

PHYSIQUE PIONEERS: THE POLITICS OF 1960S GAY CONSUMER CULTURE

By David K. Johnson

University of South Florida

While growing up in a small town in Missouri in the 1950s, Bill Kelley learned from reading the best-selling paperback *Washington Confidential* that the nation's capital was teeming not only with prostitutes, gamblers, Communists, and drug dealers, but also "fairies and Fair Dealers." Like millions of Americans who read tabloid journalist Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer's exposé, he learned that police efforts to eliminate the moral degenerates from the city focused on Lafayette Park. The reporters alleged that so many gay men congregated in this "garden of pansies" that it created "a constant soprano symphony of homosexual twittering." Lait and Mortimer had hoped to warn their readers of the dangers in Washington, D.C., but Kelley was more intrigued than repulsed. While on a high school trip to the nation's capital for the National Spelling Bee, Kelley made a surreptitious visit to Lafayette Park. He had only a limited time away from his chaperones, and as he later recalled, "I wasn't taking any chances of being misunderstood." In order to identify himself to other gay men, he went to a nearby newsstand, bought a copy of a physique magazine, and carried it with him as he walked around the park.¹

Bill Kelley's Lafayette Park story has been used to illustrate the ways in which cold war era anti-gay propaganda functioned as a virtual tour guide to the gay subculture. And because he would later move to Chicago and become involved in the early homosexual rights movement as a member of the Chicago chapter of the Mattachine Society, one of the first gay political and social service organizations, Kelley has appeared in a number of histories of the gay rights movement. But one aspect of the story has been overlooked: For a young man like Kelley from middle-America at mid-century, the purchase of a consumer item acted as means of sexual self-identification and served as an entryway into the gay community.²

This study outlines a history of gay patterns of mass consumption from 1945 to 1969—an examination of the production, sale, and consumption of physique magazines, paperback novels, greeting cards, and other items available through gay-oriented mail order catalogs and how these consumer networks fostered a sense of community. I examine how the magazine publishers, in their struggles with censorship laws, marshaled a rhetoric of legal rights and collective action and, therefore, how the first gay judicial victories were for the right to produce and purchase such commodities. I argue that before there was a national gay political

community there was a national gay commercial market and that the development of that market by a small group of gay entrepreneurs was a key, overlooked catalyst to the rise of a gay movement in America.

This project sits at the intersection of two historiographies—that of consumer culture and that of gay and lesbian community and identity formation. The history of consumer culture has become a hotly debated topic in the field of U.S. history, as demonstrated in a recent roundtable exchange in *The Journal of American History*.³ From prominent colonialists studying the American Revolution to scholars specializing in the post-World War II “Affluent Society,” historians are demonstrating the importance of individuals’ relationships to consumer goods as a key to understanding their sense of self, community, and even national identity. Many scholars see the rise of mass consumer culture as an oppressive force limiting the agency of individuals. William Leach and Susan Strasser portray the rise of national brands, department stores, and advertising agencies as the imposition of an alien corporate culture on local, autonomous agents. Leach calls the culture of consumer capitalism “among the most nonconsensual public cultures ever created.”⁴ Other scholars emphasize the potentially liberatory aspects of consumer society—highlighting how it became a catalyst to group identity formation and collective action. For example, T.H. Breen argues that it was the rise of consumer goods in the colonial era that first tied the American colonists together as an “imagined community” and provided an arena of political protest against their colonial oppressors in the form of product boycotts. Lacking from this discussion is an examination of how minority groups were able to use the marketplace to mobilize themselves and gain political power. Scholars of the black civil rights movement have begun to emphasize the importance of the right to “buy a hamburger” to that movement’s origins. This work also emphasizes how post-war American consumer culture—despite many limitations based on income, gender, and race—opened up a space for a sexual minority group to define itself.⁵

Twenty-five years ago, in his ground-breaking work on the making of the gay and lesbian community in postwar America, historian John D’Emilio gestured toward the significance of a gay consumer market when he pointed out that membership in the Mattachine Society—the first sustained gay political organization in the U.S.—numbered less than a thousand while physique magazines were selling in the hundreds of thousands. But writing one of the first scholarly works in the American history field on a gay topic, D’Emilio kept his focus within traditional definitions of “politics” and formal gay political organizations. Building on D’Emilio’s work, Martin Meeker has highlighted the importance of the broader communications networks that gay men and lesbians established as early as the 1940s, including the use of hobby magazines, pen pal clubs, and what he calls “do-it-yourself” bar guides and other publications. As he argues, “the narrative of a communications shift is tantamount to the history of a homosexual identity forming into a collective sense of itself.” Despite his insistence on the importance of mass circulation periodicals and the “politics of communication” in the formation of a gay identity, Meeker focuses on San Francisco-based magazines and the

tiny homophile press. He dismisses the myriad of physique entrepreneurs as “publishers of pornography” and insinuates that their circulation figures have been wildly exaggerated, even as his own analysis suggests their importance to gay culture. Indeed Meeker shows how even within the classified sections of *Popular Mechanics* and *The Hobby Directory* gay men established contact with each other by signaling their interest in “physical culture” and “art photography.”⁶

Art historians and film studies scholars have pioneered the study of physique magazines in the pre-Stonewall era. In *Hard to Imagine*, Thomas Waugh called physique magazines the “richest documentation of gay culture of the period” and argued that “our most important political activity of the postwar decades . . . was not meeting or organizing or publicly demonstrating but consuming.”⁷ Despite their important contributions, art historians focus on the visual content of physique magazines and largely ignore the non-visual evidence, what Waugh dismisses as “unrelated editorial content.” This focus on photography and film excludes the rise of mail order catalogues like Vagabond out of Minneapolis or Guild Press out of Washington and the host of gay consumer goods they offered, including greeting cards, musical LPs, pulp novels, bar guides, lingerie, cologne, and jewelry. Expanding on this work, I outline a social and political history of how these products were marketed by the producers and consumed and used by gay men. Engaging with the considerable body of work on consumer culture and the way in which consumption mediates the production of social identities will significantly alter the way in which we conceive the history of modern gay subculture in America.⁸

Scholars that have examined gay consumer culture assume it was a product of the post-Stonewall generation. They dismiss 1950s and 1960s physique magazines and their associated mail-order catalogs as peripheral to gay history because they were not explicitly gay. Rodger Streitmatter, for example, in his comprehensive history of the gay and lesbian press, ignores physique magazines because, he argues, “they never identified themselves as targeting gays, although their physique photographs attracted a large gay readership—or at least viewership.” Katherine Sender’s *Business, Not Politics*, the first book-length scholarly examination of the formation of a “gay market” devotes only one sentence to physique magazines and suggests that direct-mail marketing to a gay audience began in the 1980s with catalogs such as *Shocking Gray*, *Tzabaco*, and *International Male*. In their recent history of gay Los Angeles, Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons briefly discuss how Bob Mizer began selling *Physique Pictorial* in the 1950s at the same time *Ah-Men* was selling clothes to gay men in West Hollywood, but dismiss this as part of an “underground” or local market that only became overt and national in the 1970s.⁹

But nearly everyone who encountered these consumer items in post-war America grasped what scholars like Meeker, Streitmatter, Sender, Faderman and Timmons have not—that physique magazines and mail-order houses of the 1950s and 1960s were making a fortune within an already burgeoning national gay market. The U.S. postmaster general saw a proliferation of obscene literature and

launched a widespread cleanup campaign to thwart it. Congress held hearings on the immoral impact these magazines were having on juveniles by enticing them into a life of degeneracy. One leader of the anti-pornography movement called muscle magazines “house organs for homosexuals.”¹⁰ District attorneys around the nation argued that despite physique publishers’ claims to be serving a market of artists, sculptors and photographers, they were knowingly pandering to homosexuals and promoting homosexuality in American society. Federal and local judges acknowledged that these publishers were reaching a gay market, even as those judges defended their right to serve it. Magazine publishers who were losing business wrote scathing editorials against the new “homo” magazines. Body-builders and physique models complained that their fan mail came from gay men. Most importantly, gay men themselves—particularly young, isolated gay men like Bill Kelley, living beyond major cities—saw them as a lifeline to a larger world. Countless men who came of age in cold war America vividly remember their first encounter with physique magazines as part of their journey to self-identification as homosexual. As A.R. from Los Angeles wrote in 1967, “I have [physique model] Glenn Bishop to thank more than any other individual for my becoming homosexual.”¹¹

