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- **Archives in North America**: The history of the development of community- and university-based LGBTQ archives in the United States and Canada.

- **Argentina’s Gender Identity Law**: A groundbreaking law allowing transgender people the right to officially change their gender identity without third-party intervention.

- **The Art of Identity in India**: The expression of queer identity in contemporary Indian art in a society that criminalized same-sex sexual expression.

- **The Art of Queering Asian Mythology**: An examination of LGBTQ-themed artwork through the lens of Asian mythology.

- **Asexuality**: The range of definitions that can apply to this sexual identity from the perspective of asexual communities, scientific research, and queer and feminist theory.

- **Asia Pacific Transgender Network**: Coordinating body for organizations serving trans individuals in the Asia Pacific region.

- **Asrar ʿAiliyyah**: The first Egyptian film to focus primarily on homosexuality.

- **Aswat**: A Palestinian nongovernmental organization for women with nonnormative sexualities, with a focus on the group’s publications *Haqī an ā’ēsh an akhtar an akun* (2007) and *Waqfet banāt* (2010).

- **Athletes, Trans and Intersex**: Examples of trans and intersex athletes through history, and the obstacles to competition they have experienced.

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The Ugly Law (1961–1965; Denmark) ............. 1687
A law intended to crack down on male prostitution in Copenhagen, which was successfully challenged by Danish gay rights advocates.

Urban Queerness ........................................ 1688
The role that urban milieus play in the production of queer culture, identity formation, and modes of socialization.

El Vampiro de la Colonia Roma (1979; Luis Zapata) ........................................... 1695
Novella that was one of the first in Mexican literature to feature a gay protagonist.

Vargas, Chavela (1919–2012) ............................ 1698
Iconic Latin American singer who queered Mexican musical genres.
Vietnam War .......................................... 1701
American, Australian, and Vietnamese LGBT participation in the war and their impact on gay liberation movements in those countries.

Vietnam War, LGBTQ+ Veterans ................. 1708
The postwar experiences of those who fought in this war from the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

Von Mahlsdorf, Charlotte (1928–2002) ........ 1710
Famous German transvestite.

W – Z

W v. Registrar of Marriages (2013).............. 1713
Landmark court case granting transgendered persons the right to marry in Hong Kong.

Waria .................................................... 1717
The historical and contemporary position of male-to-female transgender subjects in Indonesia.

“We Demand” Protest (1971) ..................... 1720
The first major public demonstration by the Canadian gay and lesbian liberation movement, including an explanation of the ten demands made by the protesters.

The Well of Loneliness (1928; Radclyffe Hall) .. 1724
A novel about a sexual invert, which was subject to obscenity charges upon publication.

Wilde in Sinophone Culture ...................... 1727
The importance of Oscar Wilde in general to Chinese culture and to its LGBT community in particular.

Wilde Trials, International Significance of ...... 1731
The trials of Irish-born writer Oscar Wilde for “gross indecency” in 1895 and their impact both in England and the world.

Witchcraft/Occult in Africa ....................... 1735
The practice of demonizing African LGBTQ individuals by associating same-sex practices with witchcraft and the occult.

The Wolfenden Report .............................. 1739
Influential report published in Great Britain in 1957 recommending that homosexual behavior between consenting adults no longer be considered a criminal offense.

Zheng He (1371–1433) ............................. 1743
Famed admiral and explorer in China’s Ming dynasty who was also a eunuch.

Zhongxing Phenomenon ............................ 1745
A popular movement of gender ambiguity among women in postmillennial East Asian Chinese-speaking societies in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Zimbabwe .............................................. 1750
The history and current status of LGBTQ individuals in this landlocked southern African nation.

Zuqaq al-Midaq (1947; Naguib Mahfouz) ...... 1753
Egyptian novel that employs a judgmental colonialist gaze in its portrayal of a character who engages in same-sex sexual activity.

Geographic Index ................................. 1759
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Impact in Academic and Popular Production

Since the 1990s, when Vargas was making a comeback, there have been increasing efforts to engage with her work in various media of cultural production and in academic discourse. She has been especially influential in theoretical elaborations of Latin American and Latina/o sexualities, as the work of Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano (1997) and, more recently, Laura G. Gutiérrez (2010) and Sofia Ruiz-Alfaro (2010) attest. Yarbro-Bejarano, in particular, pays special homage to Vargas as an essential voice who speaks to her own identity as a queer Chicana.

