Université de Montréal

**Intersectionality, White Privilege, and Citizenship Regimes:**

Explaining LGBTQ People of Colour Collective Engagement Trajectories in Toronto and Montréal

par

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*Cette thèse intitulée*
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*Présentée par*
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# Abstract

Recent Pride march disruptions by Black Lives Matter protestors in Montréal and Toronto have pointed to the continuous exclusion of people of colour within LGBTQ movements across Canada, as well as in Europe and the United States. While these events constitute recent manifestations of a particular form of organizing within LGBTQ movements, namely organizations formed around specific racialized identities, they are in fact inscribed within a broader tradition of LGBTQ people of colour (LGBTQ-POC) organizing in Canada, overlooked by academics and mainstream activists. It is in that respect that the aim of this dissertation is twofold. First, it aims to render visible the ways in which people of colour have collectively participated in Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements, or what I refer to as *LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories*, thereby disrupting dominant, White-centered, LGBTQ narratives. Second, it seeks to explain why people of colour have collectively participated in LGBTQ movements the way that they have in Montréal and Toronto. Building on social movement theory's previous work, it argues for the need to unpack the relational context within which participation is set, meaning the power configurations that socially locate individuals and groups in relation to each other. With its emphasis on relationality, power, and social context, intersectionality thus comes across as a pertinent avenue to bridge this theoretical gap. Combined with a multilevel analysis, it reveals how LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are the result of individual activist paths (micro-level), social movement organizational dynamics (meso-level), and institutional and sociopolitical contexts (macro-level).

This dissertation draws on fieldwork undergone in Montréal and Toronto, during which 42 in-depth interviews were conducted with LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists. Secondary sources, such as documents produced by LGBTQ organizations and other government-related documentation were also used for the analysis. At a micro-level, results show how LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists follow different activist paths. At a meso-level, results reveal the structuring character of white (male/cisgender/able-bodied) privilege within LGBTQ movements, in both Montréal and Toronto. At a macro-level, a comparative analysis of Québécois and Canadian citizenship regimes however demonstrates the extent to which institutional and sociopolitical contexts also shape social movement participation.

By rendering visible people of colour's collective participation within Canadian LGBTQ movements, this dissertation fills a significant empirical gap. Theoretically, it enriches social movement theory by introducing an intersectional theoretical framework suitable for analyzing social movement participation. Rather than discard social movement theory as a whole, it instead engages a dialogue with previous work on social movement participation. Alternatively, it lives true to the promise of intersectionality as a theoretical framework for advancing our understanding of social movements, distinguishing itself from recent work focusing primarily on intersectional praxis and intersectional coalitions in the context of social movements.

**Key words:** Social movements; participation; intersectionality; lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer movements; white privilege; citizenship regimes; Canadian politics; Québec politics.

# Résumé

Les perturbations des marches de la Fierté à Montréal et à Toronto par des membres de Black Lives Matter ont mis en lumière l'exclusion des personnes racisées au sein des mouvements LGBTQ au Canada, de même qu'en Europe et aux États-Unis. Ces évènements témoignent de la façon dont les personnes racisées s'organisent au sein des mouvements LGBTQ, c'est-à-dire par la création d'organisations formées autour d'identités racisées spécifiques. Ceux-ci s'inscrivent dans une riche tradition d'activisme portée par des personnes racisées LGBTQ au Canada qui demeure, néanmoins, peu étudiée au pays. Cette thèse poursuit ainsi deux objectifs principaux. Dans un premier temps, elle vise à rendre visible la façon dont les personnes racisées participent collectivement au sein des mouvements LGBTQ à Montréal et à Toronto, ou ce que nous appelons les *trajectoires d'engagement collectif des personnes racisées LGBTQ*, rompant ainsi avec les récits dominants, centrés sur l'expérience des militants LGBTQ blancs. Dans un second temps, elle tente d'expliquer pourquoi les personnes racisées participent collectivement au sein des mouvements LGBTQ de cette façon. Puisant dans la théorie des mouvements sociaux, cette thèse soulève l'importance de tenir compte du contexte relationnel dans lequel s'inscrit la participation, à savoir la configuration des rapports de pouvoir déterminant les positionnements sociaux des individus et des groupes, les uns par rapport aux autres. Pour ce faire, nous proposons l'élaboration d'un cadre théorique intersectionnel articulé autour de trois principes, soit la relationnalité, le pouvoir et le contexte social, combiné à une analyse multiniveau. Nous démontrons ainsi que les trajectoires d'engagement collectif des personnes racisées LGBTQ sont le produit des parcours individuels militants (niveau micro), de dynamiques organisationnelles (niveau meso) et de contextes sociopolitiques et institutionnels (niveau macro).

Cette thèse est le fruit de séjours de recherche effectués à Montréal et à Toronto, durant lesquels nous avons réalisé 42 entretiens semi-dirigés avec des militant·e·s racisé·e·s LGBTQ, de même qu'avec des militant·e·s blanc·he·s LGBTQ. La documentation produite par des organisations LGBTQ ainsi que différentes instances gouvernementales a également été mobilisée de manière complémentaire. À un niveau micro, les résultats de la thèse révèlent comment les parcours individuels militants des personnes racisées LGBTQ diffèrent de ceux des personnes blanc·he·s. À un niveau meso, les résultats mettent en évidence la dimension structurante du privilège blanc (masculin/cisgenre/sans handicap) au sein des mouvements LGBTQ, ayant pour effet de reléguer les personnes racisées à la marge de ces mouvements. Enfin, à un niveau macro, une analyse comparative des régimes de citoyenneté québécois et canadiens démontre la façon dont les contextes institutionnels et sociopolitiques informent la participation au sein des mouvements LGBTQ.

En rendant visible la participation des personnes racisées au sein des mouvements LGBTQ canadiens, cette thèse contribue empiriquement à l'avancement des connaissances sur le militantisme LGBTQ au Canada. À un niveau théorique, elle enrichit la théorie des mouvements sociaux en introduisant un cadre théorique intersectionnel pouvant faciliter l'analyse de la participation au sein des mouvements sociaux. En plus d'illustrer le potentiel théorique de l'intersectionnalité pour approfondir notre compréhension des mouvements sociaux, cette thèse se distingue de travaux récents davantage centrés sur la praxis et les coalitions intersectionnels au sein des mouvements sociaux.

**Mots-clés:** Mouvements sociaux; participation; intersectionnalité; mouvements des personnes lesbiennes, gaies, bisexuelles, trans et queer; privilège blanc; régimes de citoyenneté; politique canadienne; politique québécoise.

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# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACAS: | Asian Community AIDS Services |
| ACCM: | AIDS Community Care Montréal |
| ACT: | AIDS Committee of Toronto |
| ADA: | Au-delà de l'Arc-en-ciel |
| ADGQ: | Association pour les droits des gai(e)s du Québec |
| AECA: | Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique |
| AGIR: | Action LGBTQ avec les immigrant-e-s et réfugié-e-s |
| ALOT: | Asian Lesbians of Toronto |
| ASAAP: | Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention |
| ASK: | Association for Social Knowledge |
| ATQ: | Aide aux Trans du Québec |
| Black CAP: | Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention |
| BLH: | Bureau de lutte contre l'homophobie |
| BLM-TO: | Black Lives Matter Toronto |
| CCGLM: | Centre Communautaire des gais et lesbiennes de Montréal |
| CDPDJ: | Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse |
| CHAR: | Comité homosexuel anti-répression |
| CHAT: | Community Homophile Association of Toronto |
| CLH: | Chaire de lutte à l'homophobie |
| COMSM: | Coalition des organismes des minorités sexuelles du Montréal métropolitain |
| CQGL: | Conseil québécois des gais et lesbiennes |
| CQLGBT: | Conseil québécois LGBT |
| CRC: | Combahee River Collective |
| CSO: | Civil society organization |
| CSS: | Centre des services sociaux Ville-Marie |
| E-ASO: | Ethno-specific AIDS organization |
| FLH: | Front de libération homosexuel |
| FLQ: | Front de libération du Québec |
| FMNL : | Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front |
| GAAP: | Gay Asian AIDS Project |
| GAT: | Gay Asians of Toronto |
| GATE: | Gay Alliance Toward Equality |
| GLAM: | Gay and Lesbian Asians of Montréal |
| LGBT: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans |
| LGBTQ: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer |
| LGBTQI: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and intersex |
| LGBTQ2: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and Two-Spirited |
| LGBTQ-POC: | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer people of colour |

| | |
|---|---|
| LDH: | Ligue des droits de l'homme |
| LGV: | Lesbians and gays against violence |
| LOC: | Lesbians of colour |
| LOOT: | Lesbian Organization of Toronto |
| MCC: | Metropolitan Community Church |
| NBFO: | National Black Feminist Organization |
| NOW: | National Organization of Women |
| NPO: | Non-profit organization |
| NSM: | New Social Movement theory |
| OCASI: | Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants |
| PEM: | Perspectives Ébènes Montréal |
| PIRA : | Provisional Irish Republican army |
| PLQ: | Parti libéral du Québec |
| POC : | People of colour |
| PQ: | Parti québécois |
| PSOC: | Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires |
| PWA: | People living with AIDS Foundation |
| QuAIA: | Queers Against Israeli Apartheid |
| RB: | Red Brigades |
| RCMP: | Royal Canadian Mounted Police |
| RMT: | Resource mobilization theory |
| SMO: | Social movement organization |
| SNCC : | Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee |
| TCLGQ: | Table de concertation des lesbiennes et gais du Québec |
| TGA: | Toronto Gay Action |
| TTC: | Toronto Transit Commission |
| TPS: | Toronto Police Services |
| UQAM: | Université du Québec à Montréal |
| UTHA: | University of Toronto Homophile Association |

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# Introduction

On July 2nd, 2016, Black Lives Matter Toronto (BLM-TO) disrupted the annual lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer[1] (LGBTQ) Pride march in downtown Toronto, by staging a sit-in at the intersection of Yonge and College streets. During the 30 minutes interruption, BLM-TO, who also figured as the year's honored group, formulated a list of demands towards Pride Toronto. These included an increased representation of people of colour within Pride's organizing committee, increased funding and support for Black Queer Youth events and Blockorama, and the removal of police floats during the march, amongst other things (Battersby 2016; Walcott 2017). Later that summer, Fierté Montréal celebrated its 10th edition by honoring, for the first time, Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique (AECA), an LGBTQ Afro-Caribbean organization that had been part of Montréal's LGBTQ community for over ten years. For some[2], Fierté Montréal's move seemed to come as a response to what had happened earlier in Toronto. While this has never been explicitly nor publicly stated by the organizing committee, the creation of a Montréal Black Lives Matter chapter nevertheless ensued and on August 20th, 2017, the group disrupted the annual LGBTQ Pride march downtown Montréal. Black Lives Matter protestors interrupted the traditional minute of silence asking for an increased representation of people of colour at Pride and for an acknowledgement of the pivotal role played by trans women of colour, such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, in the development of Pride (Eff 2017).

Two things stand out from this line of events. First, BLM's disruptive actions bring to light the continuous exclusion of people of colour from LGBTQ movements in Canada. What is more, they show the extent to which Canadian LGBTQ people of colour (LGBTQ-POC) have historically been invisibilized, echoing similar observations made in the United States and in Europe. Second, these events represent recent manifestations of the ways in which people of colour have collectively participated in Canadian LGBTQ movements. As AECA's existence within Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape shows, people of colour have collectively participated by creating and joining LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. Far from being anecdotical, this particular form of collective participation is in fact inscribed within a broader

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[1] The LGBTQ acronym will be used throughout this thesis for uniformity purposes. A discussion on the politics of naming and on its usage appears further in this introduction.
[2] Including activists that were interviewed for this research.

tradition of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Canada, which has been overlooked by academics and mainstream activists.

This thesis focuses on people of colour's collective participation within Canadian LGBTQ movements. Bearing in mind the significance of urban centers as converging spaces for LGBTQ people of colour activism and considering the fragmented nature of LGBTQ activism at a pan-Canadian scale (Grundy and Smith 2005; M. Smith 2005a), this research focuses on activism at a local scale. Taking as a starting point the creation of LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities observed in both Toronto and Montréal, this thesis asks the following question: why have people of colour *collectively* engaged in LGBTQ movements the way that they have? To this end, it pursues two interrelated objectives. First, considering the relative invisibilization of LGBTQ-POC organizing across academic and activist work, it seeks to retrace the ways in which people of colour have organized within Toronto and Montréal's LGBTQ movements, hence exposing what I refer to as *LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.* Second, it aims to explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories by incorporating an intersectional analytical framework to the study of social movement participation.

Social movement participation represents a long-standing and central question within social movement research, consequently giving rise to an impressive body of work. In trying to elucidate *why* people participate in social movements, social movement theory has for this matter provided a notable range of micro-, meso-, and macro-level explanations. While micro-level explanations have focused on individuals themselves, looking at one's biographical availability or resources for example (McAdam 1986; Corrigall-Brown 2012), meso-level explanations have emphasized the role played by movements, in particular social movement organizations (SMOs), in 'pulling' individuals into activism. Networks (Passy and Giugni 2001), framing processes (Snow et al. 2008), and narratives (Polletta 1998) constitute some of the meso-level factors raised in previous work. Macro-level explanations have for their part investigated the broader context within which individuals and movements are set, examining the role played by political opportunities (Meyer 2004) or moral shocks (Jasper and Poulsen 1995). Inasmuch as these constitute relevant explanatory avenues, another strand of work has instead focused on elucidating *how* people participate in social movements. Adopting a processual approach to the study of social movement participation, studies on individual

activist paths[3] (Fillieule 2001; Broqua and Fillieule 2017; Corrigall-Brown 2012) have complexified the notion of participation, examined multilevel interactions, and paid close attention to disengagement processes.

Social movement theory and previous work on individual activist paths without a doubt offer pertinent tools to further our understanding of people of colour's participation within Canadian LGBTQ movements. What is however missing from this theoretical portrait is an emphasis on the *relational* context[4] within which participation is set, which we cannot so easily dismiss. If we take into consideration the ways in which societies find themselves structured by a range of intersecting power relations, the conditions that may drive and inform social movement participation cannot be dislocated from the context in which these conditions are produced. What is more, when a certain group of individuals – in this case LGBTQ people of colour – *collectively* engage and organize in LGBTQ movements in similar ways – by creating and/or joining LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities – it is clear that the context, both movement and society-wise, within which their collective participation is set must be examined.

In light of these theoretical pitfalls, this thesis turns to intersectionality as a theoretical framework for explaining social movement participation. I argue that with its emphasis on relationality, power, and social context, intersectionality is more suitable to fully grasp and explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Toronto and Montréal. Combined with a multilevel analysis, it more specifically brings to light three elements. First, on a micro-level, it facilitates an understanding of participants' social locations and allows for an identification of the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Second, on a meso-level, it invites an unpacking of the social movement organizational dynamics and power relations within which LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are set. Finally, on a macro-level, it brings about a clarification of the ways in which institutional and sociopolitical contexts differently inform Toronto and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. This thesis consequently argues that LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are the product of (1)

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[3] This literature mostly uses the notion of 'individual trajectories'. I retain the term 'individual activist paths' to prevent confusing this line of work with the main object of this research, namely 'LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories'.

[4] Corrigall-Brown (2012) does refer to social movements' relational context. However, she focuses mainly on social ties and interactions rather than on the underlying power relations that structure social ties and shape interactions.

individual activist paths, (2) social movement organizational dynamics, and (3) specific institutional and sociopolitical contexts.

In coherence with an intersectional epistemological standpoint, individual experiences and narratives figure at the core of this research. Selected as the main method of inquiry, in-depth interviews not only provide access to individual motivations driving participation, but they also offer an opportunity for uncovering the impact that subjective experiences have on participation itself. Interviews were thus conducted with 42 LGBTQ-identifying activists[5], involved in either Toronto's or Montréal's LGBTQ movement. The interview material was complemented by secondary sources, such as documents produced by LGBTQ organizations and other government-related documentation. The proposed methodological design further incorporates a double-comparative framework. First, LGBTQ-POC and White[6]-LGBTQ individual activist paths are analyzed in a comparative fashion as a way to establish collective patterns that more specifically characterize LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Second, comparing Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements gives rise to a context-specific analysis which illuminates the various differences observed between LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in both cities.

**Clarifying definitions**

This thesis is articulated around three main terms, which I believe require some clarification: LGBTQ, people of colour, and social movements. While these terms may come across as unambiguous for some, they have nevertheless given rise to various debates, in both academic and activist circles. Without elaborating at great lengths on these debates, I will briefly define each term and clarify why I have made these particular choices.

To quote Elizabeth A. Armstrong (2002), "sexual identity labels are highly political" (xix). The way in which activists collectively name themselves represents a political act in and of itself. Labels are not neutral and defining one's activism is constitutive of the process of mobilizing collectively (Dobrowolsky and Jenson 2004). The evolution of labels used to designate sexual and gender

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[5] Interviews were conducted with both White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC activists. Six interview transcripts available in The ArQuives' digital collection were added to the 42 interviews that I conducted.

[6] Capitalizing 'White' serves to disrupt whiteness' invisibility, which maintains White people in a privileged position (see chapter 6 for an elaborate description of whiteness and its privileged invisibility). For the remaining of this thesis, I will capitalize the term 'White' whenever I am referring to White people.

activism may subsequently be understood as being shaped by both society's representation of sexual and gender norms and internal power relations within sexual and gender movements (Tremblay 2015b). It is in this regard that gender and sexual movements have taken on different labels over time and across space. From the 'gay and lesbian' movement to 'queer' and 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender' movements, the way in which sexual and gender activists have collectively labeled themselves is illustrative of internal activist dynamics and their rapport with the broader society.

In the 1950s and the 1960s, Canadian activists organized under the label 'homophile', following in the footsteps of American homophile organizing, such as the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis  (Armstrong 2002; M. Smith 2014). Focusing on the notion of 'love' rather than on the notion of 'sex', the homophile label was eventually replaced with the advent of 1970s gay liberation activism, which focused primarily on sexual liberation (Tremblay 2015b). Generally speaking, the gay liberation movement attempted at liberating everyone from sexual and gender categories, which were conceived as rigid and constraining. It privileged informal networks and radical tactics, hence distinguishing itself from homophile organizing (M. Smith 2014). Although the 'gay' label was initially thought of as inclusive of both women and men, it was primarily focused and centered around men, leading women to increasingly identify as lesbians. The early 1980s thereby gave rise to the label 'gay and lesbian movement', followed by the addition of 'bisexual' and 'transgender' by the end of the decade (Armstrong 2002; Tremblay 2015b). The late 1980s and early 1990s further saw the development of the 'queer' label, with the emergence of groups like Queer Nation. While the term 'queer' has come to be increasingly used as an umbrella term, queer activism is nevertheless empirically distinct from lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) activism (G. Brown 2016).

The LGBT acronym has gained important visibility throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, making its way outside the movement and into various political institutions. The 'Q' was eventually added, standing for those who identify as *queer*. Critics have however raised the inherent tensions that remain between the different letters. Trans critics have for instance raised the cis-centric nature of LGBTQ activism (Namaste 2000; Hodzić, Postić, and Kajtezović 2016), while lesbian women and bisexual activists have denounced their continuous invisibilization within these movements and, more generally, within LGBTQ spaces (Burgess 2016; J. Podmore 2001; McLean 2015). Others have critiqued its exclusive character, leaving some aside, such as people identifying as asexual, intersex or

Two-Spirited. Variants of the LGBTQ acronym have therefore been used, such as LGBTQI, with the 'I' standing in for *intersex* or LGBTQ2, with the '2' standing in for *Two-Spirit*.

Bearing in mind all these considerations, this thesis retains the LGBTQ label for two main reasons. First, on a collective level, sexual and gender organizations tend to use varying terms. While the LGBTQ acronym provides a unifying term, it does also come across as one of the most consensual terms within sexual and gender activist communities covered for this research. Second, it remains the most representative label in terms of the ways in which activists with whom I have met individually identify. For instance, it would not have been coherent – nor respectful – for this thesis to use the LGBTQ2 acronym without rightfully including Two-Spirited people in the analysis; even more so considering my White settler social location. Finally, I have decided to refrain from using queer as an umbrella term, as it overshadows the specificity and distinct character of queer activism (Pabion 2016).

In addition to mobilizing the LGBTQ acronym, this thesis uses the term 'people of colour' (POC). Keeping in mind recent concerns regarding the term's potential erasure of Black people (Parham 2019), POC is hereby used to include a larger spectrum of nonwhite racial diversity (Pérez 2020). As such, it does not act as a synonym for Black people, nor does it presuppose that people of colour constitute a homogeneous and monolithic group. Some concerns have further been raised regarding the possible reproduction of racial hierarchies, wherein white is treated as a noncolour against which all other racial groups are lumped together as supposedly *having* a colour (Parham 2019). Indeed, as will be further addressed in chapter 6, the dominant perception of white as a noncolour perpetuates White people's privilege of forming an *invisible* racial group. While this thesis does use the term 'people of colour' to refer to nonwhite activists, it does not attempt to flatten differences and maintain whiteness in its privileged invisibility. Instead, the term POC serves to disrupt whiteness and shed light on white privilege within LGBTQ movements.

The last term which requires some clarification is the notion of social movements. Broadly speaking, social movements seek to transform social values and institutions by engaging in collective actions (Castells 1997). Conceptually, they may be defined as "networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups, and/or organizations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani 2008, 267). It is in this regard that a social

movement is not tangible and is instead an abstraction. One of the ways in which scholars have studied social movements is by looking at the actors, both individual and collective, that constitute particular movements. On a collective level, social movement actors may range from informal grassroots collectives to formal organizations, or what is commonly referred to as social movement organizations (SMOs). Delineating the borders of a movement is therefore not an easy task, and these borders are to be further conceived as fluid and everchanging.

As a social movement seeking to transform society, the LGBTQ movement seeks to challenge heterocisnormativity – or the idea that heterosexuality is the dominant sexual and intimate norm (heterosexism) and that an individual's assigned gender at birth has to be consistent with one's gender identity (cisgenderism). Heterocisnormativity may be further conceived as a "system of norms, privilege, and oppression that organizes social power around sexual identity and gender identity whereby heterosexual cisgender people are situated above all other" (Worthen 2020, xv). As those who do not comply with heterosexual and cisgender norms are seen as 'deviant', it is considered acceptable to hold prejudice against non-heterosexual and non-cisgender individuals (Worthen 2019; M. Smith 2014). Similar to the women's movement, the LGBTQ movement is made up of a range of organizations and collectives, both formal and informal, which mobilize a variety of disruptive and less disruptive tactics. Canadian LGBTQ collective actors are thus diverse and operate in various sectors of activity (i.e. sexual health, rights, and education), as will be developed in chapter 4.

## Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided as follows. In the **first chapter**, I provide a chronological overview of LGBTQ activism in Toronto and Montréal, with a particular emphasis on the emergence and development of LGBTQ-POC activism. Starting with a discussion around the 1969 Criminal Code reforms and their impact on LGBTQ communities and activism, I follow with an exposition of 1970s gay liberation organizing in Toronto. LGBTQ organizing in Montréal is then addressed in light of Québec's undergoing Quiet Revolution and emerging nationalism. The emergence of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto in the early 1980s, the HIV/AIDS crisis and its eventual impact on LGBTQ-POC activism in the early 1990s is then brought to light. Thereafter, I explore the emergence of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal in the early 1990s and the early 2000s, highlighting the limited

impact of the HIV/AIDS crisis on LGBTQ-POC organizing. I end the chapter by addressing various racialization processes that have characterized LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto and Montréal, such as Pride politics, the tensed relationship with the Toronto Police Services (TPS), and Québec politics on *laïcité*. Overall, this first chapter serves to outline LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in both cities which the dissertation will seek to explain.

**Chapter 2** delves into the literature on social movement participation. In so doing, it sheds light on some of the ways in which social movement theory has previously sought to explain why people come to participate in social movements. Other work on individual activist paths is also addressed, focusing for its part on the ways in which people participate in social movements. **Chapter 3** turns to intersectionality and proposes a suitable theoretical framework for explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. The methodological design is then outlined in **chapter 4**, with a reflection on some of the epistemological implications of operationalizing an intersectional theoretical framework.

In chapters 5, 6 and 7, I present the results of my research. At a micro-level, **chapter 5** examines the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Individual activist paths are divided into four segments that represent different stages/characteristics of individual participation, namely (1) triggering factors, (2) driving motivations, (3) organizational mobility, and (4) patterns of disengagement. A comparative analysis between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths is undertaken throughout the chapter and allows for the identification of clear collective patterns that distinguish LGBTQ-POC from White-LGBTQ individual activist paths.

In **Chapter 6**, I engage in a meso-level analysis by exposing Montréal and Toronto's LGBTQ movements' organizational dynamics. Applying an intersectional lens to the notion of white privilege, I show (1) how relational and epistemic privilege structure LGBTQ activism through representational means; and (2) how productive and institutional privilege shape LGBTQ activism via resource-distribution mechanisms sustained through an unwritten set of rules and norms that legitimize particular forms of activism over others. This chapter thus offers some explanation for the differences observed between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths, all the while

shedding light on some of the differences between LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Toronto and Montréal.

Undertaking a macro-level analysis, **chapter 7** situates Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within their respective institutional and sociopolitical contexts. Building on the notion of citizenship regime, results show how Canadian and Québécois citizenship regimes have contributed in shaping both LGBTQ activism and LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto and Montréal. In focusing on these two citizenship regimes, this chapter more precisely looks at (1) how LGBTQ individuals and organizations have been recognized by the state; (2) the main funding mechanisms that support LGBTQ movements; and (3) how political institutions have shaped understandings of LGBTQ and national belonging amongst activists. This chapter therefore provides a context-specific analysis of LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, wherein Montréal and Toronto's institutional and sociopolitical contexts have differently informed LGBTQ(POC) activism.

On a theoretical level, this thesis demonstrates how a comprehensive analysis of micro-, meso-, and macro-level dynamics brings about a nuanced understanding of LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Moving past a homogenous and monolithic conception of LGBTQ-POC organizing, it instead highlights the underlying context-specific dynamics that differently drive and inform LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Empirically, it not only renders visible LGBTQ-POC organizing in Canada, but it also presents the specific ways – and the reasons why – LGBTQ-POC activists have organized in two of Canada's main urban centers, namely Toronto and Montréal.

Finally, with Black Lives Matter protests currently unfolding throughout North America, activists and academics have once again called for a true acknowledgement of Black people and people of colour's role in Canadian LGBTQ movements (Bowden 2020). When I started this research in 2017, the BLM-TO sit-in and the BLM disruption of the minute of silence in Montréal were still very fresh in people's minds and with very few exception, White-LGBTQ activists were mostly unfavorable to BLM's claims (Mehta, 2016). Several mainstream organizations have since taken actions, however mostly symbolic, to diversify their organizations, but there is still much work to be done for ensuring due representation of LGBTQ people of colour within our movements. It is with this in mind that this thesis harbors an affirmed political stance, and I sincerely hope it will modestly contribute to the much-needed *de-whitening* of LGBTQ movements in Canada.

# 1. LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Toronto and Montréal

On November 15<sup>th</sup> 2005, André Boisclair takes on the leadership of the Parti Québécois (PQ). Despite a significant loss for the PQ in the 2007 general election, Boisclair became the first openly homosexual politician to lead one of Québec's main political parties (Fugues 2007). Several years later, in January 2013, Kathleen Wynne takes the reins of Ontario's Liberal Party following Dalton McGuinty's resignation, becoming Ontario's – and Canada's – first openly LGBTQ premier (Tremblay 2015b). Five years later, twenty-five legislators sitting in the Canadian House of Commons openly identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Tremblay 2019). These political moments represent significant achievements for LGBTQ communities across the country, considering how these communities have historically been viewed as mentally ill, have been criminalized for their sexuality, have suffered – and continue to suffer – from police repression, and have been politically excluded from various institutions, notably civil service and the military (G. Kinsman 1987; G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010; Hooper 2019). If these political achievements certainly are encouraging, the fact is that they have not happened in a vacuum. Instead, they illustrate some of the outcomes of sustained LGBTQ activism in Canada at local, provincial, and federal levels for over half a century; an activism which further finds itself inscribed within a range of unequal power relations.

This first chapter will explore the unfolding of LGBTQ activism in Canada, with a particular focus on activism at a local level, namely in Toronto and Montréal. Drawing from secondary sources, as well as from some of the interview material gathered for this research, it will underline the emergence of LGBTQ organizing in both cities and situate, in a chronological manner, the development of LGBTQ people of colour (LGBTQ-POC) organizing – or what this thesis refers to as *LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories*. This chapter's aim is however two-fold. First, it aims at providing a general, yet detailed account of the ways in which LGBTQ activism developed in both cities, thereby highlighting some of the similarities and differences observed between Toronto and Montréal when it comes to LGBTQ-POC organizing. Considering the relative lack of data pertaining to LGBTQ-POC activism in Canada, this represents a significant descriptive result in and of itself, which is worth analyzing. Second, this chapter intends to disrupt dominant narratives in relation to the ways in which we recount LGBTQ activism in Canada. Rendering visible marginalized forms of organizing, namely LGBTQ-POC activism, hereby serves as a form of acknowledgement of the ways

in which certain narratives tend to get sidelined and remain, to some extent, invisibilized in both academic and activist work.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section will discuss the contested legacy of the 1969 Criminal Code reforms and address its impact on LGBTQ activism in Toronto. The second section will focus on LGBTQ organizing in Montréal in the 1970s, highly shaped by the Quiet Revolution and Québec nationalism. The emergence of some of the first LGBTQ-POC organizations in Toronto in the 1980s and 1990s will be discussed in the third section, while the fourth section will address the emergence of the first LGBTQ-POC organizations in Montréal in the 1990s and 2000s. Finally, the last section will focus on LGBTQ activism since the early 2010s, touching upon the ways in which racialization processes have recently unfolded in Toronto and Montréal.

## 1.1. The contested legacy of the 1969 Criminal Code reforms

While gay and lesbian communities appeared isolated and fragmented prior to the 1960s (Auger and Krug 2013; Warner 2002), sites of gender and sexual resistance, such as cabarets, burlesque shows and other social and cruising networks, were nonetheless present, albeit in secrecy, throughout Canada (see Namaste 2005; Gentile, Kinsman, and Rankin 2016). Following in the footsteps of the United States, Canadian gay and lesbian networks solidified in the 1960s with the emergence of several homophile[7] organizations located mostly in urban areas, such as Vancouver and Toronto (G. Kinsman 1987). For instance, the Association for Social Knowledge (ASK), considered to be Canada's first gay rights organization was formed in Vancouver in 1964. Soon after, in 1969, the University of Toronto Homophile Association (UTHA) was established, followed by the Community Homophile Association of Toronto (CHAT) in 1970 (Warner 2002). Mobilizing for the inclusion of gays and lesbians in all realms of society, UTHA and CHAT were largely assimilationists in their activism (C. J. Nash 2015), putting forward a normalized approach to sexuality rather than breaking away from (hetero)sexual norms. Inasmuch as homophile organizing contributed in structuring gay and lesbian communities throughout the 1960s, the 1969 Criminal Code reforms, also referred to as Bill C-150, played a substantial role in further spurring LGBTQ activism in Canada.

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[7] The use of the term homophile comes from the Mattachine Society established in the United States in 1950. "Mattachine recognized how crucial was the need for a more positive gay self-identity and rejected use of 'homosexual' which by this time had such clinical and pathological connotations. Instead, the society coined another word, *homophile*, derived from the Latin *philia,* meaning friendship, and the Greek, *philos*, meaning loving." (Warner 2002, 58).

In 1967, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed Everett George Klippert's appeal, a known homosexual, who was charged as a dangerous sexual offender and sentenced for an indefinite amount of time. Following the Supreme Court's dismissal of Klippert's appeal, then Justice minister Pierre-Elliott Trudeau expressed his will to liberalize the country's laws regarding homosexuality (McLeod 1996). The willingness to promote a more liberal view of homosexuality, which insisted on the private/public dichotomy, thereby limiting same-sex sexuality in the realm of the private sphere where the State should not intervene, was however highly influenced by the United Kingdom's *Wolfenden Report* released in 1957. The report, which recommended that "homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private be no longer a criminal offence" (Wolfenden Report quoted in Hooper 2019, 26), did in fact lead to the decriminalization of homosexual acts between consenting adults in Britain in 1967 (Warner 2002). In the advent of these events, and as a partial response to earlier discussions on legal reforms sparked by homophile organizations, in particular the ASK (Gentile, Kinsman, and Rankin 2016), Trudeau's government introduced the omnibus Bill C-150, which came into effect on August 26th, 1969 (McLeod 1996). This omnibus bill included a range of reforms that touched upon a variety of issues, such as divorce, abortion, and homosexuality, to name a few. Relative to homosexuality, it permitted sodomy between two consenting adults of twenty-one years of age or older yet limited such sexual practices to the private realm (M. Smith 2015).

While the 1969 Criminal Code reforms represent a major turning point in Canada's regulation of sexuality, its effects on LGBTQ people's lives remain contested. As some have rightly nuanced the claim according to which Bill C-150 decriminalized homosexuality in Canada, speaking instead of a 'partial decriminalization', others have further contested such narratives. Indeed, if all agree that Bill C-150 maintained a higher age of consent for same-sex sexual relations, therefore criminalizing same-sex sexual practices that involved younger people (G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010; M. Smith 2015), some have underlined how the passing of Bill C-150 has additionally led to a 'recriminalization' of homosexuality (Hooper 2019). For instance, Hooper (2019) argues that not only were private sexual acts rarely subjected to Criminal Code provisions prior to the reforms, specifically because of their private – and perhaps hidden – nature, but the introduction of the public/private dichotomy actually allowed for a State regulation of 'public' sexuality; hence, leading to "an increase in charges of gross indecency [and] expand[ing] [the] use of other Criminal Code provisions untouched by the omnibus bill, including those related to indecency acts, vagrancy, immoral theatrical performance, nudity,

obscenity, and bawdy houses" (Hooper 2019, 259–60). The intensification of police repression following 1969, revealed and documented in a range of studies (see Higgins 1999; Gentile 2016; Hooper 2016), has been used in support of the recriminalization argument regarding Bill C-150. Others have for their part questioned the antagonistic debate around the 1969 Criminal Code reforms. If Leckey (2020) rightly demonstrates the inherent complexity of the legislative process leading to the reforms, Crossman (2020) states that "one can neither be for nor against the 1969 reforms" (247), arguing instead that the reforms ought to be recognized as "creating the legal and discursive terrain within which the gay rights movement in Canada emerged"(261).

In support of Brenda Crossman's (2020) argument, Bill C-150 did have an uncontested effect on LGBTQ political activism, fostering grassroots activism and heightening the visibility of gay and lesbian networks (M. Smith 1999; G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010). The first gay and lesbian public protest was in this regard staged on Parliament Hill in Ottawa in 1971 to protest police harassment, amongst other things. In Toronto, grassroots activism also intensified in the 1970s with the establishment of significant LGBTQ institutions dedicated to a more liberationist form of activism. In 1970, Jearld Moldenhauer opened Glad Day Bookshop, Canada's first LGBTQ bookstore, which contributed to the circulation of liberationist ideas by selling gay liberation books (Warner 2002). The following year, in 1971, the Toronto Gay Action (TGA)[8] was formed, in opposition to CHAT's assimilationist approach to activism (C. J. Nash 2015), thereby devoting itself "to peaceful confrontation with all elements of sexist oppression" (McLeod 1996, 71). The Toronto-based LGBTQ newspaper, *The Body Politic,* published its first printed edition that same year, once again taking on a gay liberationist perspective (C. J. Nash 2005). This premier edition featured the infamous "We Demand" text, which consisted of a set of ten demands following the 1969 reforms, which included "the removal of crimes of 'gross indecency', 'buggery', and others from the Criminal Code" (Waite and Denovo, 1971, quoted in M. Smith 2015, 47). Organized on the anniversary of the passing of Bill C-150, the first Gay Pride Week in the country was then held in Toronto in 1972 (Warner 2002), and in 1973 a Toronto chapter of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) was established. The founding of the 519 Church Street Community Center in 1975 further provided an important organizing space for LGBTQ advocacy, as well as for a range of community-led initiatives. Meanwhile, stand-alone lesbian groups simultaneously emerged during that same decade, with the

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[8] The Toronto Gay Action became the Gay Alliance Towards Equality (GATE) in 1973 (C. J. Nash 2015).

Lesbian Organization of Toronto (LOOT) established in November 1976, also known as the largest lesbian feminist organization in Toronto (Rayside 2015; Ross 1990).

Overall, LGBTQ networks and political activism intensified following the 1969 Criminal Code reforms, albeit unequally throughout the country. As gay liberation institutions did proliferate in Toronto during the 1970s, in Montréal, LGBTQ activism developed in a particular sociopolitical context, marked by *Québécois* nationalism and an ongoing Quiet Revolution.

## 1.2. LGBTQ organizing in Montréal in the 1970s

Scholars have previously evoked the difficulty to speak of an active LGBTQ movement in Québec – and Montréal – prior to the 1970s. Not only did the Criminal Code provisions historically constrain gay and lesbian visibility, but few homophile activities could sustain such activism in Montréal, as opposed to Toronto and Vancouver (Tremblay 2015a; Higgins 1999). While the 1969 Criminal Code reforms did represent some kind of political opportunity for LGBTQ communities to mobilize across Canada, it had little substantial impact on LGBTQ activism in Québec, which was in the midst of significant sociopolitical transformations. The province's flourishing Quiet Revolution of the late 1960s and early 1970s, accompanied by an emerging *Québécois* independence movement, instead appear as major factors spurring LGBTQ activism in Montréal.

Following Maurice Duplessis' Union Nationale's defeat in the 1960 provincial election, Jean Lesage's Parti Libéral du Québec government launched what is commonly referred to as the Quiet Revolution. Having campaigned under the slogan "C'est le temps que ça change!", Lesage's Liberal government put in place a range of cultural, social, and economic reforms that transformed Québec society and strengthened the Québec State and its institutional apparatus ((Balthazar 2013). Sweeping through the 1960s, this vast movement not only prompted an economic modernization of the province, but also contributed to Québec's national affirmation as a French-speaking society within an English-speaking Canada. As a result, the Quiet Revolution "may have played an indirect role in the expression of lesbian and gay activism in the early 1970s by advancing a modernizing nationalism with which lesbian and gay groups could associate" (Tremblay 2015a, 107). An emerging Québécois nationalist movement, and the establishment of its more radical branch, the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ), more precisely shaped LGBTQ organizing in Montréal.

The 1971 founding of the Front de libération homosexuel (FLH) thus marks the beginning of formal LGBTQ organizing in Montréal, and in Québec for that matter. Far from being arbitrary, the name of the group is not only intended to show its affinity with the FLQ[9], but it also aligns itself with other radical nationalist movements, such as the Front de libération nationale in Algeria, and the Front de libération des femmes, a feminist group in Montréal (see Higgins 1999; Côté and Boucher 2008; Gentile 2016). Evidently, the group did not remain under the radar and rapidly became the target of a series of measures undertaken following the 1970 War Measures Act. Declared after a series of kidnappings staged by the FLQ, the War Measures Act was "invoked to justify raids on and closures of some of Montréal's gay bars" (G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010, 270). The FLH similarly came under acute surveillance from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and in June 1972, a police raid at the FLH's headquarters resulted in the arrest of forty people. While the group disbanded soon after the raid, LGBTQ organizing in Montréal later resurfaced following an intensification of police repression in the advent of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montréal.

According to Higgins (1999), notwithstanding the FLH's brief existence in the early 1970s, the creation of the Comité homosexuel anti-répression (CHAR) in 1976 marks the "beginning of the modern period of gay liberation in Montréal" (quoted in Tremblay 2015a, 108). As its name indicates, CHAR formed as a response to intensified police violence against gays and lesbians that was part of what is referred to as the 'Olympic games cleansing'. In anticipation of the 1976 Olympic Games, the Montréal municipal government launched its 'clean-up' campaign, thereby allowing police raids on gay and lesbian commercial spaces (J. Podmore 2015). As such, "the February 4, 1976, raid on Montréal's Sauna Aquarius is often cited as the beginning of the pre-Olympics clean-up campaign. Thirty men were arrested as 'found-ins' in a bawdy house" (Gentile 2016, 75). Lesbians were also subjected to gendered forms of police harassment during that time. The lesbian bar Chez Jilly's was in fact raided by the police, who used machine guns and submitted female patrons to physical searches. While police repression was in no regard limited to the city of Montréal, extending from Toronto to Québec City (Gentile 2016), it nonetheless had a direct effect on LGBTQ organizing in the province's metropolis. Indeed, the CHAR, which regrouped representatives from various Montréal gay and lesbian groups, organized one of the major gay rights demonstrations in the city at that time,

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[9] While the FLH explicitly identified with the FLQ, its creation also came as a response to gays and lesbians' exclusion from nationalist circles (Tremblay 2015a).

bringing together more than three hundred gay and lesbians in the streets of downtown Montréal (G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010).

In the fall of 1976, and in the wake of the CHAR, the Association pour les droits des gai(e)s du Québec (ADGQ) is established, hence reinforcing LGBTQ activism geared towards a gay liberation ideology (Tremblay 2015a; M. Smith 1999). Considered to be one of the largest gay liberation groups in Canada, it played a prominent role in the advancement of gay rights in the province. Following the Truxx Bar police raid on October 22, 1977, wherein 146 men were arrested, the ADGQ organized a demonstration of over two thousand people to protest these arrests. Two months later, and under sustained pressure from the ADGQ and the Québec Human Rights Commission, the governing *Parti Québécois* amended Québec's Charter of Rights and Freedoms to include a clause prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, in December 1977 (J. Podmore 2015). Québec thus became the first Canadian jurisdiction to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Côté and Boucher 2008).

In spite of varying sociopolitical contexts and of the specificity of Québec's Quiet Revolution, 1970s LGBTQ activism in Toronto and Montréal nonetheless followed similar paths. These similarities include a strengthening of grassroots activism, as well as an adherence to gay liberationist ideas, highly shaped by the intensification of police repression. The acute police crackdown of LGBTQ social spaces throughout the 1970s serves as an illustration of the ways in which the Criminal Code reforms of 1969 have somewhat fostered a 'recriminalization' of homosexuality, thereby catalysing the visibility of gay and lesbian activism. For instance, one may posit that Bill C-150 did play a major role in enabling Montréal's municipal government to engage in an Olympic Games clean-up that would specifically target gay and lesbian social and commercial spaces. While 1970s activism in Toronto and Montréal did in a sense take on similar paths, the 1980s did bring about slight differences. Despite a shared concern with regards to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the configuration of LGBTQ activism in both cities began to take slightly different routes, with Toronto seeing the emergence of LGBTQ-POC organizing. The next section will focus on the development of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto, namely the creation of LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities, throughout the 1980s and the 1990s.

### 1.3. LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto in the 1980s and the 1990s

As previously and thoroughly documented in a range of studies, the AIDS crisis of the 1980s significantly influenced gay and lesbian activism across the world (M. Smith 2014; Armstrong 2002). Generalized homophobia, coupled with a relative absence of governmental action in certain contexts, have contributed to further marginalize gay, and to a certain extent lesbian, communities. Grassroots LGBTQ political activism thereby turned towards creating alternative spaces and developing community-based health and support services. While Toronto is no exception to this, the development of the AIDS sector in the Ontario capital was in fact racialized, as it was primarily intended to serve White – and gay – populations, henceforth unextending to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities (Giwa and Greensmith 2012). As Catungal (2018) underlines, "despite the fact that the municipal Board of Health supported community-based response to HIV/AIDS, profound medical uncertainty coupled with homophobia, AIDS-phobia, and the adoption of one-size-fits-all approaches to social service delivery led to a landscape of access that was unevenly distributed by race and ethnicity" (45). To counter the unequal access to AIDS-related services, LGBTQ-POC activists, who had already begun creating alternative spaces outside of the 'mainstream' movement, deployed various efforts that would eventually lead to the establishment of ethno-specific AIDS organizations (E-ASOs) intended to specifically cater to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities.

The first Toronto-based LGBTQ-POC organization was formed as early as 1980. Initiated by four gay Asian men, Richard Fung, Gerard Chen, Nito Marquez, and Tony Souza, Gay Asians of Toronto (GAT) grew out of regular discussion groups initially launched by Fung[10] and Chen (Catungal 2018). As Tom Warner (2002) indicates, GAT aimed, amongst other things, at "promoting unity and mutual support among gay Asians; organizing social, cultural, educational, and recreational activities for its members; providing culturally sensitive social and support services; and advocating on issues relevant to their community's concerns" (185). Soon after its creation, GAT rapidly gained visibility in Toronto's LGBTQ movement. In 1982, it figured as the Gay and Lesbian Pride Day Parade's honored group, thereby leading the march, with Alan Li, a prominent GAT

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[10] This initiative grew out from Fung's experience at the National March on Washington in 1979, and more specifically from his participation at the first National Third World Lesbian and Gay Conference held during the same weekend. Fung's engagement in a group of gay Asians who sought to march together was "the first time that [his] intersecting ethnic and sexual identities found a space to come together" (Catungal 2018, 54). Upon his return to Toronto, Fung wanted to create a similar space specifically designed for gay Asians, which eventually led to the establishment of GAT.

activist, giving the keynote speech[11]. The following year, the group launched CelebrAsian, an annual event which began as a community-led cabaret (Ha and Daulet 2017), and in 1984, Richard Fung produced *Orientations,* a video showcasing gay and lesbian Asians that rendered visible the problems they faced in a predominantly White gay and lesbian community (Warner 2002).

Meanwhile, in 1984, a group of Black gays and lesbians, who sat around a table one evening, expressed their concerns pertaining to the lack of services for Black gays and lesbians. Speaking against the whiteness of Toronto's gay and lesbian organizations, someone suggested they do something about it and start their own organization (Doug Stewart in Catungal 2018, 49). Co-founded by Doug Stewart, Derych Gordon, Sylmadel Coke, Debbie Douglas, and Carol Allen (Warner 2002), and highly influenced by civil rights and feminist activist groups, Zami thus grew out of this desire to "create institutions and services geared specifically for Black people, especially Black queer people" in Toronto (Catungal 2018, 50). Becoming the first Canadian organization by and for Black and West Indie gay and lesbians, "Zami fulfilled social, political, and supportive roles, including peer counselling and discussion groups" (Warner 2002, 186). That same year, Lesbians of Colour (LOC) also formed to provide space and offer support to lesbians of colour in Toronto. As such, the group held weekly meetings and discussion groups, organized social events, such as dinners and parties, and participated in other public events, for instance the Lesbian Sexuality Conference (Warner 2002).

Finally, as LGBTQ-POC flourished throughout the 1980s, another group formed out of the desire to bring together South Asians of diasporic origins and of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Co-founded in 1987 by Nelson Carvalho, Karim Ladak, Deep Khosla, and Chris Paul, a group of gay men, Khush[12] was engaged in political advocacy, organized a range of social activities, held regular meetings, and published its *Khush Khayal* newsletter until the late 1990s (Warner, 2002). In 1989, Khush held Salaam Toronto!, an event meant to celebrate diasporic gay identities, which eventually led to the annual festival Desh Pardesh. Held from 1990 to 2000, and initially organized at the 519 Church Street Community Center, Desh Pardesh showcased South Asian gay and lesbian

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[11] As Li (2017) relates, Pride organizers chose GAT to lead the 1982 parade for particular reasons. In 1981, the annual gay picnic was held at Grange Park, next to Chinatown, but due to massive turnout, it became the first 'official' Pride parade. The following year, when Pride organizers applied for a permit, the city council claimed that they had received several complaints from Chinese-Canadian communities, who stated that they were offended by such public display of homosexuality. Hence, "the Pride committee felt that GAT's leadership and active involvement was needed to counter those complaints – and also demonstrate there were gay Chinese, too" (Li 2017, 333).

[12] Khush is also referred to as Khush: South Asian Gay Men of Toronto.

artists. As Nelson Carvalho recalls: "We wanted to expose our families to our realities as queer South Asians and at the same time we wanted to expose the White gay and lesbian communities to our lives in more than a tokenistic fashion" (in Fernandez 2017, 261). While a women's caucus did exist within Khush, in spite of the group's explicit orientation towards gay men, the caucus eventually merged with Asian Lesbians of Toronto (ALOT), founded in the fall of 1988 to expose the links between sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism (Warner, 2002).

As previously mentioned, the HIV/AIDS crisis largely influenced the unfolding of LGBTQ activism in Toronto in the 1980s. With the proliferation of locally and provincially funded AIDS organizations, LGBTQ activism turned towards supporting these community-led health services. Yet, this context of "institutionalized racial neglect on the part of mainstream AIDS organizations and the local state, whose one-size-fits-all approaches were unable to account, in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways, for the needs of people of colour" (Catungal 2018, 47) left LGBTQ-POC communities underserved. As a result, and as LGBTQ-POC activists were being increasingly sought by mainstream AIDS organizations to attend to the needs of people of colour, the late 1980s and early 1990s gave rise to Toronto-based ethno-specific AIDS organisations (E-ASOs), namely the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP), the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP), and the Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS). Although GAT, Zami, and Khush are no longer active today, they have played a crucial and undeniable role in the establishment of these E-ASOs (Catungal 2013; 2018; Warner 2002).

In the mid-1980s, concerns grew around the AIDS Committee of Toronto's (ACT) capacity in offering culturally sensitive services (Warner, 2002). One of the city's largest AIDS organization, ACT would repeatedly seek help from LGBTQ-POC activists to deal with various cases. Such 'complicated' cases would in part involve "HIV+ people of colour, including both Black heterosexuals and gay men, some of whom, at the time of contact with members of groups for gays and lesbians of colour, were already quite ill and/or dying" (Catungal 2018, 52). It is in this context that Black community leaders, including Zami organizers, formed the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention in 1987[13] to attend to the needs of Toronto's Black, African, and Caribbean communities, who were having difficulty accessing AIDS services (Catungal 2013). Black CAP remains active today, representing the largest AIDS service organization that specifically serves Black communities in Canada.

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[13] Black CAP formed in 1987, but was officially incorporated in 1991 (Catungal 2013, 261).

In 1989, Zami co-founder Doug Stewart, who worked at ACT prior to becoming Black CAP's first executive director, reached out to Khush members to seek out further help with one of ACT's clients, a Sri Lankan man who spoke little English (Catungal 2013). Around the same time, a South Asian couple who couldn't access AIDS services in their own language and cultural context eventually died. Following these two events, a group of Khush activists got together, shared their concerns regarding the lack of services for South Asians infected with or affected by AIDS, and established the South Asian AIDS Coalition with support from ACT. The South Asian AIDS Coalition later incorporated as an independent AIDS Service Organization in 1995 and became the Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP) (Catungal 2013; Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention 2016). Today, ASAAP "is committed to providing culturally responsive holistic health promotion and support services for people from South Asian and other related communities who are living with, at risk of, or affected by HIV and related health conditions" (Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention 2016, 2).

In addition to Black CAP and ASAAP, a third E-ASO formed, in part, out of a previous LGBTQ-POC organizing initiative. In 1990, Gay Asians of Toronto (GAT) launched the Gay Asian AIDS Project (GAAP) with support from ACT, following two major realizations (Warner, 2002). First, as prominent member Alan Li was contacted by Doug Stewart regarding a Vietnamese client who had language barriers and who eventually died, it became apparent that mainstream AIDS service organizations in Toronto lacked resources to provide ethno-racial specific services. Second, as the city of Toronto began to render funding available in the mid-1980s for community-led HIV/AIDS prevention work, thereby leading to the creation of two Asian specific projects, namely the Vietnamese AIDS Project and the Toronto Chinese Health Education, the fact that these projects did not reach out to gay and lesbian communities became an evident concern. Consequently, GAT leaders realized "that they had to develop something for [their] own community because there [was] no...safe house for gay Asians in either mainstream ethno-racial or mainstream HIV/AIDs social service spaces" (Catungal 2018, 57), hence the launch of GAAP. The Gay Asian AIDS Project spearheaded by GAT eventually merged with the Vietnamese AIDS Project of the Southeast Asian Services Center and the AIDS Alert Project of the Toronto Chinese Health Education Committee in December 1994 to form the Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS), which remains active today.

Overall, Black CAP, ASAAP, and ACAS were all established following similar concerns with regards to the lack of ethno-racial and queer specific AIDS services and the necessity to offer such services to underserved communities. At the same time, they all grew out of previous LGBTQ-POC grassroots activist initiatives, which laid the groundwork for their development. Most importantly, the fact that they have all emerged during that same particular time period revealed the "necessary hailing of racialized communities as nascent 'target populations' in the 1980s and 1990s [which] signalled the inability and failure of mainstream ways of responding to sexual health issues and the need to address the nexus of racial, sexual and health politics beyond a colour-blind framework" (Catungal 2013, 261). Meanwhile, LGBTQ-POC activists were also voicing concerns regarding the apparent – and problematic – whiteness of LGBTQ organizing, beyond the HIV/AIDS sector. It is in this regard that the late 1990s saw the rise of other forms of LGBTQ-POC organizing which worked at creating alternative spaces, particularly during Toronto Pride festivities.

By the late 1990s, Toronto Pride activities were increasingly perceived as predominantly white spaces which lacked representations with which Black queer communities could identify (Lord and Zuberi 2017). This concern was at the core of Jamea Zuberi's initiative to bring together a group of Black queer activists to discuss the absence of Black spaces and Black representations during Pride festivities. These discussions eventually led to the creation of Blackness Yes! in 1998 and the launch of its first edition of Blockorama, namely "an all-day party with drag queen performers, drummers, dancers, and DJs, fashioned after the event of the same name held in Trinidad around carnival time" (Bain 2016, 81). For Zuberi, having a space like Blockorama at Pride was not solely a matter of representation: "I felt complete with my culture, family, friends, and sexuality all being in one space. We all came together as Black queer people to celebrate transforming Pride into a space for us" (Lord and Zuberi 2017, 341). A year later, in 1999, lesbians and dykes of colour organizing under the banner World Majority Lesbians also managed to enlarge the space they had been occupying at Toronto's Pride march since 1993. In response to the Toronto Police Association's ad campaign to prevent crime in the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) which featured Latino men, World Majority Lesbians rented out a big truck, with a driver, on which they hung a sign that read : "Stop Police Racism: End the Criminalization of People of Colour!" (Lee Kam 2017). While Toronto Pride organizers and Toronto city cops put significant pressure on World Majority Lesbians to take down their sign, the group maintained their position, claimed their ground, and managed to march as planned.

All in all, the HIV/AIDS crisis considerably impacted LGBTQ-POC organizing. Not only did it render visible the absence of culturally and sexually sensitive local AIDS-related services, it revealed the organizational limit of mainstream AIDS service organizations in the city. LGBTQ-POC activists who were at the time involved in several community-based alternative spaces, laid the necessary groundwork for the establishment of some of the most prominent LGBTQ-POC organizations in Toronto today, namely Black CAP, ASAAP, and ACAS. In addition to the HIV/AIDS sector, the 1990s also brought to light the whiteness of Toronto Pride festivities and the need to diversify Pride representations. World Majority Lesbians and Blackness Yes! figure amongst those who have voiced such concerns and who have organized accordingly, thereby creating alternative spaces during Toronto Pride festivities. Blackness Yes!'s annually held Blockorama continues to bring together Toronto's Black and Caribbean queer communities. While LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto thrived throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, with LGBTQ-POC organizations remaining active today after more than 20 years of service, the Montréal LGBTQ-POC landscape has significantly differed. In the next section I will address the unfolding of LGBTQ activism in Montréal in the early 1990s and the development of LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

## 1.4. LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal in the 1990s and the 2000s

The HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s similarly shaped LGBTQ organizing in Montréal (Tremblay 2015a), however not to the same extent as what has been observed in Toronto. If gay and lesbian communities had a hard time accessing AIDS services in the province in the 1970s (Higgins 1999), the 1980s crisis somewhat spurred the efforts to improve accessibility. As such, and due to the particular lack of services for French-speaking communities, volunteers at the Centre des services sociaux Ville-Marie (CSS) spearheaded the Gai Écoute project, offering support services to French-speaking gay and lesbian communities in the city (Higgins 1999). Gai Écoute later incorporated in 1986 as a non-profit organization (NPO), becoming one of Québec's longest standing LGBTQ organization, eventually changing its name to Interligne in 2017 (Interligne n.d.). In the meantime, as English-language services seemed to also be deteriorating in the city, David Cassidy, then an AIDS point person at the CSS, and others, co-founded the AIDS Community Care Montréal (ACCM) in 1987, primarily serving English-speaking gay and lesbian communities (Montreal Gazette 2013). While the HIV/AIDS crisis contributed to strengthening gay and lesbian community-led services, the 1980s also

saw the development of the Village, namely a delineated part of the downtown area which anchored gay social and commercial spaces (J. Podmore 2015). In 1986, Village residents elected Raymond Blain as their city councillor, who became Québec's first openly gay elected representative to hold office. Finally, "by the end of the 1980s, the political gains of the growing gay constituency led to a movement to represent 'gays and lesbians' at the metropolitan scale through the creation of common institutions, including the Centre Communautaire des gais et lesbiennes de Montréal (CCGLM) and the Coalition des organismes des minorités sexuelles du Montréal métropolitain (COMSM)" (J. Podmore 2015, 191). That being said, LGBTQ activism in Montréal took a slightly different turn in the early 1990s, centering once more around the issues of violence and police repression, notably as a response to a re-intensification of police violence in the city (Tremblay 2015a).

On July 15th, 1990, the Montréal Urban Community police raided Sex Garage, a loft party attended by four hundred gays and lesbians (Warner, 2002). As the police force pretended that the organizers lacked a liquor license, the raid resulted in the arrest of eight people (Podmore, 2015). The brutality with which the police force conducted the raid nevertheless mobilized a new generation of activists (Podmore, 2015). The community rapidly responded by staging a two-hour sit-in of 150 people in the Village. The next day, a four hundred people kiss-in was organized in front of a downtown police station, resulting in the arrest of 48 people (Warner 2002). These events hence led to the creation of Lesbians and Gays Against Violence (LGV), which not only addressed issues of police brutality and homophobia, but also lobbied for greater attention on a series of homicides that were happening in the Village (Warner 2002; J. Podmore 2015). As a result, in 1993, LGV, along with other groups, notably the Table de concertation des lesbiennes et gais du Québec (TCLGQ)[14], exerted pressure on Québec's Human Rights Commission to launch an inquiry into the unsolved murders of gay men, as well as into the broader conditions of gays and lesbians. After having conducted public consultations, the Commission released its final report in 1994, entitled *De l'illégalité à l'égalité,* which addressed the following issues: access to health services, community-police relations, and the application of the law inscribed within the Québec Charter of Rights prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Commission des droits de la personne (CDPQ) 1994).

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[14] The TCLGQ changed its name in 2006, becoming the Conseil québécois des gais et lesbiennes (CQGL). In 2012, it became the Conseil Québécois LGBT (CQLGBT).

It is in this regard that LGBTQ organizing in Montréal took a rights-advocacy turn throughout the 1990s. As such, several legal battles were fought in provincial courts up until the early 2000s, pertaining in part to the common-law status of same-sex couples in 1999, civil union rights in 2002, and marriage rights in 2004[15]. That being said, the late 1990s and early 2000s also saw the rise of early LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal. In contrast with the ways in which the HIV/AIDS crisis shaped LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto, LGBTQ-POC organizations in Montréal did not specifically articulate themselves as AIDS service providers, nor did they initially form as a direct response to the predominant whiteness of LGBTQ organizations.

Gay and Lesbian Asians of Montréal (GLAM) is generally considered to be the first LGBTQ organization formed around a specific racialized identity in Montréal[16]. Founded in 1993, GLAM acted as both a social and a political support group for the city's Asians who identified as LGBTQ, primarily serving English-speaking communities (Wong 2012). As Alan Wong, co-coordinator for the organization from 2004-2009 indicates, the group mainly consisted of people of Chinese origins, including mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan, or who were born in diasporic settings, such as Canada or Southeast Asian nations (Wong 2012). Created as a volunteer-based organization that aimed at providing a safe environment for LGBTQ Asians, GLAM has officially disbanded in recent years.

Although GLAM emerged in the early 1990s, LGBTQ-POC organizing remained scarce in Montréal for the rest of the decade, as opposed to Toronto. Other LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities nevertheless emerged in the early 2000s. For instance, Au-delà de l'Arc-en-ciel (ADA), an LGBTQ organization for Spanish-speaking individuals, was founded by Hector Gomez to support LGBTQ Spanish-speaking immigrants' integration in Québec society (Chamberland et al. 2018). Their activities included informal discussion groups around the Village as well as spontaneous actions in the metro to raise awareness amongst the broader population (Chamberland et al. 2018). In doing so, it embraced a social change perspective, offering support services while engaging in rights advocacy.

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[15] Same-sex couples can marry legally in the province of Québec since 2004. Following a Supreme Court ruling in December 2004, the government of Canada legalized same-sex marriage across the country in 2005 (M. Smith 2008).
[16] While GLAM is commonly recognized as the first LGBTQ-POC organization in Montréal, it is possible that other initiatives may have taken place prior to GLAM's creation. In contrast with Toronto, there lacks thorough research on this specific subject.

In 2004, LGBTQ-POC organizing further diversified with the creation of two organizations, namely Helem Montréal and Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique (AECA). Initially conceived as an LGBTQ Lebanese organization, Helem has since expanded to include Arab-speaking LGBTQ individuals. Established as a non-profit organization, it works at tackling homophobia within Montréal's Lebanese community all the while supporting Lebanese and Arab-speaking LGBTQ people by organizing monthly meetings, among other things. While Helem remains active today, it contributed to the emergence of another initiative in the mid to late 2000s. Launched by one of Helem's past coordinators, Ethnoculture initially started out as an LGBTQ-POC community event held in 2005 in Montréal (Wong 2013). The event rapidly grew into a volunteer-run NPO that worked at coordinating "community-based events for and about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgender and queer ethnic minorities, queers of colour and two-spirited people" (D. Smith 2010). For instance, one of their 2010 events included a range of activities, from a panel on women and migration to an amateur drag show and a belly dancing performance (D. Smith 2010). Even though the group is no longer active today, Ethnoculture contributed in tackling multiple discrimination, in providing safer spaces for LGBTQ-POC to share their experiences and realities, and in raising awareness amongst Québécois regarding the inherent pluralist character of Québec society (Wong et al. 2007).

In 2004, another LGBTQ-POC organization was launched by Solange Musanganya, Didier Rwigamba, and Luc Doray to bring together Montréal's African and Caribbean queer communities. Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique (AECA) was formed to not only break Black queer communities' sense of isolation, but to also address racism in broader LGBTQ communities. As an NPO, AECA organized support groups for the organization's membership, participated in Pride activities, such as the community fair and march, and held a variety of awareness campaigns throughout the years. AECA eventually led the Pride march in 2016, figuring as Fierté Montréal's honored group. In 2009, it launched the Massimadi festival, which celebrated LGBTQ Afro-Caribbean arts and cinema. While the organization recently disbanded, the Massimadi Foundation was created to ensure the maintenance of the annual Massimadi festival. Finally, in the mid to late 2000s, another organization intended to serve Montréal's Black queer communities also formed, outside of AECA. During its short-lived presence in Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizational landscape, Perspectives Ébènes Montréal (PEM) sought to break linguistic and ethno-national divides between Montréal's Black

queer communities, thereby enhancing solidarity (Philippe 2007). Spearheaded by Vanessa Dorvily, the collective disbanded after a couple of years.

LGBTQ-POC organizing therefore thrived in Montréal throughout the mid-2000s. Considering the increased popularity of LGBTQ alternative spaces, LGBTQ-POC organizations came together and formed a coalition. Formally established in 2006, Coalition Multimundo brought together "allosexual ethnicized and racialized organizations and their allies in Montréal under one umbrella group as a means of providing a unified political voice" (Wong 2013, 71). The coalition's membership comprised the following LGBTQ-POC organizations: AECA, Ethnoculture, Feygelah – a Jewish LGBTQ organization, GLAM, Helem Montréal, Hola, Zaafaran, and PEM. Other 'ally' organizations included ACCM, Alterhéros, Association des personnes bi-spirituelles, Association des mères lesbiennes, Coalition des transexuel(le)s et transexué(e)s du Québec, Coalition jeunesse montréalaise de lutte à l'homophobie, Gay Line, GRIS-Montréal, Jeunesse Lambda, Project 10, and Séro-Zéro (Wong et al. 2007). While the Coalition aimed at unifying and strengthening LGBTQ-POC organizing, it eventually disbanded after a couple of years due to a variety of reasons[17].

