supporter of women's abortion rights, those identities in their possible clash and continuing potential for critical conversation have the ability to further my de-naturalization of the notion of identity as fixed, static, and factual. Indeed, we should look for the "queer" aspects of all of our lives.

5 React when you hear "Hey queer!"

As was mine in the first query of this book, your reaction to "Hey queer!" may be internal (though still intellectually and politically dynamic) or it may be external, with a brave and forthright defense of yourself or someone else being targeted with a slur. But remember it is also possible that "queer" is being called out as an invitation to identify your "self" differently.

And only you can now (or later) decide if you will/would answer that greeting, that invitation, that new interpellation, in the affirmative.


This remarkable and hefty anthology contains a wealth of critical materials on sexuality and gay/lesbian identity, as well as examples of applied analysis in the field. Of particular note for students of "queer theories" — as those theories overlap with the field signaled in the reader's title — are important essays by Gayle Rubin ("Thinking Sex"), Judith Butler ("Imitation and Gender Insubordination"), and John D'Emilio ("Capitalism and Gay Identity"), all of which have been discussed here. This anthology is also noteworthy and commendable for its inclusion of essays on sexualities other than those of white Anglo-Americans (including sexualities among the ancient Greeks, as well as in Chicano and Native American culture). This is a superb compendium of materials on homosexuality published from the late 1970s through the early 1990s.


While today the liberationist rhetoric of this early and important contribution to the study of identity and sexual nonconformity may seem dated, it not only demonstrates that questions concerning the fixed "nature" of identity have been intriguing some writers for many decades, but it also speculates in still compelling fashion about the future of sexual identity categories. This is a powerful statement from a place and time (1960s/1970s New York) that seems at once distant and yet very familiar. And for students of queer history, it offers copious data on the micro-politics and organizational activities of the early "gay rights" movement.

This is the best of the current introductory overviews of theories of sexuality and desire. It begins with nineteenth-century sexology, explains thoroughly the work of Freud and Lacan, and covers the influence of Foucault and even more recent theorists on our current work in the field of sexuality studies. Well written and highly detailed, this volume in Routledge's "New Critical Idiom" series provides a solid base from which to begin a study of specifically "queer theories," which only receive brief attention in Bristow's discussion. Its summaries and explanations are both accessible and reliable.


This is the second of Butler's major works in and on "queer theory." Its introduction tackles the question of "agency" in social constructionist theories; succeeding chapters offer detailed readings of Plato, Freud, Lacan, and, notably, a variety of non-"theoretical" texts: Willa Cather's short stories, Jennie Livingstone's film *Paris is Burning*, and Nella Larsen's novel *Passing*. Butler's last chapter, "Critically Queer," addresses directly the utility of the term "queer" and the various misreadings of her first book *Gender Trouble* that began to circulate after its publication three years earlier. Indeed, that discussion is perhaps the best succinct introduction you will find to the concept of "performativity" and its responsible use in critical analysis.


This is perhaps the most important book in the brief history of "queer theory" as a discrete field of speculation and investigation, though the term does not appear in the text itself. Much of Butler's discussion is devoted to close readings of and responses to Freud, Lacan, and feminist theorists of the 1980s, including Julia Kristeva, Monique Wittig, and, to a lesser extent, Luce Irigaray. These are important for anyone interested in contemporary debates in feminist and psychoanalytic theories. But it is Butler's last two sections, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions" and "From Parody to Politics," that made this book necessary reading for everyone involved in queer academic and activist movements in the early 1990s. Butler suggests that the repetitive nature of gender performance and identity allows for subversive, politically useful interventions through differing, parodic performances. While some may have read "too much" into the agency that this seems to allow those interested in subverting the norm, it certainly represented a timely and intellectually sophisticated provocation. To the second edition of *Gender Trouble* (1999), Butler adds a preface that cautions care in attending to the limits she places on "parody" as a political strategy.


This extraordinary book provides a wealth of detail concerning urban life and meaning-making among sexual minorities during the last decade of the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century. It challenges our notion that homosexuals before the civil rights movement of the latter half of the twentieth century were silent, hidden, and self-hating, demonstrating instead that men who sexually desired other men formed communities and support networks, had complex ways of recognizing each other and communicating their "identity," organized at times politically, and even were recognized and commented upon in the general media. While its purview is limited to men and to New York City, its implications for reevaluating the past are much wider. Its use of documentary evidence and its overall methodological sophistication are models for future studies in the history of sexual minorities.


This book dramatically altered literary and cultural theorists' understanding of how power operates and how resistance to power arises. From its first pages, in which Foucault challenges the Freudian notion of a "repression" of sexuality during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to its closing statements commenting ironically on our obsession with the "truth" of sexu-
ality, it asks us to reexamine the past two centuries of discussion on sexuality and see not a model of top-down oppression but a give-and-take of definition, response, counter-response, and proliferation. Of particular note is its discussion of the "birth" of the category "homosexual" in the later half of the nineteenth century and its theorization of the tactical polyvalence of discourse in which seemingly oppressive categories and classifications become sites of resistance and struggle.