Such tributes occur beyond the essay form. Vargas’s work has left a lasting impression on an entire generation of singers from across the Spanish-speaking world. Vargas has been the subject of numerous paens, including documentaries, musical projects, theater productions, and works of literature. While she enjoyed some of these tributes during her lifetime, many more have taken place posthumously. Among the latter is the film Chavela by the American filmmakers Catherine Gund and Daresa Kyi. Their award-winning work premiered in 2017 at the Berlin International Film Festival and features newly released twenty-year-old footage of Vargas in her seventies when she had yet to make her second comeback. Another of the posthumous works is the artist Eloisa Aquino’s “Chavela Vargas” zine, which is part of a series titled The Life and Times of Butch Dykes.

Vargas claimed her rareza through her daring artistic proposals, reinventing popular Mexican and Latin American song genres in the process and challenging restrictive gender patterns. She embodied a liberated method of performing music so often restricted to the world of heteronormative romance, as well as a freedom to explore the poignancy of life’s pleasures and pain using the tools of voice and guitar. As she herself told an adoring crowd in a public concert in the Mexico City Zócalo (main square) in 2010, she wished to bequeath her sense of freedom, her daring spirit, saying, “Les dejo de herencia mi libertad” (I leave you my freedom as your inheritance).

SEE ALSO Bars, Working-class, in Mexico; Cabaret Theater in Latin America and the Caribbean; Performance Artists in Latin America

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This entry analyzes the gay liberation movement and associated antiwar, feminist, and civil rights movements during the Vietnam War (1955–1975) in the contexts of the United States, Australia, and Vietnam, as well as the diffusion of LGBT culture, politics, and social movement activism. These areas are examined in three sections: (1) masculinity, femininity, sexuality, and defense force service in each country; (2) the exclusion and inclusion of homosexual personnel in the draft; and (3) the causal effects of the diffusion of social movement activism on LGBT culture and politics in these countries. Notably, the diffusion of gay liberation that occurred in the United States and Australia during the Vietnam War was less evident in Vietnam, where commercial accommodation of LGBT desires was tolerated but not politicized and public. The agency of actors and the structure of their societies enabled and constrained this diffusion.

**Masculinity, Femininity, Sexuality, and Defense Force Service**

This section briefly surveys the culturally situated gender roles that informed the service of personnel in each country. Gender permeated conceptions of duty, service, and honor, as well as conceptions of the enemy and the “other.” Each country was characterized by the dichotomization of gender into masculine and feminine roles (Connell 2005), but this demarcation also reflected cultural difference regarding the essentialism of gender and sexuality. Particularly prominent was the figure of the soldier hero, an idealized masculine figure. As Graham Dawson notes, “Military virtues such as aggression, strength, courage, and endurance have repeatedly been defined as the natural and inherent qualities of manhood, whose apogee is attainable only in battle” (1994, 1). These norms informed the ideals of the Western personnel serving in Vietnam, as well as their relationship with their Vietnamese allies and enemies.

**The United States**

Dennis Altman (1971) describes a Vietnam War–era United States that was sexually repressed and heteronormative. The country’s puritanical religious tradition institutionalized feelings of guilt regarding sex—and especially sex that fell outside prescribed norms. These norms included the utilitarian view of sex for purposes of procreation in the context of a heterosexual nuclear family and a negative view of any sexual urges and acts that fell outside heterosexual genital intercourse. The normalcy of heterosexuality was also informed by science, as American psychiatry had institutionalized its “naturalness” and homosexuality’s treatment as an “illness” (Herek 2010, 694).

These norms informed ideas about the appropriate gendered acts of US service personnel in Vietnam. Heather Marie Stur argues that for US personnel, this involved a Hollywood masculinity, informed by the figure of the actor John Wayne, who embodied American values of “martial prowess, … patriotism, courage, Christian faith” (2011, 4) and the protection of femininity. US femininity was epitomized by “the American ‘girl next door’—white, middle class, and pure” (3).

