotion, and institutionalization. Understanding who influences each of these aspects of human rights advocacy and what motivates their action is critical if analyses are to go deeper than the imputed motivations associated with race, nationality, or gender. This not only holds true for LGBT movements, women's movements, and other movements for marginalized groups in which Northerners' roles have been productively interrogated, but for human rights advocacy much more broadly.

Of course, particular contexts have always shaped how and why human rights have been articulated and realized over time, and determined where the

boundaries of universality lie (Dembour 2001; Ishay 2008). The advocacy of brokers at IGLHRC illustrates how the shifting boundaries of universality and specificity are not solely ontological. They are also political, and in contentious debates about human rights, it is possible to productively track the universalizing and relativizing tactics that different actors use to strengthen or undermine rights-based claims.

One of the difficulties of these discussions, however, has been that any recognition of the historical specificity of LGBT human rights has tended to be appropriated and deployed to undermine their legitimacy. While LGBT rights and their defenders have often been maligned as white, Western, and male, it is important to consider what these descriptions do and do not tell us about the ways these rights are constructed, promoted, and institutionalized in practice. In doing so, it is possible to gain a clearer understanding of the ways in which these rights *are* resolutely specific that does not necessarily delegitimize them as political claims.

To some extent, LGBT persons can be productively counterpoised here against other subjects of human rights law. Women are presumed to exist in every country, they are usually recognizable as women to outsiders, and they are widely understood to be at a greater risk of discrimination and adverse treatment. The same is often true for racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, refugees, children, and other groups. By contrast, leaders often deny that queer people exist in their country, they may not be intelligible as queer people, and if they are recognized as targets of ill-treatment, this is typically regarded as the consequence of their being criminal, immoral, ill, or otherwise corrosive to the social fabric – and often seen as a functional deterrent to their behavior. To varying degrees, the relevance of protection for other groups is recognized transnationally, while protections for LGBT persons remain controversial.

The cultural specificity that seems so obvious for LGBT rights, however, is arguably not the exception, but the rule. Categories like childhood, indigeneity, or ability are deeply specific, and the painstaking negotiations to construct transnational agreements around these categories belie the fact that they are still observed, flaunted, or criticized in different ways by different states and leaders. Even for women, racial or ethnic minorities, and religious minorities, it is not self-

evident who counts as "deserving" of human rights protection. While governments may sign onto the protection of a wide number of numerical or social minorities, they regularly take exception when those within their own territories are classified as such and demand protection. The human rights framework is routinely circumscribed by competing prerogatives – for example, public health, counter-terrorism, or migration controls – and while these are boldly insisted upon when LGBT rights are at stake, they are put into play in subtle ways for other kinds of rights as well. A focus on LGBT rights brings into focus the many ways that states signal who is included and excluded from the human rights framework in practice, and the understanding that negotiated agreements are only a very small part of the processual negotiation of who constitutes a deserving subject of human rights protections.

Such disputes are good to think with politically, then, but they also offer new perspectives on familiar questions about the biases of the human rights framework, including its focus on state actors, its demarcation of public and private spheres, and its juridical format that makes nuanced discussions of balancing or qualifying rights particularly difficult. As a form of law, human rights require categorization for their very operation, and sexuality is a field that, to put it mildly, resists easy categorization (see Geertz 1983; Hastrup 2003: 24). Brokers have resisted the use of identity politics, for example, by seeking to protect the category of "sexual orientation" rather than protecting homosexual acts or gay, lesbian, and bisexual identification. Nonetheless, even this more expansive category presumes that "sexual orientation" is reducible to homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual attraction and is about the gender of one's object of desire rather than orientation toward particular fetishes, acts, or the race, age, size, shape, nationality, ability, or other feature of one's object of desire. In practice, sexual orientation is often assumed to be largely or wholly permanent and inflexible. It is also assumed to be an intrinsically important part of selfhood. Such objections might also be raised about categories like gender, race, or ability, illuminating the characteristics that define them and what is glossed when these are presumed to be transnationally relevant parts of the self that merit protection.

