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towards activism was in part the result of changes associated with modernization.

Readers hoping for an explicit statement of the connection between capitalist development and the rise of a gay and lesbian movement will have to look elsewhere. The increasing importance of an all-powerful state is also slighted in Adam's discussion. Adam does allude, however, to another important change: the professionalization of medicine and the success of this profession in getting the state to support its findings. The rise of the medical model of decadence linking crime, prostitution, insanity, and homosexuality with declining national vitality (i.e. lower birth rates) sent the governments of France, Germany, and Britain in search of explanations and cures. The inchoate medical "profession," influential because of its scientific pretensions, responded all too eagerly to this charge. Not until recently did this model lose much of its authority.

Following discussions on the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the most interesting part of Adam's book are the chapters on the 1970s and 1980s. Adam agrees with most scholars that the Stonewall Rebellion of June 1969 was the watershed event in modern gay history. Not only was it the most visible effort by gays and lesbians to resist police harassment but it also proved to have inestimable symbolic power. After Stonewall gays and lesbians banded together by the thousands in new or preexisting organizations and proclaimed the start of a gay liberation movement. Between 1969 and 1972 this movement experienced its euphoric heyday when the goal of remaking the extant social world appeared realistic to many. Lesbians and gay men reached out to form coalitions with other groups struggling for civil rights and social change. As a result, the 1970s witnessed the release of an enormous amount of energy as homosexuals broke the social/cultural molds of the past and were in turn empowered by the pursuit of sexual freedom.

Concentrating on the American case, Adam bemoans the fact that achievements of the 1970s fell far short of articulated goals as gays and lesbians were partially assimilated by greater society. Conformism reared its ubiquitous head and resulted in the defeat of many of the most radical challenges the gay liberation movement posed. Worse yet, affirmation of the gay lifestyle resulted in a cooptation by the economic system. This course

of events landed many lesbians and gays in a larger and more comfortable "commercial ghetto." Adam sees in much of the activity of the late 1970s a slippage back into traditional gender roles. His analysis leads him to conclude that the movement's loss of focus and the commercialization of its spirit left it vulnerable to attack by the emerging New Right. Adam is accurate in asserting the importance of the rightist reaction to gay liberation as a significant caesura in the history of the gay and lesbian movement. His discussion of the coalition of forces comprising the new right is illuminating. In the last chapter, Adam discusses the progress of gay and lesbian civil rights in the 1980s as well as the problems associated with the AIDS crisis.

Much of Adam's pessimism seems exaggerated and he ignores many of the real achievements of the 1970s. The era saw annual marches in the nation's metropolises, establishment of a myriad of gay/lesbian organizations, the first openly homosexual elected officials, defeat of antigay referendums, and the removal of the stigma of homosexuality as a mental disorder. Yet it is by no means certain that the ideals of the 1969-72 generation have completely faded. In addition, Adam often generalizes from the American gay male experience, obscuring lesbian/lesbian-feminist activism.

In sum, Adam's survey is a welcome addition to the growing body of historical/sociological literature on the origins of organized homosexuality. His conclusions --that the vitality of the movement has been sapped by conformism and the urge to appear respectable--are worth considering. Adam lays out a bold and broad agenda for the gay and lesbian movement, believing that further assimilation into the majority culture--with its attendant atomization--will not solve the problems of lesbians and gay men. What is needed instead is the "fundamental restructuring" of some of society's basic structures as well as the fostering of linkages with the universal struggle for human rights.

- DANIEL MATTERN