Homosexuality was the pervasive antonym in this conception of gender, representing the lack of masculine aggression that was drilled into US soldiers in boot camp (see Levy 1971). The US military argued that the inclusion of homosexual personnel “would seriously impair discipline, good order, morals and the security of our armed forces” (quoted in Shilts 1994, 65). Violating essentialized gendered roles thus carried significant risk of exposure and dishonorable discharge for US service personnel. A “John W.” serving in Vietnam wrote of the pervasiveness of rigid gender dichotomization and of their inability to find space to cross-dress: “Imagine what it is like not to have any contact at all with femininity…. To not even see, much less wear the things, the symbols of femininity that I love” (Transvestia 1970, 56). It was clear, then, that failure to meet the military’s demarcation of gender and sexuality was unacceptable for personnel.

**Australia**

Western gender norms were similarly dichotomized and essentialized in Australian martial narratives during the mid-twentieth century but were also characterized by local variation. The image of the “digger,” the Australian soldier of World War I (1914–1918), was central to Australian conceptions of masculinity. The masculine digger had “given birth” to the Australian nation at Gallipoli during the failed Dardanelles Campaign of 1915–1916. The digger represented a complex of masculine folk- and state-orientated Australian values: mateship, antiauthoritarianism, irreverence, and sardonicism, but also honor, duty, bravery, and selfless sacrifice. Women were maternal, and marginal, figures, selflessly offering their sons for sacrifice (see Lake 1992; Altman 1987; Seal 2004). Australia was also influenced by the hegemony of church and science, which decried or pathologized homosexuality; sex between men remained illegal in all Australian states and territories until South Australia’s first law changes in 1975 (Smaal 2012). Furthermore, police harassment and entrapment of homosexual men, and the publishing of the names of offenders in the press, remained a strategy of enforcing heterosexual and gender norms (Wotherspoon 2016).

These gendered and heteronormative discourses of nation were strictly enforced by the Australian military during the war in Vietnam. Australian soldiers expressed hostility toward homosexuality, and the close quarters of military life regulated its open occurrence (Hart 1975).
Military anxieties about femininity and lesbianism also saw Australian servicewomen disciplined for behavior and appearance that was not decidedly feminine and heterosexual (Ford 1996). So, while Australian gendered norms had a local inflection, their effects were similarly dichotomized and constraining as in the United States.

**Vietnam** Vietnamese conceptions of gender and sexuality displayed far more complexity and pluralism than Western norms during this period, reflecting patterns historically prevalent in Southeast Asia. Some, especially rural, Vietnamese accepted transgendered and same-sex relations and practices that would have been pathologized in a Western context. This included toleration of same-sex relations if filial responsibilities to procreate were fulfilled, the prevalence of transgendered shamans in rural Vietnam, and closer physical platonic contact between members of the same sex.

The French established colonial control over the area now known as Vietnam during the nineteenth century and quickly found themselves “confounded by the Vietnamese sex/gender system, in which virtually all of the signs that they took for natural and universal attributes distinguishing male from female were disrupted or inverted” (Proschan 2002, 436). Frank Proschan (2002) argues that this inversion involved the French colonials viewing Vietnamese men as androgynous and effeminate, and Vietnamese women being simultaneously masculine and hypersexualized. Relatedly, Michael G. Peletz contends that Western religious and scientific ideas regarding gender and sexuality also informed the attitudes of Southeast Asian elites during the period of Western colonialism, and these elites espoused these discourses as they sought to “modernize” (2009, 120). Significantly, then, Western conceptions of gender and sexuality had begun to penetrate the colonized urban centers of South Vietnam by the time of the war, and gender and sexual pluralism was less tolerated (see Peletz 2009; Heiman and Van Lê 1975; Forrest 1971).

The Vietnamese violation of Western norms of strict gender difference and heterosexual puritanism disoriented Western personnel deployed in Vietnam. Charles J. Levy notes:

> The [US] marines heard lectures about Vietnamese men expressing friendship among themselves and with other men through physical contact. But this behavior became all the more inexplicable as a result of the lectures. For if handholding between men was a custom, it meant—as far as the marines were concerned—that these gestures were not aberrations within the Vietnamese society: rather the whole society was an aberration.

(1971, 20)

This “aberrant” behavior led some US personnel to distrust and abhor their South Vietnamese allies. This distrust was gendered and heteronormative; the South Vietnamese personnel did not conform to appropriate Western gender norms and were thus “queer,” “other,” and suspicious.