Studies of the gay consumer market assume that it was a byproduct of the gay rights political movement, rather than a catalyst for its development. Indeed many scholars tend to pit gay activism and gay consumerism against one another, constructing a declension narrative where gay activism—along with the other Leftist movements from the 1960s—has been co-opted by the superficial allure of gay consumerism and gay visibility in American popular culture. As Faderman and Timmons summarize, “It is ironic that, in L.A. as elsewhere, gay radicals, who prided themselves on their anti-materialism, were actually responsible for the inception of a new gay consumerism when they made the gay community widely visible.” Even scholars such as Alexandra Chasin who highlight the connection between identity formation and consumption limit their focus to the later use of boycotts, such as one in 1977 that politicized the national lesbian and gay community against Florida orange juice in reaction to the blatant homophobia of its spokesperson, Anita Bryant.¹² But it was the very rise of a gay consumer market that helped provide the rhetoric and construct the networks that fostered gay political activism. Content analysis of brochures, catalogs, magazines, and pulp fiction in the 1950s and 1960s shows not only that physique magazine publishers explicitly targeted a gay consumer market, but also that consumer items provided a means for gay men to understand themselves as belonging to a larger community. The ability to purchase these items validated their erotic attraction to other men and provided particular class-based models for what it meant to be gay. By bringing not only stories of the gay culture of Greenwich Village but also the opportunity to purchase the fashions available in Greenwich Village stores, these mail order catalogues created, in Benedict Anderson’s phrase, an “imagined community.” At the same time, some of the producers of these catalogs—particularly Lloyd Spinar and Conrad Germain, the little-known founders of Directory Serv-

ices, Inc, in Minneapolis—used an explicit language of freedom and rights in their open challenge to censorship laws that was more anti-establishment and less assimilationist than the mainstream political groups of the time. Not surprisingly, the movement's first legal victories were for the right to consume these products.

The Physical Culture Movement

Physique or fitness magazines were an outgrowth of the turn-of-the-century physical culture movement, which many historians have seen as the result of a crisis in masculinity in a rapidly urbanizing and industrializing America. As traditional markers of masculinity, such as land or independent business ownership, became less accessible to white, middle-class men, new markers of masculinity took hold. Among these was an emphasis on playing sports and developing the muscular male body. By the turn of the twentieth century, college football reached a mass audience, the Olympic Games had been revived, and Bernarr McFadden had begun building a health and fitness empire publishing *Physical Culture* magazine. Such sporting activity served to assuage fears that the new conditions of urban industrial life weakened men, particularly white “native-born” men, and caused new nervous diseases such as “neurasthenia.” Eugene Sandow, known as “the perfect man,” became the first international bodybuilding superstar. Photographs of his nearly naked body circulated in magazines and postcards all over Europe and North America.¹³

By the 1930s a host of physique magazines, such as Bob Hoffman's *Strength & Health* and Joe Weider's *Your Physique*, catered to and profited from this interest in developing the male body. Anecdotal evidence suggests that men within the burgeoning gay subcultures of European and North American cities were early participants in this network of photographs, magazines, and gyms. Yet it was an uneasy alliance. Early on Bernarr Macfadden expressed anxiety that his advocacy of muscular development might provide fodder for male sexual fantasies, denouncing “painted, perfumed, . . . mincing youths . . . ogling every man that passes.”¹⁴ But in the back of magazines such as *Strength & Health*, amongst the advertisements for barbells and supplements, gay photographers such as Lon of New York and Bob Mizer of the Athletic Model Guild in Los Angeles offered more explicit “physical culture studies.” (Figure 1) By responding to their ads, artists could obtain nude photographs of the male body to use as models for their line drawings. Soon these gay photographers realized there was a vast market for their nude and nearly nude photographs, and they began to offer entire magazines and studio catalogues catering to gay men.¹⁵

By the mid-1950s, entrepreneurs grew bolder in their efforts to reach a gay male audience and thereby attracted the attention of competitors as well as government authorities. In 1955 an advertisement appeared in *VIM*—a physique magazine published out of Columbus, Ohio—heralding “Something new for the Physique World.” (Figure 2) Subscribers were asked to join a sort of fraternal order—the Grecian Guild. As the founders explained, it was

Figure 1

LON HANAGAN
 Physique Photographer, now located at
 408 Second Avenue
 New York 10, N. Y.
 Phone: Murray Hill 6-3297
 Lon will make appointments at your
 convenience. Appointments made in
 advance only. Reasonable rates for ex-
 ceptional physique pictures.



Introducing Eugene Meyer & Pepper Gomez,
 just two of the many Southland Athletes
 you'll find in our Album B. 12 4x5 studies
 on double-wt. silk photo paper \$2.00. 12
 Ex10's \$12.00. Album A still available and
 orders accepted on Album C at these same
 prices.

**ATHLETIC MODEL GUILD 1834 W. 11th St.
 Phone FA 4180 Los Angeles 6, Calif.**

Page 29

more than a magazine. . . It is a Guild—the only association of its kind in the entire world. It has established itself through its magazine as the rallying for a unique fraternity. It has fought for its ideals, for human rights, and for freedom for itself and its members.

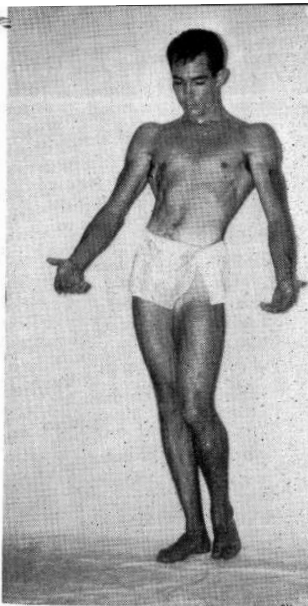
Members could buy a Grecian Guild pin to wear “proudly,” allowing easy identification of like-minded men. The Guild had plans for regional chapters, national conventions, membership directories, and other opportunities for members who shared these ideals to meet. Indeed, the Guild had its own creed for members to uphold, one that invoked the perceived ideals of ancient Greece, “the most intellectual and artistic society the world has ever known,” a place where “they believed that the body of a muscular, graceful, well proportioned youth was among

Figure 2

**Something New
for the physique world**

**The
Grecian
Guild**

**proudly announces
publication
of its new magazine**



The Guild Pictorial

**Bodybuilders, Artists, and physique students . . .
You'll be sorry (and then some) if you miss this
long-awaited magazine. To be sure of getting
your copy of the beautiful first issue, along with
full details, order today.**

The price? Only 50¢! You'll be delighted.
(This issue will NOT appear on newsstands)

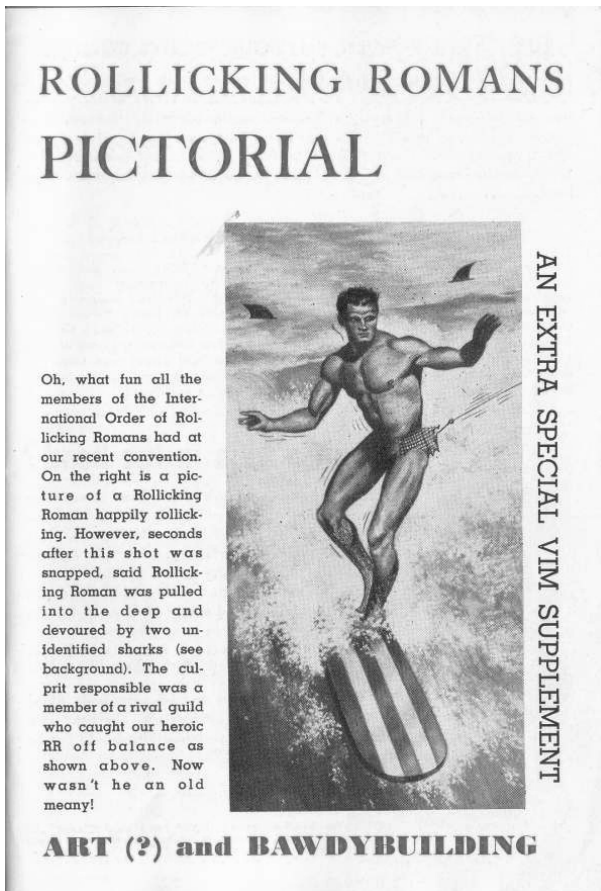
The Grecian Guild
P. O. Box 568 South Laguna, Calif.