Overall, one can observe three main differences in the development of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal and Toronto. First, the HIV/AIDS crisis did not have the same impact on LGBTQ-POC organizing in both cities. Although LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities did emerge in Toronto as early as 1980, they were significantly shaped by the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and early 1990s. As a result, most of Toronto's longstanding LGBTQ-POC organizations, in particular those who are HIV and sexual health-oriented, such as Black CAP, ASAAP, and ACAS, were established during that time. In contrast, while the HIV/AIDS crisis did impact LGBTQ grassroots activism in Montréal, it did not spur nor shape LGBTQ-POC organizing. In fact, not only did Montréal-based LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities emerge much later than in Toronto, but their establishment was not driven by HIV or other sexual health-related purposes.

The second major difference concerns the establishment of LGBTQ-POC organizations as a response to the whiteness of gay and lesbian communities. In Toronto, this particular form of

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[17] I have interviewed several activists who were involved in Coalition Multimundo. While all agreed that the Coalition was hard to maintain through time, the reasons for dismantling the Coalition varied from one activist to another.

LGBTQ-POC organizing emerged relatively early, with the creation of GAT, Zami, and LOC – to name a few – in the 1980s. It was then followed by the establishment of Blackness Yes! and World Majority Lesbians – amongst others – in the 1990s. These organizations created alternative spaces within Pride festivities dedicated to nonwhite LGBTQ communities. In Montréal however, LGBTQ-POC organizations emerged much later and were created as a direct response to the whiteness of gay and lesbian communities. While Coalition Multimundo and Ethnoculture somewhat aimed at exposing the LGBTQ community's whiteness, initiatives resembling those observed in Toronto only emerged in the 2010s – as will be further detailed in the next section.

The final difference observed between LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto and Montréal consists of the sustainability of LGBTQ-POC organizations. While short-lived organizations have marked the LGBTQ-POC organizational landscapes in both cities, Toronto's LGBTQ-POC organizations have managed to maintain themselves through time. In contrast, Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizations established in the 1990s and 2000s have mostly come and gone, with the exception of Helem Montréal, which is the only remaining LGBTQ organization dedicated to a specific racialized community to have been established during those years. That being said, as will be discussed in the following section, LGBTQ-POC organizations still compose Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape today, albeit in a slightly different manner. The next section will focus on post-2010 LGBTQ organizing in Toronto and Montréal, outlining some of the current dynamics observed in both movements.

### 1.5. Organizing since the early 2010s: racialization, Pride politics, and *laïcité*

As outlined above, Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizational landscapes have largely emerged in response to racialization processes that have either left LGBTQ-POC communities underserved in terms of HIV and sexual health-related services – as was observed in Toronto – or that have generated a need for safer spaces – as was the case in both Toronto and Montréal. LGBTQ-POC activists have in this regard come together and formed organizations to provide safer spaces and/or counter the lack of services for nonwhite communities, amongst other things. However, since the early 2010s, LGBTQ-POC organizing has been marked by a (re)politicization of race in both cities, and in particular within LGBTQ movements. In Toronto for instance, Pride politics, including the displacement of Blockorama, the initial banning of Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA), and

the Black Lives Matter Toronto (BLM-TO) Pride march sit-in, as well as revived tensions with the Toronto Police Services (TPS), notably in the wake of the Bruce McArthur case, have largely informed LGBTQ-POC grassroots activism and organizing. In Montréal, the numerous public debates on *laïcité*, diversity, and national identity in Québec from the late 2000s to 2019 have for their part participated in sparking divisions amongst LGBTQ activists, thereby shaping LGBTQ-POC organizing in particular ways. Indeed, if Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizations had yet to explicitly form against the whiteness of the city's queer communities, as was the case in Toronto throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, the sociopolitical context of the late 2000s and early 2010s has somewhat contributed in filling this gap. This last section of the chapter will therefore address the unfolding of LGBTQ-POC organizing in both cities since the early 2010s up to the present day.

### 1.5.1. LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto

In Toronto, post-2010 LGBTQ-POC organizing, and in particular grassroots activism, has been largely informed by Pride politics, wherein nonwhite communities have been repeatedly relegated to the margins of the festivities since the late 2000s, as well as by revived tensions with the TPS. While both are strongly interrelated, they will nonetheless be addressed separately for clarity purposes. As was previously explained, activists of colour mobilized efforts to create alternative spaces for LGBTQ-POC communities during Pride festivities. One of these alternative spaces was – and still is – Blackness Yes!'s Blockorama, organized annually during Toronto's Pride week. Between 2007 and 2010, Blockorama has however had to move three times to leave room for corporate-sponsored events. What is more, each of these different locations actually pushed Blockorama further away from the center of Pride festivities. As Amar Wahab and Dwaine Plaza explain, these series of displacements represent "a way of cleansing the village space to reflect a predominantly white version of pride" (quoted in Bain 2016, 91). Extensively, they illustrate an ongoing corporatization of Pride festivities, wherein large corporations are occupying community-organized spaces, at the expense of marginalized, and in this case nonwhite, communities (Bain 2016).

This series of displacement also happened at a time when Pride Toronto was involved in another struggle against Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA). For Bain (2016), these two events are inextricably linked in the sense that they have contributed at exposing the inherent "white racism of Pride celebrations" (92). QuAIA formed in 2008 in solidarity with Palestinians (Nash 2015) and

aimed more specifically at "eradicating queer and racialized colonial violence perpetrated by white settler countries like Israel" (Bain 2016, 92). As such, it opposed itself to the branding of Israel as the Middle Eastern country championing the advancement of LGBTQ rights. While its participation at Pride in 2009 sparked public debates, its eventual presence at the 2010 march became particularly contentious (C. J. Nash 2015; Bain 2016). In anticipation of the 2010 Pride March, the Board of Directors adopted a resolution prohibiting the group from marching unless they refrained from using the term 'Israeli Apartheid'. This imposed conditionality on QuAIA's participation ignited considerable public debates, leading to the creation of a grassroots collective entitled the Pride Coalition for Free Speech. The Coalition worked at pressuring Pride Toronto to allow QuAIA's participation whilst retaining the use of 'Israeli Apartheid'. Although Pride Toronto revised its position at the last minute, hence allowing QuAIA's participation in the 2010 march, the group's participation in subsequent Pride festivities continued to fuel debate, extending beyond the LGBTQ movement and unto the city's political and mediatic spheres (C. J. Nash 2015),

Inasmuch as LGBTQ-POC organizing in the early 2010s was marked by contentious Pride politics, the following years were similarly marked by a continuation of tensed relations between Pride Toronto and LGBTQ-POC communities. In July 2016, Pride Toronto's designated honored group, BLM-TO, disrupted the march by staging a sit-in. The interruption, which lasted for about half an hour, was accompanied by a set of demands that ranged from increasing the representation of people of colour within the organizing committee, to banning uniformed police officers at the march and condemning the overarching racism within LGBTQ communities throughout Canada (Battersby 2016). Once these demands were agreed to by Pride, protestors put an end to the sit-in and the march went on as initially planned (Walcott 2017). The BLM-TO sit-in did not however go unnoticed and the multiple public reactions that have followed have instead revealed the profoundness of racial divisions amongst Toronto's LGBTQ communities, igniting polarizing discussions on white supremacy within queer movements more generally (Furman et al. 2018). BLM-TO's work has in fact had repercussions beyond Toronto's LGBTQ communities, forcing other queer communities across Canada to have these difficult conversations on the inclusion of people of colour at Pride and on the presence of police corps in uniforms during LGBTQ festivities (Walcott 2017). As per Toronto, the

2016 direct action ultimately resulted in the banning of police officers in uniforms in the Pride march[18].

In addition to forcing a discussion on the inclusion of uniformed police officers at Pride, BLM-TO's actions have also rendered visible the tense – and ambivalent – relationship between Toronto's LGBTQ communities and the TPS. As several – mostly White – activists opposed the banning of police officers during the march, claiming in part that the relationship with the TPS has significantly improved, others – particularly Black, Indigenous, and people of colour – conversely state that because they continue to face police repression they cannot count on police presence to guarantee their safety (Bain 2019). The Bruce McArthur case has unfortunately further confirmed LGBTQ-POC communities' stance regarding their relationship with the TPS (Strange 2018). As early as 2011, the TPS began investigating the disappearances of three gay men, namely Skandaraj Navatram, Abdulbasir Faizi, and Majeed Kayhan. However, due to a supposed lack of evidence, the TPS went forward with closing the investigation (Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention 2019; Strange 2018). When Andrew Kinsman, a known White activist in the community, disappeared in 2017, a missing person report was opened. Although the TPS managed to arrest Bruce McArthur within seven months, it had previously connected him to each one of the three 2011 disappearances (Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention 2019). By the time of his arrest in January 2018, Bruce McArthur had killed a total of eight gay men[19], out of which six were people of colour and two were White (Gillis and Gallant 2019).

The Bruce McArthur case significantly shaped LGBTQ-POC activism as it revealed the differential and unequal attention given by the TPS to LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ victims. Considering that many of the victims were South Asian, ASAAP took on a prominent role in rendering the TPS accountable for sidelining the missing persons reports that were filed prior to Andrew Kinsman's disappearance. As such, it mobilized efforts for the implementation of an independent review of the Toronto police handling of missing persons and in doing so engaged in building stronger ties with the TPS' LGBT liaison officer (Xtra 2019). In a recent press release on

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[18] Pride Toronto has since tried to reverse their position. In the wake of the 2019 Pride festivities, the organization lifted the ban. Following massive community protests, the decision was however subjected to a vote, hence resulting in the indefinite banning of uniformed police participation at Toronto Pride's Parade (Casey 2019).
[19] These victims are Kirushna Kumar Kanagaratnam, Majeed Kayhan, Skandaraj Navaratnam, Abdulbasir Faizi, Selim Esen, Soroush Mahmudi, Dean Lisowick, and Andrew Kinsman.

unsealed judicial documents that have confirmed the TPS's known connection between McArthur and the three initial victims, ASAAP has however stated how "the police failed to conduct an effective investigation, and [that] conscious and unconscious racism, classism and homophobia played a significant role in the failure to properly investigate these disappearances" (Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention 2019). Overall, the Bruce McArthur case prompted grassroots activism in significant ways, strengthened solidarity ties between LGBTQ-POC organizations, and ultimately shed light on the tense and fragile relationship between LGBTQ-POC communities and the Toronto Police Services.

### 1.5.2. LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal

In Montréal, LGBTQ-POC organizing somewhat diversified in the last decade with the emergence of various initiatives that have openly questioned racism within and outside the movement (Labelle 2019). Some of these initiatives have for their part embraced the QTBIPOC acronym, which stands for queer and trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of colour, instead of the LGBTQ acronym. Several activists interviewed for this research evoked how this preference illustrates the English-speaking character of these initiatives, all the while highlighting the importance conferred to their racialized identity (Labelle 2019). One of these initiatives has been the Qouleur collective[20], which aimed to bring together community-organizers, activists, and artists of colour. Established in 2012, the collective created the first festival in the city explicitly dedicated at showcasing and rendering visible the work of queer, trans, and two-spirited artists of colour. Ran annually until 2016, the festival articulated itself around "the lives and experiences of Two-Spirited and LGBTTQ Indigenous and racialized people/people of colour in Montréal, many of whom face multiple oppression and discrimination in their day-to-day lives" (qouleur n.d.). While the collective disbanded in 2016, it recently reorganized itself with the aim of fostering dialogue on issues that affect LGBTQ racialized/people of colour communities in Montréal. In coherence with their initial mandate, the collective continues to engage in advocacy work through artistic means.

Furthermore, a Montréal chapter of Black Lives Matter (BLM) was formed in 2017 to dismantle anti-black racism in the province's metropolis (Labelle 2019). While the group is not specifically queer-oriented, it is nonetheless composed of various queer-identifying Black activists and has

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[20] Qouleur also uses the 2QT-POC acronym.

subsequently targeted and denounced the whiteness of LGBTQ institutions. For instance, following in the footsteps of BLM-TO, the advocacy group interrupted the Montréal Pride march in August 2017 by refusing to stay quiet during the traditional minute of silence (Morris 2017). Their disruption of the minute of silence aimed to counter the erasure of Pride's Black and racialized origins by honoring trans women of colour who have initially instigated what is now known as the LGBTQ movement, such as Marsha P. Johnson, Stormé DeLarverie and Sylvia Rivera. To quote the protest organizers: "We interrupted the parade with a duty of memory. We are determined to reconquer the space of Pride that is our space and that has been stolen from us by white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism" (Black Queer Lives Matter 2017). It is worth mentioning that this disruptive action followed another event involving police repression during Montréal Pride festivities. During a safer space dedicated to LGBTQ people of colour, a uniformed police officer approached a Black person who was rolling a marijuana joint. Even though they were surrounded by White people also smoking marijuana joints, a police officer targeted and handcuffed the Black person, dragging them to the squad car. As the Black Excellence show was about to start on Pride's main stage, BLM Montréal took to the stage to protest the arrest (CTV News 2017).

Qouleur Collective and BLM Montréal both illustrate the emergence of a particular form of LGBTQ-POC organizing in the last decade. Specifically geared towards recentering queer advocacy around the lives and experiences of queer Indigenous, racialized, and people of colour communities, these initiatives have also engaged in speaking out against racism within and outside the LGBTQ movement. Evidently, Post-2010 LGBTQ-POC activism in Montréal cannot be limited to these two groups. Other initiatives have seen the day, some of which are still active today.

Officially launched in 2009, the Action LGBTQ avec les immigrant-e-s et réfugié-e-s (AGIR) held its first general assembly in 2011. Still active today, AGIR is an autonomous NPO that engages in advocacy work, all the while providing support services to LGBTQ migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. As such, the organization favors an anti-oppressive approach, anchored in the belief that systems of oppression intersect, be it "patriarchy, misogyny, racism, colonialism, xenophobia, ableism, classism, heterosexism, cissexism, transphobia, homophobia, etc." (AGIR 2018). In 2014, a group of LGBTQ Arabs came together and cofounded another LGBTQ-POC initiative: the AlMassir collective. Self-defined as a feminist LGBTQ+ Arab group, AlMassir sought to build a "queer Arab community based on direct democracy, devoid of homophobia, transphobia, racism, misogyny,

Zionism, colonialism, Islamophobia, and other forms of oppression" (AlMassir n.d.). While the group is no longer active today, it nevertheless organized social events, such as potluck picnics, and participated in political venues, such as Pervers/Cité, during which it organized a workshop on homonationalism and pinkwashing by the Israeli State. Another LGBTQ-POC organization that is still active today is Jhalak, an LGBTQ organization dedicated to South Asians in Montréal. Formed in 2017, it was established to provide a safer space for queer South Asian communities. Since its creation, the group has organized various sociocultural, networking, and educational support events.

LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal has in this regard taken a particular form since the early 2010s. Although most LGBTQ-POC organizations established in the early 2000s no longer constitute Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape, other initiatives have nonetheless been launched. Most importantly and interestingly enough, these initiatives have spoken out more directly against racism within and outside the LGBTQ movement, condemning the whiteness of LGBTQ institutions and exposing the continuous exclusion of Indigenous and racialized LGBTQ communities in Québec society. It must however be noted that the emergence of this particular form of LGBTQ-POC organizing also comes as a response to the province's sociopolitical context, wherein laïcité, diversity, and national identity have been at the forefront of political and public debates. The 2007 reasonable accommodation crisis, the 2013 Charte des valeurs, and the 2019 *Laïcité law* have in this regard contributed in making race a contentious issue within Québec society, thus shaping LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC activism in Montréal.

The 2007 reasonable accommodation crisis emerged following an intensification of media coverage dedicated to various accommodation demands made by religious groups in the province. This intensive media coverage generated significant public outcry, leading to a share of Québec's population demanding that political action be taken to limit, and perhaps prohibit, reasonable accommodations in the province. To resolve the apparent crisis, the government put in place the *Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles*, presided by Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor (Maclure and Taylor 2010). The commission organized consultations across the province, shedding light on reasonable accommodation practices and gathering the population's concerns with regards to such practices (Le Moing 2016). While succeeding governments did not adopt any of Bouchard-Taylor's recommendations, the 2007 reasonable accommodation crisis' legacy is nevertheless substantial. As Le Moing (2016) rightly underlines, it

spurred public discussions on the constitution and definition of Québec values and collective identity, thereby paving the way for succeeding political initiatives.

One of these succeeding political initiatives has been Bill n°60, commonly referred to as the Charte des valeurs[21]. Introduced by the Parti Québécois in 2013, the Charte des valeurs aimed, amongst other things, at prohibiting State employees from wearing ostentatious signs and from displaying any signs of religious affiliation (Labelle 2019). While the project was eventually withdrawn, it nonetheless impacted LGBTQ organizing around that time, generating significant divisions within LGBTQ communities. Not only did several LGBTQ activists publicly support Bill n°60 (see Gagnon 2014), but a group was formed to specifically advocate for the passing of the bill. This group, also going by the name *LGBT pour la laïcité,* showed public support for the Charte des valeurs, insisting on the religious basis of sexual oppression in Québec. Illustrative of the extent to which the Charte des valeurs sparked internal divisions within LGBTQ communities, *LGBT pour la laïcité* explicitly positioned itself in opposition to the *Association LGBT pour un Québec inclusif*, which had previously formed to condemn Bill n°60 (see Gagnon 2013; 2014).

The 2013 Charte des valeurs sparked significant debates within Montréal's LGBTQ communities. Drawing from the interview material collected for this research, it is clear that this political episode contributed to render LGBTQ-POC's racialized identities quite salient within Québec society in general, and within Montréal's LGBTQ movement in particular. For instance, Alan Wong, a founding member of Qouleur, evoked the impact of this episode on the collective's motivations to hold the festival, positing that "debates around the Charter of Values created much tension not only in the larger society in Québec, but also within the LGBTTQ community in general. It's times like these that continue to make our event necessary and relevant to the local queer people of colour, Indigenous, immigrant, and refugee populations" (qouleur n.d.). Interestingly, the 2019 passing of Bill n°21 entitled *Loi sur la laïcité de l'État* did not spark similar divisions within the movement. On the contrary, LGBTQ organizations came together to condemn the bill, insisting on the discriminatory aspect of the law and its possible stigmatizing effect on religious minorities (Conseil québécois LGBT 2019). The cumulative public debates on *laïcité* that have spanned for more than a decade have nonetheless instilled a particularly tensed sociopolitical climate that has fostered

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[21] Bill n°60 was officially entitled *Charte affirmant les valeurs de laïcité et de neutralité religieuse de l'État ainsi que d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et encadrant les demandes d'accommodement.*

internal divisions within Montréal's LGBTQ movement. It is in that respect that LGBTQ-POC organizing in the 2010s appears to have been shaped by Québec politics pertaining to national identity, diversity, and *laïcité.*

Overall, Toronto's post-2010 LGBTQ-POC activism has been very much focused on the politics of Pride festivities, contesting the whiteness and racialization processes happening at Pride Toronto, as well as on the revived tensions with the Toronto Police services, ensuring accountability and exposing the vulnerability of LGBTQ-POC communities. In Montréal, post-2010 LGBTQ-POC activism has instead focused on creating alternative spaces for LGBTQ-POC communities, in response to the whiteness of Montréal's LGBTQ communities. Québec's particular sociopolitical context marked by public debates and public policies on *laïcité*, diversity, and national identity has additionally informed LGBTQ-POC organizing by fueling internal divisions within Montréal's LGBTQ movement. All in all, both cities were marked by significant racialization processes that have impacted LGBTQ-POC organizing in considerable ways. While these racialization processes unfolded differently in Toronto and Montréal, they have nonetheless exposed the ways in which internal conflicts within Canada's LGBTQ movements impact LGBTQ-POC communities, activism, and movement organizing.

## 1.6. Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the unfolding of LGBTQ activism in Canada and on the development of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto and Montréal – or what this thesis refers to as *LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.* By focusing on LGBTQ activism at a local scale, it highlighted some of the context-specific particularities of grassroots activism in these two different Canadian cities located in two distinct provinces. As such, it showed how LGBTQ activism took on different paths, with LGBTQ activism in Toronto remaining highly shaped by the HIV/AIDS crisis and Montréal's LGBTQ activism being increasingly geared towards rights-advocacy. When it comes to LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, three main similarities can be drawn from this historical narrative.

First, although LGBTQ-POC organizations have emerged during different decades, their emergence has constituted an observable phenomenon in both Toronto and Montréal's LGBTQ

movement, since the 1980s and the 1990s respectively. Second, while its sustainability has somewhat differed in both cities, LGBTQ-POC organizing remains a constant observable phenomenon. On the one hand, Toronto's LGBTQ-POC organizational landscape remains active through long-standing organizations. On the other hand, Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizational landscape is in constant flux, with community-led initiatives coming and going, albeit continuously. Third, in spite of varying sociopolitical contexts, post-2010 LGBTQ-POC activism in Toronto and Montréal has shown similar dynamics, openly responding to racialization processes. For instance, Toronto's LGBTQ-POC activism has been largely informed by Pride politics, as well as by revived tensions with the Toronto Police Services. In Montréal, LGBTQ-POC activism has been shaped by Québec politics pertaining to *laïcité*, diversity, and national identity. Even though racialization processes unfold differently in Toronto and Montréal, LGBTQ-POC activism has converged towards challenging such processes. Table I provides a very brief overview of Toronto and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

*Table I: Overview of LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Toronto and Montréal*

| | LGBTQ-POC Collective Engagement Trajectories | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Toronto* | *Montréal* |
| **Emergence** | ♦ 1980s/1990s | ♦ 1990s/2000s |
| **Organizational sustainability** | ♦ Long-standing organizations<br>♦ High sustainability | ♦ Short-lived organizations that come and go<br>♦ Low sustainability |
| **Current dynamics/significant racialization processes** | ♦ Pride politics<br>♦ Relationship with TPS | ♦ Québec politics (laïcité, diversity, and national identity) |

The LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories outlined herein constitute the starting point of this thesis. In addition to disrupting dominant narratives, they further expose one of the ways in which POC activists have come to collectively participate and organize in Canadian LGBTQ

movements, notably through organizations formed around specific racialized identities. While the differences observed between Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, as indicated in Table I, do not constitute the core of this thesis, they nevertheless remain essential in our understanding of the dynamics that have shaped people of colour's participation within both cities' LGBTQ movements. These differences will thus be addressed throughout this dissertation.

With all this in mind, LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories represent an observable phenomenon suitable for undergoing a sociopolitical analysis. How can we make sense of these collective engagement trajectories? How can we understand their foregrounding within both Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements? In other words, why have LGBTQ-POC activists collectively engaged the way that they have in both cities? In contrast, why have LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories taken slightly different forms in Toronto and Montréal? Building upon this set of questions, the remaining of this dissertation will more precisely seek to explain Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. To this end, the following chapter will delve into the social movements literature and highlight some of the ways in which social movement theory has previously explained participation.

# 2. Social movement participation: a multifaceted concept and a long-standing puzzle

*"When I think about...cause your original question, why do people get involved, and I think I got involved when I needed to be involved in something because I didn't have anything going on. And that's when I really started volunteering heavily but I've stayed involved because I sort of see this need. And I've somehow put down the torch, but I feel that I need to have more people. But I think the original reason why I first got involved was that I really needed to do something that felt worthwhile and productive. I was working a job, I dropped out of graduate school and I wasn't in a great place, but I actually really liked going to the 519 Church Street Community Center and I learned [some important skills], and I felt really productive."*

Jan, Toronto

My first encounter with an LGBTQ organization happened to be during my undergraduate studies at McGill University. Having recently come out to myself and to a very small handful of my closest friends, I reached out to Queer McGill with the intention of connecting with other sexual minorities like myself. Yet, my involvement with the group remained quite limited, and I eventually drifted away from Queer McGill and from Montréal's LGBTQ movement altogether. After a hiatus of over five years, I reconnected with the movement when a friend of mine suggested I join the board of the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups. Without thinking too much about it, I enthusiastically accepted her invitation and remained actively involved with the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups for three years. Reflecting on my own participation I began wondering why I had not gotten more involved with Queer McGill back when I was an undergraduate student? What inhibited my participation with that particular group at that particular time? Conversely, beyond my friend's invitation, why did I decide several years later to engage in LGBTQ organizing and pursue my involvement for three consecutive years? And why did I recently disengage from it? These reflections, while coming from a personal place, do echo an overarching set of questions that have animated students of social movements for over fifty years.

Social movement theory has indeed grappled with the question of social movement participation in a variety of ways and for quite a while now. From micro-level to macro-level analyses, social movement scholars have furthered our understanding as to what prompts individuals to participate in a range of protest activities, such as demonstrations, boycotts, and sit-ins, and what

motivates some, but not others, to further engage with social movement organizations (SMOs)? Similarly, scholars have sought to understand why individuals shift their participation from one SMO to another and why some come to disengage entirely from social movement organizing? These questions without a doubt resonate with the study undertaken herein, in which case social movement theory does offer some answers as to why LGBTQ people of colour participate in LGBTQ movements the way that they do.

As argued throughout this chapter, social movement theory does however conceal several limits. For instance, it has remained overtly focused on explaining participation during particular 'moments' of mobilization, such as large-scale demonstrations or small-scale occupations, henceforth overlooking day-to-day participation in social movements and in periods of abeyance (Taylor 1989; Bagguley 2002; Valiente 2015). But as movements do not 'die' in-between large moments of mobilizations, activists and SMOs do pursue their work (Taylor 1989). By focusing on moments of mobilizations, social movement theory has thereby maintained a somewhat narrow conception of what participation entails. It is in this regard that in spite of its theoretical relevance, social movement theory does present some limits that will be underlined herein.

This chapter will thus review the literature on social movement participation. The first section will attempt to clarify how scholars have defined participation, highlighting the concept's multifaceted character. The second section will present some of the micro-, meso-, and macro-level explanations to social movement participation, including biographical and structural availability, collective identity, moral shocks, and so on. The third section will more specifically examine the literature on 'trajectories', which complexifies – for the better – the notion of social movement participation and allows for an all-encompassing and interactionist analysis of micro-, meso-, and macro-level explanations. In the concluding section, I will address some of the theoretical pitfalls of this review, paving the way for the proposed theoretical framework detailed in the following chapter.

## 2.1. Defining social movement participation

Who participates in social movements and why? This long-lasting and central question in social movement research has generated – and continues to generate – an impressive amount of work. However, inasmuch as social movement participation may appear to be a straightforward

concept, it has come to mean various things empirically speaking. What exactly is being referred to when we speak of social movement participation? Are we referring to social movement activities, such as protests, or social movement organizations, such as board membership? Do we limit our understanding of participation to visible forms of action or do we take into account all of the day-to-day work undertaken by SMOs and non-affiliated activists? Is participation a sporadic form of action or do we consider participation to be a long-term process? In this section, I will further develop on the predominant binary conception of participation and non-participation and on what has traditionally constituted social movement participation.

Scholars studying social movements have traditionally maintained a binary understanding of participation and non-participation (M. Ward 2016). As some people attend protests or sign petitions, others stay home or abstain from signing. This particular understanding of participation, also referred to as *differential participation*, has driven an impressive body of work on social movement participation (Stryker 2000; Passy and Giugni 2001; Corrigall-Brown et al. 2009; Saunders et al. 2012). For instance, in his study of high-risk activism, McAdam (1986) has sought to understand why some prospective volunteers participated in the 1964 Freedom Summer Project in Mississippi while others withdrew their application and decided not to participate. If Corrigall-Brown *et al.* (2009) focus their analysis on levels of participation, their study of differential participation in homeless mobilizations nonetheless maintains a similar understanding of participation, implying that some do participate, albeit at different levels, while others do not. More recently, Viterna's (2013) analysis of women's participation in El Salvador's Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMNL), wherein she addresses micromobilization processes within the FMNL, builds once more upon a binary understanding of participation, henceforth distinguishing between participants and non-participants. It is in this regard that social movement participation has in some sense been understood in opposition to *non-participation* (Snow et al. 1986; Passy and Giugni 2001). As people *either* participate or not in social movements, participation and non-participation have been taken as being mutually exclusive.

While past research on differential participation has furthered our understanding as to what motivates individuals to participate in social movements, this binary conception of participation/non-participation nevertheless raises two interrelated concerns. First, it constrains participation as something that people *do.* More precisely, it presupposes that participation requires some form of

action. It suggests that individuals who participate in social movements *take part* in something that is external to themselves, consequently distinguishing between the individual going about their daily life and the individual engaging in social movement activities or organizations. One's participation is in this regard expected to have an identifiable beginning and end. This mechanical and dichotomous understanding of participation/non-participation is however empirically problematic. For instance, living in the margins of society and resisting gender norms by simply being true to oneself may constitute activism in and of itself, which does not necessitate a specific action *per se* (Ahmed 2017; Rees-Turyn 2007; Butler 1990). In her study of youth gender justice activism in Ecuador and Peru, Coe (2015) underlined how battling ordinary sexism in their daily lives, notably through family interactions, constituted an integral part of youth activists' participation in the broader gender justice movement. Similarly, a non-binary activist whom I have met while I was involved in the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups expressed how identifying as non-binary on a daily basis represented a form of activism in and of itself. Going against cisgender norms represented an integral part of their participation in the broader LGBTQ movement. In this line of thought, the distinction between participation as something you *do* and non-participation as something that you *do not* is much more porous than initially stated.

Second, viewing participation as something that people do or take part in neglects other less-visible forms of activist work. Yet, social movement participants not only engage in visible activities, such as large-scale demonstrations, but also undergo less-visible work essential for sustaining mobilization that range from networking to fundraising and raising awareness (Taylor 1989; McAdam 1986; Ferree and Hess 2002). Consciousness-raising has been an integral component of feminist collective mobilizations (Staggenborg 1991; Taylor and Rupp 1993; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004; Reger 2004). Examining feminist zine production in North America, Ferris (2001) illustrates how these underground magazines "enable girls to create communities based on shared experiences and communications" (52), and work at connecting feminists around the world. Taylor (1989) has for her part shown how the continuous, albeit less-visible work undertaken by feminist organizations throughout the 1940s and the 1950s has been somewhat crucial for the resurgence of the American feminist movement in the 1960s marked by the creation of the National Organization of Women (NOW). Alternatively, considering the importance of resources in sustaining social movement activities, McAdam (1986) has asked if donating money to a SMO may constitute a form of participation. While this might be slightly stretching the concept, it nevertheless reminds us how

social movements are sustained through less-visible forms of participation that are as empirically valuable compared to more visible forms of participation.

This binary understanding of participation/non-participation is illustrative of the ways in which scholars have treated social movement participation. Unsurprisingly, social movement *activities*, and in particular protest events, have occupied a central part of social movement participation research (Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and Dijk 2009; Ketelaars 2016; Klandermans 1993; McAdam 1986; Jasper and Poulsen 1995). For example, in studying the effects of mobilizing contexts on individual motivations, Van Stekelenburg *et al.* (2009) have concentrated their analysis on two large-scale demonstrations organized by the labor movement and the Turn the tide alliance in the Netherlands. Saunders *et al.* (2012) have, for their part, identified four different types of protestors by examining data on demonstration participation in seven European countries. When it comes to LGBTQ movement participation, a significant body of work has similarly focused on explaining participation at Pride events (McGlendon 2013; McFarland 2012; Peterson, Wahlström, and Wennerhag 2018), which nevertheless constitute a fraction of the work undertaken by LGBTQ activists.

In addition to social movement activities, scholars have placed great emphasis on explaining individual participation within social movement *organizations* (Kitts 2000; J. Ward 2008; Cable 2016), which represent formal affiliations with movements (McAdam 1986). As such, feminist scholarship has been particularly active in examining participation in women's organizations (Reger 2002; Weldon 2006), as well as women's participation in other SMOs, such as community-based environmental organizations (Cable 2016). Focusing solely on formal affiliations with movements and SMO membership nevertheless overshadows other forms of participation. For instance, individuals may participate in movements through grassroots organizing and informal networks. A study undertaken by Dufour, Bherer, and Rothmayr Allison (2015) on mobilizations against shale gas in Québec has revealed how citizens have engaged in *DIY politics* by collectively organizing outside SMOs. Previous work on queer mobilizations has similarly shown the significance of informal networks and somewhat hidden social spaces for contesting cisheterosexual gender norms, especially in a context of acute sexual repression (Gentile 2016; G. Kinsman 1987; Namaste 2000). A growing body of work has furthermore attended to individualized forms of participation, such as digital activism and political consumerism (Bennett 2012; Micheletti 2003; Micheletti and Stolle 2015).

Investigating dumpster diving in Montréal, Bherer, Dufour, and Montambeault (2018) have in this regard shown how this particular kind of action, albeit less coordinated than other more typical collective actions, does attempt at fostering social change. Focusing primarily on participation within SMOs henceforth neglects the various ways in which individuals come to engage in social movements.

In light of these considerations, this dissertation puts forward an inductive conception of social movement participation. Rather than prescribing a preconceived idea of participation, it rests upon activists' own understanding of what their participation in LGBTQ movements entails. Doing so allows us to examine the multiple ways in which individuals may participate in social movements; a participation that is therefore not restricted to *something that people do*, and that is not limited to one's participation in social movement activities or organizations. Most importantly, this acknowledges participants' agency in delineating the contours of their activism, such as what it entails for them and for the broader movement.

## 2.2. Explaining social movement participation

As previously mentioned, explaining social movement participation has constituted a core concern amongst social movement scholars. From Olson's (1965) paradox of collective action and its derivative free rider problem, scholars have mobilized a range of theoretical perspectives, such as resource mobilization theory (RMT) and political process approaches, to explain why individuals engage in social movements. This section will go over some of these competing explanations by situating them within three levels of analysis: micro (individual), meso (movement), and macro (sociopolitical and institutional context). While these levels of analysis will indeed be treated separately, most work nevertheless acknowledges their inherent interaction with one another.

### 2.2.1. Micro-level explanations

Pioneering work on social movement participation has traditionally sought to explain participation by looking at individuals themselves. This has entailed examining individuals' social background, employment, political interest, and self-conception, amongst other things, to explain why some people participate in social movements while others refrain from doing so. This ensemble

of work, which I refer to as *micro-level explanations*, has thereby led to an identifiable range of factors that may account for individual participation within social movements. These include individuals' ideological and attitudinal affinities, biographical availability, resources, and identity salience[22].

Extensive research has pointed to the importance of *ideological and attitudinal affinities* in explaining social movement participation. Sharing a movement's goals and values has indeed traditionally appeared as a strong predictor of activism (McAdam, 1986). In their study of individual protest participation in the United States, Schussman and Soule (2005) have for instance found that having a liberal ideology increases the probability for protesting. Beyond increasing one's likelihood of participating in contentious politics, ideology may further push individuals to participate as they may search for meaning and ways to express their view on a particular matter (Klandermans 2004). While there remains a general consensus around the importance of ideology in predisposing individuals to join and participate in contentious politics (M. Ward 2016; Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2010; Corrigall-Brown 2012), the significance of ideological and attitudinal affinities has been somewhat nuanced in subsequent work. As Corrigall-Brown (2012) argues, sharing a movement's values or being ideologically predisposed in joining a movement does not necessarily translate into participation if one does not have the necessary means to do so. In her study of right-wing activism, Blee (2011) has further found that individuals were mostly drawn into these movements through social ties rather than because of their right-wing ideological affinity; even though they did share an ideological affinity with the movement. In that respect, ideological and attitudinal affinities come across as a necessary, yet non-sufficient, factor in explaining individual participation in social movements.

In addition to sharing a movement's goals and values, or to being predisposed to join particular movements because of ideological and attitudinal affinities, individuals who chose to participate need to be available to get involved in activism. *Biographical availability* or "the absence of personal constraints that may increase the costs and risks of movement participation" (McAdam 1986, 70) may thereby shape one's decision to engage in social movements. These personal constraints include one's employment situation, one's marital status, and one's family responsibilities, and may inhibit participation even if one is already predisposed (McAdam 1986; Corrigall-Brown 2012).

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[22] While this list remains non-exhaustive, it nevertheless brings together the most influential factors, as examined and acknowledged in previous studies.

Previous work has in this regard shown how family responsibilities and child rearing may decrease one's chance to participate in social movement activities, not just because of the lack of time, but because the risks and costs associated with activism also increase (Schussman and Soule 2005). Corrigall-Brown (2012) has further revealed how biographical availability plays a significant role in shaping one's decision to disengage from activism. As such, she argues that not only are those who are married "less likely to have ever participated in contentious politics" (57), but those who marry *after* having participated are also more likely to disengage from activism. Similarly, as child rearing may become time consuming, individuals may struggle to maintain their participation over time. In this vein, biographical availability appears to be inextricably tied to one's resources, such as one's time (or lack thereof), which constitutes a third micro-level explanation to social movement participation.

Inherited from resource mobilization theory, *resources* have come across as another key micro-level predictor of participation. More precisely, resources allow individuals to translate their beliefs and willingness into effective action, and may in this regard be highly tied to biographical factors (Corrigall-Brown, 2012). Resources may be of various nature: time-related, financial, educational, and/or cultural. Evidently, time constitutes a critical resource facilitating one's engagement in activism. If one does not have the time to protest or to assist monthly-held board meetings, one is most likely to refrain from participating altogether. As one's socioeconomic status may directly impact the time that one may have to participate, it has been positively correlated with one's propensity to take part in social movements. In other words, the more money one has, the more likely one may be willing to give their time and voluntarily engage in social movement activities and organizing. Yet, financial resources alone do not suffice in explaining participation. Instead, they are intimately tied to one's political knowledge and one's educational level, which also increase one's propensity to participate (Quéniart and Jacques 2002; Schussman and Soule 2005). As Corrigall-Brown (2012) underlines, "those with higher levels of education and knowledge are more likely to have ever engaged and to either persist or follow an abeyance pattern over time, instead of disengaging permanently after a period of participation" (57). Similar to one's political knowledge, cultural resources also come across as significant. This entails being able to understand the cause or the movement in question.

Another micro-level explanation consists of *identity salience*, which takes roots in Stryker's (1981) identity theory. Similar to the role of ideology, this explanatory avenue builds on sociopsychological factors to explain participation. Identity theory posits that the self is "composed in part of multiple identities linked to interaction in networks of social relations" (Stryker 2000, 21). It conceives of identities and social actions as being in continuous interaction with one another, mutually informing each other. Simply stated, society shapes identities and identities inform social behavior. When it comes to explaining social movement participation, identity theory insists on the notion of *identity salience* (Viterna 2013; Gould 1995). This notion acknowledges that an individual's identities vary in salience along a specific hierarchy. A particular identity is salient when it comes "into play in a variety of situations as a function of its properties as a cognitive schema" (Stryker 2000, 28). As identities become salient, they may inform behavior, thereby prompting individuals to participate in social movements (Gould 1995). For Gamson (1992), social movement participation thus represents somewhat of an extension of the self: "participation in social movements frequently involves an enlargement of personal identity for participants and offers fulfillment and realization of self. Participation in the civil rights movement, women's movement, and New Left, for example, was frequently a transformative experience, central to the self-definition of many participants in their later lives" (56). As identity salience also appears to have a direct impact on one's commitment to a particular group of people or network, it additionally incites social movement participants to pursue their activism, even when movements' causes appear to be hopeless (Stryker 2000).

Micro-level explanations hence all situate social movement participation within the individual actor. Individuals' ideology, biographical availability, resources, and identity salience thereby constitute plausible factors that may work together at explaining participation. However, as individuals may not decide to engage in activism independently from one another, they may indeed need to be 'pulled' into activism (McAdam, 1986). This premise has subsequently led scholars to delve into another set of explanations inscribed within movements themselves.

### 2.2.2. Meso-level explanations

As individuals are socially situated and as they may not necessarily act independently from their surroundings, scholars have sought to explain participation by moving beyond individually based explanations. In shifting the focus from individuals to movements, *meso-level explanations* have

sought to explain social movement participation by mobilizing social and movement-based factors. These include structural availability, framing processes, collective identity, and movement narratives.

In an attempt to bridge individual-related and other structural explanations to engagement, students of social movements have evoked the importance of *structural availability* in explaining participation. Structural availability rests upon the premise that sharing a movement's values or having the necessary resources to engage in activism matter little if "the individual lacks the structural contact to 'pull' him or her into protest activity" (McAdam 1986, 65). Inasmuch as individuals may have the willingness or resources to participate, recruitment processes undergone by movements themselves play a crucial role in facilitating engagement. It is in this regard that scholars have investigated the role played by networks and social ties in rendering individuals structurally available to participate in movement activities and organizations (McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Lim 2008; Diani 2004). As Passy and Giugni (2001) underline, networks serve three basic functions in 'pulling' individuals into social movements: they provide opportunities for participation, they socialize participants to a movement's cause or goal, and they shape participants' decision to get involved in activism. A study conducted by Cable (2016) on women's involvement in working class community-based environmental protest organizations has indeed confirmed the significance of women's networks in recruiting participants, revealing how the former contributed in activating the latter's structural availability. In addition to networks, McAdam and Paulsen (1993) have focused on the effect of social ties on participation. Acknowledging that individuals are embedded in a variety of networks, they have showed how the strength and the durability of the ties play a determining role in spurring participation.

In a similar attempt to shed light on recruitment processes and their impact on individual participation, scholars have turned to another meso-level factor, namely *framing processes.* Building on Goffman's work, Snow *et al.* (2008) define frames as schemas of interpretation through which individuals make sense of their life in the world. Frames, in this vein, contribute in organizing and making sense of individual experiences, thereby shaping behavior and guiding action. When it comes to social movement participation, Benford and Snow (2000) insist on the importance of frames in providing "a 'call to arms' or rationale for engaging in ameliorative collective action, including the construction of appropriate vocabularies of motive" (617). Yet, in order for frames to provide the necessary rationale for engaging in activism, there needs to be some congruence between individual

interests, values, and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology. It is in this regard that SMOs engage in frame alignment processes to recruit potential adherents and sustain movement participation. For Snow *et al.* (2008), as frame alignment processes act as a necessary condition for movement participation, SMOs are instrumental in fostering participation. As was repeatedly pointed out however, framing processes tend to overstate the strategic character of SMOs, downplaying the more symbolic and cultural aspect of their work.

Inherited from cultural approaches to social movements, as well as from New Social Movement theory (NSM), *collective identity* constitutes a third meso-level explanation of movement participation. Initially developed and conceptualized by Melucci (1995; 1980) collective identity has come to be defined in a variety of ways, thus revealing its multiple uses over time. If Orsini (2014) views collective identity as an all-encompassing process through which individuals analyze the risks and costs of their actions, Polletta and Jasper (2001) define it in the following terms: "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may inform part of a personal identity" (285). In this regard, collective identity involves a 'we-feeling' (Taylor, 1989), crucial for sustaining solidarity and commitment amongst participants (Taylor and Whittier 1992). As Minkoff (1997) and M. Smith (1999) relate, collective identity has been particularly important in spurring participation amongst gay and lesbian movements. As these groups have historically lacked institutional access and infrastructure, movement organizations have been essential in generating collective identities that have ensured individual commitment. Conversely, Polletta and Jasper (2001) have evoked how a decline in a movement's collective identity tends to prompt individual disengagement. In her study of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Robnett (2002) has indeed found that internal changes within the organization have narrowed the group's collective identity, thereby leading to a disengagement on the part of several participants, notably women. Previous work on collective identity has thereby revealed how SMOs continuously engage in identity-work as a way to facilitate individual commitment and to sustain participation. What is more, it has appeared to be a particularly relevant factor for understanding participation within identity-based movements, such as LGBTQ organizing.

Also anchored in cultural approaches to social movements are *narratives,* which figure as the fourth and last meso-level explanation addressed herein. In their simplest form, narratives are "stories that people tell to make sense of their own experiences and justify their actions" (Viterna 2013, 48). Narratives imply a logic of events that establish who we are, as an individual, a community, a nation, and so on, and may in this sense be used to strengthen collective identity and sustain participation (Polletta 1998). As Viterna (2013) underlines, "it is through narrative that individuals explain how a 'person like me' is compelled to act in a 'movement like that'" (48-49). Yet, narratives do not spring out of nowhere, but instead compose part of movements' work. They are thus produced and reproduced through a variety of means, be it through legal documentation, movement manifestos, public speeches or informal storytelling. As Polletta (1998) observes, narratives further shed light on informal recruitment processes that may occur outside SMOs, between activists and potential adherents. They may further account for the maintenance of participation, even in the face of movement defeats, henceforth preventing activist disengagement.

Meso-level explanations shed light on the role of movements and SMOs in fostering participation, notably through recruitment processes. Whether it be through socialization, frame alignment, identity work or narrative production, movements, and in particular SMOs, are inevitably crucial in pulling participants into activism and sustaining their participation over time. It is in this regard that they rightly add to micro-level explanations and enhance our understanding of social movement participation. Nevertheless, as movements are embedded within larger structures, activist participation may also be shaped by the broader context in which mobilization happens.

### 2.2.3. Macro-level explanations

While micro- and meso-level explanations have been predominant in explaining participation, another strand of work has attended to the effects of the broader sociopolitical and institutional context on individual movement participation. *Macro-level explanations* thereby offer another, much broader, perspective as to what may trigger participation, beyond individuals' situation and movement dynamics. Although this set of work has similarly relied on an *active* conception of participation, it nevertheless remains relevant as it allows us to situate both individuals and movements within their broader context. In this subsection I will discuss two main macro-level explanations, namely political opportunities and moral shocks.

Anchored in the political process approach, the concept of *political opportunity* has traditionally been used to explain movement emergence and collective mobilizations (Tilly 1978; McAdam 1999). As the political context determines the set of grievances around which people mobilize and the tactical choices put forward by movements, political opportunities rest on the premise that social movements and activism are context-dependent (Meyer 2004). By shedding light on mobilizing contexts, political opportunities may be useful for situating individual motivations and understanding movement participation. In studying the effects of the political context on individual motivations, Ketelaars (2016) suggests that political circumstances may affect how participants perceive the political efficacy of their action, thereby shaping one's motivation to participate. While her results do not point to a causal relationship *per se*, they nevertheless reveal that "when the government stance is positive *vis-à-vis* the aims of the protest demonstration the activists' expectation that the event might have political impact grows" (124). Looking at macroeconomic and political conditions of collective mobilizations following the 2008 crisis, Giugni and Grasso (2016) further find that individuals are more likely to protest in times of economic crisis, as their feelings of relative deprivation increases. What is more, as political opportunities may inform individual participation by setting the broader context in which individuals mobilize, they additionally shed light on the ways in which individuals come to participate in social movements, be it by taking part in disruptive actions or engaging actively in rights-advocacy organizations (Meyer 2004).

The state-centric character of the political opportunity literature has led scholars to further examine how the non-political and non-institutional aspect of macro-level contexts may also foster activism and spur individual movement participation. It is in this line of thought that *moral shocks* have been evoked as a potential driver of participation. Jasper and Poulsen (1995) define moral shocks in the following way: "when an event or situation raises such a sense of outrage in people that they become inclined toward political action, even in the absence of a network or contacts" (498). These events and situations may be of public nature, hence highly publicized, or may be experienced individually. One example of this is Luker's (1984) study of abortion and the politics of motherhood, wherein many individuals joined the anti-choice movement following the decision on *Roe v. Wade* in 1978. This highly publicized judicial decision generated massive participation of "new groups of people [who] were mobilized into the movement" (Luker 1984, 144), significantly growing the membership base of several anti-choice organizations in the United States. Similarly, Jasper and

Poulsen (1995) have found that numerous animal rights activists were pulled into animal rights activism by seeing visual images of animals in scientific labs and feeling terrified of this happening in the United States. It is in this regard that moral shocks may play an equivalent role to social networks as they work at 'pulling' individuals into activism (Jasper and Poulsen 1995). Yet, in comparison with social networks or other framing processes for recruitment purposes, moral shocks may take place outside, and independently from, movements (Wettergren 2007). Considering how they need "to lead to engagement in order to render the shocking experience meaningful" (Wettergren 2007, 111), it nevertheless remains unclear how moral shocks get translated into actual participation.

Political opportunities and moral shocks nevertheless show how macro-level factors may be just as significant as other micro- and meso-level explanations in spurring social movement participation, by situating movements and individuals within their larger context. Evidently, if they may be seen as competing with one another, these various explanatory avenues most often than not interact with each other in driving individual participation. It is in this regard that although they have been treated separately, they should be thought of as complementary.

Another strand of research has for that matter further investigated the interrelation between micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors to explain social movement participation. This line of work, mostly anchored in the French intellectual tradition, has thus looked into *individual trajectories of participation*[23] within social movements. Doing so has not only allowed for a fine-grained analysis of the interplay between micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors in explaining participation over time, but has also fostered a broader understanding of participation, taking into consideration the day-to-day work undertaken by activists in-between large moments of mobilization.

## 2.3. Individual trajectories of social movement participation (individual activist paths[24])

The various explanatory avenues exposed in the previous section, although useful, provide circumscribed explanations that pertain to specific moments of mobilization, such as large-scale

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[23] This literature uses the term 'trajectory' to make sense of the ways in which individuals come to engage in activism. It is worth clarifying that I use the term 'trajectory' to refer to the ways in which a group of individuals *collectively* engages in activism (see Introduction and chapter 1); hence the term 'collective engagement trajectories'.

[24] For clarity purposes, I will use the term 'individual activist path' for the remaining of this chapter.

demonstrations, consequently reinforcing a binary understanding of participation and overlooking the day-to-day aspect of social movement engagement. When it comes to individuals themselves, social movement theory has additionally been overtly focused on explaining specific moments of participation, namely one's initial engagement into activism and one's disengagement from it. This particular focus has however overshadowed participatory dynamics between one's initial engagement and one's disengagement from activism, all the while perpetuating a linear conception of social movement engagement. What is more, inasmuch as social movement theory literature sheds light on *why* people come to participate in social movements, it falls short of explaining *how* people engage in activism over time. Examining individual activist paths thus allows scholars to overcome these limits and reveal the inherent complexity and non-linearity of activist engagement. To this end, I will begin by defining the notion of individual activist paths, clarifying at the same time between the notions of participation and engagement. I will then discuss previous work on individual activist paths, highlighting their relevance for explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

### 2.3.1. Defining individual activist paths

The notions of participation and engagement have been used interchangeably throughout this chapter. While both terms may indeed refer to a similar phenomenon, they are nevertheless rooted in different literatures that have examined individual and collective actions in slightly different ways. Traditionally speaking, the term participation comes from the broader literature on political participation which has tended to be overtly focused on electoral participation. Pioneers in this field, Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978) have defined political participation as "those legal acts by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions that they take" (1). The predominance of state-centered approaches to participation have nevertheless led some scholars to extend the notion of participation and examine less institutional forms of participation (Ekman and Amnå 2012), such as petition signing, demonstrating, and so on.

Conversely, the term engagement has been used by political scientists as a way to refer to citizens' active and long-term involvement within the civil society, also known as civic engagement (Delli Carpini 2007). Typically seen as a secondary form of political participation, civic engagement has pointed to the ways in which citizens could participate politically, albeit in-between elections.

Similarly, it has assumed that "such engagement most often comes in the form of collaboration or joint action to improve the civil sphere"(Ekman and Amnå 2012, 285). When it comes to social movements, the term engagement evokes how individuals maintain proximate ties with social movement organizations, informal collectives, and so on. In this regard, it has traditionally put forth a broader understanding of the ways in which individuals may politically participate and contribute to advancing social change.

As participation and engagement have eventually been used extensively and have come to mean a variety of things, they have somewhat converged over time. However, considering the predominant binary conception of participation/non-participation, the term engagement better encapsulates the range of social movement activities in which individuals may take part in, including day-to-day social movement work. Speaking of social movement engagement hence allows scholars to investigate both the *why* and the *how* of participation, moving beyond an overt focus on specific moments of mobilization and participation. It is in that respect that previous work on individual activist paths has put forward more of an 'engagement' perspective, insisting on its continuous, yet non-linear aspect, and taking into consideration both active and latent forms of participation.

Rather than explaining particular moments of participation or mobilization, individual activist paths address participation over the life course. They, in this regard, take hold of a processual perspective on social movement engagement by incorporating the notion of time into one's analysis. Not only do they refer to the long-term process through which individuals have come to get involved in activism, but they also attend to the ongoing process of what engaging in social movements entails. For Corrigall-Brown (2012), "examining participation over the life course can help illuminate the ways in which individuals disengage from a particular social movement organization but not necessarily from participation as a whole, and how episodes of participation are related to one another" (9). Studying individual activist paths further bring scholars to engage with individual biographies and take note of the evolving sociopolitical context in which individual biographies are set (Fillieule 2001). As such, it views one's activism as an all-encompassing whole that cannot so easily be dislocated from one's personal biography. Previous work on individual trajectories have in this sense proposed an understanding of participation as something that is inscribed within a long-term and inherently complex process.

Beyond advancing a broader understanding of social movement participation, previous work on individual activist paths has contributed in enriching social movement theory in three main ways. First, by seeking to understand why individuals engage differently over time, it has shed light on varying individual activist paths, further complexifying engagement patterns within a range of movements. Second, through a processual and interactionist approach to engagement, scholars have convincingly demonstrated the effectiveness of investigating multilevel interactions to understand individual activist paths. Finally, by looking more closely at how individuals engage over time, previous work has somewhat clarified what disengagement entails, viewing disengagement as an integral part of one's activist path.

### 2.3.2.1. Complexifying engagement patterns

Scholars have primarily studied individual activist paths to understand why individuals follow different paths while engaging in social movements. In studying the effects of gender on individual activist paths in France, Rétif (2010) has for instance found that women tend to start engaging politically through civic associations while men tend to initially engage by joining political parties and unions. In differentiating between individual activist paths, three particular stages of engagement have typically been emphasized: initial engagement, ongoing participation, and disengagement. After initially engaging in a particular movement, some individuals may disengage rapidly, while others may sustain their participation for a number of years before eventually disengaging. Treated in a linear way, these three stages of one's activist path have however overlooked how individuals may reduce their involvement at some point without completely disengaging from activism or why individuals may shift their participation from one SMO to another whilst remaining engaged. It is in this line of thought that Corrigall-Brown (2012) has insisted on studying more closely the particular ways in which individuals engage in activism, hence examining the level and the venue of one's involvement.

In seeking out differences between individual activist paths, scholars have undertaken somewhat of a typological work, establishing prototypical paths that individuals may follow over their life course. Corrigall-Brown (2012) has in this regard differentiated between four activist paths

that individuals may follow once they are engaged in activism: persistence, transfer, individual abeyance, and disengagement. While *persistence* refers to the continuity of one's engagement in the same SMO or of one's participation in protest activities over time, *transfer* points to a shift of engagement from one SMO to another without disengaging from the movement. *Individual abeyance* happens when an individual disengages temporarily from a SMO or other protest activity, whereas *disengagement* implies disengaging permanently from activism. In their study of the Provisional Irish Republican army (PIRA) and the Red Brigades (RB) in Italy, Bosi and della Porta (2012) have for their part investigated the different paths that have led to one's initial engagement in one of these two groups. Their results not only reveal that individuals follow different motivational paths depending on how they were recruited to join these groups, but also show that these paths further inform the nature of their engagement within the PIRA and the RB – with some most likely to resort to political violence. While this dissertation does not explicitly aim at establishing prototypical paths, it however seeks to understand what has led POC activists to collectively engage the way that they have within LGBTQ movements. As such, differentiating between individual activist paths remains useful for identifying engagement patterns, distinguishing between particular groups of activists, and understanding collective forms of organizing within a specific movement.

### 2.3.2.2. Examining multilevel interactions

Scholars studying individual activist paths have also pointed to the ways in which micro-, meso-, and macro-levels of analysis interact in explaining social movement engagement over time. Moving beyond a deterministic approach to participation, Fillieule (2001) has in this line of thought made a compelling case for a processual and interactionist approach to engagement, which rests upon the premise that individuals and society are not only interdependent with one another but are mutually reinforcing. Individual activist paths are thus to be conceived as the product of three main types of interactions.

First, *micro/meso interactions*, wherein organizational dynamics may shape individual experiences and motivations to (dis)engage. Engaging in a particular organization implies adhering and contributing to this organization's discursive and symbolic universe, as well as fostering relationships through membership interactions. Tensions between members may however arise, thereby transforming relations of sociability and prompting excluded individuals to withdraw from

protest activities or from particular SMOs (Fillieule 2013; 2010). Examining what actually happens *within* SMOs is in that respect crucial for understanding and situating individual motivations within their meso-level contexts (Fillieule 2010). Second, because SMOs similarly find themselves inscribed within broader sociopolitical contexts, *macro/meso interactions* allow scholars to situate and further shed light on organizational dynamics. On this particular matter, Fillieule (2013) emphasizes how sociopolitical environments may constrain organizational possibilities, hence shaping internal organizational dynamics. Studying AIDS activism in France, Broqua and Fillieule (2017) show for instance how "state funding of certain actions taken in the context of the fight against AIDS has contributed to shaping the social and legal forms of contemporary homosexuality", illustrating "a process of coproduction of social norms by the [French] state and social movements" (1624). Finally, *macro/micro interactions* imply locating personal paths within their broader macrostructural context, all the while acknowledging their overlap with individual activist paths. For example, the changing status of homosexuality overtime may change LGBTQ activists' personal experiences, shape their public identity accordingly, and inform their motivations to (dis)engage. A processual and interactionist approach therefore stresses the importance of taking into consideration multilevel interactions when analyzing and explaining individual activist paths.

### 2.3.2.3. Clarifying disengagement processes

By paying close attention to the ways in which individuals engage in activism over time, scholars have come to complexify, and perhaps clarify, what disengagement actually entails. Rather than viewing it as a static moment characterizing the end of one's activist path, this strand of work has instead put forth a processual understanding of disengagement, identifying various ways in which activists may come to reduce their involvement or withdraw from activism (Fillieule 2013). As previously developed, Corrigall-Brown (2012) has for instance distinguished between individuals who transfer from one SMO to another, individuals who withdraw temporarily, and those who disengage permanently. In seeking to understand why people were specifically drawn to the *Ligue des droits de l'homme* (LDH) in France, Agrikoliansky (2001) has for his part found that this particular kind of engagement tended to follow a previous disengagement from unions or political parties, thereby revealing how individuals may shift their activism without completely disengaging. Reviewing Introvigne's (1999) typology of disengagement profiles, Fillieule (2010) has furthermore stated how modalities for disengagement vary depending once more on the interaction between micro-, meso-,

and macro-level factors. It is in that respect that this line of work has allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of disengagement as a process that is constitutive of one's individual activist path.

## 2.4. Conclusion: theoretical pitfalls

The literature on social movement participation, including that on individual trajectories, has been enhanced over time, borrowing from a range of theoretical approaches. In that respect, it has evolved judiciously, giving rise to analytical tools that continue to be relevant today – and that certainly remain useful for this research. As such, I retain the notion of individual activist paths to study LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Not only does it facilitate an interactionist perspective on engagement, hence bridging micro-, meso-, and macro-level explanations to participation, but it further proposes an understanding of engagement as a long-term, complex, and non-linear process.

Two major limits are, however, worth underlining. First, previous work on social movement participation and individual activist paths, has yet to fully consider the *relational* context in which individuals come to engage in activism and participate in social movements. As societies are structured by a range of intersecting power relations, the conditions that may drive participation cannot so easily be dislocated from the context in which these conditions are produced. For example, while resources may explain how individuals translate their willingness to engage into actual participation, they remain inextricably tied to one's social location; a location that is dependent on one's gender, sexual orientation, race, ability, and so on. Similarly, as movements are not located outside of society, SMOs may (re)produce power relations and perpetuate dominant narratives at the expense of others, hence maintaining a somewhat homogenous membership and inhibiting others from participating in SMO activities. It is in that respect that a more critical perspective on participation may further enlighten us on the relational dimension of participation.

Second, scholars working on individual activist paths have been overtly focused on the effect of *change*. Whether it be at micro-level (i.e. biographical change), meso-level (i.e. organizational change), or macro-level (i.e. political change), previous work has had a tendency to emphasize specific changes and assume their determining impact on activists' participation. Overemphasizing

change however understates the impact that regular day-to-day activity work may have on activists. As social movements are of collective nature, interpersonal relations and professional interactions may shape activist motivations to sustain or not their participation within a particular movement or SMO. What is more, SMOs' day-to-day activity work finds itself inscribed within particular social movement configurations, wherein power and resources may be distributed unevenly. These configurations do not necessarily need to change for them to have an impact on individual activist paths. Once again, taking hold of the relational context in which social movement individuals and organizations are set, a context that is most likely than not shaped by a range of intersecting power relations, needs to be accounted if we are to fully grasp *why* and *how* activists follow particular collective engagement trajectories. With its emphasis on processes of marginalization and politically excluded identities, intersectionality does provide some of the necessary bases for taking these matters into consideration. As outlined in the following chapter, it provides a clearer picture of the ways in which – and the reasons why – people of colour have collectively participated in LGBTQ movements by creating and joining organizations formed around particular racialized identities.

# 3. Intersectionality as a theoretical framework

*"But I knew that if I would only focus on one single individual perspective of my identity, it would only engage me so far, and especially wih I think anti-racist groups...they have become I think a lot more militant than LGBTQ groups and they are very inclusive of a lot of other identities, like LGBTQ or whatever, but because they're more militant, there's a lot more work involved being part of them, partly emotional work, but also just physical work, just volunteering for things [...] I'm just overwhelmed and I feel that there's just a lot of things in my personal life I need to work, that I want to work on like, not just my own self-care, but you know, finding a relationship and those kinds of things."*

<div align="right">Alan, Montréal</div>

*"I feel like I'm a Black trans person so I don't really...for me the LGBTQ, I don't know, I don't really feel like it's inclusive of people like me so for me I really feel most of the time like I'm actually working in parallel, you know. Cause it's like people sort of categorize me as Black LGBT, which I don't...but like I have many feelings about the 'T' being part of the 'LGB' because you know, for example, I identify as queer because my sexuality like for me it's like, I just don't date White people, gender I don't care, for me race has actually a bigger impact, so I feel like I'm queer in that sense, but also I'm trans, but the transness being part of the LGBT, a lot of people put it together, but it just doesn't work together. Like it's not the same thing, right? It's not the same fights, and stuff."*

<div align="right">Lucas Charlie Rose, Montréal</div>

In their infamous statement, the Black lesbian women of the Combahee River Collective (CRC) explicitly affirmed the location of their activism, situated at the crossroads of feminism, anti-racism, anti-capitalism, and heterosexism. More precisely, they expressed how they were "actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and [saw] as [their] particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking" (Combahee River Collective 2017 [1977]). In consolidating intersectional thought and praxis, the CRC rightly showed how interlocking systems of oppression not only shape individual experiences and political subjectivities but produce conditions for mobilization. For instance, by locating individuals and collective actors socially and politically, interlocking systems of oppression inform both individual motivations and collective grievances. Alan, cofounder of Qouleur Collective, and Lucas Charlie Rose, a member of Black Lives Matter Montréal, both account for such an understanding, wherein their gender, race, and sexuality

informed their own understanding of collective struggles and shaped their activism correspondingly. As Alan notably expressed in the above quote, for him to engage in activism necessitated taking into account the multidimensional character of his identity, including both its racial and sexual components. For Lucas Charlie Rose, this further implied conceiving of his sexuality as being intrinsically shaped by his race and his transness. In continuity with the CRC, Alan and Lucas Charlie Rose's social locations both within and outside Montréal's LGBTQ movement thus played a determining role in shaping their activism.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, inasmuch as social movement theory provides enlightening pieces of information regarding the micro-, meso-, and macro-level conditions spurring and maintaining individual engagement in a particular movement, it has yet to reflect more deeply about the context in which these conditions are produced. Simply stated, it has lacked somewhat of a thorough analysis of the *relational context* in which individuals collectively engage over time; an analysis which additionally includes the day-to-day work of social movements. It is in that respect that the CRC's foregrounding work on interlocking systems of oppression and activism, as well as subsequent Black feminists' work on intersectionality, appear to be more suitable to fully grasp how and why people of colour collectively engage in LGBTQ activism in Canada the way that they do, notably through organizations formed around specific racialized identities. With its emphasis on intersecting power relations, marginalization processes, and politically excluded identities, intersectionality allows us to shed light on the ways in which systems of oppression inform individual activist paths, shape movement configurations, and structure the broader institutional context in which LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are set.