This is one of the key works exploring the debate between "essentialism" and "constructionism" and articulating the theoretical interests that would drive the creation of "queer studies" in the 1990s. Fuss’s readings of Luce Irigaray, Monique Wittig, and other leading feminists and theoreticians of identity are supple and intellectually stimulating, but her first chapter — "The Risk of Essence" — is particularly useful for its exploration of the possibility of "deploying" essentialism in ways that are self-conscious and politically useful. Her 1995 work *Identification Papers* continues her project of unsettling the terms by which we understand identity issues and the possibilities for and limitations of "identity politics."


This was one of the first of many essay collections offering a range of interventions in the new field of "lesbian and gay studies" and contributing to the creation of queer studies as an abrasive set of theoretical speculations. Fuss’s Introduction, "Inside/Out," is an important problematization of perspectives in and on identity politics, and is followed by important theoretical articulations by Judith Butler, Carole-Anne Tyler, and Lee Edelman, and provocative applications of theory by D. A. Miller, Michelle Aina Barale, and Jeff Nunokawa. It concludes with two strong essays on pedagogy and politics by Cindy Patton and Simon Watney. This is a collection that over a decade after its publication still deserves careful reading and consideration by all students interested in the fields of gay/lesbian studies and queer theories.

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This exceptional book intervenes imaginatively in the debates over essentialism and constructionism by examining the crises in social definition posed by masculine women. Halberstam examines texts ranging from nineteenth-century sexology through twentieth-century film, music, and performance art. Her overviews of debates among activists working from transgendered and transsexual subject positions, her reading and response to the theories of Judith Butler, and her final chapter on "new masculinities" make this an important book for all critics and students interested in queer theories and their possible future fields of inquiry and modes of application.


This book provides a wide-ranging set of theoretical speculations and applications concerned with sexualities that do not fall neatly into the heterosexual/homosexual binary. The pluralizations of its title and subtitle indicate its interest in providing numerous complications rather than a set of definitive answers or methodological formulae. Among the various topics that the collection addresses are "queer theory's" all-too-common erasure of bisexuality, the presence of fluid or changing sexual subject positions in pre-Victorian and Victorian erotica, African-American bisexual narratives, and representations of bisexualities in film culture. Its two-part introduction entitled "Epistemologies of the Fence" offers two different readings of the challenge posed by "bisexuality" to cultural critical theorization and identification.


This is the best introduction to Foucault's theories as they bear specifically on the creation of "gay and lesbian studies" as an academic pursuit and the genesis of "queer theory" as a phenomenon linked to AIDS activism in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Unabashedly celebratory, Halperin's book provides both accessi-
bie explanations of key concepts in Foucauldian theory and a reliable survey of the many, sometimes competing biographies of Foucault published after his death in 1984. Halperin also provides a detailed history of queer political activism in the latter decades of the twentieth century and a brief survey of the work of other theorists who draw on Foucault. In effect, this book provides a companion and reading guide to Foucault’s *History of Sexuality, Volume 1* for all beginning students of theory.


Like Dennis Altman’s *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation*, Hocquenghem’s book offers a wealth of historical data from and information about the early years of the “gay rights” struggle. But unlike Altman’s book, which focuses primarily on New York, Hocquenghem’s is centered in France and owes much of its primary theory base to the influence of Deleuze and Guattari, and the Marxist theories that helped fuel protests by workers and students in Paris in 1968. And beyond its important interventions on the connection between capitalism and desire, this book also provides sophisticated commentary on the relationship between social classifications and identity formation, on the rights of youth to sexual self-determination, and on the role of the psychiatric establishment in the continuing oppression of sexual nonconformists. Furthermore, Hocquenghem is an adept reader of some of his contemporaries’ work on sexuality, including that of Sartre. The 1993 reissue of this important book includes the helpful, original preface by Jeffrey Weeks (from 1978) and a new introduction by Michael Moon.


This was the best and most widely used brief introduction to “queer theory” published in the 1990s. It is succinct, accessible, and reliable. Jagose’s particular strengths are her careful relating of the origins of “queer theory” to the feminist movement and her examination of the early years of the “gay liberation” movement. At the same time, her book is limited in its lack of any detailed applications of the theories she overviews, in its hesitation to critique or even mention any lacks or omissions in “queer theory,” and in its now somewhat dated quality. Furthermore, it barely mentions the complications to “queer theory” offered by bisexual and transgender theory. Nevertheless, it is still a useful resource for students who desire another introductory guide to the origins of specifically “queer” forms of theorization and the use of the term “queer” in political activism as well as in the academy.


