

Contested Images: Debating Nudity, Sexism, and Porn in *The Body Politic*, 1971–1987¹

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Introduction

In its April 1986 issue, Canada's gay liberation journal *The Body Politic* (*TBP*) published a contentious photograph of a female breast pierced by a suture needle. The image triggered a debate over the paper's sexual and erotic imagery, as some readers viewed the picture as "pornographic" on the grounds that it was obscene, promoted S&M, and denoted contempt for the body. The publication of this photograph in *TBP*, at a time when feminist groups were actively campaigning either against pornography or against its censorship, made the paper's stance on the visual representation of sexuality clear. The liberation of sexual desires and representations had been a core project of *TBP* since it began publishing in 1971. Neither the *TBP* editorial collective nor its readers, however, were a monolithic voice that could speak for the interests of all gays and lesbians both inside and outside of Canada's queer activism.² Instead, the people who produced and read the paper had diverse and often clashing understandings of what "pornography," "sexism," or "objectification" were. The debate that the April 1986 picture triggered was not an unprecedented event in *TBP*; the visual culture of the magazine had been the object of scrutiny among collective members, readers, and public officials throughout *TBP*'s entire history (1971–1987).³ This article examines the debates on nudity, sexism, and pornography that *TBP*'s sexual and erotic imagery prompted among its collective and readers. The debates, as well as the overall production and reception of the magazine, are contextualized in the historical backdrop of Canada's gay and lesbian liberation movement and second wave feminism of the 1970s and 1980s. The article argues that *TBP*'s sexual and erotic imagery played a key role in the paper's community-building project. It also argues that sexual and erotic imagery in *TBP* triggered debates because the meanings of "pornography," "sexism," "objectification," "liberation," and "community" were contested and because feminist critiques profoundly influenced the reception of the magazine despite its scarce female readership.

TBP was launched in November 1971 by a group of activists previously involved in the alternative newspaper *Guerilla* and the Toronto Gay Action (TGA) group. It was created just a few months after the August 28, 1971 "We Demand" protest on Parliament Hill—the first public demonstration for gay rights in Canada.⁴ During its fifteen years of circulation, *TBP* became not only the foremost voice of

the gay liberation movement in Canada, but also one of the leading and most read queer newspapers in North America. *TBP* featured articles, essays, local and international news, entertainment and community event listings, pieces of literature, book reviews, and erotic imagery. Reproducing a common model of the late 1960s and early 1970s, *TBP* operated as a collective which “came together with a sense of relative equality, shared power, and mutual ownership.”⁵ For most of *TBP*’s history, the collective included both gays and lesbians, though the former were always the majority. Likewise, while both gays and lesbians contributed to and read the paper, *TBP* was from the beginning a male-oriented journal and a product by and for the white middle classes. As a gay liberation periodical, it provided gays and lesbians in Canada and other English-speaking countries such as the US, UK, and Australia with a space for learning about, commenting on, and debating a number of issues, including civil rights, pornography, censorship, or intergenerational sex.⁶ *TBP* pursued a community-building project aimed at promoting a shared identity and raising awareness about oppression among gays and lesbians. The meanings of gay liberation or community, like those of pornography and sexism, however, were contested, because people experienced oppression differently.

Life-long activist and former collective member Tim McCaskell notes that the gay liberation movement “drew from the social solidarity promoted by socialism, Keynesianism, feminism, the civil rights movement, and anti-colonial struggles to produce the notion of ‘community.’”⁷ The building of this community was fueled by inviting people “to come out,” to “dare to be [themselves],” and to “deal with [their] own oppressive behaviour.”⁸ Community in this instance, as Gary Kinsman observes, is “a social relationship between gay and lesbian resistance and heterosexual hegemony—not something that can be abstracted from this relation. It cannot be seen as a ‘thing’ existing on its own outside this social and historical context.”⁹ Ideas of community, then, have varied according to the social and political landscape in which gays and lesbians have existed. The pre-1969 gay networks conformed around bars or private gatherings “were transformed in the 1970s, through a process of social organization, into the ‘gay community.’”¹⁰ This community encompassed bars, clubs, baths, restaurants, social networks, political and social groups, publications and bookstores, among other spaces which, as Dennis Altman notes, “represent[ed] a sense of shared values and a willingness to assert one’s homosexuality as an important part of one’s whole life.”¹¹ Towards the late 1970s and early 1980s, changes in Toronto’s social and political landscape reconfigured how gay community was conceived. Sex acquired a new meaning among gay people and a central role in community-formation, and, in some respects, this reconfiguration had a negative impact among some gays and lesbians. McCaskell asserts that “elevating sexual desire to the centre of community formation potentially alienated those who found themselves excluded from those circuits, since it appeared to put sexual desire above criticism.”¹²

While it is difficult to assess the historical formation of gay communities, this article is concerned with the relationship between *TBP*'s notion of the existence of a "gay community" and the paper's visual culture. As collective member Ed Jackson recalls, the gay liberationists' theory in the early 1970s was that they "were creating a gay community"—they used "gay" in a broad sense.¹³ Gay liberationists, he notes, "conceptualized the community before there was a community and ... created the community by that conception."¹⁴ Community-building, according to lesbian feminist and collective member Chris Bearchell, was actually "the essence of the [gay liberation movement] agenda."¹⁵ For people in *TBP* there was a gay community they spoke to, however heterogeneous or "imagined" it may have been. While the magazine's liberationist discourse could not speak for that community as a whole, *TBP* honoured its community-building project by encouraging people to make their voices heard and to share their views on, for instance, the paper's visual culture. The collective gauged reader opinion on images, not only to become more familiar with their readership or to make changes to the paper, but also to promote further debate and involvement on their part. Historian John D'Emilio asserts that community-based newspapers played a decisive role in building LGBT organizations and communities and in fostering political mobilization.¹⁶ By focusing on *TBP*, this article demonstrates that the sexual and erotic imagery of the magazine was instrumental in the paper's community-building undertaking.

The publication of sexual and erotic imagery in *TBP* was a recurrent point of debate among the editorial collective and readers, largely because the reception of such images was shaped by feminist critiques of sexism, objectification, and pornography. The tone and meanings that such debates acquired, though, changed notably throughout the paper's fifteen-year run. For the majority of the *TBP* collective, the representation of sexual imagery constituted a politics of sexual liberation. However, erotic or sexually explicit photographs, ads, comics and illustrations created tensions and divisions among the people involved in the paper—both men and women. By the time *TBP* started publishing, the second wave of feminism was already underway in US and Canadian major urban centres. From the mid- to late 1960s, largely white, middle-class, educated women began developing feminist theories and setting up consciousness-raising groups. Their aim was to analyze the social relationship between the sexes in order to challenge patriarchy and sexism, and to achieve women's freedom to decide over their bodies and personal life.¹⁷ As part of their project, they condemned the stereotypical and sexist representation of women in the mainstream fashion and beauty industries, as well as in pornography, because they "reinforce[d] the construction of gender differences between women and men and capitaliz[ed] on women's subordination."¹⁸ Neither the early movement nor its adherents were a homogeneous voice engaged in an analysis of sexism and oppression across the lines of gender, sex, class, and race. Therefore, shortly after the emergence of the movement feminist women envisioned different ways of fighting oppression and adhered to different factions of feminism, such as

lesbian feminism.¹⁹ Moreover, divisive understandings about the role that sex played in the liberation of women led to a number of conflicts among feminists, especially throughout the 1980s. The series of debates over pornography and censorship traditionally known as the “sex wars” divided feminists in to two major factions: anti-porn advocates, and pro-sex, anti-censorship feminists.²⁰ While anti-porn feminists saw censorship and legislation as compelling instruments of social power that would stop the reproduction of misogyny through pornography, anti-censorship feminists—especially lesbians and those in academia—did not think that major legislation would effectively fight the roots of misogyny.²¹ Anti-censorship feminists, and most gay liberationists, opposed censorship laws because, among other reasons, they were detrimental for sexual minorities—some of whom were also feminist advocates, such as lesbians and S&M feminists—as they triggered homophobic responses, repression, and seizure of queer materials.²²

With gay liberation and feminist theory as its backdrop, the reception of *TBP*'s visual culture was profoundly shaped by conflicts and clashing understandings of oppression and liberation. Through the 1970s, when feminist groups were campaigning against the media's objectification of women, concerns about sexism and the objectification of the body shaped discussions over sexual and erotic imagery in the paper. Through the 1980s, concerns about pornography and S&M were more current, since they mirrored contemporary debates among feminist groups. A lingering concern about the stereotyping of gay life through the visual spanned both decades. While most collective members did oppose sexism, objectification, and mainstream stereotypes of gay life, there was hardly a consensus on the meaning of these concepts, nor was there a homogeneous collective whose ideas were shared by every member. For instance, while some collective members and readers disapproved of commercial use of sexual imagery, others thought it was necessary, either to celebrate the body and gay sexuality or to make the paper more appealing. As a forum for the expression of sexuality, debates over *TBP*'s visual culture are not surprising since, as David Churchill notes, “the control of images, representations, and identity [was] a core project of lesbian and gay liberation.”²³ Noteworthy are the ways in which such debates intersected with *TBP*'s community-building project.