Indeed, beyond the contestability of these rights, the role of brokerage in defining these rights at IGLHRC and in the human rights arena also raises questions of opacity, and of who is actually involved in constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing rights. One aspect of activist praxis that emerges in ethnographies of human rights NGOs is that a tremendous amount of energy is devoted to universalizing human rights. The goal is not only to construct universal categories that can be used to claim global protections for the populations in question, but to endow those rights with all of the accoutrements of international law, that is, to have their defenders speak out at the UN, to enshrine them in declarations, to have violations highlighted and taken seriously, and to both hold states accountable and have states take these rights seriously enough to police themselves and offer their own guarantees.

Too often, these universalizing practices – and indeed, the relativizing practices undertaken by opponents – are obscured in ethnographies that fail to look at which actors are promoting a human rights framework, which other politics they hold dear as they do so, and how the rights of different groups are worked out processually. The studies that do exist have been enormously insightful insofar as they track debates about the content, language, and culpability of different rights at the UN and other bodies. These often focus on the stage, however, when states are negotiating these rights as a matter of policy, and not the stages prior to this, when brokers themselves are developing rights-based projects and defining who and what they might protect. Virtually every rights-based movement transnationally has been shaped by these processes to different extents. They spawn questions about who counts as "indigenous," what rights are considered important for children to exercise in vastly different sociocultural contexts, and how women's rights might require different theories of culpability. They also draw attention to who answers these questions in these movements, how, and why.

The tension between universalizing and relativizing practices gives human rights their dynamism, and disputes over sexual rights are a particularly good place to examine how these strategies are deployed and contested politically (see Cowan et al. 2001: 6). LGBT rights are among the most controversial assertions of human

rights at the UN and other intergovernmental forums, and, like the rights of children, disabled persons, or indigenous persons, helpfully illuminate the hierarchies and power dynamics of international law. They are also indubitably part of the construction of new forms of sexual subjectivity, and seek to globalize particular understandings of SOGI as meaningful parts of selfhood that must be respected and protected in all of their diversity. Disputes over how this kind of sexual subjectivity is codified domestically, regionally, and internationally can reveal a great deal about how the state, the nation, the family, and other social units are conceptualized and politicized.

In these myriad ways, the anthropology of human rights can benefit from the questions raised by brokerage at IGLHRC. Although human rights as a concept are the product of a very specific history, they are too often treated as an ideological monolith. The work that brokers do on a day-to-day basis to construct, promote, and institutionalize human rights offers one snapshot of the ways that human rights are perpetually being reconfigured and redeployed, and the role that activists play in these processes.

E. On the Anthropology of Transnational Human Rights Advocacy

If there is one thing that has gone largely unremarked throughout the text but definitively shaped every chapter, it is the concept of brokerage. It is difficult to underestimate how important brokerage is at IGLHRC itself, where individuals exert considerable influence over which projects are undertaken, how they are implemented, and what effect they ultimately have.

As I indicate in the Introduction, the concept of brokerage has been most fruitfully deployed in the anthropology of development, where scholars have used it to highlight the agentive roles that actors play in negotiating policies, practices, and projects. The idea has offered a corrective to purely political, theoretical, or ethical discussions of development, foregrounding the human aspects of wider structural phenomena (N. Long 2001: 1; Lewis and Mosse 2006: 9-10; Olivier de Sardan 2005: 167).

The pioneers of actor-oriented approaches have suggested that they are applicable to other fields – for example, the study of religious, environmentalist, and advocacy networks – as ideological and political goals are increasingly pursued by transnational networks of dedicated actors (N. Long 2001: 53; see Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2003: 163). The preceding chapters shed some light on the potential utility of the concept of brokerage in the anthropology of human rights, and perhaps particularly for the study of transnational advocacy networks. At its core, one of the most important roles that the concept of brokerage can play in human rights is emphasizing the malleability and contingency of political projects that are too often taken for granted. As I suggest in the Introduction, debates about sexual rights can be deafeningly normative, and frequently drown out discussions of what activists, scholars, and policymakers are actually doing and why. Analyses of geopolitics are indispensible, but they need not preclude engagement with the sprawling networks of actors who manipulate resources, relationships, and prestige in pursuit of their aims (N. Long 2001: 3, 17; Salemink 2006). Brokerage offers a tool to elucidate the heterogeneity and complexity of sexual rights projects and the tactics and strategies used to advance them (see Lewis and Mosse 2006: 15-16; Bierschenk 1988: 146, 158; Olivier de Sardan 2005: 186).