**Homosexuality and the Draft**

Both the United States and Australia used conscription during the Vietnam War, and both militaries actively excluded LGBT persons from service. This policy was used as a means to avoid service by both straight and LGBT draftees, but it also had the effect of ensnaring LGBT persons who willingly and proudly served, too. Furthermore, higher burdens of proof for homosexuality were required as the war progressed, meaning that some LGBT persons were knowingly enrolled in their country’s military, despite suspicions that would have excluded them in less pressing times (see Shilts 1994; Dapin 2014; Suran 2009).

In the United States, declaring one’s homosexuality during recruitment was a straightforward task, requiring only the checking of the box asking about homosexual tendencies on the medical history report. But doing so entailed admitting to desires that were illegal in every US state, except Illinois, in the 1960s. Furthermore, admitting, or feigning, homosexuality was far from confidential, especially in small communities, and had consequences for those seeking civil service employment (Shilts 1994).

Similar medical screening of recruits was conducted in Australia to weed out those too unhealthy, too mentally incapacitated, or too homosexual. A pamphlet titled “How Not to Join the Army: Advice for 20 Year Olds,” published by Resistance, Sydney, advised draft resisters, “Don’t answer any questions on homosexuality, just smile ... learn to touch the fellow you’re talking to suggestively. Be a little pathetic” (Wallace 1968, 13). Those brave enough to admit to, or feign, homosexuality in Australia faced similar social taboos if word leaked out regarding the reason for their draft rejection (Dapin 2014). Feigning or confessing to homosexuality when selected for the draft therefore had significant continuing consequences in both countries.

**The Gay Liberation Movement and Diffusion**

This section surveys the emergence of the gay liberation movement in the United States, its interaction with other social movements, and the success and failure of its diffusion to Australia and Vietnam. It employs the theoretical framework of social movement diffusion to provide a causal explanation of these shifts. Social movement diffusion refers to the spread of movements that seek to change social attitudes and public policy from
one site to another, frequently internationally. Diffusion
spreads in a multidimensional manner, via the “what” of
diffusion (interpretative frames that construct and inter-
pret issues, as well as any attendant protest tactics), the
“how” of diffusion (relational and interpersonal, nonrela-
tional and nonpersonal, and mediated and third-party
contacts), and the “impact of diffusion” (especially the
effects of agency and structure on the impact of gay
liberation) (see Givan, Roberts, and Soule 2010). While
this section does not purport to offer a definitive
delineation of gay liberation’s various groups and actions,
it does note some of the more significant events to
highlight its diffusion.

This entry focuses on the United States, Australia,
and Vietnam, but it should be noted that the emergence
of gay liberation and culture was also occurring in
western Europe and Southeast Asia during this period.
Early gay liberation activism was evident, if peripheral,
to the May 1968 events in France, notable for their
independence from the New York Stonewall riots of
June 1969. While this quickly disappeared after calm
was restored in France, gay radicalism reemerged in
France in 1971 and adopted the frames and tactics of US
gay liberation (see Sibalis 2009). Also inspired by the US
movement, the British Gay Liberation Front began in
October 1970 and adopted disruptive tactics and
consciousness-raising as strategies (see Lent 2001). In
Southeast Asia, according to Peter A. Jackson (2009),
local queering began before the diffusion of US gay
liberation frames and tactics in the 1970s, with the
dynamics of local capitalism and urbanization being the
crucial causal factors in the emergence of a local queer
culture and sex work in Thailand as early as the 1930s.
Bugis Street in Singapore was also a center for queer
culture and sex work during the mid-twentieth century,
emerging in the 1950s and catering to Western cliente
and soldiers on leave during the Vietnam War (Ho
2012). This complexity points to the limitations of
simple Westernized causal explanations that center on
the diffusion and impact of American gay liberation
activism of the late 1960s and 1970s. These local
dynamics are crucial to note when assessing the Vietnam
War’s impact on Vietnamese queering, discussed below.