the most admirable of all things.”¹⁶ This invocation of ancient Greece had a long history in the gay community, dating back to the 1920s, as a way for gay men to create a folklore of a collective past and a way to legitimize and naturalize male admiration for the male body. The “classical alibi” became a dominant theme in the physique world. Many photo studios and mail order businesses highlighted this connection by adopting names such as Apollo, Athens West, Plato, Spartan of Hollywood, Trojan Book Service, Vulcan and Young Adonis.¹⁷

Membership in the Grecian Guild grew rapidly, and the magazine quickly stepped up publication from a quarterly to a monthly, causing alarm among its mainstream competitors. Just three months after the launch of *Grecian Guild Pictorial*, VIM editors, claiming to be “nauseated” and “disgusted,” ran a two-page at-

tack against the new magazine they parodied as the “Gilded Greek.” Noting the models’ lack of muscular development, the editors compared them to “undernourished prisoners in a concentration camp.” They also raised their collective eyebrows over *Grecian Guild*’s plans for national conventions, which they pointed out would permit members to “indulge in the various activities that bound members together, whatever those activities might be.” Nine months later, *VIM* ran a four-page satirical diatribe against the upstart, calling it “Rollicking Romans Pictorial.” This time the editors were even more explicit about their moral objections, which they signaled in the article’s subtitle—“Art(?) and Bawdybuilding.” (Figure 3) *VIM* saw the attributes of ancient civilizations differently than did *Grecian Guild*. Rather than the ideals of masculine beauty, *VIM* saw “debauchery, promiscuity, corruption, and moral pollution.” *VIM* parodied the *Grecian Guild* membership application, where members were asked to identify themselves as a bodybuilders, artists, or students. To this list *VIM* added a fourth option—“just looking.” They changed the categories “married” and “single” to “married?” and

Figure 3



“whatever for?” *VIM* even printed a page of angry letters from readers who denounced the editors for their cowardice in attacking the other magazine, canceled their memberships in high dudgeon, and warned that *VIM* was “on the way out.” *VIM* claimed to be happy to see them go. This spat within the pages of *VIM* demonstrated that these new, more openly queer, magazines were not hiding anything. The two tropes they used to legitimize male admiration for the bodies of other men—the appeal to the traditions of ancient civilizations or the appeal to bodybuilding—were both transparent. To *VIM* it was all perversion.¹⁸

VIM was not the only old-line, mainstream fitness magazine to denounce these queer upstarts. By 1957, *Strength & Health*, one of the oldest fitness magazines—where many gay physique photographers ran their first advertisements—launched its own attack on what it called “the flood” of new magazines “aimed at the homo trade.” In an article entitled “Let me Tell You a Fairy Tale,” the editor wrote:

Under the guise of wholesome physical culture, these dirty little books are aimed directly at a very profitable market, the homosexual or “fairy” trade. They are on the stands for one reason only—to make a profit. Circulation figures show they do just that, because they outsell the regular physical culture journals.

Strength & Health objected not only to the moral character of these magazines but also to what they were doing to its bottom line. Although both genres of physique magazines claimed to be serving particular communities—whether legitimate bodybuilders or cultural heirs of Greek civilization—they were also market competitors. *Strength & Health* sought to warn readers of these new magazines that “the cause of clean physical culture is threatened by peddlers of pornography.”¹⁹

Other magazine publishers sought to exploit rather than denounce this new market. In 1958 Canadian Joe Wieder launched *The Young Physique*, where “the world’s handsomest young bodybuilders greet you each month,” featuring homoerotic drawings by George Quintance. By 1959, even *VIM*, after a change in ownership, changed its editorial approach, began to offer a pen pal club for “Males Only!” and printed an article defending homosexuality as normative. The homosexual is simply “different” in his sexual expression, the author noted, not dangerous, contagious, or pathological. But the author warned that homosexuals and, increasingly, readers of physique magazines, were being used as scapegoats for the perceived increase in juvenile delinquency. This same issue included a suggestive piece on the bachelor using “power tools,” a *Playboy*-like male centerfold, and a campy picture of Rock Hudson with a camera focused on the young man on the next page. Pointing out how the youth had captured his “pictorial attention,” the editors comment, “Wouldn’t it be nice to have Rock as your cameraman?” Supplementing their physique photographs with fashion spreads, cosmetic advertisements, and positive editorials, publishers such as Wieder targeted a gay male audience.²⁰

Fighting Censorship

The commercial competition between these more openly queer magazines and their mainstream counterparts was not the only struggle that reveals the cultural shift these magazines represented. Almost all of the publishers and photographers connected with physique magazines were arrested by the police and tried in court at some point in their careers. Bob Mizer, Lynn Womack, Al Urban, and John Barrington spent time in jail. Others, such as Chuck Renslow, Alonzo Hagan, Bob Anthony, Lloyd Spinar, and Conrad Germain successfully fought prosecution.²¹ Even many consumers were arrested for possessing obscene materials. As George Whitney recalled,

In 1955, when I entered Yale University as a freshman, I was called in to the FBI's office in New Haven. They had been intercepting my mail for about a year and a half before, mainly because I had been ordering material from the AMG [Athletic Model Guild] in L.A. I was 18, so naive, and scared out of my wits. I was required to write a letter to my parents explaining what I had done. Otherwise they threatened me with an indictment. It was the most humiliating experience of my life.²²

Newton Arvin is perhaps the best known physique magazine consumer to have been prosecuted. A Smith college professor, noted literary critic, and former partner to Truman Capote, Arvin was arrested in 1960 for possession of muscle magazines such as *Adonis*, *Tomorrow's Man*, and *Physique Pictorial*, along with some stag films, as part of a coordinated sting operation by the Massachusetts State Police. He fell victim to President Eisenhower's postmaster general, Arthur Summerfield, who was engaged in an anti-pornography campaign which Congress had invigorated by passing the Granahan Bill, allowing the U.S. Postal Service to seize the mail of anyone suspected of trafficking in obscenity. Much in the news, Summerfield had recently launched a new cancellation stamp for all U.S. mail that read "REPORT OBSCENE MAIL TO YOUR POSTMASTER." (Figure 4) According to the Post Office's own records, the campaign was effective. Between 1961 and 1968, they recorded 4,979 arrests and 4,095 convictions for "obscene" mail. But in his biography, *The Scarlet Professor*, Barry Werth portrays Arvin as shocked by the arrest and quite isolated in his plight. "He had been locked in a sphere by himself his entire conscious life," Werth wrote of Arvin's reaction to his arrest, ignoring both how Arvin shared his muscle magazines with a coterie of men in Northampton and how the magazines themselves connected him to a national homosexual network that was actively and aggressively challenging censorship laws.²³

Most of the gay physique magazines ran lengthy and frequent editorials about the growing danger of police and postal inspectors, and the language they used called for a collective response. As early as 1955, Bob Mizer's *Physique Pictorial* began a series of editorials denouncing censorship and supporting the efforts of the American Civil Liberties Union to defend the rights of a "cultural minority"

Figure 4



that enjoys art that some label obscene. In 1963, The Guild Press's *MANual* ran an "Urgent Appeal to our Readers," alerting them to the plight of Al Urban, whom it labeled the "dean" of American physique photography. Although Urban had been acquitted on several occasions on obscenity charges, the New York City police were harassing him by holding hundreds of confiscated negatives, thereby depriving him of his livelihood. *MANual* was confident that the collective it labeled "the American Physique Audience" would not sit by and let this "arbitrary injustice" happen. A few months later, *Manorama*, another Guild publication, warned of "DANGER AHEAD!" in describing the arrest of John Paignton (a.k.a. Barrington) in Great Britain. "This case is not John Paignton's alone, it is the case of everyone of us." That this prosecution was in a foreign jurisdiction, under Britain's newly enacted Obscene Publication Act, did not seem to matter. These cases, the editors insisted, "concern *you*, no matter where you live," highlighting the international dimension to this community. Imploring readers to send money to a Paignton defense fund, the editors called on readers to man the barricades and "FIGHT CENSORSHIP—NOW!"²⁴ Using the language of justice and rights, the magazines called on their constituency to send money, which would be rewarded with credit toward copies of the threatened images. Their plea underscored how buying a magazine or supporting a photographer helped strike a blow against censorship—how consumer choices were political acts. The appeal imaged a community of consumers at risk of losing their ability to consume unless they engaged in collective action.