This article draws on archival research and oral history interviews in order to gain insight into the practices that surrounded the production and reception of *TBP*. Archival sources comprise letters, memos, and administrative files, among other documents. Interviews were conducted in 2016 and 2019 with former collective members—five men and two women. The article contributes to the historiography of gay liberation in Canadian and US contexts by looking at the gay press from a visual culture lens. In arguing that *TBP*'s sexual and erotic imagery played a central role in the paper's community-building project, the article draws on the work of Richard Meyer (2006), David Johnson (2010), Lucas Hilderbrand (2013), and Robert Dewhurst (2014).²⁴ By looking at different US contexts, their work demonstrates how images fueled the efforts of gay liberation since the 1960s, “in part by

attracting participation and affirming membership in the political project at hand.”²⁵ The article also builds on a number of works that have examined the role of *TBP* in Canada’s queer history, such as those of Tom Warner (2002), David Churchill (2003), Michael Connors Jackman (2013), Catherine Nash (2014), Scott De Groot (2015), Tim McCaskell (2016), and Nicholas Hrynyk (2018).²⁶

Featuring Nudity and Sex in a Gay Liberation Journal

Throughout *TBP*’s fifteen-year run, members of its editorial collective engaged in various discussions over the paper’s visual culture in order to decide whether to feature nudity, erotic imagery, or sexually explicit material. Gender differences were usually at the core of the debates, but were not the only issue at play. Conflicting ideas over the meaning of gay liberation also shaped opinions over visual representations. While *TBP* was labelled as a gay liberation newspaper, such a label had various meanings among the editorial collective and its readers.

Tim McCaskell recalls that in order to foster unity, some groups like *TBP* kept “the basis of unity intentionally vague. ‘Gay liberation’ could mean different things to different people ... Generally that worked, but when a contentious issue came up, such vagueness meant that people could sometimes find themselves in serious disagreement.”²⁷ Chris Bearchell acknowledged in 1979 that while people in *TBP* were all committed to the struggle for gay liberation, “We can’t say we agree on what gay liberation is let alone, say, how it relates to feminism or the struggle for socialism.”²⁸ In 1972, the *TBP* collective stated that gay liberation was “a socio-political force working for a society free of unnecessary repression and oppressive political structures.” Drawing on the language of second wave feminism, gay liberationists challenged “the dominance of the nuclear family as the basic political unit of institutionalized sexism.” The latter was defined as “the discrimination against, exploitation and/or objectification of people because of their sex or sexual preference”; the basic direction of the paper, they claimed, had to be consistent with such ideas.²⁹ Throughout the entire history of *TBP*, and for the majority of the editorial collective, making gay sexuality visible was part of a politics of gay liberation. Yet for some people the publication of sexual or erotic imagery in a gay liberation paper was not necessarily liberating but rather sexist. Several women, including lesbians, were particularly concerned about sexism and the objectification of the body, while some men were troubled by the reproduction of gender stereotypes in sexualized images.

In 1972, the publication of a nude portrait by *TBP*’s founding member Jearld Moldenhauer triggered the first debate over images among the editorial collective (fig. 1). The photograph, published on the back cover of *TBP*’s second issue, depicted a naked young man averting his gaze and sitting on a bed.³⁰ While the picture seems to evoke intimacy and tenderness, it led some collective members to accuse others of being sexist and of using the body to sell the paper.³¹ The main opponents were the only two women involved in *TBP* at the time, Jude and Aileen.

The editorial collective had initially decided against printing the photograph, but Moldenhauer insisted on publishing it, thus causing a division among the members. Peter Zorzi, one of *TBP*'s founding members, recalls that Moldenhauer had the intention of illustrating the paper with his portfolio of male photo studies, but some collective members—both men and women—opposed the idea.³² Jude and Aileen rejected the representation of nudity in *TBP* and claimed that Moldenhauer's photographs objectified the body.³³



Fig. 1. Back cover of *TBP*'s January–February 1972 issue.
Courtesy of Jearld Moldenhauer.

Moldenhauer—who denies having a “portfolio of male photo studies,” but only a few pictures—“pushed to use the photograph to counter the sex negative mentality of so many collective members.”³⁴ Foreseeing the debate that this type of image might prompt, some male members also opposed publishing nudity. However, for most men in the collective, referring to the photograph as “sexist” was a “dogmatic assertion.” In 1975, Ed Jackson recalled that most men could not understand such an interpretation, and the few who did support it could not clarify their reasons: “Everyone was a novice in [that] new way of perceiving things.”³⁵ Unlike men, women’s experience with sexism and objectification led them to be more critical and sometimes radical in their opinion over certain representations. Conversely, as Jackson observed, most men did not feel that all male nudity was sexist and exploitative: “Men on the whole simply do not experience that sense of

being diminished, of being robbed of wholeness and humanity by a one-dimensional representation of our bodies.”³⁶ While for women, as McCaskell states, not having to deal with sexualized images could be liberating, for men, the access to similar images might have the opposite meaning.³⁷

Although the nude photograph debate took place in *TBP*'s earliest issues, collective member Ken Popert recalls the incident as one of the turning points in the paper's history.³⁸ One of the most significant changes that the debate originated was that *TBP* “became more male-identified,” because women “drifted away.”³⁹ A number of lesbians would eventually join the collective in the following years—for instance, Chris Bearchell, Mariana Valverde, Sue (now Johnny) Golding, and Gillian Rodgerson—but they were always outnumbered by men. Women were not only a minority voice in *TBP*, the paper arguably acted as a microcosm of the patriarchal society in which it emerged. McCaskell notes that, “Lesbians often found themselves out of place in the gay lib movement, not so much because of active sexism or misogyny (although that did exist) but because of the incomprehension of women's issues among the majority of gay men.”⁴⁰ As Golding commented in 1982, while “there were the lesbians who had actually ... put tremendous amounts of energy into the gay movement[, they] were increasingly tiring of the innumerable requests to educate their gay ‘brothers’ on the Whys-and-Wherefores of Feminism.”⁴¹

Some women, though, felt rather comfortable working with gay men, such as sex-positive lesbians Bearchell and Rodgerson, who joined the collective in 1978 and 1983 respectively. As Miriam Smith points out, Bearchell was a leading activist in Toronto's gay liberation movement from the 1970s to the 1990s. She not only played a major role in *TBP*'s history, but also engaged in a number of gay and lesbian organizations such as the Gay Alliance Toward Equality, the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, Lesbians Against the Right (LAR), and the Lesbian Organization of Toronto (LOOT).⁴² In a 1996 interview with Smith, Bearchell recalled that LOOT was founded in the early 1980s to acknowledge that “there were women who worked exclusively within gay organizations, women who worked exclusively within feminist organizations, and women who worked in both, who were all lesbian and who had a common cause to make, and so it was in fact a deliberate attempt to bridge some of those differences.”⁴³ For Bearchell, McCaskell claims, bridging the gender divide among gays and lesbians was indeed a priority.⁴⁴ Moreover, another issue that complicated women's involvement with the gay press was that in the 1970s they had less opportunities to spare time for activism. According to McCaskell, “Women in the workforce earned approximately 60 percent of what men earned. Lesbians, independent of men, tended to be poorer. The commercial scene's orientation to men reflected this difference in disposable income.”⁴⁵

In 1975, Jackson recalled that the collective never thought of using the incident as a learning experience for their readers or for themselves. However, the debate did lead the collective to publish a poll in the paper's third issue where they asked readers for feedback on *TBP*'s general content, on their opinion about adver-

tising, on Moldenhauer's photograph, and on images of that sort. Most readers seemed to favour nude photographs, though the collective feared that their decision was clouded by their responses to the young man in question.⁴⁶ The paper received comments such as: "Thought he was gorgeous!" and "Hunky and Delicious." Mr. B. Reynolds of Hollywood protested that "Those who object to tasteful and artistic nudes should join the Catholic Legion of Decency." Other commenters "found it much less than obscene," for instance L. Snowdon, of London, who claimed that "The photography was just tacky. As a result its purpose was neither aesthetic nor masturbatory!"⁴⁷

The collective's interest in receiving feedback suggests not only the debate's relevance, but also *TBP's* compromise with a community-building project, and the importance that the paper ascribed to readers' involvement in gay liberation politics. Over the course of the 1970s, *TBP* featured nudity without further debate. Images of buttocks, same-sex love, nude men, and even illustrations depicting sexual intercourse became more frequent. Some of these images, as collective member Gerald Hannon advocated for in 1972, seem to have aimed to celebrate the body, though other images were simply used as illustrations for the paper.⁴⁸ The fact that few women were involved in *TBP* for most of the 1970s might have eased debates over sexual representations. Nevertheless, opinions over sexual imagery and gay liberation were not only determined by peoples' gender.