This chapter aims to develop and outline an intersectional theoretical framework suitable for explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories and will be divided as follows. The first section will review the origins of intersectional thought and provide a conceptual understanding of intersectionality. The second section will attempt to clarify the bases for operationalizing intersectionality in the context of studying social movement participation. To this end, I will elaborate on six main ideas that guide intersectional analyses, namely relationality, power, social inequality, social context, complexity, and social justice (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016; Hill Collins 2019). I will end by clarifying how intersectionality allows us to better situate micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors that may account for explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

## 3.1. Defining intersectionality

Intersectionality has without a doubt become an increasingly popular concept, both within and outside the academy. Activists, practitioners, and scholars throughout North America and Europe have all come to embrace the term, oftentimes with the aim of transforming a range of institutional practices that are now seen as problematic because of their exclusionary effects. While some have denounced its 'buzzword' character (K. Davis 2008), which has deprived it from its initial political foregrounding, others have called for a re-examination of its conceptual roots to reinstate its original meaning (J. C. Nash 2008; Bilge 2013; Hancock 2016; Hill Collins 2019). As the uses of intersectionality have consequently multiplied, ranging from a methodological approach to a praxis guiding social movement practices and public policymaking, amongst other things, this dissertation focuses on the promise of intersectionality as a theoretical framework. To this end, I will first locate the development of intersectional thought and will thereafter outline its conceptualization.

### 3.1.1. Locating intersectional thought

In recent years, several scholars have sought to re-examine, and perhaps redress intersectionality's intellectual history (May 2015; Carastathis 2016; Hancock 2016; J. C. Nash 2018). The common insistence on Kimberlé Crenshaw's work, credited for coining the term intersectionality at the end of the 1980s, has in this regard invisibilized the contribution of other Black feminists and women of colour scholars and activists who have defended and put forward an intersectional understanding of power and oppression. While Crenshaw's work marks an undeniable turning point in intersectionality's history, it is however essential to locate the concept within its broader genealogy.

There is a general agreement that intersectional thought predates American social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, going back to the 19th century. As such, the former slave and abolitionist activist Sojourner Truth is commonly identified as one of the first Black women to have verbally articulated some of the core ideas foregrounding intersectional thought. In her 1851 speech at the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, Truth repeatedly asks 'Ain't I a Woman?', in an attempt to reveal the opposing and contradictory experiences of White and Black women in America.

In relating her experience to both White women and all men, she "deconstructs every single major truth-claim about gender in a patriarchal slave social formation (...) drawing attention to the simultaneous importance of subjectivity" (Brah and Phoenix 2013, 77). In so doing, she locates her own experience as a product of the interplay between gender oppression, the system of slavery and racial oppression; an experience that does not find echo in White women's reality. Truth's words undeniably influenced the works of many Black feminists over the years, eventually inspiring the title of bell hooks' 1981 book, *Ain't I a Woman?*.

As intersectional thought may be traced back to the 19th century, American social movements of the 1960s and 1970s further contributed in consolidating an understanding of the ways in which interlocking systems of oppression marginalized Black women and women of colour in particular ways. As alluded to in this chapter's introduction, the CRC's statement constitutes one of intersectionality's foundational texts (J. C. Nash 2018). Building on numerous Black feminist essays, such as Frances Beal's "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female", the CRC insisted on an interlocking perspective of systems of oppression, additionally including heterosexism (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016) – which had until now remained fairly neglected. A collective of Black lesbian women activists, the CRC more specifically developed their analysis in the context of social movements, evoking their experienced sexual marginalization within the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) and their disagreement with the lesbian separatist movement, highly dominated by White lesbian women at the time. Coming together in the early 1970s, the CRC thereby treated "oppression as resulting from the joint operations of major systems of oppression that form a complex social structure of inequality" (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016, 70). As such, they righteously underlined the interwoven nature of identities, structures, and oppressions, all the while revealing their continuous interaction in shaping individual experiences and producing social inequalities.

Intersectional thought also finds some roots in 1970s and 1980s Chicana and Native American feminisms (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). In this vein, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's edited work published in 1981 and entitled *This Bridge Called My Back*, is repeatedly brought up as another pioneering text for situating the development of intersectionality. Bringing together writings from Black, Chicana, Latina, Native American, and Asian-American feminists, Moraga and Anzaldúa's collective volume gave voice to women of colour's experiences using multiple forms of expression, from poetry to artwork and testimonies. Acknowledging this line of work as constitutive of

intersectionality's intellectual historical genealogy not only represents an attempt to underline the long tradition of thinking *intersectionally*, but also works at locating intersectional thought in the context of social movements and activism prior to its introduction in the academic sphere (J. C. Nash 2018; Hill Collins 2019).

While intersectional thought had been very much present in a variety of scholarly and activist texts, the coining of the term 'intersectionality' is generally attributed to Kimberlé Crenshaw, following the publication of two articles: "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" (1989) and "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour" (1991). Coming from a critical legal studies perspective, Crenshaw uses intersectionality to make sense of the "juridical invisibility of Black women's experiences of discrimination, experiences that can be – though are not always – constituted by the interplay of race and gender" (J. C. Nash 2018, 11). At the core of her work is the now infamous General Motors case, wherein five Black women sued the car manufacturer denouncing a discriminatory seniority policy targeting Black women only. As the court ruled against both racial and sex discrimination claims, arguing that the policy did not discriminate against all women, nor against all Black people, it became apparent that 'Black women', as a social group in need of discrimination protection, were not accounted for by the law. Instead, they were – and still are – "protected only to the extent that their experiences coincide with those of either of the two groups [women and Black people]" (Crenshaw 1989, 143). To make sense of these discriminatory experiences, Crenshaw (1989; 1991) used a traffic intersection analogy where different roads represent sexual, racial, or classist discrimination flows. When an accident happens at an intersection, it may be caused by several or all of the cars coming from the different directions, rendering the identification of a single cause quite difficult and perhaps impossible. Similarly, when discriminatory situations happen, we may not be able to explain them by looking at sexism, racism, and classism separately and individually.

As important as Crenshaw's 1989 and 1991 articles have been in 'bringing' intersectional thought in the academic sphere and fostering an impressive amount of subsequent work, Patricia Hill Collins' matrix of domination, developed around the same time, also encapsulated the complexity of social structures and inequalities (J. C. Nash 2018). Anchored in Black feminist thought, the matrix of domination acknowledges the interlocking character of systems of oppression, discarding any

additive or cumulative models of oppression. Individuals are thus differently located within the matrix, depending on their socioeconomic status, their religion, their sexuality, and so on. In this line of thought, "depending on the context, an individual may be an oppressor, a member of an oppressed group, or simultaneously oppressor and oppressed" (Hill Collins 2000, 246). Although Black women's experiences figure at the center of Hill Collins' analysis, her conceptual stance allows her to situate Black women's experiences in relation to other groups, such as sexual and gender minorities, who may similarly encounter different dimensions of this matrix.

Kimberlé Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins' work represent significant intellectual contributions for advancing intersectional thought within the academy, along with the contributions of numerous scholars, activists, and authors. As such, they have developed analytical tools that allow us to capture the complexity of social inequalities, identities, and oppressions. As intersectionality has since traveled across disciplines and beyond academic and activist circles, entering the policymaking field for instance, it was nevertheless necessary to (re)locate the concept within its broader historical intellectual genealogy[25], highlighting its development in the context of social movements and activism.

### 3.1.2. Conceptualizing intersectionality

Just as intersectionality's intellectual history has been subjected to various debates (J. C. Nash 2018), the popularity of the concept has also given rise to a range of discussions pertaining to its definition. While the previous subsection has already glossed over some of the theoretical bases of intersectional thought, it remains essential to further engage with what intersectionality entails, theoretically speaking. To this end, I will hereby develop on intersectionality's conception of marginalization.

In its simplest form, intersectionality refers "to the ways in which systems of oppression, such as racism, sexism and classism, intersect in (re)producing inequalities and fostering discrimination" (Labelle 2020b, 1). It rests on the premise that societies are structured along categories of sameness and difference that situate individuals in relation to one another (Hill Collins 2015). These categories

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[25] This was a brief, non-exhaustive, historical overview. For more comprehensive overviews of intersectionality's intellectual history see Hancock (2016), May (2015), Hill Collins and Bilge (2016), Carastathis (2016), and Hill Collins (2019).

may include race, gender, sexuality, ability, and religion, amongst others, and remain endless in part because of the unpredictable nature of social categorization processes that work at (re)producing rapports of domination and subordination. What is however central to intersectionality is thinking about these categories "not as distinct but as always permeated by other categories, fluid and changing, always in the process of creating and being created by dynamics of power" (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795).

Categories of sameness and difference interact and produce society (Hancock 2007b) through four interrelated domains of power, namely structural, disciplinary, interpersonal, and hegemonic (Hill Collins 2000; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Whereas the *structural* domain consists of the social institutions that work at (re)producing marginalization, henceforth organizing oppression, the *disciplinary* domain manages oppression though a range of administrative practices, bureaucratic hierarchies, and surveillance techniques (Hancock 2007a). These more precisely function at managing power relations "not through social policies that are explicitly racist or sexist, but through the ways in which organizations are run" (Hill Collins 2000, 280). The *interpersonal* domain consists of routinized interactions and micro-level practices that characterize how individuals treat each other on a daily basis. Finally, the *hegemonic* domain is composed of the ideas, cultures, and ideologies that justify and maintain domination (Hancock 2007a; Hill Collins 2000). These four domains of power wherein categories of sameness and difference interact hence work at maintaining domination and perpetuating marginalization.

Furthermore, intersectionality rests on the idea that if we are to understand the complex realities that marginalized groups have to navigate, we must simultaneously take into account the multiple systems of oppression –such as racism, sexism, classism, etc.– that maintain categories of sameness and difference in place – race, gender, class, etc. Two main principles guide this idea. First, distinctive from a single-axis analytical framework, an intersectional analysis holds that if we are to understand the lived realities of, for example, Black women in the United States, we cannot focus on racism, sexism, or classism alone (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013). Instead, we need to adopt an integrative approach that encapsulates the racism/sexism/classism nexus. Second, when systems of oppression interact, they produce variable and singular effects. Studies have for instance shown how race, sexuality, and gender interact in such a way that particularly impacts and marginalizes gay men of colour in certain contexts. Plummer's (2007) study of Seattle's gay community has more precisely

revealed how ethnosexual stereotypes produce racial fetishism – a manifestation of sexual racism – which specifically marginalizes gay men of colour in gay communities. In this particular case, because of their race/sexuality/gender, gay men of colour navigate these spaces in very different ways than White gay men, heterosexual men of colour, and lesbian women of colour. As such, the effects that systems of oppression have on individuals' lives cannot be easily added or multiplied, nor can they be anticipated in a systematic manner; put simply, they are to be conceived as singular rather than cumulative, and context-dependent[26] (Dhamoon 2011; Hancock 2007a). It is in that regard that intersectionality maintains an understanding of systems of oppression as interlocking, mutually constitutive, and indissociable (Bilge 2009; Dhamoon 2011). They do not exist independently from or apart of one another, and their effects are variable, indeterminate, and singular.

Intersectionality therefore rests upon a particular conception of power and oppression, wherein power relations and systems of oppression interact in producing marginalization. Furthermore, mutually constitutive and interlocking systems of oppression materialize in a range of institutions, be it legal, political, economic, or cultural (Grzanka 2014; Crenshaw 1991; 2014). As they contribute in institutionalizing categories of sameness and difference, systems of oppression structure peoples' lives and constrain individual capabilities. It is in this vein that intersectionality insists on the structural dimension of marginalization, wherein structures contribute to socially locate individuals within intersecting power relations. This is not to say that individuals do not have agency, nor that identities do not matter. On the contrary, as structures condition individual experiences, they also inform political subjectivities and enable action. If we take a step back and reexamine the CRC's understanding of intersectionality, identities do appear as a central theme (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Conceived as political projects, identities are shaped by people's social location within interlocking systems of oppression yet may serve as the basis for mobilization. It is precisely this acknowledgement of the interrelation between the structural character of intersecting oppressions and identities as political locations that informed the CRC's understanding of identity politics, viewed as "a vital tool of resistance against oppression" (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016, 116). In that respect, intersecting systems of oppression not only produce and shape marginalization, but also enable action and collective mobilization. Overall, intersectionality, as a theoretical framework, argues for an interactionist perspective of power and oppression, wherein structures and identities interact in shaping marginalization and fostering mobilization, as shown in Figure I.

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[26] This was notably demonstrated in Crenshaw's (1989) analysis of the General Motors lawsuit.
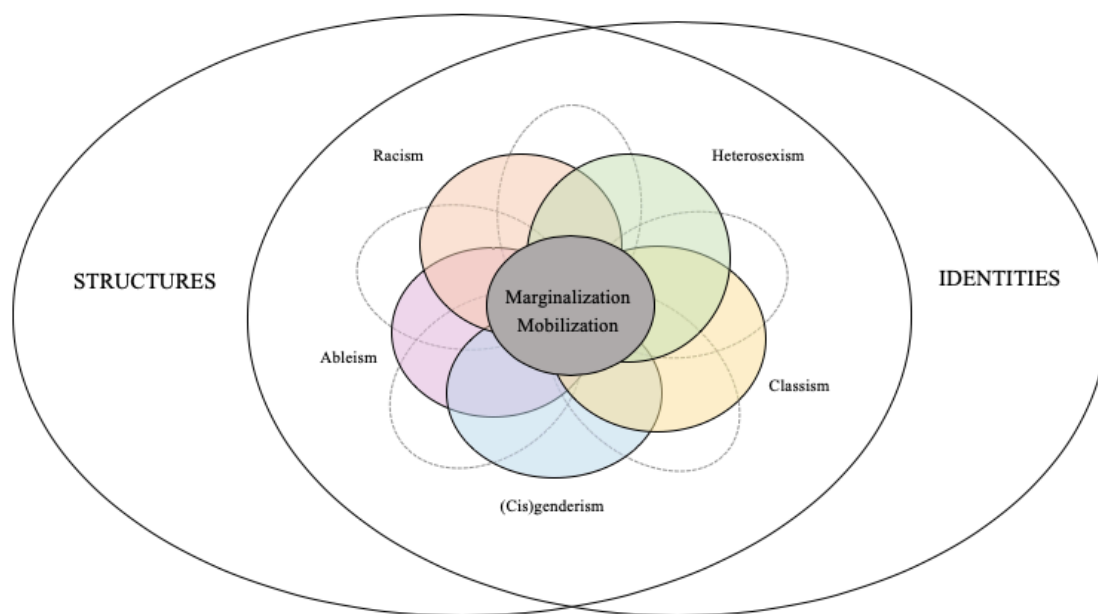
*Figure I: An intersectional understanding of marginalization and mobilization: dynamics of power and oppression[27]*

To briefly sum up some of the underlying premises developed herein, one may conceptualize intersectionality as a transdisciplinary theoretical framework that aims at shedding light on the ways in which systems of oppression intersect and contribute in (re)producing social inequalities that are inherently complex. As such, it (1) acknowledges that categories of sameness and difference interact through four domains of power, namely structural, disciplinary, interpersonal and hegemonic, which work at managing, maintaining, and (re)producing oppression; (2) proposes that systems of oppression interlock, mutually constitute each other, and produce variable effects that are singular and context-dependent; and (3) calls for an interactionist perspective of power and oppression, wherein structures and identities interact in fostering marginalization and shaping mobilization.

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[27] The dotted circles represent other, unidentified, systems of oppression that may be of relevance for understanding marginalization in a particular context.

## 3.2. Operationalizing intersectionality analytically

This thesis proposes to apply an intersectional understanding of marginalization for explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Canada. More precisely, it aims at combining an intersectional framework with a multilevel analysis, where micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors interact and inform collective engagement trajectories. To this end, I will review some of the core ideas guiding intersectional analyses. These will provide some guidance as to what ought to be observed within and across each level of analysis. I will thereafter develop further on the multilevel analysis proposed herein, clarifying its articulation with an intersectional theoretical framework.

### 3.2.1. Intersectionality as an analytical lens

As previously stated, the concept of intersectionality has gained in popularity both across disciplines and beyond academia. In her review of intersectionality scholarship, Hill Collins (2019) nevertheless identifies six core ideas that continuously appear, albeit at varying degrees, within previous work, namely relationality, power, social inequality, social context, complexity, and social justice. I will briefly go over each idea and highlight its analytical purpose.

*Relationality* guides intersectional analyses by insisting on the relational character of categories of sameness and difference. As such, intersectional analyses emphasize the relational processes through which categories are constructed, gain meaning, and take form, and bring scholars to "demonstrate how various social positions (occupied by actors, systems, and political/economic structural arrangements) necessarily acquire meaning and power (or lack thereof) *in relation* to other social positions" (Hill Collins 2019, 46, emphasis added). When it comes to studying engagement within LGBTQ movements, this implies looking at the ways in which gender and sexuality interact with other categories of sameness and difference, such as race or ability, subsequently shaping activists' locations both within and outside the movement.

Inextricably linked to relationality is the organization of *power,* which constitutes a second core idea guiding intersectional analyses. As indicated above, intersectionality rests upon an understanding of power as composed by systems of oppression that co-construct each other and that

(re)produce unequal outcomes, both material and symbolic (Hill Collin 2019). These outcomes consequently shape people's experiences along their specific location within social hierarchies. In this regard, intersectional analyses shed light on the ways in which power is organized in a particular society and the impact it has on people's experiences. Intersectionality thereby facilitates an examination of the ways in which power is distributed within LGBTQ movements, notably through resources, representations, and privilege, and the impact it holds on LGBTQ-POC experiences, individual activist paths and collective engagement trajectories.

A third core idea guiding intersectional analyses is *social inequality*. More precisely, intersectional inquiries have inscribed social inequalities as the product of intersecting power relations and have in this sense moved past treating gender, racial, and other types of inequalities as separate entities. Intersectionality has thus contributed in complexifying our understanding of social inequalities, produced by an array of intersecting power relations rather than by a single factor (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). This rethinking of social inequalities has furthermore rejected previous notions that have commonly normalized inequalities, "depicting [them] as natural and inevitable" (Hill Collins 2019, 46). Instead, intersectional analyses insist on the necessity of foregrounding social inequalities within particular power configurations, from which derive a range of social problems. It is in that respect that unpacking intersecting power relations within LGBTQ movements remains essential for bringing to light social inequalities within LGBTQ organizing.

Generally speaking, intersectional analyses have underlined the importance of situating knowledge production, be it in the context of academic or activist work (Hill Collins 2019). As a fourth core idea guiding intersectional analyses, *social context* refers primarily to the significance of understanding how particular interpretive communities organize knowledge production, notably through an examination of internal dynamics governing these communities. As Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) underscore, "using intersectionality as an analytical tool means *contextualizing* one's arguments, primarily by being aware that particular historical, intellectual, and political contexts shape what we think and do" (28, emphasis added). Attending to social context whilst studying LGBTQ movements thereby calls for understanding the underlying processes of claims-making and political discourses, and the internal social hierarchies that shape what different groups of activists think and how they mobilize. More precisely, it entails unpacking institutionalized power configurations at both meso-

and macro-levels, all the while situating individual motivations within their respective social locations, at a micro-level.

A fifth idea constitutive of intersectionality as an analytical tool is *complexity.* Not only has intersectional thought attended to reveal the complexity of the social world, but it has also maintained an understanding of power and social inequalities as inherently complex (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Scholars engaging with the complex nature of power and social inequalities have therefore engaged more deeply with the methodological implications that arise when applying an intersectional analytical lens (as will be exposed in chapter 4). In the words of Patricia Hill Collins (2019), "complex questions may require equally complex strategies for investigation" (47). Mobilizing an intersectional analytical lens while studying LGBTQ movements finally require acknowledging the complexity of power relations and inequalities, as well as their intertwining, which constitute and inform LGBTQ organizing.

*Social justice* constitutes a sixth and last core idea guiding intersectional analyses. Similar to complexity, social justice has been at the forefront of methodological concerns pertaining to the operationalization of intersectional research projects (Hill Collins 2019). Attention to social justice nonetheless informs the underlying purposes of mobilizing intersectionality analytically, notably as a way of bringing about social change. Social justice has thus played a major role in fostering intersectional thought and guiding intersectional projects and practices, from the CRC to Kimberlé Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins' work. It is in this regard that this research underlyingly pursues a social justice agenda, whether it be through rendering visible LGBTQ-POC collective narratives or through casting a light on deeply complex inequalities structuring LGBTQ activism and rights recognition in Canada.

Overall, relationality, power, social inequality, social context, complexity, and social justice inform intersectional research projects by providing analytical guidance. While treated separately, they are to be conceived as continuously informing one another. Inscribed within an intersectional understanding of marginalization, they offer relevant analytical avenues, albeit at varying degrees depending on what constitutes the main focus of the research inquiry. As previously exposed, this dissertation seeks to understand how and why people of colour activists collectively participate the way that they do within LGBTQ movements in Toronto and Montréal, notably through joining or

creating LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. In mobilizing intersectionality theoretically, this dissertation's analytical framework primarily emphasizes the relevance of *relationality*, *power*, and *social context* to further our understanding of LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. How are activists situated in relation to one another, depending on their race, gender, religion, etc. and how does this differently inform their motivations and the conditions in which they engage in activism? How is power distributed amongst activists engaged in LGBTQ movements and how is power organized differently or similarly across cities? How can we take into account the historical, political, and cultural development of LGBTQ activism to further make sense of the path undertaken by LGBTQ-POC activists today? In light of these questions, and to fully tackle how marginalization shapes LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, I suggest deploying a multilevel analysis, which incorporates micro-, meso-, and macro-level analyses.

### 3.2.2. Deploying a multilevel analysis

Previous work on social movement participation has revealed the significance of situating individual activist paths within their meso- and macro-level contexts (Corrigall-Brown 2012). As outlined in the previous chapter, Fillieule (2001) has for instance shown how individual activist paths were simultaneously shaped by the organizational context of the movement and by the broader sociopolitical context wherein both individuals and movements evolve. Although useful in several respects, this line of work has generally overlooked the relational context in which individuals collectively engage in activism over time. By relational context, I mean the power configurations that not only situate activists within and outside the movement, but that also situate LGBTQ SMOs in relation to one another and in relation to the state. Hence the relevance of mobilizing an intersectional theoretical framework in our undertaking of a multilevel analysis of LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. I will hereby clarify how I intend to go forward with such an analysis by detailing what is to be observed at each level of analysis, focusing on three of intersectionality's guiding principles, namely *relationality, power,* and *social context*.

#### 3.2.2.1. Micro-level

At a micro-level, this analysis seeks to further understand individual social movement participation within LGBTQ movements. Who participates in LGBTQ movements, how, and why?

Social movement theory and previous work on activist paths have already identified several factors leading to one's participation within social movement activities, such as one's resources (financial, cultural, educational, and time-related), one's network, and/or one's ideological and attitudinal affinities. While these remain useful, they lack a thorough understanding of the underlying conditions that render these factors analytically relevant. Incorporating an intersectional analytical lens, with an emphasis on relationality, power, and social context, could in this regard facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the micro-level context within which these factors come to play a role in fostering/limiting individual participation.

First, by focusing on the relational character of categories of sameness and difference, *relationality* brings about a clearer understanding of who participates in LGBTQ movements. By insisting on the importance of analyzing individuals in relation to each other, it facilitates a comparative understanding between activists, allowing for the identification of collective patterns. Second, as intersectionality prompts an analysis of the organization of *power*, it enables one to better situate the conditions in which one's participation is set. For instance, in which ways do resources facilitate or constrain one's activism? How do they shape one's activist path? Finally, an attention to *social context* invites a comprehensive understanding of the rationale behind one's participation. Why do activists participate the way that they do? What drives their activism over time and what prompts their disengagement? It is in that respect that a micro-level analysis allows us to identify and expose *individual activist paths* that compose collective engagement trajectories.

### 3.2.2.2. Meso-level

At a meso-level, this analysis intends to focus on LGBTQ movements themselves and on the ways in which they are organized. More precisely, who organizes, how, and why? Previous work has for this matter evoked the importance of attending to movements' organizational contexts, as well as to what happens within SMOs (Fillieule 2010). While these considerations remain undeniably essential for fully grasping the immediate context within which activists organize, they understate the relevance of internal day-to-day dynamics that structure collective organizing. An intersectional analytical lens can in this regard bridge this gap correspondingly.

First, attending to *relationality* engages a deeper analysis of the relationship between SMOs, thereby socially situating activists accordingly within LGBTQ movements. It additionally questions who has the necessary means to organize and be part of such movements. Second, an intersectional analytical lens enables a thorough analysis of movements' internal *power* configurations, which may shape how activists organize. With what resources and in which ways do activists organize? How do resources shape activists' daily experiences? Finally, *social context* prompts a profound reflection on the historical, cultural, and political dimensions of movements' organizational landscapes. Why do activists collectively organize the way that they do? In this regard, a meso-level analysis facilitates an understanding of *social movements' organizational dynamics* in which collective engagement trajectories are set.

### 3.2.2.3. Macro-level

At a macro-level, this analysis proposes to take a closer look at the broader context within which both movements and individuals evolve. Focusing on the state itself, and the relationship it holds with social movements and individuals, it asks the overarching question: who is recognized by the state, both individually and collectively, how, and why? Previous studies on political opportunities have for instance revealed the significance of macro-structural contexts in fostering or inhibiting collective mobilization (M. Smith 2014). Others have similarly shown the extent to which individual motivations to participate in social movement activities are informed by the broader sociopolitical context (Ketelaars 2016). Incorporating intersectionality nevertheless pushes the analysis a little bit further by delving into identity recognition.

First, with its focus on *relationality*, intersectionality prompts a reflection on a society's sense of belonging. By asking who is recognized by the state, on both individual and collective levels, it allows us to socially situate activists within their broader context, hence outside LGBTQ movements. Second, by bringing to light the broader *power* configurations within a particular society at a particular time, it invites an understanding of recognition processes. Through which policies or rights are individuals and social movements recognized by the state? Finally, the emphasis placed upon *social context* further contextualizes the historical, cultural, and political development of recognition processes that structure both LGBTQ activists and movements. A macro-level analysis therefore

enables an understanding of the ways in which *institutional and sociopolitical contexts* inform collective engagement trajectories.

The multilevel analysis proposed herein acknowledges firsthand the interrelation between individuals, movements, and the state, in the sense that they do not 'exist' and evolve independently and separately from each other. As such, if we are to fully grasp collective engagement trajectories – or why and how LGBTQ-POC activists engage in LGBTQ movements the way that they do over time – we must take into account their individual activist paths, the organizational dynamics of LGBTQ movements, as well as the institutional and sociopolitical contexts that shape both movements and individuals on a daily basis. Figure II provides an illustration of the ways in which an intersectional analytical lens may be combined with a multilevel analysis to explain collective engagement trajectories.
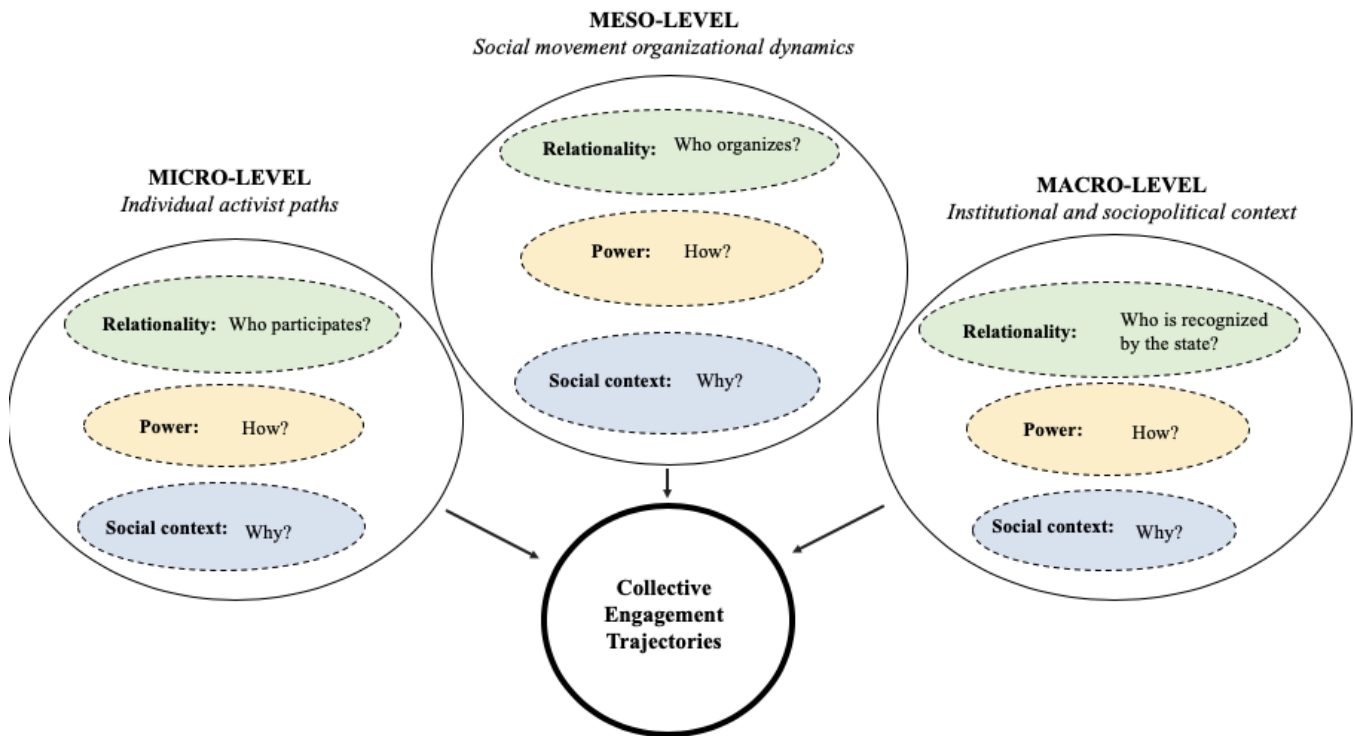


*Figure II: Combining an intersectional analytical lens to a multilevel analysis for explaining collective engagement trajectories*

### 3.3. Conclusion

I posit that intersectionality, as a theoretical framework, can enlighten some of the blind spots identified within social movement theory. Rather than discarding previous approaches to social movement participation, it instead builds on previous work to bring a refreshing perspective on the ways in which marginalization drives participation. More precisely, by insisting on individuals' agency, intersectionality breaks away from other critical approaches that overstate the constraining character of oppression. The Combahee River Collective represents in this sense a case in point, with its own understanding of identity politics as a political project reflective of their multiply marginalized social location. Similarly, this research seeks to demonstrate how marginalization factors in explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements. Analytically speaking, and combined with a multilevel analysis, it shows how the interrelation between individual activist paths, social movement organizational dynamics, and the institutional and sociopolitical context impact collective engagement trajectories.

The contribution of the theoretical framework exposed herein is twofold. First, it mobilizes a critical theoretical perspective, namely intersectionality, to differently analyze a long-standing sociopolitical puzzle: social movement participation. While social movement participation is by no means a new empirical puzzle (see chapter 2), this thesis proposes an innovative approach with the particular aim of enriching ongoing dialogues that seek to further understand why people mobilize the way that they do. Second, by drawing upon the theoretical underpinnings of intersectionality, it distinguishes itself from a growing body of work which has come to primarily use intersectionality as an empirical object (see for instance studies on intersectional coalitions and intersectional praxis within social movements)[28]. Instead of focusing on intersectionality as an observable phenomenon within social movements, I mobilize the concept theoretically and fundamentally believe in its theoretical relevance for analyzing sociopolitical puzzles. That being said, operationalizing an intersectional research project does carry its load of epistemological and methodological concerns (Hill Collins 2019; Bilge 2009; Bowleg 2008; K. Davis 2014), which will be addressed in the upcoming chapter.

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[28] This line of work has indeed expanded over the years, figuring at the core of current work on intersectionality and social movements (see Laperrière and Lépinard 2016; Evans 2016; Mayo-Adam 2017; Ayoub 2019).

# 4. Epistemological and methodological considerations

*"The major source of difficulty in our political work is that we are not just trying to fight oppression on one front or even two, but instead to address a whole range of oppressions. We do not have racial, sexual, heterosexual, or class privilege to rely upon, nor do we have even the minimal access to resources and power that groups who possess any of these types of privilege have."*

Combahee River Collective, 1977

When I began recruiting participants for my research, I contacted activists of colour whose work I found essential and remarkable. Understandingly, and rapidly enough, some of these activists raised concerns regarding my research, questioning in part why a White queer scholar like myself appeared so interested in hearing LGBTQ people of colour's (LGBTQ-POC) narratives, narratives that most often than not concealed difficult experiences. I vividly remember one activist in particular, whom someone had suggested I contact. This activist very clearly stated how my research risked reproducing the very same power relations I was supposedly tackling by soliciting people of colour's emotional labor without advancing some form of financial retribution. They then pointed out that I should use my privilege in more useful ways, implying that I shift my focus from LGBTQ-POC's narratives to the configuration of white privilege in LGBTQ movements. While I instinctually feared that my research was jeopardized, I quickly realized that they were right, that I should listen to what they had to say, and that if it meant redesigning my research then so be it. After all, LGBTQ-POC activists are in a better position to know what their communities really need. If I believed that I was already aware of my own privilege as a White scholar, this interaction made me realize how I had insufficiently reflected on what this white privilege represented, how it had shaped and informed my initial research design, and how it could negatively impact research participants. Then again, in coherence with my own commitment to intersectional thought, I could not so easily isolate my whiteness from my other identifications. Inasmuch as I attempted to apply an intersectional methodological framework, it soon appeared unclear as to what that entailed substantially and practically speaking.

In its 1977 declaration, the Combahee River Collective (CRC) clearly and openly discussed the relationship between privilege, power, and activism. As such, they evoked how their lack of privilege

resulted in a lack of power, which at the same time grounded and formed the bases of their political activism. Their shared experiences of oppression as Black lesbian women informed their politics, leading them to argue that "the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression" (Combahee River Collective 2017 [1977]). Not only did the CRC articulate its politics and activism around Black lesbian women's shared experiences of oppression, but its organizing members also insisted that they could only rely on themselves as "the only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation is us" (Combahee River Collective 2017 [1977]). Thereupon, the collective insisted on the importance of standpoint in fostering activism, advancing social change, and producing knowledge, thereby defining their very own understanding of identity politics. In that respect, and in light of the interaction with the activist I encountered earlier, I began to question which place I could occupy in the struggle against white privilege in LGBTQ movements? How did my own standpoint shape the ways in which I approached this research endeavor? As a White queer scholar working on LGBTQ-POC activism, I needed to thoroughly reflect on how I could legitimately and ethically undertake an intersectional research project that could effectively work at tackling white privilege in LGBTQ movements. By implying that my research, as was initially designed, risked reproducing power relations, that activist triggered a much needed reflection on my part – to which I am indebted – as to how I could actually apply an intersectional analytical framework coming from a place of relative privilege and how I needed to approach my methodological design differently.

The aim of this chapter is twofold. First, it aims to provide a critical reflection on intersectionality as a methodological framework by asking the following questions: What makes an intersectional research project and/or an intersectional methodology *intersectional*? How can one operationalize an intersectional research project coming from a place of relative privilege? How does thinking *intersectionally* inform one's epistemological standpoint and how does it shape one's methodological design? What are the ethical considerations at play? Secondly, this chapter will provide an outline of my methodological design, detailing my research process and providing information on the data gathered for the analysis.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section will focus on the operationalization of intersectional projects and address current methodological debates within intersectionality scholarship. The second section will reflect on the ways in which intersectionality shapes one's

epistemological standpoint. More precisely, this implies complexifying how one positions herself towards research participants, continuously confronting one's embodiment of privileges and engaging in self-reflexivity in the field, and reassessing one's ethical responsibilities. The third section will outline the methodological design, such as the chosen method of inquiry, the elaboration of methodological tools, and other technical aspects relative to the research. The fourth section will go over the sociodemographic profile of research participants in Toronto and Montréal and provide a succinct portrait of research participants' location within each city's organizational landscape. The final section will address the contributions and limits of the research design.

## 4.1. Operationalizing an intersectional research project[29]

Intersectionality has become a 'buzzword' in academia and elsewhere, notably amongst public officers and social movement organizers (K. Davis 2008). Yet, this institutionalized popularity has had considerable effects on the significance and the scope of the term. While some have evoked its apparent depoliticization (Mügge et al. 2018; J. C. Nash 2008; Bilge 2015), others have voiced concerns regarding its misinterpretation and misapplication in the academic sphere (Hill Collins 2019; Hancock 2016; Tlostanova 2015; Carbado and Gulati 2013). As more and more studies claiming to embrace an intersectional framework have failed to properly define what was meant by such a framework, it has become unclear what an intersectional framework actually entails when it comes to academic research. It is in that respect that one may ask what makes an intersectional research *intersectional*? If answering this question remains a seemingly impossible task, this section will nonetheless attempt to provide some thoughts on this matter. Rather than redefining intersectionality (see chapter 3), this section will instead focus on what *ought* to inform an intersectional framework when it comes to knowledge production. It will first attempt an answer by addressing the methodological literature within intersectionality scholarship, thereby highlighting some of these debates' shortcomings. Intersectionality's ontological premises will subsequently be addressed as a way of formulating a second tentative answer as to what makes a research project intersectional.

### *4.1.1. An intersectional methodology?*

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[29] The ideas shared in this section, as well as in the next section entitled 'Intersectional epistemology', are taken from a paper published by the author in the *European Journal of Politics and Gender*.

While intersectionality is not a method *per se*, the development of an intersectional methodology – and perhaps intersectional methodologies – has been at the forefront of intersectionality scholarship for more than a decade. If Crenshaw (2011) situates this debate within intersectionality's popularity in an academic realm dominated by positivist epistemologies[30], it has also been largely informed by McCall's (2005) staple article entitled "The Complexity of Intersectionality." In this work, McCall (2005) presents a portrait of intersectionality scholarship and in so doing distinguishes between three intersectional methodological approaches. First, *anticategorial* approaches aim to deconstruct analytical categories. Second, *intracategorial* approaches examine particular marginalized intersecting identities as a way to reveal the complexities of the lived realities of individuals and communities located at a particular intersection. Third, *intercategorial* approaches focus on the relationship between and among social groups, in the aim of revealing social inequalities. In distinguishing between these three methodological approaches, McCall (2005) underlines how one's methodological approach will inform one's chosen method of inquiry. For instance, she holds that statistical methods may be well suited to operationalize intercategorial approaches that favor large-N analyses. In doing so, she moves away from equalizing intersectional research with qualitative methods and instead puts forward the idea that quantitative and mixed methods constitute valuable and legitimate methods.

Scholars have since been engaged in reflecting on the use of particular methods for operationalizing intersectional research projects, be it qualitative, quantitative, or mixed. In this regard, Simien (2007) underscores the importance of having both quantitative and qualitative studies, arguing that these actually complement each other, thereby enriching intersectionality scholarship. Griffin and Museus (2011) similarly make the case for mixed-methods research, stating that they can "serve as a useful methodological alternative and have the potential to maximize the benefits and balance the limitations of both qualitative and quantitative strategies" (19). They can in this sense remedy quantitative methods' limitation of conceiving of identity in an additive manner instead of embracing its complex and integrative nature. Others have further reflected on how researchers may measure intersectionality, thereby attending to the ways in which researchers construct their methodological tools (Hancock 2007a; Simien 2007; Bowleg 2008). On this particular matter, Bowleg

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[30] Crenshaw (2011) warns that the methodological turn in intersectionality scholarship risks reinforcing positivist epistemologies in academia, rather than benefitting intersectionality scholarship. The pressure to develop an intersectional methodology in order to render legitimate intersectional theory may in this regard reinforce positivist conceptions of knowledge production that are incoherent with intersectionality's core principles.

(2008) has underlined the difficulty of elaborating questions of inquiry, be it for in-depth interviews or survey questionnaires. She evokes, amongst other things, the importance of asking "questions about experiences that are intersecting, interdependent, and mutually constitutive, without resorting, even inadvertently, to an additive approach" (Bowleg 2008, 314). That being said, the increased attention given to method choice and method operationalization within intersectionality scholarship has given rise to emerging critics that have called for a (re)grounding of intersectional research within its core precepts.

By engaging in methodological pluralism, scholars have in some ways *performed* rather than *applied* intersectionality. One may take for example 'intersectional' statistical analyses. Adding demographic categories and binary variables into one's analysis has not necessarily translated into applying an intersectional framework. On the contrary, it has in part contributed in maintaining within-variable differences invisible, all the while reproducing additive and/or cumulative models of oppression (May 2015; Simien 2007). What we have therefore observed is a gap between the ways in which intersectional projects have been operationalized – using a range of methods that may be conceived as non-intersectional, and perhaps anti-intersectional (May 2015) – and the ways in which intersectionality has been conceptualized (J.C. Nash 2008). By enlarging the methodological scope of intersectional research projects, intersectionality's initial conception as a form of situated knowledge has somewhat been neglected (Tlostanova 2015). A form of situated knowledge which places the experiences of oppression and marginalization as the point of departure for spawning social change (Hill Collins 2019). In that respect, how can researchers operationalize an intersectional analytical framework in such a way that is coherent with its initial conceptualization? If it appears that there is no methodology or method that is inherently intersectional, going back to the concept's ontological premises may provide some enlightening thoughts on what ought to make an intersectional research project *intersectional.*

### 4.1.2. Ontological premises of intersectionality

To quote Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013), "what makes an analysis intersectional is not its use of the term 'intersectionality', nor its being situated in a familiar genealogy, nor its drawing on lists of standard citations (...), rather [it] is its adoption of an intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power" (795). Yet, what is an intersectional way

of thinking and what does it imply? Building on Hill Collins (2019), I will attempt to provide some tentative answer by going back to the concept's ontological premises. In addition to shaping one's way of thinking, these premises may also inform one's way of conducting research and of producing knowledge.

One of the first guiding premises identified by Hill Collins (2019) consists of conceiving systems of oppression as interdependent rather than independent from one another. Categories of sameness and difference, such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, are in this sense conceived as mutually constitutive of one another. This means that one cannot understand the effects that racism or sexism have on individuals and communities by looking at systems of oppression separately from one another, nor can discrimination be thought of as the result of a single system of oppression (i.e. racism). When it comes to research and knowledge production, this ontological premise requires acknowledging the unpredictable nature of the ways in which oppressions materialize in the lives of individuals. As such, even if one focuses more specifically on the interaction of racism and heterosexism in driving social movement participation, for instance, one must remain aware that this particular interaction may be shaped by other interacting systems of oppression, such as ableism or classism.

A second guiding ontological premise consists of conceiving social inequalities as the complex product of these intersecting systems of oppression (Hill Collins 2019). Not only are social inequalities complex, but they are also interdependent. For instance, there can be no such thing as a racial inequality, as this particular inequality may be shaped by other interacting categories of sameness and difference, thereby rendering social inequalities inherently complex. Embracing an intersectional way of thinking therefore complexifies one's analysis of social problems as there can be no single explanatory framework. This is further rendered complex by intersectionality's third guiding premise which consists of taking into consideration the various contexts within which social problems occur, namely at the local, regional, national, and global levels (Hill Collins 2019). In that respect, not only is an intersectional analysis required to solve social problems, as these are inherently complex, but this analysis must also incorporate a context-focused analysis.

The last guiding ontological premise evoked by Hill Collins (2019) implies acknowledging individuals' social location within these intersecting power relations and the impact of this location

on our perception of social inequalities. As everyone is differently located, everyone experiences the world differently. This will inevitably impact how one navigates the social world, thereby shaping one's experiences and one's perception on social inequalities. When it comes to knowledge production, this entails considering how a researcher's positionality shapes one's research process and what kind of knowledge one is able to produce. This particular point will be further developed in the upcoming section.

In addition to identifying four guiding ontological premises, Hill Collins (2019) selects six core analytical principles drawn from previous intersectional inquiries: relationality, power, social inequality, social context, complexity, and social justice (see chapter 3 for detailed information on each principle). While these constructs are interrelated with one another, Hill Collins (2019) nonetheless specifies that intersectional research projects place varying emphasis on these core principles. They can also be used in varying ways, for instance "to structure a study itself, the case of attending to social context, [or] to evaluate outcomes" (Hill Collins 2019, 48). One might in this sense posit that what makes an intersectional research project *intersectional* is one's commitment to these analytical principles as inevitably shaping one's research, be it in terms of research design or data analysis. All the while adhering to intersectionality's guiding ontological premises outlined above.

## 4.2. An intersectional epistemological standpoint

Committing to intersectionality's ontological premises engages researchers to adopt a particular epistemological standpoint that is similar, yet slightly different from feminist epistemologies (Hill Collins 2019). On the one hand, similar to feminist epistemologies, intersectional epistemologies[31] acknowledge the inextricable tie between epistemology and methodology. This implies, amongst other things, that methodology is not disembodied from the ways in which researchers envision how knowledge is produced and what constitutes valuable knowledge for that matter. As such, methodological considerations go beyond selecting methods of inquiry and establishing selection criteria on a purely 'scientific' basis, and instead include a profound reflection on the researcher's social location and on its impact on the research process itself, on research participants, and on the kind of data that can be collected. On the other hand, embracing an

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[31] Intersectionality, as a concept, disregards one-size-fits-all approaches, insisting instead on the complexity of identities and discrimination. It would therefore appear incoherent to impose one particular kind of intersectional epistemology, hence the plural use of the term.

intersectional epistemology implies a commitment to intersectionality's guiding analytical principles, which include, as mentioned earlier, relationality, power, complexity, and social justice. Building on Patricia Hill Collins' (2019) thoughts on intersectional epistemologies, I propose that applying an intersectional research project holds three particular epistemological considerations that inevitably inform one's methodological design and operationalization. Simply put, embracing an intersectional epistemology (1) complexifies how one positions herself vis-à-vis her research and research participants beyond an insider/outsider binary, (2) involves continuously confronting one's embodiment of privileges by engaging in constant self-reflexivity, and (3) necessitates reassessing one's ethical responsibilities.

### 4.2.1. Complexifying one's positioning

The insider/outsider binary has generated a significant amount of work across a variety of fields and disciplines, be it in feminist scholarship or amongst scholars engaged in ethnographic work. Scholars have in this regard reflected at great lengths whether it is best to be an insider, meaning sharing the characteristics, or experiences of participants, or an outsider, meaning a distant observer to what is being observed (Becker 1967; Dwyer and Buckle 2009). In feminist scholarship, insider knowledge has long been associated to the notion of epistemic privilege, suggesting that the oppressed have privileged access to a legitimate form of knowledge that oppressors do not have (Hartsock 1983) . Just as the notion of epistemic privilege has since been contested, the dichotomic aspect of the insider/outsider binary has also given rise to various criticisms. While some have evoked its essentializing and mutually exclusive nature – one can either be an insider or an outsider – others have suggested conceiving it as a dialectic, thereby acknowledging that researchers can embody both at once (Blee and Taylor 2002). For Nancy Naples (2004), the problem with the insider/outsider binary is not so much how we conceive of the relationship between the two positions, but rather how we consider them as states of being in the first place. Conceiving these in this particular way neglects the interactive processes through which one may feel as an insider or as an outsider. She therefore prefers speaking of 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness', additionally positing that both the researcher and the researched may embody varying degrees of insiderness and outsiderness towards what or who is being referred to. While I fully embrace Naples' view on the insider/outsider binary, adopting an intersectional epistemology further shapes one's positioning towards her research and research participants.

Speaking from a Black feminist perspective, Patricia Hill Collins (1986) has introduced the notion of the *outsider within*, referring to Black women intellectuals' particular position in both the academy and their communities. Using the outsider within, she sheds light on the ways in which Black women intellectuals "have used both their marginalized status in the academy and their privileged status within Black communities to produce knowledge from a Black woman standpoint" (Labelle 2020b, 7). She further insists that these outsider-within locations that researchers occupy not only influence how researchers may think, but most importantly shape which questions researchers may ask and which methods researchers may use. This is further echoed in Yacob-Haliso's (2018) argument that researchers are in fact multipositioned on various levels, as both insiders and outsiders, which come to impact different aspects of the research. Taking an intersectional stance, she posits that understanding the impact of one's social location on the research process or in the field is inherently complex and multifaceted. Furthermore, unlike standpoint theory, intersectional epistemologists hold that one cannot "self-locate as *either* on a margin *or* in a center [as] one is neither purely oppressor nor purely oppressed" (Hancock 2016, 82). This challenges once more standpoint theory's conception of knowledge and oppression, wherein one's social and political location justifies which kind of legitimate knowledge one is allowed to produce. As researchers occupy a range of positions that intersect and interact with one another and as researchers cannot easily self-locate as on a margin or in a center, one's social and political location cannot be so easily delineated. In that regard, adhering to an intersectional epistemological standpoint inevitably complexifies how one positions herself vis-à-vis research participants, as one is neither an insider nor an outsider per se.

As I have developed in previous work (Labelle 2020b), researchers' positionality should therefore be conceived as multiple, contingent, relational, and fluid. As other factors external to the researcher herself shape one's positionality, practices of self-reflexivity remain insufficient to fully grasp and comprehend how one is positioned towards research participants. One of these factors consists of research participants' own subjectivities. Not only do participants have their own subjectivities that are largely shaped by their social and political locations within society, but they are also located within a movement structured along intersecting power relations. For instance, intersecting power relations, such as racism, sexism, and cisgenderism, have structured LGBTQ activism in Canada, thereby reproducing inequalities within these movements. These inequalities have notably impacted resource distribution, with resources and decision-making power resting in the hands of White-cisgender-gay-men at the expense of people of colour, lesbian, and trans activists

(Lenon and Dryden 2015; J. A. Podmore and Chamberland 2015; Namaste 2000). As such, a White cisgender gay man and a trans woman of colour that occupy different locations within the movement will not regard my research, nor my own social location, in the same way. Additionally, a White cisgender lesbian woman and a cisgender lesbian woman of colour will not view my research in the same way, nor will they and I share similar feelings of insiderness, in spite of our shared identification as cisgender lesbian women. Inasmuch as I could have appeared to occupy an insider position as a sexual minority myself, the reality is much more complex than that as my lesbian identity remains shaped by my whiteness as well as by socioeconomic status, amongst other things.

I thereby hold that one's positionality cannot be defined in insider/outsider terms as it is inherently more complex than that. Not only does one's intersecting identifications, such as one's sexual orientation, gender, race, and socioeconomic status, complexify one's positionality vis-à-vis research participants, but the intersecting power relations concealed within the movement under study also inform how participants will locate the researcher socially and politically. Embracing an intersectional epistemology thus implies reflecting more deeply about the ways in which one's positionality, conceived as multiple, contingent, relational, and fluid, impacts one's research process and methodological design. Such impact may include access to fieldwork and participants, as well as access to particular narratives, which subsequently bears effects on the kind of data researchers can access, gather, and analyze.

### 4.2.2. Confronting one's embodiment of privileges

Occupying multiple positions that are socially and politically located inevitably involves embodying a range of privileges. As such, embracing an intersectional epistemological standpoint is not solely about situating oneself socially and politically. Instead, it implies reflecting on what the notion of privilege entails, how it unfolds in the context of research, and how researchers ought to react when confronted to their own embodiment of privileges, particularly when coming from a place of relative privilege. Although privilege is to be understood as being relational and multidimensional – one is neither privileged nor lacking privilege *per se* – it is fair to state that I come from a place of relative privilege, as a White researcher working within a privileged institution that is academia. In this subsection I henceforth posit that reflecting on one's embodiment of privileges involves addressing one's legitimacy of producing knowledge on a particular subject matter, thereby echoing

Linda Alcoff's (1991) 'problem of speaking for others' and remaining aware of the impact that one can have on research participants.

In her ground breaking work on the 'problem of speaking for others', Alcoff (1991) evokes the privileged dimension of producing knowledge, also referred to as *speech*. Considering that speech – and the ability to speak – is a privileged act, she questions the legitimacy that one can have *to speak*, evoking its potential impact on the (re)production of inequalities: "when one is speaking about others, or simply trying to describe their situation or some aspect of it, one may also be speaking in place of them, that is, speaking for them" (Alcoff 1991, 9). As a White scholar studying people of colour activism, I rapidly questioned my own legitimacy in undertaking this particular research. Coming from a place of relative privilege as a White-identifying scholar, who was I to study LGBTQ-POC's narratives and producing knowledge on *their* participation within LGBTQ movements? Was I reproducing the same power relations I was trying to tackle? For Alcoff (1991), occupying a privileged position does not dismiss one's legitimacy to speak. On the contrary, it enables one's political responsibility to do so: "If I don't speak for those less privileged than myself, am I abandoning my political responsibility to speak out against oppression, a responsibility incurred by the very fact of my privilege?" (8). The question thus moves away from *who* is able to produce knowledge on a particular subject matter to *how* one produces knowledge whilst attempting to avoid (re)producing inequalities. As a way to resolve this issue, I attempted to slightly reframe my research project from solely studying people of colour's social movement participation to paying closer attention to power configurations – and the structuring character of white privilege – within LGBTQ movements and within Canadian society more broadly. While the two questions remain interrelated, the latter explicitly questions white privilege, revealing more clearly my political stance. That said, as Alcoff (1991) rightly underlines, addressing one's legitimacy to speak also involves considering the discursive context in which speech is produced, hence academia.

Considering academia as a site of knowledge production induced by intersecting power relations implies acknowledging how researchers embody privilege on a macro-level. In my particular case, this involved questioning academia's legitimacy in researching grassroots activism, beyond acknowledging social movements as knowledge producers (Chesters 2012). When I began recruiting participants, I was soon confronted with the legacy of previous research conducted on grassroots activism. Several activists shared with me how academic research had fed into social

movements and activism for self-purposes, such as ensuring the scientific reach of academic institutions, without 'giving back' to movements and activists. Forms of 'giving back' notably meant informing participants of analyzed results and sharing available publications. Additionally, LGBTQ-POC activists underlined the instrumental – read tokenistic – nature of their participation in previous research projects initially designed by White scholars. They criticized, amongst other things, the perceived lack of inclusion from scholars, who had oftentimes reached out to LGBTQ-POC communities during the last stages of the research rather than at the beginning of the process. While my research was not inscribed within a larger research project of that nature, I was nonetheless affected by the legacy that these experiences had left in LGBTQ-POC activist communities, subsequently shaping their perspective towards my own research.

As I inevitably embodied micro- and macro-level privileges, it soon appeared essential to engage in continuous self-reflexivity throughout the entire research process, from the elaboration of the research question to the conduct of fieldwork and the results analysis phase. Actively engaging in wokeness[32] practices implied listening to voiced concerns, integrating criticism and adapting one's research according to input provided by activists and underprivileged communities. As per this particular research, this led to the reframing of the research question as mentioned above, all the while slightly redesigning the methodological approach. More precisely, this meant revisiting my initial sample to recruit activists in more privileged locations within the movement under study, notably White cisgender gay men. Doing so not only acted as a way to avoid overexposing LGBTQ-POC activists to various forms of emotional labor, but also facilitated shedding light on processes of racialization from the perspective of those holding relative power positions.

### 4.2.3. Reassessing one's ethical responsibilities

Confronting one's embodiment of privileges thereupon led to a reassessment of my own ethical responsibilities. How could I undertake this particular research in an ethical manner coherent with my own embrace of an intersectional epistemological standpoint, after having taken into account my positionality towards research participants and the potential impact of my own embodiment of micro- and macro-level privileges?

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[32] Wokeness consists of being aware of social problems and social justice issues. While the term became popular in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States around 2012, it was nonetheless used in American Black activist communities as early as the 1960s (Whiteout 2018).

Although ethics have been previously – and thoroughly – engaged within feminist scholarship (Stacey 1988; Devault 2004), recent intersectionality scholarship has unfortunately neglected this particular aspect of research; even though an ethical commitment to social justice has always figured as a core principle of intersectional thought (Hill Collins 2019). One illustration of this particular ethical commitment has been a sense of obligation to recognize the complexity of social problems and speak out to initiate change, all the while refusing to situate activists and researchers in opposing and hierarchical epistemic classes. For Hill Collins (2019), embracing intersectionality as an epistemological standpoint precisely means attending to the "social actions [that] are possible within the complex social inequalities that organize our daily lives (the politics of power), as well as our agency and actions in response to the social injustices that confront us (the commitments of ethics)" (290). Ethics is thereby conceived as a researcher's responsibility to use knowledge production to foster social change. Blee and Taylor (2002) emphasize for their part the researcher's responsibility towards individual participants, specifically when one studies social movements. This includes preventing any harm, assuring the confidentiality of interviewees and "taking care that the process of interviewing itself does not exploit the emotional vulnerabilities of respondents simply to gain data or does not provoke unnecessarily painful or troubling emotions or memories on the part of the interviewee" (Blee and Taylor 2002, 113). In this regard, they show how methods of inquiry are not exempt of power relations. On the contrary, they are applied within broader contexts structured by an ensemble of intersecting power relations that in turn characterize the rapport between researchers and participants. Inasmuch as Hill Collins (2019) insists on the collective aspect of ethics and Blee and Taylor (2002) on the individual nature of ethical considerations, I hold that ethics should be conceived in more holistic terms. This means reassessing one's ethical considerations as a shared responsibility between individual researchers and academia as an institution.

As I have previously developed, one aspect that needs to be reassessed is our relationship with research as an inevitably instrumental endeavor. To avoid falling into what I call the 'non-instrumental illusion', researchers should pre-emptively acknowledge the inherent instrumental nature of conducting research (Labelle, 2020; Naples, 2004), instead of denying their own complicity in such processes as a way of distancing themselves from the institution within which they evolve professionally. Doing so actually allows researchers to confront their own embodiment of macro-

level privileges and consider ways to reduce their negative impact on participants and communities targeted through their research.

While I did not initially want to instrumentalize LGBTQ-POC's experiences and narratives for my own benefit – in this case a successful dissertation – my research nonetheless rested upon LGBTQ-POC's emotional labor. This meant that whether I wanted it or not, I was going to produce and diffuse knowledge about LGBTQ-POC activism and personally benefit from this knowledge diffusion, all the while soliciting LGBTQ-POC's time and unpaid[33] emotional labor. Not only would I benefit from this knowledge based on LGBTQ-POC experiences, but academia would also collectively benefit from this, bringing me to reflect on academia's ethical responsibility in this particular matter. In this line of thought, rendering funding available could act as a form of acknowledgement of participants' work in knowledge production, without which academic knowledge production would certainly be limited. It could also serve as a form of recognition of academia's accountability in the (re)production of inequalities, as a socially and politically located institution. In that respect, "ethics is (…) not about right response to a radically exterior/ized other, but about responsibility and accountability" (Karen Barad quoted in Lykke 2010, 159).

Reassessing ethics does represent an undeniably large task, which needs to be tackled with by both researchers as individuals and academia as a collective. In the meantime, researchers can adopt strategies to ensure that one's commitment to ethical considerations does extend beyond the well-being of participants, fostering larger reflections on academic research's role in the (re)production of power relations. Such strategies may include collaborative research processes. While my methodological design was not a collaborative research process *per se* – as will be developed below – I nevertheless engaged participants at various stages of the research. This involved consulting activists during the elaboration of methodological tools, such as the interview questionnaire, and adhering to a 'double-consent' strategy to validate participants' consent once the results were analyzed and drafted. I must state that this strategy proved itself to be particularly useful in developing a trustful rapport between the interviewees and myself. While some participants did withdraw their consent

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[33] It is worth mentioning at this point that as I began my recruitment, several LGBTQ-POC activists stated that their participation was conditional to getting some form of financial retribution. As I had already conducted interviews without financially compensating participants, I chose to ensure an equal treatment between participants and continued as such. That being said, this is definitely something that I am keeping in mind for future studies, something that I should have engaged with prior to beginning my recruitment.

for some parts of the interview, others actually embraced this opportunity to clarify their thought and insert additional input.

Overall, embracing an intersectional epistemological standpoint informed the elaboration of my methodological design. Attending to one's positionality towards participants, one's embodiment of privileges, and one's ethical responsibilities led to a constant reshaping of the research design. Not only does this illustrate the inextricable tie between epistemology and methodology, but it also reflects one of the effects of engaging in continuous self-reflexivity throughout the research process. The next section will focus on the methodological design itself.

## 4.3. Methodological design

This section outlines the shaping of my research's methodological design. It includes an explanation regarding the selection of the main method of inquiry, namely in-depth interviewing. A brief overview of the questionnaire will also be provided, as well as details pertaining to the recruitment process, including selection criteria and sampling considerations. The coding material and analyzing process will succinctly be addressed at the end of this section.

### 4.3.1. Method: in-depth interviewing

While a range of both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used – and can be used – to further our understanding of social movements, Klandermans and Staggenborg (2002) remind us that a major consideration to keep in mind whilst choosing a method of inquiry consists of the level of analysis of the research in question. They posit that for individual-level analysis research questions, in-depth interviewing does remain a particularly well-suited method, as it allows researchers to assess life stories and personal trajectories, amongst other things. In this regard, one of the advantages of conducting in-depth interviews consists of gathering and developing an understanding of social movement organizing from the perspective of activists themselves which "provide greater breadth and depth of information, the opportunity to discover the respondent's experience and interpretation of reality, and access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher" (Blee and Taylor 2002, 93). Doing so not only allows researchers to capture a diverse array of perspectives regarding the micro, internal dynamics

of social movements, but also provides access to the ways in which actors rationalize their own participation within movements.

Beyond accessing actors' motivations to participate in social movements, in-depth interviewing can also provide relevant data on "little-studied aspects of social movement dynamics and [on] social movements that are difficult to locate, generate few documents, or have unclear or changing memberships" (Blee and Taylor 2002, 94). This is particularly the case for LGBTQ-POC activism, which remains understudied and under documented. In that regard, interviewing key actors can serve to rebuild collective narratives that are less visible, remedy the relative lack of documented archives and, to a certain extent, disrupt more common dominant narratives. It is with this in mind that I selected in-depth interviewing as the main method of inquiry for this research. Not only did it provide access to actors' motivations to participate in social movement organizing, but it also allowed me to gather some kind of historical data on LGBTQ-POC events, actions, and community-led initiatives that have not necessarily been documented elsewhere.

In addition to a social movement scholarship perspective, in-depth interviewing also stands as a privileged method amongst feminist epistemologies, in-line with the application and operationalization of an intersectional framework. Both feminist and intersectionality scholarships have indeed developed around a commitment to social justice that is achieved in part by rendering audible and visible the experiences and realities of historically ignored, silenced, and invisibilized communities (Hill Collins 2019; J. C. Nash 2008; Hesse-Biber 2012). As such, feminist and intersectionality scholars have repeatedly insisted on the importance of placing the lived experiences of women and marginalized communities as the starting point of research (D. E. Smith 1990; Hill Collins 2000; 2019; hooks 1981). This in part serves as a way to disrupt traditional – and more positivist – conceptions of science, wherein experiences are not perceived as valuable – read scientific – knowledge. Qualitative methods, and in particular in-depth interviewing, have thus become methods of choice to "get 'inside' the everyday lives of women and uncover their range of 'subjective experiences'"(D. E. Smith 1990 quoted in Hesse-Biber and Leckenby 2004, 215).

While many insist on feminist and intersectionality scholars' commitment to 'giving' or 'granting' voice, I remain critical of such intentions. First, it reproduces a binary conception of having/not having a voice, implying that some have a voice while others do not. Subsequently, it

downplays the inherent complexity of what having a voice actually means. Second, it reifies power relations between the researcher and the researched. While the latter is perceived as having a voice that is not heard, the former is seen as the one who has the power of rendering the latter's voice audible. As such, it distances the voice of the researched – or the 'other' – from the researcher's inner voice, without acknowledging the researcher's own subjectivity in the ways in which the other's voice is granted in the first place and subsequently transmitted (Spivak 1988).

All the while acknowledging these precautions, in-depth interviewing has nevertheless been the best suited method to understand why and how people of colour have collectively participated and continue to participate in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements. In addition to providing access to first-hand accounts of actors' own motivations and experiences, this method of inquiry is also in-line with my own adherence to an intersectional epistemology. Yet, this method has not been applied without difficulty and as any other method, in-depth interviewing does conceal several limits, which will be discussed in the last section of the chapter.