In 1963 *Grecian Guild Pictorial* ran a lengthy article denouncing censorship as "perverse" and a leading cause of sex crimes—a reversal of the usual argument of moral reformers. "The sight of someone else's body may interest you (and this is only natural) but it does not tempt you to commit an immediate crime" the editor argued, using pointedly gender-neutral language that suggested either a same-sex or different-sex attraction. If a fight over censorship breaks out in "your city," he recommended political action. "Don't

just lie down . . . write to the papers—spread the truth around. Insist on your rights at all times.” The magazine received an overwhelmingly positive response and published many reader comments, but most insisted on anonymity. In a follow-up piece the editors lamented, “This is understandable, BUT—we will not make *any* progress until more people have the courage of their convictions. *This* is what I wish readers would think about.” This was a call for readers to publicly assert their admiration for images of other men—what gay leaders within the decade would call “coming out.”²⁵

While many physique magazine publishers were politically involved in the struggle against censorship, Directory Services Inc. (DSI) became the most aggressive supporter of freedom of expression. Lloyd Spinar and Conrad Germain, two twenty-something partners, founded DSI in 1963 in Minneapolis and quickly turned it into a veritable gay mail-order empire. Recently discharged from the Air Force, Germain was on his way from his native South Dakota to relocate in New York City when he stopped in Minneapolis to visit relatives. He met Spinar in a Minneapolis gay bar and decided to stay. Spinar was a commercial artist for a local newspaper, but was already experimenting with a side business he called “the vagabond club.” When his employer discovered his other interest, he lost his job, giving him more time to devote to mail-order. One of the first items the two partners offered for sale was a directory of gay bars throughout the U.S. “In mail-order, if you get a five percent response rate, you are a big success. But eighty percent of the people we offered this directory to bought it,” recalled Germain in a recent interview. “That’s when we knew there was a real need for this stuff.” Over the next decade, DSI sold books, records, jewelry, clothing, greeting cards, and other items to thousands of gay men around the United States and abroad. They called their first catalog *Vagabond* — “the unusual catalog.” (Figure 5) Soon they were offering a directory of physique photographers, magazines, and clothing; another directory of books that “deal with the homosexual way of life”; and a third travel guide to “279 Places to Go for a Gay Time.” DSI even offered a pen pal service, a credit card for making catalog purchases, and a prepaid film development mailer, a service that allowed customers to avoid embarrassment or even arrest at local photo labs. “We made millions,” Germain confessed. By 1967 the two partners had fourteen full-time employees, making them arguably the largest gay-owned and gay-oriented enterprise in the world.²⁶

The heart of the DSI enterprise was the publication of an extensive series of physique magazines featuring the first male frontal nudes. With the cover of each of their magazines revealing more male anatomy, Spinar and Germain sought to challenge American censorship laws. Their very first issue of *Butch* in 1965 (Figure 6) featured both male nudes (minus the usual posing strap found in all previous magazines) and a “Publisher’s Creed” that boldly asserted that “all of us have a common ground to defend”:

Those concerned with freedom have the responsibility of seeing to it that each individual book or publication, whatever its contents, is given the freedom of expression granted to it by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Figure 5



A string of U.S. Supreme Court decisions had loosened definitions of obscenity, including a 1962 decision affirming photographs of men in posing straps were not “patently offensive” and therefore protected by the First Amendment. In *MANual v. Day*, the Supreme Court found that “these portrayals of the male nude cannot fairly be regarded as more objectionable than many portrayals of the female nude that society tolerates.”²⁷ Such decisions gave the DSI publishers cause for hope. By 1966 DSI was printing 50,000 copies of each issue of *Butch* as well as 50,000 copies of a second, full-color magazine called *Tiger*.²⁸

But in 1967 two assistant U.S. district attorneys, several postal inspectors, and several members of the U.S. Marshall’s office appeared at DSI’s 5,700-square-foot Minneapolis publishing plant. They arrested Spinar and Germain and charged them with twenty-nine counts of sending lewd materials through the mail. Without a warrant, they seized financial records, mailing lists, postage meters, and 15,000 magazines—a seizure that depleted the entire inventory, according to DSI attorneys, and amounted to illegal restraint of trade. The government confiscated so much material that they had to order a second semi-trailer truck to haul it away. The U.S. district attorney claimed his office had received 1,400 com-

Figure 6



plaints from individuals receiving unsolicited DSI materials. If found guilty on all charges, Spinar and Germain faced 145 years in prison and \$145,000 in fines. This was only the first in a series of harassing lawsuits filed by federal authorities that would eventually leave Spinar and Germain virtually bankrupt.²⁹

During the two-week trial, covered extensively in Minneapolis newspapers, DSI's attorneys maintained the now long-established alibi that their intended audience was "artists, photographers and sculptors," assuming this would bolster their First Amendment claims. But the prosecution argued that homosexual men were the intended "recipient group" and that by "pandering" to this group, Spinar and Germain were seeking to "promote homosexuality in our society." Assistant U.S. Attorney Stanley H. Green introduced testimony from a physique photographer that 80 per cent of the 15,000 names on the mailing list he sold to DSI were those of "homosexuals." He called gay male customers of DSI as witnesses—many of

whom had been forced to testify under threat of losing their jobs—to try to establish that looking at magazines such as *Butch* and *Tiger* encouraged them to go out cruising for men and effectively caused homosexuality. To drive home the danger, he put two teenage boys on the stand who had allegedly received unsolicited DSI advertisements in the mail.³⁰

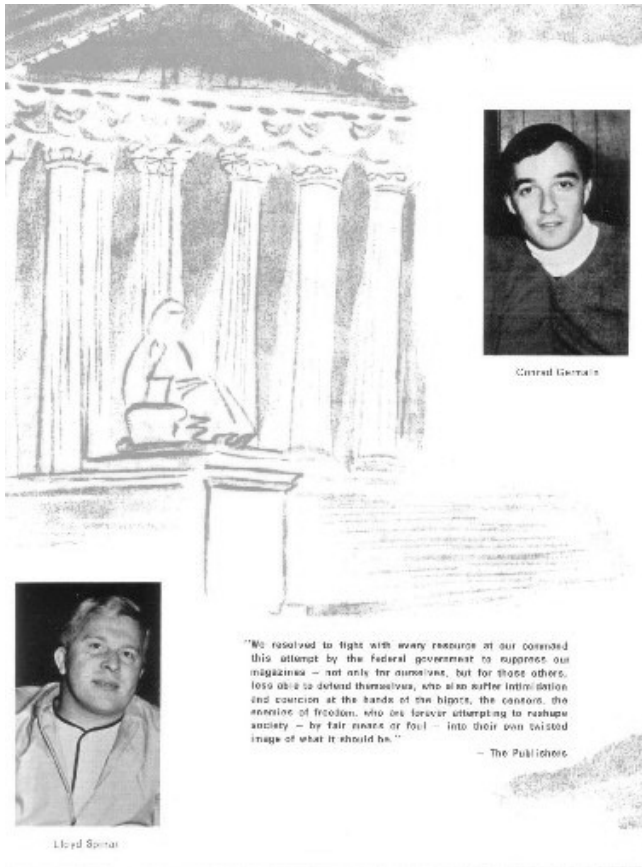
Judge Earl R. Larson of the US federal district court agreed with the prosecution that the intended market was this “deviant group.” But to the amazement of the prosecution, he still found Spinar and Germain not guilty on all counts. Larson ruled that “the materials have no appeal to the prurient interests of the intended recipient deviant group; do not exceed the limits of candor tolerated by the contemporary national community; and are not utterly without redeeming social value.” But Larson went further, acknowledging that these were gay magazines targeting a specifically gay market, and defending the rights of those consumers. “The rights of minorities expressed individually in sexual groups or otherwise must be respected. With increasing research and study, we will in the future come to a better understanding of ourselves, sexual deviants, and others.” Spinar and Germain were so proud of this landmark legal achievement that they published stories about the decision in their publications headlined “A Major Victory” and included photographs of themselves—an unprecedented public display for publishers continually threatened with arrest. (Figure 7) In subsequent issues of the magazines seized in Minneapolis, they published full frontal nudes with the prominent caption “This photo was declared NOT obscene in a Federal Court.”³¹