The Emergence of Gay Liberation in the United States

The gay liberation movement sought societal transfor-
mation, moving beyond the liberal demand for rights
that had characterized the homophile movement of the early
1960s. A two-step causal process facilitated the emergence
of gay liberation: (1) gay liberation drew inspiration from
the counterculture’s framing of dominant American social
mores (Altman 1971); and (2) the draft’s requirement to
prove homosexuality forced homosexual men to assert
their homosexuality and aided their formation of a publicly

An Anti–Vietnam War “Homosexuals for Peace” Protest
Pin. Gay liberationist groups “piggybacked” the protests of the
antiwar movements, both to oppose the war and to advance their
own cause. © STUART LUTZ/GADO/GETTY IMAGES

gay identity, as opposed to a closeted, private, homosexual
identity (Soran 2009).

While the Stonewall riots in New York City in June
1969 are commonly thought of as the moment when the
gay liberation movement coalesced, the antiwar move-
ment and gay liberationists had interacted on the West
Coast before, and contiguous with, Stonewall. The first
gay liberation group in San Francisco was the Committee
for Homosexual Freedom, formed in April 1969, and the
events of Stonewall and the Vietnam Moratorium Day of
October 1969 aided its radicalization and spread (Soran
2009). The emergence of New York’s Gay Liberation
Front in the aftermath of Stonewall (a name that invoked
the Vietnamese National Liberation Front) furthered the
movement on the East Coast.

Gay liberation existed in a dialectical relationship
with the other social movements of the counterculture
(Altman 1971). Opposition to the war in Vietnam
provided one link, and gay liberationist groups “piggy-
backed” the protests of the antiwar movements, both to
oppose the war and to advance their own cause (Soran
2009). Gay liberationists also learned from the Black
Power and women’s liberation movements, borrowing
notions of pride in identity from radical African American
thought and tactics of consciousness-raising, diffuse
structure, and personal politics from women’s liberation
(Altman 1971). The shared opposition to the war in
Vietnam held these disparate groups loosely together, but
also masked the differences in their goals and levels of agency in a racist and patriarchal society, which curtailed further coordinated action as the Vietnam War ended.

Dennis Altman, a gay liberation scholar and participant, noted in 1977 that the movement had lost much of its radicalism as economic factors took over. More gay men were attracted to the flourishing commercial world of gay life, including gay bathhouses and saunas, clubs and bars, theaters, and restaurants, than to politics. Politicized LGBT persons, lacking the counterculture’s impetus for radical social change, soon found themselves co-opted into the structures of US pluralism, with tempered goals of interest group formation and incremental policy change. The commercial world of gay life thus took over the facilitation of identity formation during this period (see Altman 1979, 1989).

The Diffusion of Gay Liberation to Australia The Australian gay liberation movement adopted the frames, and some of the tactics, of its US cousin. The first openly homosexual and political organization in Australia, the Campaign Against Moral Persecution, or CAMP (a play on the locally preferred parlance), emerged in the mid-1970s. CAMP was initially reluctant to mobilize in public, and their first public protest in October 1971 was not an antihar action but instead opposed a Christian fundamentalist who was challenging for preselection for the conservative Liberal Party of Australia (Altman 1987; Reynolds 2002). This type of campaigning against the curtailment of homosexual rights is a rough gloss of CAMP’s activities.

Early CAMP contained the breadth of Australian homosexuality: gay men and lesbians, rights-seeking politicians, transformational liberationists, and those who used the organization to connect with their community. Tensions quickly arose, and radical liberationists split from CAMP in January 1972 to form a group called Gay Liberation. Lesbian women soon began to leave too, “as they felt pressured by male demands for social and sexual space” (Altman 2013, 98; see also Reynolds 2002). Gay Liberation was more influenced by American and British theory and praxis of liberation than CAMP, adopting the frame of utopian liberation from heteronormative hegemony and employing the tactics of consciousness-raising (Reynolds 2002). This was primarily nonrelational, as the United States and Australia’s shared Western values, and liberal democratic political institutions aided their common understanding of the world. Some relational links were evident, with Altman (1987, 2013) being an activist and scholar who shared ideas across the movements.

As in the United States, Gay Liberation in Australia was also influenced by other movements: women’s liberation’s theories of patriarchy and personal politics, as well as notions of pride drawn from African American politics (Johnston 1980). However, a survey of local literature and archives failed to uncover a Gay Liberation alignment with the analogous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander struggle for liberation and self-determination. Furthermore, though Gay Liberation and elements of CAMP were unquestionably part of the counterculture, the late 1970 drawdown of Australian deployments in Vietnam meant that the impetus for antiwar radicalism had been somewhat negated by the time CAMP conducted its first public protest the following year.