Of course, as a concept forged in development studies, brokerage is more applicable to some aspects of human rights advocacy than others. The preceding analysis of IGLHRC suggests that the concept might helpfully enrich understandings of human rights advocacy in three ways – first, by emphasizing the heterogeneity of advocates and their approaches; second, by describing how advocates actually mediate between different people, structures, and worldviews; and thirdly, by making it clear why the ideals and praxis of advocates might not neatly align. Each of these points is worth considering in turn.

On the first point, it is readily apparent that brokers at IGLHRC approached their work with different backgrounds and investments in sexual rights advocacy. As this ethnography suggests, it mattered that particular staff members grew up in post-revolution Iran, in apartheid South Africa, or even in Brooklyn during the HIV/AIDS crisis. The perspectives that brokers brought to IGLHRC were not only

shaped by their sexual politics, but on their theories of geopolitics and social change. The fact that some had gained their activist credentials through direct action, some through critical scholarship, and some through media and filmmaking made the NGO a fertile space where brokers negotiated strategy and politics on a daily basis. The differences they brought to IGLHRC sometimes produced tactical disagreements, but sometimes proved to be enriching and energizing for their work.

When activists at IGLHRC interacted with others in transnational networks, the idea of brokerage was helpful in illuminating a second useful dimension of human rights advocacy. Brokerage has drawn attention to the role that actors play in translating across the development "interface," and their capacity to deploy both technical and popular knowledge (Olivier de Sardan 2005: 168-69; Rossi 2006). In human rights, too, brokerage can fruitfully illuminate the extent to which activists actively negotiate with others. A major part of what transnational activists do is translation – and myopically focusing on the globalization of gay identity masks more subtle negotiations about the meaning of sexual, legal, and political ideas and the tactics used to advance them. As evidenced in Chapter 3, concepts like "LGBT human rights" are not apolitical or neutral, and have been developed with very particular goals in mind. Interrogating what these concepts enable and disable is crucial if one is to understand anything about LGBT human rights advocacy in a larger sense.

Beyond translation, framing human rights advocacy as a kind of brokerage can also illuminate how activists play other mediating functions as nodes in transnational networks. Chapter 5, for example, explored how activists at IGLHRC acquire information from partners with the explicit or implicit promise of material, relational, and reputational compensation. Activists are literally engaged in an economy of knowledge, and broker different resources as part of their advocacy. Here, the concept of brokerage is indispensible, as structural analyses are ill-equipped to track the finer-grained aspects of these routine interactions and what is at stake for participants in them.

Thinking of human rights activism as a kind of brokerage across an interface can helpfully challenge regnant assumptions about where that interface is located

(Rossi 2006). As IGLHRC's negotiations with governments and multilateral bodies indicate, the mediating role played by human rights activists is hardly confined to North-South partnerships. In constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing LGBT human rights, brokers routinely serve a mediating function between policymakers and LGBT persons at risk of human rights violations. Projects like the blackmail report or the API Institute on violence against women offer telling examples of this phenomenon. On one hand, they engage and seek to develop definitions of blackmail and violence against women that were largely forged on the anvil of Anglo-American law. On the other hand, both projects first emerged from the felt needs of LGBT persons in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and only then sought to translate those needs into a language that policymakers would grasp and take seriously. The mutual translation here is not merely or even primarily about project implementation across a North-South interface, but seeks to facilitate understanding and action across a number of different interfaces transnationally.