DSI’s victory in federal district court was recognized at the time as a watershed moment, but today has been almost forgotten both by historians of pornography and obscenity and by historians of the gay movement.³² After 1967, the artistic, bodybuilding, and classical alibis that had been used to justify male nudity fell away. Within a year publications appeared with cover photos of naked men in bed, the sexual connotations no longer even thinly disguised. Made aware of the victory thru Spinar and Germain’s own publicity, new photographers and publishers entered the business and many existing studios quickly turned to offering sexually explicit materials. Two months after the Minneapolis verdict, Don Michaels began publishing a small, openly gay publication called *The Los Angeles Advocate*. Its first cover story highlighted the DSI legal victory and the magazine’s own contents clearly drew on the physique model, with sexy photographs of “Groovy Guy” beauty pageant winners, a “Body Buddy” fitness column, and an all-male personal ad section, “Trader Dick.” Lou Rand Hogan, author of *The Gay Cookbook*—which DSI and other gay mail-order book services had promoted—offered a cooking column. Its first major advertisers were mail-order businesses. Renamed *The Advocate*, by the 1970s it became a prominent national gay and lesbian news magazine, but with a circulation still less than DSI’s *Butch* a decade earlier.³³

Homophile Sexual Politics

One of the prime witnesses for DSI in their 1967 Minneapolis obscenity trial was Hall Call, head of the Mattachine Society in San Francisco. Call had a close

Figure 7



personal relationship with Conrad Germain, who he had solicited for financial support for his fledgling homophile organization. Call was instrumental in finding other expert witnesses to testify on DSI's behalf, including Ward Pomeroy from the Kinsey Institute. Call's support for the physique publishers was unusual. The early gay or "homophile" movement—consisting of a handful of chapters of the Mattachine Society, One, Inc. in Los Angeles, and chapters of the lesbian group, the Daughters of Bilitis—were concerned with middle-class respectability and largely antagonist toward gay bars and graphic sexual imagery. Hall Call was one of the few homophile leaders who saw a connection between sexual freedom and gay rights and therefore supported gay commercial interests. With friend Don Lucas, Call owned Pan-Graphic Press, which published the staid *Mattachine Review*, a series of gay pulp novels, and an early gay bar guide which became *Bob Damron's Address Book* and continued to be published well into the 1990s. In 1960 they began publishing the *Dorian Book Service Quarterly*, which offered mail-order books along

with news on censorship issues and an explicit agenda of supporting the “freedom to read.” According to Call, these commercial enterprises provided the financial support for *Mattachine* at a time when “we didn’t have a pot to piss in.”³⁴

Hall Call’s Pan-Graphic Press demonstrates the complex, overlooked relationship between homophile movement leaders and physique publishers. Although physique magazines are often derided for hiding behind the bodybuilding or artistic alibis, *Mattachine* and *ONE* also hid behind the mask of being mere “research and education” institutions. Like their physique counterparts, early homophile leaders used references to classical Greece and Rome “as models on which to base claims for gay rights.”³⁵ When called upon to make judgments in obscenity trials, judges often conflated the two genres. Arguing that the fictional stories in *ONE* magazine “are obviously calculated to stimulate the lust of the homosexual reader,” a federal district court rejected *ONE*’s claim to provide information about a societal problem and effectively classified its rather tame fiction with photographs of naked men. *ONE* editors made a similar comparison. When they tried to get newsstands to carry their magazine, they naturally approached those that sold muscle magazines. As Martin Block remembered arguing, “The magazine stands that we went to in Los Angeles all had gay customers . . . they carried the physique magazines that had photographs of men in jock straps and posing straps. They knew they had customers for the physique magazines, so why not sell *ONE* magazine as well?”³⁶

The homophile political movement benefited from and was intricately connected with the more entrepreneurial physique world. As early as fall 1956, Bob Mizer offered readers of his widely popular *Physique Pictorial* the addresses of *ONE* and the *Mattachine Review* if they wanted “factual information” on the topic of homosexuality. According to historian Craig Loftin, readers of *ONE*, *The Mattachine Review*, and even the lesbian-oriented *Ladder* had long pleaded for pen pal advertisements, gay bar listings, and photographs, but the editors believed such offerings would involve them in encouraging criminal activity. Despite the popular demand that homophile publications become more like physique magazines, homophile leaders increasingly distanced themselves from publications they considered tawdry and possibly illegal. When Clark Polack, a homophile leader in Philadelphia, began in 1964 to publish *Drum*, a magazine that combined gay news and commentary with physique photography, other homophile leaders attacked him as a threat to the movement. The *Mattachine* Society of Washington denounced such “combination” magazines and cut all ties with publications that “contain both articles of serious homophile interest and photographs of naked teenage boys in provocative poses.”³⁷ This stance failed to acknowledge the increasingly explicit political content of the physique editorials and the huge gay following they commanded. By combining commercial, sexual, and political interests, *Drum* represented not a threat to the movement, but its future. As even Del Martin, a lesbian leader notoriously antagonistic to the bar scene, had to acknowledge by 1966, “there has been a growing emphasis upon homosexuals as consumers and a drive to support homosexual merchants.”³⁸

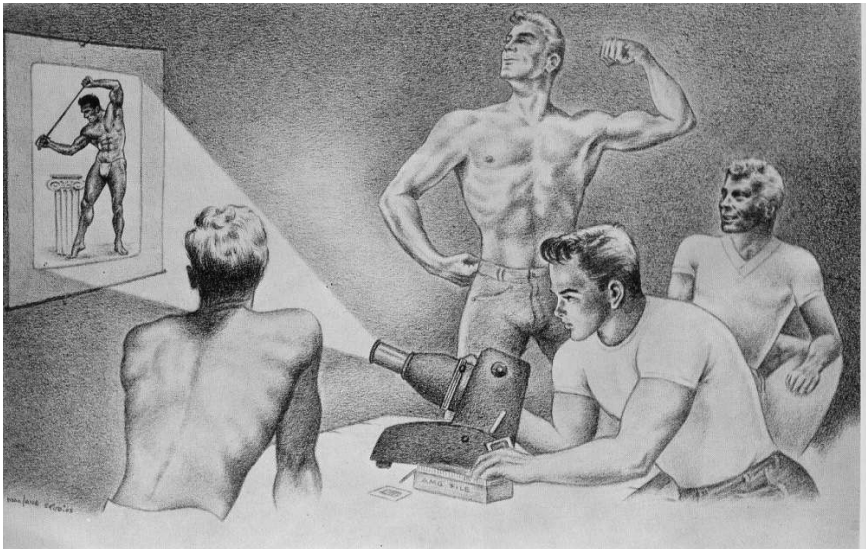
A Gay Consumer Rights Revolution

Despite opposition from traditional fitness magazine publishers, the U.S. post office and even fledgling gay political organizations, physique publishers flourished and allowed gay men to form connections—both imagined and real. By offering photographs of men gazing at other physique magazines, publishers encouraged their readers to identify with the models and see their homoerotic interests as natural. They invited readers to buy posing straps and books on photographing the male nude, enter drawing contests, submit fiction or photographs, and write letters. Readers responded in droves, sending in photographs of themselves—stylized to conform to the physique look they saw in the magazine—asking to be included in an upcoming issue.³⁹ Readers also incorporated physique photographs into their everyday lives. Though they may have arrived in the mail in the proverbial brown paper envelope, as early as 1962 these catalogues offered wall posters and calendars intended for public display. Men used physique photographs to decorate kitchen match boxes that could not only be used in the home but also could serve as “get-acquainted devices” when someone on a street corner asks, “Hey buddy . . . got a match.” Both DSI and Grecian Guild sold pins and rings with their company logos as another, and more profitable, way for gay men to identify themselves to one another as members of the physique world.⁴⁰