In the May–June 1975 issue, *TBP* published a comic depicting oral sex between two men which triggered a new debate among the collective and readers and earned the paper a visit from the Police Department (fig. 2). The comic "Harold Hedd," by Canadian artist Rand Holmes, showed two white men on a bed reading passages from psychiatrist David Reuben's bestseller *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex, but Were Afraid to Ask*—a book that *TBP* collective regarded as homophobic and "the most vicious attack on gay people to date."⁴⁹ After laughing at the book, the couple kissed and performed mutual oral sex until they ejaculated in each other's mouths. The muscled, long-haired men looked fairly alike, though one's moustache and slightly more robust body made him seem somewhat older. For the collective, "this mocking illustration was a significant political statement."⁵⁰ They considered that the comic had a basic, pro-gay, pro-sex message that should be repeated. They thus decided to run it, although conscious that the explicit representation of oral sex or the "unnecessarily large" size of the characters' penises would be problematic for some readers.⁵¹ The "gratuitous" representation of "huge erections," as Jackson reflected a few months later, could indeed be regarded as sexist because "The cock has come to symbolize the power and privilege which the male traditionally enjoys. Masculinity, virility, butchness—call it what you will—many gay men are caught up by this image, their fantasies and actions conditioned to imitate it."⁵² Because of the comic, the Toronto Morality Squad found *TBP's* issue obscene and pornographic, and ordered all issues containing the cartoon off Toronto's newsstands.⁵³

TBP readers' opinions on the "Harold Hedd" comic were diverse. According to Hannon, the collective received an unusual amount of mail commenting on the paper's decision to publish the comic. About half of the letters suggested that *TBP* "got what they deserved," for if they insisted "on publishing dirt," they would have to face the consequences.⁵⁴ The other half found the comic appealing and encouraged the paper to publish more images of that type. An anonymous writer thanked the collective for printing the cartoon. He especially appreciated "the squares which showed the two men sucking each other's cocks and enjoying the splurt and splurge of their hot male cum." He considered that gay people needed more of these images printed and available, because the mind of the public was "retreating from the new and gloriously open sexuality."⁵⁵ Greg Snyder, from Chicago, thought the cartoon was "witty, sexy, and still made a point."⁵⁶ Even a straight mother liked the comic and asked *TBP* to "keep up the good work."⁵⁷

Conversely, critics of the comic complained that it was sexist and reflected stereotypes concerning gay life. Richard A. Maecker and his partner—owners of a gay bookstore in Jamestown, New York—disapproved of the collective's decision to print the cartoon, even if "the pictures were thrilling."⁵⁸ Maecker's objection was that "the entire comic had a sexist base; worse yet, a heterosexist base." He was troubled by the "outrageously large" penises—"Aren't too many of us already too overly concerned with 'size'?"—and because the characters "were cast in masculine/feminine roles," following "the heterosexual myth of male-active, female-passive." He also complained that, in printing the cartoon, *TBP* supported "the social myth that good sex need always be accompanied by a soothing drink or a relaxing cigarette." Maecker considered that gay people needed to see same-sex relations "presented openly and positively," but homosexual publications needed "to enlighten the gay population, not just give it what it wants."⁵⁹ Another critique which touched upon the paper's community-building project and radical politics came from the Boston-based gay activist John Kyper, whose letter circled around a politics of representation, reflecting on which bodies got shown in *TBP* and why. While Kyper enjoyed the comic, he agreed with Maecker's comments on the penises' size and with his critique of smoking and drinking going hand in hand with sexual fulfillment. The latter, Kyper thought, mimicked another myth of our capitalist culture.⁶⁰ In his opinion, though, the critique that one character was "butch" and the other "femme" was not as relevant as the fact that both men were white: "we need more good, unexploitative and non-oppressive pornography. We need to see more Blacks, Orientals, Indians, interracial cocksucking, fat people, old people, people with small cocks, skinny people, etc." Gay life, he observed, is "more complex and varied than the currently fashionable images of well-hung white studs would have us believe."⁶¹ Kyper's assertion echoes the criticism *TBP* has received for being a product by and for Toronto's white middle classes. The absence of people of colour in the editorial collective was mirrored in the paper's visual culture, which featured mostly white people.

TBP's response to its critics came from Ed Jackson in his article "Nudity and Sexism," published in the November–December 1975 issue. The use of images in *TBP* had been a point of debate throughout its then-four-year run, and Jackson's article took "the first step towards a more open treatment of the subject." Considering that readers had reacted in both positive and negative ways to the paper's imagery, this article was more than a response to the comic critics: it was a justification of the paper's use of images. Jackson observed that the editorial collective had endlessly discussed the issues that revolved around the use of nudity, such as sexism, objectification, and "the commercial exploitation of the flesh so pervasive in a capitalist society." He explained why the collective published certain images, such as Moldenhauer's photograph, the Harold Hedd comic, and an illustration depicting a winged man with a large, erect penis who held the legend "Be of good cheer." The latter was featured in the November–December 1974 issue because it made an important refutation of the anti-sexual ideology of the Christian church. However, after its publication, it caused second thoughts among the collective and "rumblings from readers." Since the image was published on the issue's first page, the paper "was exhibiting an unmistakable male orientation, announcing loudly and clearly to all that those not enamored of the male appendage, and of male nudity in general, need go no further." The collective, Jackson reflected, never wanted to discourage lesbian readers, yet they effectively did so "by the overuse of such blatant pictorials."⁶²

The majority of the *TBP* collective regarded the publication of sexual imagery as a liberating practice that challenged the oppression of gay sexual desire and helped to build community. On the one hand, such imagery confronted homophobic attitudes towards gay sexuality: "Straight people, especially, have not wished to be reminded that gay people are sexual beings, that they do sexual things straight people often find distasteful," Jackson noted. On the other hand, since gay men have traditionally been seen as only sexual, "promiscuous and insatiable," Jackson maintained that many gays tried to get away from that fixation: "They become excessively reactive to anything which appears to suggest gay people are preoccupied with sex," such as the "use of nudity and sexual graphics in a gay liberation paper." For Jackson, avoiding nudity merely for these reasons "would be to capitulate to the worst kind of internalized homophobia."⁶³ Fighting such a feeling was indeed part of a gay liberation agenda. As mentioned above, in order to build community, gay liberationists "had to deal with [their] own oppressive behaviour."⁶⁴ *TBP* tried to employ images in accordance with this gay liberationist ideology, which most of the collective shared. As Jackman states, the *TBP* collective "was composed of people whose pro-sex attitude was a kind of lived politics or praxis who proclaimed openness about sex as a kind of commitment to engagement with others' attitudes about sex."⁶⁵ Moreover, the possibility of choosing something merely to attract the attention of newsstand readers had always haunted the collective, for they knew

that nude photos were what many male readers wanted. The majority of the collective thought that if appealing images moved people to buy the paper and read its articles, their publication was acceptable.⁶⁶ The problem, however, was that many people did not approve of the commercial use of sexual or erotic imagery. Advertising was a contentious topic among the collective and some readers.

Advertising in *TBP* and the capitalization of gay culture

From the early 1970s, the *TBP* collective paid special attention to advertising and encouraged readers to participate in the paper's decision-making over its ads policy. This effort constituted another way in which images and community-building intersected in the paper. When *TBP* started publishing, the collective had refused to accept ads. However, since advertising could provide resources for publishing on a more frequent schedule, the paper printed a poll in the third issue to ask readers what they favoured.⁶⁷ After 88.5 percent of respondents approved advertising in *TBP*, the paper's fourth issue began to include ads.⁶⁸ The collective, though, established an ads policy using the same criteria they applied to other submissions. As with any other article or letter, ads were discussed and voted upon by the collective; any submission required a two-thirds majority vote for acceptance. The collective was cautious to not accept ads from businesses which promoted sexism, or whose ads were exploitative in appearance, and until the late 1970s, their policy was to not allow any nudity in advertising.⁶⁹ Following another questionnaire in 1981, the collective learned that more than a third of respondents wanted to see more advertising.⁷⁰ Fifty-two percent of the men, though, said they would be willing to pay more for *TBP* if it had less advertising. Most people stated they would reject particular kinds of ads: materials that were false or misleading, racist, sexist, or anti-woman. A few readers were willing to turn away anything overtly sexual: sex toys, sadomasochism (S&M) paraphernalia, pornography, and nudity—as discussed below, from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, S&M emerged as a matter of debate among gays and lesbian feminists.⁷¹

Some collective members regarded advertising in the paper as a “necessary evil,” either because gay liberation was critical of the capitalization of gay culture, or because ads tended to be controversial.⁷² In the March 1978 issue, the collective acknowledged that the use of sexual imagery in ads was “the topic of what must be the collective's longest-running serialized debate.” Some members thought it was wrong to use sex “as a come-on to try to sell something.” Others thought it was only wrong “if what you're selling is washing machines or floor wax,” but not “if what you're selling is sex, or at least the opportunity for it,” such as in baths' advertising.⁷³ Moreover, the capitalization of gay culture, and consequently the commercial use of images in advertising, conflicted with some of the foundational principles of the gay liberation movement. Through the 1970s, many groups made up of lesbian feminists, sexual liberationists, and gay and lesbian leftists followed a radical agenda and linked their liberation movements to struggles against oppressive struc-

tures of colonialism, capitalism, imperialism, racism, and sexism.⁷⁴ In the foundational anthology of gay liberation texts *Out of the Closets* (1972), Karla Jay stated that gay and lesbian liberationists conceived their “oppression as a class struggle and [their] oppressor as white, middle-class, male-dominated heterosexual society.”⁷⁵ Gays and lesbians envisioned liberation for everyone on the basis of unity of all oppressed people: “there can be no freedom for gays in a society which enslaves others through male supremacy, racism and economic exploitation (capitalism).”⁷⁶ Like Jay, most gay liberationists thought that only an end to capitalism would lead to equality.⁷⁷ Critiques of capitalism were present in the paper in, for instance, Kyper’s above-mentioned letter. However, in Barry Adam’s words, “The paradox of the 1970s was that gay and lesbian liberation did not produce the gender free communitarian world it envisioned, but faced an unprecedented growth of gay capitalism and new masculinity.”⁷⁸

While from the early to mid-1970s some members of *TBP* and gay business owners such as Peter Maloney and George Hislop had clashed over conflicting perspectives on gay movement politics, by the late 1970s and 1980s the paper had notably changed its rhetoric. On one hand, as McCaskell notes, in 1974 organizations like the Community Homophile Association of Toronto (CHAT) and the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) as well as “key business leaders were ... alienated by *TBP*’s radical postures”—such as those regarding intergenerational sex and child sexuality—because they “undermined work for acceptance.” On the other hand, the *TBP* collective “saw the worldview of MCC, CHAT, and the business community, valuing acceptance and incremental change, as deeply conservative.”⁷⁹ *TBP* was already critical of gay businesses for perpetuating the isolation of gays in ghettos. However, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in the context of a series of bathhouse raids, the *TBP* collective began to realize that the basis of gay community increasingly depended on the capitalization of gay culture.⁸⁰ As Nash argues, the 1978 Barracks raid was “a pivotal moment in gay activism in Canada as it brought together two groups largely antithetical at the time”: gay businessmen and gay activists.⁸¹ By June 1981, *TBP* “no longer [saw] the commercial gay ghetto as a space operating in opposition to gay movement politics.” While in May 1979 Popert had published an article on the dangers of the commercialization of gay life, in June 1981 “Hannon extolled the virtues of gay and lesbian commercial spaces and warned of the damage to the vitality and legitimacy of the gay and lesbian community if these spaces disappeared.” Hannon was concerned that “attacks on gay spaces such as the Barracks raid were a blatant attempt to destroy the ability of gays and lesbians to meet and socialize.”⁸²

According to collective member Rick Bébout, *TBP*’s initial critique of bars, baths, and clubs was part of a radical agenda, but the paper had a problem: “unlike many other parts of the movement, its medium was a product, bought and sold in the capitalist marketplace.”⁸³ Since sales alone could not finance *TBP* unless it was low-circulation, infrequent, and high-priced, it reluctantly depended on advertising.