Altman’s incisive critique of US gay liberation was echoed in Australian developments in commercialization and politics. As in the United States, the gay economy exploded in Australian capital cities in the late 1960s and into the 1970s, with drag shows, gay bars and pubs, and bathhouses facilitating the spread of gay culture and identity (see Worthington 2016; Smaal 2012). Gay politics also soon found itself interacting with Australian democratic structures of trade union politics and the attendant influence of Marxism, a crucial difference from the US movement (Altman 1989; Johnston 1980). Writing in 1980, Craig Johnston argued that the Australian gay movement of the 1970s had fragmented, had achieved “dramatic” but not “earthshattering” advances in consciousness-raising and public opinion, and had created “liberated zones” (28) for homosexuals.

The Diffusion of Gay Liberation to Vietnam The frames and tactics of gay liberation did not diffuse to Vietnam as they did from the United States to Australia. However, the commercial world of gay life that was evidently growing in the West was also tolerated in Vietnam during the war and catered to Western, Chinese, and local LGBT persons. Gay liberation failed to diffuse because of the historical moment, the structures of Vietnamese culture, economics, and politics, and the agency of those Vietnamese who did have limited relational and nonrelational contact with Western gay liberation.

That said, there is significant evidence to suggest that LGBT relations and sex in Vietnam were prevalent during the war, despite Vietnamese enculturation into Western gender and sexual norms and American and Australian attempts to eliminate homosexuality from the ranks. A 1970 survey of 488 Australian male personnel deployed to Vietnam found 3 percent of them admitting to homosexual experiences while in Vietnam itself (Hart 1975). Randy Shilts states that “by 1971, a vast gay subculture existed within the American military stationed in Vietnam. Six years of intense U.S. presence had been time enough to establish huge networks of gay servicemen throughout Southeast Asia” (1994, 149). This seems confirmed by contemporary sources such as Philip Marnais (1967) and the International Guild Guides of 1968–1973 that contained listings of gay venues catering to a Western clientele and GIs in Vietnam, Thailand, and
Singapore. It should be noted, however, that the Marnais source (written under a pseudonym) was a salacious and questionably factual account of sex and sin in Saigon and should, therefore, be treated with caution (Copyright Office 1971). The International Guild Guides, in contrast, were guidebooks with the explicitly stated purpose of accuracy, thus making them an arguably more useful source.

There is, however, little evidence to suggest that the utopian ideals of gay liberation spread to Vietnam during this period. The commercial toleration of Western LGBT individuals in Vietnam echoed colonial patterns of subjugated acquiescence to Western hegemony, as the economic service of queer desires was catered for, but the politics of gay liberation was not. This is not surprising; the war hardly provided the structure of liberal freedoms that the Western movement exploited. There were also significant cultural differences between the countries that curtailed nonrelational connections; the Vietnamese emphasis on Confucian values, combined with sympathy for communism and the struggle for national freedom, emphasized collectivism over individualism.

There were some brief relational contacts between Western movement activists and the Vietnamese. Judy Tzu-Chun Wu (2013) has analyzed the 1971 Indochinese Women’s Conferences that gathered antiwar feminists from North America, Laos, and South and North Vietnam. But these conferences were characterized by significant identity-based conflict between factions of the North American movement, and racial, sexual, and national lines of opposition were drawn among attendees. The individualism that characterized the North American participants in the conferences, as well as their conflicts, failed to gel with the Vietnamese participants’ collective worldview. A question asked of North Vietnamese women and their answer to it illustrate this disconnect:

Q: In the U.S.A., there is disunity between the several kinds of anti-war groups, revolutionary groups, and oppressed groups (Third World Peoples, unemployed, poor people, youth, women’s groups)…. We can’t find a basis for unity but we believe we should. What is your opinion?

A: You have raised the single-issue versus the multi-issue question, to use American terminology…. We believe there are no multi-issues, only the single issue of the struggle against imperialism.

(PeDestaL 1971, 10; Emphasis added)

The Vietnamese distaste for Western identity politics was further evidenced by one participant’s recollection that some Indochinese women had walked offstage when questioned about Vietnamese lesbian sex by radical lesbian participants (Wu 2013). So, the North American and Indochinese women may have shared antiwar political goals, but they did not share the Western frame of individualism and self-liberation that had sustained the gay liberation movement in the United States and Australia.