Far from being mere objects of secret enjoyment or private reading, physique magazines tried to create an interactive experience with multiple opportunities for readers to become a part of the physique world and simultaneously spend more money. Readers could join pen pal clubs, exchange photographs, and order slides or movies to be displayed at parties. (Figure 8) Everett Jones, a fifty-nine year old chef and DSI customer from Menlo Park, California, recalled receiving flyers in the mail every two or three weeks offering new products and services. He purchased several DSI directories, slides of nude men, and phonograph records. He subscribed to its Reader's Service and had responded to some of its personal ads. He also was a member of the DSI Collector's Club for the purchase of individual photographs. John Raymond, a forty-two year old engineer from Akron, Ohio, had placed an advertisement through DSI's Reader's Service and, according to his sworn testimony, received over one hundred responses.⁴¹

Physique magazines were not the only element of early gay consumer culture. Campy and sexually suggestive greeting cards were another common item, one that underscored and fostered the interconnectivity of this growing network. (Figure 9) By the 1960s a number of clothing stores, such as Ah-Men on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood, had a thriving mail-order business. The photographs and models in its catalogs showed the influence of the physique world, as did the store's title, a campy refrain that suggested a worshipful, even religious, devotion to the male body. Even some of the clothing came directly from the physique world. In the 1965 edition of the catalog, in addition to shirts, pants, and shoes, one could purchase posing straps for “figure studies.” As one anonymous gay man remembered in an on-line posting in 2000, “As a teenager I discovered the mail order cat-

Figure 8



alog Ah-Men out of California in the mid 1960's. . . To me, Ah-MEN catalog was a link to my awakening of my sexuality." Another man, underscoring the pivotal role these pieces of consumer culture played in his self-understanding, wrote, "would you believe that I STILL have every catalog I ever received from Ah-Men—probably some of the earliest—and boy, do they ever exude sex! . . . Ah-Men catalogs [were] a catalyst for awakening the hormones deep inside."⁴² That the owner of Ah-Men later opened one of the most popular gay bars in West Hollywood underscores how these early sites of consumption were important precursors to the more widely recognized ones of the post-Stonewall generation.

As important as they were, the connections and sense of collective identity created by this consumer network of physique magazines and other mail-order items were severely limited by gender and to a lesser extent race. Women were completely absent from the physique world and their only participation in the larger world of gay consumer culture seems to have been limited to lesbian pulp fiction. Even more than the political groups that would follow, these early consumption-based communities were largely male. In a consumer-driven market, men's higher disposable income undoubtedly played a role. So, too, did the field's roots in a male tradition of physical culture magazines that gay men, alone, were able to co-opt. Although by the 1970s lesbian feminists would critique the male-dominated movement for its superficial and sexist focus on bodies and bars, some lesbians in the early 1960s envied the access to a consumer culture that gay men had created. One small-town lesbian wrote to the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian rights organization, imploring them to supply a list of places "where one gal can meet another gal of her interest." As she pointed out, "The men have this directory already—put out by a 'Mr. Larry' of Directory Services" and a female equiv-

Figure 9

Another VAGABOND original. All cards printed in two colors on quality paper. Envelopes included. The front of the card is shown below. The saying inside the card is stated below the card number.

Everyday Cards

 150 Have a Happy Birthday	 151 hearing from you	 152 If you can't fight 'em join 'em	 153 for your birthday	 154 Oh, you would, would you
 155 up odd jobs - got one?	 156 till your birthday	 157 ...over!	 158 sand 'n oil hurt	 159 if you stay overnite
 160 I wanna box	 161 write me	 162 I wanna "sweep" with you	 163 have bat, will play	<p>Individual cards 25¢ each Order by number</p> <p>Set of 14 cards (1 each of designs shown) \$3.00 Item #7002</p>

alent was “badly needed.” Unfortunately, she would wait nearly a decade for the first commercially available lesbian bar guide. The Daughters of Bilitis did offer a Book and Record Service between 1960 and 1964 as a fundraising tool, but offered mostly lesbian literature and non-fiction.⁴³

On the issue of racial equality, the physique movement looks slightly better. One scholar has taken the publishers to task for their furtherance of Jim Crow, deriding the entire genre as “pages of whiteness.” But after a systematic survey of physique magazines, even she had to admit that they featured one black male image in nearly every issue, often more.⁴⁴ In June 1960 *Vim* featured a black model on its cover. If the numerous images of Latino or mixed-race men are included,

the representation of minorities in physique magazines appears significantly better than most mainstream news or fitness magazines in 1950s and 1960s America. Even while excluding women and marginalizing men of color, these magazines and related consumer items created a sense of an imagined nationwide, even global, community of like-minded men with an interest in the male body. But it also helped to solidify at a very early stage an association between the white male body and gay rights.

Recent scholarship on gay consumerism has tended to focus on the limitations of commercial interests in furthering a civil rights agenda. Lisa Dugan and other scholars lament how a gay movement with origins in a Leftist coalition from the 1960s has narrowed into a corporate-dominated arm of neoliberal politics.⁴⁵ Although corporate America and Hollywood may court the gay market, they point out, the mirror they hold up to the community reflects back a very narrow version of that community—one that is largely white, male, affluent, and partnered. But the origins of the gay rights movement do not fit neatly within a golden age of social radicalism bent on destroying hierarchies of race, class, and gender. Many of the early leaders who helped create this national culture were free-market capitalists who leaned toward supporting Republican candidates for president such as Senator Barry Goldwater in 1964. Because of Goldwater's support for limited government—at a time when that government was likely to tell you what you could read, publish, and receive in the mail—Clark Polack suggested Goldwater was his preferred candidate, had it not been for his stance against pornography. “Goldwater's stand for the good old morality,” Polack wrote in the first issue of *Drum*, “is in direct contradiction to his basic concept of freedom for the individual.” Spinar and Germain at DSI also printed editorials in defense of the virtues of the “free enterprise system” and envisioned themselves as part of a new generation of entrepreneurial Americans who were “finally starting to lay the organization man to rest.” These young gay leaders saw limited government and a free consumer market as allies in their fight for sexual freedom. Their position highlights the contradiction within modern American conservative ideology that defends a free consumer market while simultaneously decrying the results of that very market. Conservatives who lament the prominence of gay culture in modern American life should wag their fingers less at sixties radicals and identity politics and more at Adam Smith and the free market.⁴⁶

The link between consumption and a sense of identity and community is exceedingly hard to document. But the story of a small circle of gay friends in Pensacola, Florida, is suggestive. They came up with a novel way to deal with the postal authorities' habit of opening “plain brown” envelopes that were addressed to single men. According to historian John Loughery, they had all of their mail-order books, magazines, and films sent to a mythical “Emma Jones” at a local post office box. They got a sympathetic straight woman to pick up the mail. In 1966 those men decided that “Emma Jones” would host a beach party on the Fourth of July weekend. Though “Emma” sent out twenty-five invitations to her first beach bash, fifty people showed up. Attendance grew to 200 people in 1967 and to 400 in 1968. By the early 1970s “Emma Jones” was hosting “the largest gay gathering

held in the South,” according to Loughery, one that included lesbians and gay men of color. Thanks to Emma, “innumerable friendships had been made, an example of gay economic clout had been established, and an exuberant gay presence had asserted itself on the Florida Panhandle that, whatever the setbacks ahead, would never disappear entirely.”⁴⁷

It is impossible to know what was on the minds of the men and women who resisted arrest at the Stonewall bar at the end of June 1969. Surely they were inspired by the acts of civil disobedience of the civil rights movement, the Black Power movement, and the New Left. But their collective act of resistance—commemorated in cities around the world every year in gay pride celebrations—was fundamentally about the right to consume. The riots were not the beginning of a movement—as they are often portrayed in the popular media—but the culmination of a gay consumer rights revolution begun by the purveyors of physique magazines, solidified by larger mail order houses, and then taken to the streets by the Stonewall patrons. If they had won the legal right to view gay images, buy gay books, and join gay correspondence clubs all over America, why could they not frequent a gay bar in the heart of Greenwich Village and buy a drink with others like themselves?