The difficulties of this kind of work and the pressures of working in a heterogeneous, ideologically diverse field have been made evident in a number of actor-oriented studies of development (Olivier de Sardan 2005: 215). Here, the concept of brokerage can usefully shed light on a third dimension of human rights advocacy. Discussions of human rights, like discussions of development, often take place on a decidedly normative plane. By focusing on activist praxis, brokerage can concretely depict how political commitments are sharpened, dulled, or refashioned by the actors and systems that activists encounter. In this ethnography, the most glaring examples of this are the pressures actors faced as they navigated the UN system, although compromise and pragmatism are evident in myriad other places as well – for example, in attempts to partner with "the only game in town," in instances when staff declined to openly criticize other actors in their network, or in decisions about where and how to spend resources for documentation, translation, and advocacy.

As in development, brokerage can play a valuable role in the anthropology of human rights. Its adoption should not be uncritical, however. The preceding chapters depict aspects of work at IGLHRC that are not fully captured by the concept

of brokerage, and illustrate where the concept might have its limitations. One of the major objections to brokerage has been its tendency to lionize agency and downplay systemic factors (N. Long 2001: 62-63; Lewis and Mosse 2006: 10-11). At IGLHRC and elsewhere, human rights advocacy is heavily shaped by episodes that are beyond any advocate's control, and it would be misleading to focus solely on their agency in understanding the work they do.

Criticisms of brokerage overwhelmingly focus on the concept's seemingly singular focus on agency. This can be largely overcome by situating analyses in a wider sociopolitical context, however, and should not negate the broader utility of brokerage as a tool (N. Long 2001: 62-63). Indeed, "the disadvantage of the term 'broker' (which implies a very high degree of individualization or specialization) is merely the other side of the coin which represents its advantages: brokerage is not an abstract function but one that is embodied in specific social actors, even though they are sometimes diffuse, exist as networks, or function only part-time" (Olivier de Sardan 2005: 176). In fields like human rights, where the political, philosophical, and normative bases of core concepts are extensively documented and critiqued, glancing away from structures and systems may be less of a concern. Instead, I would suggest that there are two unique limitations that arise in the human rights context which are demonstrated in the preceding chapters, and which helpfully qualify the utility of actor-oriented approaches in the anthropology of human rights.

The first is that brokerage is inherently relational, and threatens to downplay the individual and organizational commitments of the activists who are glossed as brokers. To be sure, brokerage is a dominant and underappreciated dimension of what activists at IGLHRC do. In developing partnerships and relationships, producing and publicizing information, and wielding influence at the UN and in regional mechanisms, activists at IGLHRC play agentive, impactful roles as nodes within much wider networks. It is not, however, all that they do. They are also activists, with their own investments and politics, and this is often fundamental to their identities as individuals and as a collective. In Chapter 2, it is evident that staff come to IGLHRC for a variety of reasons, and have a variety of styles and political commitments to which they are deeply dedicated. In Chapter 6, it is similarly

evident that in spaces like the UN, IGLHRC as an organization is not simply mediating between the claims of local partners and the policymakers that forge human rights law and policy. Instead, IGLHRC has its own organizational goals that staff would like to see affirmed and completed. In this role, staff at IGLHRC may at times function more as *activists* than *brokers* – two roles that are not incompatible, but which may seem that way if their complementarity is not acknowledged and explored (see Bierschenk 2009; Luetchford 2006: 132-136). Indeed, a fully developed actor-oriented ethnography should not only leave room for brokers to operate as activists, but should also acknowledge how political and institutional relationships constrain activism through their normative and pragmatic strictures (Bierschenk 1998: 153).

The second limit of brokerage is that it tends to privilege a particular kind of interface, and draws attention away from other important sites of human rights praxis. In development, the centrality of the "project" as the locus of ethnographic analysis frequently positions brokerage as a mediation between the goals of policy planners in the North and of the presumed beneficiaries of interventions in the South. Many discussions therefore focus on actors who are locally or nationally resident in the area targeted by development interventions, but neglect to consider the many other intermediate actors who make up the development apparatus (Olivier de Sardan 2005: 174-76). In human rights, the "meso" level between policy formulation and implementation is perhaps much larger than development anthropologists have recognized – particularly insofar as ideas and goals are decisively shaped by those outside of any given project (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2003: 150). Indeed, in human rights activism, influence is often less about sheer financial power and more about ideological and symbolic power. The work that activists at IGLHRC do is across multiple interfaces, not only with their partners in the South, but with governments, regional mechanisms, the UN, journalists, faith leaders, scholars, medical and psychiatric professionals, and other social movements (N. Long 2001: 36). Framing advocacy as a form of brokerage and reflexively turning attention to the North-South interface is important, but cannot overshadow the other complex aspects of human rights advocacy.