Postwar Vietnam provides further evidence for the failure of gay liberation diffusion. Richard Quang-Anh Tran’s 2014 survey of Vietnamese news articles, literature, and government reports between 1986 and 2005 found no usage of the Western language of homosexuality (gay, lesbian, LGBT, etc.) before the 1990s. Ethnographic research during this same period reveals the Vietnamese belief that homosexuality was introduced by the French and Americans (Aronson 1999). Vietnamese socialism during and after the war decried the Western undermining of Vietnamese morality, and left little room for the liberation of LGBT persons. As such, the politics of gay liberation failed to diffuse to Vietnam during the period, and Western-style queering of culture and economics had limited continuing impact after the war’s end.

The Vietnam War was a crucial framing event for the emergence and diffusion of gay liberation. The operation of conscription in the United States, combined with the US military’s exclusion of LGBT individuals from service, radicalized LGBT Americans. They quickly framed their own liberation as part of the counterculture’s challenging of hegemonic gender and heteronormative social mores and operationalized tactics borrowed from other social movements.

These frames and tactics diffused to Australia, a Western, liberal-democratic country that was also fighting in Vietnam and employing conscription. This diffusion was aided by the obvious political, economic, and cultural similarities between the countries, but there was also local variation and relative caution in Australia.

These enabling mechanisms were less evident in Vietnam. North and South Vietnam did not offer the liberal-democratic freedoms or the cultural belief in individualism that underpinned gay liberation in the West. Despite tentative relational contact between North Americans and the Vietnamese, these differences proved too difficult to bridge. Thus, the globalization of LGBT culture and politics emerged much later in the Vietnamese context.

See also Australia and New Zealand; Black Freedom Movement and Sexuality; Cold War and Sexuality in Latin America; Marches on Washington; Military Law and Policy in the United States; Sex Tourism in Asia; Vietnam War, LGBTQ+ Veterans

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Vietnam War, LGBTQ+ Veterans

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The postwar experiences of those who fought in this war from the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.

One challenge when looking to history has been the silences surrounding LGBTQ+ military service, both in the records and from veterans themselves. Work on World War II (1939–1945) shows that LGBTQ+ people served in all theaters of war and came from all walks of life. The war was a formative experience for these men and women, as it was for that entire generation. Because so many men and women served in all combatant nations, not surprisingly many members of the homophile movements of the 1950s and 1960s were veterans. An even larger percentage of them remained guarded about their sexuality, though, whether choosing to marry and start families, to visit public places to cruise for sex ("beats" in Australian parlance), or to live quiet lives in relationships. Indeed, one of the state presidents of Australia’s premier veterans’ organization, the Returned and Services League, was a World War II veteran with a same-sex partner; this came out only posthumously when there was a fight over his will. Much the same silence surrounds veterans of the Korean War (1950–1953) and the Malayan Emergency (1950–1960).

Medical Issues
The Vietnam War affected a different generation and was the first conflict in which societies seriously grappled with not only the physical scars of war but also the mental and emotional traumas plaguing veterans. LGBTQ+ veterans faced trials common to all Vietnam War veterans, yet in many ways their stories diverged from the dominant Vietnam veteran narrative. Post-traumatic stress disorder is a common challenge experienced by many Vietnam veterans from Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, although there are differences in individual veterans’ symptoms and in how the nations’ veterans’ administrations responded. LGBTQ+ veterans, like straight and cisgender (those whose gender identity aligns with their sex at birth) personnel, often turned to alcohol, experienced flashbacks, and were prone to fits of anger. Veterans who were trying to repress or hide their homosexuality or gender identity only compounded the mental distress.

The majority of LGBTQ+ service personnel who received honorable discharges retained their entitlements to pensions and medical services. Even so, many seeking medical treatment chose not to disclose their sexuality for fear of being discriminated against, and for decades support services did not cater to the different needs of LGBTQ+ veterans. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the veterans’ administrations have become more attuned to the needs of LGB veterans. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, as there has been an increase in transgender visibility globally, so, too, have veterans’ establishments had to consider transgender needs. In the United States, a 2011 Veterans Health Administration