Department of History
Tampa, FL 33620-8100

ENDNOTES

I would like to thank some of the many colleagues and institutions who have supported this project, including Phil Levy, Robert Ingalls, William Zewadski, Gary Gebhardt, the Phil Zwickler Memorial Research Grant at Cornell University, the University of South Florida Office of Research, and the University of South Florida History Department's Faculty and Graduate Research Seminar.

1. John Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives and Gay Identities: A Twentieth-Century History*, (New York, 1998), 198; author's correspondence with Bill Kelley, January 22, 2007.
2. I met Kelley in researching my study of the cold war origins of the gay rights movement. David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Persecution of Gays and Lesbian in the Federal Government* (Chicago, 2004). See also Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (New York, 1999), 288; Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (New York, 1993), 222-229; Andrew Davis, “Talking History with Longtime Activist Bill Kelley,” *Windy City Times*, June 22, 2005.
3. David Steigerwald, T.H. Breen, and Lizabeth Cohen, “Exchange: American Consumerism,” *Journal of American History* 93 (September 2006): 385-414.
4. William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York, 1993); Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (Washington, D.C., 1989).

5. T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York, 2004); Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, 2003); Robin Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class* (New York, 1996); Robert E. Weems, Jr., "The Revolution will be Marketed: American Corporations and Black Consumers During the 1960's" in Lawrence Glickman (ed.), *Consumer Society in American History: A Reader* (Ithica, 1999), 316-325; Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago, 2007).
6. John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States 1940-1970* (Chicago, 1983), 136; Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s-1970s* (Chicago, 2006), 9, 24, 56; One of the few articles to engage these two literatures is from a marketing perspective, but the focus is almost exclusively on mainstream advertisers in the post-Stonewall era. See Blaine J. Branchik, "Out in the Market: A History of the Gay Market Segment in the United States." *Journal of Macromarketing* 22, no. 1 (2002): 86-97. There have also been some specific studies of individual entrepreneurs or artists, such as Jackie Hatton, "The Pornography Empire of H. Lynn Womack," *Thresholds: Viewing Culture* 7 (Spring 1993): 8-32 and Reed Massengill, *The Male Ideal: Lon of New York and the Masculine Physique* (New York, 2004).
7. Thomas Waugh, *Hard to Imagine: Gay Male Eroticism in Photography and Film from Their Beginnings to Stonewall* (New York, 1996), 217-219.
8. Waugh, *Hard to Imagine*, 253; Other scholars that have discussed the images of physique photographers include Michael Bronski, *Culture Clash: The Making of Gay Sensibility* (Boston, 1984) and Richard Meyer, *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art* (Boston, 2002).
9. Rodger Streitmatter, *Unspeakable: The Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Press in America* (Boston, 1995), xi; Katherine Sender, *Business, Not Politics: The Making of the Gay Market* (New York, 2005), 38; Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York, 2006), 74, 234. Other examinations of the gay press that completely ignore physique magazines include Amy Richlin, "Eros Underground: Greece and Rome in Gay Print Culture, 1953-1965," Beert C. Verstraete and Vernon Provenal (eds.), *Same-Sex Desire and Love in Greco-Roman Antiquity and in the Classical Tradition of the West* (New York, 2005), 422.
10. U.S. Congress, House, "Obscene Matter Sent Through the Mail," Hearing, Subcommittee on Postal Operations, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 1959; On the anti-pornography movement, see Richard Kyle-Keith, *The High Price of Pornography* (Washington, D.C., 1961), 47; In *Manual v. Day*, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harlan wrote, "(1) the magazines are not physical culture or "body-building" publications, but are composed primarily, if not exclusively, for homosexuals, and have no literary, scientific merit; (2) they would appeal to the "prurient interest" of such sexual deviates, but would not have any interest for sexually normal individuals; and (3) the magazines are read almost entirely by homosexuals, and possibly a few adolescent males; the ordinary male adult would not normally buy them." *MANual Enterprises v. Day*, 370 U.S. 478 (1962).
11. On model complaints, see Richard Alan, "Bodybuilding 1958," *Iron Man* 17, no. 6 (April-May 1958), 24-27, quoted in Waugh, *Hard to Imagine*, 433; A.R. quoted in "Dear Drum," *Drum*, August 1967, 37
12. Alexandra Chasin, *Selling Out: The Gay and Lesbian Movement Goes to Market* (New York, 2000), 159; Faderman and Timmons, *Gay L.A.*, 232.
13. Gail, Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago, 1995); John F. Kasson, *Houdini, Tarzan and the Perfect Man: The White Male Body and the Challenge of Modernity in America* (New York, 2001); David L. Chapman, *Sandow the Magnificent: Eugene Sandow and the Beginnings of Bodybuilding* (Urbana, 2006).

14. Bernarr Macfadden, *Superb Virility of Manhood* (New York, 1904), 176, quoted in George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York, 1994), 116, 179.
15. On the history of Bob Mizer's Athletic Model Guild, which began publishing *Physique Pictorial* as an advertising booklet for photographers in 1951, see Winston Leyland, ed. *Physique: A Pictorial History of the Athletic Model Guild* (San Francisco, 1982) and F. Valentine Hooven III, *Beefcake: The Muscle Magazines of America 1950-1970* (Köln, 1995).
16. Grecian Guild advertisement in *VIM*, August 1955, 49; "What's in a Name," *Grecian Guild Pictorial*, Autumn 1955, 4-5. Many physique publisher and photographers used the word "guild" to suggest the collective nature of their endeavor, including Athletic Model Guild, Western Photography Guild, Underwood Guild, and The Guild Press.
17. Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 283-285.
18. "There are Grecians in the bottom of my garden. . .," *VIM*, November 1955, 44-45; "Rollicking Romans Pictorial," *VIM*, September 1956, 7-10; "Variations on a Scream," *VIM*, November 1956, 36.
19. Harry B. Paschall, "Let me Tell You a Fairy Tale . . .," *Strength & Health*, June 1957, 17.
20. Jack Walters, "Males, Morals, & Mores," *Vim*, July 1959, 2; Jack Zuideveld became editor of *VIM* in the spring of 1959 and obtained publishing rights in August. See *United States v. Zuideveld* 316 F.2d 873 (7th Cir. 1963). On the complicated way in which representations of Rock Hudson both concealed and revealed his homosexuality, see Richard Meyer, "Rock Hudson's Body," in Diana Fuss (ed.), *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York, 1991), 258-88.
21. "Womack Jailed Anew in Obscenity Crackdown," *Washington Post*, January 28, 1961; *People v. Robert H. Mizer, Jack O'Neil and William Petty*, C-14164, Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, March 18, 1947, Library of the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction; Rupert Smith, *Physique: The Life of John S. Barrington* (London, 1997); Massengill, *Lon of New York*, 33-34; Joseph W. Bean (ed.) *Kris: The Physique Photography of Chuck Renslow* (Las Vegas, 2008), 9-11; Interview with Chuck Renslow, Chicago, May 25, 2008.
22. Email correspondence, George Whitney to David Johnson, February 21, 2005.
23. Berry Werth, *The Scarlet Professor: Newton Arvin: A Literary Life Shattered by Scandal* (New York, 2001), 196; Post Office figures quoted in Marc Stein, *City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves: Lesbian and Gay Philadelphia, 1945-1972* (Chicago, 2000), 239.
24. "An Urgent Appeal to Our Readers," *MANual*, February, 1963, 37; "DANGER AHEAD!," *Manorama* 12, July 1963, 33; "Danger Ahead!," *Grecian Guild Pictorial*, September 1958; Smith, *Physique: The Life of John S. Barrington*, 116-123.
25. Jack Wills, "Perverse Nonsense!," *Grecian Guild Pictorial* 37, March 1963, 7-10; "Perverse Nonsense—The Aftermath," *Grecian Guild Pictorial* 39, July 1963, 40.
26. Most of the gay-oriented bars at this time were not gay-owned. Interview with Conrad Germain, West Hollywood, California, June 6, 2008; Vagabond Catalog, 1963, DSI Folder, Lynn H. Womack Papers, Human Sexuality Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University; *U.S. vs. Spinar and Germain*, Transcript of Trial, National Archives—Chicago Branch, RG 21, US District Court, Fourth Division of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Criminal Case Files, 1966-1969, Box 11, Case 4-67CR 15.