By the early 1980s, about 30 percent of *TBP*'s income came from commercial display ads and classifieds, which occupied 25 percent of the space in every issue.⁸⁴ In December 1979, collective member Michael Lynch observed that the more they increased advertising—unless they handled it carefully—the more two things happened: “we tie ourselves to advertisers, and we suggest that gay liberation is a matter of gay consumerism (To be gay you must buy gay).” He also noted that “Aiming the paper too much at their Toronto ghetto fosters the paper’s racism, ageism, and classism.”⁸⁵ For other collective members like Bearchell, advertising was not so bad—in December 1979, she claimed that “There is no need to be squeamish about ‘dirty’ money,” since increasing the proportion of advertising in the paper “would be one of the least energy-consuming ways to increase our revenue.”⁸⁶ The problem for Lynch was that the paper was increasingly moving towards a business structure, thereby importing other financial, competitive motives that were “not very liberationist.” The paper, he asserted, “was not a commercial object,” since collectivism, volunteerism, and commitment were part of *TBP*'s central ethos.⁸⁷

Within the context of the late 1970s discussions over advertising, a new debate took place. In 1978 the collective and readers discussed whether the paper should run an ad for The Club baths in Ottawa, which seemed to stereotype gay life and worship masculinity. Just a few months earlier the collective had decided that the then-existing policy of not allowing any nudity in advertising was too simplistic. The ad depicted a drawing of a muscular, white middle-aged man wearing an open coverall that exposed his body from chest to pelvis (fig. 3). His gaze, his almost visible genitalia, and his touching of his left nipple signaled the availability of his body, while his garment, muscles, and hairy body eroticized a working-class model of gay masculinity. Some collective members regarded the image as too stereotypical and thought that it reinforced the formula that gay men were only interested in sex. Some members also noted that images of that sort were sexist and offended women. They stated that, if *TBP* wanted more female readers, that was a “lousy way to get them interested.” Those who challenged the critiques claimed that the image was realistic and actually celebrated a gay male sexuality. No one was completely comfortable with the illustration, but neither were any of them ready to accept all arguments against it.⁸⁸ As with any other ad containing images of male sexuality, the collective discussed its publication and rejected it by a tie vote; however, they decided to publish the image in the editorial page so readers could participate in the debate.

Feminist critiques of advertising began with the second wave of American feminism, first from liberal feminist stances and then from a radical theorizing. By the late 1960s, women and a few men began organizing to actively campaign against the advertising industry.⁸⁹ Numerous critics objected to “the industry’s limited depictions of women, who were typically shown in domestic roles or as sex objects,” and to the imposition of “unrealistic standards for female appearance” which “undermined women’s physical and psychological well-being.”⁹⁰ As Carolyn Bronstein

observes, such concerns were also addressed in academia during the 1970s—for example, in Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman’s *Gender Advertisements* (1976), and Judith Williamson’s semiotic analysis *Decoding Advertisements* (1978). Drawing on these works, members of the American organizations WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Women) and WAVPM (Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media) maintained that “media played a significant role in subordinating women and creating pervasive gender discrimination,” while “persuading viewers of their own inferiority.”⁹¹

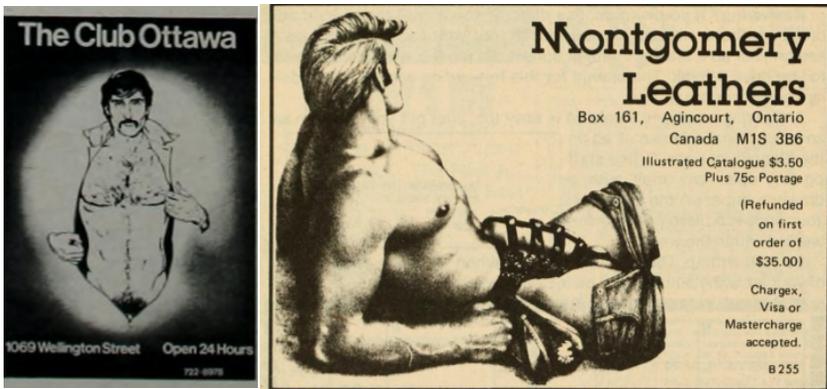


Fig. 3 and 4. Ads for The Club Ottawa and Montgomery Leathers, published in *TBP*'s March 1978 and November 1980 issues, respectively. Republished with permission of the members of *TBP* Collective.

Some men supported women’s concerns about advertising and a few of them even embraced a feminist discourse to criticize ads that targeted gay men. Greg Bourgeois, from Toronto, was concerned with the reproduction of stereotypes in images that emphasized the sexual character of gay people. He noted that browsing through most gay magazines left “one with the impression that life’s fulfillment is making it with some ‘hung, humpy number’ and that you’re beneath recognition if you’re not one yourself.” Magazines like *TBP*, he claimed, were the only resource for most gays to make contact with peers. However, images like The Club ad implied that “you’ve got to make it as a sexy object.” Bourgeois asked the editors to preserve *TBP* as a meeting place where his “validity” was not dependent on his “desirability.”⁹² His critique resonates with Ed Jackson’s 1975 article which noted that certain images were problematic for some individuals, who would “measure themselves against impossible ideals, find themselves wanting, and in so doing have their social and sexual interactions gravely impaired.”⁹³ The majority of men, however, were not troubled by images of that sort, and actually criticized the use of feminist discourses to interpret gay ads.

Several male readers of *TBP* condemned a supposedly female opposition to The Club ad and urged the paper to run it even if it reinforced stereotypes of gay life. John Duggan, on behalf of the Gays of Ottawa Political Action Committee (GO), urged *TBP* to publish the ad because The Club was one of the few places where gay men in Ottawa could go to meet other gay men: “While the Baths are certainly not liberating, they do provide a safe and relatively supportive place for gay men.” GO did not find the ad sexist, for they felt it was necessary to explore and celebrate gay male sexuality, and believed that lesbians and gay men must allow one another the space and freedom to express their sexuality.⁹⁴ Paul Goldring, from Montreal, thought that the ad’s debate had been “clouded by feminists assuming that what applies to the exploitation of women applies equally to men’s sexuality.”⁹⁵ Douglas A. Campbell, from Syracuse, also assumed some resistance from a female public, and wondered why ads containing male nudity were offensive to lesbians: “The reverse doesn’t seem to be true. If the collective is going to be really non-sexist, then why did you have the audacity to reject a partially clad male on page 2 and run a totally unclad woman on page 13? . . . if you’re going to pursue a course, let’s make it the same for *both* sexes!”⁹⁶ What Campbell observed was indeed accurate, because *TBP*’s visual culture and the different responses to it were somewhat ambiguous—sexual imagery in the paper was perceived differently depending on the space it occupied in the paper. For instance, sexualized images illustrating articles or book reviews do not seem to have incited complaints.

Several readers pressed *TBP* to include more images like The Club ad, but other people continued to oppose the publication of what they regarded as “sexist” materials, particularly in advertising.⁹⁷ Jackson had stated that many gays saw “prudishness” as the paper’s and the gay liberation movement’s stance on nudity and sex.⁹⁸ The same pressure to overcome said “prudishness” reappeared in 1980, when another ad created some controversy—a regular female contributor was bothered by a Montgomery Leathers ad, which she found offensive and tacky because it depicted “a Tom-of-Finland-like hunk with his cock bound in a harness” (fig. 4). The collective did not think that “cocks [were] offensive,” but they recognized that some commercial uses of them could be. Though “vaguely bothered by the illustration,” they published the ad and once again asked readers for their opinion.⁹⁹ Only one out of the six men who commented on the ad thought *TBP* should not have run it, on the grounds that it could create a precedent for other such images. The other five urged *TBP* to publish more of these ads, for they were “humorous” and fulfilled the purpose of selling a product. Images of large penises, allusions to S&M sex, or the use of sexual imagery to sell something sexy did not trouble them. One reader asked *TBP* not to be “too fussy,” and another one denounced the opposition to the ad as counter-revolutionary.¹⁰⁰

In the 1970s, people who opposed *TBP*’s sex-positive liberationist stance, or who were disappointed with the lack of support for women’s concerns, had left

the paper, which noticeably influenced *TBP*'s visual culture. For instance, Mariana Valverde, exhausted with the paper's scarce interest on women's issues, decided to leave *TBP* in May 1979. In her resignation letter, she commented that while she was becoming "extremely interested in feminism," she did not find much support for feminist views and activities in the male-dominated paper. As a result, she found herself "alienated from both the gay and women's community."¹⁰¹ Valverde's concerns are reminiscent of the experiences of other lesbian feminists in gay male-dominated spaces.¹⁰² As Becki Ross notes, while many lesbians continued to work with gay men through the 1970s, "by 1975, many of the women initially involved in gay-liberationist projects had retreated from the fold."¹⁰³ Without significant resistance to the publication of sexual imagery, from the early 1980s the *TBP* collective stopped being so concerned about issues like nudity, sexism, or objectification, and started printing more ads like those for The Club and Montgomery Leathers. A number of ads for nightclubs, baths, or sex shops depicted nudity, sexual intercourse, hunks wearing tight clothes, and hyper-masculinized men in a San Francisco clone style. *TBP*, however, did not ask readers to comment on such contents.