Of course, none of these objections are limited to human rights. Indeed, development practitioners are similarly agentive, and are often themselves activists, pressing for change in a way that is not always comfortably fit in the relational framework of brokerage. In the human rights context, however, this aspect of a broker's role becomes far more visible, reminding anthropologists that not everything that brokers do is in relation to their supervisors, their clients, or a particular project. Indeed, their work is often ongoing and foundational to their identity, without the kind of discrete, bounded parameters that often characterize development projects. As a result, their investments and priorities are not solely or obviously related to their immediate work. Analyses of human rights activism illustrate why these dynamic engagements might deserve ethnographic scrutiny.

IGLHRC also has a high rate of staff turnover, which exacerbates the diversity of commitments that brokers at the organization prioritize at any given time. Indeed, this is the primary reason that I have discussed IGLHRC's work in the past tense. IGLHRC is an incredibly dynamic organization, and it would be wholly unrepresentative for me to discuss their work in any sort of timeless present. In the year following my fieldwork alone, a few changes merit discussion as a kind of coda to the ethnography. Most notably, IGLHRC shuttered its Africa Office in Cape Town just months after I left the organization. With one broker's resignation following health issues and a dispute with New York, another's decision not to renew his contract, and simmering animosity between the two remaining brokers in the office, the future of the staff was unclear. As the lease was about to expire on the physical space and brokers questioned whether it made sense to have a highly mobile, multinational staff based in South Africa, it was a prescient time to review the future of the office. Shortly after I left, Cook decided to return to graduate school and Perle left for another job, leaving the webmaster as the only person on the Communications and Research staff in New York. Ampatuan left, too, and a new Director of Development was brought onto the staff to take IGLHRC in a different direction. The LAC Program was then reorganized to have only one staffer, such that D'Elio left and Ferreyra remained. By this point, only half of the brokers from my fieldwork remained on staff.

These moves were accompanied by a reevaluation of IGLHRC's mission and the adoption of a new strategic plan, a process that Johnson took quite seriously. After a lengthy process, brokers decided that IGLHRC would focus on the two key areas of human rights documentation and global advocacy. The former would involve multi-country convenings, in-country trainings, learning exchanges, and collaborative projects with partners, while the latter would involve work with UN agencies in New York, with CEDAW and the ICCPR, and with the ACHPR, the Asia-Pacific Forum, and the IACHR. Notably, brokers would also focus their attention regionally, and work intensively with a maximum of three to five countries in each of the four regions. Given those priorities, brokers also reorganized the structure of the organization itself. The position of Program Director was split in two, with Jones focusing on formal human rights advocacy and a second broker located outside the US focusing on work with grassroots groups. The regional programs were then downsized; rather than having full offices in each region, each was covered by one broker. A fairly prominent South African activist was hired to work as the Africa Program Coordinator from Johannesburg, while Ferreyra, Poore, and Alizadeh all stayed on in their roles to oversee their regions.

It is too early to know how these structural changes will affect IGLHRC's advocacy. What all of these changes do suggest, however, is that grounded ethnography is critical if we are to understand how and why human rights advocacy takes place and remains dynamic in practice. Without a solid grasp of the many motivations and pressures that shape human rights advocacy, it is difficult to understand the subtleties and subtext of the strategies that brokers themselves employ, or to articulate the ways that movements might take a different approach to pursue their vision of a more just and humane order. If anthropologists are to participate fully and constructively in these discussions – and to understand what is at stake for those involved – taking the complexities of constructing, promoting, and institutionalizing rights in practice seriously is an indispensable first step.

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