### 4.3.2. Methodological tool: questionnaire

The interview questionnaire addressed two main themes (see Appendix I). First, participants were asked a set of questions about their activist paths. Interviewees discussed their motivations to participate in LGBTQ activism, as well as why and how they have come to get involved (or not) in particular LGBTQ organizations. They were also asked to share their overall perception of the LGBTQ movement within which they participated, discussing whether or not they perceived any inequalities between organizations or between social groups. They were further asked to recall both positive and negative experiences relative to their participation. Second, interviewees were asked a set of questions about belonging and citizenship. In this latter part of the interview, we discussed participants' sense of belonging to various communities, for instance LGBTQ and Canadian communities, as well as their view on electoral politics and whether or not they participated in electoral politics. No question explicitly addressed participants' experienced discrimination or feelings of marginalization. One reason for this was to avoid falling into an additive conception of discrimination, whereby racial and sexual discrimination would be addressed separately and independently from one another (Bowleg, 2008). That said, interviewees did touch upon various experiences of discrimination and feelings of marginalization throughout the interview, for instance when they were asked questions about the challenges they have faced while mobilizing or even when

they were asked if they felt they belonged to LGBTQ communities or to Québécois and Ontario societies. It therefore allowed for discrimination and marginalization to be addressed inductively throughout the interview by interviewees themselves instead of being imposed as a discussion theme by the researcher.

As part of my commitment to an intersectional epistemology, I submitted my questionnaire to a couple of activists, namely LGBTQ people of colour, prior to initiating the recruitment process. The questionnaire was then modified according to the feedback obtained from the activists consulted. The questionnaire was further amended and adjusted progressively as interviews were being conducted. Questions were either dropped or added following interviewees' feedbacks as well as following interviewees' responses.

### 4.3.3. Recruitment

Participants were recruited in three different ways, namely (1) individual-recruitment, (2) organizational-recruitment, and (3) snowball recruitment. The first round of recruitment implied contacting particular activists who were at the head of their respective organizations or who had previously (co)founded LGBTQ organizations in Toronto or in Montréal. In addition to contacting particular activists, I reached out to LGBTQ organizations detailing my research, thereby seeking interviewees amongst the organizations' staff, Board members, volunteers or regular membership. As this recruitment method was limited to organizations that were still active today, the individual-recruitment strategy allowed me to reach out to activists involved in organizations that have since disbanded. Finally, I proceeded with a second round of recruitment by contacting activists using the snowball method (Noy 2008), in which case I asked previous participants to provide me with a couple of potential participants. While the snowball method had a limited impact on my recruitment, it nonetheless allowed me to get in touch with activists who were less visible than others, as well as reaching out, once again, to activists that were no longer active but who were at one point involved in LGBTQ organizing.

Overall, two criteria were used for selecting participants. On the one hand, participants had to have been involved either as an organizing member, as a volunteer, as a staff or as a Board member within an organization or collective that either served LGBTQ communities or advocated for gender

and sexual rights. LGBTQ organizations needed not be currently active, nor did participants have to be currently involved in LGBTQ organizing. On the other hand, participants had to identify as being part of LGBTQ communities themselves. In that regard, self-identified LGBTQ allies who volunteered in LGBTQ organizations were not selected for the research.

### 4.3.4. Sampling

Throughout the recruitment process, I adopted several strategies in order to ensure a somewhat representative sample on various levels. In accordance with previous work that has underlined the invisibilization of lesbians, bisexuals, trans, and non-binary activists within LGBTQ organizing and in the public space more generally (DeFilippis 2018; Hodzić, Postić, and Kajtezović 2016; Goyette 2014), I attempted to ensure a representative sample in terms of sexual and gender diversity. I therefore prioritized and purposefully reached out to activists who self-identified as lesbian, bisexual, trans or non-binary. Considering the range and diversity of LGBTQ organizing, I aimed at guaranteeing a representative portrait of Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ organizational landscapes. In this sense, I attempted to meet with activists involved in different organizations to ensure that most organizations were somewhat represented in my sample. Additionally, considering that people get involved in LGBTQ organizing in various ways, I attempted to meet with activists that occupied different roles, namely volunteers, staff, and Board Members, within organizations. For large organizations, this implied meeting with one employee and one Board member as an attempt to once again obtain a diverse set of individual experiences.

Although the main objective of this research consisted of explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, I also met with White-LGBTQ activists. Diversifying my sample in terms of racial identifications allowed me to proceed with a comparative analysis between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. Doing so allowed me to 'isolate' – for lack of a better term – the specificities of LGBTQ-POC's individual activist paths, all the while acknowledging their inherent diversity. Relative to what has been addressed in the previous section, meeting with White activists also shed light on white privilege within LGBTQ communities from a white-centered perspective, all the while avoiding the over exposition and over solicitation of LGBTQ-POC activists to forms of emotional labor.

Fieldwork in Montréal lasted from January 2018 to December 2018, overlapping with fieldwork in Toronto which started in August 2018 and ended in August 2019. Interviews were conducted in three ways, namely in person, on the phone or through video applications such as Skype and Zoom. Interviews in person were held in a variety of places, that ranged from interviewees' living rooms to interviewees' workplaces and coffee shops and lasted between 30 minutes and four hours. I conducted 28 interviews with Montréal-based activists, and 14 interviews with activists in Toronto. Data collected in Toronto also included 6 interviews available in The ArQuives[34] digital collections, thereby completing the overall sample of 48 interviews. Detailed information on the interviewees' sociodemographic profile will be provided in a subsequent section.

### 4.3.5. Coding and analysis

I undertook the interviews' transcription, coding, and analysis. Coding proceeded in two ways. First, I imported all transcribed material on the Nvivo software, on which I proceeded with coding the interviews. The coding sheet (see Appendix II) was elaborated inductively as interviews were being coded. Second, as I was coding each interview, I reconstructed an individual timeline and built an individual profile of each interviewee. This allowed me to identify all organizations or initiatives within which interviewees were involved, thereby establishing a clear portrait of the LGBTQ organizational landscape covered by the interviews.

Coded material was then analyzed qualitatively. First, I gathered all material coded in one particular node, such as 'Motivations', and identified broad categories of motivations (e.g. work opportunity, networking, finding a community, etc.). Second, I analyzed the recurrence of each set of motivation and crossed this data with particular social groups within my sample (e.g. people of colour, White, women, men, etc.). Subsequent nodes were thus analyzed following these two steps. This analyzing strategy led to the identification of patterns across and between social groups, thereby facilitating a comparative analysis between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists, as well as between Toronto and Montréal.

### 4.4. Situating research participants

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[34] Previously known as the Canadian Gay and Lesbian Archives.

This section will situate research participants both sociodemographically and organizationally. The sociodemographic profile of interviewees will first be presented, including interviewees' distribution across gender identities, sexual orientation, race, age, and level of education. The organizational landscape covered in this research will then be outlined. As such, a portrait of Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ organizational landscapes will be established, including all organizations or informal collectives in which interviewees have participated in the course of their individual activist paths.

### 4.4.1. Sociodemographic profile of interviewees

As previously mentioned, I have met and conducted interviews with 42 activists, Toronto and Montréal combined. Gender identity, sexual orientation, and race categories were determined inductively. For instance, interviewees were asked an open question about their gender identity without a prepared list of answers. The same thing was done for interviewees' sexual orientation. Racial categories were determined following activists' identification as belonging to particular communities during the interview itself. Out of this sample, 16 of them are White[35] while 26 identified as belonging to LGBTQ-POC communities. It is however worth underlining the racial heterogeneity of LGBTQ-POC activists, as is shown in Figure III. While the category 'Black' may appear dominant amongst LGBTQ-POC racial identifications, it is important to mention that it includes African, Haitian, and other Black-Caribbean identifying activists. It is moreover interesting to point out that although there are about twice as many gay men in my sample than lesbian women, women interviewees tended to increasingly sexually identify as pansexual and bisexual.

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[35] White activists did not explicitly state that they belonged to White communities. Activists were nonetheless categorized as White when they did not identify to particular ethno-racial communities. Some of them did however specify that they were White, notably when they acknowledged their own privilege within LGBTQ organizing.
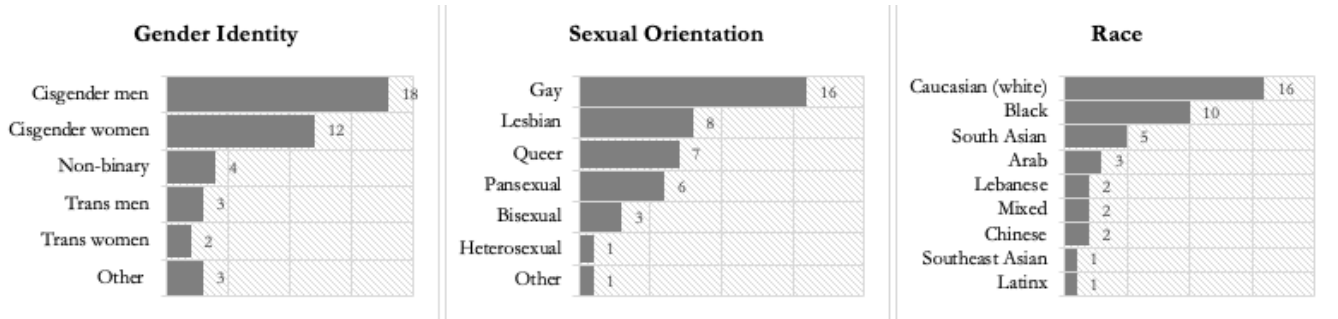
*Figure III: Gender identity, sexual orientation, and race of interviewed activists (N=42) [36]*

As is shown in Figure IV, the majority of research participants are between 20 and 49 years old, with a relatively proportionate distribution between the 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49 age brackets. While I did manage to meet with two activists over 50 years old, they remained harder to reach for a variety of reasons, in part because many of them are no longer active in LGBTQ organizing.
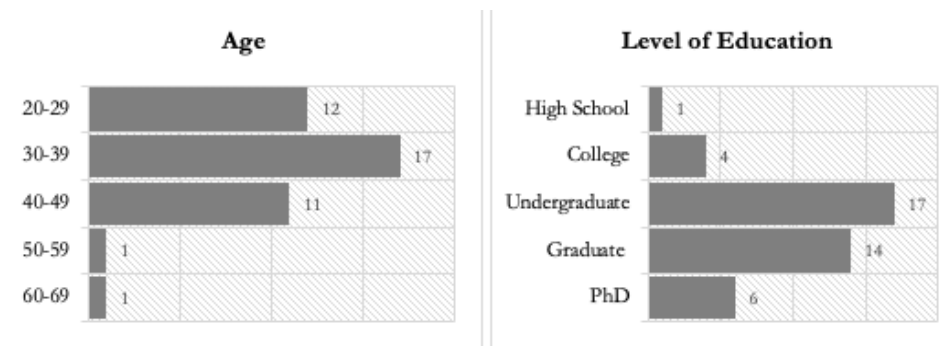


*Figure IV: Age and level of education of interviewed activists (N=42) [37]*

When it comes to the level of education of research participants, almost all interviewees hold a post-secondary diploma, which reveals the relative privileged nature of LGBTQ activism. This privilege is furthermore shared by both White and POC activists, with POC activists appearing increasingly more aware than White activists that their activism is rendered possible in part because of their privileged socioeconomic status. As this is a significant result in itself, it will be further developed in the upcoming chapter. One last thing that is worth pointing out is the number of PhD

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[36] Excluded from this figure are activist testimonies collected through the ArQuives, due to a lack of sufficient information.

[37] Excluded from this figure are activist testimonies collected through the ArQuives, due to a lack of sufficient information.

holders, which is relatively high as well. This additionally reveals the porous frontiers between academia and LGBTQ activism, observed in both Montréal and Toronto.

### 4.4.2. Organizational landscape of interviewees

Interviewees[38] have participated in 64 different LGBTQ organizations or collectives, some of which are still active today. 35 of them are – or were – located in Montréal while 29 organizations are – or were – Toronto-based. Evidently, there are more organizations than that, but the organizational landscapes covered by the research remain nonetheless representative of LGBTQ organizing in both cities. To illustrate the inherent variety of LGBTQ organizing, I have regrouped these organizations into four categories, namely service providers, advocacy groups, festival/arts/event groups, and others. *Service providers* consist of organizations that are mainly geared towards providing services to LGBTQ communities, be it mental health, sexual health or HIV/AIDS related services. *Advocacy groups* include organizations that have a significant rights advocacy component in their mission statements. This category also includes organizations that work at raising public awareness on LGBTQ issues. *Festival/arts/event groups* consist of organizations that put together various events for LGBTQ communities, such as Pride celebrations, or that create cultural spaces entirely dedicated to LGBTQ communities, such as the Buddies in Bad Times Theater in Toronto. An 'other' category was also created for organizations that did not fit any of the other three categories.

Although organizations were categorized once, these four categories may in reality overlap, especially when it comes to service providers and advocacy groups. Taking this into consideration, the categorization presented herein rests primarily on organizations' mission statements, in which case I selected what came across as the main objective of the organization. In both Figures V and VI, LGBTQ-POC organizations are marked in darker shades.

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[38] These include both research participants with which I have met, and interviews conducted by others and available on the ArQuives.
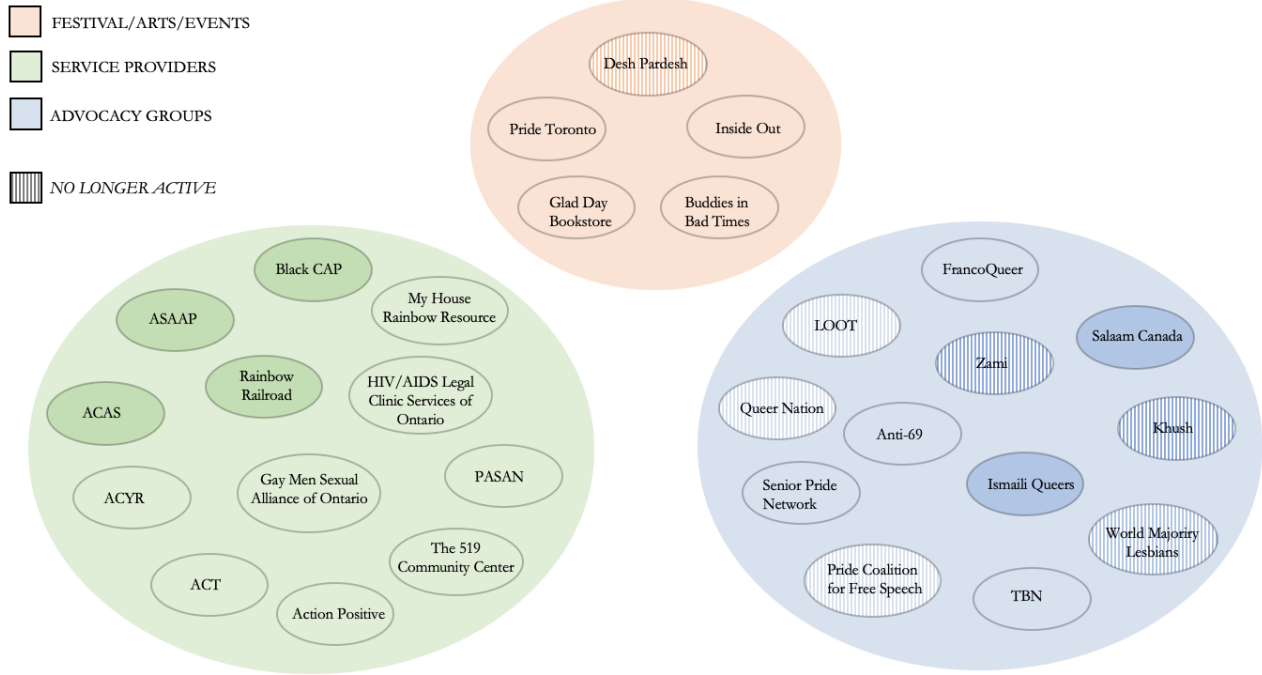
*Figure V: Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape covered in this research*[39]

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[39] Toronto's organizational landscape includes organizations based in Toronto and organizations located in the greater Toronto area, such as York.
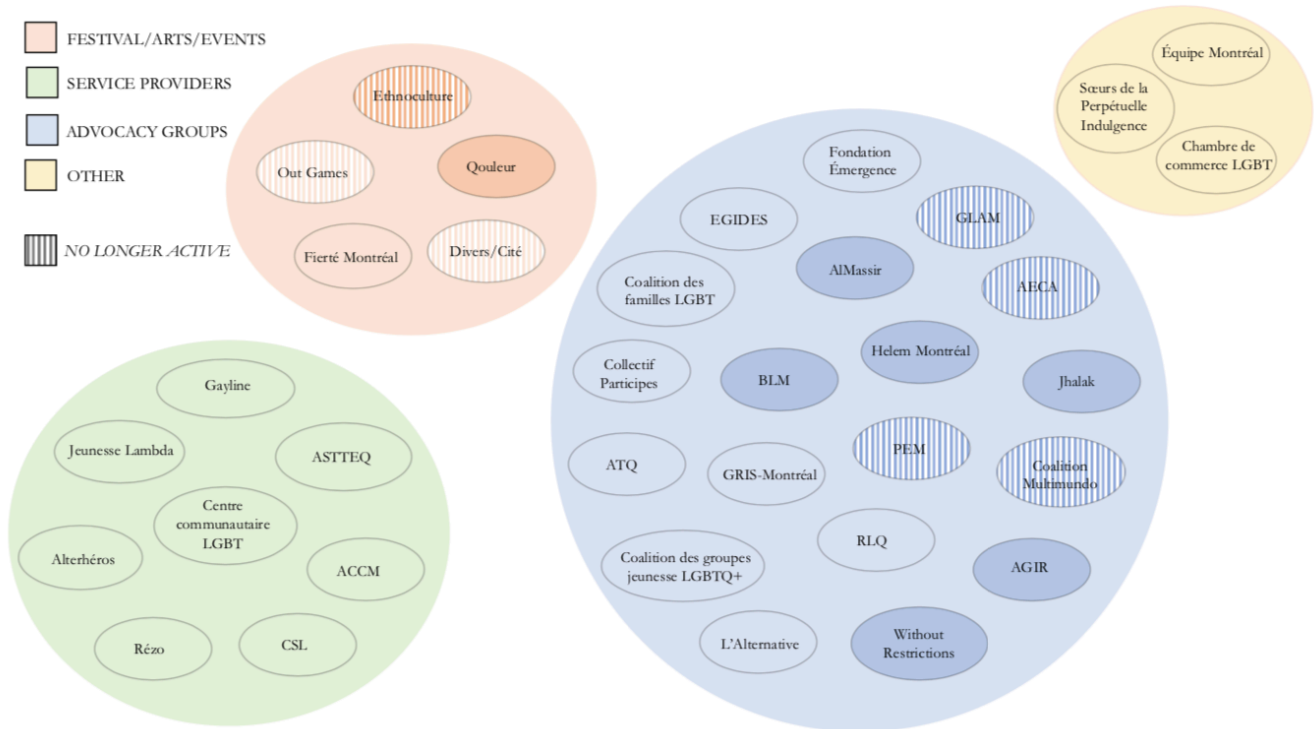
*Figure VI: Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape covered in this research*

When we compare Toronto's and Montréal's organizational landscapes, there are striking differences. First, the proportion of service providers in Toronto is much more significant than in Montréal, where advocacy groups remain predominant. This is notably explained by the various HIV/AIDS related organizations that compose Toronto's LGBTQ movement as opposed to Montréal. It may also be explained by Québec's particular institutional context, which favors the development of rights advocacy groups (see chapter 7). Derived from the first observation made above is a second major difference which more specifically concerns LGBTQ-POC organizations. As most LGBTQ-POC organizations currently active in Toronto are service providers – i.e. ACAS, ASAAP, and Black CAP – LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal is rather focused on rights advocacy. That being said, some of these organizations do provide some sort of services to their members, but not to the same extent as organizations that figure as service providers. As the differences between Toronto's and Montréal's organizational landscapes represent a significant result in and of itself, it will be further attended to, developed, and explained in chapter 7.

## 4.5. Limits and contributions of the research

As is the case with any research, the methodological design outlined above does conceal several limits. First, regardless of the method used, the focus on individual activist paths can undermine their potential generalization. Not only are individual activist paths of an indefinite nature – there can be as many paths as there are activists – but the sampled paths also depend on one's access to fieldwork and participants, which is inevitably limited regardless of the researcher's positionality. Activists' availability and other time-related concerns can in fact impede on one's access to fieldwork, amongst other factors. While I did manage to meet with activists from various backgrounds, activist paths cannot be limited to those sampled in this research. In spite of this, individual activist paths do remain informative of larger trends pertaining to LGBTQ-POC organizing, as they shed light on broader dynamics observed in LGBTQ movements Taken together, they can adequately inform us on LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

Second, in-depth interviewing was also selected as the main method of inquiry to render visible collective narratives pertaining to LGBTQ-POC organizing, particularly in Montréal. However, as the material collected may vary from one participant to another, and as the material remains shaped by participants' own subjectivities, data collected during the interviews are inevitably limited and non-exhaustive. In spite of the difficulty to obtain systematic responses using in-depth interviews (Blee and Taylor, 2002), this method was nonetheless used due to a lack of available data, such as documented archives. Acknowledging this limit does not necessarily undermine the data collected in this matter, nor does it impede on the research's second objective of rendering visible collective narratives of LGBTQ-POC organizing. On the contrary, this prompted me to adopt various strategies, such as seeking participants that I would not necessarily have contacted initially, which enriched the research altogether. The interview material was complemented by secondary sources, such as governmental documentation and various documents produced by LGBTQ organizations.

Two major contributions stem from the methodological design presented herein. First, it provides innovative first-hand accounts of LGBTQ-POC activism and organizing, which have remained – to different extents in Toronto and Montréal – invisibilized and overlooked in previous work. There is indeed a lack of research, hence of empirical evidence, relative to the internal racial dynamics of LGBTQ movements in Canada, particularly at a local level. As the lack of documented archive impedes in part on the visibility of LGBTQ-POC organizing, as well as on their institutional memory, the narratives collected in this research nonetheless provide some form of collective

memory. This further enriches what we already know about Canadian LGBTQ movements, all the while disrupting dominant narratives that are continuously (re)produced in part because of this particular lack of data. This first contribution is further achieved by the diversified and heterogeneous sample of individual activist paths collected during fieldwork. The racial, gender, sexual, and age-related diversity of the participants, as well as the organizational landscape covered by the interviewees, are representative of both movements and adequately illustrate the inherent heterogeneity of LGBTQ activists and activism.

The second contribution concerns the comparative framework of the analysis, using Toronto and Montréal as separate, yet comparable, case studies. While scholars have previously studied LGBTQ movements at various scales, namely federal (M. Smith 2015; G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010), regional (Everitt 2015), provincial (Tremblay 2015a; Rayside 2015), and local (Gentile 2016; J. Podmore 2015; C. J. Nash 2015), few have engaged in a comparative analysis across Canadian cities or provinces. Yet, comparing LGBTQ movements in two Canadian cities located in two different provinces can further our understanding of the ways in which varying institutional contexts may shape (or not) the ways in which these movements have emerged, developed and evolved over time. Moreover, it can shed light on the context-specific instances of exclusion within LGBTQ movements, all the while revealing how LGBTQ-POC activists are marginalized in similar, yet distinctive ways in these movements. Studying LGBTQ-POC organizing by comparing Toronto and Montréal is thus not only enlightening in this regard, but also contributes significantly to the literature on LGBTQ movements in Canada.

# 5. Mobilizing in sameness and difference: LGBTQ(POC) individual activist paths

*"To defend a cause that touches upon who I am personally, it's even stronger I find. It's not a cause that I have chosen, in a way. Before, I would choose where I would get involved, but now it's something that is tied to who I am fundamentally, and my sexual orientation is not something that I have chosen either. To be able to defend my right to exist and the right of all others in the community to exist, I find that it's something powerful. And you know that the people who are there are there because it affects them personally."*[40]

Justine, White-LGBTQ activist, Montréal

*"I think that the work that I do with Helem, I can't do it anywhere else because of my personal history with Helem, because of the fact that one of the mandates of Helem is to eliminate article 534 that criminalizes homosexuality in Lebanon, so obviously this whole thing is a personal thing for me. I can't go to a French-Canadian LGBT organization and say that I want to be as involved, I don't have that connection."*

Jade, LGBTQ-POC activist, Montréal

When I started interviewing activists about their motivations to participate in LGBTQ movements, it made me question why I had decided to get personally involved in the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups in September 2016. Just like Justine, I had previously been involved in non-LGBTQ community work; yet, entering Montréal's LGBTQ movement represented something else and felt quite different. Not only did I personally identify with those whom I participated with, but I was also directly concerned by the rights we were collectively defending and advocating for. Mobilizing for one's identity. Mobilizing for one's right to exist. Mobilizing for one's community. These motivations all resonated too well with me. They also resonated with most, if not all, activists I met throughout this research, regardless of their gender, race or age. As LGBTQ-identifying activists, we were driven by our own identification as sexual and gender minorities and collectively mobilizing

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[40] Original quote in French: De rentrer dans une cause qui touche qui je suis personnellement, c'est encore plus fort je trouve. C'est pas une cause que j'ai choisie, dans un sens. Avant je choisissais un peu où m'impliquer, mais là c'est quelque chose qui est reliée à qui je suis fondamentalement, pis mon orientation c'est pas quelque chose que j'ai choisi non plus. De pouvoir défendre un peu mon droit d'exister et le droit de toutes les autres personnes de la communauté d'exister, je trouve que c'est quand même puissant. Pis les gens qui sont là tu sais qu'ils sont là parce que ça les touche personnellement.

for the well-being of our community. Yet, for which community were we mobilizing? For whose right to exist and for whose identity? Most importantly, how were we mobilizing?

As outlined in chapter 1, people of colour have been collectively participating in Canadian LGBTQ movements for quite a while. In both Toronto and Montréal, LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities have emerged, since the 1980s and the 1990s respectively, and have since constituted part of both movements' organizational landscapes. As Jade's account reveals, activists of colour not only appear to be motivated by their desire to improve the well-being of sexual and gender communities but are also driven by another set of motivations that make them collectively participate the way that they do, notably within LGBTQ-POC organizations. To begin explaining why people of colour have collectively participated in LGBTQ movements the way that they have, or what I refer to as LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, *individual activist paths* serve as an essential starting point. After all, collective engagement trajectories are fueled by individuals who are committed, who participate and who invest time, energy, and resources into activism. In that respect, what drives one to get involved in LGBTQ activism? What are the motivations driving one's participation? How does one participate and in which organization? Do individuals disengage from particular organizations or from activism altogether, and if so, why? These are some of the questions that will be addressed throughout this chapter.

The main purpose of this first empirical chapter is to expose what drives activists to participate the way that they do in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements. Inasmuch as individual activist paths may differ from one activist to another, this chapter seeks to identify differentiating trends between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths. The social movement participation literature suggests that to understand why and how activists participate (or not) the way that they do, scholars should focus on three main stages of participation, namely one's initial involvement in social movement activities or organizations, one's sustained participation, and one's disengagement from activism (Klandermans 1997). However, as Corrigall-Brown (2012) argues, these three foci do not allow for a fine-grained analysis that fully captures the different ways in which activists may participate in social movements, for instance moving from one social movement organization (SMO) to another; in which case attention to organizational mobility, or activists' shifting participation from one SMO to another, is necessary to complete the analysis. As these four

stages are more or less constitutive of all individual activist paths, they moreover facilitate a comparative analysis, hence allowing for the identification of distinctive trends.

The literature on individual activist paths places much emphasis on the process through which individuals come to be involved in social movement activities and organizations. In so doing, previous work has brought to light the role played by socialization processes that precede one's participation (Passy 1998; Dauvin and Siméant 2002; Fillieule 2001; Fillieule et al. 2004). Inasmuch as this line of work enlightens us on the propensity of individuals to engage in certain kinds of activism, this research is instead interested in not only understanding how individuals come to get involved in activism, but most importantly how they come to participate over time. Considering that this dissertation does not aim to explain individual activist paths *per se,* it rather seeks to build on this notion to further our understanding of LGBTQ people of colour's collective participation within LGBTQ movements. With this in mind, and as outlined in chapter 3, I posit that intersectionality, with its focus on relationality, power, and social context, is better suited to understand who participates and fuels LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, how, and why.

To this end, and building on previous work, I have deconstructed individual activist paths into four segments that represent different stages of social movement participation, thus facilitating a comparative analysis between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activist paths: (1) the triggering factor, namely what sparks one's initial involvement within LGBTQ movements; (2) the ongoing motivations that drive and sustain one's participation; (3) one's organizational mobility within the movement; and (4) patterns of disengagement. The four sections that comprise this chapter correspond to these four stages. Taken together and analyzed using a comparative lens, they will expose and clarify the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

## 5.1. Triggering Factor

If all individual activist paths remain inherently different from one another, they all have a starting point which marks the beginning of one's participation in LGBTQ movements. Building on in-depth interviews conducted with LGBTQ-identifying activists, it appears that participation in LGBTQ movements is inevitably 'triggered' by something that is either endogenous or exogenous (or

both) to activists. Four types of non-mutually exclusive triggering factors were thus identified: (1) coming out or transitioning processes; (2) finding a sense of belonging; (3) networks; and (4) work-related purposes. While addressed separately for clarity purposes, some of these triggering factors are in fact intertwined with one another. As developed below, this set of triggering factors will shed some light on the ways in which LGBTQ activists interviewed for this research have come to get involved in Canadian LGBTQ movements, all the while revealing significant differences between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths.

### 5.1.1. Coming out and transitioning processes

The first triggering factor identified, namely *coming out and transitioning processes*, significantly stood out as one of the main factors spurring engagement, which inevitably illustrates the specificity of the movement under study. When asked to retell the first steps leading to their involvement with LGBTQ movements, the majority of activists emphasized the importance of their very own coming out or transitioning processes. These consisted more specifically of acknowledging one's non-normative sexual orientation or gender identity, either to others or to oneself. For example, coming out to his family prompted Rahim, a cisgender queer man of colour, to get involved in his university's LGBTQ organization:

> So I guess what happened was that, so back in 2007, I had just come out to my family, I was 22 and I was coming back to Waterloo for my fifth year, my final year of undergrad and I got involved with GLOW which is the on-campus group, but what that meant was just actually attending, there was a weekly discussion group that I would attend and then I think it wasn't too long after that that I volunteered for their peer support phone line and became a service coordinator, so one of the co-leads of the organization for one or two semesters.

For most activists, coming out to oneself or to others actually rendered possible their participation in LGBTQ movements. This was notably the case for Jan, a White cisgender queer bisexual community-organizer who discovered Toronto's 519 Church Street Community Center during her own process of coming to terms with her sexual identity. This led her to eventually get involved in the organization:

> I was going through some issues, some personal issues, so that I was
> questioning my orientation. I had identified as bisexual for a long time,
> since I was about 14 or 15, but I started to wonder, maybe I was a lesbian.
> (…) In the course of going through this period, and I wasn't working very
> much, I started hanging out in the Village, I would go for a long walk, and
> then I'd be in the Village. I started going to the 519 Church Street
> Community Center, which is an amazing resource, and there I found a
> support group that I now help facilitate which was for bisexual identified
> people. And I also started volunteering regularly at the 519 so I got
> involved there.

Jan's process of coming out to herself and figuring out her sexual identity thus led her to invest in Toronto's LGBTQ milieu, in particular the 519 Church Street Community Center, where she sustained her participation as a volunteer. This echoes Julien's initial involvement in Montréal's LGBTQ movement. When Julien, a White trans pansexual man, began his transition, he started going to the Aide aux Trans du Québec (ATQ) as part of his gender identity acceptance process:

> I started transitioning 7 years ago. And I went to the ATQ for the first time
> 7 years ago and I was a very quiet guy who wouldn't talk much, who wasn't
> very sociable, and who was very complexed by who he was. I think that if I
> could have hidden under the carpet of that office, I would have done it[41].

As he came to terms with his own identification as a trans man and as he found support within the ATQ, Julien later became involved with the organization, eventually becoming president of the board. Jan's and Julien's narratives – which were shared by countless activists – both illustrate how one's initial participation within LGBTQ movements is deeply intertwined with one's process of coming out to oneself or to others as a sexual or gender minority. Additionally, just as Julien's transition led him to get involved in a trans specific organization, many gay-identified activists chose to invest the HIV/AIDS sector as a result of their own coming out processes. For instance, when asked why he had first been involved in the HIV/AIDS sector, Haran, a cisgender gay man of colour, immediately recalled the impact of his own coming out process on his initial social movement participation in Winnipeg:

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[41] Original quote in French : J'ai commencé ma transition il y a 7 ans. Puis je suis entré pour la première fois ici [ATQ] il y a 7 ans et j'étais un petit gars très renfermé qui parlait pas beaucoup, qui était pas très sociable, qui était vraiment complexé. Je pense que si j'avais pu entrer sous le tapis du local, je l'aurais fait.

So I kind of started volunteering in the HIV sector in Winnipeg, just as I was coming out of the closet when I was 19-20. I came out of the closet with my friends earlier, but 19-20 is sort of when I started volunteering with a place called Nine Circles Community Health Center in Winnipeg cause that's where I grew up. I sort of learned about HIV/AIDS, because people, when I was coming out of the closet at the time, people were saying 'oh you have to be careful, you're going to get HIV and that's what is going to kill you', so because HIV and gay were automatically associated, right? Not knowing when you'd get it or whatever…but that was an automatic association. So I think I'd go, number one, learn what's going to kill me, and number two also find a community within it, cause that's often where you find the LGBTQ, it is around HIV. Back in the 1990s when I was coming out of the closet. So that's sort of how I entered this entire thing.

While coming out and transitioning processes do stand out as significant triggering factors for activists both in Toronto and Montréal, they can also be, as Haran underlines, tied to a second triggering factor, namely finding a sense of belonging. As many activists negotiated their sexual or gender identity, they also felt the need to find and/or build a community to which they could belong.

### 5.1.2. *Finding a sense of belonging*

Coming out and transitioning processes do not suffice to explain why people come to get involved in LGBTQ movements. If that were the case, everyone who identifies as a sexual or gender minority would become an active LGBTQ movement participant. It is with this mind that *finding a sense of belonging* and building a community stood out as another significant triggering factor. Oftentimes intertwined with one's coming out or transitioning process, the need to meet other LGBTQ-identifying individuals spurred many to get involved in LGBTQ movements, especially people of colour. For instance, Laurent Maurice Lafontant, a Black cisgender gay man, went to a youth-specific organization for the explicit reason of finding a community:

[Organization X] was a place where I would go to meet other young people like me and to get familiarized with the LGBT community. Because I wanted to meet other people who were also experiencing this reality, I went to [organization X], and that's where I met my boyfriend[42].

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[42] Original quote in French: [X] c'était juste un endroit où j'allais pour rencontrer d'autres jeunes comme moi et puis commencer un peu une familiarisation avec le milieu LGBT. Parce que j'avais ce désir de rencontrer d'autres gens qui vivaient cette réalité-là, donc j'ai été à [X], c'est d'ailleurs là que j'ai rencontré mon copain.

Youth-specific groups in Montréal were repeatedly identified as preferred spaces where LGBTQ-identifying youth could find a community and start getting involved in the city's LGBTQ movement. Similar to Laurent Maurice Lafontant's account, Fauve, a cisgender lesbian woman of colour, started to participate in an LGBTQ youth-specific organization to break away from her isolation and meet other lesbian women like herself:

> At the beginning, I needed to exchange with others and not be the only lesbian in Montréal. Before getting involved in [organization X], there was another organization. There, a psychologist referred me to [organization X]. I wasn't sure at first because it was at UQAM, and at the beginning when you go in for a meeting, to exchange with other gays and lesbians, you experience a great discomfort. So it took me a while, but it was on Friday, and luckily there was no one on Fridays at UQAM's visual arts department, because I wouldn't have gone if that were the case. It was before internet, before LGBT visibility, so there wasn't much going on in Montréal. We were much more isolated[43].

After having participated in this youth-specific LGBTQ organization, where she met one of her best friends, Fauve went on to become a GRIS-Montréal volunteer. Finding a sense of belonging thus triggered some activists' need to invest LGBTQ organizations as part of their broader coming out processes, but it also led others to engage more substantively with the movement by becoming part of organizing committees or even launching their own initiatives. Observing the lack of community-building amongst gay Africans, in both Africa and in the diaspora, and building on her own feelings of loneliness, Solange, a Black trans woman in Montréal, launched the website *gaiafrique.com*, which marks the beginning of her own involvement in LGBTQ activism:

> If when I was in Rwanda or elsewhere, I had this kind of information, it would have helped me a lot. I would have seen things differently, not because I would have a met a lover or what not but knowing that around me there are other people who share similar feelings, who suffer from loneliness like me, it would have helped me. By creating *gaiafrique.com*, it began to create micro...not like micro societies, but people in their lives began to meet. Abidjan, Dakar, Douala, Paris, Montréal...people would

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43 Original quote in French: C'était à mes débuts, j'avais besoin d'échanger et de pas être la seule lesbienne à Montréal. Donc avant [X] il y avait une organisation, je pense que c'est [Y], puis j'avais rencontré une psychologue qui m'a référé à [X]. J'étais pas sûre au début parce que c'était à l'UQAM, puis à tes débuts quand tu rentres pour aller dans une rencontre, d'échanger avec d'autres gais et lesbiennes, il y a une grosse gêne qui est là. Donc ça m'a pris un certain temps, c'était les vendredis et heureusement qu'il y a personne les vendredis à l'UQAM en arts visuels parce que je serais peut-être pas allée. Ça c'était avant l'ère internet, avant l'ère de la visibilité LGBT, donc y'avait pas grand chose qui se passait je trouve, à Montréal. On était plus isolées je dirais.

begin to meet each other, sending me messages and telling me 'it's all
because of you that I met my boyfriend.' I was like wow. [44]

After launching this website, Solange went on to become a prominent community-organizer in Montréal's LGBTQ movement, eventually cofounding Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique and serving on a variety of administrative boards. Jade's narrative is similar in this matter as his desire to find a sense of belonging translated into him getting involved with Helem Montréal's organizing committee, thus becoming President of the organization. Interestingly, the need to build and foster communities to which LGBTQ-POC could belong was inherently shaped by the lack of sustained LGBTQ-POC communities within Canada's – and in particular Montréal's – LGBTQ movements, which will be further developed in chapters 6 and 7.

For many activists that were interviewed for this research, identifying as LGBTQ and coming out to oneself or to others oftentimes generated feelings of loneliness, particularly when one did not know any other LGBTQ-identifying person. As a result, finding a sense of belonging triggered many to get involved in LGBTQ organizations. While for some this may have initially served as a way to simply meet new friends, it eventually led them to become activists and sustain their participation in the movement. For others, this translated into launching community initiatives or substantially investing LGBTQ organizing committees. This echoes Hamidi's (2006) findings regarding civic engagement in France, wherein participation in community-organizing may substitute the loss (or lack thereof) of social ties, be it family or friendship ties.

### 5.1.3. Networks

Whereas coming out and transitioning processes were accompanied by a need for some activists to find a sense of belonging, for others, particularly those who already knew other LGBTQ-identifying individuals, *networks* played a substantial role in triggering their participation within LGBTQ movements. In these particular cases, individuals participated in LGBTQ movements as a

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[44] Original quote in French: Si moi au Rwanda ou ailleurs j'avais eu ce genre d'information, ça m'aurait beaucoup aidé. Je me serais vue différemment, pas parce que j'aurais rencontré un amoureux ou quoi que ce soit, mais savoir qu'autour de moi il y a d'autres gens qui avaient les mêmes sentiments que moi, qui souffraient du même isolement que moi, ça m'aurait aidé. Donc en créant gaiafrique.com, ça a commencé à créer des micros...pas des microsociétés, mais les gens dans leurs vies ont commencé à se rencontrer et Abidjan fut une des villes qui a été très fréquentée sur ce site internet là. Abidjan, Dakar, Douala, Paris, Montréal...donc il y avait des gens qui commençaient à se rencontrer, qui m'envoyaient des messages en me disant 'c'est grâce à toi que j'ai rencontré mon copain', j'étais comme wow.

result of being either directly contacted by other activists or referred to specific organizations by people in their entourage. While finding a sense of belonging particularly stood out amongst LGBTQ-POC activists, networks played more of a role in spurring White-LGBTQ individual activist paths.

As previously mentioned, Fauve got involved in a youth-specific organization through a referral from her psychologist. When asked why he reached out to the ATQ, Julien once again underlined the role played by his entourage, including his psychologist, who insisted that he seek support amongst available LGBTQ resources as part of his transitioning process:

> It was a colleague of a high school friend of mine, as well as my psychologist, who told me that it would probably do me some good to break my isolation and to go out and meet other trans people and to seek out resources that trans people might know of[45].

While Julien's and Fauve's networks were mostly comprised of non-LGBTQ identifying individuals, who recommended that they seek out support amongst LGBTQ organizations as part of their coming out and transitioning processes, others came to get involved in LGBTQ organizing through other LGBTQ-identifying individuals in their entourage. This was indeed the case for Émilie, a White cisgender pansexual woman, who joined an organization upon her gay roommate's suggestion:

> My involvement started 5 or 6 years ago, when I joined [organization X]. I was sharing an apartment with three other people, including my friend who is gay and who volunteers for [organization X]. And he had been telling me about it for a while and so when I finished my studies, returned from an internship abroad, I was searching for a job and started getting involved in the organization. I went to the information meetings, did the intensive training to intervene in high school classrooms. So this is the way that it started. It really was because of my friend who kept telling me about it and saying how they were looking for people, especially women, and in particular bisexual women[46].

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45 Original quote in French: Pour faire une histoire courte, c'était justement la collègue de mon amie du secondaire et mon psychologue qui m'ont dit que ça me ferait peut-être du bien pour briser mon isolement, d'aller voir d'autres personnes trans et d'aller chercher des ressources qu'on ne connait pas mais qu'eux connaissent.

46 Original quote in French: Mon implication a commencé il y a 5-6 ans, je sais plus, quand je suis entrée chez [X]. J'étais en colocation avec 3 autres personnes et il y en a un là-dedans qui est gai et qui fait du bénévolat pour [X]. Ça faisait super longtemps qu'il m'en parlait donc quand j'ai fini mes études puis que je suis revenue d'un stage que j'avais fait à

When asked how he had come to first get involved in the LGBTQ community in Ottawa, Marcus, a White cisgender gay man, provided a similar response:

> I had just graduated from university and had been working at the student newspaper for a while and I was dating a guy that knew somebody...like informal networks. Yeah, I was dating somebody who introduced me and that's how I got started on that.

Just like Marcus and Émilie, numerous activists joined existing LGBTQ organizations and came to be involved in LGBTQ movements as a result of a referral from a friend or from a friend of a friend. For Jean-Rock, a White cisgender gay man, this referral – or rather suggestion – from a friend eventually led him to cofound FrancoQueer, an organization dedicated to French-speaking LGBTQ people in Toronto:

> There was a guy that I knew who had done a research, and who was gay, with OISE [Ontario Institute for Studies in Education] at the University of Toronto, and his research was on francophones' participation in the gay community. He came to interview me and he told me 'wouldn't you be interested in starting something for gays, an association for francophone gays in Toronto? We should start something.'[47]

Thus, networks play a pivotal role in triggering LGBTQ-identifying individuals to get involved in LGBTQ activism, either as participants in existing organizations or as cofounders of community initiatives. One may in this sense argue that inasmuch as coming out and transitioning processes may render LGBTQ-identifying individuals predisposed to get involved in activism, they may need to be 'pulled' into it, hence confirming previous work on structural availability in general, and on networks in particular (McAdam 1986; Passy and Giugni 2001). However, considering how networks appeared to be particularly relevant in launching White-LGBTQ individual activist paths, their relevance

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l'étranger, je me cherchais un job alors j'ai commencé à m'impliquer là. Je suis allée aux rencontres d'information, j'ai fait la formation intensive pour devenir intervenante en classe. C'est comme ça que ça a commencé, c'est beaucoup mon ami qui m'en a parlé et qui me disait 'ah là ils cherchent des gens, des filles surtout, et en plus t'es bisexuelle'.

[47] Original quote in French: Il y avait un gars que je connaissais qui avait fait une recherche pendant que je travaillais, qui était gai, avec OISE, avec l'Université de Toronto, puis sa recherche était sur l'engagement des francophones dans le milieu gai, pourquoi ils s'engageaient donc là il était venu m'interviewer et il m'avait dit 'ah ça t'intéresserait pas de démarrer quelque chose de gai, une association pour les gais francophones de Toronto? On devrait partir quelque chose'.

further appears as context-dependent. In other words, the extent to which one's network may play a role in spurring one's activism remains intimately tied to people's social location.

### 5.1.4. *Work-related purposes*

Testament to the institutionalization, and perhaps professionalization, of Canada's LGBTQ movements, a significant proportion of activists interviewed for this research further explained how they first got involved in LGBTQ movements for *work-related purposes*. Sometimes rendered possible through one's network, this last triggering factor spurring one's participation in LGBTQ movements also appeared to be predominant amongst White-LGBTQ activists.

Thus, many participants underlined the work-related character of their motivation to start volunteering for LGBTQ organizations. Jonathan, a White cisgender gay man, explained how his long-term plan of getting into a social work program at university drove him to get involved in a youth-specific organization:

> The first thing that got me to [organization X] was through a research of mine. I figured that I wanted to study social work and I noticed that universities required some kind of volunteer-work, either as a prerequisite or as something that was an added value to my application. As I was thinking about my future, I thought that I might as well start volunteering right now. At first, it was just supposed to be volunteering, but after participating in an event I decided to get involved on the board of the organization[48].

Marie-Édith, a White cisgender lesbian woman, provided a similar account when she explained how she first got involved in Montréal's LGBTQ movement:

> It was a colleague of mine at school who was already a volunteer for [organization X] who told me that it could interest me. It gives us

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[48] Original quote in French: La première chose qui m'a amené en fait c'est parce que je faisais une recherche. Je venais juste de comprendre que je voulais aller étudier en travail social et j'avais remarqué que dans les prérequis des universités le bénévolat soit c'était obligatoire ou soit c'était apprécié dans ton application. En pensant à mon avenir, je me suis dit que je devais commencer à m'impliquer. Au départ, c'était juste sensé être du bénévolat, mais je suis venu une soirée et j'ai décidé d'entrer dans le CA directement.

experience, it's good for our CV, and the team is pretty fun. So that was it. I got in touch with people at [organization X] and I never left since[49].

Marie-Édith's account adequately illustrates how one's involvement within LGBTQ movements may be spurred by one's network on the one hand, and by work-related purposes on the other hand. What is particularly striking is that while Jonathan and Marie-Édith both started volunteering in LGBTQ organizations for work-related purposes, they ended up becoming substantially involved in Montréal's LGBTQ movement. Whereas Jonathan became President of a youth-specific organization for several years, Marie-Édith became Executive Director of her organization, and soon after became president of a youth-specific LGBTQ organization.

In addition to getting involved as a volunteer to broaden one's employment possibilities, activists also came to participate in LGBTQ movements by seeking work opportunities within LGBTQ organizations. When asked to explain his own debut with Montréal's LGBTQ movement, Frédérick, a White cisgender gay man, insisted on the fact that he randomly stumbled upon a job advertisement to work in an LGBTQ organization in the city:

> I learned about the LGBTQ community through [organization X]. I have been here almost 6 years. When I was studying at university, I didn't have any job and I was looking in the job database at UQAM and I saw that they were searching for someone to fill a position at [organization X]. I was a young gay guy, I was about 20-21 years old? No I was 22 years old. I wasn't really aware of the community. I had just moved to Montréal for school. I discovered both the gay community and the LGBTQ movement through my work at [organization X]. And that was 6 years ago[50].

Whereas Frédérick did not intentionally seek out employment opportunities within Montréal's LGBTQ movement, David, a cisgender gay man of colour, actively looked for a more inclusive work environment and purposefully applied for a position at an ethno-specific HIV/AIDS organization (E-ASO) in Toronto. Once again highlighting the role that his own network played in his

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[49] Original quote in French: Une collègue de classe qui était déjà bénévole pour [X] m'a dit que ça pourrait peut-être m'intéresser, ça nous donne de l'expérience, c'est bon sur un CV, puis l'équipe est l'fun. Ça a été ça tout simplement. Je suis entrée en contact avec les gens de [X] puis je ne suis jamais partie depuis.

[50] Original quote in French: J'ai connu le milieu LGBTQ à travers [X]. Ça fait presque 6 ans. Quand j'étais à l'université, j'avais pas de job, je checkais sur la banque d'emplois de l'UQAM et j'avais vu qu'ils cherchaient à combler un poste à [X], j'étais un jeune gai, j'avais quoi, j'avais quel âge, 20 ans, 21 ans? Non j'avais 22 ans. J'étais pas trop dans le milieu, je venais de déménager à Montréal pour l'université. Tant la découverte du milieu gai que la militance en tant que tel a commencé par mon arrivée au travail à [X]. C'est ça, ça fait 6 ans que je suis dans le milieu.

involvement in Toronto's LGBTQ movement, David explained how working in an LGBTQ organization reflected his own will to work for a community to which he belonged:

> So my brother used to come here, cause my brother is also gay, yeah, so he used to come here a lot and this is where he found kind of his identity and his sense of home and belongingness but I never really came here when he was here so that's how I heard about it. And then when I heard that they had a job opening I was like oh my gosh, yeah, I definitely want to work at a place where they are supporting the community, and especially ethnocultural specific, right?

Individual activist paths in both Toronto and Montréal have to some extent been fueled by work-related purposes, which alternatively reveals the somewhat professionalized nature of Canadian LGBTQ movements. While some activists initially got involved for determined periods of time, either as interns or as volunteers, others have come to join the movement as hired employees within LGBTQ organizations. Yet, most of them have remained active in the long run, eventually becoming prominent LGBTQ activists and community-organizers. What is more, a majority of those who came to occupy a paid position in an organization eventually pursued their activism beyond their position as employees. The professionalized dimension of one's participation within social movement organizations, wherein the boundaries between one's work and one's activism become quite blurry, has also been observed within feminist movements, which have undergone significant institutionalization throughout the 1980s and the 1990s (Bereni and Revillard 2018; Sawer 2013; Walby 2011).

### 5.1.5. *LGBTQ-POC activism as endogenous, White-LGBTQ activism as exogenous*

Notwithstanding the fact that people initially participate in LGBTQ movements in various ways and for different reasons, it is clear – building on the interviews conducted for this research – that being aware of one's sexual or gender identity serves as a necessary condition to get involved in LGBTQ activism, hence confirming previous work on identity (Stryker, Owens, and White 2000; Gamson 1992; Armstrong 2002). However, considering that not all those who identify as a asexual or gender minority participate in activism, it remains insufficient on its own. When one takes a deeper look at the differences between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activists path's triggering factors, the impact of coming out and transitioning processes on one's initial participation appeared

to vary. For a majority of LGBTQ-POC activists, coming out and transitioning processes were inextricably tied to the need of finding some sense of belonging and building a community. The necessity to break one's isolation and to find other LGBTQ-identifying individuals significantly stood out as predominant factors spurring LGBTQ-POC's initial involvement in LGBTQ movements. It is in that respect that LGBTQ-POC's individual activist paths appear to be launched by endogenous factors, meaning that they are situated within individuals.

In contrast, networks and work-related purposes were much more common in launching White-LGBTQ individual activist paths. More precisely, White-LGBTQ activists repeatedly underlined their entourage's role, such as LGBTQ-identifying friends already involved in LGBTQ activism, or their motivation in volunteering as a way to broaden their employment possibilities. Others specifically sought out employment opportunities in existing LGBTQ organizations as a way to professionally evolve in an inclusive work environment. While this was much more prevalent amongst White-LGBTQ activists, it was nonetheless mentioned by a handful of LGBTQ-POC activists, most of whom were part of Toronto's LGBTQ movement. One may nevertheless posit that exogenous factors played a substantial role in triggering participation of White-LGBTQ individuals, in which case they also appeared as being increasingly 'pulled' into LGBTQ activism.

## 5.2. Motivations driving activism

Motivations drive activism and sustain one's participation in social movement activities and organizations. Not fixed in time, motivations may change after one's initial involvement in LGBTQ movements, as well as over the course of one's activist path. Inasmuch as they may be numerous and multidimensional, I have nevertheless grouped them into three non-mutually exclusive categories: (1) *endogenous motivations*, which include identifying with the broader movement, identifying with other activists through shared discrimination, and identifying with a particular activist community within the movement; (2) *exogenous motivations*, which imply mobilizing as a result of a window of opportunity, mobilizing due to a lack of network and community, and mobilizing because of resources; and (3) *relational*\*51 *motivations*, which include increasing visibility and representation of

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51 I use the term relational with an asterisk (\*) to distinguish between my own understanding of relational, which is anchored in intersectional thought, and other sociopolitical perspectives that primarily insist on its interactive character. As outlined in chapter 3, my usage of the term relational further includes the power configurations that socially locate individuals or groups *in relation* to each other, hence the use of the asterisk.

underprivileged communities, creating safer spaces for marginalized communities within the movement, and attending to the specific needs of marginalized communities. Slightly different than the first two sets of motivations, relational* motivations tend to drive activism following one's initial participation in LGBTQ movements. Whereas endogenous and exogenous motivations characterize both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths, relational* motivations are instead quite specific to LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths.

### 5.2.1. Endogenous motivations

This first set of motivations, namely *endogenous motivations*, evidently speaks to the nature of the movement under study. These include identifying with the broader movement as a sexual and/or gender minority, identifying through shared experiences of sexual and/or gender discrimination, and identifying with a particular activist community through specific organizations. The majority of activists interviewed interestingly underlined how their participation in LGBTQ movements appeared obvious to them, as if their identification as sexual and/or gender minorities was inherent to their activism. Indeed, when asked why they were specifically involved in LGBTQ activism rather than in another movement, most of them mentioned that this kind of activism represented a natural venue where they could get involved. One of the reasons provided for this was their intrinsic identification with the broader movement. When I asked Marc, a cisgender gay man of colour in Montréal, if he would get involved in another social movement that is not LGBTQ-related, his immediate response was negative, which was quite telling in this particular matter:

> No, no, no. In the end, to get involved, I need to be directly affected by the cause, it needs to bring me something. I'm not the kind to...I don't know...there are children in Africa who are dying, I'm not going to help them. It's too far from my reality[52].

This inextricable tie between his sexual identity and the broader LGBTQ movement thus drove Marc to sustain his participation in LGBTQ activism beyond his initial involvement. This was also the case for Shakir, a cisgender gay man of colour in Toronto, who more specifically described

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[52] Original quote in French: Non. Non. Dans le fond, moi pour m'impliquer, il faut que la cause me touche, il faut que ça m'apporte quelque chose. Je ne suis pas du genre à dire ah...je sais pas moi...en Afrique il y a des enfants qui meurent, je vais les aider. C'est trop loin de ma réalité.

his motivation to participate in LGBTQ organizations involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the following way:

> Well I think it's because it's such a central issue within, at least the most immediate community I identify with, as a gay man, I think HIV/AIDS and sexual health are so central issues to our day to day lives that it just seems like a natural place to be involved and engaged. It's also a sector where there's a lot of stigma in terms of the people that we serve and so when I think about where the need lies, that's part of what compels me to HIV/AIDS and sexual health.

In addition to identifying with the broader movement, activists were also driven by the feeling that LGBTQ-identifying individuals may share experiences of sexual and/or gender discrimination on the basis of their identification as sexual and/or gender minorities. For instance, many evoked their own discriminatory experiences, simultaneously underlining their motivation to work at preventing discrimination from happening to other sexual and/or gender minorities. When Jonathan started participating in a youth-specific LGBTQ organization, he realized how easier it could have been for him growing up to have this kind of resource at his disposal. He further explained how his identification with today's LGBTQ youth and his motivation to actively participate in the organization's board stemmed in part from the discrimination he experienced when he was in high school:

> When I was young, I would have needed this kind of space. When I was in high school. To have found it when I did I was like...I need to make sure that other youth have access to this kind of space too. When I arrived here, during the first event, it was a video games night and it was chaotic, there wasn't even any space to breathe, there were tables everywhere and screens, and it was chaotic. But at the same time, I was like, everyone here is here because they are queer and they want to be here, and I had never experienced that before. The word community really started to make sense when I began to come here[53].

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[53] Original quote in French: Quand j'étais jeune j'aurais vraiment eu besoin d'avoir une place comme ça. Quand j'étais au secondaire. De l'avoir trouvé quand je l'ai trouvé j'étais comme...il faut que je m'arrange pour que d'autres jeunes aient cet espace-là aussi. Je suis arrivé ici, la première soirée, c'était une soirée jeux vidéo et c'était pêle-mêle, il y avait à peine de place pour respirer, il y avait plein de tables, d'écrans et c'était chaotique. Mais en même temps j'étais comme tout ce monde-là est ici parce qu'ils sont queer et parce que ça leur tente. J'avais jamais vécu ça avant. Le mot communauté a vraiment commencer à prendre sens quand j'ai commencé à venir ici.

Fauve also underlined the impact that her own experience has had on her motivation to become a GRIS-Montréal speaker and share her story with other high school students who might experience similar situations:

> I found it important to meet these kids because there no longer is a *Formation personnelle et sociale* class in high school, and I would have liked that somebody like that would have come to my school to talk about sexual diversity instead of feeling lost in high school knowing that I was questioning myself without really knowing why. And also to have a positive image of a lesbian woman that is not pejorative, which was the case at that time. There were few role models like we have now, so I would have really liked that somebody like that would have showed up at my school[54].

In this regard, not only did activists identify with the broader movement, but they also underlined how they felt like they identified with other LGBTQ-identifying individuals through shared experiences of discrimination on the basis of their sexual or gender identity. This particular feeling thereby incited them to get involved and sustain their participation within LGBTQ movements.

Finally, several activists purposefully explained how their participation was further driven by an identification with a particular activist community, namely a specific organization, which determined where they chose to participate. This endogenous motivation was particularly significant amongst LGBTQ-POC activists. For example, Rameez, a gender fluid gay man of colour who has been involved in Toronto's and in Montréal's LGBTQ movements, explained his involvement in Ismaili Queers in the following way:

> I'm also involved with a group called Ismaili Queers, because I'm an Ismaili Muslim. With that group what I try to do is organize meetups whenever I'm traveling to different cities to foster a sense of community and also to create a dialogue and start a discussion about how things can change in our community when it comes to the acceptance of the LGBTQ demographic, and how they can also be integrated in a more religious and

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[54] Original quote in French: Je trouvais ça important d'aller rencontrer des jeunes parce qu'il y a plus de cours de FPS. J'aurais aimé ça moi qu'un intervenant vienne à mon école me parler de la diversité sexuelle et non de me sentir perdue au secondaire sachant que je me questionnais mais je ne savais pas pourquoi. Puis aussi avoir une image positive et non péjorative d'une femme lesbienne, contrairement à ce moment-là. Il y avait peu de modèles comme aujourd'hui, donc moi j'aurais vraiment aimé ça que quelqu'un se présente à mon école.

> spiritual context. I found that a lot of people in my community, because they are part of the LGBTQ demographic they're not as active because of cultural stereotypes and traditional stigmas resulting in boundaries that people in my community have placed.

Rameez's participation in Ismaili Queers is in this sense explained through his own identification as an Ismaili queer person, driving him to work at fostering inclusivity within his religious community. His decision to join this specific organization thus appears to stem from his own identification with this organization's membership, namely Ismaili queers. This kind of endogenous motivation was further echoed in Haran's account as to why he decided to pursue his activism in the Alliance for South Asian Aids Prevention (ASAAP):

> And so I came to Toronto and I'm watching the parade and ASAAP went by and I saw other Brown people who were queer and gay and all that, or lesbian or trans, however they identify, and that was sort of my tipping point in that I needed to know this organization and get to learn about this. So I googled on the internet and I researched in 2001 and going into 2002, and then end of 2002 there was a job available as a Tamil outreach worker.

As a South Asian gay man himself, Haran instantly felt the need to get involved with this specific organization, in which case he worked as a Tamil outreach worker before becoming executive director of the organization.

LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths are thus driven by several endogenous motivations that include identifying with the broader movement as a sexual and/or gender minority, identifying with each other through shared experiences of discrimination, and/or identifying with particular activist communities through specific organizations. These motivations unsurprisingly echo previous work on identity and social movement participation (Stryker 2000; Melucci 1995; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Armstrong 2002), in which case people's identity and their own feelings of identification with the movement's collective identity came across as significant factors driving individual participation within LGBTQ movements. Inasmuch as endogenous motivations play a role in fostering social movement participation, hence characterizing individual activist paths, they were oftentimes intertwined with another set of explanations situated outside individuals, namely exogenous motivations.

Activists interviewed for this research were also driven by *exogenous motivations*. These include mobilizing as a result of a window of opportunity, of one's network (or lack thereof), and building on one's resources to enhance community-led activism. If most activists began their involvement in LGBTQ movements by attending events or by regularly participating in particular organizations, some of them pursued their activism by occupying different, perhaps more substantial positions in these movements, either as board members, executive directors or coordinators. Several of them insisted that their decision to do so oftentimes stemmed from the fact that these positions had become available and that somebody had reached out to them inciting them to fill the position. In this regard, they were driven by what they perceived to be a window of opportunity for them to pursue their activism and be able to convey their ideas from more prominent positions. This was notably the case for Camille, a White non-binary pansexual activist who worked for an LGBTQ youth-specific organization and who was inadvertently recruited to join another LGBTQ organization's board:

> I arrived here in November, a bit agitated, at the community meeting organized by [organization X] to seek out input from members and to nominate its community representatives on its board. When I entered the room, two people from the board asked me if I was interested in being a candidate for the board. It had never crossed my mind before because you don't get involved in an organization that pisses you off. But then I thought about it, quite rapidly I must say, and I thought what could be more meaningful than being invited to join an organization where so many things have to be changed and where you can potentially have a significant impact and affect even more people. So I said yes. (...) But at that time, I really saw this as a huge opportunity to be able to add my contribution to this enormous machine. Now I realize that the machine really is enormous[55].

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[55] Original quote in French : Je suis arrivé en novembre, un peu pompée à la rencontre communautaire que [X] organise à la fin de chaque festival pour prendre le pouls puis pour nommer ses représentant, représentantes communautaires au sein du CA. Puis quand j'ai passé la porte, il y a deux personnes, membres du CA, qui sont venues me demander si j'étais intéressée à présenter ma candidature pour faire partie du CA. Ça ne m'a jamais traversé l'esprit parce que tu ne t'impliques pas dans un milieu qui te fait chier, sauf que, j'y ai réfléchi, assez rapidement il faut se le dire, et quoi de plus constructif que de te faire inviter à entrer dans un milieu où il y a beaucoup de choses à changer et où que ton impact pourrait potentiellement être quelque chose de significatif et de constructif et toucher encore plus de personnes. Donc j'ai dit oui à titre personnel (...) Mais c'est ça, à ce moment-là je l'ai vraiment vu comme une opportunité gigantesque d'aller mettre mon grain de sel dans une machine qui est énorme pis là je me rends compte que la machine elle est énorme.

Similar to Camille's account, Jade explained how his decision to become Helem Montréal's president was in large part due to a window of opportunity triggered by the former president's decision to refrain from seeking out another term. He more specifically viewed this as an opportunity for him to take on a leading role in the community, a community with which he strongly identifies as a Lebanese bisexual man himself:

> And so like I realized that Helem is a great opportunity for me to do that because not only do I identify as part of the community but also that I can bring a lot of changes to the organization that the organization needs. So when I decided to become President it was because the president that was before me, he had been there for quite some time, 5 years consecutive, before that maybe another 3 or 4 so when we were talking about Helem, he was telling me how people think that Helem is [X] and [X] is Helem. Which is something that is not good for an organization because he didn't want it to be him. He didn't want people to associate it to him. Because it's still an organization that works to fight a cause. So that's why he decided not to run again. And so when he decided not to run again for reelection that's when I thought to myself, ok, that's my catch. That's my opportunity. We spoke and he said he thought it was a great idea, that we needed someone young, that's fresh, that can bring more positive ideas and a new outlook to the organization and that's why I decided to do it.

What stands out in Camille's and Jade's narratives is the way in which these windows of opportunities were perceived as providing them with more power to actually change things and bring their ideas to the table. What is more, not only were they motivated to occupy these positions as a way to pursue their activism, but they were also, and perhaps most importantly, driven by a desire to incite change within these organizations.