Through the late 1970s and early 1980s *TBP* underwent significant structural and ideological changes due to the neoliberal landscape in which it published. The gay community increasingly faced state repression—the bathhouse raids, *TBP*'s fight for their right to publish, and the ongoing censorship of material at Toronto's gay bookstore Glad Day—and neoliberalism was pushing the collective to redefine the paper's content.¹⁰⁴ McCaskell notes that the initial efforts of gay liberationists against "the power of traditional, pre-liberal, pre-capitalist institutions and the values they promoted ... was later buoyed by a neo-liberal economy that deployed sex as a marketing tool, and in particular, cultivated a gay market in order to spur lagging consumption."¹⁰⁵ Neoliberalism, Kinsman notes, was "introduced into the 'Canadian' context unevenly, not beginning to centrally inform state policies until the 1980s" during Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's government. Neoliberal policies opposed earlier Keynesian perspectives that "focused on the need for social funding and the development of the 'welfare state.'" Since such policies concentrated "on cutting back social programs and expanding private capitalist relations," they significantly increased *TBP*'s financial difficulties.¹⁰⁶ As McCaskell recalled in a 2016 interview, *TBP* had a couple of paid people "who cycled off and on Unemployment Insurance," something that a Keynesian world allowed them to do. So the paper "always had two people working for the price of one ... and the state supporting the rest." Through the 1980s, McCaskell observed, those benefits were harder to get, the money was more limited, and it was more difficult to maintain volunteers. The paper thus became concerned with selling more in order to survive: "You were a small business ... and so you had to sell enough ads. You had to sell enough papers ... You had to shrink the politics a little bit so [*TBP*] would be interesting for a broader number of people ... You needed to be sexier rather than political."¹⁰⁷ The increasing effort to make *TBP* visually attractive led Lynch to object that, while they

all wanted “a well-written and visually appealing paper ... too much energy [was going] into some forms of editing and design/layout.”¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, in the 1980s sex acquired a greater importance for gay men. According to McCaskell, in the early days of the gay liberation movement the unity of gay people had to do with the common oppression they faced. After the 1981 bathhouse raids, however, the notion developed that gay community arose “because of the sexual networks that gay men would develop.”¹⁰⁹ Since the gay community “focused on sexuality as what held [them] together,” the paper “had to start talking more about sexuality and showing sexuality.” They also had to discuss pornography, both because of the contemporary government repression of porn and because of the increasing dissemination of sexually explicit material.¹¹⁰ One of the collective’s strategies to make the paper “sexier” was to include a more varied visual content. Aside from “sexy” ads, erotic photographs were also featured in the paper as a tool for attracting readers and getting more resources; a series of photographs known as “Hot Pics” were included beginning in 1985. The final section of this article addresses these images and places their reception within the broader historical context of the mid-1980s.

Debating Porn and S&M in *TBP*

Gay and lesbian groups in Canada and the US began to debate pornography around the time *TBP* was launched. In the US, three influential feminist reform groups emerged in the 1970s and led the movement against pornography through the following decade: WAVAW, WAVPM, and Women Against Pornography (WAP).¹¹¹ In Canada, demonstrations against pornography were held toward the mid-1970s by groups such as Toronto’s WAVAW, which several LOOT lesbians and friends had founded in 1977.¹¹² These movements “pressured the federal government to strengthen the laws by, among other things, expanding the definition of obscene material to address depictions of violence and degradation that are not primarily sexual in nature.”¹¹³ Anti-porn feminists argued that porn violated women’s dignity, reflected hostility towards them, undermined their right to liberty and equality, and inculcated misogynist attitudes in men because it portrayed women as mere objects for their sexual gratification.¹¹⁴ Radical feminists such as Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon in the US, and Susan G. Cole in Canada, defined pornography as “the presentation of sexual subordination for sexual pleasure,” and claimed that porn set “certain standards for what women are for and what they should look like.”¹¹⁵

Although critiques of pornography originally arose within feminist organizing, some men were also concerned about it, but for different reasons. For example, in 1971 a group of gay activists—Moldenhauer among them—complained to the CBC for airing a TV program in which the gay lifestyle was inaccurately portrayed. They protested that the program led the viewer “to associate gay life with pornography, anonymous sexuality, sexual addiction and sadomasochism,” thus giv-

ing the impression that everything in the gay world was centred on sex. The writers did not condemn pornography per se, but they found “especially insidious” the representation of pornography shops “with an extremely sordid aesthetic,” because “viewers retain far more of the visual impression than of the verbal content.”¹¹⁶ While porn was not a main concern in gay liberation politics, which actually challenged respectable images of gay sexuality, some gay men were also critical of it.

Pornography, however, had different and sometimes conflicting meanings for gay men and (straight or lesbian) feminist women. Adam notes, “Whereas women observing pornography often found a medium made *about* them but *by* and *for* heterosexual men, gay men more often found a medium that presented images of themselves for their own consumption.”¹¹⁷ While several women regarded the depiction of coercion as a form of violence against them, “gay men typically read consent even into portrayals of sadomasochistic sex.” For most of them, “pornography filled a relatively benign role of affirming their sexuality in the midst of a sex-phobic society and of offering aesthetic images of men as pleasurable and playful.”¹¹⁸ Conversely, according to Dany Lacombe, in the 1970s and 1980s feminist critiques provided numerous illustrations of the violence and misogyny in the “new” pornography, which differed from the 1960s depictions of mere nudity. They held that the new pornography was “less about sex than about sexism,” and that it glorified and eroticized sexual violence perpetrated against women.¹¹⁹ Pornography was perceived as “the source of sexism; its eradication, through the enactment of anti-pornography legislation, became the promise of equality and freedom.”¹²⁰ Some civil libertarian groups also opposed pornography—Lacombe writes that while in the 1960s “they defined pornography in terms of sexual explicitness and its positive impact on sexual liberation, in the 1980s most civil liberties and human rights organizations such as the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) saw pornography as an affront to women’s dignity.” Groups like the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA), though, did not support criminalization, because there was no scientific evidence that porn posed enough of a threat to women to justify restricting freedom of expression.¹²¹

Through the late 1970s and early 1980s, several feminists, lesbians, artists, and gays challenged the attacks on pornography and opposed censorship. The latter, they argued, did nothing to attack the roots of women’s oppression, and could be detrimental for sexual minorities, including lesbian feminists.¹²² In the US, when WAVPM held its first public protest against pornography in 1977, writer Patrick Califia and feminist academic Gayle Rubin denounced the organization’s “view of sexuality as conservative and puritanical and in turn founded Samois, a lesbian-feminist S&M rights group based in San Francisco from 1978 to 1983.”¹²³ In *Coming to Power* (1981), Samois members defended S&M as a feminist act that, contrary to other feminists’ opinions, did not reproduce patriarchal, misogynist attitudes; rather, it implied a consensual exchange of power.¹²⁴ The 1982 Feminist Conference at Barnard College, “Towards a Politics of Sexuality,” was also a landmark in the his-

tory of the “sex wars.” The event sought to promote a movement that could speak “as powerfully in favor of sexual pleasure as it [did] against sexual danger.”¹²⁵

In Canada, lesbian and gay liberationists, such as those participating in the 1978 conference of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition, voiced “grave concerns about feminist calls for more censorship, fearing that anti-pornography laws would be used disproportionately against representations of same-sex sexuality without being effective against violent or degrading representations involving women produced for the gratification of heterosexual men.” Lesbian feminists such as Valverde in 1979 and Bearchell in 1983 feared that “Whatever the solution to pornography as violence against women may be, it’s not hard to imagine the way that the same laws we might now wish to see strengthened could, some day, be used against us.” Bearchell was particularly concerned about “minority tastes, violent or not,” because they would be “the first to be hit with the full force of the law”; “the hotter lesbian pornography becomes the more vulnerable it will be to the whims of the guardians of public morality,” she claimed.¹²⁶ In the mid-1980s, pro-sex American lesbian feminists created venues such as *On Our Backs*, *Bad Attitude*, *Power Exchange*, and *Outrageous Women* which, as Adam comments, “took up the challenge to create a nonexploitative erotica by and for lesbians.”¹²⁷ The warnings of anti-censorship feminists in regard to the negative impact that censorship would have on sexual minorities proved to be true in 1992, when *Bad Attitude* came into trial and was found obscene.¹²⁸

