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### Strategic Tradeoffs

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Davidson, R.J.

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## STRATEGIC TRADEOFFS: MOVEMENT-GOVERNMENT INTERACTIONS AND DUTCH GAY AND LESBIAN POLICY, 1986-1994\*

Robert J. Davidson<sup>†</sup>

*Interactions between social movements and government actors have been conceptualized as either combative and exclusionary or institutionalized and coopted. This article transcends that dichotomy by tracing one social movement organization's tactical pursuit of institutionalization, examining the process through which institutionalization occurred, and evaluating its effects. This case study, based on qualitative, archival data, traces the institutionalization of the gay and lesbian social movement organization, the Dutch Association for the Integration of Homosexuality, COC, between 1986 and 1994. The analysis offers three findings: First, institutionalization is a process built through sustained exchange relations over time. Second, institutionalization does not necessarily result in cooptation but does involve tradeoffs. Third, both SMO and governmental actors are affected, albeit differently, by the process of institutionalization. While the COC was primarily affected organizationally, the Dutch government became more activist by attempting to influence the social institution of sexuality to accommodate homosexuality.*

Social movement organizations (SMOs) advocating on behalf of diverse issues struggle with the question of how to position themselves in relation to government actors. Do they critique society, law, and policy from the barricades or attempt to influence social, legal, and policy processes by working within and through government institutions? Social movement scholarship examining the latter strategy, or the institutionalization of social movement organizations, has posited that such a strategy often results in cooptation. In this article I evaluate the claims of the posited outcomes of organizational institutionalization through examining the case of the Dutch Association for the Integration of Homosexuality COC's (COC<sup>1</sup>) and its institutionalization in the Netherlands between 1986-1994. Organizational institutionalization did not result in the COC being coopted, according to the definitions of cooptation evaluated. Instead, organizational institutionalization resulted in a number of benefits for the COC and its advocacy efforts, while also entailing a number of tradeoffs the COC chose to accept in order to maintain institutionalization and its accompanying benefits.

SMOs concerned with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans\* (LGBT) rights have increasingly partnered with government actors on various local, national, and supranational contexts since the 1980s in the pursuit of their goals. In some contexts, LGBT SMOs have achieved more

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<sup>†</sup> Robert J. Davidson is a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR) of the University of Amsterdam (UvA). His research examines the changing relationship between the Dutch government and the gay and lesbian social movement. Davidson is the program manager of the Amsterdam Research Center for Gender and Sexuality (ARC-GS), has taught courses at the UvA in the disciplines of political science and sociology, and has previously published on the Dutch gay and lesbian social movement, queer theory, and intersex social movement organizations. Please direct all correspondence to R.J.Davidson@uva.nl.

social, legal, and policy successes than others, and LGBT SMOs have been particularly successful in the Netherlands. The Dutch government and the most historically significant LGBT SMO in the Netherlands, the COC, have advocated together for LGBT rights and acceptance in the Netherlands, in various other national contexts, and in and through the supranational organizations of the EU and the UN. This article focuses on 1986-1994, the period of the COC's advocacy in which institutionalization took shape. The long history of movement-government interaction provides a ripe case to pinpoint how institutionalization took place. The relative success of the Dutch LGBT movement makes the case relevant for evaluating the effects of institutionalization, which have most often been theorized to lead to cooptation. The central questions addressed in this article are: in what ways was the COC institutionalized within the Dutch government from 1986-1994, and in what ways were the COC and the government affected by that institutionalization?

### LGBT POLICY ADVOCACY AND THE COC IN EXISTING LITERATURE

SMOs of the LGBT social movement have received little attention as policy movements, even though a number of LGBT SMOs not only interact but also actively collaborate with various actors in local, national, and supranational governments in the formulation and execution of policies (Ayoub 2013; Tremblay, Paternotte, and Johnson 2011). As LGBT SMOs increasingly engage government actors, it is necessary to better understand how they interact and form relations with government actors and the potential effects of those relations. Most studies of the LGBT social movement have applied the so-called "new social movements" approach to analyze the movement as primarily concerned with cultural change and the production and maintenance of LGBT-identities (Bernstein 1997). While cultural change and identity production have been included in the broader strategies of many LGBT SMOs, many LGBT SMOs advocate for legal changes and LGBT rights (Ayoub 2016) as well as for the introduction of social policies on homosexuality<sup>2</sup>.

Kollman (2017) has called the Netherlands a LGBT policy pioneer, primarily because it was the first country to open marriage to same-sex couples (in 2001). Before marriage for same-sex couples became an issue of debate, the Netherlands introduced social policy on homosexuality (in 1986), including measures to protect gays and lesbians from violence and to promote the social acceptance of homosexuality. That first wave of social policy on homosexuality in the Netherlands was inextricably tied to advocacy by and government collaboration with the COC.

Previous studies of the Dutch gay and lesbian (GL<sup>3</sup>) movement have focused on the COC's ability to gain access to government actors, which was most likely facilitated by the Dutch political culture of pillarization (Schuyf and Krouwel 1999; Tielman 1982; Wansink 1985). During the political culture of pillarization, Dutch society and politics consisted of four dominant groups (Protestants, Catholics, socialists, and liberals), all of which were minorities<sup>4</sup>. Tielman (1982) argued that pillarization facilitated the political accommodation of other minority groups, such as gays and lesbians. While pillarization contributed to the Netherlands being a most likely case for the institutional inclusion of gays and lesbians, this article looks beyond how institutional access was gained to examine the ways in which the COC navigated institutions after access was gained, how it maintained its institutionalization, and with what effects.