This brilliant set of interrelated essays combines theoretical and autobiographical musings, as well as applied literary analysis and broad cultural critique. It asks questions that few other books are willing to broach: how do we inhabit these bodies that can manifest desire in very disturbing ways, how do we account for the way race inflects our desires, and why do critics so nervously avoid a discussion of their own desires in their too-often antiseptic theorizations of desire? In offering a few tentative answers to these difficult questions, Reid-Pharr takes us through readings of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, cultural phenomena such as the “Million Man March,” and anti-Semitism and sexism in contemporary culture. Reid-Pharr leads the way into a new set of engagements with sexuality that take “queer theory” as their base, but that remain determined to critique multiple, coexisting forms of oppression and retain always “queer theory’s” interest in denaturalizing and abrading notions of “normality,” even that underlying queer theory itself.


Sedgwick is one of the best known and most incisive of the critics/theorists working in the field of “gay studies” and queer theory (though she rarely discusses lesbians in her work, which is why I use the term “gay studies” here). This book is perhaps her most important contribution to the field, and of particular interest are her “axiomatic” introduction and her first chapter, “Epistemology of the Closet.” In these two sections Sedgwick provides a thorough overview of the ongoing discussion about
sexuality and identity, and explores the general muddle in current attempts to regulate and legislate expressions of sexual identity. Following those discussions are intriguing and complex readings of a variety of late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary works, from Melville’s *Billy Budd* through texts by Wilde, Henry James, and Marcel Proust. Written before the advent of specifically “queer” theorizations, Sedgwick’s analysis here remains provocative and important for anyone interested in sexuality studies today.


This collection of essays, musings, and autobiographical reflections is Sedgwick’s important intervention into specifically “queer” studies. Its “Queer and Now” introduction is one of the best investigations ever published of the origins and implications of the word “queer.” Her varied and brash readings of Jane Austen, Willa Cather, and numerous other writers are also intriguing and important. Yet one of the most provocative aspects of this book is its abrasion of the standard literary critical form, with its at times experimental language and bold “inside/outside” move in self-presentation. It remains one of the few books by a major American theorist that attempts to be queer as well as discuss queer concepts, even as it retains its intellectual integrity and its commitment to accessible communication. It is a book to return to often and from which one may glean many and varied reading pleasures.


Relatively few books have attempted to use the insights of “queer theory” (or theories) and apply them outside of the arena of sexuality studies. This book takes tremendous risks in using its theory base in Foucault, Butler, D’Emilio, and others, to discuss the creation of and abrasions of categories of race during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Critics always lose a certain degree of specificity and conceptual consistency when they cross such boundaries, but the risk, to my mind, is well worth taking. Thus in her final chapter, Somerville offers a gutsy and intriguing investigation of Jean Toomer’s use of the term “queer” in his writings in ways that undercut notions of static and self-evident categories of racial and sexual identity. Somerville’s is hardly the “final” word on discussions of the interplay of race and sexuality, but she certainly takes the conversation in new and interesting directions.


While written more for the use of students of history and philosophy than for students of literature, this book provides a very thorough overview of “queer theory’s” roots in Anglo-European philosophy and many of its varieties and disputed concerns today. Turner is particularly good at explaining Foucault’s insights and implications for historians, and provides accessible basic definitions of a range of often confusing terms (post-structuralism, discourse, power, etc.). This is a solid summing-up of the field from the perspective of a full decade of theorization and debate. While Turner makes no attempt to look to the future, and barely glances at film, literature, art, and other expressions of culture, he does offer his readers clear insights into the sociopolitical, legal, and academic implications of queer theory/theories as a new and abrasive field.


This collection of essays is the most important set of original articulations yet published that explore queer theory's specific interest in interrogating notions of “normal” sexuality. Warner’s introduction is necessary reading for anyone interested in “queer theory” as a intellectual enterprise, Lauren Berlant and Elizabeth Freeman’s “Queer Nationality” is unparalleled in its insight into the “Queer Nation” movement, and Steven Seidman’s “Identity and Politics in a Postmodern Gay Culture” is an impressive exploration of possible “queer” sociologies. A decade and more after their writing, the essays published in *Fear of a Queer Planet* are still timely and intellectually dynamic. Indeed, your own “fear” of a queer planet may be piqued and/or assuaged by reading this collection.

What Altman provides for New York and Holquenghem for France, Weeks offers here for Britain: a detailed history of the early struggle for “gay rights” that will be of interest to all students of marginalized sexualities. Weeks is particularly good at covering the rise of the medical and legal regulation of sexuality during the late nineteenth century, and includes a lengthy section tracing the birth of the lesbian rights movement. To the 1990 edition Weeks adds a chapter entitled “Identity and Community in the 1980s and 1990s,” which details the impact of the AIDS crisis in Britain and mentions briefly the new radical response tactics of ACT UP. As we have seen, Queer Nation and queer theory were soon to follow.

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