From the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, *TBP* consistently reported on the course of the “sex wars,” allowing readers to actively participate in the debate. In 1978, when the early anti-pornography campaigns emerged, the paper received several letters that discussed the relationship between pornography, censorship, and feminism. Due to the importance of the topic, the *TBP* collective published a selection of letters in the August 1978 issue, hoping to receive further responses.¹²⁹ The censorship movement was critiqued among the collective and readers for posing a threat to the gay and lesbian community, if used for repressive purposes. Collective members Merv Walker and Gerald Hannon, as well as the reader Ulli Diemer, thought that government regulations could lead to the closing down of magazines because of their sexual content. For Hannon, the trial *TBP* faced after publishing the controversial “Men Loving Boys Loving Men” article was an example of how obscenity laws would be used against gay magazines.¹³⁰ In contrast, some male readers supported pornography legislation, claiming that men also suffered the impact of the sex industry. Drawing on a feminist discourse, Richard Mohr wrote that “portrayals of gays degrading gays for the titillation of other gays should be banned as promoting self-hatred.” “Every cocksucker,” he went on, “knows the moment at which in sexual manipulations he is turned from a willing, desiring mutual participant into a tolerating instrument of masturbation. It is at this moment that the censor’s knife should fall.”¹³¹ Richard Mehringer also echoed a feminist critique of porn, and warned the *TBP* collective that some of its publications were dividing

feminist women from feminist men.¹³²

In the context of the “sex wars,” *TBP* implemented changes in its format and visual culture, including the addition of more erotic images as well as advertising, which by 1985 occupied between 30 to 40 percent of the paper. One of these additions led to a new debate that centred on a contentious image published in 1986 and which resonated with contemporary discussions on porn. Beginning in June 1985, the *TBP* classifieds section was illustrated with photographs known as “Hot Pics” which depicted mostly nude white men and women. A memo from the collective stated that these “sexy” photos would occupy one quarter of the page, “should be by as many different photographers as we can get our hands on, should be hot, imaginative, and of high quality photographically. A chance to help suggest what the erotic might look like, in the middle of the sex ads.”¹³³ A few months later, the collective asked readers to send their own hot pics to be featured in that section, allowing them to be involved in a more intimate way in the paper. Each issue included two photographs, which at first had no other purpose than to illustrate the classifieds section to attract more readers. From May 1986, however, the pictures incorporated the photographers’ contact information, thus turning the images into ads as well. The decision to publish these erotic images in the middle of the classifieds shaped their reception among readers, for the relation between nudity and commercial purposes had always been a matter of debate in the paper.

While the first twenty “Hot Pics” did not produce a significant response, one of the pictures in the April 1986 issue caused tension between members of the *TPB* collective and readers.¹³⁴ The image by Ryan Hotchkiss depicted the breast of a young, white woman whose nipple was pierced by a suture needle (fig. 5).¹³⁵ The faceless, close-up picture evoked both pain and pleasure and troubled several readers—some of them critiqued Hotchkiss’s photograph on the grounds that it contravened the paper’s liberationist undertaking. For instance, Robert D. Butchart complained that “the monstrous close-up ... celebrate[d] the deliberate infliction of pain on others or on oneself, ... a cause incompatible with *TBP*’s noble mission.” Butchart associated the image with a sadomasochistic act, claiming that however extant they may be in a community that had been trained by the oppressor to practice self-oppression, sadism and masochism were “the very antithesis of that which might engender pride, gay or otherwise.”¹³⁶ The anti-censorship feminist Gillian Rodgerson, who at the time helped in the selection of “Hot Pics,” responded that she understood Butchart did not find Hotchkiss’s photograph sexually exciting, since the collective did not expect “every ‘hot pic’ to turn every reader on.”¹³⁷ However, she discarded Butchart’s interpretation of the image by highlighting the risks of defending “normative” behaviours within the gay community. In her view, Butchart’s conception of the “homosexual condition” was clearly based on a very narrow definition of gay “normalcy.” Her selection of photographs, she claimed, was “guided by an exploration of the perverse, not a definition of a norm.”¹³⁸ Butchart’s critique echoed a feminist response to S&M which argued that the prac-

For some readers, featuring Hotchkiss's photograph in *TBP* was a provocative way to explore alternative sexual practices. Considering that through the 1980s anti-porn groups sought to redefine pornography as any representation that outraged the female body or promoted violence against women, it is not surprising that some readers, both men and women, reacted so strongly to the picture. A close look at the paper's letter section reveals that the vast majority of complaints came from men. While this seems obvious, given that most *TBP* readers were men—in December 1984, only 20 percent of *TBP* subscribers were women, most of whom were probably lesbians—it is notable that a number of them had adopted an anti-porn stance.¹⁴³ Some men were particularly concerned about the reproduction of sexualized images that stereotyped gay life. In the April 1986 issue, B. Benson complained that the "Hot Pics" and other nude sketches and pictures made it seem that sex was all gay people thought about.¹⁴⁴ His critique, as this article has shown, had been a long-lasting concern among some gays.

The placing of Hotchkiss's photograph in the classifieds section shaped how readers responded. K. McCarthy complained that if the paper wanted to attract readers by including "artistic" photographs, it should have placed those "raunchy" images in another section, for readers would assume that every ad solicited only non-intimate, casual sex. Porn, he concluded, "should not be forced on anyone."¹⁴⁵ David G. Thomas, from Gloucester, Ontario, asked *TBP* what their purpose was in publishing those "bizarre" photographs—while he had tolerated previous "Hot Pics," Hotchkiss's photograph prompted him to write because it bespoke "mutilation and contempt for the body." He wanted *TBP* to know that the decision to publish the image showed "political irresponsibility on [the collective's] part, to say the least."¹⁴⁶ Despite some disapproval, the purpose of the "Hot Pics" was indeed to provide a sexy illustration for a sex-oriented section, and to be as visible as possible. Similar to the juxtaposition of poems with visual pornography in San Francisco's queer journal *Gay Sunshine*—which Dewhurst has examined—the "Hot Pics" turned the browsing of classifieds into a "visual reading experience," thereby "expanding the range of pleasures" such pages could offer.¹⁴⁷

One of the most striking letters criticizing *TBP* came from "The Sheaf Collective," a group from the University of Saskatchewan who decided to cancel their subscription to the paper because of its visual culture. Some *TBP* content contravened the Sheaf's policy against accepting pornographic publications, such as the ads using close-up photos of male torsos, ads depicting crotches strapped into leather and metal devices, or the full-coloured ads for "Hot American Tapes for Cold Canadian Nights." The Sheaf felt that such images made "undue emphasis on the violent, 'power-game' aspect of sexuality," and perpetuated stereotypes of a gay life-style. They also complained about the August 1985 "Hot Pics," which portrayed nude women "fondling their crotches," with one of them wearing a metal-

studded bracelet that denoted bondage.¹⁴⁸ Although the Sheaf did not explicitly refer to Hotchkiss's photograph, it is possible that the picture had encouraged them to express how offended they felt about *TBP* visual content. The collective's response came from Gerald Hannon, who associated the Sheaf's critique with a radical feminist stance. He criticized authoritarian ways of interpreting pictures because they allowed an image the possibility of making only one statement.¹⁴⁹

While this article has argued that *TBP*'s visual culture was instrumental in the paper's community-building project, there were significant changes in the mid-1980s. Concerns from the 1970s over nudity, sexism, and objectification evolved into debates over porn, S&M, and censorship in the 1980s. *TBP*'s attitude toward such discussions evolved as well. Whereas in the 1970s *TBP* seemed more eager to solicit feedback on the paper's visual culture, Hannon's and Rodgerson's responses to readers reveal a less conciliatory attitude towards the reception of images in *TBP*. This does not mean that Hannon and Rodgerson were less sensitive to readers' concerns, but it does suggest that by the mid-1980s the collective was tired of and less interested in dealing with sex-negative, moralistic, or anti-porn critiques that conflicted with *TBP*'s liberationist stance. Those critiques also conflicted with the *TBP*'s fight against censorship, the paper's adaptation to a neoliberal economy, and its dependence on advertising. Moreover, those critiques hardly fit into the contemporary social and political landscape wherein sex had acquired a new importance among the gay community. It is not clear, though, how the AIDS crisis affected the reception of sexual and erotic imagery in the paper; while AIDS could have influenced concerns about the over-association of gay life with sex in the 1980s, those concerns had existed since the 1970s. Throughout both decades, as Churchill asserts, gays and lesbians "fought against stereotypes of same-sex sexuality, which they saw as negative, disfigured, and unfair"; key for liberationists "was the rejection of external definitions and characterizations of their own identity, sexual practices, and behaviours."¹⁵⁰

Approaching *TBP* through the lens of visual culture thus reveals that sexual and erotic imagery was not only constitutive of the magazine's radical politics but also of its community-building project. Analyzing the debates that such imagery triggered among editors and readers sheds light on the practices that surrounded the production and reception of *TBP* and other gay liberation journals in North America. Most importantly, these debates offer a valuable archive of the emotions and concerns of the gay community that both produced and consumed the paper.

NOTES

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² As collective member Michael Lynch claimed in 1979, “We [TBP collective members] do not and never have represented a wide range of the gay community.” Michael Lynch, “A Working Paper for *The Body Politic*,” December 1979, Box 3, F0002-01-070, *The Body Politic* Fonds, The Arquivos, Toronto, Canada [hereafter TPB Fonds].

³ This article uses the term “visual culture” simply to refer to “what is seen” in TBP. What is seen, as George H. Roeder notes, “depends on what there is to see and how we look at it.” That includes photographs, films, videos, ads, television, electronic imagery, visual art, illustrated magazines, comics, cartoons, buildings, cities, manufactures, and “the human body as clothed, shaped, adorned, and depicted,” among many other images. George H. Roeder, “Filling in the Picture: Visual Culture,” *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 1 (1998): 275.

⁴ On August 28, 1971, more than one hundred gay men, lesbians, and their supporters attended the “We Demand” protest on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, to mark the second anniversary of the proclamation of Bill C-150. According to Elise Chenier, while this federal government’s 1969 omnibus bill had removed from the Criminal Code of Canada certain laws targeting same sex acts, it left many laws and government policies “that subjected lesbians and gays, suspected or ‘confirmed,’ to criminal, legal, and social sanction.” The protest thus “sought to oppose the Criminal Code reforms by protesting against the higher age of consent for same-gender erotic practices, police repression, the national security campaigns against queers under way in the public service and the military, and calling for the repeal of gross indecency laws.” See Patrizia Gentile, Gary Kinsman, and L. Pauline Rankin, eds., *We Still Demand!: Redefining Resistance in Sex and Gender Struggles* (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2017), 3–4; Elise Chenier, “Liberating Marriage: Gay Liberation and Same-Sex Marriage in Early 1970s Canada,” in *We Still Demand!*, 33.