27. *MANual Enterprises v. Day*, 370 U.S. 478 (1962); Rodger Streitmatter and John C. Watson, "Herman Lynn Womack: Pornographer as First Amendment Pioneer," *Journalism History* 28 (2002): 56-66; Joyce Murdoch and Deb Price, *Courting Justice: Gay Men and Lesbians v. The Supreme Court* (New York, 2001), 65-88.
28. Testimony of Joseph Rosen, manager of Rosen Printing Company, Buffalo NY in *U.S. vs. Spinar and Germain*, Transcript of Trial, National Archives—Chicago Branch, RG 21, US District Court, Fourth Division of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Criminal Case Files, 1966-1969, Box 11, Case 4-67CR 15, 226; Given under oath in a federal court, these are the most reliable circulation figures available for any physique magazine. Lynn Womack claimed circulation figures of 30,000 for his magazines in 1963 (Womack to Krysalka, June 11, 1963, Lynn H. Womack Papers, Human Sexuality Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University). Given that there were more than twenty such magazines in circulation at the time, the monthly sales figures for the entire industry were easily in the hundreds of thousands.
29. Brief in Support of Motion to Suppress, *US v. Spinar and Germain*, Folder 13, Box 1, H. Lynn Womack Papers, Human Sexuality Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University; On subsequent lawsuits, see "Jury Convicts DSI owners of obscenity," *The Advocate*, vol 4, no. 12 (August 5, 1970), 1; *DSI Sales v. US*, US Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit, 440 F2d 1241 (April 1, 1971).
30. *U.S. vs. Spinar and Germain*, Transcript of Trial, National Archives—Chicago Branch, RG 21, US District Court, Fourth Division of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Criminal Case Files, 1966-1969, Box 11, Case 4-67CR 15.
31. *US v. Spinar and Germain*, Decision, US District Court, Minneapolis, Case 4-67 CR 15, July 26, 1967; Finlay Lewis, "Homosexuals Called Chief Buyers of Male Pictures," *Minneapolis Tribune*, July 14, 1967; Interview with Mickey Robins, Santa Monica, California, June 12, 2007; "A Major Victory," *Butch* 9 (1967), 7; "A Major Victory," *Galerie* 3 (1967), 7.
32. Thomas Waugh, *Hard to Imagine*, is one of the only scholars to discuss the DSI case. F Valentine Hooven, III, *Beefcake: The Muscle Magazines of America 1950-1970* (Berlin, 1995) fails to mention DSI and wrongly attributes the emergence of full frontal nudity to an alleged Supreme Court Case involving *Drum* magazine.
33. On the founding of *the Advocate*, see Faderman and Timmons, *Gay L.A.*, 159-161 and Streitmatter, *Unspeakable*, 87-88, 96-98; Lou Rand Hogan, *The Gay Cookbook* (New York, 1965).
34. Interview with Conrad Germain, West Hollywood, California, June 6, 2008; Interview with Hall Call in Eric Marcus, *Making History: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights 1945-1990, An Oral History* (New York, 1992), 65-69; Martin Meeker makes a similar and more developed argument about the commercial side of Mattachine in *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s-1970s* (Chicago, 2006).
35. Richlin, "Eros Underground: Greece and Rome in Gay Print Culture, 1953-1965," Verstraete and Provençal (eds.), *Same-Sex Desire and Love in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, 422.
36. *One Inc. v. Olesen*, 355 U.S. 371(1958); Murdoch and Price, *Courting Justice*, 27-50; Streitmatter, *Unspeakable*, 35; Interview with Martin Block in Marcus, *Making History*, 41.
37. "Homosexuality and Bodybuilding," *Physique Pictorial*, Fall 1956, 17; "Physique Photography," *Eastern Mattachine Magazine*, Nov-Dec 1965,18; Craig Loftin, "Passionate Anxieties: McCarthyism and Sexuality in the United States, 1945-1965" (Ph.D. diss. University of California, Irvine, 2006), 34. By 1963 *Grecian Guild Pictorial* was offering reviews of gay books and advertisements for *The Homosexual Dictionary* and *The Guild Guide to the Gay Scene*. By 1966 it featured a "Newsfront" section that included news of gay legal and cultural notes from around the world. See *Grecian Guild Pictorial*, No. 59, November 1966.

38. Del Martin, "History of S.F. Homophile Groups," *The Ladder*, October 1966, 9.
39. Based only on his reading of *Physique Pictorial*, Daniel Harris argues that physique magazines editors encouraged gay male readers to feel "self-contempt" by emphasizing the heterosexuality of their models. I found that most model descriptions were pointedly ambiguous about the sexuality of the models, encouraging a feeling of identification. See Daniel Harris, *The Rise and Fall of Gay Culture* (New York, 1997), 86-90. For original copies of letters from readers, see Folders 48, 49, 56 and 57, Box 1, H. Lynn Womack Papers, Human Sexuality Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University and Thor Studio Correspondence, 1953-1955, Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction.
40. *Young Physique*, January 1963, 30-31; the back cover of *Young Physique*, April 1962, offered "life-size" posters "ready for framing for your bedroom or den!"
41. *U.S. vs. Spinar and Germain*, National Archives—Chicago Branch, RG 21, US District Court, Fourth Division of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Criminal Case Files, 1966-1969, Box 11, Case 4-67CR 15, 82, 177.
42. Forum Postings from "Tanline" and "Rick2206" January 23, 2000 on <http://atkol.com/>; Faderman and Timmons, *Gay L.A.*, 233-4. Although Faderman and Timmons acknowledge that Ah-Men began in the late 1950s, it does not appear in their history of gay Los Angeles until the chapter on the 1970s.
43. "Jan Sheeler" to *The Ladder*, July 21, 1964, quoted in Meeker, *Contacts Desired*, 104; Marcia M. Gallo, *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement* (Emeryville, 2006), 59-60.
44. Tracy D. Morgan, "Pages of Whiteness: Race, Physique Magazines, and the Emergence of Public Gay Culture," Brett Beemyn and Mickey Eliason (eds.) *Queer Studies: A Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Anthology* (New York, 1996), 280-97.
45. Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (Boston, 2003).
46. "Liberty in the Defense of Vice is No Extreme," *Drum*, Vol 4, No. 9 (November 1964), 1; "A New Era is Upon Us," *Bronco*, #1, no date. Although *Bronco* contains no publication information, its format, font, and Publisher's Creed all indicate it is a DSI publication; on the relationship between wage-labor capitalism and gay identity, see John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity" in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, eds. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York, 1983), 74-87, and Rosemary Hennessy, *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism* (New York, 2000).
47. Loughery, *The Other Side of Silence*, 273-5. Emma Jones's legacy continues as a Memorial Day weekend series of circuit parties in Pensacola. See Mickey Weems, "Southern Comfort: Interview with Promoter Johnny Chisholm," *Boston Edge*, May 22, 2007.