As discussed above, networks played a significant role in triggering activists' initial involvement in LGBTQ movements. However, they were also instrumental in sustaining social movement participation and shaping where activists pursued their involvement in LGBTQ movements. Marlyne, a Black non-binary pansexual person who initially got involved in a mainstream-white-dominated organization, explained how she was somewhat invited to join an LGBTQ-POC organization by a friend of hers who moreover insisted she join the organization despite her own hesitation:

> In the end, he says to me 'no, you'll see, it'll be fun. There was this little community aspect that I was missing so I decided to get involved in [organization X]'s women committee. And after that, things just happened. I joined the women's committee, I went to several events, I also organized events at my place, all of that, and then it ended up being like a family to me. I found it very fun and so I decided to join the executive board[56].

While Marlyne's network played an undeniable role in 'pulling' her into this LGBTQ-POC organization, it also contributed to her sustained participation within this particular organization, in which case she felt it necessary to maintain its sustainability. For others, the lack of networks, and of community for that matter, played a similar role in the sense that it also worked at sustaining their participation. Olivia, a White cisgender pansexual woman in Montréal, explained how the lack of a support network for LGBTQ-identifying students at her university contributed in her motivation to become actively involved in an on-campus LGBTQ organization:

> It really was all about finding people to participate and start creating some sort of network. Our goal was to fight against isolation, especially at the university, oftentimes these are people who no longer have family support or who no longer have access to their own support systems, such as their Cégep friends. They arrive here and they don't know anyone, and when you don't know anyone who's LGBTQ, to whom can you talk about it? It's not an easy task[57].

Reacting to the lack of networks thus prompted numerous activists, especially nonwhite, nonmale, and noncisgender, to create spaces in which networks could form. This was either done through specific organizations, which was the case for Olivia, or sometimes through coalition-building, as was the case for Alan, a cisgender gay man of colour and former president of Montréal's Coalition Multimundo:

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[56] Original quote in French: Finalement, il me dit non, tu vas voir, ça va être l'fun. Il y avait ce petit côté communautaire qui me manquait donc je me suis impliquée au Comité des femmes [à organisation X]. Et suite à ça, les choses se sont faites, j'ai intégré le comité des femmes, j'ai été à plusieurs évènements, j'ai fait des soirées chez moi aussi, tout ça, puis après ça faisait comme une famille, je trouvais ça super chouette puis j'ai décidé de m'impliquer au Conseil d'administration.

[57] Original quote in French: C'était pas mal trouver des gens pour participer et essayer de créer un réseau en fait. Le but c'était vraiment de lutter contre l'isolement, souvent, à l'université, ce sont des gens qui ont plus leur système de soutien familial ou leur système de support qui était non-familial. Par exemple leurs amis avec qui ils étaient au Cégep. Là ils connaissent personne, ils arrivent, puis quand tu connais personne et que t'es LGBT, à qui est-ce que tu peux en parler? C'est pas évident.

> It was for people to meet each other, who might not have ordinarily met each other, that was when I started becoming involved and interested in that cross-racial, inter-racial kind of activism. Because I guess through my experiences with Coalition Multimundo, even though it didn't work out in the end, I really felt like coalition-building was really important. And so I wanted to see…even if it wasn't like they would form coalitions, just getting people to meet each other, to work together, to collaborate on things, I think that was important to me because that means that there could be more events available, there could be more of a community that either supports each other and/or are recognized or can be recognized by other communities, that they exist, you know just sort of build strength there.

Overall, networks not only functioned as opportunity structures (Passy and Giugni 2001; Diani 2004) but rather served as motivating factors prompting activists to organize and provide support to other sexual and gender minorities. This might once again speak of the specificity of the movement under study, which tends to bring together sexual and gender minorities who have more often than not experienced marginalization. As the lack of networks may characterize many LGBTQ-identifying individuals' lives, activists are henceforth driven by the will to fill this gap and improve the well-being of sexual and gender minorities. Yet, the lack of networks stood out as a more prominent factor amongst LGBTQ people of colour than amongst their White counterparts.

Finally, acknowledging one's socioeconomic privilege and wanting to mobilize one's resources to enhance organizational capacity served as another exogenous motivation. Otis, a Black cisgender gay man, insisted on the ways in which in own privileged position acted as a motivating factor driving and sustaining his own participation within Toronto's LGBTQ movement:

> Yeah, my thing is, and one phrase I use every time, my objective is to use my knowledge, skills, gifts, and talents, all different things. My knowledge, skills, gifts, and talents, to use it to change and to advocate for those less than. And that's just it. If I come to a Board then I'm bringing you some knowledge, I'm bringing you some skill, I'm bringing you a gift, I'm bringing you a talent, to use that to offer change and that is my main objective when it comes to being on a Board.

For many activists, in particular LGBTQ people of colour, acknowledging their relative privilege motivated them to pursue their participation within LGBTQ spaces and organizations. As a

result, many of them conceived their activism as facilitating organizational development and capacity-building of LGBTQ organizations.

Exogenous motivations evidently overlap with endogenous motivations as outlined above, in which case they tend to complement each other. In this regard, identifying with the broader movement, identifying through shared experiences of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, identifying with particular activist communities, mobilizing as a result of a window of opportunity, building or building on one's network, and bringing one's resources to enhance community-led organizing all stood out as significant motivating factors prompting both White and POC activists to sustain their participation within LGBTQ movements. While endogenous and exogenous motivations appear to characterize both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths, another set of motivations, namely relational* motivations, has emerged as quite specific to LGBTQ-POC activists, as well as to other White activists that do not identify as cisgender gay men, albeit in a somewhat smaller proportion

### 5.2.3. Relational* motivations

In addition to endogenous and exogenous motivations, there lays a third set of motivations which furthers our understanding of the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. This is not to say that LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths are not driven by endogenous and exogenous motivations. Instead, results show that these two sets of motivations, while providing significant pieces of information, fall short of explaining why LGBTQ-POC activists more specifically invest and participate in organizations formed around particular racialized identities. Three main *relational* motivations* were thus systematically evoked by research participants, namely rendering visible nonwhite LGBTQ realities, creating safer spaces for racialized LGBTQ-identifying individuals, and attending to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities that are overlooked by mainstream-white-LGBTQ organizations.

Significantly, more than two thirds of LGBTQ-POC activists interviewed for this research mentioned how the lack of visibility and representation of nonwhite LGBTQ realities motivated them to actively participate in Canadian LGBTQ movements. This implied challenging both the whiteness of Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements and the misconception that nonwhite individuals

cannot identify as sexual and/or gender minorities. For some, this motivation stemmed from their own experience as being the only LGBTQ person of colour in a predominantly White organization. R, a cisgender queer woman of colour who volunteered at a mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organization in Toronto underlined the fact that because those attending the organization's activities were not all White, she had to sustain her participation as one of the few persons of colour involved in the organization:

> But at the [organization], since I started volunteering here, and with the volunteering work that I had to do, the counselors that were also volunteering were also very White. Very White, they were White. And White presenting. And that made me want to continue volunteering, because the people that I was doing the counseling for at the [organization] were not coming from places...like they are people of colour and it was important that representation was there.

For R, the fact that there was a racial discrepancy between the people attending the organization's activities and those offering organizational services led her to pursue her involvement in this particular organization to ensure that people of colour were somewhat represented in the organization's staff. This echoes Otis' explanation as to why he chose to join white-dominated organizations:

> So I need to be in a seat of influence and representation is important and they need to see a Black person on a Board, they need to also see persons from all different spaces like myself on a Board, but representation is very important. But also what is important is that voice. Because my voice is different from your voice.

Lezlie Lee Kam, a cisgender lesbian woman of colour, expressed a similar concern when detailing her own activism in Toronto's LGBTQ movement:

> Because I knew what it was like and I didn't know where other girls like me would get help. Cause everywhere I went, everybody was White. So I said this is what I need to do, I need to be there for other girls who look like me, and that's when I actively felt like I needed to do something and I felt that this was my spot for it.[58]

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[58] In Brown and Lee Kam (2017a).

The lack of visibility and representation of nonwhite LGBTQ realities thus spurred many activists to sustain their commitment in white-dominated organizations as a way to ensure due representation of nonwhite perspectives. Alternatively, this led others to invest in LGBTQ-POC organizations as a way to further disrupt and challenge the invisibility of their communities. For Laurent Maurice Lafontant, this meant actively participating in Montréal's Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique:

> When I came out in 2005, people said that Black gay men did not exist, that homosexuality did not exist in Black communities. So Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique was a way to render visible our own existence, to break this myth and this prejudice that we do not exist. And to also be role models, to show others that we exist and by doing so, by rendering visible this reality, it will eventually either facilitate others' lives or at least start a discussion on this matter[59].

It is in this line of thought that Jennifer, a Black cisgender lesbian woman, founded Perspectives Ébènes Montréal (PEM) in the 2000s to render visible nonwhite LGBTQ perspectives in the movement. For her, mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations did not adequately represent nonwhite realities, hence the creation of PEM:

> It was a way of bringing other perspectives to the gay community. Ethnocultural communities needed other perspectives, to talk about things, so that's why I named the organization 'Perspective'. (...) But then again, when you look at all the events [in the LGBTQ community], all of the organizers are mostly Caucasian. They don't use Montréal's multicultural richness[60].

In relation to the lack of visibility and representation, LGBTQ-POC activists were motivated by the need to create and foster safer spaces dedicated to LGBTQ-POC communities. As Meryem, a cisgender lesbian woman of colour, explained, creating safer spaces for LGBTQ-POC communities has always been at the core of her activism:

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[59] Original quote in French: Quand j'ai fait ma sortie du placard en 2005, on disait que ça n'existait pas des personnes gaies noires qui sont des hommes, que l'homosexualité n'existe pas dans les communautés noires. Donc Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique c'était une manière de visibiliser notre existence, de briser ce mythe et ce préjugé qu'on n'existe pas. Et puis d'être un modèle, de montrer aux autres que oui ça existe et puis en montrant que ça existe, en visibilisant cette réalité-là, veut veut pas, ça facilitera la chose, soit pour certains, soit ça amènerait une discussion sur la table.
[60] Original quote in French: Donc la communauté ethnoculturelle avait besoin d'autres perspectives pour parler des choses, pour dire les choses, c'était pour ça, 'Perspective'. (...) Puis encore une fois, quand on regarde tous les évènements, c'est principalement caucasien, tous les organisateurs, ils ne profitent pas de cette richesse multiculturelle de Montréal, du mélange culturel.

As an Arab or Muslim, what I tried to do with AlMassir was to combine my LGBTQ+ identity with my Arab and Muslim identity, to create spaces for people to meet and be in solidarity (...) But ideally I think that it's just about creating inclusive spaces, especially for people of colour, because there aren't many. When we walk in the Village, it is very very White and very very gay, actually it's very White cis gay men. So to have these spaces, for women, for migrants, for refugees, for Arabs, for Muslims...there are very few. So it's all about creating these safer spaces. It can be either private events or events that are opened to all, but just having these spaces, that's what we need. That's what it was about when I was at Jeunesse Lambda, that's what I did when I was at the LGBTQ+ Community Center, that's what AlMassir was about, and now with AGIR it's all about accompanying refugees to integrate Montréal and Québec society. But then again, it's also about providing this kind of space and to get them in touch with the organizations that provide this space[61].

Echoing Meryem's concern regarding the lack of safer spaces for LGBTQ people of colour, Rahim more specifically insisted on the need to foster safer spaces in which Muslim-identified individuals can share their thoughts and experiences, thereby underscoring the importance of Salaam Canada:

And when we talk with faith-based identities or religious affiliation or religious identity, we all have our relationship to Islam or the identity and I think we need to create spaces where we can sort out what that identity is and what our relationship to those things are. Cause a lot of us struggle with, we face islamophobia, we have internalized islamophobia, I think we experience racism more broadly in the community, some of us have language to describe that and others don't and others will report not experiencing it, nevertheless I think we are trying to create unique space where people don't have to be defensive and kind of have a space to figure stuff out and to feel safe, right? And I think we are recognizing that a space can be peer-led but also having some structure and producing some

[61] Original quote in French: En tant qu'Arabe ou musulmane, ce que j'ai essayé de faire avec Almassir, c'était de combiner justement mon identité LGBTQ+ avec le fait d'être arabe, d'être musulmane, pour créer des espaces de rencontre, solidaires (...) Mais idéalement je pense que c'est juste de créer des espaces inclusifs et surtout pour les personnes...les people of colour...queer people of colour..les personnes racialisées. Il n'y en a pas tant que ça, si on se balade dans le Village, c'est très très blanc et très très gai, en fait, homme cis blanc gai, du coup d'avoir ces espaces-là, pour les femmes, pour les personnes immigrantes, réfugiées, pour les personnes arabes et musulmanes, il y a très peu d'espace donc juste de créer ces espaces-là sécuritaires. Ça peut être des évènements fermés, comme ça peut être des évènements ouverts à tous, mais juste de créer ces espaces-là, idéalement c'est ça. C'était ça à Jeunesse Lambda que j'avais fait, c'était ça au Centre communautaire, avec AlMassir, puis avec AGIR c'est vraiment d'aider ces personnes-là à s'intégrer, au final, à la société montréalaise et québécoise, mais d'encore une fois de fournir cet espace, de les mettre en contact avec des organismes qui fournissent cet espace-là.

concrete resources can be very good for continuity and I think continuity and infrastructure for support is something that I'm interested in building for Salaam Canada.

Driven by the will to create and sustain safer spaces for LGBTQ-POC communities, activists evoked the needs of particular communities within the broader LGBTQ movement that had to be attended to and that were overlooked by mainstream-white-dominated organizations. This is in part highlighted in Rahim's quote above wherein LGBTQ Muslims needed to reflect on what their faith-based identification represented and entailed for them. Rameez observed for his part how Montréal's LGBTQ movement lacked a space specifically dedicated to South Asians. Consequently, he founded Jhalak, which now provides LGBTQ-identifying South Asians with the opportunity to meet and engage with each other, all the while sharing the same cultural background or experiences.

This third set of motivations marks an important difference between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths. If LGBTQ-POC activists did reveal being driven by endogenous and exogenous motivations, they additionally evoked various relational* motivations that acted as major drivers of their activism in both Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements. In several cases, relational* motivations emerged as a result of LGBTQ-POC's initial involvement in the movement, notably within mainstream-white-dominated organizations.

### 5.2.4. Motivations driving activism: mobilizing in sameness and difference

These results show to the extent to which endogenous and exogenous motivations, such as one's identification with the movement or one's network, are in and of themselves insufficient to explain the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. This is not to say that they do not matter. Rather, they remain intimately tied to a third set of motivations, namely relational* motivations. For instance, all activists, including people of colour, evoked how their participation stemmed in part from an identification with the broader movement as LGBTQ-identifying individuals. However, due to their racialized identities in the context of Canadian LGBTQ activism, LGBTQ people of colour appeared to be motivated by other concerns that include the desire to ensure due representation of nonwhite realities and to cater to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities; hence the significance of mobilizing an intersectional analytical lens and taking into consideration the relational character of one's participation. Similarly, inasmuch as networks may

have functioned to 'pull' activists into joining particular organizations, the lack of networks instead contributed in motivating LGBTQ people of colour to create safer spaces or sustain their participation within LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. Networks therefore appear to differently motivate and sustain one's participation depending on one's social location both within and outside the movement. This once again points to the necessity of taking into account how categories of sameness and difference interact, thus socially situating individuals, informing their political subjectivities and shaping their motivations to participate in social movements.

As this section did touch upon, LGBTQ-POC activists are driven by relational* motivations that make them participate the way that they do, such as getting involved in LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. Oftentimes, these motivations stem from previous experiences within mainstream-white-dominated organizations, which illustrate another interrelated aspect that characterizes the peculiarity of LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. With this in mind, the next section will focus on activists' organizational mobility within Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements.

## 5.3. Organizational mobility

Motivations to participate in LGBTQ movements may change over time, as the previous section briefly touched upon. Consequently, activists may choose to shift their participation from one SMO to another or to simultaneously get involved with more than one organization. In this section I will therefore expose a third aspect of one's individual activist path, namely *organizational mobility* within LGBTQ movements. This more precisely implies examining how – and why – activists may choose (or not) to participate in different SMOs. When it comes to identifying the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, this furthermore means examining how LGBTQ people of colour come to get involved in LGBTQ-POC organizations.

At the outset, organizational mobility does stand out as an observable phenomenon within LGBTQ movements. Notwithstanding their race, LGBTQ activists stood out as generally quite mobile, in which case most activists participated, on average, in approximately two organizations. Two different patterns of organizational mobility were nevertheless observed. First, while most

White and POC activists have participated in more than one SMO, White-LGBTQ activists appeared to *simultaneously* participate in several organizations while LGBTQ-POC activists seemed to *successively* participate in different SMOs. The second observed pattern concerns organizational entry points into LGBTQ movements. Whereas White and POC activists shared similar entry points into Montréal's LGBTQ movement, namely through mainstream-white-dominated organizations, Toronto's LGBTQ movement's entry points appeared to be much more diverse. Subsequently, LGBTQ-POC organizations served as significant entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement. As will be further addressed, these entry points had a considerable impact on LGBTQ-POC activists' organizational mobility and on the ways in which LGBTQ-POC activists came to get involved in LGBTQ-POC organizations.

### 5.3.1. Outlining 'typical' individual activist paths

White-LGBTQ activists interviewed for this research have either remained involved in a single organization or have simultaneously participated in more than one SMO. In the latter case, activists' participation within these organizations tended to either overlap for a determinate amount of time or to be simultaneously sustained. Kevin's activist path is quite illustrative of this particular form of organizational mobility:

> *During his undergraduate studies in social work at Université Laval in Québec city, Kevin joined [organization X] to gain some practical intervention skills. As an [organization X] member, he invited a prominent leader of [organization Y] to speak at a conference. Following this event, he started getting involved with [organization Y], both as a volunteer and as a paid employee, all the while remaining part of [organization X]. When he moved to Montréal, he sustained his involvement in [organization Y] and in Montréal's chapter of [organization X], additionally fulfilling research contracts for [organization Z], an HIV/AIDS organization.*

While Kevin's overlapping commitment in these three organizations has not necessarily always been equally distributed, it has nonetheless been sustained over time. For instance, Kevin did not leave organization X to get involved in organization Y or to work for organization Z, and has instead been involved in these organizations simultaneously, albeit at varying degrees. What Kevin's activist path therefore shows is how White-LGBTQ activists who choose to multiply their

engagement in LGBTQ movements tend to do so simultaneously, thereby committing themselves to more than one organization at a time.

Although some LGBTQ-POC activists interviewed for this research have been simultaneously involved in more than one organization, most of them have instead participated in different LGBTQ SMOs in a successive manner. This means that in such cases, activists have disengaged from an organization prior to joining another one. Florence and R's activist paths illustrate this particular form of organizational mobility observed in both Montréal and Toronto's LGBTQ movements:

> *Florence first got involved in Montréal's LGBTQ movement through [organization X]. While at [organization X], she became a volunteer and shared her story with a range of high school students. After a while, she chose to disengage from [organization X] as she no longer felt at ease for various reasons. She soon after became involved with [organization Y], eventually becoming co-president of the organization.*
>
> *R first started getting involved in LGBTQ organizing in Montréal, where she was a volunteer for [organization X]. When she moved to Toronto, she left [organization X] and joined [organization Y]. She rapidly identified with [organization Y] and remained involved for a couple of years. When she left [organization Y], she started volunteering for [organization Z] where she remains involved today.*

Florence's involvement in organization Y thus followed her disengagement from organization X, just like R's participation in organization Z followed her disengagement from organization Y. As such, Florence's and R's activist paths reveal a specific pattern of organizational mobility primarily observed amongst LGBTQ-POC activists. Whereas White-LGBTQ activists tended to simultaneously participate in more than one SMO, LGBTQ-POC activists tended to shift their participation from one SMO to another. Once again, this is not to say that LGBTQ-POC activists have not been simultaneously involved in more than one LGBTQ organization. Rather, it points to the fact that LGBTQ-POC activists' organizational mobility overall follows a different pattern when compared to White-LGBTQ activists' organizational mobility.

All things considered, Florence's and R's activist paths do present one striking difference, which is not indicated in the above descriptions due to anonymizing efforts. Florence's initial participation in Montréal's LGBTQ movement happened to be in a mainstream-white-dominated

organization. She then disengaged from that SMO and joined an LGBTQ-POC organization. In contrast, R first got involved in Toronto's LGBTQ movement in an LGBTQ-POC organization, from which she eventually disengaged to later join a mainstream-white-dominated organization. Florence's and R's organizational entry points into both cities' LGBTQ movements were thus quite different. Illustrative of larger trends, the next subsection will take a deeper look into Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements' organizational entry points.

### 5.3.2. Organizational entry points into Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements

Prior to participating in more than one organization, activists usually first get involved in LGBTQ movements by joining one particular SMO, which I refer to as one's *organizational entry point*. While some activists may sustain their participation within the same organization, others may choose to pursue their participation elsewhere. For instance, as developed above, White-LGBTQ activists tend to simultaneously participate in various organizations whereas LGBTQ-POC activists tend do successively do so. Because Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements' organizational entry points present significant differences, the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in both cities also somewhat diverge.

As mentioned above, Florence's involvement in Montréal's LGBTQ movement first started in a mainstream-white-dominated organization, from which she disengaged to join an LGBTQ-POC organization. One may in this sense state that the mainstream-white-dominated organization served as Florence's organizational entry point into LGBTQ activism, which is in fact illustrative of Montréal's individual activist paths gathered for this research. Indeed, mainstream-white-dominated organizations, such as GRIS-Montréal and Jeunesse Lambda, were repeatedly evoked as the main organizational entry points into LGBTQ activism in Montréal, for both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists. What is however distinctive of LGBTQ-POC's activist paths is that most of them ended up pursuing their activism elsewhere, particularly within LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities, such as Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique. People of colour's sustained participation within LGBTQ-POC organizations therefore appeared to stem from a previous experience in a mainstream-white-dominated organization.

In contrast, mainstream-white-dominated organizations do not serve as organizational entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement for all activists. For example, R's initial involvement in Toronto's LGBTQ movement was rendered possible through an ethno-specific AIDS organization (E-ASO), after which she eventually started volunteering in a mainstream-white-dominated organization. David's activist path is similar to R in the sense that his entry point into Toronto's LGBTQ movement was through another E-ASO. Rather than shifting their participation from a mainstream-white-dominated organization to an LGBTQ-POC organization, as was the case for the majority of those interviewed in Montréal, the opposite was seen in Toronto wherein people of colour tended to move from an LGBTQ-POC organization to a mainstream-white-dominated organization, or move from one LGBTQ-POC SMO to another. These results thus show that LGBTQ-POC organizations, in particular E-ASOs, serve as significant organizational entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement, unlike in Montréal. This is not to say that mainstream-white-dominated organizations did not play this particular role for people of colour; it rather means that mainstream-white-dominated organizations do not act as LGBTQ-POC activists' *main* organizational entry point.

Two main things stand out with regards to activists' organizational mobility. First, LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths are characterized by different forms of organizational mobility. While White-LGBTQ activists tend to simultaneously participate in more than one SMO, LGBTQ-POC activists tend to successively move from one organization to another. Second, LGBTQ-POC's organizational entry points shed light on considerable differences between Montréal and Toronto's organizational landscapes. For instance, LGBTQ-POC activists in Montréal tend to participate in LGBTQ-POC organizations following a previous experience within mainstream-white-dominated organizations. Successive organizational mobility may thereby explain how POC activists come to participate in Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizations. In contrast, LGBTQ-POC organizations act as significant entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement, in which case people of colour tend to pursue their participation in other LGBTQ-POC organizations or in mainstream-white-dominated organizations. Activists' organizational mobility, and activist paths for that matter, thus not only appear to be informed by people's social location, but also seems to be shaped by the movements' organizational landscapes. This will be further developed in chapters 6 and 7.

## 5.4. Patterns of disengagement

As the previous section did touch upon, individual activist paths may include various instances of disengagement. These imply either disengaging from a particular organization to join another one, as discussed above, or disengaging from activism altogether. Patterns of disengagement have been repeatedly brought up by activists, with various factors identified as driving one's decision to disengage from an organization or from activism. While the literature has traditionally viewed engagement and disengagement as processes that mirror each other (Corrigall-Brown 2012), our results show that distinctive factors may in fact explain the latter. Two types of disengagement patterns were thus identified. First, driven by organizational and relational* factors, such as internal conflicts or tokenism, some activists disengaged from specific organizations without disengaging from activism. Second, driven by organizational and mental health-related factors, such as the lack of time or emotional breakdowns, other activists disengaged from LGBTQ activism altogether. I will elaborate on these two types of disengagement, delving into the various explanatory factors and shedding light once more on some of the differences observed between LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ individual activist paths.

### 5.4.1. Disengaging from an organization

LGBTQ activists interviewed for this research have demonstrated significant organizational mobility. While some have been simultaneously involved in various SMOs, others have instead moved from one organization to another in a successive manner, hence disengaging from specific organizations. Two sets of factors were identified as driving one's decision to disengage from an LGBTQ organization, namely organizational and relational* factors. As the first set of factors has been raised by both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists, the second set concerns mostly LGBTQ-POC activists, thus shedding some light as to why LGBTQ-POC activists tend to successively move from one organization to another.

#### 5.4.1.1. Organizational factors

In spite of the positive outcomes that activism may bring in people's lives, the majority of those interviewed underlined significant challenges faced throughout their participation within

LGBTQ SMOs. If some have sustained their participation despite these challenges, others have instead preferred disengaging from the organization with which they were involved. Amongst the reasons provided for this, internal organizational conflicts have stood out as being quite significant. These may include interpersonal conflicts between particular activists, disagreement over the organization's stance on contentious issues, a divergence of opinions as to the direction taken by the organization, or a disagreement over resource-allocation. For instance, Marlyne evoked how internal conflicts and organizational disagreements between the different board members drove her to disengage from the organization in which she was involved, hence submitting her resignation to the board. Similarly, Jennifer, who represented PEM in the Coalition multimundo, explained the toll that interpersonal conflicts had on her own participation in the coalition:

> I often found myself having to leave committees, executive boards...I am not saying it to point fingers at Caucasian people, I also point ethnocultural communities. We had cofounded an umbrella organization called Coalition Multimundo and you see, they fought with each other within this organization and it didn't last long because of internal conflicts. So it was a lot of conflicts, not much solidarity. A lot of conflicts for money and subsidies[62].

In addition to internal conflicts, activists underlined the perceived lack of commitment from fellow activists, rendering community-organizing much more arduous. Considering the efforts required to sustain an organization, especially when one is committed voluntarily, several activists preferred calling it quits when they felt like they had no support. This was notably the case for Alan, a prominent community-organizer in Montréal's LGBTQ movement, who decided to disengage from Qouleur:

> So I kept trying to have meetings and getting people, like other Qouleur members to come, and again it became something like what happened with GLAM, like one person would show up for one meeting and a couple of people would show up for another meeting, and they were kind of committed, but then they weren't committed anymore, and I had thought well maybe if we turn it into a biennale, and so it's every 2 years, instead of

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[62] Original quote in French: Je me suis souvent retrouvée à devoir quitter les comités, les conseils d'administration....et je le dis pas pour pointer du doigt les gens caucasiens, je pointe aussi les communautés culturelles. On avait cofondé une table de concertation. Pas une table de concertation mais un organisme parapluie des organismes communautaires qui s'appelait Coalition MultiMundo et puis tu vois, ils se sont chicanés à l'intérieur d'eux, et puis ça n'a pas duré à cause des chicanes internes. Donc c'est beaucoup de chicanes, pas beaucoup d'unions. Beaucoup de chicanes pour l'argent.

every year, that maybe, it'd be better to sell it like that to people, that maybe they will come...but it was just. I sort of at some point said, you know, this isn't working and I can't do this, I can't organize this on my own, there's no fricking way, even if it was a small event. And I was kind of like...kind of at that point losing interest in organizing things, I was kind of feeling, I think it's time for me to retire...so this was like end of 2016 and 2017.

Echoing Alan's narrative, many activists insisted on the difficulty for LGBTQ organizations to recruit community-organizers, which rendered their own participation much more demanding and time consuming. In some instances, due to the lack of support, these activists' disengagement also led to the dismantling of organizations, as was the case with GLAM and Qouleur following Alan's disengagement.

### 5.4.1.2. Relational* factors

In addition to facing organizational challenges, several LGBTQ-POC activists expressed feeling excluded whilst participating in LGBTQ organizations, particularly within mainstream-white-dominated organizations. Racism and cisgenderism for instance, as experienced or witnessed by LGBTQ-POC activists, have led many of them to disengage from mainstream-white-dominated organizations. Yet, rather than inciting activists to disengage from activism altogether, it instead encouraged them to pursue their activism elsewhere, notably within LGBTQ-POC organizations. Lucas Charlie Rose, a Black trans masculine non-binary activist, was one of the very few people of colour on Montréal's trans march's organizing committee. Recalling his decision to recuse himself from the organizing committee, he evoked having felt excluded from decision-making processes because of his blackness:

> And[63] that's like anti-blackness, but the thing is like, for me I just don't take it so that's why I stopped, cause for me...like if I organize, I have to be in an environment where I can focus and I feel good about everything happening, I don't need to be facing violence while I'm organizing for my rights, you know? Obviously, I'm facing violence from people outside of my actions, but that's what I want...inside I want to be chill, you know? So yeah, that's why I stopped.

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[63] This quote also appeared in Labelle (2020a).

After disengaging from the trans march's organizing committee, Lucas Charlie Rose joined Montréal's Black Lives Matter chapter where he rapidly felt a sense of belonging. Lucas Charlie Rose's narrative highlights how being excluded from decision-making processes or witnessing one's exclusion from an organizational space may motivate one's decision to disengage from a white-dominated organization on the one hand, and subsequently engage in LGBTQ-POC activism on the other hand. Another way in which feelings of exclusion have manifested themselves, hence prompting one's disengagement from a white-dominated organization, has been through experienced tokenism. This implies, amongst other things, activists of colour's over solicitation to participate in promotional campaigns and their constrained involvement within designated 'diversity' committees. As will be further developed in chapter 6, tokenistic processes have significantly impacted people of colour's disengagement from white-dominated organizations, thereby shaping the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

### 5.4.2. Disengaging from LGBTQ activism

Inasmuch as individual activist paths may include partial forms of disengagement (i.e. disengaging from a specific organization), they may also conceal instances of complete disengagement from LGBTQ activism, whether temporarily or permanently. Interviews revealed two interrelated sets of factors that have driven activists to disengage from LGBTQ activism: organizational factors, such as the lack of time and the overwhelming workloads, and mental health-related factors, which include episodes of depression and emotional breakdowns. While this disengagement pattern has been observed in both Montréal and Toronto, it appeared to be perhaps more significant in Montréal.

#### 5.4.2.1. Organizational factors

Sustaining one's participation within LGBTQ movements is inevitably time consuming, particularly when one is actively involved in decision-making instances. Depending on their biographical availability and resources, activists may not always have the time needed to fully invest themselves and sustain their participation (Corrigall-Brown 2012). Consequently, some may choose to disengage from activism due to a lack of time to fully commit and fulfill organizational expectations.

This was notably the case for Fauve who was initially involved in GRIS-Montréal. As a GRIS-Montréal speaker, Fauve was expected to undergo a minimum of five high school classroom interventions per academic year. Due to a lack of time to carry out five interventions per year, she decided to take a step back and disengage herself from the organization – and from activism altogether. While Fauve does remain informed of the movement's activities, she underscored how she unfortunately does not have the time to fully invest herself in an organization.

Another organizational factor that significantly stood out as motivating one's disengagement – or potential disengagement – from LGBTQ activism was the overwhelming day-to-day workload. Activists have indeed repeatedly underlined how organizational administrative tasks can be quite arduous, particularly for those who participate voluntarily and who do not necessarily have the necessary background to run non-profit organizations. What appeared to render activist work particularly overwhelming, to the extent that some have flirted with the idea of disengaging from activism, is the emotional labor that activists have to undergo to either sustain organizations or support other LGBTQ-identifying individuals in need. Jonathan came extremely close to disengaging himself and take a step back from activism for this particular reason, as he kept acting as the organization's mediator, thus managing interpersonal conflicts and providing support to other organizing members. Relating how this emotional labor had drained him to the point that he had considered taking a break from activism, Jonathan nevertheless explained what kept him going:

> One of things that stressed me out the most was that one of the roles that I ended up doing while I was at [organization X] was being a mediator. Whenever there was tension, I was the one who had to deal with it. I would be the one who would deal with tension between the teenagers, or between members of the board and so one of my challenges was to be able to manage all of these interpersonal relations without draining myself. (...) When you're here and even when you're on the board or part of the volunteering team, your responsibility is toward the youth, toward the space and you become a part of something much greater than you. It's not just volunteer work. And so it was rough and at some point I was just like, is it worth staying? I just keep breaking my own heart and I sometimes just wanted to leave. And so I was evaluating my own level of energy and I took a break from school cause I wasn't able to keep on going, I wasn't able to deal with all of this. And that's when I met my boyfriend. He came here for the first time, he joined the board and he stopped me from leaving. I

fell back in love with the space and I fell in love with him. The mood then changed[64].

While Jonathan did not disengage from activism in the end, he nonetheless expressed something that has led others to disengage, namely the impact that one's emotional labor in the context of LGBTQ organizing may have on one's mental health. The overwhelming workload, both administrative and emotional, is thereby intimately linked to the second identified set of factors spurring complete disengagement.

### 5.4.2.2. Mental health-related factors

One of the things that struck me the most when I was conducting interviews was the extent to which LGBTQ activists suffered from mental health issues. Not only did these issues stem from discrimination and marginalization, as experienced in the broader society, but they were also – and most importantly – rooted in the context of organizing and participating in LGBTQ movements. While some pursued their activism in spite of their declining mental health, others chose instead to divest themselves from activism altogether. After being involved in numerous organizations for more than a decade, Mathieu Chantelois, a White cisgender gay man who then worked at a mainstream LGBTQ organization in Toronto, found himself in the midst of a contentious episode. Seeing the toll that this had on his mental health, Mathieu decided to take a step back from community-organizing and put an end to his participation in Toronto's LGBTQ movement:

> That's why after many years of being involved it had become extremely difficult for me to carry that weight, I had lost 30 pounds, I was no longer sleeping at night, police officers were coming to [organization X's] office almost every day because I was receiving death threats. I woke up one morning, I looked at my partner, I was crying, and I told myself that I was

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[64] Original quote in French: Je te dirais qu'une des affaires qui m'a le plus stressé c'est qu'un des rôles que j'ai fini par assumer en étant à [X] ça a été d'être médiateur, c'est-à-dire que si jamais il y avait une tension, c'était moi qui allait gérer. C'est moi qui gérais entre les jeunes, ou entre les membres du CA pis je te dirais qu'un de mes défis ça a été d'être capable de gérer les relations interpersonnelles de tout le monde sans trop me brûler là-dedans non plus. (...) Quand t'es ici et même si t'es au CA ou que tu fais partie de l'équipe bénévolement, ta responsabilité est envers le jeunes, est envers l'espace, like you become a part of something much greater than you. C'est pas juste du bénévolat. Puis non c'est ça, ça a été rough de se taper la tête de même puis un moment j'étais juste comme écoute, ça vaut tu la peine de rester? Je fais juste me briser le coeur des fois et j'ai juste envie de partir. J'étais en train d'évaluer mon propre niveau d'énergie et à ce moment-là j'ai pris un break de l'école parce que j'étais pas capable, je m'en venais pu capable de jongler tout ça. C'est là que j'ai rencontré mon chum, il est venu ici pour la première fois puis après ça il est entré au CA et il m'a empêché de repartir. Je suis retombé en amour avec l'espace autant que je suis tombé en amour avec lui. L'humeur a changé.

no longer capable, it was no longer my place to do this kind of work. Someone else had to take the lead[65].

Mathieu Chantelois has since recovered from this mental health episode, yet he chose to remain disengaged from LGBTQ activism. Whereas Mathieu's mental health problem stemmed in part from internal conflicts within Toronto's LGBTQ movement, Solange's disengagement was due to her exhaustion from sustaining an organization for approximately a decade. After cofounding Montréal's Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique, Solange worked night and day to sustain and develop the organization. To this end, she continuously applied for funds, sought revenues, participated voluntarily in community events, and mobilized her own resources. When the organization finally received a significant public grant, she realized how exhausted she was, forcing her to take a break:

> I had hope, there was the policy against homophobia that was adopted in 2006 I think. There was the action plan that was adopted in 2009-2010 and which came with almost 5 million dollars to launch the Office against homophobia. So we saw the money coming. We had to very carefully plan our strategy. We had to do things the right way so that this money could reinforce what we already had. So I had hope. But my personal life was taking a toll. I was no longer living. Yes, it was exhausting, extremely exhausting. It drained me so much to the extent that when we finally received the SACAIS grant in 2013, for me it had been 9 years of Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique, I told myself that I would only accompany Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique for the next 6 months and then stop. Just stop everything. For me it had been 10 years of working for the organization. We had offices. We had core funding. We had several funded projects. We had one or two employees. We had annual reports for 6 years, we had activity reports, financial reports. We had pictures. We had archives. We had a successful festival. We had funders who liked the project. I was just tired. I was exhausted[66].

[65] Original quote in French: C'est pour ça qu'après plusieurs années d'implication c'est devenu tellement difficile pour moi comme poids à porter, j'avais perdu 30 livres, je dormais pu la nuit, les policiers venaient presque à tous les jours dans les bureaux de [X] parce que j'avais des menaces de mort. Je me suis levé un matin, j'ai regardé mon conjoint, je pleurais et je me suis dit je suis pas capable, c'est pu à moi de faire ça. Quelqu'un d'autre va prendre le relais.

[66] Original quote in French: J'avais espoir, il y avait la politique de lutte à l'homophobie qui a été adoptée en 2006 je pense. Il y avait le plan d'action qui a été adopté en 2009-2010 qui venait avec peut-être 5 millions pour faire le Bureau de lutte à l'homophobie. Donc je voyais l'argent venir. Il fallait bien structurer l'action. Il fallait bien faire les choses pour que justement cet argent-là vienne renforcer ce qu'il y a. Du coup j'avais espoir. Mais ma vie personnelle en prenait vraiment un coup. Je vivais presque plus. Oui, c'était épuisant, extrêmement épuisant. Ça m'a tellement brûlé que quand on a eu le vrai financement du SACAIS en 2013, pour moi c'était comme 9 ans d'Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique, je me suis dit que je vais juste accompagner Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique pendant 6 mois et après arrêter. Juste complètement arrêter. C'était pour moi 10 ans de l'organisme. On a des bureaux. On a un financement à la mission. On a quelques financements aux projets. On a un ou deux employés. On a des rapports sur 6 ans, des rapports d'activités, des rapports de financement. On a des photos, on a

At that point, Solange disengaged from activism for a period of time. Today, she is actively involved with other LGBTQ organizations, including EGIDES – l'Alliance internationale francophone pour l'égalité et les diversités. Solange's excerpt reveals the extent to which organizational work may impede on one's mental health. Ultimately, and this will be developed in chapter 6, organizational work may prove to be particularly difficult for those who have less resources to begin with, in which case sustaining one's participation may become unfeasible. This particular pattern of disengagement was especially present in Montréal and much more characteristic of LGBTQ-POC activist paths. The lack of sustainability of Montréal's LGBTQ-POC organizations, as later exposed in chapter 7, constitutes part of the answer as to why disengagement from activism appears more prominent amongst LGBTQ-POC activists.

## 5.5. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to expose the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. To this end, I deconstructed, in a comparative manner, LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activist paths into four different stages of participation: (1) triggering factors explaining one's initial participation within LGBTQ movements; (2) the motivations driving and sustaining one's participation in LGBTQ movements; (3) one's organizational mobility; and (4) observed patterns of disengagement from LGBTQ organizations and activism. Table II provides a brief overview of these results.

*Table II: Portrait of LGBTQ individual activist paths*

| TRIGGERING FACTORS | |
|---|---|
| *Endogenous* | *Exogenous* |
| ♦ Coming out and transitioning processes<br>♦ Finding a sense of belonging | ♦ Role of networks<br>♦ Work-related purposes |
| DRIVING MOTIVATIONS | |

des archives. On a un festival qui marche. On a des bailleurs de fonds qui aiment ce projet. J'étais comme fatiguée. J'étais épuisée.

| Endogenous | Exogenous | Relational* |
|---|---|---|
| ♦ Identifying with the broader movement<br>♦ Identifying through experienced gender/sexual discrimination<br>♦ Identifying with specific activist communities | ♦ Window of opportunity<br>♦ Building/Building on networks<br>♦ Bringing one's resources to enhance community-led activism | ♦ Ensuring visibility and representation of nonwhite LGBTQ realities<br>♦ Creating safer spaces<br>♦ Attending to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities |
| **ORGANIZATIONAL MOBILITY** | | |
| *Simultaneous* | *Successive* | |
| **PATTERNS OF DISENGAGEMENT** | | |
| *From an organization* | *From activism* | |
| ♦ Organization factors (interpersonal conflicts and lack of commitment from others)<br>♦ Relational* factors (racism and feelings of tokenism) | ♦ Organizational factors (lack of time and overwhelming workloads)<br>♦ Mental health-related factors (depression and emotional breakdowns) | |

Taken together, these four elements provide a comprehensive portrait as to how and why LGBTQ people of colour come to participate in LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. In spite of an evident heterogeneity amongst LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths, there remains significant observable trends, as indicated in Table III. First, LGBTQ-POC activist paths tend to be triggered by endogenous factors, namely one's coming out or transitioning processes and one's need to foster some sense of belonging and thus build a community. Second, while endogenous and exogenous motivations, such as identifying with the broader movement and building on one's resources to enhance community-led activism, drive LGBTQ-POC activists to engage in LGBTQ activism, relational* motivations drive participation in LGBTQ-POC organizations. These motivations include ensuring visibility and representation of nonwhite LGBTQ realities, creating safer spaces, and attending to the needs of specific LGBTQ-POC communities. Third, LGBTQ-POC activists tend to be successively organizationally mobile. This implies disengaging from an organization prior to joining and getting involved in another SMO. However, slight differences were hereby observed between Montréal and Toronto. Whereas mainstream-white-dominated organizations serve as the main entry points into Montréal's LGBTQ movement for both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists, in Toronto, LGBTQ-POC organizations actually play this particular role for LGBTQ-POC activists. Finally, relational* factors, such as racism and feelings of tokenism, stood out as significant factors leading LGBTQ-POC activists' disengagement from particular organizations, especially in Montréal.

In contrast, White-LGBTQ activist paths tend to be mainly triggered by networks and work-related purposes. In addition to being increasingly 'pulled' into activism, they also appear to be mostly driven by endogenous and exogenous motivations. Furthermore, White-LGBTQ activists tend to simultaneously participate in various organizations, albeit to various degrees, in which case they do not necessarily disengage from specific organizations in order to pursue their activism elsewhere. Finally, while White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC activists who have disengaged from activism altogether expressed being driven by similar factors, such as the overwhelming workload and mental health-related problems, it appears to be much more prevalent amongst LGBTQ-POC activists.

*Table III: LGBTQ individual activist paths in comparative perspective*

|  | LGBTQ-POC | White-LGBTQ |
|---|---|---|
| **Triggering factors** | ♦ Endogenous (i.e. coming out and transitioning processes, building a community and finding a sense of belonging) | ♦ Exogenous (i.e. networks, work-related purposes) |
| **Driving motivations** | ♦ Relational* (i.e. ensuring visibility of nonwhite realities, creating safer spaces)<br>♦ Endogenous (i.e. identifying with the movement)<br>♦ Exogenous (i.e. building on one's resources) | ♦ Endogenous (i.e. identifying with the movement)<br>♦ Exogenous (i.e. windows of opportunity, building on one's resources) |
| **Organizational mobility** | ♦ Successive | ♦ Simultaneous |
| **Disengagement** | ♦ Relational* factors (i.e. racism and tokenism)<br>♦ Organizational factors<br>♦ Mental-health factors | ♦ Organizational factors<br>♦ Mental-health factors (especially in Montréal) |

Overall, these results reveal that there are significant differences between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths and that these differences are key to understanding why people of colour collectively participate in LGBTQ movements the way that they do, notably through LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. As a reminder, this thesis does not aim to explain individual activist paths *per se*. Instead, it seeks to explain *collective engagement trajectories*, and to this end argues for the need to clarify and expose who participates in LGBTQ movements – and LGBTQ-POC activism – how, and why. The differences uncovered herein thereby

allow us to paint a portrait of the reasons why LGBTQ people of colour are drawn into activism, why they sustain (or not) their participation in LGBTQ movements, and how exactly they take part in such movements, notably through LGBTQ-POC organizations. While these results have pointed to a variety of social movement theory's factors for explaining participation, such as networks and identities, they have most importantly shown the relevance of situating these factors within their context; a context that is inevitably shaped by categories of sameness and differences and intersecting power relations.

To make sense of the individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, I suggest that we need to further locate these individual activist paths within their broader context, both movement-wise and society-wise. With this in mind, chapter 6 will focus on unpacking the internal dynamics of LGBTQ movements, including their power configurations, and their impact on LGBTQ-POC activism. Chapter 7 will then move the analysis upward and locate LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within their respective sociopolitical contexts.

# 6. From margin to center? White privilege in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements

> *"We all have privilege and it's how you use your privilege to make things happen. For me, the main thing that I'm fighting for, apart from making sure queers of colour have a space, is for Indigenous people to get their land back and to get rights."*[67]
>
> Lezlie Lee Kam, Toronto

> *"If we didn't have these inequities, then we wouldn't be having this fight for claiming space and giving voice and passing the mic."*
>
> Otis, Toronto

During my term as vice-president of the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups, we collectively and repeatedly discussed the racial homogeneity of the organization's staff and executive board. As indicated on our newly adopted strategic plan, we were committed to an intersectional and anti-oppressive approach, which in part meant centering our actions around the voices of the most marginalized among us; yet, all of us were White. Not only were we unrepresentative of our membership but the composition of the organization's staff and executive board remained the same, despite concerns regarding the whiteness of the coalition. As I started interviewing activists, it soon appeared that the Youth Coalition of LGBTQ+ groups was not alone in undergoing such critical reflections. Most organizations did very well know that they lacked sufficient representation of people of colour; however, very few of them actually succeeded at overcoming this underrepresentation. It thus became apparent that inasmuch as White activists acknowledged, to some extent, their own racial privilege, organizational change did not ensue.

The lack of people of colour involved in mainstream-white-dominated organizations does not come as a surprise. As outlined in the previous chapter, notwithstanding the different entry points into LGBTQ social movement organizing, LGBTQ-POC activists tend to engage and sustain their activism through LGBTQ-POC organizations or initiatives. While individual motivations driving LGBTQ-POC activism have been exposed in chapter 5, including the need to create safer spaces and to ensure visibility of nonwhite realities, they only form a part of the answer as to why people of

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[67] In Brown and Lee Kam (2017b).

colour participate the way that they do. As these motivations do not spring out of nowhere, they need to be situated within their broader context, notably at the movement-level.

The literature on feminist movements has repeatedly shown how movements (re)produce power relations that structure society at large. As such, scholars have extensively demonstrated how feminist movements have historically relegated women of colour, lesbian women, trans women, and disabled women, amongst others, to the margins of movements (Yuval-Davis 2006; hooks 1981; Evans 2015; A. Y. Davis 1981; Chamberland 1989). The literature on LGBTQ movements has more recently attended to the ways in which systems of oppression, notably racism, sexism, and cisgenderism, have similarly permeated such movements in Canada, Europe, and the United States (DeFilippis 2016; 2018; Bilić and Kajinić 2016; Bain 2016; Boston and Duyvendak 2015). Scholars have thus shown how processes of marginalization have historically invisibilized people of colour, lesbian, and trans activists. In light of these literatures, and with the aim of explaining LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, I propose to situate individual activist paths within LGBTQ movements that find themselves structured along intersecting power relations.

This chapter therefore aims to explain the specificities of LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. By looking at the internal power relations that structure LGBTQ movements in Toronto and Montréal, it more specifically seeks to shed light on organizational dynamics that structure LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. To this end, I turn to the notion of white privilege and analyze how it translates in the context of LGBTQ movements, how it structures LGBTQ activism, and how it impacts LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths.

This chapter is divided as follows. The first section will focus on the conceptualization of white privilege in the context of LGBTQ movements. To this end, I will define and distinguish between the notions of whiteness and privilege. The second section will outline how white privilege structures Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements, both in terms of representation and resource-distribution processes. White privilege's effects on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths will be examined in the third section, with a specific focus on intersectional praxis and its impact on the (re)production of whiteness in LGBTQ movements. Taking on a comparative perspective, this third section will present the ways in which white privilege differently impacts LGBTQ-POC activism in both cities.

## 6.1. Conceptualizing white privilege

As Evans and Lépinard (2020) point out, intersectional thought has strongly focused on the notion of privilege as a way "to fully excavate systemic and structural inequalities, and to understand them within historic, social, and economic contexts" (12). While the notion of privilege has since been continuously evoked by those working within an intersectional analytical framework, it has yet to be clearly defined. As such, this section will attend to the conceptualization of privilege, and more precisely white privilege. To do so, I will first define the notions of whiteness and privilege, followed by a conceptualization of white privilege in the context of LGBTQ activism.

### 6.1.1. Whiteness

Developed by postcolonial and critical race scholars, whiteness may be defined as a socially constructed category invisibilized through privilege (Dyer 2003; Maillé 2007; Lépinard 2020). In opposition to blackness or brownness, whiteness is not seen nor spoken of; henceforth, whiteness is perceived as a 'non-colour', invisible and unseen, just as Whites are perceived as not having a race (Ahmed 2007). In the words of Judith Levine (2003), "[White] is the race that need not speak its name" (189). It is in that respect that whiteness is maintained in its privileged social and political position through its continuous invisibility as a race in and of itself. For Sara Ahmed (2007), it is precisely its invisibility that enables White bodies to do what they can do and, in this regard, holds real material implications that go beyond having a particular skin colour.

By remaining invisible, whiteness therefore acts as the norm, a standard against which other named racial groups are held. As Whites are constructed as *people* without a race, in opposition to *Black people* or *people of colour*, they do not think of themselves as racially *different from others*[68] (Levine 2003). For Hage (2000), the normalization of whiteness as a universal reference point can be traced back to colonization, wherein whiteness has come to represent the ideal of Western civilization, something that all must embody and aspire to. Rather than referring to particular biological attributes, it instead expresses a category of power and domination characterized by an accumulation

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[68] Instead, White people see nonwhite people as racially *different from them*.

of various capitals (Hage 2000). It is in that respect that Dyer (2003) conceptualizes whiteness as a way of seeing and racializing White people in the aim of "dislodg[ing] them/us from the position of power, with all the inequities, oppression, privileges and sufferings in its train, dislodging them/us by undercutting the authority with which they/we speak and act in and on the world" (22). Thinking about and speaking of whiteness therefore engages a much-needed reflection on the notion of privilege, as something that is both enabled and sustained by the very construction of whiteness as a category of power.

### 6.1.2. Privilege

Etymologically, the notion of privilege is rooted in the legal tradition, from the Latin *privus* (private) and *legis* (law) and was initially used to indicate individual exemptions from the law (Kruks 2005). As birth eventually became a determining factor for entering particular privileged social groups, the notion of privilege extended beyond the legal sphere and into the social realm. As Kruks (2005) puts it, "privilege began to acquire the meaning of an ascribed social status, which it frequently connotes today" (180). Privilege tends to be conflated with power, as those holding various privileges are also socially and politically located in more dominant positions. However, privilege does not just confer power. Rather, it is about "unearned power conferred systematically" (McIntosh 2003, 156). It in part implies receiving unearned advantages in society all the while remaining oblivious about it. These unearned advantages remain invisible to those who receive them as they are not affirmed nor recognized as such (McIntosh 2003; Monahan 2014).

Beyond unearned advantages, privilege also refers to something that everyone must want. Simply put, it is considered the norm to which all must aspire to (McIntosh 2003). It is in this regard that Kruks (2005) insists on the structural relationship that privilege entails. As one group benefits from unearned advantages, another group is being denied these same advantages. Yet, at the very same time, the latter group seeks to earn the advantages that the former group has, albeit obliviously. In this regard, privilege is maintained through the reproduction of unequal power relations. As Leonardo (2004) underlines, there are direct processes that work at securing domination for those holding privileges and in this line of thought, privilege cannot be reduced to a state of being dominant. For Evans and Lépinard (2020), there nonetheless remains a conceptual tension between passive and agentic interpretations of privilege. On the one hand, some hold that not being aware of

one's privilege and the unearned advantages it confers, is central to the notion of privilege (Pease 2010), while on the other hand, others insist that privileged actors actively sustain and normalize systems of privilege (Leonardo 2004). Ultimately, these two interpretations are complementary and remain intertwined with one another. Reflecting on her own white privilege, Peggy McIntosh (2003) evokes how both interpretations are in fact constitutive of privilege: "I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was *'meant'* to remain oblivious" (148, emphasis added). She hence highlights how white privilege is sustained through systems of domination, hinting at the fact that privileged actors remain complicit of such systems, for instance by remaining oblivious of their privileged position.

In surveying the literature on privilege, Evans and Lépinard (2020) have come to distinguish between four interrelated analytical approaches to privilege, namely epistemic, productive, relational, and institutional. Epistemic privilege refers to the power to define knowledge and truth. It entails, amongst other things, who has the power to speak and to be heard, who is silenced, and who is objectified and by whom (Kruks 2005). This approach to privilege has additionally attended to an *epistemology of ignorance*, shedding light on the ways in which privilege is maintained through the lack of awareness of one's own privilege (Lépinard 2020). By ignoring one's privilege, privileged actors maintain the very same systems that privilege them. A productive approach to privilege has for its part shed light on the ways in which privilege "produces, and reproduces, systemic forms of oppression" (Evans and Lépinard 2020, 14). This approach focuses on the material effects of privilege, looking at how systems of oppression including racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism, reproduce inequalities between social groups and are reproduced through privilege. Others have attended to the relational nature of privilege. Acknowledging that privilege is produced through the interaction between identities, Evans and Lépinard (2020) further explain how this approach also attends to the contextual aspect of privilege, stating that "if privilege is relational, it is also contextual: relations are embedded in social contexts" (15). Finally, an institutional approach to privilege has looked at how it is institutionalized through rules and regulations, policies and practices. These four approaches may overlap and are not to be conceived as mutually exclusive (Evans and Lépinard 2020). I posit that they offer pertinent analytical frames through which we can make sense of the ways in which whiteness constitutes a form of privilege that permeates LGBTQ movements in various ways.

*6.1.3. White privilege in LGBTQ movements*

Taking into consideration the different approaches to privilege mentioned earlier, it is clear that various privileges will play out differently according to context as well as according to one's identity. For instance, reflecting on his own white privilege, Dyer (2003) underlines the fact that White men have come to benefit from unearned advantages that White women have not had. With this in mind, if we are to speak about white privilege, we must take into account other categories of power and difference, such as class, gender, and ability, and the ways in which these categories interact with whiteness (McIntosh 2003). In that respect, white privilege in the context of LGBTQ activism is best understood as a *white cisgender gay male able-bodied upper middle-class privilege*. As previous studies have shown, whiteness has been interacting with other systems of oppression, in particular cisgenderism, sexism, and classism, hence privileging particular individuals and organizations within LGBTQ movements (DeFilippis 2016; Trawalé and Poiret 2017; J. A. Podmore and Chamberland 2015).

White privilege has permeated LGBTQ movements in different ways. First, as Bérubé (2003) mentions, white privilege has been maintained through practices that have invisibilized race within LGBTQ movements. Based upon his own experience as a gay activist in the United States, he relates how white gay political life has not been lived nor experienced through race, as if it has never been about race. He further states how "these lived assumptions, and the privileges on which they are based, form a powerful camouflage woven from a web of unquestioned beliefs – that gay whiteness is unmarked and unremarkable, universal and representative, powerful and protective, a cohesive bond" (Bérubé 2003, 256). By bringing these assumptions into a political arena already dominated by White men, gay activists maintain and reenact gay whiteness. Similarly, J. Ward (2008) evokes the notion of white normativity to make sense of the ways in which white privilege has been maintained within LGBTQ movements by shaping how organizations form and function. She highlights how organizational norms and practices have maintained whiteness in a state of privilege and invisibility, meaning that "even in racially diverse environments in which people of colour are extended a degree of institutional power, whiteness may still be a dominant ingredient of the environment's culture and a determinant of prevailing norms for communication and behavior" (J. Ward 2008, 564). What is more, while LGBTQ organizations are not necessarily intentionally white, this precise *unintentionality*

prevents White activists from engaging with their own whiteness and the exclusionary processes it engenders, thereby perpetuating the privileged invisibility of whiteness (Bérubé 2003).

Second, white privilege in the context of LGBTQ activism has been maintained through particular sets of representations. As Dyer (2003) reports, even historically deviant social categories, like queers, were conceived as White. This further meant that White queer subjects have been considered 'normally deviant', as if only Whites could be socially acceptable queer subjects, in spite of their conceived deviance. More recently, Roy (2012) has observed a "constant visual reiteration of *gayness* as *whiteness* [which] constitutes a legitimizing space for an effectively constrained gay subject" (185, emphasis in original). While Roy (2012) focused more specifically on representation within Québec's gay media, his results nonetheless echo other studies that have shown "the racialized nature of mainstream LGBTQ politics in Canada, wherein White activism overshadows other realities, namely those of Aboriginal and POC [People of colour] communities" (Labelle 2020a, 205). As such, not only has white privilege contributed to establishing a white gay norm, but it has shaped the ways in which LGBTQ movements have developed, the ways in which LGBTQ organizations have come to function, and the demands that have been formulated by LGBTQ activists, amongst other things.

The next section will therefore focus on the ways in which white privilege has structured – and continues to structure – Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements. Understanding the workings of white privilege in the context of LGBTQ activism will provide enlightening pieces of information as to why LGBTQ-POC activists have collectively engaged the way that they have.

## 6.2. White privilege in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements

When I first met with LGBTQ-POC activists, I somehow expected, and to a certain extent hoped, that they would bring up issues relating to white privilege in LGBTQ movements. Without much surprise, almost all of them did, raising concerns over the lack of representation of nonwhite activists within the movement's leadership[69] and within mainstream organizations, the unequal distribution of resources amongst LGBTQ organizations, and the lack of access of LGBTQ-POC activists and organizations to decision-making instances. While I did not necessarily have the same

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[69] Leadership hereby refers to both individuals and organizations.

expectations when I interviewed White-LGBTQ activists, I was evidently surprised to find out that not only did they somehow express, and perhaps acknowledge their own embodiment of white privilege, but they also shared LGBTQ-POC activists' concerns with the ways in which white privilege seemed to structure LGBTQ activism, be it in terms of representation, resource-distribution, or access to decision-making instances. That said, both POC and White activists, most often referred to a *white cisgender gay male able-bodied upper middle-class privilege*, additionally expressing concerns over the lack of recognition of other gender and sexual identifications, such as non-binary and bisexual identities, on the part of the movement's leadership.

Building on interviews with both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists, I have identified two interrelated ways in which white privilege has structured LGBTQ activism in Canada. First, white privilege has shaped LGBTQ activism through *representational means*. This implies both representation within the movement's leadership and within mainstream organizations, as well as social, and normative, representations of who gets to be a part of the LGBTQ community and who is 'othered' by the movement. In this regard, privilege is both epistemic, as it determines who can speak for LGBTQ communities and who is considered as 'other', and relational, meaning that it is sustained and reproduced through interactions with other identities, namely gender, class, and ability. Second, white privilege has informed LGBTQ activism through *resource-distribution processes*. This entails an unequal distribution of funds across LGBTQ collective actors in favor of particular forms of social movement organizing and an unequal access to decision-making instances and political institutions. In that respect, privilege is both productive and institutional; it holds material consequences that perpetuate systems of oppression within LGBTQ movements and is further maintained through institutional norms and practices that regulate LGBTQ social movement organizing.

### 6.2.1. Privilege as relational and epistemic: representation in LGBTQ movements

When I asked activists if they perceived inequalities within LGBTQ movements, all of them responded in the affirmative. When I asked them to elaborate on what these inequalities were and what they entailed, there was an overwhelming consensus that the 'face' of LGBTQ movements has always been, and continues to be, White, as those occupying positions of leadership happen (for the most part) to be White activists. Research participants thereby insisted on the fact that the lack of representation of nonwhite activists and nonwhite realities within the movement's leadership and

mainstream organizations was not only testament to unequal power relations within LGBTQ movements, but also – and most importantly – had substantial effects on activism itself. It is in that respect that white privilege has structured LGBTQ activism through representational means, revealing relational and epistemic forms of privilege.

As most activists pointed out, the leadership of LGBTQ movements in both Toronto and Montréal tends to be assumed both by white-dominated organizations and by White activists. Referring more specifically to Toronto's organizational landscape, Shakir has indeed observed a lack of diversity when it comes to leadership positions within the movement:

> What I have perceived is if you look at the leadership of a lot of the institutions, particularly among their senior operational staff, aside from the ethno-specific groups like [organization X], there are issues in terms of diversity and representation.

Meryem evoked the whiteness of Montréal's LGBTQ movement's leadership in similar terms:

> I know that [organization X] tries to hire some people but when you look at their executive boards, it's always very very very White. [Organization Y], it's the same, they are all cisgender and White. Of course these are people that engage and advocate for us but why isn't there any representation? On executive boards, within the staff, people who have power to change and influence things, it doesn't transpire. The more you go up the hierarchy, the more White and cis it becomes[70].

Furthermore, Tommy explained how people of colour have a harder time occupying leadership positions within organizations that are dominated by White activists:

> And so the more you go up the hierarchy of a group, the more you see that people of colour are not really there, like on the executive boards. That's

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[70] Original quote in French: Je sais que [X] essaie un peu d'embaucher quelques personnes mais quand on voit leur conseil d'administration, c'est toujours très très très blanc. [X], pareil, ce sont des personnes blanches cis. Oui, ce sont des personnes qui essaient et qui militent aussi mais pourquoi il y a pas cette représentation là? Sur le Conseil d'administration, au niveau des employés, les gens qui ont le pouvoir de changer les choses et d'influencer, ça ne se reflète pas. Plus on monte dans la hiérarchie, plus c'est blanc et cis.

an issue...positions of power are not really held by people of colour. That is a really big issue[71].

While Shakir, Meryem, and Tommy all underline the whiteness of leading LGBTQ organizations, Marie-Édith further adds that the movement's leaders also share, for the most part at least, the same gender identity. She thus emphasizes how the representation of Montréal's LGBTQ movement has always been ensured by only a handful of activists who have repeatedly appeared as the movement's spokespersons. While all of them happen to be White, most of them also happen to be cisgender men:

> Oftentimes, the spokespeople that appear at events or in the media are men. I look at those spokespeople who have emerged in the last couple of years, such as [person X], who has been asked to talk about issues affecting the community sector even though it is not necessarily his reality. [Person Y], who has been there for a while and who has lived this reality, but who on certain issues could have passed the torch. Otherwise, I look at [person Z] as well, who has been there for a long while and who is still there, but still, what we see when we look at the LGBT milieu, it is White cis and gay men[72].

It is in this regard that white privilege in LGBTQ movements is relational. By interacting with other identities, it produces a contextually specific matrix of domination (Hill Collins 1990), wherein White cisgender gay men have been holding – and continue to hold – leadership positions within LGBTQ movements. As Marie-Édith's reflection very briefly touches upon, the overrepresentation of White cisgender gay men within the movement's leadership is not just a matter of who holds power positions or who is solicited by the media and other political institutions to speak about LGBTQ issues. Rather, it holds consequences as to how specific issues are being treated both within and outside the movement, as well as what demands are being formulated by the movement. In other words, it generates an epistemic form of privilege wherein particular individuals have the legitimacy

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[71] Original quote in French: Plus que t'avances dans la hiérarchie d'un groupe, plus que tu vois que les personnes racisées sont pas tant là, dans le CA. Ça c'est un enjeu...les positions de pouvoir c'est pas beaucoup les personnes racisées qui sont dans ces positions-là. Faque ça c'est vraiment un enjeu.