⁵ Rick Bébout, “Conception & birth,” *On the Origins of The Body Politic*, accessed January 13, 2019, <http://www.rbebout.com/oldbeep/concep.htm>.

⁶ Ed Jackson and Stan Persky, eds., *Flaunting It!: A Decade of Gay Journalism from The Body Politic: An Anthology* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1982), 2; Peter Zorzi, “The Start-up of *The Body Politic*—Fall, 1971,” *Queer Catharsis*, 1992, accessed May 3, 2016, <http://onthebookshelves.com/bp01.htm>; Michael Connors Jackman, “*The Body Politic*: At the genesis of sexual liberation in Canada,” *Xtra!*, October 20, 2011, 18.

⁷ McCaskell, *Queer Progress: From Homophobia to Homonationalism* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2016), 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 21, 25.

⁹ Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Sexuality in Canada* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1996), 309.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹¹ Cited in Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire*, 297.

¹² McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 183.

¹³ Ed Jackson, interview by the author, January 26, 2019.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Miriam Smith, “Interview with Chris Bearchell, Lasqueti Island, 1996,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 48, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 256.

¹⁶ John D’Emilio, “Foreword: The Leading Edge of Change: The LGBT Press in the 1970s,” in *Gay Press, Gay Power: The Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America*, ed. Tracy Baim (Chicago: Prairie Avenue Productions and Windy City Media Group, 2012), 9–10.

¹⁷ For more on second wave feminism, see Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton, 1963); Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Doubleday, 1970); Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex: the Case for Feminist Revolution* (New York: W. Morrow, 1970); Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980); Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings By Radical Women of Color* (Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981); Sue Golding, “Knowledge is Power: A Few Thoughts About Lesbian Sex, Politics and Community Standards,” *Fireweed* 13 (1982); Mariana Valverde, *Sex, Power and Pleasure* (Toronto: Women’s Press, 1985); Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967–1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Becki Ross, *The House that Jill Built: A Lesbian Nation in Formation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Victoria Hesford, *Feeling Women’s Liberation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

¹⁸ Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 85.

¹⁹ These fractions of feminism include (but are not limited to): radical, cultural, liberal, separatist, and socialist.

²⁰ For more on the “sex wars,” see Lisa Duggan and Nan D. Hunter, eds., *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006).

²¹ Duggan, “Feminist Historians and Antipornography Campaigns: An Overview,” in *Sex Wars*, 65–69.

²² Duggan and Hunter, *Sex Wars*, 9; Brenda Cossman, Shannon Bell, Lise Gotell, and Becki L. Ross, *Bad Attitude/s on Trial: Pornography, Feminism, and the Butler Decision* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 33.

²³ David Churchill, “Personal Ad Politics: Race, Sexuality and Power at *The Body Politic*,” *Left History* 8, no. 2 (2003): 126.

²⁴ Richard Meyer, “Gay Power circa 1970: Visual Strategies for Sexual Revolution,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 12, no. 3 (2006): 451–452; Robert Dewhurst, “*Gay Sunshine*: Pornopoetic Collage, and Queer Archive,” in *Porn Archives*, eds. Tim Dean, Steven Ruszczycky, and David Squires (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 213–233; David Johnson, “Physique Pioneers: the Politics of 1960s Gay Consumer Culture,” *Journal of Social History* 43, no. 4 (2010): 867–892; Lucas Hilderbrand, “A Suitcase Full of Vaseline, or ‘Travels in the 1970s Gay World,’” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22, no. 3 (2013): 373–402.

²⁵ Meyer, “Gay Power circa 1970,” 452.

²⁶ See Tom Warner, *Never Going Back: A History of Queer Activism in Canada* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Churchill, “Personal Ad Politics”; Michael Connors Jackman, “Bawdy Politics: Remembering Sexual Liberation” (PhD diss., York University, 2013); Catherine Nash, “Consuming Sexual Liberation: Gay Business, Politics, and Toronto’s Barracks Bathhouse Raids,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue d’études canadiennes* 48, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 82–105; Scott De Groot, “Out of the Closet and Into Print: Gay Liberation across the Anglo-American World” (PhD diss., Queen’s University, 2015); McCaskell, *Queer Progress*; Nicholas Andrew Hrynyk, “Pin the Macho on the Man’: Mediations of Gay Male Masculinity in *The Body Politic*, 1971–1987” (PhD diss., Carleton University, 2018).

²⁷ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 57–58.

²⁸ Chris Bearchell, “Contribution to the ‘Think Tank,’” December 13, 1979, Box 3, F0002-01-070, TPB Fonds.

²⁹ “Editorial Page,” *TBP*, May–June, 1972, 2.

³⁰ The man in the photograph was portrayed by Jearld Moldenhauer the morning after he met him during a trip in Europe. Moldenhauer recalls having photographed

Rolf in his dorm room at the University of Groningen. Jearld Moldenhauer, interview by the author, May 23, 2016.

³¹ “Gaylup Poll,” *TBP*, March–April, 1972, 2.

³² Zorzi, “The Start-up of *The Body Politic*.”

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Moldenhauer, email to the author, March 4, 2017.

³⁵ Ed Jackson, “Nudity and Sexism,” *TBP*, November–December, 1975, 12.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 12–13.

³⁷ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 67.

³⁸ Ken Popert, interview by the author, April 28, 2016.

³⁹ Jackson, “Nudity and Sexism,” 12.

⁴⁰ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 66–67.

⁴¹ Golding, “Knowledge is Power,” 93; see also Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 33–37.

⁴² Smith, “Interview with Chris Bearchell,” 253.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 257–258.

⁴⁴ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 67.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁶ Doug, “Gaylup Poll Results,” *TBP*, May–June, 1972, 8.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Gerald Hannon, “Celebrate the Body (towards alternative aesthetic),” *TPB*, July–August, 1972, 12–13.

⁴⁹ The collective, “we’re gonna close you down,” *TBP*, July–August 1975, 1; “Editorial: Thought Police,” *TBP*, July–August, 1975, 2.

⁵⁰ The collective, “we’re gonna close you down,” 1.

⁵¹ Jackson, “Nudity and Sexism,” 25.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵³ “Editorial: Thought Police,” 2.

⁵⁴ Gerald Hannon, “Obscenity laws & the uses of sexual guilt,” *TBP*, September–October, 1975, 1.

⁵⁵ Anonymous, “Harold Hedd,” *TBP*, September–October, 1975, 28.

⁵⁶ Greg Snyder, “Letter,” *TBP*, November–December, 1975, 24.

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- ⁵⁷ Ms. Ann Onymus, “Mother and son like Harold Hedd,” *TBP*, November–December, 1975, 24.
- ⁵⁸ Richard A. Maecker, “Harold Hedd Cartoon Sexist?,” *TBP*, November–December, 1975, 2.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, 24.
- ⁶⁰ Kyper’s critique of “our capitalist culture” was a common trope of gay liberation during the 1970s. As Barry Adam comments, “The paradox of the 1970s was that gay and lesbian liberation did not produce the gender free communitarian world it envisioned, but faced an unprecedented growth of gay capitalism and new masculinity.” Barry Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 104.
- ⁶¹ John Kyper, “More Hedd,” *TBP*, January–February, 1976, 2.
- ⁶² Jackson, “Nudity and Sexism,” 12–13.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ⁶⁴ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 25.
- ⁶⁵ Jackman, “Bawdy Politics,” 148.
- ⁶⁶ Jackson, “Nudity and Sexism,” 13.
- ⁶⁷ “Gaylup Poll,” *TBP*, March–April, 1972, 2.
- ⁶⁸ Doug, “Gaylup Poll Results,” 8.
- ⁶⁹ “Editorial Page,” *TBP*, May–June, 1972, 2; The collective, “Sex and money, or what can you find wrong with this picture?,” *TBP*, March, 1978, 2.
- ⁷⁰ “True Confessions,” *TBP*, February, 1981, 21–24.
- ⁷¹ “True Confessions: Report No. 2: Getting—and getting into—*TBP*,” *TBP*, November, 1981, 47.
- ⁷² Ken Popert, interview by the author, April 28, 2016.
- ⁷³ The collective, “Sex and money,” 2.
- ⁷⁴ Marc Stein, *Rethinking the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 120; Dorothy E. Chunn, “‘Take It Easy Girls’: Feminism, Equality, and Social Change in the Media,” in *Reaction and Resistance: Feminism, Law, and Social Change*, eds. Dorothy E. Chunn, Susan B. Boyd, and Hester Lessard (Vancouver, Toronto: UBC Press, 2007), 32.
- ⁷⁵ Allen Young and Karla Jay, *Voices of Gay Liberation* (New York: Douglas Book Corp, 1972), 1.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 25–26.

⁷⁷ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 40.

⁷⁸ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 104.

⁷⁹ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 45–46.

⁸⁰ Through the 1970s and early 1980s, both *TBP* and gay businesses were targeted by Toronto police's systematic harassment and entrapment against the gay male community. *TBP* was raided in December 1977, and the next year, on December 9, the police raided the Barracks, a bathhouse where patrons could practice S&M sex. The raid preceded the February 1981 "Operation Soap," the name given to a series of bathhouse raids which resulted in close to 300 charges. See Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire*, 339–340; Nash, "Consuming Sexual Liberation," 83; Smith, "Interview with Chris Bearchell," 260.

⁸¹ Nash, "Consuming Sexual Liberation," 83.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 97–98. The articles Nash refers to are Ken Popert, "Gay Business: Its Interests and Ours," *TBP*, May, 1979, 18, and Gerald Hannon, "Putting on the Pressure," *TBP*, June, 1981, 8–10.

⁸³ Rick Bébout, "Business, reluctant and otherwise: Advertising and budding gay capitalism," in *The Body Politic and Visions of Community* (November, 1995).

⁸⁴ "True Confessions," *TBP*, February, 1981, 23.

⁸⁵ Lynch, "A Working Paper for *The Body Politic*."

⁸⁶ Bearchell, "Contribution to the "Think Tank.""

⁸⁷ Lynch, "A Working Paper for *The Body Politic*."

⁸⁸ The collective, "Sex and money," 2.

⁸⁹ Steve Craig, "Madison Avenue Versus *The Feminine Mystique*: The Advertising Industry's Response to the Women's Movement," in *Disco Divas: Women and Popular Culture in the 1970s*, ed. Sherrie A. Inness (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 15; Valverde, *Sex, Power and Pleasure*, 133.

⁹⁰ Carolyn Bronstein, *Battling Pornography: The American Feminist Anti-Pornography Movement, 1976–1986* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 143.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 143–145.

⁹² Greg Bourgeois, "Letter," *TBP*, April, 1978, 2.

⁹³ Jackson, "Nudity and Sexism," 12.

⁹⁴ John Duggan, "Club Bath ad," *TBP*, May, 1978, 2.

⁹⁵ Paul Goldring, "Letter," *TBP*, May, 1978, 2.

⁹⁶ Douglas A Campbell, "Images and responsibility," *TBP*, April, 1978, 2.

⁹⁷ For instance, Jean Gagnon from Quebec City thought that by refusing The Club ad *TBP* was doing the same thing as straight newspapers refusing advertising from the gay movement. Jean Gagnon, "Letter," *TBP*, May, 1978, 2.

⁹⁸ Jackson, "Nudity and Sexism," 12.

⁹⁹ The collective, "When are cocks offensive?," *TBP*, November, 1980, 3.

¹⁰⁰ "Leather ad," *TBP*, February, 1981, 6.

¹⁰¹ Mariana Valverde, "Resignation Letter," 29 May 1979, Box 3, F0002-01-070, *TBP* Fonds.

¹⁰² For instance, Ross recalls a 1973 episode in which several female members of CHAT left the group because of its alleged sexism. Their energies, they claimed, would "not be wasted on raising the consciousness of the members of CHAT who should be raising their own." Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 34–35.

¹⁰³ Since gays and lesbians lived their sexuality and experienced sexual oppression differently, they could hardly understand each other. As Ross notes, "Lesbian sexuality rarely assumed public expression and was not regulated by police and the courts in the same way, hence the liberation of sexual practice was not the locus of political battle for lesbians in ways that it was for gay men." Moreover, "the eroticization and increasing commercialization of sex in urban gay-male communities emerged as a focus of lesbian-feminist criticism in the early 1970s." By the late 1970s, "most activist lesbians were perplexed by, and even scornful of, what they understood to be 'anonymous,' 'penis-fixated,' 'casual,' and 'public' sex practised by gay men." Lesbians, including the majority of LOOT members, condemned what they regarded as forms of "power imbalance, objectification, and insensitivity ... intrinsic to gay-male sexual activities." Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 37, 118.

¹⁰⁴ McCaskell, *Queer Progress*, 183.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Kinsman, "Queer Resistance and Regulation in the 1970s: From Liberation to Rights," in *We Still Demand!*, 140.

¹⁰⁷ Tim McCaskell, interview by the author, April 25, 2016.

¹⁰⁸ Lynch, "A Working Paper for *The Body Politic*."

¹⁰⁹ Tim McCaskell, interview by the author, April 25, 2016.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Bronstein, *Battling Pornography*, 2; Duggan and Hunter, *Sex Wars*, 17–18; Whitney Strub, *Perversion for Profit: The Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 213–214.

¹¹² Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 113.

¹¹³ Warner, *Never Going Back*, 124–126.

¹¹⁴ Dany Lacombe, *Blue Politics: Pornography and the Law in the Age of Feminism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 30; Cossman et al., *Bad Attitude/s on Trial*, 21; Warner, *Never Going Back*, 124–126.

¹¹⁵ Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon, *Pornography and Civil Rights: A New Day for Women's Equality* (Minneapolis: Organizing Against Pornography, 1988), 69; Susan G. Cole, *Pornography and the Sex Crisis* (Toronto: Amanita Enterprises, 1989), 22, 47, 68–69.

¹¹⁶ The letter was signed by George Hislop from CHAT, Charles Hill from UTHA (University of Toronto Homophile Association), Jearld Moldenhauer from TBP, Tony Metie from TGA, and Roger Wilkes from YUHA (York University Homophile Association). *TBP*, January, 1972, 1.

¹¹⁷ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 148–149.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹¹⁹ Lacombe, *Blue Politics*, 26–27.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 53–54.

¹²² Warner, *Never Going Back*, 127; Lacombe, *Blue Politics*, 57.

¹²³ Bronstein, *Battling Pornography*, 141.

¹²⁴ Samois, *Coming to Power: Writing and Graphics on Lesbian S/M* (Boston: Alyson, 1981).

¹²⁵ Carole S. Vance, “Pleasure and Danger: Toward a Politics of Sexuality,” in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole S. Vance (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 3–4.

¹²⁶ Warner, *Never Going Back*, 127–128.

¹²⁷ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 149.

¹²⁸ According to Cossman and Bell, in 1992 the Canadian Supreme Court decision in *R. v. Butler* upheld the constitutionality of obscenity laws and wrote a new test for determining whether representations are obscene. According to the Court, “sexually explicit representations that do not include violence, are not degrading nor dehumanizing, and do not involve children should not generally be found obscene.” Six months after the decision, the Toronto Police brought criminal charges against Glad Day for selling *Bad Attitude*, a magazine of erotic lesbian fiction. The magazine was deemed obscene and the bookshop and its owner were charged with obscenity. See Cossman et al., *Bad Attitude/s on Trial*, 4; Cossman, “Censor, Resist, Repeat: A History of Censorship of Gay and Lesbian Sexual Representation in Canada,” *Duke*

Journal of Gender Law & Policy 21, no. 1 (2013): 55.

¹²⁹ “Pornography,” *TBP*, June–July, 1978, 2.

¹³⁰ *TBP*, August, 1978, 12–13.

¹³¹ Richard Mohr, *TBP*, August, 1978, 13.

¹³² Richard Mehringer, “Re: porn,” *TBP*, October, 1978, 4.

¹³³ “Memo to: the collective,” June 1985, Box 3, F0002-01-074, *TBP* Fonds.

¹³⁴ Before Hotchkiss’s photograph, *TBP* only published one letter in which a reader, B. Benson, complained about the Hot Pics and other nude sketches and pictures in *TBP*. B. Benson, “Take sex out of *TBP*,” *TBP*, April, 1986, 11.

¹³⁵ According to Ross, by the early 1980s Ryan Hotchkiss, along with Sue Golding, Gillian Rodgeron, “and other sex radicals/militants and biker women had begun to articulate a distinctive pro-sex feminism that positively foreshadowed the coalescence of lesbians, sex workers, transvestites, gay men, transsexuals, and transgendered people under the ‘queer’ banner in the 1990s.” Ross, *The House that Jill Built*, 129.

¹³⁶ Robert D. Butchart, “Celebrating Pain?,” *TBP*, May, 1986, 10.

¹³⁷ Gillian Rodgeron, *TBP*, May, 1986, 10.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ See Pat Califia, *Sapphistry: The Book of Lesbian Sexuality* (USA: Naiad Press, 1998), 118; Juicy Lucy, “If I Ask You to Tie Me Up, Will You Still Want to Love Me?,” in *Coming to Power*, 30; Susan G. Cole, *Pornography and the Sex Crisis*, 126; Judy Butler, “Lesbian S/M: The Politics of Dis-Illusion,” in *Against Sadomasochism: A Radical Feminist Analysis*, eds. Robin Ruth Linden, Darlene R. Pagano, Diana E. H. Russell, and Susan Leigh Star (California: Frog In the Well, 1982), 172; Diana E. H. Russell, “Sadomasochism: A contra-feminist activity,” in *Against Sadomasochism*, 176; Mariana Valverde, “Feminism meets fist-fucking: getting lost in lesbian S&M,” *TBP*, February, 1980, 43–44.

¹⁴⁰ John Rechy, *The Sexual Outlaw: A Documentary* (New York: Grove Press, 1977), 262.

¹⁴¹ The ad was published in the classifieds of *TBP*’s February 1985 issue.

¹⁴² Churchill, “Personal Ad Politics,” 117.

¹⁴³ Ken Popert, “The future and everything,” December 31, 1984, Box 3, F0002-01-058, *TBP* Fonds.

¹⁴⁴ B. Benson, “Take sex out of *TBP*.”

¹⁴⁵ K. McCarthy, “Classified Porn,” *TBP*, May, 1986, 10.

¹⁴⁶ David G. Thomas, "Taking the cake," *TBP*, June, 1986, 11–12.

¹⁴⁷ Dewhurst, "*Gay Sunshine*," 215, 219.

¹⁴⁸ The Sheaf Collective, "Glaring pornography," *TBP*, June, 1986, 11

¹⁴⁹ Gerald Hannon, "*The Collective responds*," *TBP*, June, 1986, 11.

¹⁵⁰ Churchill, "Personal Ad Politics," 126.