[72] Original quote in French: Souvent, les porte-paroles qui apparaissent dans les évènements ou dans les médias c'est souvent des hommes. Je regarde les gens qui sont apparus dans les dernières années, [X] beaucoup, qui était même amené à parler des enjeux vécus dans le communautaire alors que ce n'est pas nécessairement sa réalité. [X] qui a été là pendant plusieurs années et qui a vécu cette réalité-là, mais qui sur certains enjeux aurait pu peut-être passer le flambeau. Sinon, je regarde [X] aussi qui a été là longtemps et qui l'est encore, mais reste que la majorité des figures qu'on voit dans le milieu LGBT, ce sont des hommes gais cis et blancs.

to speak for themselves and for others. Justine's narrative further points to this specific issue. As a young woman leading one of the largest LGBTQ organizations in Montréal, Justine evokes how the existence of an 'LGBT ruling class' dominated by White well-off men over 40 years old makes it harder for others to be heard:

> As president of [organization X], I think that what struck me the most is the extent to which women are absent from this milieu. Not the milieu, but like the LGBT ruling class. Those who find themselves attending cocktails organized by banks, those who find each other at City Hall events, those who attend galas, it is oftentimes the same people, and it is oftentimes men. Men of over 40 years old I must add. In fact, it seems as if it is the White man who has money. It is the typical image of what we see and so as a woman it is very hard to take up space. It's like it's a boys' club. People know each other very well, they have been seeing each other for a while throughout their work and then you come in, as a woman, a very young woman and they don't know where I come from. So it can be very hard to come in like this, to come in this circle and to be heard[73].

While Justine's account reveals how white male privilege impacts who is being heard within the movement itself, Marlyne tangibly exposes how epistemic privilege further shapes organizational practices that (re)produce whiteness. Building on her own experience as a volunteer within a particular organization, she reveals how schools located in neighborhoods with large ethnic communities have been represented as 'difficult' by the organization, as if they were underlyingly more homophobic than other schools:

> At the same time in [organization X], there wasn't much cultural diversity, there wasn't any ethnic diversity, so I did not recognize myself as much in the approach that they had with the students, for example. Also, there was one thing that always bothered me, there always were these trainings on how to intervene in difficult schools. And difficult schools were always

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[73] Original quote in French: Sinon, comme présidente, ouin je pense que ce que je trouve le plus frappant, c'est pas vraiment un défi personnel, mais c'est à quel point les femmes sont absentes du milieu. Pas du milieu mais comment dire...genre...the ruling class LGBT. Ceux qui se retrouvent dans les cocktails organisés par les banques, qui se retrouvent dans les évènements à l'hôtel de ville, qui se retrouvent dans les galas, c'est souvent les mêmes gens, et c'est souvent des hommes, c'est souvent des hommes de 40 ans et plus je dirais, c'est souvent l'homme blanc qui a des sous en fait. C'est le portrait typique de ce qu'on retrouve et en tant que femme c'est dur de faire sa place. On dirait que c'est le boys club un peu. Les gens se connaissent déjà très bien, ça fait longtemps qu'ils se côtoient dans leurs implications, et là t'arrives là, je suis une femme, toute jeune puis ils savent pas trop d'où je sors, donc c'est dur des fois de rentrer là-dedans, de rentrer dans le cercle et de me faire entendre.

schools with ethnic minorities, like in Montréal Nord...I would find this shocking[74].

Marlyne was not the only LGBTQ-POC activist who expressed this very specific concern regarding this organization's categorization of 'difficult schools'. As these schools also happened to have significant ethnic minority populations, LGBTQ-POC activists felt that it unfortunately contributed to perpetuate prejudice against ethnic minorities, suggesting that they are somehow inherently homophobic. While this particular organizational practice may appear anecdotal, it nevertheless reveals a more generalized pattern within LGBTQ movements pertaining to the ways in which ethnic communities are represented by prominent White-LGBTQ activists and organizations. Tommy elaborates on how communities of colour have been (mis)represented by leading White-LGBTQ activists:

> Oftentimes we are seen as victims of a situation, and White people are seen as being there to help us. At one-point [this person] was interviewed by a newspaper, and he was talking about homophobia in Québec and he said 'It is still important to fight against homophobia, especially because we have newcomers' and that's the first thing he says! (...) And there's all this discourse on how communities of colour are seen. We are seen as homophobic, we are seen as transphobic, and we are always seen that way, but as White Québécois you are not flawless[75].

What Marlyne's and Tommy's excerpts reveal is the ways in which white privilege manifests itself through negative representations of communities of colour as being more homophobic and transphobic than White communities. These representations subsequently shape activism as they may incite activists to identify particular targets of action and develop corresponding strategies. For example, several years ago, a mainstream-white-dominated organization received significant funding from Québec's government to launch an awareness campaign targeting communities of colour to

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[74] Original quote in French: Mais en même temps à [X], il y avait pas de diversité culturelle, il y avait pas de diversité ethnique, donc je me reconnaissais moins dans l'approche qu'ils avaient avec les élèves, par exemple. Surtout il y avait un truc qui me choquait tout le temps, il y avait toujours des formations pour aller dans les écoles difficiles, pis les écoles difficiles c'étaient toujours les écoles avec des minorités ethniques dedans, genre les écoles à Montréal Nord, les écoles...et je trouvais un peu difficile, je trouvais ça un peu choquant.

[75] Original quote in French: Souvent on est vues comme victimes d'une situation et les personnes blanches sont vues comme étant là pour nous aider. Un moment donné, [X] donnait une entrevue dans un journal et parlait justement de la situation de l'homophobie au Québec et il disait, 'c'est encore important de lutter contre l'homophobie, surtout qu'on a des nouveaux arrivants' et c'est la première chose qu'il dit! (...) Et il y a tout le discours, comment les communautés racisées sont vues. On est vues comme homophobes, on est vues comme transphobes, on est toujours vues de même, mais en tant que Québécois blancs, vous êtes pas irréprochables.

reduce homophobia within these particular communities. While I am not denying that there might have been homophobic discourses or practices within these communities, this awareness campaign nevertheless located and confined homophobia outside White communities and within communities of colour. This is further striking given that the organization was led by White-LGBTQ activists and had no prior relationship with communities of colour. In that respect, one may argue that whiteness brings about an epistemology of ignorance within LGBTQ movements (Lépinard 2020) wherein White communities are not seen or observed as being as problematic – or as homophobic – as communities of colour.

These results show how white privilege has structured – and continues to structure – LGBTQ activism through representational means. This implies a lack of representation of LGBTQ-POC activists within the movement's leadership as well as within mainstream LGBTQ organizations. However, as many activists have rightly evoked, whiteness interacts with other identities in producing privilege. In the context of LGBTQ activism, privilege is thus embodied by White cisgender gay men that tend to be well-off and of a certain age (relational privilege). Furthermore, representation is not just a matter of occupying leadership positions and acting as the 'face' of the movement. Instead, it holds real implications pertaining to who has the right to speak and to be heard within the movement, as well as which demands are formulated by the movement and which organizational practices are put in place (epistemic privilege). Those holding leadership positions therefore not only have the power to act as representatives of the movement, but also have the power to represent others, thereby informing LGBTQ activism.

*6.2.2. Privilege as productive and institutional: resource-distribution processes in LGBTQ movements*

White privilege also structures LGBTQ activism through resource-distribution processes. Just as representational means (re)produce unequal power relations within LGBTQ movements, resource-distribution processes also stem from and contribute in reproducing inequalities within these movements. When I asked activists to further elaborate on perceived inequalities within LGBTQ movements, the majority of them evoked persistent unequal resource-distribution processes across organizations, which favor certain kinds of activism, such as 'universal' rather than 'specific', and 'formal' rather than 'informal'. In that respect, LGBTQ-POC organizing appeared to be systematically disadvantaged when it came to receiving funding as it tended to be considered

'specific', meaning that it was not considered as contributing to the wellness of *all* LGBTQ communities, and in some cases, informal, such as collectives not recognized as non-profit organizations – although more so in Montréal than in Toronto. Unequal resource-distribution processes were inextricably tied to an unequal access to decision-making instances within LGBTQ movements and to political institutions and other decision-making instances outside movements. It is in this regard that resource-distribution processes within LGBTQ movements reveal the ways in which white privilege is both productive and institutional. Not only does it produce material effects, but it is also sustained through unwritten rules and norms that legitimize certain kinds of activism over others.

One of the ways in which white privilege permeates resource-distribution processes within LGBTQ movements is through funding[76]. What particularly stood out from the interviews is the perception that funding mechanisms, in particular public-funding, tend to reproduce a preconceived idea of what LGBTQ activism entails, thereby privileging particular forms of activism over others. This in part served to explain why the same organizations seemed to receive most of the funding year after year. In more precise terms, activists evoked how mainstream organizations that were perceived as broad and encompassing of *all* gender and sexual identities appeared to be systematically favored. Yet, these organizations who were perceived to be 'universal', or attending to the well-being of all LGBTQ communities, were in reality led by White cisgender gay men. For Jennifer, one of the reasons why mainstream-white-dominated organizations led by White cisgender gay men have managed to receive most of the funding year after year is precisely because of their apparent 'universal' character:

> Right now you have a big pie that is named 'gay' and the lesbian barely gets a piece of the pie and that's when she is able to have a piece at all. And then gays talk about everything. They talk about old people, they talk about HIV/AIDS, they talk about everything because they want the money to go into their own pockets. Now there are trans that have started to fight a bit so they will get some money, which is good. In my categories I forgot to mention trans and queer. But that's not scientific. The point is that there is an imbalance and there has always been this imbalance. Sometimes lesbians would get a little bit more money, but it has always been gay men who have taken all of the pie, it has always been that way. Year after year,

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[76] Funding mechanisms will be further explored and detailed in chapter 7.

the funding increases or decreases but the pie has never been divided equally[77].

Adding to Jennifer's account of an unequal resource-distribution across Montréal's LGBTQ organizations, Otis has observed a similar trend in Toronto's LGBTQ movement. As president of a leading Black organization, Otis states the following:

> And sometimes you see the LGBT work being led by predominantly White community, White boards, you see the support, you see hundreds turnout, you see the backing, you see that. In certain organizations that serve the Black LGBT community, that serve such a strong niche of people who are not mostly, but all, oppressed, people coming from low sources of economic challenges, refugees, persons who are HIV positive, you see also the layers of lack and systematic oppression and that's something that I am challenged by and concerns me. Even in a space like Toronto. You can see the inequities in certain things and that's something that I am challenged by.

Otis' narrative rightly underlines the ways in which representation remains tied to resource-distribution processes, as organizations led by White activists tend to attract more resources than organizations led by people of colour. Both Jennifer and Otis' accounts moreover evoke this idea whereby organizations led by White – and perhaps cisgender gay men – activists appear to serve a broader range of communities, whereas organizations led by people of colour – and perhaps trans, lesbian, and women – activists appear to serve a specific niche of people. Unfortunately, as David explains, mainstream-white-dominated organizations do not necessarily cater effectively to communities of colour, because of the whiteness of their approach and of their organization. As a result, people of colour have to turn to other, albeit less funded resources, such as ethno-specific AIDS organizations:

> Also, like big organizations, like [organization X], or there's also [organization Y], which caters to all demographics, but I find that a lot of

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[77] Original quote in French: En ce moment tu as une grosse tarte qui s'appelle 'gai' et la lesbienne c'est à peine si elle a une ligne, ça c'est quand elle est capable d'avoir une ligne. Et les gais ils parlent de tout. Eux ils te parlent des personnes âgées, ils te parlent du sida, ils te parlent de tout parce qu'ils veulent que l'argent aille dans leurs poches. Maintenant il y a les trans qui se battent un peu, donc ils vont en avoir un petit peu, tant mieux. Et dans mes catégories j'ai oublié trans, j'ai oublié queer, j'ai oublié les autres différences. C'est pas scientifique la façon de mettre ça comme ça mais le point étant qu'il y a un déséquilibre et ça a toujours été ce déséquilibre. Des fois les lesbiennes avaient un petit peu plus, mais l'homme homosexuel a toujours pris toute la tarte, ça a toujours été ça. Et selon les années, ça augmente, ça diminue, mais ça n'a jamais été divisé de manière égale.

our service users find it intimidating to go into these places, because sometimes they are predominantly White or they just don't feel comfortable in there, there's a language barrier, and so these organizations are receiving all the funding, because these funders aren't seeing what's happening on the frontlines. The funders focus more on the ones that have a wider reach, so like [organization X], they receive so much funding and that's why they are able to have thee really nice facilities and all these great resources. But the smaller ones like [organizations A, B, and C], we don't get a lot of funding and we are always fighting for that small pool of money, because funders don't see these ethnocultural specific groups as important as [organization X]. But it's so different. [Organization X] is so different from [organization A]. The resources that they can provide for [communities of colour] are so different from what we can provide to [communities of colour], cause we're specific, and we have trans leaders, we have cultural specific resources and there's even a cultural way of interacting with [communities of colour] and I believe those big organizations don't have that capacity to do that.

As David puts it, mainstream-white-dominated organizations are perceived by funders to be serving all communities as opposed to ethno-specific organizations, or LGBTQ-POC organizations, that are seen as too specific. Jessie, who served as president of a leading lesbian organization in Montréal, similarly explained how these mainstream-white-dominated organizations also happened to be led by men. In addition to representing all racial groups, these mainstream-white-dominated organizations also appeared to serve all gender communities, whereas lesbian organizations were continuously perceived as being too specific in the eyes of funders[78]:

So we're all in the same LGBT niche, we're all part of the same envelope. At [organization X], our executive director, she made us realize all of the inequities between men-dominated organizations and women-dominated organizations. And so we have submitted a lot of project proposals, extremely well crafted, not stupid and botched project proposals. Project proposals that are necessary for women, for lesbian women. But at the Justice ministry and at the *Bureau de lutte contre l'homophobie* (BLH), they consider that if we fight against homophobia, this includes women, so they kept asking us why we wanted money. And so every time we tried talking about lesbophobia, we would be tossed aside, saying 'No but when we talk about homophobia it already includes women. Lesbophobia is no different than homophobia'. And it was so hard to get money because those people up there, who are White men by the way, they don't believe the fact that women live different realities. And we tried to explain it to them. I like to

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[78] While lesbian organizations have always struggled to secure funding, things have slightly improved.

ask people that when they talk about homophobia or homosexual people, who do they picture in their head? They see two men. Nobody is going to naturally picture two women, never! So when you talk about homophobia, when you try to fight homophobia, you do it for men, that's it, that's all. You don't talk about women. Because even if you think about women in your own head, the person that's listening to you doesn't think about women. So we tried explaining that it's different for women, that we need to talk about lesbophobia, that we need to talk about sexually diverse women, but we were never heard.[79]

I must mention at this point that the situations exposed by David and Jessie were echoed by a majority of activists involved in youth-specific, trans-specific, LGBTQ-POC, bisexual, and lesbian organizations. Consequently, marginalized activists shared concerns over the fact that particular LGBTQ organizations, namely those led by White cisgender gay men who claim to advocate for and cater to all LGBTQ communities, are systematically favored when it comes to funding. This is quite revealing of the ways in which whiteness operates. By remaining invisible as a racial category in and of itself, whiteness is perceived as universal rather than specific, presumed to represent all racial communities (hooks 1981; Ahmed 2012). In this regard, because they are considered 'universal', within LGBTQ contexts that is, these organizations appear as being most likely to impact the largest range of people, even though they are inherently designed to primarily serve White communities, albeit obliviously.

While research participants extensively explained the ways in which LGBTQ funding systematically privileged mainstream-white-dominated organizations, activists evoked how formal

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[79] Original quote in French: Comme on est tous dans le même créneau, LGBT, on est tous en dessous de la même enveloppe. Donc c'est sûr qu'il y a du tirage de couvertes. Notre directrice générale, elle nous a fait prendre conscience cette année des inégalités par rapport aux organismes gars versus les organismes filles, pis on a fait plein d'appels à projet qui sont extrêmement nécessaires, pas des appels à projet à la con, des appels à projet extrêmement bien travaillés en plus, qui sont nécessaires pour la communauté des femmes, mais souvent, en haut, au ministère de la Justice et au BLH, le Bureau de lutte à l'homophobie, eux autres là, 'si on combat l'homophobie, les femmes sont incluses là-dedans, donc pourquoi vous voulez de l'argent?' Et à chaque fois qu'on essaie de parler de lesbophobie, on se fait tasser. 'Non mais quand on parle d'homophobie on inclut les femmes là! Lesbophobie c'est pas différent de l'homophobie tsé'. C'est extrêmement dur d'avoir de l'argent justement pour ça parce que les gens en haut qui sont des hommes blancs by the way, ils y croient pas au fait que la femme vit des réalités différentes. On essaie de leur expliquer. J'aime bien ça leur dire que quand tu parles d'homophobie ou d'homosexuel, à n'importe qui, qui est-ce qu'il voit dans leur tête? Il voit deux gars. Il y a pas personne qui naturellement de même va voir deux filles dans sa tête, jamais! Donc quand tu parles d'homophobie et quand t'essaies de combattre l'homophobie, tu la combats pour deux hommes, that's it that's all. Tu parles pas des femmes. Parce que même si dans ta tête à toi tu penses que tu parles des femmes, la personne qui t'écoute ne reçoit pas le mot femme. Il reçoit pas dans sa tête faque ça se fait pas. Pis on essaie d'expliquer non, nous autres c'est différent, il faut qu'on parle de lesbophobie, faut qu'on parle des femmes de la diversité sexuelle, c'est important, mais on n'est pas entendu.

organizations were also systematically favored over informal collectives. Evidently, these two elements are inextricably tied. As activists repeatedly explained, when an organization receives funding, it allows that organization to become more professionalized and hire one or two employees. By becoming more professionalized, it then has the resources to ask for more funds, which increases its chances to receive additional funding. Camille furthered this analysis by explaining how a shift in government funding in Québec – pertaining notably to LGBTQ organizations – has contributed in perpetuating resource-distribution inequalities between well-established mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations and emerging collectives. As they explained:

> The less an organization is funded, the less chances it has to be funded because…and this perpetuates inequalities. Because when you're a group, for example, a student group, or a group of people who have a low income, or a group of people who don't have much education, well you don't have access to grant applications, you don't know how it works, it's long, it's very dense, it requires some structure. When you don't have that structure, when you're a collective, an autonomous, horizontal collective, try to get some core funding…it's like…it's no longer possible to get a hand on core funding. Right now, in Québec, that's blocked. You can no longer create new organizations that run with core funding which means that it is always the same organizations that have some sort of stability and the other organizations that are always struggling. That's problematic[80].

Toronto activists shared similar understandings of the ways in which larger, more formal, organizations are systematically favored when it came to funding, at the expense of informal collectives who do not necessarily have the structure, or the network needed to put a hand on resources. Shakir expressed how funding inequalities are unfortunately exacerbated by a lack of solidarity between larger and smaller organizations:

> So the big organizations have the access, the network, for the other organizations no, and then forget about the even smaller groups like collectives and things that aren't formal NGOs but still do important work.

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[80] Original quote in French: Moins un organisme est financé, moins il y a des chances qu'il soit financé et ça perpétue des inégalités. Parce que quand t'es un groupe par exemple, de personnes étudiantes, ou un groupe de personnes à faible revenu ou un groupe de personnes non-scolarisées, t'as pas accès à des demandes de financement, tu sais pas comment ça fonctionne, c'est long, c'est lourd, ça prend une structure. Quand t'as pas de structure, quand t'es un collectif, autonome, horizontal, essaies de te faire financer quelque chose à la mission, c'est comme… Puis c'est pu possible de mettre la main sur du financement à la mission. En ce moment, au Québec. C'est gelé. Tu peux pu créer de nouveaux organismes qui fonctionnent à la mission ce qui fait que c'est toujours les mêmes organismes qui ont une stabilité pis les autres qui rush. Ça c'est vraiment problématique.

And the problem is those big groups don't feel much of a need to reach out to these other smaller groups. And you see that there are major points of tension between the two and actually a distinct lack of collaboration which then impacts the broader dynamics of how things get done.

As funding privileges organizations that appear to cater to all LGBTQ communities and as the already funded organizations have the necessary resources to receive additional funding, other organizations end up being systematically disadvantaged. White privilege thus structures LGBTQ activism through resource-distribution processes that systematically marginalize LGBTQ-POC organizing. Not only are LGBTQ-POC organizations considered too 'specific' to receive large sums of money that correspond to what mainstream-white-dominated organizations receive, but the fewer resources LGBTQ-POC organizations receive, the lesser their chances to become professionalized and develop the necessary means to obtain substantial funding. Subsequently, white privilege (re)produces real material effects that maintain marginalized and narrow conceptions of what LGBTQ-POC activism entails and what space it should occupy within LGBTQ movements.

Activists furthermore explained how an unequal distribution of resources across LGBTQ organizations inevitably contributed to an unequal access to decision-making instances within the movement, as well as to political institutions and decision-making instances outside the movement. For instance, many activists explained how decision-making instances within Montréal's LGBTQ movement, such as community-held *tables de concertation* that bring together representatives from various LGBTQ organizations, work in such a way that excludes organizations with fewer resources. Building on her own experience, Solange underlined how the *tables de concertation* that met during work hours limited her participation and the possibility for her organization to take an active part in these community meetings:

> I had a job working for the City as a computer scientist, I was a webmaster for the *Office de consultation publique de Montréal*, I earned a decent wage, but the challenge at that time was to figure out how to be aware of what was going on in the LGBT community? When, because of your job, you cannot go to the meetings that are usually held during the day, and during weekdays. And at that time there were all these concertation tables, there was the policy against homophobia that was being developed, and later there was the action plan that had to be implemented, but how was I able, as the leader of [organization X], to be informed and to provide my input? That was a huge challenge. To reconcile my work with my activism, with

the latter being volunteer based, precisely because we didn't have any funding. So we had to find ways to get funding to be able to live without my job and focus on [organization X][81].

The established parameters of LGBTQ movements' decision-making instances, such as community-held concertation tables, evidently impact whose voice is being heard within the movement. What is more, as many research participants have pointed out, it is oftentimes the same voices that are being excluded due to a systematic lack of resources. Marc, who was president of an LGBTQ-POC organization for a number of years, experienced a similar situation:

> We [organization X] are too small to take part in all concertation tables and to have a certain weight around these tables and no one really takes on the responsibility to hear our voice (...) And I saw it when we had to talk about the new action plan against homophobia and the issue discussed was what should we ask the government to spend money on. Everyone asked for more funding per projects and I was like...can we put aside your projects for a while? We need a community center in Montréal. We need a community center with offices for all organizations[82].

Kevin, a White-LGBTQ activist, witnessed this as well:

> I think that there are funding issues that create inequalities, if you take for example participation within concertation tables. Well if LGBTQ groups want to be represented and have a voice, they need to take the time. Oftentimes, meetings take place during the day. I'll give you an example. I participated in a provincial LGBTQ collective following the adoption of

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[81] Original quote in French: J'avais un emploi à la Ville de Montréal en tant qu'informaticienne, j'étais webmestre à l'office de consultation publique de Montréal, je gagnais bien ma vie, c'est même avec ça que j'ai acheté ce condo en 2007, j'étais en relation avec un Haïtien, mais le défi justement à ce moment-là c'était comment être à l'affût de tout ce qui se passe dans le milieu LGBT ? Quand, à cause de son emploi, on ne peut pas aller dans les réunions qui se passent généralement pendant la journée, pendant la semaine. Là c'était des Tables de concertation par-ci, par-là, c'était la politique de lutte à l'homophobie qui était en train de se construire, c'était plus tard le plan d'action qui devait se mettre en place, mais comment moi en tant que leader de [X] je puisse être informée et donner mon point de vue à tout ce qui se passe ? Donc ça c'était vraiment un autre nouveau défi. Réconcilier le travail qu'on a avec l'activisme qui lui ne fait pas payer, ne paie pas, parce que justement on n'avait pas encore de subvention. Du coup l'idée c'était comment trouver les subventions, au moins une petite subvention qui me permettrait de vivre en laissant le travail et en me concentrant sur [X].

[82] Original quote in French: Nous on est trop petit pour être autour de toutes les tables ou pour avoir un poids autour de ces tables-là et il n'y a personne qui prend sur lui d'avoir cette voix-là des autres, des plus gros organismes. [...] Je l'ai vu quand il a fallu qu'on discute du nouveau plan de lutte à l'homophobie et que la question était où est-ce qu'on demande au gouvernement de dépenser l'argent ? Tout le monde a demandé plus d'argent pour les projets. Moi j'étais comme..euh...est-ce qu'on peut oublier vos projets un peu ? On a besoin d'un centre communautaire à Montréal. Un centre communautaire avec des locaux pour tous les organismes.

the policy against homophobia in 2009. It has now become the policy against homophobia and transphobia, but in 2009, a collective was created and there were a lot of organizations involved, it was pretty big. There was a liaison committee and all of that and I participated at a few meetings, I think at the time I was attending on behalf of [organization X], I was working for [organization X] at the time so I would go to these meetings during my work hours. I was a waged worker but was also doing some volunteer work, but I was mostly paid. But there were other groups where people had to take time off from their work, during the day, to attend meetings, because they were concerned, and they wanted to be involved[83].

As activists rightly underlined, access to decision-making instances within the movement is inherently tied to organizational and individual resources. In this regard, LGBTQ-POC activists, as well as other marginalized activists within the movement, tend to be sidelined from these instances, thereby making it harder for them to get their voices heard and to share their input when it comes to formulating demands. Unfortunately, as Tommy explained, the lack of resources also limited LGBTQ-POC organizations' access to political institutions and decision-making instances outside the movement:

When you don't have much resources well you can't do as many things. You can't really develop your organization, or at least it is harder to develop it. Just having human resources for example. Because being socially involved requires a lot of work and if we always do it voluntarily without being paid, at one point we end up burning out. And it also becomes more difficult to share insider knowledge. If we had funding, we could establish more solid bases, have more solid bases, and better organize ourselves and have access to political spheres, because of course, there are LGBT organizations that act as the movement's contact point for the government. But people of colour, we don't act as such, and we don't have access to certain spheres[84].

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[83] Original quote in French: Je pense qu'il y a des enjeux de financement qui créent des inégalités, ne serait-ce que par exemple quand on participe à des tables de concertation, si certains groupes LGBT veulent être représentés et avoir une voix, restituer leur parole, il faut qu'ils prennent de leur temps. C'est souvent des réunions dans la journée. Je prends un exemple. J'ai été, au début surtout, il y avait eu un collectif LGBTQ provincial dans la foulée de l'adoption de la politique de lutte à l'homophobie en 2009. Maintenant qui est devenue la politique de lutte à l'homophobie et la transphobie, mais en 2009 il y a eu un collectif qui s'est créé et il y avait plein d'organisations, c'était quand même gros, avec un comité de liaison et tout ça et moi je gravitais, j'ai participé à quelques rencontres, je pense que j'avais le chapeau [X], à l'époque j'étais agent de développement, mais j'y allais sur mon temps de travail. J'étais salarié mais un petit peu bénévole, mais c'était principalement comme agent de développement. Mais il y avait d'autres groupes où il y avait des personnes qui prenaient congé de leur travail, en journée, pour assister aux réunions, parce que ça les concernait, ils voulaient être impliqués.

[84] Original quote in French: Quand on n'a pas beaucoup d'argent, on peut faire moins de choses aussi, et on peut pas développer, mettons, je sais pas...c'est plus difficile de développer... comme avoir des ressources humaines, parce que c'est d'la job là faire de l'implication sociale et on est toujours bénévoles. Un moment donné on finit par se brûler. C'est

Meryem further explained how accessing political institutions necessitates resources, but to have resources, you need visibility and access to political institutions. For her, this represents a vicious circle, wherein the same organizations continue to have an advantage over others:

> There are inequalities when it comes to accessing 'power'. To influence, to have access to meetings with ministers, to have access to media coverage, to have access to government grants even, to have time to write grant applications, or even to have people within your organization that know how to write grant applications. We are lucky at [organization X], we have people who are used to writing grant applications, but other organizations that are very small, all of their energy goes into supporting those who are involved and often times they don't really have anyone who is used to writing grant applications. It's a vicious circle. These people then don't have the necessary means to grow, and there isn't much solidarity between groups on this matter. There are large organizations that will receive significant grants and so it sort of becomes a competition rather than a solidarity momentum, and to say well I received this grant, so I can now help you and you can receive this other grant[85].

What this comes down to is the same organizations, namely mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations led by cisgender gay men receiving substantial funding and maintaining a privileged access to decision-making instances both within and outside the movement. It is in that respect that white privilege permeates LGBTQ activism through resource-distribution processes that are inherently unequal, and that work to perpetuate white normativity within these movements (Ward 2008). This means that even though LGBTQ-POC activists get involved in LGBTQ movements, institutionalized norms and practices pertaining to funding and decision-making within and outside movements continue to advantage mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations

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difficile aussi d'avoir des transferts de connaissance après, alors que si on pouvait avoir du financement pour justement établir des bases plus solides, des fondations plus solides, pour après pouvoir mieux s'organiser pis avoir accès aux sphères plus politiques, parce que oui y'a des groupes LGBT qui ont un interlocuteur privilégié avec le gouvernement. Mais les personnes racisées, c'est pas nous qui sommes un interlocuteur privilégié, donc on n'a pas accès à certaines sphères aussi.

[85] Original quote in French: Il y a des inégalités aussi d'accès au 'pouvoir'. Donc pour influencer, d'avoir accès à des entretiens avec les ministres, d'avoir accès à une couverture médiatique, d'avoir accès aux subventions même, d'avoir le temps d'écrire des demandes de subvention, ou même d'avoir des personnes au sein des organismes qui savent. Nous on a de la chance à [X], on a des personnes qui ont l'habitude de rédiger, mais d'autres organismes où il y a tellement peu de gens, toute l'énergie va à soutenir puis il n'y a personne dans son équipe qui est forcément habitué à rédiger. C'est un cercle vicieux. Ces personnes-là n'ont pas les moyens de se développer plus, il n'y a pas vraiment de solidarité à ce niveau-là. Et il y a des gros organismes qui vont prendre les grosses grosses grosses subventions et du coup c'est un peu une perspective de concurrence au lieu que ce soit une perspective de solidarité et de se dire 'ah bin moi j'ai cette subvention donc je peux t'aider, toi tu peux avoir celle-là'.

at the expense of LGBTQ-POC organizations and other organizations otherwise considered as 'specific' – i.e. lesbian, youth, trans, etc. White privilege thus holds an institutional character, as resource-distribution processes continue to privilege those already privileged (Stoltz, Halsaa, and Stormhøj 2020) within LGBTQ movements.

As the previous chapter did touch upon, activists that engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing are driven by a particular set of motivations that tend to stem from previous activist experience in LGBTQ movements, notably in Montréal. Considering the ways in which white privilege has structured, and continues to structure, LGBTQ movements in Toronto and Montréal, it is reasonable to state that LGBTQ-POC activists are subsequently impacted by the movement's whiteness. The next section will thus aim to expose the effects of white privilege on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths.

## 6.3. White privilege and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths

In the previous chapter I outlined how LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths appear to be driven by a particular set of motivations that include ensuring visibility and representation of nonwhite realities, creating safer spaces, and attending to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities. As evidenced above, these motivations are inscribed within a specific context wherein white privilege structures LGBTQ activism through representational means and resource-distribution processes that systematically relegate LGBTQ-POC activism to the margins of the movement. Although white privilege structures Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements in similar ways, its impact on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths presents slight differences.

As presented in chapter 5, LGBTQ-POC organizations serve as important entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement. In Montréal, mainstream-white-dominated organizations play this particular role, yet LGBTQ-POC activists' initial participation within these mainstream-white-dominated organizations tends to be short-lived. While engaging in intersectional praxis and trying to foster inclusivity, Montréal's mainstream-white-dominated organizations instead tend to (re)produce tokenism in such a way that leads LGBTQ-POC activists to disengage from these organizations and create/join LGBTQ-POC organizations. I therefore posit that white privilege *directly* impacts individual activist paths, hence shaping the ways in which Montréal's LGBTQ-POC

activists come to *collectively* take part in LGBTQ-POC activism. This is not to say that white privilege does not have any impact on Toronto's LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. On the contrary, by witnessing the ways in which white privilege structures LGBTQ organizing in Toronto, activists already involved in LGBTQ-POC organizations further consolidate their activism by remaining involved in LGBTQ-POC organizing. It is in that respect that in comparison with Montréal, white privilege *indirectly* impacts Toronto's LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths, in which case the movement's whiteness acts as a mediating factor.

### 6.3.1. Montréal: direct impact

In Montréal, mainstream-white-dominated organizations are the main entry points into Montréal's LGBTQ movement for both White and POC activists. While White activists have for the most part sustained their activism with the same organization, most POC activists with which I have met have instead somewhat rapidly disengaged from these organizations before launching or joining LGBTQ-POC organizations and other LGBTQ-POC community-led initiatives. Unsurprisingly, white privilege was repeatedly raised as being one of the main factors driving LGBTQ-POC activists' organizational disengagement, notably because it shaped organizational discourses and practices in such a way that further marginalized LGBTQ-POC activists and communities. Beyond organizational discourses and practices, LGBTQ-POC activists raised another significant way in which white privilege led them to disengage from mainstream-white-dominated organizations *in order* to pursue their activism in safer spaces, namely LGBTQ-POC organizations. Research participants pointed out that as mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations attempted to deal with their own whiteness, they implemented a range of practices to foster inclusivity and increase LGBTQ-POC representation within their respective organizations. Resembling what scholars have referred to as intersectional praxis (Evans 2016; Laperrière and Lépinard 2016; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016) or what I have previously referred to as intersectional praxis *from within* (Labelle 2020a), these practices have however created exclusionary effects, reifying these organizations' whiteness (Ahmed 2012) and shaping LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths.

Intersectional praxis, in the context of social movement organizing and activism, refers to the ways in which social movement organizations and activists draw upon intersectional frameworks in their activist work (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). As Evans and Lépinard (2020) note, intersectionality is

used and practiced by social movement actors in multiple ways, be it as a collective identity (Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin 2013), as a strategy to build coalitions (Weldon 2006) or as a repertoire for inclusivity (Tormos 2017). They additionally observe that the ways in which intersectionality is implemented – and the effects it produces – strongly depends on the type of organization that engages in intersectional praxis. In this particular case, mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations appear to use intersectionality as a repertoire for inclusivity. More precisely, this implies embracing intersectionality as a way to attend to the needs of all LGBTQ communities and to subsequently reflect the diversity of the movement. While intersectionality may in this regard signify an organization's commitment to inclusivity, on a discursive level at least, it nonetheless holds substantive implications. For instance, Evans' (2016) study of student activism in the United Kingdom rightly shows how an organization's discursive use of intersectionality may additionally work at fostering substantive discussions on specific issues. In spite of a discursive commitment to intersectionality as a way to foster inclusivity and to confront organizational whiteness, Montréal's mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations have engaged in intersectional praxis in such a way that has produced tokenistic effects, thereby leading LGBTQ-POC activists to disengage from these organizations.

Drawing upon interviews conducted with both White and POC activists, I have identified three ways in which Montréal's mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations have engaged in intersectional praxis. First, in an attempt to diversify their image, mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations have reached out to LGBTQ-POC activists to take part in awareness or recruitment campaigns. Having participated in one of these campaigns, Florence recalled her experience in the following way:

> I[86] participated in a photoshoot, they were looking for minorities to make it more colourful, but that's the thing, I don't have any patience for this...I often find that they are trying, but I don't have any patience... Sometimes there is a good will, but I find that there is sometimes too much thoughtlessness in the ways in which they are trying to include[87].

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[86] This quote also appeared in Labelle (2020a).

[87] Original quote in French: J'ai même participé à un photoshooting où ils cherchaient des minorités pour faire plus colouré dans leurs trucs, mais c'est ça, j'ai plus de patience. Je trouve que souvent il y a des essais, mais j'ai plus de patience. Des fois il y a de la bonne volonté, mais je trouve qu'il y a des fois trop de maladresse dans ces façons d'essayer d'intégrer.

Second, mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations have reached out and nominated LGBTQ-POC activists on their executive boards as an attempt to diversify their internal composition. This was notably the case for Solange who, after having co-founded an LGBTQ-POC organization, was recruited to become a board member for a range of mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations. Finally, a third way in which mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations engaged in intersectional praxis has been through the creation of 'diversity'[88] committees "meant to bring together LGBTQ-POC activists involved within an organization" (Labelle 2020a, 209). Echoing Reger's (2002) findings on the American National Organization of Women (NOW), these committees have worked to accommodate SMOs' internal diversity by creating safer spaces within these organizations, all the while acting as consultative bodies for executive boards. However, this third practice has more often than not restrained people of colour's participation within these specific committees, thereby limiting their access to organizational decision-making instances.

While these practices were intended to foster inclusivity and perhaps render mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations 'safer' for people of colour, they have instead contributed in (re)producing tokenism and feelings of tokenization amongst LGBTQ-POC activists. Laws (1975) defines tokenism as "the means by which the dominant group advertises a promise of mobility between the dominant and excluded classes (…) The Token is a member of an underrepresented group, who is operating on the turf of the dominant group, under license from it" (51). As such, while appearing inclusive of marginalized identities, these practices had the opposite effect as they reproduced racialized power relations within the movement. LGBTQ-POC activists who were targeted by these practices indeed explained how they actually felt reduced to their racialized identity and only recognized as such, instead of being seen as 'normal' LGBTQ activists. Solange notably raised this issue when she explained how she had been recruited to serve on a variety of white-dominated executive boards:

> Sometimes[89] they would tell me, okay you'll be governor for [organization X], you'll be a board member for [organization Y]. Yes, okay, these are great avenues for sharing what I have to say, but at the same time, I was

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[88] These committees have had different names over time and across organizations. I hereby use 'diversity' as an umbrella term.

[89] This quote also appeared in Labelle (2020a).

aware that I was offered that position because I was Black. And sometimes like, we don't want to be *just* Black (emphasis added)[90].

Solange's feeling of being seen as Black, and subsequently inferior to others just because of her skin colour, was further echoed in her recollection of her participation in another LGBTQ institution:

> I don't want that just because of my skin colour, I am seen as little. I remember when I was working for [organization X], there was a lawyer who was there and he would always call me '*Salut mon petit noir. Salut mon petit noir*'. At one point I told him 'no, I am not your *petit noir*. You work here just like I do, we both work here. And you know what? I looked up your age and I am a year older than you so technically I am your older sister. I am not your *petit noir*.' And so there's always that. We always have to remind people that we are not that small. That we have the same ideas as everyone else. That we can occupy the same place as everyone else. That we don't have that place just because we are Black or because we are immigrants[91].

In addition to feeling tokenized and being subjected to organizational whiteness, Jennifer explained how LGBTQ-POC activists involved in mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations are also expected to act as educators, to deconstruct racial prejudice, and to make their way through racial barriers:

> Within [organization X], they are not able to keep cultural minorities. Many community organizations have a hard time keeping cultural communities. Because every time an ethnocultural community gets involved, well either this person is a token or either this person has to face all of the prejudice and take down all of the racial barriers, just because this person has another skin colour or is from a different place[92].

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[90] Original quote in French: Et puis des fois même quand on disait bon tu vas être gouverneure de [X], tu vas faire partie du Conseil d'administration de [X]. Oui, c'est vrai, c'était de belles plateformes pour pouvoir passer le mot, mais en même temps j'étais consciente qu'on me donnait ce siège parce que j'étais noire. Pis des fois on a juste comme, pas juste envie d'être noire.

[91] Original quote in French: Je veux pas que juste à cause de ma couleur de peau, je sois vue comme petite, comme un petit organisme. Je me souviens qu'une fois, quand je travaillais à [X], il y a un avocat qui était là et il m'appelait toujours 'Salut mon petit noir. Salut mon petit noir.' Un moment donné je lui ai dit, non, je ne suis pas ton petit noir. Parce qu'un, tu travailles ici comme moi, on travaille tous ici. Deux, sais-tu, j'ai regardé ton âge et j'ai un an de plus que toi, donc normalement, je suis ta grande soeur. Je suis pas ton petit noir. Donc il y a toujours ça, il faut en tout temps rappeler les gens qu'on est pas si petits que ça. Qu'on a les mêmes idées que tout le monde. Qu'on peut briguer des places comme tout le monde. Qu'on n'a pas la place parce qu'on est noir ou parce qu'on est immigrant.

[92] Original quote in French: Et donc du coup [X], s'ils ne sont pas capables de garder les minorités culturelles en leur sein, c'est parce qu'ils sont pas mieux. Et vice et versa, donc pas mal d'organismes communautaires qui s'impliquent dans diverses choses, ils ont pas mal de la misère à faire de la rétention de communautés culturelles. Parce qu'à chaque fois

Jessie, a White-LGBTQ activist who has led one of the largest lesbian organizations in Montréal, reaffirmed this particular point, wherein the responsibility to confront and disrupt racial prejudices within an organization tends to rest – although unintentionally so – upon the shoulders of people of colour; and as there are few POC activists who remain involved in mainstream-white-dominated organizations, they tend to disengage quite rapidly as the burden becomes quite overwhelming. This was notably the case with Jessie's organization, where the only person of colour involved on the board resigned before the end of her term. White activists with whom I have met, for the most part at least, were nevertheless aware that organizational practices designed to foster inclusivity did (re)produce tokenism. With this in mind, they expressed how complex it could be for mainstream-white-dominated organizations that have come to normalize a range of practices, to commit to inclusivity without further excluding people of colour. Olivia, who was part of an LGBTQ committee with limited funding, recalled her own experience in trying to put together a diversified panel at an event:

> One of the main issues has been to include people of colour without tokenizing. To find a way to give a voice to people of colour without saying 'I want you there because you are Black'. But on the other hand, we want people of colour. So it's like yeah I don't want it to be all White people but I don't want to ask someone just because she's Black. So we always have to negotiate this, which is not an easy task. And the fact that if you don't have funds, well you tend to only have White people around the table.

The ways in which mainstream-white-dominated organizations reach out to people of colour in an attempt to 'diversify' their organizations thus strongly echoes Ahmed's (2012) argument on institutional whiteness. For Ahmed (2012), the very idea of 'diversifying' an organization by 'colouring' its composition exposes the inherent whiteness of an institution and subsequently reveals an institutional failure to commit to diversity in the first place:

> The very idea that diversity is about those who 'look different' shows us how it can keep whiteness in place. If diversity becomes something that is added to organizations, like colour, then it confirms the whiteness of what is already in place. Alternatively, as a sign of the proximity of those who

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qu'une communauté ethnoculturelle s'implique, c'est soit une personne qui est token, c'est soit une personne qui doit se taper tous les préjudices et doit défaire tous les murs raciaux, parce que cette personne est d'une autre couleur ou d'une autre origine.

'look different', diversity can expose the whiteness of those who are already in place. To diversify an institution becomes an institutional action insofar as the necessity of the action reveals the absence or failure of diversity (33).

The tokenistic effects produced by mainstream-white-dominated organizations' attempt to engage in intersectional praxis have directly impacted Montréal's LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. As many activists have shared, these practices have significantly contributed to their disengagement from mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations. However, rather than disengaging from the movement altogether, LGBTQ-POC activists instead pursued their activism by either joining existing LGBTQ-POC organizations or by launching other LGBTQ-POC initiatives. Intersectional praxis from within, and the tokenism it produced, contributed to both organizational disengagement and organizational mobility which, as outlined in the previous chapter, characterize LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Montréal. LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths therefore appear to be *directly* impacted by white privilege, in which case experiencing organizational whiteness first-hand informed activists' disengagement from mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations followed by an engagement with LGBTQ-POC organizing.

### 6.3.2. Toronto: Indirect impact

In Toronto, LGBTQ-POC organizations represent significant entry points into the city's LGBTQ movement. As LGBTQ-POC activists, for the most part at least, are not as subjected to organizational whiteness and tokenism as their Montréal counterparts, they do not experience white privilege in the same way. This is not to say that white privilege does not have any impact on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. On the contrary, LGBTQ-POC activists witness, experience, and endure the effects of white privilege on the movement itself and on LGBTQ organizing more specifically. With this in mind, I argue that white privilege indirectly impacts Toronto's LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. Mediated by the movement's whiteness, white privilege further consolidates people of colour's participation in LGBTQ-POC organizing. Instead of disengaging from organizations or from the movement altogether, LGBTQ-POC activists pursue and sustain their involvement in LGBTQ-POC organizing.

As previously outlined, white privilege contributes to the (re)production of inequalities within LGBTQ movements, in part through resource-distribution processes that systematically relegates LGBTQ-POC organizing to the margins of the movement. While these inequalities directly impact the internal configuration of the movement and the place occupied within it by each organization, they appear to indirectly shape LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths by sustaining one's participation within LGBTQ-POC organizations or by informing one's individual motivations and advocacy. As Shakir explained, his previous experience as a Board member for an LGBTQ-POC organization has expanded his understanding of the disparities observed within Toronto's LGBTQ movement, wherein marginalized communities consistently remain marginalized and invisibilized. Shakir's involvement in the missing persons review following the Bruce McArthur case[93], wherein he and ASAAP took on a leadership role in ensuring accountability of the Toronto Police Services (TPS), more precisely represented a tangible experience of the ways in which racial inequalities have structured – and continue to structure – LGBTQ communities. This experience has not only compelled him to pursue his involvement in LGBTQ-POC organizing, but has also contributed in shifting his advocacy objectives to further tackle systemic injustices:

> Initially it was just contributing to you know the proper governance of these organizations and especially in bringing in a queer lived experience voice, but at the Board level. So often people think that maybe operationally we want to bring these voices in, but they don't think about well, you need that at every level of the organization, from the top down, so that's really a big part of my approach to it, is that you need the board to reflect that. But now it's shifting a little bit to a more advocacy, systemic advocacy objectives, so I think with the missing persons review that really launched a new phase of my, what I hope to be my involvement, which is a bit more movement oriented. And in particular, the interesting thing about that and what I hope to replicate on future things is, we have a little bit of a gap in terms of...I don't know if I can say it's a gap, but you know we have a really excellent, I'd say in Toronto, group of people who are sort of activists on the street, protesting, bringing attention, getting media, absolutely excellent and it's very important to have them doing that function. We have service delivery groups and organizations that are effective in providing services and resources. We don't have a lot of people who can engage with senior people in government or other places, in a way, that's representing the interest of the marginalized people and that's

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[93] Bruce McArthur is a serial killer who targeted gay men in Toronto, in particular gay men of colour. While the TPS was aware that Bruce McArthur was connected to the disappearances of three gay men of colour, it dismissed the investigation. The investigation was later reopened as other disappearances were signaled, including Andrew Kinsman, a known White-LGBTQ activist within the community.

policy-change oriented. We just kind of don't have that class of people. Because I don't think it's a funded class of people, right? Government wants to fund service delivery, people who run service delivery don't want to jeopardize relationships with government. People who are doing the protests and activism are a little more geared toward that skillset. But you need that middle, other class of person, so that's actually right now my central objective. Is trying to be maybe sort of a bridge between the institutional, the people on the ground, but having their interests in mind and being trusted by them, but also being able to build a relationship here.

Haran similarly expressed how funding inequalities within Toronto's LGBTQ movement informed his advocacy. As executive director of an LGBTQ-POC organization, he not only experienced fundraising challenges first-hand, but also tried to seek out a way to remedy the situation:

And then when we look at fundraising…[laugh] Everyone goes to [organization X], including the racialized people who can afford it, they go to [organization X] or they go to [organization Y], because it's a larger organization, they don't give it to a small organization and we also don't have the capacity to hire someone to do that fundraising. I just was able to convince the Board this Monday to give me some money from the reserve fund to hire someone who could do fundraising for us. Which is great, cause then it's off of my plate and someone can dedicate their time to building relationships and building funds. Even that, it was like 17 000$, and someone in other organizations are making like 89-90 0000$ a year to do that work, and I'm paying somebody 17 000$ to do that work [laugh].

Beyond shaping his advocacy work, these inequalities, as experienced on an organizational-level, consolidated Haran's engagement with LGBTQ-POC organizing. Witnessing the ways in which mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations' approach tended to persistently exclude people of colour has further convinced Haran of his organization's fundamental purpose in being part of Toronto's LGBTQ organizational landscape:

So you have the [organizations X, Y, and Z], for HIV, in Toronto and Ontario, and then you have [organizations A, B, and C] that do all the LGBT stuff. But sometimes those places aren't inclusive in terms of the ways in which they work with South Asian populations and I think that's why the need, that's why we need to exist so that we can deal with those individuals who kind of all through the cracks, who may not qualify for their programs. Whether it's income, whether it's language, whether it's

cultural sensitivities, oftentimes we have people who are new to the country who don't know what is used here that's appropriate. And so they may go to a group like [organization X] or whatever and say something and then they may actually be banned from it because they used the wrong word and somebody was offended, which I get, but understanding from a cultural context we have to...you know when they say homosexual it's not because they are being discriminatory it's just that that's what they know and that's how they were thought, right? Or using proper pronouns and stuff, and again it's no excuse but there's an education that needs to happen and you can't punish people without offering the education.

Shakir's and Haran's accounts reveal how experienced organizational inequalities within the movement between mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations and LGBTQ-POC organizations informed their activism. More precisely, it contributed in shaping their advocacy and consolidated their motivations, which translated into sustained involvement in LGBTQ-POC organizing. It is in that respect that unlike in Montréal, where white privilege directly impacts LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths, Toronto's LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths appear to be indirectly impacted by white privilege, in which case the movement's whiteness – and the consequences it holds – acts as a mediating factor. This slight difference between Toronto and Montréal remains tied to the fact that LGBTQ-POC organizations already serve as main entry points into Toronto's LGBTQ movement.

## 6.4. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explain the specificities of LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths outlined in the previous chapter by situating them within their broader context, namely at a movement-level. In doing so, it focused on LGBTQ movements' organizational dynamics and exposed the ways in which power relations structure LGBTQ activism and relegate LGBTQ-POC activists to the margins of the movement. Building on previous work and on the data collected for this research, it more precisely looked at the ways in which white privilege shaped organizational dynamics, henceforth structuring LGBTQ activism in Canada.

Results showed how white privilege is both relational and epistemic, permeating LGBTQ movements through representational means. Representation refers to the movement's leadership and the composition of mainstream organizations, as well as to normative representations regarding

who is considered part of the movement and who is 'othered' by the movement's leadership. As LGBTQ movements in Montréal and Toronto are led by White cisgender gay men, whiteness is invisibilized through its apparent 'universal' character, while communities of colour are 'othered' by these movements' leadership. Unequal resource-distribution processes observed within LGBTQ movements have further revealed the ways in which white privilege is both productive and institutional. This implies an unequal access to funding, which favor 'universal' rather than 'specific' organizations, as well as formal and professionalized organizations rather than informal collectives, relegating LGBTQ-POC activism to the margins of the movement. Not only are LGBTQ-POC organizations considered too 'specific' to receive large sums of money as opposed to mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations who are considered as being 'universal', but with lesser funds, LGBTQ-POC organizations have lesser chances at becoming more professionalized in such a way that could lead them to secure more funding. This is inevitably tied to an unequal access to decision-making instances both within and outside LGBTQ movements, as well as an unequal access to political institutions. As such, white privilege creates material effects that (re)produce unequal power relations within LGBTQ movements, all the while being sustained and reenacted through institutionalized norms and practices.

While white privilege similarly shapes LGBTQ organizational dynamics in Montréal and Toronto, it has had different impacts on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. As evidenced above, this is in part due to the fact that both movements have different entry points. In Montréal, LGBTQ-POC tend to initially engage in LGBTQ activism through mainstream-white-dominated organizations. As these organizations engage in intersectional praxis as a way to foster inclusivity, they instead reproduce tokenism. LGBTQ-POC activists thus feel reduced to their race and subsequently constrained in their engagement. As a result, they, for the most part at least, tend to disengage from these mainstream-white-dominated organizations to pursue their activism in safer spaces, such as LGBTQ-POC organizations. In contrast, LGBTQ-POC activists in Toronto tend to initially engage in LGBTQ activism through existing LGBTQ-POC organizations. That said, as they experience and endure the effects of white privilege at an organizational, and perhaps movement-level, LGBTQ-POC activists feel compelled to sustain their engagement in LGBTQ-POC organizing. While white privilege appears to directly impact LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Montréal, it seems to have an indirect impact on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Toronto, in which case the movement's whiteness acts as a mediating factor.

This chapter thus provides enlightening pieces of information as to why LGBTQ-POC activists collectively participate the way that they do. By focusing on LGBTQ movements' organizational dynamics, it has shown the extent to which individual activist paths are inscribed within movements that find themselves permeated by whiteness and white privilege, be it in Toronto or Montréal. In that respect, exposing social movement organizational dynamics allows for a better understanding of the meso-level context in which LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are set. However, as evoked above, Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements do present slight differences, notably when it comes to the ways in which white privilege impacts LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. To further understand both cities' LGBTQ-POC collectives engagement trajectories, we therefore need to situate individual activist paths and social movement organizational dynamics within their even broader context, namely at an institutional and sociopolitical-level. In the next chapter, I will therefore attend to Montréal's and Toronto's sociopolitical and institutional contexts that have informed LGBTQ individuals, communities, and organizations.

# 7. Mobilizing in different citizenship regimes: a comparative analysis of LGBTQ(POC) activism in Toronto and Montréal

*"So yeah, this organization, we're mainly health, sexual health, but I feel that the Youth program is becoming more social justice advocacy, and so with that, we are not experts on everything. All these social justice issues. That's a little difficult to navigate, especially when people are holding the Youth program accountable or [organization X] accountable for things that are happening in the community, and for us to say something. But it's always, you have to be careful too, because we're getting money from funders who...you know what I mean? It's always very complicated."*

David, Toronto

*"Listen, I don't even know how to explain because I have so much difficulty navigating all of this. I talk about banks, but it's also the case with businesses. But it really is as if we don't speak the same language. And I think there is a clash between the community sector and the financial community. And even between the community sector and the frontline public service, which is not part of the community sector. So I feel that we are displaced along numerous levels and when you come from the community sector and you try and talk to people with a lot of money... [sigh]."*

Marie-Édith, Montréal

Before engaging in fieldwork, I conducted a brief survey of Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements' organizational landscapes in order to have a better idea of the participants I could potentially meet for this research. While I was already familiar with Montréal's LGBTQ organizations, Toronto's organizational landscape was on the contrary quite foreign to me. Searching for organizations through which I could get in touch with community-organizers and activists therefore represented somewhat of a challenge. Not so much because of my limited knowledge of the community, but rather because of the type of organizations that were part of Toronto's LGBTQ movement. Surprisingly, besides the 519 Church Street Community Center, Pride Toronto, and Rainbow Railroad, and a few others, I kept stumbling upon AIDS organizations or other sexual health related service providers. Inasmuch as AIDS organizations may be LGBTQ-oriented, they were not specifically geared towards serving LGBTQ communities, at least not always explicitly. However, as I met with participants involved in these AIDS organizations, I rapidly realized that they were indeed part of, and perhaps significantly so, Toronto's LGBTQ movement. What is more, ethno-specific AIDS organizations (E-ASOs), such as ACAS, ASAAP, and Black CAP, represented

significant venues for LGBTQ-POC activists. In contrast, Montréal AIDS organizations did not have the same significance for LGBTQ-POC activists, at least not to this extent, nor did they constitute part of what this research refers to as LGBTQ-POC organizing, namely organizations formed around specific racialized identities. Instead, LGBTQ-POC organizations appeared to be first and foremost advocacy groups, engaged in awareness and rights-advocacy activities, and simultaneously providing support to LGBTQ-POC communities.

In the previous chapter, I attempted to unpack some of the organizational dynamics within which LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are set. In so doing, I sought to explain some of the differences observed between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths outlined in chapter 5. Building on the notion of white privilege, I showed how whiteness shaped Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements in similar ways, relegating LGBTQ-POC organizations to the margins of these movements. Upon evaluating the impact of white privilege on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths, slight differences were observed in Montréal and Toronto. While white privilege seemed to directly impact LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Montréal, it instead had an indirect impact on Toronto's LGBTQ-POC individual paths, in which case the movement's whiteness acted as a mediating factor. Differences between both movements' organizational landscapes, and more specifically between movements' entry points were therefore evoked as potential, yet insufficient explanations, that required further analysis. In this regard, because movements' organizational landscapes seem to differently impact LGBTQ-POC activists in Montréal and Toronto, we need to move the analysis upward, namely at a sociopolitical and institutional-level. Doing so will not only allow us to grasp the ways in which Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements are differently organized, but also rightly situate LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within their even broader context.

M. Smith (2005b) suggests that to further understand how movements are shaped and formed, scholars should turn to political institutions. She evokes how political opportunity structures inform social movement organizing, and in particular social movement organizations (SMOs), be it in terms of resources or claim-making processes. Others have additionally stressed how political institutions may shape advocacy strategies through state funding (Clément 2017; 2019; Corrigall-Brown and Ho 2017). Inasmuch as political opportunity structures and state funding may shape social movements, political institutions additionally contribute in the shaping of the political community, thereby

delimiting frontiers of exclusion and inclusion. When it comes to LGBTQ activism, this implies looking at the ways in which political institutions and state funding not only shape movements' organizational landscapes, but also how they legitimize particular claims and recognize certain identities at the expense of others. It is in this respect that the notion of citizenship regime (Jenson and Philips 1996; Dobrowolsky and Jenson 2004) appears to be particularly relevant if we are to understand the differences between Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ organizational landscapes as well as the ways in which LGBTQ-POC activists are socially and politically positioned within these movements.

This chapter's aim is twofold. First, it will attempt to explain movement-level differences between Toronto and Montréal by locating these movements within two different citizenship regimes. As the Canadian politics literature has thoroughly documented, we can indeed speak of a Québécois citizenship regime that distinguishes itself from a Canadian citizenship regime (Jenson 1997; Laforest and Phillips 2001), therefore shaping LGBTQ activism in different ways. Second, it will situate Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within these respective citizenship regimes, by exploring the ways in which activists identify and feel a sense of belonging to Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ communities. The analysis outlined herein thereby rests upon the interview material collected as part of this research, as well as on an assortment of documents produced by governments and organizations.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will review the literature on citizenship regimes. More precisely, it will go over its definition, highlight some of the reasons why scholars speak of Canadian and Québécois citizenship regimes that differ from one another, and underline some of the ways in which citizenship regimes may inform mobilization and social movements. The second section will locate Montréal's LGBTQ movement within Québec's citizenship regime, whereas the third section will situate Toronto's LGBTQ movement within a Canadian citizenship regime. Both of these sections will address how LGBTQ individuals and organizations are recognized by the state, reveal some of the funding mechanisms that support LGBTQ movements and their impact on movements' organizational landscapes, and expose how political institutions shape understandings of LGBTQ belonging, thereby delimitating the frontiers of Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ communities.

## 7.1. Citizenship regimes

As Jenson (1997) underlines, citizenship is not to be conflated with nationality; rather, it is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond an ensemble of rights – political, economic, cultural, and social (Marshall 1965). Citizenship may thus be thought of as the product of an "institutionalization of a set of practices by which states use public power to shape and regulate markets and communities" (Jenson 1997, 628). By tracing the boundaries of the political community, citizenship further reveals who is recognized as citizens by the state. As these boundaries may shift, and as state practices may fluctuate over time, it is to be conceived as dynamic, thereby changing over time and across space.

Largely influenced by historical institutionalism, welfare studies, and political economy's regulation approach, Jenson and Phillips (1996) introduced the notion of *regime* to further make sense of the *stability* of state practices that pertain to the distribution of responsibilities across the state, markets and communities; to the recognition of rights; to governance arrangements including modes of participation in civil life; and to the definition of membership. Broadly speaking, the notion of regime refers to a "stable assemblage of seemingly disparate institutions, such as electoral and party systems, intergovernmental relations, the composition of the political economy, bureaucratic and voluntary sector traditions, and so on" (Jenson 2018, 261). In this regard, a citizenship regime consists of the "time-situated materialization of a given meaning of citizenship and, as such, a lens by which it is possible to identify the 'model' citizen, as recognized by the state, and the practical implications of this ideal (Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018, 4). In this section, I will (1) further define the notion of citizenship regime and develop on its four constitutive dimensions; (2) outline the ways in which Canada and Québec represent two distinct citizenship regimes; and (3) address the relationship between citizenship regimes and social movements.

### 7.1.1. Defining citizenship regimes

More encompassing than the concept of citizenship, a citizenship regime allows scholars to focus and render visible the relationship that citizens have with the state, as well as amongst each other (Laforest and Phillips 2001). As previously outlined in Canadian scholarship, it is composed of four interrelated and interdependent dimensions (Jenson 2018). First, it consists of the distribution of

responsibilities between the state, the market, the community, and the family – or the private sphere (Jenson 2007). Commonly referred to as the 'responsibility mix', it can be thought of as a diamond wherein each actor constitutes one of its four ends (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003). The linking of each end thereby suggests the interactive nature between each of these four social actors, all the while acknowledging that all of the lines may not necessarily be symmetrical. It is in this regard that "what should be of interest is the shape of the diamond – for example, stretched in one direction – for it represents the division of labour favoured at one point in time" (Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018, 5). Different citizenship regimes are therefore expected to appear as differently shaped diamonds.

The second dimension includes the formal recognition of rights and responsibilities of citizens by the state (Dobrowolsky and Jenson 2004). By recognizing political, civil, cultural, or social rights, the state establishes the boundaries of its political community. This not only implies identifying those who are not considered citizens, but also entails identifying "those entitled to full citizenship status [and] those who, in effect, hold only second-class status" (Jenson and Papillon 2000, 246). It is in this regard that this dimension of the regime touches upon the realities of exclusion and marginalization, further shedding light on existing social hierarchies within a society. The notion of citizenship regime thus allows one to analyze how the state establishes sexual boundaries in such a way so as to perpetuate exclusionary processes. For instance, several scholars have raised how the homonationalist and homonormative character of federal public policies (M. Smith 2019; Lenon and Dryden 2015; Lenon 2011) have contributed in normalizing the image of a 'model liberal LGBTQ citizen' at the expense of marginalized queer others.

The regime's third dimension concerns access to political representation, which is broadly understood as "the institutional mechanisms giving access to the state, modes of participation in civil life and public debates, and the legitimacy of specific types of claims-making" (Jenson 2007, 56). Beyond access to formal political institutions, this dimension also looks at informal spaces of political representation and the conditions of access to such spaces. While these conditions may include formal rules and mechanisms, they may also refer to whom the state considers as legitimate, determining which types of claims-making can be heard and recognized by the state. As Laforest (2013) writes, "[governments] convey a particular understanding of *who* the legitimate actors are and support a conception of their role in policy" (235). M. Smith (2018) similarly explains how changes in Canada's citizenship regime in the 1980s and 1990s have contributed in legitimizing particular types

of LGBTQ actors as well as specific types of LGBTQ claims-making in subsequent years. In coherence with a broader neoliberal discourse emphasizing individualized rather than collective claims-making, the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has not only provided new institutional, political, and legal resources to LGBTQ communities, but has also favored legal claims-making on the part of LGBTQ social movement organizations, henceforth legitimizing rights-oriented organizations such as Egale.

The final dimension of the citizenship regime includes membership to the political community and feelings of belonging and identity (Jenson 2007). It entails both the notion of nationality, in the passport-holding sense, and the concept of identity, or how citizens identify (or not) with the political community. This includes looking at the ways in which the state establishes and maintains boundaries of belonging, as well as shedding light on the ways in which citizens are treated within one's political community. As the next section will highlight, Québec's and Canada's citizenship regimes hold very different perspectives regarding membership to their political community. When it comes to activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ communities, there also appears to be striking differences between Toronto and Montréal that mirror their respective citizenship regime. This will be further developed in the chapter.

As Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels (2018) underline, previous work on citizenship regimes has tended to focus on one or several dimensions of the regime; indeed, very few studies have examined all dimensions. In this chapter I will therefore focus my analysis on three dimensions, namely (1) the responsibility mix pertaining to LGBTQ issues; (2) the formal recognition of rights and responsibilities, both in terms of the community/voluntary sector and LGBTQ individuals; and (3) membership to the political community and LGBTQ activists' sense of belonging. These represent key dimensions for understanding why activists engage in LGBTQ activism the way that they do, for which this research has collected the necessary material. This is not to say that the political representation dimension is irrelevant; it would however necessitate further research that goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

*7.1.2. Canada/Québec as distinct citizenship regimes*

In her presidential address at the annual conference of the *Canadian Political Science Association* in 1997, Jane Jenson convincingly notes that there have probably always been two different citizenship regimes in Canada: Québec and the rest of Canada. One of the major differences that has characterized Québec's and Canada's postwar citizenship regimes has been their vision of their respective political community. For instance, whereas Canada promoted an individualistic vision of society, Québec's postwar citizenship regime favored the development of a collective national identity. This particular vision contributed in the development of a modernist nationalist project that "entrench[ed] the recognition of peoples at the heart of political institutions" (Jenson 1997, 638). This entailed establishing political, social, and cultural institutions, as well as implementing policies to protect and promote the community. Québec's citizenship regime was thus focused on the promotion of the community, enacting a vision of Canada as a country of communities rather than individuals (Jenson 1997). Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels (2018) further insist that "this was not just nation building through identity politics; Québec's regime was supported by separate social policies" (12), all the while having "its own version of the triangular relationship among state, market, and community" (Jenson 1997, 640). In contrast, Canada's postwar citizenship regime was profoundly liberal, engaged in promoting individual rights. In the aim of fostering a sense of a pan-Canadian identity centered around individual rights, the federal government similarly established a range of cultural and political institutions, in addition to implementing economic development projects and social programs. The federal government thus played an active role in promoting and protecting individual social rights, in part by investing public funds into civil society organizations (Corrigall-Brown and Ho 2017).

Inasmuch as Québec's and Canada's postwar citizenship regimes diverged in their understanding of the political community, as well as in their understanding of the relationship between states, markets, and communities, their divergence became increasingly visible with the advent of neoliberalism in the 1980s and the subsequent implementation of neoliberal policies throughout the 1990s (Jenson 1997; Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018). As both states underwent significant changes, the Québec state nevertheless remained a central actor in protecting and promoting a collective identity (Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018), as well as in supporting the community. This particularly translated into the varying relationship between the voluntary sector and the Canadian and Québécois states. For instance, Québec's recognition of the voluntary sector as the *community* sector, or *action communautaire autonome*, already implied a particular vision wherein

community organizations do not just act as service providers but rather serve as social actors that engage in advocacy and that are involved in social change. It is with this in mind that the community sector's partnership role with the state of Québec was maintained and consolidated throughout the 1990s. The state further recognized the sector's political role beyond its service provision functions with its 2001 policy (Laforest and Phillips 2001). The Québec state thus reinforced the community sector's role as a social and political actor, in spite of a neoliberal restructuring of the state (White 2012).

In contrast, the relationship between Canada and the voluntary sector underwent significant changes throughout the same period that instead reduced its political role. As Laforest and Phillips (2001) note, "the restructuring of the [Canadian] welfare-state led to a recasting of the voluntary sector's role as service providers, instead of as a political actor that contributes to the full realization of citizenship" (46, my translation). This is notably the case for the LGBTQ sector in Toronto, wherein LGBTQ organizations are first and foremost service providers (M. Smith 2018) as opposed to Montréal's LGBTQ organizations, which primarily engage in advocacy work. More broadly, what we observe is a deeply different understanding of the voluntary sector's identity, structure, and political framework in both regimes. Whereas access to the federal government has been increasingly limited since the 1990s (Laforest 2013), Québec has instead maintained its partnership relationship with the community sector (Garon and Dufour 2010; White 2012). Moreover, while state funding has had a depoliticizing effect on Canadian civil society organizations (Clément 2017), which have increasingly engaged in service provision, Québec's community sector continues to play a central – political – role in advocating for social change (Dufour and Ancelovici 2018).

Since the 1970s, Canada's citizenship regime has furthermore been marked by a decentralization of social program responsibilities to provinces and municipalities, accompanied by an "off-loading of state responsibilities to the third sector" (Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018, 11). Characteristic of a social investment state, it has become increasingly focused on targeted investments according to needs and contexts rather than on ensuring rights and enabling redistributive measures intended to protect individuals and communities (Jenson and Saint-Martin 2003; Papillon 2018). As it redefined its role in social programs, the Canadian state provided somewhat of an opportunity for provinces to develop or reinforce their own model of social citizenship (Papillon 2018; Fourot, Paquet, and Nagels 2018). As Paquet (2018) more specifically notes,

the advent of neoliberalism and its enduring impact has translated into a Canadian citizenship regime characterized by the downloading of policy and administrative responsibilities from the federal state to the provinces on the one hand, and by the emergence of provinces as "new sites of economic and social development in Canada" (124) on the other hand. Using immigration as an example, Paquet (2018) indeed shows how provinces have embarked on a variety of province-building projects, growingly since the 1990s, in which case provinces have developed their own definitions of immigration, viewing it in most cases as a vital resource for provinces. It is in that respect that one may view Canada's citizenship regime as being increasingly "responsive to market imperatives, local contexts, and specific conditions" (Papillon 2018, 89), all the while contributing in the development of provinces as relatively autonomous political and administrative bodies.

While province-building projects have alternatively led to the emergence of new sites of belonging (Paquet 2018), Canada's citizenship regime's sense of belonging has nevertheless remained largely shaped by two main events that are still relevant today: multiculturalism and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom. Viewed as a nation- building project in and of itself (Winter 2011), the 1971 multiculturalism policy nevertheless "provide[d] a possibility for a pluralistic form of substantive citizenship" (Abu-Laban 2017, 265), eventually becoming a defining characteristic of Canadian belonging. By acknowledging and recognizing differences, multiculturalism not only spurred an enlarged sense of belonging to Canadian society – particularly on the part of immigrants – but simultaneously erected itself in direct opposition to Québec's interculturalist model, which explicitly recognized a French-speaking majority. Today, support for multiculturalism remains strikingly high, both amongst political elites and the general Canadian population (Abu-Laban 2017). The 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms constitutes another nation-building project which has significantly shaped national belonging in Canada. As Bickerton (2018) argues, by recognizing individual rights and freedoms, *as well as* language rights, the Charter alternatively worked to limit the importance of regionalism in Canada and weaken Québec nationalism, thus becoming an integral component of Canadian belonging.

### 7.1.3. Citizenship regimes and social movements

In outlining differences between Canada's and Québec's citizenship regimes, previous work has additionally touched upon the relationship between the state and civil society in general, and

more specifically between the state and social movements. To begin with, governments play an important role in shaping political action, be it in terms of access to resources or funding opportunities (Laforest and Orsini 2005; M. Smith 2005b). Recent research has indeed focused on the relationship between government funding and social movement organizations (Clément 2017; 2019; Chewinski and Corrigall–Brown 2020; Corrigall-Brown and Ho 2017). Not only does government funding impact internal movement dynamics by privileging particular types of organizations (Clément 2019), but the reliance on government funding by SMOs also tends to shape advocacy strategies and activities (Chewinski and Corrigall–Brown 2020). For example, Rodgers and Knight (2011) have shown how women's groups have managed to survive following the decline of state funding by engaging in service provision and adopting other consensus-based strategies. This echoes larger observed trends regarding state recognition of SMOs as service providers through public funding (Clément 2017).

By allocating resources and subsequently privileging particular actors, governments contribute in tracing lines of exclusion and inclusion within particular sectors and amongst civil society organizations (Laforest 2013). When it comes to LGBTQ movements in Canada, M. Smith (2005b) has shown how particular organizations, such as Egale, that have once benefited from public funding, continue to benefit from a privileged access to the federal government through routinized contacts with the state. The type of public policies implemented in a given society also affect protest dynamics, shaping conditions for mobilization (Monforte and Dufour 2011) and informing the nature of claims articulated by social movement actors (Giugni and Passy 2004). As Dobrowolsky and Jenson (2004) underline, "actions of social movement organizations are understood to be profoundly shaped by the policy directions adopted by the governments they seek to influence" (156). They nevertheless add that the "claims mounted [by social movement organizations] depend on the internal life of movements, their resolution of strategic dilemmas, battles over names, representation, and action" (Dobrowolsky and Jenson 2004, 156). It is in that respect that Dufour and Ancelovici (2018) build on the notion of citizenship regime to speak of *protest regimes*, whereby "contemporary struggles unfold in, and are shaped by, an environment inherited from past policies *and* struggles" (170, emphasis added).

The notion of citizenship regime therefore appears to be particularly useful in developing a contextually specific analysis of movement dynamics. As such, it facilitates comparative analyses in

an attempt to explain variations in protest (Dufour and Ancelovici 2018). Although this research does not focus on protest *per se,* it nonetheless aims to understand variations in movement configurations and activities. Moving the analysis upward at the regime-level therefore appears to be of undeniable relevance. What is more, it remains useful in examining contextually specific mobilization in an interactive manner, in spite of its state-centric character (Papillon 2018); it thus allows for a fine-grained analysis of the ways in which individuals, social movement organizations, and political institutions interact with one another. With this in mind, this chapter will attempt to explain how Canada's and Québec's citizenship regimes have not only contributed to shaping Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements, notably in terms of organizational landscapes, but have also informed activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ communities.

## 7.2. Mobilizing in a Québécois citizenship regime: LGBTQ-POC activism in Montréal

As outlined in chapter 1, LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities have constituted part of Montréal's LGBTQ movement since the early 1990s. However, two trends have characterized LGBTQ-POC organizing in Montréal. On the one hand, LGBTQ-POC organizations have been somewhat unsustainable, oftentimes dismantling after a couple of years – with the exception of a relative few, such as Helem Montréal. On the other hand, in spite of their organizational unsustainability, LGBTQ-POC organizations and community initiatives have (re)emerged over the years, ensuring somewhat of a continuous representation of nonwhite realities within Montréal's LGBTQ movement. Providing micro and meso-level analyses, chapters 5 and 6 have offered some light on individual activist paths fueling LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories as well as on organizational dynamics within Montréal's LGBTQ movement. In undertaking a macro-level analysis, I hereby argue that Québec's citizenship regime, characterized by an acute state recognition of LGBTQ rights, a financial opportunity structure that favors the establishment of LGBTQ rights-advocacy organizations, and a historical focus on rights-activism on the part of LGBTQ collective actors, has additionally contributed in (re)producing unequal power relations within the movement, thus shaping LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

In this section, I will (1) examine state recognition of LGBTQ communities in Montréal, including individuals and organizations. I will (2) address the impact of Québec's citizenship regime on Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape. Lastly, I will (3) explore the ways in

which Québec's citizenship regime shapes activists' sense of belonging and identification with LGBTQ communities.

### 7.2.1. State recognition of LGBTQ communities

Québec has been at the forefront of LGBTQ rights recognition in Canada. In 1977, a clause prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation was added in Québec's Charter of Rights and Freedoms[94]. Since then, Québec's political institutions and main political parties, namely the Parti Québécois (PQ) and the Parti Libéral du Québec (PLQ), have enacted their role as LGBTQ-rights providers and defenders. The 2002 recognition of civil unions followed by the 2004 recognition of same-sex marriage – before the 2005 legalization of same-sex marriage by the Canadian state – are testament to this trend. This is not to say that LGBTQ movements have not played an important role in advocating for such legislation. On the contrary, LGBTQ social actors exerted considerable pressure on political institutions to put forward such legislation (Tremblay 2015), all the while participating regularly in parliamentary commissions and consultations.

The 2009 adoption of the *Politique québécoise de lutte à l'homophobie* put forward by the PLQ most likely represents the epitome of contemporary state recognition of LGBTQ communities and organizations in Québec. Not only did this legislation result from vast consultations with LGBTQ collective actors (Bourgois 2017), but it additionally installed a number of measures to ensure the wellbeing of LGBTQ communities in the province. For instance, through its subsequent *Plan d'action de lutte à l'homophobie 2011-2016*, the government explicitly engaged a range of ministries, from the *Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux* to the *Ministère de l'éducation, des loisirs et des sports* and the *Secrétariat à la jeunesse*, and outlined a series of ministerial responsibilities. Moreover, it established specific institutions entirely designated to address LGBTQ issues. First, it provided funding for the creation of a research chair, entitled the *Chaire de recherche sur l'homophobie* (CRH), located at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). Second, the plan called for the establishment of an LGBTQ bureau within the Ministry of justice specifically mandated to pursue and oversee the fight against homophobia. The *Bureau de lutte contre l'homophobie* (BLH) hence oversaw the implementation of the action plan against homophobia and assured its monitoring, all the while managing a

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[94] As detailed in chapter 1, LGBTQ activists played an important role in advocating for such political changes.

governmentally run program designed to reduce and eradicate homophobia in Québec society (Gouvernement du Québec 2009).

As the action plan came to an end in 2016, the government launched another round of public consultations. This resulted in the *Plan d'action gouvernemental de lutte contre l'homophobie et la transphobie 2017-2022,* in which case the state pursued its own conception as the bearer of formal rights for sexual and gender minorities. The official statement by then Québec Premier Philippe Couillard exemplifies this particular vision:

> Since 1977, the year in which Québec included sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the successive governments have taken several actions to combat homophobia and transphobia.
>
> Québec has been a precursor in becoming the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt, in 2009, the *Politique québécoise de lutte contre l'homophobie.* This policy aimed to recognize the lived realities of sexual minorities, to promote their rights and their well-being, as well as to ensure a concerted action.
>
> Today, with the *Plan d'action gouvernemental de lutte contre l'homophobie et la transphobie 2017-2022,* we are pursuing these efforts and we are renewing our commitment to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans individuals[95]. (Gouvernement du Québec 2017, 2, my translation)

The renewed action plan brought together an impressive range of governmental institutions, including the *Directeur de l'état civil;* the *Ministère de la famille*; the *Ministère de la justice;* the *Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux;* the *Ministère de la sécurité publique*; the *Ministère de l'économie, de la science et de l'innovation;* the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur*; the *Ministère de l'immigration, de la diversité et de l'inclusion*; the *Ministère des affaires municipales et de l'occupation du territoire*; the *Ministère des relations internationales et de la francophonie*; the *Ministère du travail, de l'emploi et de la*

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[95] Original excerpt in French: Ainsi, depuis 1977, année où le Québec incluait l'orientation sexuelle au nombre des motifs de discrimination interdits par la Charte des droits et libertés de la personne, les gouvernements qui se sont succédé ont accompli plusieurs gestes significatifs afin de lutter contre l'homophobie et la transphobie. Le Québec a été un précurseur en devenant la première juridiction au Canada à adopter, en 2009, la Politique québécoise de lutte contre l'homophobie. Cette politique avait pour objectif de reconnaître les réalités des personnes de minorités sexuelles, de favoriser le respect de leurs droits et leur mieux-être ainsi que d'assurer une action concertée. Aujourd'hui, avec le Plan d'action gouvernemental de lutte contre l'homophobie et la transphobie 2017-2022, nous poursuivons les efforts entrepris et nous renouvelons notre engagement à soutenir les personnes lesbiennes, gaies, bisexuelles et trans.

*solidarité sociale*; the *Secrétariat à la condition féminine*; the *Secrétariat à la jeunesse*; the *Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones;* and the *Secrétariat aux aînés* (Gouvernement du Québec 2017, 4). With this plan, the government further expressed its will to support the BLH in operating throughout the province and reaching sexual and gender minorities in rural areas. Most importantly, it reaffirmed the Ministry of Justice's responsibility in combatting homophobia and transphobia in Québec society.

The creation of a research chair, the establishment of an LGBTQ bureau at the Ministry of Justice, and the renewal of a governmental action plan not only contributed in further recognizing LGBTQ rights and communities in the province, but also shaped LGBTQ activism in substantial ways. For instance, it allowed – and continues to allow for that matter – LGBTQ civil society organizations to access public funding through the BLH. As part of its mandate, the BLH is indeed committed to financially supporting community-led projects that work to prevent and dismantle prejudices and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Eligible organizations include private enterprises, non-for-profit organizations, local and regional municipalities, as well as governmental and para-governmental ministries and organizations. While the amount may vary over the years, the BLH offered funding up to 50 000$ per project, covering a period of maximum 12 months in its latest 2019-2020 call for projects (Ministère de la justice 2019, 7). Moreover, these initiatives have normalized interactions between the state and civil society organizations, legitimizing the participation of key LGBTQ collective actors in Québec political institutions. However, as it was mentioned in the previous chapter, it has ensued in the marginalization of other LGBTQ collective actors, in particular LGBTQ-POC organizations that are less visible in the public space.

What we are seeing in Québec is a strong presence of the state in recognizing rights to its LGBTQ citizens and instilling responsibilities throughout its political institutions. What is more, and this appears to be one of the main elements distinguishing Québec's citizenship regime from Canada's, the state has created a particular political and financial structure ensuring, to a certain extent, the sustainability of LGBTQ civil society organizations. In addition to accessing resources through existing programs, such as the *Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires* (PSOC), LGBTQ organizations benefit from additional public funding that is explicitly LGBTQ-related. Simply put, not only does the state recognize the community sector as an important political and social actor in Québec, as was previously discussed (Laforest and Phillips 2001; Garon and Dufour

2010), but the state has further recognized the importance of LGBTQ organizations in advocating for social change. At this point, one may even argue that the state has contributed in developing somewhat of an 'LGBTQ public policy sector', illustrating once more the active role that it plays in recognizing LGBTQ rights, citizens, and community organizations. This constitutes an undeniable specificity of Québec's citizenship regime when compared to Canada's[96].

### 7.2.2. *Québec's citizenship regime and Montréal's LGBTQ movement*

Québec's citizenship regime has had an impact on Montréal's LGBTQ movement in several ways, notably financially and organizationally. This has further contributed in (re)producing unequal power relations within the movement, all the while shaping activists' motivations and sense of belonging. In this subsection I will however focus the analysis on (1) the funding mechanisms that ensure Montréal's LGBTQ movement's sustainability and (2) on the ways in which Québec's citizenship regime shapes Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape. I will end by (3) addressing the effect that both of these elements have had on internal power dynamics explored in previous chapters.

#### 7.2.2.1. <u>Funding</u>

Montréal's LGBTQ organizations are funded in a variety of ways. To get a clearer, yet relatively broad, picture of the funding mechanisms that ensure Montréal's LGBTQ movement's sustainability, I have conducted a brief analysis of the available documentation, namely annual reports produced by the organizations that fall within the scope of this study. While I was able to rely on the most recent (2018-2019) annual report for the majority of the organizations under study, I also relied on older reports, dating back to 2014, albeit for a few cases only. When there lacked any annual report, I browsed through organizations' web pages, in which case I was sometimes able to identify the main funding sources.

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[96] Historically, the federal government has rarely implemented LGBTQ-related funding programs, nor has the Ontario government. The current Canadian Liberal government has however announced in early 2020 the creation of a governmentally run program designed to fund LGBTQ-related projects throughout Canada.

After gathering the available documentation, I identified four broad types of funding sources. First, *public-related funding*, which I subdivided into three categories, namely municipal, provincial, and federal. Second, *market-related funding*, which comprises banks and enterprises, with the latter also including private law firms. Third, *community-related funding*, which I subdivided into unions and other civil society organizations (CSOs). This distinction was particularly relevant for identifying funding mechanisms that are specific to Montréal, as will be shown in the analysis below. The last type of funding source consists of *individual donors.*

<div align="center">

*Table IV: Public funding sources of Montréal's LGBTQ organizations*

</div>

| Public Funding Sources | |
|---|---|
| **Municipal** | ♦ Direction générale de la santé publique<br>♦ Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal<br>♦ Bureau des festivals et évènements culturels de Montréal |
| **Provincial** | ♦ Ministère de la famille et des aînés<br>♦ Ministère de la justice (BLH)<br>♦ Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux<br>♦ Ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur<br>♦ Ministère de l'immigration, de la diversité et de l'inclusion<br>♦ Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales (SACAIS)<br>♦ Secrétariat à la jeunesse<br>♦ Secrétariat à la condition féminine<br>♦ Discretionary envelopes from MPs |
| **Federal** | ♦ Canadian Armed Forces<br>♦ Women and Gender Equality Canada<br>♦ Public Health Agency of Canada<br>♦ Employment and Social Development Canada<br>♦ Canadian Institutes of Health Research |

As shown in Table IV, public funding sources are quite varied, in which case all three levels of government have contributed, one way or another, in funding LGBTQ organizations. That being said, provincial funding came across as being the most significant source of funding for LGBTQ

organizations, whereas municipal and federal funding did prove to be relatively marginal. Without much surprise, almost all of the organizations under study have benefitted from BLH funding. However, organizations also sought and obtained funding from a vast range of governmental entities, from the *Ministère de la famille et des aînés* to the *Secrétariat à la condition féminine* and the *Ministère de l'immigration, de la diversité et de l'inclusion*, as well as from MPs' discretionary envelopes. In contrast, federal and municipal funding were most significant for organizations engaging in service provision, such as Rézo, which also operates in the broader HIV/AIDS sector. Figure VII sums up the relative significance of municipal, provincial, and federal funding.
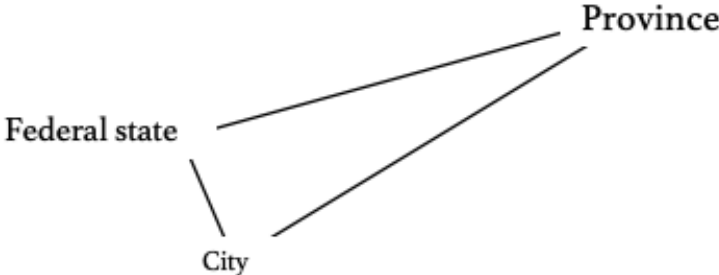


*Figure VII: Significance of public funding across municipal, provincial, and federal levels (Montréal)*

Market-related funding came across as the second most important source of funding for LGBTQ organizations. However, while banks do seem to fund a wide range of organizations, both large and small, enterprises, and in particular private law firms, tend to mostly fund mainstream organizations, such as the Fondation Émergence and Fierté Montréal. This finding does not come as a surprise and further confirms previous studies that have revealed the growing corporatization of LGBTQ movements across Europe and North America (DeFilippis 2018). LGBTQ organizations also received community-related funding, albeit in a smaller amount. What is particularly interesting here is the significance of unions and other locally based LGBTQ organizations that provide this particular type of funding. This marks an important contrast with Toronto, as will be further developed. Finally, individual donors, who either contribute spontaneously or during annual fundraising campaigns are an additionally important source of funding, although more so for large organizations than for smaller ones. For example, individual contributions amounted to 75% of the GRIS-Montréal's 2018-2019 total budget, while governmental funding constituted only 15% of its

revenue, thereby representing 92 875$ (GRIS-Montréal 2019). Table V presents a non-exhaustive list of market and community-related funding sources.

*Table V: Market, community, and individual funding sources of Montréal's LGBTQ organizations*

| Market-related Funding Sources | |
|---|---|
| **Banks** | ♦ National<br>♦ TD<br>♦ Desjardins<br>♦ Scotia |
| **Enterprises (selected)** | ♦ Air Canada<br>♦ Law Firms<br>♦ Telecommunications (Rogers, Telus, Bell, Fido)<br>♦ Lush Cosmetics<br>♦ Casino de Montréal<br>♦ Pepsi<br>♦ Coors Light<br>♦ Trojan |
| **Community Funding Sources** | |
| **Unions** | ♦ CSN<br>♦ CSQ<br>♦ Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement<br>♦ Fédération des professionnelles et professionnels de l'éducation du Québec |
| **Other civil society organizations (selected)** | ♦ Local LGBTQ organizations<br>♦ Appui-Montréal<br>♦ Fondation St-Hubert<br>♦ LGBT Giving Network<br>♦ Student associations |
| **Individual donors** | |

Broadly speaking, one could rightly posit that Montréal's LGBTQ movement is mostly funded through public and market-related means, with community and individually based funding remaining somewhat marginal. While Figure VIII presents the overall responsibility mix pertaining

to Montréal's LGBTQ movement, there nevertheless are important nuances that need to be brought up. First, community-related funding does remain particularly significant for smaller organizations, in which case larger organizations may financially contribute to the former. There thus appears to be some sort of financial solidarity between organizations, although not all organizations benefit from this solidarity; this will be further developed below. Second, market-related funding does vary depending on the organization's size. For instance, large organizations that are increasingly visible rely on large fundraising events, in which case they have the necessary means to attract donors, notably from private law firms. In contrast, smaller organizations tend to receive market-related funding primarily from banks or other socially engaged enterprises. Lush Cosmetics, for example, has been one of Helem Montréal's funding partners.
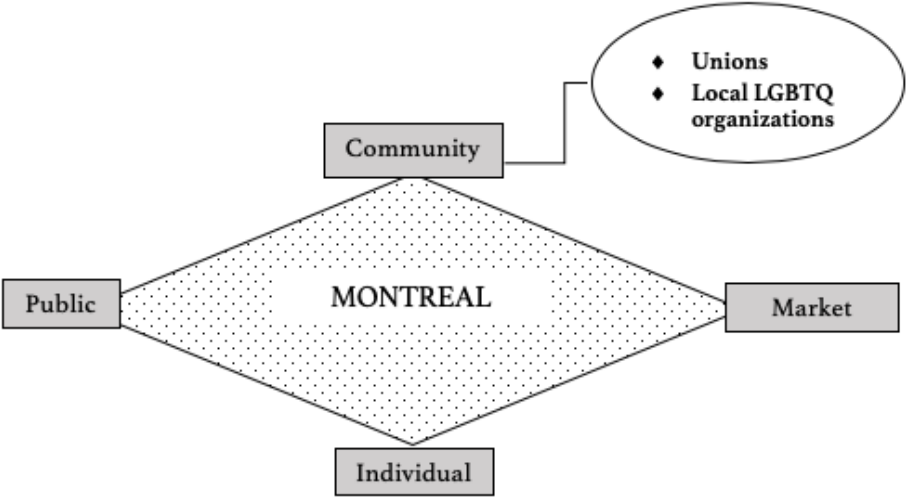


*Figure VIII: Montréal's responsibility mix*

7.2.2.2. <u>Nature of organizations</u>

Montréal's LGBTQ movement is primarily composed of organizations that can be described as advocacy groups, as shown in Figure VI (chapter 4). More precisely, this means that Montréal's LGBTQ organizations engage in activities that tend to be geared towards defending rights and creating awareness amongst the general population. This entails engaging political institutions and

formulating rights-oriented demands, amongst other things. This is not to say that LGBTQ organizations do not additionally provide services. On the contrary, LGBTQ organizations in Montréal do simultaneously engage in advocacy and service provision. For example, AGIR both defends LGBTQ migrants' legal, social, and economic rights, and offers a range of support services to newcomers, including asylum seekers and refugees (AGIR 2018).

Québec's citizenship regime offers some analytical avenues if we are to understand the nature of LGBTQ organizations in Montréal. As Laforest and Phillips (2001) underline, the autonomy of Québec's community sector and its political role as a social actor always came as a major concern. As a result, when the government adopted its 2001 *Politique de soutien aux organismes communautaires*, the state engaged in a codification of its relationship with community organizations; it thereby explicitly recognized the necessity of providing community organizations with non-binding funding (Garon and Dufour 2010). This meant that publicly funded organizations could engage in both advocacy and service provision as they maintained their relative autonomy from the state. This policy thus further distanced Québec's citizenship regime from Canada's, as federal funding took an opposing path. As Clément (2017) found in his study of federal state funding of human rights organizations, changes, read decline, in federal funding has rendered Canadian social movements organizations more inclined in undergoing service provision rather than advocating for rights. This was however not the case in Québec, in part because of the province's particular recognition of the community sector's autonomy. The policy has since remained in effect, in which case LGBTQ organizations that receive PSOC funding can engage in both types of activities.

If we are to fully grasp today's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape, we must however look beyond political institutions and consider the ways in which grassroots organizations have emerged and developed through time. Dufour and Ancelovici (2018) indeed insist on the importance of situating current struggles within their own movement's developmental path. In this regard, inasmuch as state policies have shaped Québec's civil society organizations, the history of Montréal's LGBTQ movement is of equal importance for this narrative, notably as rights-advocacy organizations have historically been at the forefront of the movement. Without laying out at great lengths the development of LGBTQ activism in Montréal[97], it is nonetheless worth revisiting major turning points. As outlined in chapter 1, one of the first LGBTQ organizations that emerged following

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[97] Please refer to chapter 1 for a detailed history of LGBTQ activism in Montréal.

the short-lived Front de libération homosexuel (FLH) was the Association pour les droits des gai(e)s du Québec (ADGQ). Created in the fall of 1976 and in the wake of community responses to increased police repression, such as the Comité homosexuel anti-répression (CHAR), the ADGQ led the advancement of gay rights in Québec throughout the 1970s up until the mid-1980s. For instance, the group exerted sustained pressure on the PQ to modify Québec's Charter of Rights and Freedoms to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination; hence the modification of the Charter in 1977. Moreover, Laurent McCutcheon, a prominent ADGQ activist, later launched two organizations that now occupy a significant place within Montréal's LGBTQ movement, namely Gai Écoute in the 1980s – later renamed Interligne – and the Fondation Émergence in 2000. Both organizations currently engage in service provision and advocacy work, although the former mainly offers support services to LGBTQ communities while the latter mostly acts as a rights-defender, thereby launching various awareness campaigns on a range of LGBTQ-related issues.

While the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s did affect Montréal's LGBTQ communities in serious ways, it did not however have a lasting impact on the role taken up by LGBTQ organizations. With the advent of the 1990s and the resurgence of police repression, rights-oriented activism became once more characteristic of Montréal's LGBTQ movement, as well as of the broader movement at the provincial level. Established in 1993 in the wake of repetitive police raids on LGBTQ communities, the Table de concertation des lesbiennes et gais du Québec (TCLGQ) illustrates the enduring rights-advocacy nature of LGBTQ collective actors in the province. In its attempt to serve LGBTQ communities' needs through rights-recognition, it worked closely with Québec's political institutions, particularly the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ). As such, it participated in the CDPDJ consultations which resulted in the infamous report entitled *De l'illégalité à l'égalité.* In its report, the CDPDJ outlines a series of 40 recommendations intended for the Government of Québec. The TCLGQ pursued its work over the years and was for instance largely involved in the struggle for state recognition of same-sex couples throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s. Now referred to as the *Conseil* Québécois LGBT (CQ-LGBT), it is one of the main interlocuters of the state, mandated to represent LGBTQ communities and defend their rights in the province.

Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape thus appears to be shaped by Québec's citizenship regime. This includes both Québec's recognition of the community sector as a social actor through non-binding funding and the movement's developmental path, centered around

rights-recognition. As a result, Montréal's LGBTQ movement appears to be mainly composed of advocacy groups that pursue a rights-oriented agenda. What is more, LGBTQ service providers also engage in rights-advocacy activities, which is quite striking when one compares with Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape. In addition to shaping Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape, Québec's citizenship regime contributes to the (re)production of unequal power relations within the movement, thereby shaping LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

### 7.2.2.3. <u>LGBTQ-POC organizing as unsustainable</u>

The Québec state has instituted a financial opportunity structure for LGBTQ civil society organizations, hence distributing public funding through the BLH. While there is a general consensus amongst activists regarding the importance of accessing resources through the BLH, research participants have nevertheless evoked how the BLH funding program unfortunately contributes to the reproduction of inequalities within the movement. By functioning on a non-recurrent funding per project basis, the BLH does not work at ensuring an organization's stability or sustainability over the years; in reality, this was never its purpose. Consequently, organizations that wish to obtain core funding, or other types of recurrent funding, need to look elsewhere, and apply for PSOC funding, for instance. Others alternatively turn to private funding sources, such as individual donors, enterprises, and banks.

Activists with whom I met for this research have been quite vocal regarding the inherent inequities fostered by the funding per project mechanism implemented by the BLH. These interwoven inequities include small organizations' lack of resources to submit project proposals that meet institutional criteria, a lack of visibility and contact with state employees that have significant discretionary power, and a general climate of competition amongst LGBTQ organizations. As Kevin explained, the BLH's funding per project program instituted by the *Politique de lutte contre l'homophobie 2011-2016,* systematically disadvantages smaller organizations who do not have the necessary means to properly submit applications or who are not already well established:

> When it comes to funding, there is always a historical aspect. How you ended up getting funding in the first place, for instance. In a context of state disengagement, it becomes quite flagrant, I think. Funded groups, like

[organization X], which manages [project X], has just recently received funding, even though it is extremely important. There is an important disengagement in terms of recurrent funding, which is not the same as funding per project. There are many projects, especially with the *Politique de lutte à l'homophobie et à la transphobie,* and there are many calls for projects. But then again, you need to have the time to fill out an application. Mastering the forms, formulating a project in a way that convinces the state and the public employees that will evaluate your project and grant you the funds, that's not always easy. You need to know how to write these grant applications. Language is also important, and you need to have the time to do it. All of this comes into play[98].

In this regard, well established LGBTQ organizations that have been at the forefront of LGBTQ rights-activism throughout the 1990s and early 2000s benefit from public visibility and state access in such a way that newer, and less visible organizations, including LGBTQ-POC organizations, do not. Meryem further expressed the difficulty for smaller organizations to navigate this public funding apparatus, particularly when organizations are in a survival mode:

There are not that many grants that provide core funding, and that can be a challenge. But when we talk about grants, it's oftentimes funding per project and that is a huge challenge because when we draw up a project, once again you need the expertise, the human resources and the capacities to undertake such project. And once it's over what do we do? There is a lack of core funding and accessing it is very difficult, you need to meet a lot of criteria, and for organizations that are in survival mode and for organizations that need it most, they just can't have it[99].

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[98] Original quote in French: Comment t'as abouti à avoir un financement au départ. Dans un contexte de désengagement de l'État. Flagrant, je pense. Les groupes qui sont financés, je pense à [X], tsé financer [le projet X], la [X] c'est tout récent qu'ils ont un financement de base, pourtant c'est extrêmement pertinent, mais c'est ça il y a tellement peu de groupes communautaires, il y a un désengagement de l'État et on refile un peu les missions, c'est ce que je remarque, des fois le milieu institutionnel refile, bon fait de la référence, mais parfois le financement suit pas. Faque un gros désengagement. En fait on parle de financement récurrent, ce qui est différent du financement par projet. Il y a comme plein de projets, surtout avec la politique de lutte à l'homophobie et la transphobie, il y a plein d'appels à projet. Mais encore une fois il faut avoir le temps de faire une demande de subvention. Maitriser les formulaires, la façon de formuler un projet pour que ce soit vendeur aux yeux de l'État, des fonctionnaires qui vont évaluer ta demande et octroyer les sous, c'est pas évident. Il faut avoir, et ça également il faut maitriser cette façon d'écrire-là, bureaucratique. La langue également, être capable de rédiger, avoir le temps pour le faire. Tout ça, ça rentre en ligne de compte.
[99] Original quote in French: Il y a très peu de subventions à la mission, je me dis que ça aussi ça peut aller dans les défis...Mais c'est ça dans les subventions aussi qu'il y a, c'est souvent des subventions par projet, ça c'est clair que c'est un défi très important parce que quand on monte un projet, encore une fois il faut avoir l'expertise, les ressources humaines et les capacités pour pouvoir monter et proposer ce projet-là et une fois que c'est fini on fait quoi? Il y a très très très peu de subventions à la mission et l'accès est très difficile, il faut avoir plein plein plein de critères, pour des organismes qui sont en mode survie et ceux qui en ont le plus besoin de ce financement ne peuvent pas.

In addition to perpetuating structural inequalities within Montréal's LGBTQ movement, the BLH's funding per project mechanism not only provides public employees who approve funding with significant discretionary power, which advantages well established organizations that maintain normalized contacts with the state, but also fosters competition amongst LGBTQ organizations. Many activists indeed pointed to the fact that as most, if not all, organizations submit project proposals, they are instantly placed in competition with one another. As large organizations who are most visible and who have most access to state officials tend to have a relative advantage, the same organizations receive most of the funding year after year. For Marlyne, former president of an LGBTQ-POC organization, this unequal access to public funding has not only contributed in rendering relationships between organizations somewhat tensed but has also led LGBTQ-POC organizations to seek out resources from private donors.

As mentioned above, private funding has been instrumental in sustaining Montréal's LGBTQ movement. However, while most organizations resort to private funding, they do not necessarily target the same kinds of donors, which further reflects unequal power relations in the movement and sheds light on the unsustainability of LGBTQ-POC organizing. While BLH funding does appear to be favoring mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations, other mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations additionally hold annual fundraising events wherein they manage to attract private donors and raise significant sums of money. This is notably the case for an organization with which Kevin has been involved:

> [Organization X] chose not to focus so much on public funding to have some sort of independence from the state and so it gets most of its funding through private means, through its annual fundraising campaign. These are private donations, wherein people will give out money[100].

In contrast, LGBTQ-POC organizations who turn to private funding mostly target banks and enterprises, as they do not have the visibility to attract numerous donors, nor do they have the resources required to organize large fundraising events in the first place. Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique and Helem Montréal activists with which I have met both revealed how their organizations had indeed turned to private funding. Marc, Helem Montréal's former president, further explained how private

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[100] Original quote in French : [X] a également fait le choix de pas trop axer sur le financement étatique et avoir une dépendance envers l'État donc c'est davantage du financement privé par la campagne de financement qui est une campagne annuelle. Ce sont des dons privés, par des gens qui vont donner.

funding came as an option following the BLH's refusal in funding their proposed project. The organization, who wanted to gather narratives from LGBTQ Arab asylum seekers in a documentary entitled *La cassette migrante*, thus sought funding from Lush, a British cosmetics company. In this respect, unlike mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations who ensure their own sustainability through recurrent private funding, LGBTQ-POC organizations resort to private funding in a sporadic way that is not intended to ensure their sustainability.

What this comes down to is an underfunding of LGBTQ-POC organizations, notably from the state, which renders their sustainability more difficult. Although the Québec state has established some kind of financial opportunity structure for LGBTQ organizations through the BLH, it has nevertheless contributed in (re)producing power relations within the movement. For instance, by recognizing LGBTQ struggles as rights-oriented activism through the establishment of the BLH within the Ministry of Justice, it has somewhat contained and channeled LGBTQ activism as being geared towards advocacy – instead of sexual health, for example. While all agree that having an 'LGBTQ envelope' is of significant importance for LGBTQ communities, it however contributes in fostering competition amongst LGBTQ organizations who end up competing for the same envelope. As a result, larger LGBTQ organizations that are seen as having a wider reach and that already have resources – human, financial and knowledge-wise – hold an undeniable advantage. Furthermore, although state funding remains non-binding, BLH employees still hold significant discretionary power when distributing funding, in which case well established organizations that have a regular access to the state and who are visible once again find themselves in an advantageous position. Beyond shaping Montréal's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape and (re)producing unequal power relations between organizations, Québec's citizenship regime further impacts individual activist paths by informing citizens' sense of belonging and identification to LGBTQ communities.

### 7.2.3. Activist sense of belonging

As previously stated, the notion of citizenship regime allows scholars to shed light on the frontiers of the political community and on the ways in which citizens identify with the former. What is particularly relevant for us and for this research in particular is to understand how social movement participation and activists' sense of belonging inform each other within a particular

regime. Without much surprise, almost all activists interviewed responded in the affirmative when asked if they felt like they belonged to Montréal's LGBTQ community. What is more, participants provided very similar answers when it came to explain why they identified with the community, evoking the necessity to acknowledge previous struggles and pursue the fight to protect legislative gains. However, numerous activists, and in particular LGBTQ-POC participants, underlined how the LGBTQ community was in reality *plural*, preferring to refer to *LGBTQ communities* rather than to a single community. As this section will expose, the identification of a plurality of LGBTQ communities appears to stem from marginalization processes experienced both within Montréal's LGBTQ movement and within Québec's broader society. Overall, activists' particular sense of belonging and social movement participation not only mirrors Québec's citizenship regime, but further seems to be inextricably tied to one's motivation to engage in LGBTQ activism, and more specifically in LGBTQ-POC organizing.

### 7.2.3.1. <u>Sense of belonging: rights-defenders</u>

In spite of slight variations between one's understanding of one's identity, research participants' sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community displayed striking similarities. If all participants identified as LGBTQ individuals, their identification also stemmed from their engagement in the community, from their acknowledgement of previous struggles, and from their intent to pursue the fight for equality and maintain state recognition of LGBTQ citizens.

Many activists intuitively explained how their own sense of belonging seemed to come as a result of their involvement within LGBTQ communities in the city. For instance, Olivia evoked how her involvement in an LGBTQ group contributed in surrounding herself with other LGBTQ individuals in her day-to-day life:

> For a long time it wasn't part of my identity, but as soon as I let it be part of my identity, that's when it came to take up all the space. Cause we are what we do. And so all that I have done since 2014 is being involved in LGBTQ issues. So all of my friends identify as LGBT. Like I seriously don't have any

straight friends anymore. Well I might have one or two, but all of my closest
friends at least are LGBTQ-identifying, cause that has become my thing[101].

Tommy similarly expressed how his own sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community was intimately tied to him being actively involved in the community. Almost as if being part of the community was synonymous to being actively involved in it:

So I am part of the community, I am involved in the community, and I am in a community where, well not everyone, but mostly queer people, even if White queer people can be very racist, but to share a particular vision of society and to be in the same fight against the heterosexual regime and against a heterosexist vision of society and even cissexist. You know, we're all people who share similar values as well, and several oppressions too, so it produces solidarity[102].

For Tommy, people who are actively involved, to a certain extent at least, share similar values that resonate with his own, thereby fostering a certain sense of belonging. Beyond shared values, he rightly points to something that has been repeatedly evoked in interviews, wherein activists felt that they indeed shared similar experiences of oppression that prompted solidarity within the community. As if feeling excluded from the broader political community prompted their sense of belonging to the LGBTQ community. In addition to developing a sense of belonging through active participation, many activists acknowledged previous struggles led by the community. This further contributed to their own understanding of the community as one that has always struggled in gaining recognition from the state. This was notably the case for Laurent Maurice Lafontant who situated his own understanding of the community within a deeper history of LGBTQ struggles:

When we talk about the LGBT community, I will feel concerned, sometimes not, but oftentimes yes. I identify as gay. I identify with the history, with Stonewall, with civil rights for gays. Without this gay rights movement, Arc-

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[101] Original quote in French: Donc pendant longtemps ça n'a pas fait partie de mon identité et à partir du moment où je l'ai laissé être une partie de mon identité, ça a commencé à prendre toute la place. Parce qu'on est ce qu'on fait. Et tout ce que j'ai fait depuis 2014 ce sont des implications LGBT. Donc tous mes amis sont des personnes LGBT. Sérieusement, j'ai plus d'amis hétéros. C'est rendu que j'en ai juste peut-être un ou deux, mais tous mes amis proches en tout cas c'est des personnes LGBT parce que c'est devenu ma bataille.

[102] Original quote in French: Je fais partie de la communauté, je m'implique dans la communauté et je suis dans une communauté où, pas tout le monde, mais souvent plus les personnes queers, même si les personnes queers blanches peuvent être super racistes pareil, mais où on partage une certaine vision de la société et d'avoir la même vision de contestation d'un régime hétérosexuel et d'une vision hétérosexiste de la société et même cisexiste. Ce sont des personnes en fait qui partagent certaines valeurs et aussi certaines oppressions, ce qui crée quand même de la solidarité.

en-ciel d'Afrique could not have existed. I mean if Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique was able to exist, it was because we are in a system, in a province that has given rights to LGBT people in general and if this is the case it's because other people led the fight. So I would say that we are tied to this broader LGBT history. Our festival is called Festival Massimadi LGBT, we use the term LGBT. It's not necessarily homogenous within the community, but this is the term that allows us to understand each other. I will not say Festival Massimadi Montréal Québec without saying LGBT, because we are in a French-speaking province that uses the LGBT term, that's the language of the community, so yes, I identify with the community's history. We walk at Pride, and for me Pride's march is a way to connect with this history, to take place in this history, to be the continuation of that history[103].

Similarly, Camille exposed how both shared conditions of oppression and an active involvement in pursuing collective struggles shaped their own sense of belonging to the community. They expressed how marginalization, resistance, and struggle were constitutive of their identification to the community:

So that's what I was saying earlier, marginalization on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation, and sexuality in general. I mostly identify with the Q [Queer]. More with queerness, with the political aspect of it, deconstructing labels, prejudices, stereotypes. With a lens to deconstruct oppression. So yeah, I identify with the community that fights[104].

In this regard, activists' sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community appeared to be expressed in terms of rights-advocacy. More precisely, this entails acknowledging the struggling character of the community, as one that has a long history of fighting for state recognition and

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[103] Original quote in French: Si on parle de la communauté LGBT, je vais me sentir concerné, des fois oui, des fois non, mais quand même oui. Je m'identifie quand même comme gai, je veux dire. Je m'identifie quand même à l'histoire de Stonewall, à l'histoire des droits civiques pour les gais, je veux dire. Sans ce mouvement des droits civiques des personnes LGBT, Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique n'aurait pas pu exister non plus. Je veux dire si Arc-en-ciel d'Afrique a pu exister c'est parce que on est dans un système, dans une province qui donne des droits aux personnes LGBT en général et si ça a lieu c'est parce qu'il y en a d'autre qui ont fait ce combat. Donc, moi je dirais que oui on est lié à l'histoire générale LGBT, en même temps. Notre festival s'appelle Festival Massimadi LGBT, on utilise les termes LGBT. Ça c'est encore...c'est pas forcément homogène dans la communauté, il y en a d'autre qui...mais moi j'ai quand même dit, bin veut veut pas, c'est quand même les termes qui permettent de nous comprendre. Je vais pas dire Festival Massimadi Montréal Québec sans dire LGBT, on est quand même dans une province francophone qui utilise les termes LGBT, c'est le langage de la communauté, donc oui on s'identifie à l'histoire de la communauté, on défile à la Fierté, donc pour moi défilé à la Fierté c'était une façon de rentrer dans cette histoire, de prendre place dans cette histoire.
[104] Original quote in French: Ce dont je te parlais tantôt, la marginalisation liée à l'identité de genre et à l'orientation sexuelle et à la sexualité en général. Je m'identifie majoritairement au Q, ça c'est drôle, ça tu peux le plugger. Plus à la queerness, la partie politique revendicatrice, déconstruction des étiquettes, des préjugés, des stéréotypes. Avec une lunette de déconstruction des oppressions. Ouin, je m'identifie à la communauté qui lutte.

attempting to gain social, economic, political, and legal rights. This is further exemplified in Marlyne's account:

> Why [do I identify?] Because I have been advocating for this community for the last 7 years. Because when I go out on the street, I am associated with this community anyways. Because I sweat and live it. Why? Because...I adore queer values. Queer feminism, queer equality, even those that are a little bit more center-left as well. There are things that I find important in this, things that resemble other minorities, not just the LGBTQ minority, but also cultural. My brother, for example, is disabled. I think that that is being part of a minority as well, one which we barely talk about. So I think that it is important because we are part of the society, we are active members, we pay taxes, we work, and so it's important to get this recognition[105].

Marlyne's narrative evokes a liberal conception of sexual citizenship, one that is focused on gaining, maintaining, and defending state recognition of individual rights for LGBTQ citizens. What is particularly striking with all of these accounts, particularly when one compares these results with Toronto, is how Montréal's LGBTQ's sense of belonging is very much characterized by an active conception of citizenship. In this regard, activists repeatedly tied their own sense of belonging to previous, current, and future struggles in terms of LGBTQ advocacy, which is not so much the case with Toronto, as will be developed in upcoming sections. Not only has Montréal's LGBTQ movement been mostly oriented towards rights-advocacy, but activists' understanding of belonging to LGBTQ communities also appears to echo this trend.

### 7.2.3.2. Plural communities

While activists characterized their sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community in similar ways, a great deal of LGBTQ-POC participants nevertheless preferred referring to LGBTQ communities – in the plural sense. In so doing, they explained how they somewhat identified with

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[105] Original quote in French: Pourquoi? Parce que je milite dans cette communauté depuis les 7 dernières années. Parce que quand je sors dans la rue on m'associe à cette communauté-là de toute façon. Parce que...je transpire et je vis ça. Pourquoi? Parce que si...bin j'adhère aux valeurs queer quand même. Queer féministe, queer égalité, qui sont un petit peu centre gauche aussi des fois. Il y a des choses que je trouve qui sont importantes là-dedans, qui est pas juste la minorité LGBTQ, mais tsé culturelle, mon frère par exemple est handicapé, je trouve que ça fait partie des minorités aussi dont on parle peu. Donc j'pense que c'est important de..parce qu'on fait partie de la société, on est des membres actifs, on paie nos impôts, on travaille, c'est important qu'il y ait de la reconnaissance.

particular communities within the broader movement, insisting on its heterogenous character. For instance, LGBTQ-POC activists emphasized the significance of their racialized identity, underlining their attachment to the broader LGBTQ-POC community within the movement. In detailing why, they evoked a range of marginalization processes experienced both within and outside the movement. As explained below, this proves to be intimately tied with their motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing.

Marginalization processes not only impact internal movement dynamics, as outlined in the previous chapter, but also inform LGBTQ-POC activists' sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community. For several research participants, getting involved in LGBTQ activism, particularly within white-dominated spaces, proved to be particularly challenging, in which case they became aware of their racialized identity and their political location as 'minoritized others'. As Jennifer explicitly stated:

> I have a tendency to say that we like the gay community as long as we stay away from it. When you start getting involved and you try to find some sense of belonging, particularly when you're an ethnic minority, you start to dislike it and you become very pissed off. You tell yourself, ok, now I'm really shitting myself from all sides[106].

If Jennifer expressed experiencing first-hand racism in the community, Alan instead evoked how there lays an assumption that the LGBTQ community is inherently White identifying. This assumption, accompanied by the invisibilization of nonwhite realities and the perceived exclusiveness of the LGBTQ label, contributed in Alan's sense of belonging to the broader LGBTQ-POC community:

> I think just because I identify as a gay man, or a queer man, that I have to necessarily identify with the community in a particular way, but I wouldn't say there's a whole kind of absorption of myself in the community. Because I think we're at a stage in our political history where if you sort of just say the LGBTQ community, it doesn't necessarily include the POC element. It's not automatically assumed.

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[106] Original quote in French: J'ai tendance à dire, on aime la communauté gaie tant qu'on reste loin. Quand on commence à se mettre proche et qu'on essaie de se trouver un sentiment d'appartenance, en tout cas quand t'es une minorité ethnique, tu commences à moins l'aimer et tu commences à être vraiment en [***]. Tu te dis, 'je me fais chier de tous les bords'.

Marginalization processes experienced within Montréal's LGBTQ movement further mirrored marginalization processes experienced within the broader Québec society. As such, a great deal of LGBTQ-POC activists exposed their reluctance to identify as Québécois. Not only because of the presumed whiteness of Québec's national identity, but most importantly because of the lack of recognition of their Québécois identity by others. Solange rightly laid out her own experience in this matter:

> In contrast, the word Québécois or Québécoise, there is a certain load that comes with it. I feel like when I say Québécois, he is Québécois, or when people meet me, that they ask me 'are you Québécois or Québécoise?', that there is like this idea that when we talk about a Québécois, everyone sees a White catholic. There is an 'us' and 'them'. This means that we cannot become Québécois. We feel like we are born Québécois. Even if we've been here for three generations, as long as we're Black, it's like we are not Québécois. You're not Québécois cause you are Black. Even if we want to identify with it, we feel like we are grafted. We will be grafted to this Québec nation of which we are not a part of. Sometimes people will talk about Neo-Québécois, the newcomers, the immigrants. But when we say we're Québécois, they'll say 'Ah Québécois from diverse origins'. There is always a need to add something to it which is not something I feel when I say that I am Canadian. Yes. With Québec, I fill that I have to defend something whereas I don't have to defend myself when I say that I am Canadian. I can just be me[107].

Solange's understanding of the lack of recognition of her own identity as a Québécoise has been evoked by numerous activists of colour. For Jennifer, this feeling manifested itself following the 1995 referendum and was further exacerbated as politicians held exclusionary discourses pertaining to Québec's national identity:

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[107] Original quote in French: Par contre, le mot Québécois ou Québécoise, il y a une certaine charge qui vient avec. On sent comme quand on dit Québécois, il est Québécois, ou quand on me rencontre, qu'on me dise 'es-tu Québécois ou Québécoise ?', que je dis oui, je vois les yeux qui se questionnent. 'Ah bon, une noire qui dit qu'elle est Québécoise ?' Il y a comme cette forme que quand on parle d'un Québécois tout le monde voit un blanc catholique et où il y a le nous et le eux. Du coup, on ne devient pas Québécois. On a l'impression on naît Québécois ou on appartient à un groupe de Québécois, depuis plusieurs générations. Même si ça fait 3 générations qu'on est ici, tant qu'on est noirs, y'a comme 'non, t'es pas Québécois, t'es noire'. Même si on veut s'identifier à ça, on sent comme si on est greffés. Il y a une sensation de greffe. On va se greffer à cette nation québécoise dans laquelle on ne fait pas partie. Les gens des fois vont parler de Néo-Québécois, les nouveaux arrivants, les immigrants au Québec. Mais quand on dit Québécois, on dit 'ah Québécois d'origine diverse'. Il faut toujours qu'on ajoute ce quelque chose que je ne sens pas quand je dis que je suis Canadienne. Oui. Avec le Québec je sens que je dois me défendre alors qu'avec le Canada je ne me défends pas. Je suis juste comme moi.

Québécois meant something before but it no longer means anything, I know that I am not Québécoise. I was born in Québec, of Haitian origin. Québec culture has influenced me, but am I Québécoise? I no longer label myself that way, it is no longer a source of pride. It's just a fact that Québec culture is a part of me. But in the end, that's what she wanted [Pauline] Marois? Well that's it. That's what they wanted. For them, we are not Québécois, we are Néo-Québécois, we are Allo-Québécois, we are anything but Québécois[108].

In contrast with this lack of recognition on the part of Québec political institutions and society regarding people of colour's identification – or desire to identify – with Québec, activists expressed very positive feelings when it came to identify with the city. One of the main reasons for this consisted of the multicultural character of Montréal, and perhaps the normalized character of the city's racial diversity. As Marc underlined, he can fully be who he wishes to be without feeling marginalized:

The multicultural aspect of it probably. The francophone aspect as well. Yeah, in the end it's a city, it's francophone but it's not just that. I find that it allows me to find a good balance between my two identities. I can be Lebanese, and I can be 'not Lebanese' when I want to. I can be a French-speaking Québécois or be an Arab-speaking Lebanese when I want to. Whereas if I go to Sherbrooke, well the Lebanese identity is like…well there is no Lebanese community like Montréal's. In Montréal there are so many Lebanese or Arab things that we can be connected with this identity if that's what we want, but there are also plenty of other things that exist to disconnect from it when we want[109].

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[108] Original quote in French: Québécois voulait dire quelque chose mais je sais que je suis pas Québécoise. Je suis née au Québec, je suis d'origine haïtienne, ma culture qui m'a influencée est québécoise, mais est-ce que JE suis Québécoise? Je ne me donne plus ce gros label, ce n'est plus une fierté. C'est juste un fait d'être que la culture québécoise m'a influencée et fait partie de moi. C'est ce qu'elle voulait [Pauline] Marois? C'est ça. C'est ce qu'ils ont tous voulu. Pour eux on n'est pas des Québécois, on est des Néo-Québécois, on est des Allo-Québécois, on est tout sauf des Québécois.
[109] Original quote in French: Le côté multiculturel, sûrement. Le côté francophone, beaucoup. C'est ça, dans le fond c'est une ville, francophone, mais pas que. Et je trouve que c'est un bon équilibre entre mes deux identités. Je peux être Libanais et pas Libanais quand je veux. Je peux être Québécois francophone ou Libanais arabophone, quand je veux, alors que si je vais à Sherbooke, le côté Libanais est comme…parce qu'il n'y a pas de communauté autant qu'à Montréal. Alors qu'à Montréal il y a assez de trucs libanais ou arabes qui existent pour faire en sorte qu'on peut rester connectés à ça si on le veut, et il y a assez de choses qui existent pour décrocher de ça si on veut.

This acute sense of belonging to the city of Montréal as opposed to the province of Québec appeared to be an integral part of Montréal's LGBTQ-POC activists' sense of belonging, which is once again exemplified in Rameez's account:

> Québec has a more negative energy attached to it. You'll never hear about somebody talking about a racist Montréaler. But you will hear people talking about a racist Québécois. So I think being exposed to that constantly in my mind, it's been more appealing...not appealing... I am more connected to being a Montréaler than I am to being a Québécois, because I find the values that are within Montréal versus the province as a whole are more clear and more defined as opposed to being a Québécois.

LGBTQ-POC activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ, Québec, and Montréal's communities therefore transpired in the ways in which they participated in Montréal's LGBTQ movement. To begin, just like other White-LGBTQ activists, LGBTQ-POC activists did feel some sense of belonging to Montréal's LGBTQ community, developed in part through an active participation in the movement. However, their marginalization as 'racialized others' both within the movement and within Québec's broader society generated feelings of exclusion, shaping people of colour's motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing. Feelings of exclusion experienced within Québec society were nonetheless accompanied by feelings of inclusiveness with regards to Montréal, on the basis of perceived recognition on the part of the city and of other citizens.

### 7.3. Mobilizing in a Canadian citizenship regime: LGBTQ activism in Toronto

LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities have continuously constituted part of Toronto's LGBTQ movement since the early 1980s. As detailed in chapter 1, they have proved to be quite sustainable, particularly since the late 1980s and early 1990s. In contrast with Montréal, we have observed a constant presence of LGBTQ-POC organizations in Toronto for over 20 years, in spite of their relative marginalization within the broader LGBTQ movement. In this section I posit that Canada's citizenship regime, characterized by an ambivalent relationship between the Canadian state and its LGBTQ citizens, a social-policy conception of LGBTQ issues that entails a delegation of political responsibility to provincial and local governments, and a historical focus on sexual-health activism on the part of LGBTQ actors, has had a dual effect on LGBTQ-POC organizing. On the one hand, it has consolidated a health-related financial opportunity structure that

has allowed for the emergence and maintenance of LGBTQ-POC organizations; on the other hand, it has limited the advocacy-work capacity of such organizations by containing them into a service provision role.

In this section, I will (1) address state recognition of LGBTQ communities, including both individuals and organizations, by the federal government. I will (2) examine the impact of Canada's citizenship regime on Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape, looking at funding sources and the nature of organizations. In the last subsection I will (3) outline the ways in which Canada's citizenship regime informs activists' sense of belonging and identification with LGBTQ communities.

### 7.3.1. State recognition of LGBTQ communities

Criminal Code provisions have historically prohibited and penalized a range of sexual practices between same-sex partners in Canada. The Criminal Code being of federal jurisdiction, it has thus contributed in fostering a tense and ambivalent relationship between LGBTQ individuals and the Canadian state, in which case LGBTQ individuals have longed to be recognized as full citizens by the state (G. Kinsman and Gentile 2010). While the federal government did proceed in removing some of these provisions in its 1969 omnibus bill, it has kept in place other discriminatory provisions (M. Smith 2019). For some, this legislation has unfortunately contributed in 'recriminalizing' same-sex relationships, all the while facilitating an intensification of police raids on LGBTQ social spaces (Hooper 2019). As thoroughly developed in chapter 1, the 1969 omnibus bill nevertheless generated significant protest on the part of LGBTQ activists, rendering the federal state a target of the movement.

As the province of Québec was introducing sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination in its Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1977, and as the city of Toronto had already passed a motion in October of 1973 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Chambers et al. 2017), the federal state still lacked such provisions. Indeed, the partial decriminalization of homosexuality in 1969 had not translated into human rights protections for sexual minorities (G. W. Kinsman 1996). It is in that respect that the advent of the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms represented an opportunity for the state to further recognize its

LGBTQ citizens and protect them from discrimination (M. Smith 2008). Section 15 of the Charter, which came into effect in 1985, thereby promised equality rights by enlisting a series of prohibited grounds of discrimination. While sexual orientation was not explicitly stated as a prohibited ground of discrimination, "the open-ended listing of grounds of discrimination opened up the possibility that sexual orientation might be 'read in' to the Charter (or informally added) through court decision" (M. Smith 2005b, 85). Inasmuch as section 15 of the Charter constituted an important milestone in the legal recognition of LGBTQ rights, state discrimination pursued for several years. The continuous systematic surveillance, identification and exclusion of LGBTQ individuals serving in the Canadian military and working in the federal public sector up until the 1990s, also known as the 'LGBTQ purge', are testament to such persistent discrimination (McDonald 2019). Although legal advances have been observed since, M. Smith (2019) reaffirms that the "federal-government [has had] a long-standing failure to reform criminal laws that encapsulate formal-legal inequality of lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals, compared to straights" (2). What is more, the ways in which the Canadian state has recognized LGBTQ rights over time has fostered a liberal, homonormative, and homonationalist conception of sexual citizenship in Canada (M. Smith 2019; Lenon and Dryden 2015; Grundy and Smith 2005), thus excluding other marginalized queer subjects[110].

In addition to lagging behind in terms of individual LGBTQ rights recognition, the Canadian state has yet to thoroughly recognize LGBTQ organizations that are part of the broader voluntary sector. Without developing at great length what has already been said earlier about Canada's relationship with the voluntary sector, it is worth mentioning that some of the changes undergone by the Canadian state in light of neoliberalism and the neoliberal policies that followed throughout the late 1980s and the 1990s, have impacted LGBTQ organizing in two ways. First, by engaging in a shift from advocacy to service provision, the state has further constrained voluntary organizations' capability in undergoing advocacy work by imposing conditionalities on federal funding. In doing so, it has materialized its reluctance to recognize voluntary organizations as political actors, as opposed to the Québec state, which has maintained non-binding funding (Laforest and Phillips 2001; White 2012). Second, the shift towards service provision has been accompanied by a downloading of service provision responsibilities to non-profit, community-led organizations. For LGBTQ organizations, this was further impactful considering the integration of LGBTQ issues within social policy sectors, such

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[110] Such as polyamorous and non-binary individuals, as well as other LGBTQ citizens who do not correspond to a 'Western LGBTQ norm'.

as health and education. Henceforth, the downloading of service provision responsibilities to community-led organizations is in this case intertwined with a delegation of LGBTQ-related political responsibilities to provincial and local governments.

As social policies, such as health and education, are of provincial jurisdiction (White 2012), LGBTQ organizations increasingly turn to Ontario's government to access funding. While the relationship between LGBTQ organizations and the Ontario government is not as strong as what we have observed in Québec (M. Smith 2005b), the provincial response to the AIDS crisis has had a substantial effect on LGBTQ organizations and on the inscription of LGBTQ struggles within broader HIV/AIDS and sexual-health struggles; an effect that has not been seen in Québec. Simply put, it has somehow consolidated the province's LGBTQ organizations, and in particular locally based community-led organizations, in their role as service providers attending to the needs of marginalized communities, rather than serving as rights-defenders. As opposed to what we are seeing in Québec, there is a stronger disconnect between the work undertaken by local Toronto LGBTQ organizations that is best characterized as service provision and the work undertaken by Ontario LGBTQ organizations that also operate on a pan-Canadian scale, like Egale, which rather consists of rights-advocacy (M. Smith 2005b). The recognition of LGBTQ organizations as service providers, the diffusion of LGBTQ issues throughout various social policy sectors that are of provincial jurisdiction, and the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and early 1990s, have thus impacted Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape by fostering the emergence of a particular form of LGBTQ-POC organizing, namely E-ASOs. While the emergence of E-ASOs has been thoroughly detailed in chapter 1, I will further develop on this in the upcoming subsection.

Overall, the federal state's recognition of LGBTQ issues has been articulated around a rights-centered agenda. However, through its recognition of the voluntary sector's service provision role and through its downloading of service provision responsibilities to community-led organizations, it has yet to recognize locally based LGBTQ organizations' role as rights-advocates. This is further enmeshed through a diffusion of LGBTQ issues in a range of social policy sectors that are of provincial jurisdiction. As such, it does not appear to recognize LGBTQ issues as constitutive of a distinct 'LGBTQ policy sector' wherein the federal state might play an active role. For instance, in comparison with the Québec state, the Canadian state has not established specific LGBTQ institutions, nor has it rendered funding available specifically for LGBTQ organizations.

I must however mention at this point that Justin Trudeau's 2015 election has marked somewhat of a turning point in this matter. Following the 2015 election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appointed MP Randy Boissonnault as his Special Advisor on LGBTQ2 issues. Then, in 2017, he announced the creation of an LGBTQ2 Secretariat within the Privy Council Office[111] with an aid of $3.6 million over three years, as included in the 2017 federal budget. At the time, the Secretariat did not have any funding program; it only linked LGBTQ social actors with other relevant federal organizations that could potentially provide funding (Government of Canada 2018). In early 2020, the government nevertheless launched a program designed to fund LGBTQ community-led projects across the country, for a total of $20 million (Canada 2020). With this in mind, the Canadian state seems to want to play a greater role in recognizing LGBTQ civil society organizations, though it is a bit too early to confirm this particular trend. The analysis presented herein nevertheless rests upon an understanding of Canada's citizenship regime up until 2020, in which case it is possible that we are currently witnessing a regime change.

### 7.3.2. Canada's citizenship regime and Toronto's LGBTQ movement

Canada's citizenship regime as exposed above has inevitably shaped Toronto's LGBTQ movement financially and organizationally. In contrast with Montréal, Canada's citizenship regime has however had a dual effect on LGBTQ-POC organizing in the Ontario capital. While the fragmentation of LGBTQ issues within a range of social policy sectors, notably health, coupled with the 1980s AIDS crisis, have created somewhat of a financial opportunity structure for LGBTQ-POC organizations. However, the cemented service provision role taken on by these organizations – accompanied by historically bounded federal funding – has limited their advocacy-work capabilities. In this subsection, I will elaborate on (1) the funding mechanisms that support Toronto's LGBTQ movement and (2) on the ways in which Canada's citizenship regime has shaped the city's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape. I will then (3) address the impact that these prior elements have had on the internal movement dynamics explored in the previous chapter, and more specifically on LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto.

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[111] The Secretariat has since been moved to Canadian Heritage.

### 7.3.2.1. Funding

While there has historically been no federal, nor Ontario funding structure specifically designed for LGBTQ organizations as is the case in Québec, Toronto's LGBTQ organizations have nonetheless had access to various types of funding. As was done for Montréal, I have gathered the available documentation in order to have a clearer idea of the funding mechanisms that ensure Toronto's LGBTQ movement's sustainability. I thereby relied on the most recent annual report (2018-2019) for most of the organizations under study. However, several advocacy groups lacked annual reports, as these tend to be somewhat more informal than Montréal's, running almost entirely on a voluntary basis with insufficient funds. The fact that these groups do not produce annual reports further reveals a striking difference between Québec and Canada's state recognition of locally based advocacy groups. Nevertheless, four types of funding were identified, namely public, market-related, community-related, and individually based funding.

*Table VI: Public funding sources of Toronto's LGBTQ organizations*

| Public Funding Sources | |
|---|---|
| **Municipal** | ♦ Toronto Public Health<br>♦ City of Toronto Community Service Partnerships<br>♦ Toronto Arts Council |
| **Provincial** | ♦ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care<br>♦ ACCESS Employment<br>♦ Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration<br>♦ Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services<br>♦ Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)<br>♦ Ontario Disability Support Program |
| **Federal** | ♦ Public Health Agency of Canada<br>♦ Canadian Institutes of Health Research<br>♦ Citizenship and Immigration Canada<br>♦ Employment and Social Development Canada<br>♦ Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFATD) |

Table VI presents public funding sources across all three levels of government. As such, all three levels of government contribute one way or another in funding Toronto's LGBTQ movement which, at first glance, resembles Montréal's situation. It must however be mentioned that in comparison with Montréal, federal funding represents a significant source of funding for a range of LGBTQ organizations in Toronto. Service providers operating in the broader HIV/AIDS sector are indeed all supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Municipal funding is similarly much more significant than in Montréal, in which case Toronto Public Health funds numerous projects undergone by locally based service providers. Provincial funding is additionally substantial. While organizations do seek funding from a range of governmental entities, the Ontario AIDS Bureau located within the ministry of Health and Long-Term Care remains the most significant provincial contributor. Figure IX presents the relative significance of municipal, provincial, and federal funding for Toronto's LGBTQ organizations.
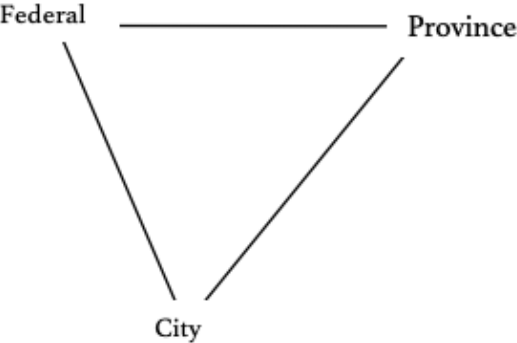


*Figure IX: Significance of public funding across municipal, provincial, and federal levels (Toronto)*

In addition to public funding, Toronto's LGBTQ movement is further sustained through market-related means, which represent an equally important source of funding as it did for Montréal's LGBTQ organizations. In Toronto, however, market-related means represent the main source of revenue for organizations that do not necessarily operate in the broader HIV/AIDS sector, such as the 519 Church Street Community Center and Rainbow Railroad. As such, banks, private law firms, and a wide range of enterprises, from airlines to brewing companies, support Toronto's LGBTQ organizations. This is particularly the case for Pride celebrations which rely upon a range of

sponsorships. In contrast with Montréal, community and individually based funding do not constitute marginal revenues; on the contrary, they are quite significant. On this particular note, it is worth highlighting that community-related funding does not refer to unions or other locally based LGBTQ organizations. Instead, it is comprised of a wide range of foundations that operate on municipal, provincial, and federal levels, and that are not necessarily LGBTQ-specific. Finally, individual donors represent a significant source of revenue for *all* organizations. Table VII provides a non-exhaustive list of market and community-related funders.

*Table VII: Market, community, and individual funding sources of Toronto's LGBTQ organizations*

| **Market-related Funding Sources** | |
|---|---|
| **Banks** | ◆ BMO<br>◆ TD<br>◆ RBC<br>◆ Scotia<br>◆ CIBC |
| **Enterprises (selected)** | ◆ Delta Air Lines<br>◆ Law Firms<br>◆ Telecommunications (Telus, Bell, Fido)<br>◆ Labatt Brewing Company<br>◆ Bud Light<br>◆ Trojan |
| **Community Funding Sources** | |
| **Civil society organizations (selected)** | ◆ United Way<br>◆ MAC AIDS Foundation<br>◆ Viiv Healthcare<br>◆ Community One Foundation<br>◆ Ontario Trillium Foundation<br>◆ Ontario HIV Treatment Network<br>◆ Canada Post Community Foundation<br>◆ Slaight Family Foundation<br>◆ Toronto Community Foundation<br>◆ Dawn Tattle Family Foundation<br>◆ Freedom House<br>◆ Broadway Cares<br>◆ Women's College Research Institute<br>◆ Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research (CANFAR)<br>◆ Aviva Foundation |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ♦ Toronto Circle of Care<br>♦ Centre de la coopération de l'Ontario<br>♦ Centre francophone de Toronto<br>♦ Reflet Salvéo |
| **Individual donors** | |

Toronto's LGBTQ movement appears to be equally sustained by all four types of funding identified in the analysis presented herein, as shown in Figure X. Evidently, there are nuances that need to be evoked to clarify this portrait. First, as there lacks a public financial structure specifically designed for LGBTQ organizations, not all LGBTQ organizations benefit from public funding. While service providers operating in the broader HIV/AIDS sector do receive funding from all three levels of government, other organizations that somewhat operate in the broader rights-advocacy sector increasingly turn to market, community, and individually based funding. For instance, almost half of Rainbow Railroad Canada's revenue for 2018 came from general donations, including individuals and foundations, totaling 1,264,696$ (Rainbow Railroad 2019). Second, inasmuch as the type of primary funding (public, market, or community-related) may vary depending on the organization's role, be it an HIV/AIDS service provider, a general service provider or a rights-advocacy organization, individual donors represent a significant secondary source of revenue for all organizations under study.
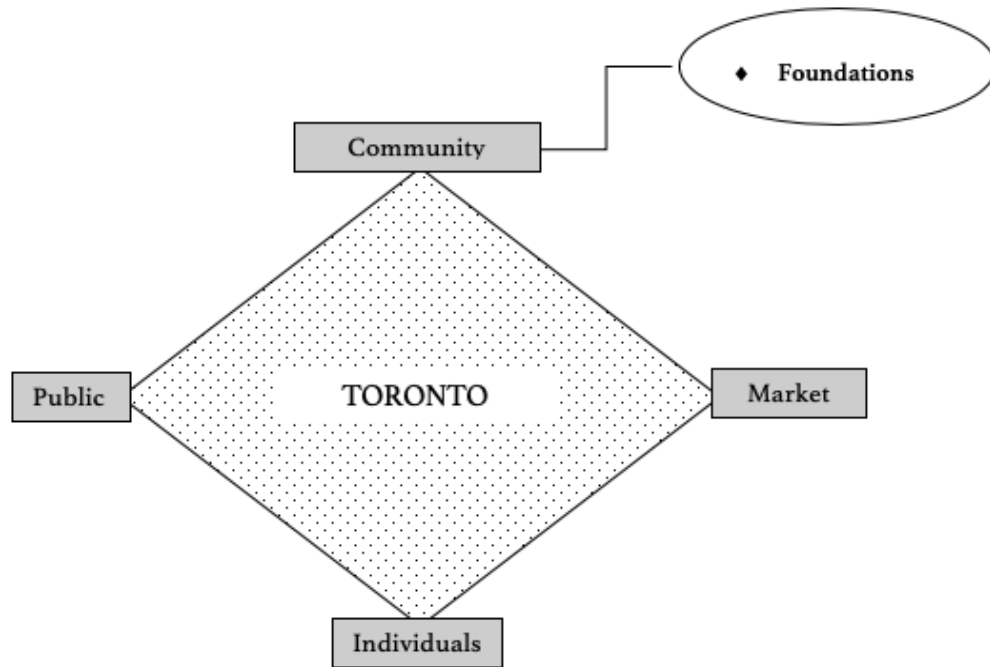
*Figure X: Toronto's responsibility mix*

### 7.3.2.2. Nature of organizations

Toronto's LGBTQ movement today is mainly composed of organizations that engage in service provision, as shown in Figure V (chapter 4). This entails providing services to LGBTQ communities that range from holding weekly support groups to individual meetings with professional counselors, such as social workers and psychotherapists, amongst other things. Simply put, it is increasingly centered around the *needs* of its communities rather than around its *rights* (M. Smith 2005b). This is not to say that rights-advocacy is not a concern for Toronto's LGBTQ movement, on the contrary. There are indeed organizations that engage in rights-advocacy, such as FrancoQueer and the Anti-69 network[112]; yet, the majority of Toronto's LGBTQ organizations remain predominantly geared towards service provision.

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[112] The Anti-69 network is not limited to Toronto and does hold activities across Canada. It is however a Toronto-based initiative.

Canada's citizenship regime does provide enlightening pieces of information in this matter, notably when one looks at the federal recognition of community-led organizations. For a long period of time, federally recognized non-profit organizations (NPOs) were not exempt from federal tax if more than 10 percent of their time was invested into advocacy work (White 2012). This provision thereby substantially constrained NPOs into a service provision role, and in so doing limited their political advocacy work. As of December 2018, this specific provision has however been removed from the Income Tax Act, in which case the distinction between advocacy and non-advocacy work is no longer in effect (International Center for Not-for-profit Law 2019). While this legislative change provided organizations with a possibility to expand their advocacy work, the long-term effect of the previous provision did limit their capacity in doing so.

The diffusion of LGBTQ issues into social policy sectors that are of provincial jurisdiction further contributed in constraining LGBTQ issues as health-related issues, thereby cementing LGBTQ organizations into a service provision role. More precisely, the financial opportunity structure outlined above provided somewhat of an incentive for LGBTQ organizations to pursue HIV-related mandates. Indeed, several activists with whom I have met underlined how pursuing an HIV-related mandate appeared to be the only way to access significant funding. This was notably the case for FrancoQueer, an organization for French-speaking LGBTQ individuals in Toronto. As there lacked funding for non-HIV related LGBTQ organizations, and as FrancoQueer identified a need to provide HIV-related services to French-speaking LGBTQ individuals, it ended up creating Action Positive, an HIV/AIDS organization. As FrancoQueer and Action Positive's cofounder, Jean-Rock, recalled:

> At that time, the ministries, the Ontario AIDS Bureau or Canada's ministry of Health did not provide funding for organizations that were not exclusively dedicated to HIV. And so, FrancoQueer was not exclusively dedicated to HIV, and we did not want it to be that, we wanted it to remain LGBT. So we figured that we should create another organization. So we created Action Positive, backed by FrancoQueer. FrancoQueer paid the 75$ required to register Action Positive and FrancoQueer's board members became Action Positive's board members along with others[113].

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[113] Original quote in French: À l'époque les fonds, les ministères, le bureau du sida de l'Ontario ou le ministère de la santé du Canada, ils ne donnaient pas de fonds à des organismes qui n'étaient pas exclusivement dédiés au VIH. Alors donc, FrancoQueer n'était pas exclusivement dédié au VIH, on voulait pas que ce soit ça, on voulait que ce soit LGBT. On a dit 'bin on va créer un autre organisme. On va créer Action Positive et FrancoQueer va favoriser l'émergence'. FrancoQueer a

While FrancoQueer and Action Positive still coexist today, with FrancoQueer accessing funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services of Ontario and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) (FrancoQueer 2019), the province still lacks specifically LGBTQ-related funding programs. As Jean-Rock rightly put it:

> There aren't many LGBT envelopes. HIV envelopes, those are numerous, the province puts close to $100 million per year in the fight against HIV. But LGBT...not so much. LGBT initiatives in Ontario are very limited[114].

This is not to say though that HIV/AIDS organizations in Toronto do not pursue any kind of specifically LGBTQ-related agenda. Instead, as Haran, ASAAP's Executive Director, underlined, it simply means that other LGBTQ-related issues, such as homophobia, are conceived as being intimately tied with AIDS[115]. AIDS organizations therefore become somewhat all-encompassing of broader LGBTQ struggles, which does not come without difficulties, as Haran explained:

> We are really worried because our organization is funded, our core funding is the ministry of Health and Long-Term Care from the AIDS bureau. So you know, with Doug Ford going in with this whole slash and burn mentality, of all of the things that those who are marginalized need, like social assistance, or those who need education around physical and health education, curriculum, so he's just going in and slashing it, so we are king of worried with what is going to happen with that core funding of $315 000 a year that we get from the ministry. Because his brother did the same thing with the city, Rob Ford, he actually was on course to cut funding for public health related stuff as well as the libraries and the recreational pools and stuff like that, stuff that all offer subsidized programming to the marginalized. And also HIV, it's great because HIV is a manageable chronic illness now, which then allows community health centers to take that work on and organizations like ours, we don't know how the public health and all of the funding...but we have to look at how we access fundraising dollars and increase our fundraising dollars, or how do we, as an organization, morph into something that really can contribute to the organization outside of HIV but be very inclusive of HIV

payé le 75$ pour enregistrer Action Positive. Et des membres du Conseil de FrancoQueer sont devenus membres du conseil d'Action Positive avec d'autres monde.

[114] Original quote in French: Il n'y a pas beaucoup d'enveloppe LGBT. Les enveloppes VIH ça il y en a beaucoup, la province met pas loin de 100 millions par années dédié au VIH. Mais LGBT, très très peu. Les initiatives LGBT en Ontario sont très minces.

[115] "What [Québec] do[es] with homophobia, we do with HIV. And so addressing homophobia sort of falls into that pot. It's affiliating it as a disease rather than addressing it as an issue separately on its own." (Haran)

and LGBT health. So it's to find that fine balance as to how do we do that and honor people's lives and experiences and the root of this organization as we move forward.

What this comes down to is a constrained role for many LGBTQ organizations that have pursued an AIDS-related mandate. As Haran's account reveals, the enduring effect of the political and financial structure ensuring these organizations' work has somewhat limited the organizational capacity to morph into another kind of LGBTQ organization, for instance one that engages in advocacy. That being said, this organizational path dependency further appears to stem from previous struggles in the city. Indeed, when we look at the evolution of Toronto's LGBTQ movement over the years, we observe a relative institutionalization of the movement, and in particular of AIDS-related struggles from 1980s and the 1990s onward. This institutionalization is not only reflected through a consolidated institutional and financial structure ensuring AIDS-related service provision, as described earlier, but is also echoed in an observed professionalization of many longstanding AIDS-related LGBTQ service providers that remain active today.

In response to the 1980s AIDS epidemic, a small group of community activists, including members of the gay community, created the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) (Robertson 2016). Now one of the largest HIV/AIDS organizations in Canada, ACT works at educating, reducing HIV prevalence, and ensuring the dignity and wellbeing of people living with HIV and AIDS, amongst other things. As Warner (2002) puts it, community activism became very much focused on providing AIDS-related services: "The still very limited community resources were put into fighting illness and death, conducting education, and researching the cause of AIDS. Little was left for small grass-roots community groups working on other issues. Trying to achieve lesbian and gay liberation and pursuing human rights advocacy were de-emphasized" (163). Without a doubt, AIDS activism in the 1980s was very much rendered possible because of previous work undergone by gay and lesbian activists in the 1970s. In fact, these activists were central in the fight against AIDS, becoming key organizers, and subsequently intertwining LGBTQ and AIDS activism (M. Smith 1998). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Toronto then saw the proliferation of AIDS organizations, such as the People living with AIDS Coalition (PWA), later renamed the PWA Foundation, and other E-ASOs like Black CAP, ASAAP, and ACAS; a proliferation that was not necessarily observed in Montréal. While AIDS organizations gained relative independence from the broader movement at around the same time, due in part to increased available government funding (Warner 2002), LGBTQ activism remained

very much tied to AIDS; hence the concerns raised by activists regarding an acute de-politicization of gay and lesbian activism. In spite of attempts to (re)politicize AIDS activism, with the advent of ACT UP for instance, the 1990s nevertheless saw the institutionalization of community-led AIDS organizations. As such, "many of the once small, volunteer-based organizations had become large bureaucracies, with big budgets, sizeable staff, income derived from government grants, lucrative fund-raising campaigns and, increasingly corporate sponsorships" (Warner 2002, 254). In that respect one might suggest that the lack of a governmentally run financial structure ensuring state recognition and state funding of Toronto's rights-advocacy LGBTQ organizations, as opposed to Montréal, somehow prevented the reconfiguration of LGBTQ activism as being possibly turned towards rights-advocacy[116].

Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape overall appears to be shaped by Canada's citizenship regime. This entails a federal recognition of voluntary organizations as service providers through historically bounded funding, a diffusion of LGBTQ issues through social policy sectors that are of provincial jurisdiction, and the movement's developmental path, substantially shaped by the AIDS epidemic. As there lacked substantial federal state – and provincial, for that matter – recognition and subsequent funding of organizations that mainly engaged in advocacy work at a local scale, the Ontario AIDS financial structure established throughout the 1980s seems to have had a long-lasting impact on Toronto's LGBTQ movement. Toronto's LGBTQ movement today thus appears to be mainly composed of service providers, many of whom also operate within the broader HIV/AIDS sector.

### 7.3.2.3. LGBTQ-POC organizing as marginalized, yet sustainable

Canada's citizenship regime, and its impact on the funding and nature of Toronto's LGBTQ organizations, has impacted LGBTQ-POC organizing in several ways. First, it has provided a window of opportunity that has resulted in the establishment of E-ASOs, ensuring somewhat of a sustainability for LGBTQ-POC organizing in the city. As such, the provincial and local financial

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[116] Again, this is not to say that Toronto's LGBTQ movement lacks rights-advocacy organizations or activism. It instead means that the historical intertwining of LGBTQ and AIDS activism, coupled with the availability of public funding for AIDS-related service provision, have rendered AIDS a main concern for LGBTQ communities, additionally shaping the nature of Toronto's LGBTQ organizations. In contrast, the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE), which exerted pressure on the Toronto City Council to adopt its 1973 motion and which was involved in other rights-advocacy activities, was short lived and did not morph into another kind of rights-advocacy organization.

structure established in response to the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, coupled with the lack of culturally specific approaches to service provision by the main AIDS organizations, have contributed in the development of E-ASOs, which constitute a major form of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto. As thoroughly developed in chapter 1, Black CAP, ACAS, and ASAAP have all been launched following an identified need, on the part of activists that were previously involved in other LGBTQ-POC advocacy-oriented organizations, to cater to communities of colour in the city. While obtaining the necessary funds to pursue their activities did not prove to be an easy task *per se*, the existing – and long-lasting – financial structure did provide the sufficient funds for these organizations to become well-established. For instance, as opposed to LGBTQ-POC organizations in Montréal, E-ASOs have become quite professionalized. Black CAP, ACAS, and ASAAP all have an Executive Director, as well as additional paid staff. From what I have observed while conducting fieldwork in Montréal and Toronto, having paid staff, and in particular an Executive Director, does open up the possibilities for securing additional funds, thereby increasing and organization's chances at ensuring its own sustainability. This does not mean that E-ASOs do not face any difficulties, nor that they are in a well secured place in the broader voluntary sector. As Giwa and Greensmith (2012) reaffirm, although they appear to be better funded than other LGBTQ-POC organizations in Montréal, they remain relatively underfunded when compared to other mainstream-white-dominated LGBTQ organizations or other HIV/AIDS organizations in Toronto.

Second, as formal LGBTQ-POC organizations have found their advocacy work capacities limited through time, it has somehow left a void for those wanting to advocate for social change. Not only has this void been partially filled by more informal collectives like Black Lives Matter Toronto, it has additionally fell upon the shoulders of individuals. For example, in the wake of the Bruce MacArthur case, Shakir, who was a Board member of ASAAP, initiated pressure on the Toronto Police Services (TPS), calling for a civilian review of how the TPS was conducting missing persons review. While this process was initiated by Shakir, and backed by ASAAP, it nevertheless represented somewhat of a burden on the shoulders of Shakir:

> The harder thing was feeling that individual burden as a person. Because I felt that every meeting that I was in, not only...it was just not about me, it was about the whole community and my advocacy was for that so certainly there were times when a senior advisor from the mayor's office is like 'well you're being combative, why are you being combative?' And I was like...'you have to understand the burden I feel right now and the stakes'. And there

was a certain point where I was glad to step back because it was so high profile and so important that you felt every possible challenge, it wasn't just an assignment or this or that it was oh my gosh now the whole process can be derailed. And then on top of that it was just me and our ED [Executive Director] and our pro bono lawyers, there wasn't, this wasn't like a team available. Everyone was working together but...so it was just the personal demand and time that was a massive...so that was definitely challenging.

It is important to note that the backing of this advocacy-related initiative by ASAAP was in part rendered possible following the 2018 legislative change concerning the federal recognition of NPOs. However, as the organization did not necessarily have the resources, nor the knowledge, to undertake such activity, Shakir's own experience as a lawyer did facilitate this entire process. Overall, what this comes down to is Canada's citizenship regime's dual effect on LGBTQ-POC organizing. On the one hand, it appears to have opened up a window opportunity for the emergence of E-ASOs, which has ensured – to some extent at least – their sustainability. On the other hand, it has constrained LGBTQ-POC organizing into a service provision role, thus leaving advocacy work in the hands of informal collectives and other individuals.

### 7.3.3. Activist sense of belonging

Beyond shedding light on internal movement dynamics, the notion of citizenship regime provides a pertinent analytical lens to further our understanding of citizens' sense of belonging to specific political communities; an understanding that appears to be inextricably linked to one's motivation to engage in LGBTQ activism. Not only do citizenship regimes trace the boundaries of the political community, and in this case LGBTQ communities, but they also substantially inform *how* citizens come to identify with these communities. On this particular matter, results showed how Montréal activists tended to express their sense of belonging in terms of rights-advocacy, thereby echoing the ways in which the Québec state has engaged with LGBTQ issues and the ways in which LGBTQ activism has developed in the province. As this section will outline, Toronto activists, while positively identifying with the city's LGBTQ community, increasingly perceive themselves as service-providers, once more mirroring a particular citizenship regime that differs from Québec's. In spite of identifying differently with the community, Toronto's LGBTQ-POC activists were also manifold in speaking of *plural communities,* thus explaining, to some extent at least, the similarities between Montréal and Toronto's activist motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing.

Canada's citizenship regime, which implies an understanding of LGBTQ issues as being primarily health-related and of locally based LGBTQ organizations as first and foremost service providers, has transpired in Toronto activists' narratives pertaining to belonging. For instance, instead of identifying as rights-defenders, as was the case for Montréal, Toronto's activists increasingly identified as service-providers for the community.

To begin, a great deal of participants expressed how Toronto's LGBTQ community provided a home, and in some cases an enlarged family, with which they could be whomever they wanted to be. This was notably the case for Marcus, for whom the LGBTQ community represented some sort of family with which he shared similar values:

> Yeah, I guess I have found a home, a community, and a family through being queer. And as a result, those communities are communities where I feel more affinities with politically, socially, sexually, but also it has become family.

While this feeling was somehow shared by a few participants in Montréal as well, it was nonetheless much more characteristic of Toronto. What is more, feelings of finding a 'home' within the community were intimately tied with the ways in which the community had previously responded to activists' needs. Rahim evoked how Toronto's LGBTQ community had indeed provided a safer space for him, in which he could fully realize himself:

> I think the LGBTQ community has provided a lot of the sanctuary and safe spaces for me. Even though they haven't always been free of judgment or they haven't always been easy to navigate, there's this possibility of discussion, exploration, and lots of fun, you know? I do, since 2006 I believe, did a lot of my partying in gay men's communities in particular. I love them, those are my spaces!

As will be addressed below, LGBTQ-POC spaces further responded to activists' safer spaces needs, in such a way so as to spur their participation within these very specific spaces. With this in mind, activists' sense of belonging to Toronto's LGBTQ community overall appeared to reflect a

particular conception of the community as a secure space providing the necessary means, such as a support system and a sense of family, to fully realize oneself. In contrast with Montréal, almost no activist evoked the significance of previous struggles or the necessity to protect the community's rights as constitutive markers of their identity. This is not to say that these concerns were not shared by Toronto activists; it simply means that these concerns did not appear to be at the core of activists' understandings of belonging to Toronto's LGBTQ community.

Furthermore, activists' sense of belonging as service-providers appeared to reflect a broader understanding of belonging as Canadian citizens; an understanding that was rarely brought up by activists in Montréal. When asked why she identified as Canadian, Yasmeen responded succinctly by underlining the importance of universal healthcare, conceived as a fundamental human right:

> Well there's protection in the Human Rights code, and that's enabled most of us to have access to healthcare. In many ways, it kind of allows me to be who I am in the Canadian context.

For Shakir, his identification as a Canadian citizen has made him acknowledge his own privilege as a college-graduate from a wealthy background in relation to others who find themselves in a lesser privileged situation:

> Hm...well I'm a citizen so that would be the biggest sense of it. I have lived my whole life here so I think I'm enmeshed in the kind of experience of being Canadian. But I do think, for me, my experience is atypical of my demographic. I was born into a wealthy family, I've had access to the best education, I have always been or felt access to a part of Canadian society that without that economic privilege I would have never felt that access to. I don't know whether my response to you would be different, I'm very cognizant that that informs it, for sure.

Acknowledging his own privilege therefore prompted Shakir to act on it in order to help others in need. This was echoed in numerous activists' narratives pertaining to belonging to the LGBTQ community. Although shared marginalization did come up as an identification marker, as mentioned above, relative privilege on the part of activists was also evoked to further justify one's motivation to engage in activism. In this regard, participants' sense of belonging to Toronto's LGBTQ community appeared to reflect a particular understanding of Canadian citizenship, namely one that

favors citizens' engagement in service provision, and what it means to be a 'model' Canadian citizen; for instance, helping others in need when one is in a position of privilege.

### 7.3.3.2. Plural communities

While people of colour evoked a similar understanding of LGBTQ belonging as White activists, they nonetheless expressed feeling increasingly attached to LGBTQ-POC communities. In doing so, they underlined their preference of referring to a plurality of LGBTQ communities, in a way that was quite similar to Montréal, albeit for different reasons. Activists did express how shared marginalization increased their feelings of belonging to these specific communities, touching upon internal movement inequalities. However, and this is the main take away of this subsection, participants most importantly raised how their attachment to LGBTQ-POC organizations was inherently tied to their understanding of belonging to Canada. Not only did LGBTQ-POC organizations allowed them to embrace their racialized identity, but this was rendered possible through a collective understanding of Canada's pluralist and multiculturalist character; an understanding that was also mapped onto the city of Toronto.

To begin, David's narrative sheds light on the ways in which movement inequalities, in terms of race for instance, have impacted how he identifies with the community, hereby specifying the importance of communities of colour in his own sense of belonging:

> With the community...heum I'm not really sure. I feel that everyone in the queer trans community is very much like, I would say, outcasted in society. So I feel drawn to that, this whole trip of being an outcast or whatever. And being different and very diverse, but there's a very specific pocket in the LGBT community that I identify with more. Such as more like the people of colour (POC) and queer community opposed to like the White gays and stuff like that. I also feel different, like an outcast, when I see media, I don't see a lot of representation of myself in there, but in the queer community I definitely see myself.

For David, this appeared to translate into an increased identification with those facing acute marginalization both outside and within Toronto's LGBTQ movement. For Haran, identifying with a particular LGBTQ-POC community facilitated his resilience when confronted with racialized marginalization. He explained how identifying with the South Asian LGBT community and

developing his own understanding of oneself, not only allowed him to embrace his identity and his sense of belonging to the broader LGBTQ community, but also made him more resilient when faced with adversity:

> I think, you know what, because I was able to find out who I was...And when I was in university I did a paper on homosexuality and Hinduism, because it was important to find out about me, that context, and sort of debunk some of those myths, because I had the support of my mom and my sisters, and now the entire family, and I found a South Asian community, whether I agree with them or not, a South Asian LGBT community, I am able to...I feel that I am able to have a stronger and better relationship with myself and with the LGBT community as a whole. And I also feel that I'm resilient to the racism that exists within the LGBT community as well. If someone was to say something racist about me being South Asian or whatever, I have the confidence to either talk back or to completely disconnect and I know that I won't be affected by making that choice.

In this light, activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ-POC communities does not necessarily stem from marginalization processes as directly experienced within the movement, as was the case in Montréal. Instead, it appears to come from a prior identification to a community that is already visible and that best represents LGBTQ-POC activists firsthand; an identification that is then further consolidated through one's participation in the movement and one's experience with internal movement inequalities.

Moreover, activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ-POC communities did not appear to be further consolidated through feelings of exclusion with regards to Canada. On the contrary, their sense of belonging appeared to be inextricably tied to one's understanding of belonging as Canadian, and Torontonian, residents. While Toronto was in fact perceived as a multicultural space, activists did mention how it was also a space where people might unfortunately struggle in finding community. As a result, motivations to engage in service provision for specific LGBTQ-POC communities not only appeared to stem from an understanding of LGBTQ organizations as service providers, but also seemed to come from an understanding of Toronto as a potential 'home' for LGBTQ-POC individuals to fully realize themselves. Haran's narrative is quite revealing in this matter and rightly captures the complex relationship between one's sense of belonging and one's motivation to participate in social movement organizing:

> And also, because if you...I also have to say because this is a caveat, because I have community, and because I know I belong, I see Toronto as home. But I know a lot of people, and we hear a lot of people who don't have community and who don't fit like they belong, and this society actually ends up killing them cause it's just too big. Again, geographically it's small, but it's just too big and they feel lost and they don't have anyone to connect with. That's why we, as an organization, make sure that any South Asian person or Middle Eastern person coming into the city and who is LGBT identified, that we are able to create these social and recreational spaces to address their mental health and well-being and find community and connection so that they don't feel so isolated, so that they actually can be successful in society, rather than being lost through the system and falling through the cracks. That's why I see myself as a Torontonian.

Toronto's LGBTQ-POC activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ-POC communities and activist motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing therefore do not appear to take root in experienced marginalization as racialized activists within the movement or within the broader Canadian society; as was the case for Montréal activists. On the contrary, activists' sense of belonging to LGBTQ-POC communities appears to be intimately tied to a conception of Canada and Toronto as multicultural spaces inclusive of ethnocultural diversity, thereby echoing Canada's broader citizenship regime, one which promotes pluralism and multiculturalism as foundational characteristics of its national identity. Finally, activists' sense of belonging and motivations seem to stem from already (relatively) visible LGBTQ-POC communities that have provided the necessary safer spaces for activists to fully embrace their sexual, gender, and racialized identity. Having benefitted from these safer spaces and other community-led resources, participants expressed being driven by a desire to maintain service provision for other marginalized and isolated LGBTQ-POC communities and individuals. This insistence on service provision and on LGBTQ-POC organizing as providing a 'home' for both activists and other individuals once more echoes Canada's citizenship regime; a regime that not only contains LGBTQ issues within specific social policy sectors, such as health, but which also conceives of community organizations as service providers responsible for delivering social services, including health-related services.

## 7.4. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to situate and explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories by moving the analysis upward, namely at a sociopolitical and institutional-level. Doing

so allowed for a broader understanding of Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements' organizational dynamics, their effect on LGBTQ-POC organizing and on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths. Building on the notion of citizenship regime, it argued that the differences between Canada's and Québec's citizenship regimes, pertaining notably to the recognition of LGBTQ individuals and organizations by the state, the 'responsibility mix' relative to LGBTQ communities, and the understanding of belonging to LGBTQ communities, have contributed in differently shaping movements and participation. It is however worth stressing that both citizenship regimes were also shaped by the developmental paths undertaken by LGBTQ movements over time in both cities, hence the importance of deploying an interactionist perspective on social movements and the state. Table VIII presents the differences identified between both regimes, when it comes to state recognition, responsibility mix, and belonging.

*Table VIII: Summary of Québec's and Canada's citizenship regimes and LGBTQ movements in Montréal and Toronto*

| | MONTRÉAL<br>*Québécois citizenship regime* | TORONTO<br>*Canadian citizenship regime* |
|---|---|---|
| **State recognition** | | |
| *Rights* | ♦ Active role | ♦ Ambivalent role |
| *Organizations* | ♦ Advocacy groups<br>♦ Service providers | ♦ Service providers |
| *LGBTQ policy* | ♦ Separate policy sector<br>♦ Incorporated within Ministry of Justice through the BLH<br>♦ Centralized at state-level | ♦ Integrated within social policy sectors (i.e. health)<br>♦ Downloaded to provincial and local governments |
| **Responsibility mix** | | |
| *Public*<br>*(in order of importance)* | ♦ Provincial (BLH)<br>♦ Federal<br>♦ Municipal | ♦ Provincial (AIDS Bureau)<br>♦ Federal/Municipal |
| *Market* | ♦ Banks<br>♦ Enterprises<br>♦ Private Law Firms | ♦ Banks<br>♦ Enterprises<br>♦ Private Law Firms |
| *Community* | ♦ Unions<br>♦ Other local LGBTQ organizations | ♦ Foundations |
| *Individuals* | ♦ Significant for mainstream organizations | ♦ Significant for all organizations |

| LGBTQ-POC Belonging | | |
|---|---|---|
| *LGBTQ community* | ♦ Rights-defenders<br>♦ Plural communities because of marginalization processes and perceived exclusivity of Québec's national identity | ♦ Service-providers<br>♦ Plural communities because of identification with Canada's pluralism and multicultural character |
| *State/province/city* | ♦ Low identification with Québec<br>♦ High identification with Montréal | ♦ High identification with Canada<br>♦ High identification with Toronto |

The results presented herein pertinently add to previous findings and allow for a more comprehensive understanding as to what drives people of colour to collectively participate in LGBTQ movements the way that they do. By privileging an interactionist analysis, it has showed how actors and institutions co-constitute each other through time and over a particular space. In so doing, it provided a differentiated understanding as to what constitutes LGBTQ-POC organizing in two different cities, and in two different movements for that matter. Inasmuch as LGBTQ-POC individuals engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing for similar reasons in Toronto and Montréal, their collective engagement trajectories do present significant differences that are shaped by their respective institutional contexts. By moving the analysis upward, we were therefore able to not only situate individual activist paths and social movement organizational dynamics within their broader institutional context, but also shed light on the ways in which macro-level configurations have informed LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories in Canada.

# Conclusion

People of colour, and in particular trans women of colour like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, played a pivotal role in spurring LGBTQ activism, not only in the United States but also in Canada (Monroe 2017; Bowden 2020). Unfortunately, their participation has been largely invisibilized through whitewashing processes that have erased the lives and the contributions of people of colour in these movements. Centering the needs of White cisgender able-bodied gay men, LGBTQ movements have over time relegated to the margins people of colour, trans activists, and lesbian women, evaluating their needs and their demands as being less concerning (Loh 2018; DeFilippis 2018; Catungal 2018; Bain 2016; Wong et al. 2007). By disrupting Pride festivities in Toronto and in Montréal, in 2016 and 2017 respectively, Black Lives Matter (BLM) protestors have brought to light marginalization processes observed in the Canadian context. Explicitly denouncing ongoing racialization processes that continuously exclude queer people of colour and invisibilize their demands, these protests have created due discomfort amongst a range of White-LGBTQ activists, all the while echoing a rich tradition of people of colour organizing within Canadian LGBTQ movements. Looking more closely at the history of LGBTQ activism at a local scale, one indeed finds that people of colour have not only participated in LGBTQ activism on an individual level, but have also collectively organized within these movements, notably by creating LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities.

This thesis focused on people of colour's collective participation in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements and pursued two main objectives. First, taking as a starting point the creation of LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities, it sought to render visible *LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories* at a local scale, namely in Toronto and Montréal. In so doing, it outlined the emergence of LGBTQ-POC organizing in Toronto in the early 1980s and in Montréal in the 1990s and early 2000s, as well as their development over time. In spite of differences pertaining to their nature and sustainability, LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities have always been part of both cities' LGBTQ movements, creating safer spaces and attending to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities, amongst other things. In recent years, LGBTQ-POC activists have been increasingly vocal to challenge ongoing racialization processes occurring both within and outside LGBTQ movements. While Toronto activists have rallied against Pride and against the Toronto Police Services, activists in Montréal have issued concerns with Québec politics pertaining

to *laïcité*. Throughout the years, queer people of colour have displayed incredible resilience despite a context of persistent marginalization.

Second, this thesis aimed to explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories by asking the following question: why have people of colour collectively engaged the way that they have in Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ movements? Social movement participation has represented a key concern within social movement research, in which case social movement theory has developed a range of explanations that can account for participation. Micro-level explanations have for instance focused on situating participation within individuals, investigating the significance of particular factors such as ideological and attitudinal affinities, biographical availability, resources, and identity salience (Klandermans 2004; McAdam 1986; Schussman and Soule 2005; Stryker 2000; Gould 1995; Viterna 2013; Gamson 1992). The overemphasis placed on individuals has, however, overshadowed the social environment within which individuals come to participate in social movements, hence the development of meso-level explanations. Focusing on movements themselves, meso-level explanations have more specifically examined the role played by movement activists and social movement organizations (SMOs). These factors include structural availability, such as one's networks and social ties, framing processes – undergone in part by SMOs –, collective identity, and movement narratives (McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Passy and Giugni 2001; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Snow et al. 2008; Melucci 1995; Polletta 1998). As movements are further embedded within larger structures, macro-level explanations have for their part exposed the role played by the broader sociopolitical and institutional context within which movements and individuals are set. Political opportunities and moral shocks constitute two of these macro-level explanations (Tilly 1978; Meyer 2004; Ketelaars 2016; Giugni and Grasso 2016; Jasper and Poulsen 1995).

While micro-, meso-, and macro-level explanations certainly provide enlightening tools to account for people of colour's participation within LGBTQ movements, they remain overtly focused on explaining *why*, rather than *how*, individuals participate. As these two questions remain intertwined with one another, in my view at least, a growing body of work has further taken into consideration the ways in which people participate in social movement activities and organizations (Corrigall-Brown 2012; Fillieule 2001). By viewing participation as an ongoing and non-linear process, previous work on individual activist paths has paid a closer look at the evolution of one's social movement participation, shedding light for instance on one's shifting involvement from one SMO to

another. They have also righteously taken into account some of the ways in which micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors interact with one another, fostering or inhibiting one's participation at a particular time (Fillieule 2013). Finally, this line of work has complexified the notion of disengagement, viewing it as constitutive of one's individual activist path (Corrigall-Brown, 2012).

Because individual activist paths bring to light the ways in which individuals participate in social movements over time, and because they facilitate an interactionist perspective on participation which takes into account micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors, they purposefully allow us to better grasp why individuals come to engage the way that they do. While I retained the notion of individual activist paths to understand what fuels LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, I posit that they only constitute part of the answer. Indeed, previous work on individual activist paths, and on social movement participation for that matter, has tended to overlook the *relational* context within which individual activist paths are set; and in so doing fall short of explaining why LGBTQ-POC activists have *collectively* participated the way that they have, notably by launching or joining LGBTQ organizations formed around specific racialized identities. If we take into account that societies are structured by a range of intersecting power relations that situate individuals in relation to each other, the conditions and the motivations that drive one's participation cannot so easily be dislocated from the context within which one's participation is set. It is with this in mind that I have turned to intersectionality to further unpack the relational context within which people of colour have collectively participated in Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements.

Intersectionality sheds light on the ways in which systems of oppression, such as racism, heterosexism, and classism, interact so as to (re)produce inequalities. Materialized through a range of institutions, intersecting systems of oppression socially locate individuals and in so doing constrain individual capabilities (Crenshaw 1991; Grzanka 2014). This is not to say that individuals lack agency, on the contrary. In addition to structuring peoples' lives, intersecting systems of oppression also inform political subjectivities and identities (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016; Combahee River Collective 2017 [1977]). Conceiving of identities as political locations, the Combahee River Collective (CRC) has indeed shown how identities may act as tools of resistance against oppression. Consequently, intersecting systems of oppression not only produce marginalization, but also enable action and foster collective mobilization.

To explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, this thesis built upon three of intersectionality's core ideas to provide analytical guidance, namely relationality, power, and social context (Hill Collins 2019). *Relationality* has entailed looking at the ways in which categories of sameness and difference, such a gender, race, and class, interact and acquire meaning and power, thus socially locating activists in relation to each other. Inextricably tied to relationality is the organization of *power*. This implied examining the configuration of power in a particular context and unpacking the material and symbolic outcomes it produces. *Social context* meant attending to the ways in which particular contexts shape what people think and do. It entailed situating experiences and actions within their respective political, historical, economical, and cultural context. In applying an intersectional analytical lens guided by the notions of relationality, power, and social context, this thesis further deployed a multilevel analysis, which insisted on examining (1) individual activist paths (micro-level), (2) social movement organizational dynamics (meso-level), and (3) institutional and sociopolitical contexts (macro-level) to explain LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories.

## Results

### *Micro-level: individual activist paths*

At a micro-level, attention to relationality, power, and social context implied examining who participates in LGBTQ(POC) activism, how, and why? As such, it entailed situating individual activists in relation to each other, exposing the ways in which individuals participate in LGBTQ movements over time, and clarifying their driving motivations. Building on interviews conducted with 42 activists in Montréal and Toronto and proceeding with a comparative analysis between White-LGBTQ and LGBTQ-POC activists, I was able to identify and expose the *individual activist paths* that fuel LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. To this end, I more specifically focused on four different stages of participation: triggering factors prompting one's initial participation, driving motivations sustaining one's activism, organizational mobility, and patterns of disengagement.

All the while acknowledging the specificity of each individual activist path, significant trends amongst LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths were identified. First, people of colour's participation appeared to be considerably triggered by endogenous factors, such as one's coming out or transitioning processes and one's need to build a community, as opposed to White activists whose

participation seemed to be mostly triggered by work-related purposes, in which case they were increasingly 'pulled' into activism (McAdam 1986). Second, while all activists described being driven by endogenous and exogenous motivations, such as identifying with the broader movement and mobilizing one's resources to enhance community-led activism, LGBTQ-POC activists were additionally driven by relational* motivations, which included ensuring representation of nonwhite realities and creating safer spaces for LGBTQ-POC communities. Third, LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths were characterized by a successive form of organizational mobility, wherein activists tended to disengage from a SMO prior to engaging in another one. In contrast, White-LGBTQ activists were most likely to simultaneously participate in several SMOs. Finally, while organizational and mental-health factors prompted disengagement of both LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists, relational* factors such as racism and tokenism additionally contributed in fostering LGBTQ-POC activists' disengagement. These results thus show how activists' social locations appear to have informed their motivations and shaped the ways in which they have participated in LGBTQ movements over time.

### Meso-level: social movement organizational dynamics

At a meso-level, this analysis focused on LGBTQ movements, questioning who organizes, how, and why? The purpose of such analysis was to situate LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in their broader context and to expose the *social movement organizational dynamics* within which LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories are set. To this end, it built on the notion of white privilege – best understood as a white cisgender gay male able-bodied upper middle-class privilege – and its four constitutive dimensions, namely epistemic, relational, productive, and institutional. In doing so, it shed light on the ways in which white privilege has shaped LGBTQ activism, thus impacting individual activist paths.

Both Toronto's and Montréal's LGBTQ movements have come across as being shaped by white privilege. First, epistemic and relational forms of privilege have appeared to shape activism through representational means. This means that White activists and White-dominated organizations have come across as embodying these movements' leadership, thereby benefitting from widespread visibility. This white embodiment of leadership subsequently contributes in perpetuating normative conceptions as to who is considered part of these movements and who is

'othered' by the movement. For instance, while whiteness is invisibilized through normative conceptions of "gayness as whiteness" (Roy 2012), people of colour are instead 'othered' by the movement and perceived as being inherently homophobic. Second, productive and institutional dimensions of privilege have shown to shape activism through resource-distribution mechanisms, sustained by an unwritten set of rules and norms that privilege certain forms of activism over others. Results have indeed revealed how organizations considered as 'universal' and professionalized (i.e. mainstream-white-dominated organizations) tend to hold an advantage on 'specific' and less professionalized organizations when it comes to accessing funding. This subsequently impacts organizational access to decision-making instances both within and outside the movement.

These organizational dynamics have similarly shaped LGBTQ-POC activism in Toronto and Montréal, in which case LGBTQ-POC organizations have been continuously relegated to the margins of these movements. However, their impact on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths has slightly differed in both cities. Whereas white privilege, and the organizational dynamics it fostered, directly impacted LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Montréal, notably through experienced tokenism within mainstream-white-dominated organizations, it appeared instead to have had an indirect impact on LGBTQ-POC individual activist paths in Toronto, wherein the movement's whiteness acted as a mediating factor. By experiencing and enduring the effects of white privilege at an organizational level, LGBTQ-POC activists in Toronto seemed to sustain and pursue their activism in such a way so as to attend to people of colour's needs and ensure visibility of nonwhite LGBTQ realities. What these results ultimately reveal is the importance of situating individual activist paths within their respective relational context, thereby taking into account the context within which activists mobilize and the intersecting power relations that permeate social movement organizational dynamics. As intersecting power relations situate both individuals and SMOs in relation to each other, they not only inform individual activist paths but also shape LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories. Yet, as this meso-level analysis showed, slight differences were observed between Toronto and Montréal, evoking the necessity to foreground social movement organizational dynamics in their broader context.

*Macro-level: institutional and sociopolitical contexts*

At a macro-level, the analysis proposed herein sought to further situate LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within their even broader context. Inasmuch as social movements find themselves structured by a set of intersecting power relations, they remain embedded within larger structural dispositions that are context-specific. Social movement organizational dynamics thus do not happen in a vacuum and are instead located within particular institutional and sociopolitical contexts. Applying an intersectional analytical lens at a macro-level thereby entailed reflecting on broader recognition processes, subsequently questioning who is recognized by the state – on both individual and collective levels –, how, and why? This not only allowed us to situate LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories within their respective institutional and sociopolitical contexts, but most importantly facilitated an understanding of the state's role in fostering or inhibiting people of colour's collective participation within LGBTQ movements.

To this end, I built upon the notion of citizenship regime. Developed and conceptualized within Canadian politics scholarship, a citizenship regime is composed of four dimensions, namely the distribution of responsibilities between the state, the market, the community, and the family; the formal recognition of rights and responsibilities; access to political representation; and the membership of the political community (Jenson and Philips 1996; Jenson 1997). Taking into consideration policies, rights, and questions of belonging, the notion of citizenship regime is particularly relevant to understand social movement configurations and evaluate how activists' sense of belonging inform their participation (Corrigall-Brown and Ho 2017; Monforte and Dufour 2011; Dufour and Ancelovici 2018). The existence of two citizenship regimes in Canada – one in Québec and one in the rest of Canada – , has been thoroughly underlined by Canadian politics scholars (Jenson 1997; Laforest and Phillips 2001), which facilitates a comparative analysis between Toronto and Montréal, subsequently clarifying some of the differences observed between both cities.

Results show that Canadian and Québécois citizenship regimes are characterized by a distinctive political history of LGBTQ rights recognition, a divergent consideration of LGBTQ organizations' role in advancing social change which subsequently inform funding mechanisms and shape movements' organizational landscapes, and a specific understanding of belonging to Canadian, Québécois, and LGBTQ communities. In a Québécois citizenship regime, the state has played an active role in recognizing LGBTQ individuals on the one hand and viewing LGBTQ organizations as political actors that engage in advocacy work on the other hand. It has established a financial

opportunity structure, through the Ministry of Justice, which has further channeled LGBTQ activism into rights advocacy. By providing LGBTQ specific funding, it has however instilled competition amongst LGBTQ organizations and (re)produced unequal power relations within Montréal's LGBTQ movement. While LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists have similarly identified as rights-defenders, echoing Québéc's citizenship's regime and LGBTQ movement's developmental path, people of colour's experienced marginalization within and outside the movement has further informed their own understanding of belonging, shaping their motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC organizing.

In a Canadian citizenship regime, the state has played an ambivalent role in recognizing LGBTQ individuals and organizations. Not only has it historically criminalized sexual and gender communities, but it has somewhat depoliticized the voluntary sector's role over time through bounded funding, constraining LGBTQ organizations into a service provision role. In contrast with Québec, wherein LGBTQ issues have almost been treated as a distinct public policy sector, the federal government has instead disseminated LGBTQ issues into a range of social policy sectors, such as health and education, which are primarily conceived as provincial competencies; it has in this sense refrained from providing LGBTQ-specific funding. The delegation of LGBTQ issues into social policy sectors that are of provincial jurisdiction has in part contributed in the development of an AIDS-related financial structure at the provincial and local levels, which has in turn shaped Toronto's LGBTQ movement's organizational landscape. While AIDS-related funding has provided some sort of financial opportunity structure for LGBTQ-POC organizations, ensuring their sustainability over time, it has however undermined their advocacy capabilities. In line with Canada's citizenship regime, LGBTQ-POC and White-LGBTQ activists have perceived themselves as service providers. Nevertheless, LGBTQ-POC activists' view of Canada and Toronto as inherently multicultural and facilitative of safer spaces has further informed their motivations to engage in LGBTQ-POC activism and attend to the needs of LGBTQ-POC communities.

In unpacking Québécois and Canadian citizenship regimes, this dissertation has showed the relevance of situating individual activist paths and social movement organizational dynamics within their broader context, namely at an institutional and sociopolitical level. As such, it has acknowledged that while fueled by individuals and organizations, LGBTQ activism remains shaped by the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural context which has structured – and

continues to structure – collective mobilization. By mobilizing the notion of citizenship regime – instead of political opportunity structures for instance – it has further shown how identity and belonging play into people's motivation to participate in social movements the way that they do.

## Discussion

This dissertation has overall shown how intersecting power relations permeate society and social movements in such a way that impacts the ways in which multiply marginalized groups participate in social movements. Rather than constraining multiply marginalized groups' capabilities and inhibiting their agency, intersecting power relations instead contribute in enabling action and shaping collective mobilization. By focusing on people of colour's collective participation in two locally based LGBTQ movements, this research furthermore revealed how intersecting power relations may similarly shape individual experiences all the while differently impacting social movements set in distinctive institutional and sociopolitical contexts. Intersectionality's insistence on providing context-specific analyses has therefore proved to be of utility and relevance in this particular matter, shedding light on some of the ways in which states contribute (dis)similarly in (re)producing inequalities. With this in mind, two main conclusions can be drawn from these results.

First, while social movement theory has rightfully pointed to a range of conditions that may explain social movement participation, such as resources, identity, and networks, these conditions are not given. They are instead produced through power configurations that structure societies and that socially locate individuals and social movements in a given context. For instance, the results presented herein have shown that identity does play a role in fostering one's participation in LGBTQ movements, thereby confirming previous work on identity and social movement participation (Stryker 2000; Viterna 2013; Taylor and Whittier 1992). By foregrounding identities in their relational context, it has however revealed how identities are not given, but instead acquire meaning – thus enabling or inhibiting action – through specific power configurations that produce symbolic and material outcomes. As such, identities cannot be dislocated from the context within which they are set, and in and of themselves remain insufficient in explaining participation. Similarly, this thesis has shown how networks may indeed work at 'pulling' individuals into activism, once more confirming previous work on structural availability (Passy and Giugni 2001; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Lim 2008). By contextualizing and unpacking the various ways in which networks have pulled (or not)

LGBTQ-identifying individuals into activism, it has nevertheless shown the extent to which networks (or the lack thereof) are intimately tied to individuals' social locations. Networks' impact on participation therefore depends on the context within which they are embedded, in which case they come across as being intimately tied to other factors that are also context-dependent, such as one's identity or one's resources. It is in that respect that this research has revealed the significance of situating the conditions for participation within their context; a context that finds itself structured along intersecting power relations.

Second, the results presented in this thesis bring to light the interrelation between the *why* and the *how* of participation. Individual activist paths, while rendered possible through a range of conditions and while driven by particular sets of motivations, come to take different forms depending on the context within which they are set; hence reaffirming previous work on individual activist paths (Fillieule 2001; 2013; Corrigall-Brown 2012). By deploying a multilevel analysis, results have indeed shown how social movement organizational dynamics and institutional and sociopolitical contexts facilitate or inhibit particular forms of participation. It is in this regard that the ways in which people collectively participate in social movements come across as the product of individual agency on the one hand and on larger structural dispositions on the other hand. With all this in mind, this thesis has however more precisely exposed how individual agency and structural dispositions interact in explaining the *why* and the *how* of participation. By focusing once more on the relational context within which participation is set, it exposed how intersecting power relations shape individual agency and structural dispositions, producing marginalization and fostering collective mobilization.

### Contributions

On a theoretical level, this dissertation built on social movement theory and engaged in a dialogue with students of social movements. Rather than discard previous explanations that may account for participation, it instead built upon them and argued for the need to further situate these explanations by unpacking the relational context within which participation is set. This certainly implies taking into account movements' organizational landscapes, as argued in previous work (Fillieule 2001; Corrigall-Brown 2012), but also the power configurations that shape the reasons why and the ways in which people collectively participate in social movements. To this end, it introduced

an innovative intersectional framework to the study of social movements. Despite its growing popularity within the social sciences, particularly within gender and sexuality studies, intersectionality has yet to be mobilized, as a critical social theory, by social movement scholars. Considering how the social movement participation literature has throughout the years borrowed from a range of theoretical approaches inherited from various disciplines (i.e. rational choice theory, identity theory, and sociopsychology), critical theories, such as intersectionality, have indeed been fairly neglected by students of social movements in general, and by students of social movement participation in particular. However, as this thesis has shown, intersectionality can rightfully contribute and add to these theoretical approaches, notably as it sheds light on an overlooked dimension of participation. It is in that respect that the intersectional theoretical framework put forth in this thesis can definitely be of utility for those studying social movement participation, henceforth enriching social movement theory as a whole.

By drawing upon the theoretical underpinnings of intersectionality, this dissertation distinguishes itself from previous work on intersectionality and social movements. A growing body of work has indeed been focusing on intersectionality and social movements, albeit empirically, examining for example the ways in which intersectionality is used as a social movement strategy by collective actors to foster inclusivity (Laperrière and Lépinard 2016). This line of work, which has shed light on intersectional coalitions and intersectional praxis within social movements, has however remained overtly focused on treating intersectionality as an observable social phenomenon, rather than as a theoretical approach (Evans 2016; Mayo-Adam 2017; Ayoub 2019). Although the results of this research have brought to light some of the ways in which intersectional praxis is indeed observed within LGBTQ movements, it has primarily mobilized intersectionality theoretically, hence living true to its promise as a critical social theory (Hill Collins 2019).

Moreover, this thesis contributes to the field of Canadian politics on a theoretical and on an empirical level. First, by mobilizing the notion of citizenship regime and by undertaking a comparative analysis between movements located in two distinct citizenship regimes, it has shown how states inform social movement participation through recognition processes that produce both material and symbolic outcomes. While Canadian politics scholars have rightfully examined the relationship between citizenship regimes and social movements (Laforest and Phillips 2001; Dufour and Ancelovici 2018; Clément 2017; Corrigall-Brown and Ho 2017), few have taken an in-depth look at

the relationship between citizenship regimes and social movement participation. Yet, as this thesis has shown, Canadian and Québécois citizenship regimes not only shape social movements in distinctive ways, but also differently contribute to foster (or inhibit) social movement participation. Second, by studying the ways in which people of colour have participated in Canadian LGBTQ movements at a local scale, this research has contributed in disrupting dominant narratives of LGBTQ activism in Canada. In so doing, it has rendered visible LGBTQ-POC organizations and community-led initiatives, underlining their continuous activity over time. While LGBTQ-POC activism in Toronto has been quite documented over time, to some extent at least (Bain 2016; Catungal 2018; Walcott 2006), documentation on LGBTQ-POC activism in Montréal remains scarce. It is in this regard that this thesis fills a significant empirical gap, as it exposed the various ways in which LGBTQ-POC activists have mobilized and organized in Québec's metropolis. By comparing Montréal's and Toronto's LGBTQ-POC collective engagement trajectories, it has further revealed the inherently diverse and heterogeneous character of people of colour's collective participation in Canadian LGBTQ movements.

The results presented herein furthermore elucidate some of the ways in which white privilege permeates social movements. Scholars and activists have increasingly evoked the overall whiteness of LGBTQ movements in the United States, in Canada, and across Europe (DeFilippis 2018; Bain 2016; Catungal 2018; Trawalé and Poiret 2017; Walcott 2006; J. Ward 2008). While a few studies have unpacked what whiteness entails in the context of LGBTQ activism, pointing to its intersectional character, the ways in which white privilege operates in structuring these movements has remained somewhat unclear. It is in this regard that this dissertation serves as an empirically documented illustration of how white privilege functions within contemporary LGBTQ movements and how it (re)produces unequal power relations, notably through representational means and resource-distribution processes.

On a social level, documenting this phenomenon may incite White-LGBTQ collective actors to thoroughly reflect about existing organizational practices and discourses, as well as their potentially exclusionary and tokenistic effects. As I have repeatedly heard throughout my research, things need to change; and I have been convinced that the desire to reduce racial inequalities within LGBTQ organizing is very well present and shared by the majority of White-LGBTQ activists. Yet, real, sustainable, and respectful change requires addressing up front years and years of white

privilege in LGBTQ movements, not on an individual level *per se*, but rather on a collective, organizational and institutional level. While this thesis did not attempt to provide a clear answer as to what ought to be the right way forward to achieve such change, it nonetheless rendered visible, documented, and ultimately disrupted whiteness by bringing to light its privileged invisibility.

**Further research**

In the years leading to this dissertation, numerous doors have opened. While some have closed along the way, others remain open, ready for further research to sprawl and pursue the work undertaken until now. One of these doors consist of the proven potential for an intersectional analysis of the relationship between citizenship regimes and social movements. As this thesis has shown, mobilizing an intersectional analytical lens can bring to light overlooked aspects pertaining to the ways in which citizenship regimes shape social movements, and in particular social movement participation. However, much more work needs to be done to fully grasp how citizenship regimes maintain and (re)produce intersecting power relations in such a way so as to shape social movements and collective mobilization. While chapter 7 does provide some enlightening pieces of information, it established the bases for an entire other dissertation – or research project for that matter. Dissecting the various funding mechanisms that support LGBTQ movements and their institutional evolution over time could certainly enlighten us some more.

With the *Black Lives Matter* protests currently unfolding in North America, the profound need, and perhaps urgency, to question structures of privilege within our societies has rarely been as tangible; and while most agree that inequalities within LGBTQ movements must be addressed, the road ahead remains unclear. Inadvertently, this dissertation revealed the extent to which movement inequalities are sustained through organizational practices, and though these practices may seem well intentioned, they have (re)produced unequal power relations. While this research did allude to some of these practices (i.e. intersectional praxis), it did not attempt to document and examine the range, nor the rationale behind such practices. In light of the current interest given to intersectional praxis in the context of feminist organizing (Evans 2016; Lépinard 2020; Anctil Avoine, Veillette, and Pagé 2019), LGBTQ movements represent vast empirical terrains that have remained relatively uninvestigated.

Ultimately, what this experience has taught me, as a White LGBTQ-identifying researcher seeking to reduce inequalities and to contribute in advancing social change, is the importance of questioning one's own legitimacy of occupying a particular research space. Notwithstanding my good intentions and the overall relevance of the results presented in this dissertation, I firmly believe, on an ethical level at least, that it would have been increasingly beneficial for me – and for LGBTQ-POC communities – to occupy another research space, one which explicit works to unpack whiteness within LGBTQ movements. For instance, I could have focused on White-LGBTQ activists and organizations – rather than on LGBTQ-POC activism – and unpacked the ways in which whiteness is perpetuated through normalized practices and discourses. Evidently, this whole experience has been an ongoing learning process and I am now more than ever convinced that occupying a research space which openly addresses (white/male/cisgender/able-bodied) privilege represents the best path forward for White LGBTQ-identifying researchers seeking to transform Canadian LGBTQ movements – and LGBTQ communities – for the better.

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# APPENDIX I – Interview questionnaire

*Name and sociodemographic information*

Name: _____

- ➤ Age :_____
- ➤ Place of birth:_____
- ➤ Citizenship :_____
- ➤ In Canada since…:_____
- ➤ Occupation :_____
- ➤ City :_____
- ➤ Education : _____
- ➤ Used pronouns: _____

*PART I : Questions on activism*

1. How have you been involved in LGBTQ activism, and since when?
2. How did you get involved in [...]?
3. What were some of the challenges you faced?
4. Were there any achievements that have particularly marked you and why? Do you have an example upon which you can elaborate?
5. What were your objectives when you advocated for [...]? Were they met?
6. Can you describe an unforgettable moment that has marked you while you were part of [...]?

7. Did you get involved with other groups before that? Which one(s)?
8. Did you ever consider getting involved with another LGBTQ group? Why or why not?
9. Do you see any obstacles regarding your possible involvement with those groups?

10. Do you perceive inequalities between different groups within the LGBTQ movement in [Toronto/Montréal]?
11. Did you hear about the Black Lives Matter sit-in during the Toronto Pride Parade in the summer of 2016? What did you think of it? Did the event trigger any discussion within [...]?

*PART II: Questions on belonging*

12. Do you identify with the LGBTQ community? Why or why not?
13. What is your relationship with this community? Why?

14. Do you identify with another community? Which one? Why or why not?

15. Do you feel Canadian? Why or why not?
16. Do you feel [Québécois/Ontarian]? Why or why not?
17. Do you feel [Montréaler/Torontonian]? Why or why not?
18. Do you feel like you belong to another city, another region or another country? Why?

19. Did you vote in the last federal/provincial/municipal elections? Why or why not?

20. Is there something else that you would like to add or clarify? Is there something you wished to talk about?

## *Sociodemographic information*

➢ Gender identity: _____

➢ Sexual orientation: _____

# APPENDIX II – Nvivo coding sheet

| 1. **Activist path** |
|---|

  a. Triggering Factor
  b. Disengagement
  c. Motivations
      i. *General*
      ii. *Specific*

| 2. **Personal path** |
|---|

| 3. **Activist experiences** |
|---|

  a. Defining moments
  b. Challenges
  c. Successes
  d. Upsides

| 4. **Organizational-level** |
|---|

  a. Objectives
  b. Claims
  c. Challenges
  d. Successes
  e. Recruitment and membership
  f. Collective actions
  g. Funding
  h. Movement relations
      i. *Conflict*
      ii. *Solidarity*
  i. Institutional relations
      i. *Federal*
      ii. *Provincial*
      iii. *Municipal*

| 5. **Inequalities** |
|---|

| 6. **LGBTQ belonging** |
|---|

  a. Coming out
  b. Relationship with community

| 7. **National belonging** |
|---|

  a. Canada
  b. Province
  c. City

| 8. **Other forms of belonging** |
|---|

| 9. **Discrimination, violence, and exclusion** |
|---|

       a.   White privilege
       b.   Racism
       c.   Homophobia
       d.   Transphobia
       e.   Biphobia
       f.   Sexism

| 10. **Voting behavior** |
|---|
| 11. **Relationship with police** |