Existing research on the Dutch GL movement suggests that the movement was deeply invested in and engaged by government organizations from the 1980s but details neither how institutionalization occurred nor the effects of institutionalization. Hekma (2004) mentioned only in passing that the COC partnered with the Dutch government in the 1980s. Duyvendak (1996) highlighted a particular relationship between the GL movement and the government during the late 1980s and early 1990s but only in relation to policy on HIV/AIDS, which was a policy domain separate from GL policy from 1987. Schuyf and Krouwel (1999) even cast aside

government relations with the COC as being rather insignificant for the movement, as the GL movement's relations with government actors were not formalized to the degree experienced by SMOs of some other identity-based social movements<sup>5</sup>. Swiebel (2011) noted that two government ministries, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Work, Public Health, and Culture (WVC<sup>6</sup>), presented white papers on GL policy but made little mention of the COC's specific involvement with GL policy or either of those ministries. The literature on the Dutch GL movement suggests that the COC pursued institutionalization at the Ministries of Justice and WVC, but it remains unclear how institutionalization took place and affected the COC and the government.

### INSTITUTIONALIZATION AS PROCESS OF SUSTAINED EXCHANGE

What I call organizational institutionalization occupies the main focus of this article. Organizational institutionalization concerns the process through which organizations and the actors in them interact with and relate to each other. Those interactions are centered around exchange relations and are sustained over time.

Some of the most influential work on social movements focused on combative, hostile relations between challengers and authorities (Snow 2004; Tilly 1984). One of the most dominant theoretical approaches in social movement research, the political process approach (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, and Giugni 1995), is concerned with how those challengers, social movements, gain access to governments and conventional political institutions. As SMOs have often been defined based on their institutional exclusion and use of the tactic of protest (Diani 1992), many scholars have stopped their analyses of SMOs after those SMOs gained political access. The result is that analyses of social movements often focus on phases of protest and pay less attention to phases of institutionalization.

Many SMOs engage in tactics of institutionalization, but the process of SMO institutionalization itself remains unclear (Masson 2015). Based on a study of the women's movement in Korea, Suh (2011: 443) defined institutionalization as "social movements traversing the official terrain of formal politics and engaging with authoritative institutions such as the legislature, the judiciary, the state, and political parties to enhance their collective ability to achieve the movement's goals." Suh's definition is helpful in assessing SMOs' engagement with government actors in pursuit of policy goals, but it sheds little light on the process of institutionalization itself and does not explain how SMOs "traverse" into the terrain of formal politics.

Resource mobilization theories, which have emphasized the importance for SMOs of occupying and being able to mobilize resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977), can assist in conceptualizing how institutionalization may take place. Some resources, such as policy and financial resources, are either monopolized or greatly controlled by government actors. SMOs that pursue evolutionary tactics (Davidson 2009) and seek to access such resources may tactically engage in exchange relations with government actors. Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Leech, and Kimball (2009) found that policy resources play an important role in the successes of lobbying organizations. Coston (1998) and Alvarez (1999) found that, in some situations of collaboration, NGOs and governments may share resources. By extension it seems likely that exchange relations may also develop between SMOs and governments. I expect an SMO, however, to have different potential functions and to be able to mobilize different resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977) than NGOs or lobbying organizations. For example, SMOs have expertise that could be similar to that of NGOs, but they are also able to mobilize their constituent members.

I operationalize the institutional "traversing" Suh (2011) refers to as the process through which exchange relations between an SMO and government actors are established and maintained over time. The maintenance of exchange relations results in a different dynamic between the actors involved, compared to a one-time exchange, in that it requires (the building of) trust

and may lead to tactical, short-term compromises and tradeoffs in the hope of future gains. I posit that SMOs will exchange expertise and policy advising for policy influence and financial resources from the government.

### THE EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Beyond the process of institutionalization itself, the outcomes and effects of organizational institutionalization for SMOs remain hotly debated in social movement scholarship. One prominent assumption in the literature is that institutionalization results in cooptation, although scholars vary in how they conceptualize cooptation. Some scholars define cooptation as being more or less synonymous with institutionalization, while others define cooptation as an outcome of institutionalized relations. As I conceptually delineate between the process of institutionalization and its effects, I focus on the latter understanding of cooptation, as an outcome of institutionalized relations. Cooptation, as an effect of institutionalization, has been defined in widely divergent ways and has been used to: identify a shift in a social movement's tactics (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) or goals (Modavi 1996); refer to movement deradicalization (Piven and Cloward 1977); suggest the neutralization of a movement (Coy and Hedeem 2005); identify an SMO's shift to a service provider (Pruijt 2003); and point to a movement's inability to achieve its goals (Gamson 1975).

Scholars have identified potential outcomes of institutionalized social movement advocacy other than cooptation, such as movement facilitation that can occur through the harnessing of governmental resources (Landriscina 2007). Institutionalization can facilitate SMOs when relations of "conflictual cooperation" can be established with government actors (Evers 1990; Giugni and Passy 1998).

Scholars have debated the extent to which institutionalization results in changes to a SMO's organizational structure. Zald and Ash (1966: 340) found that, "while there is often an association between growing institutionalization and bureaucratization and conservatism, there is no evidence that this is a necessary association." Sabine Lang (2013) found that through NGOs' desires to be included in policy arenas and receive subsidies, they often became more oriented toward government regulations and accountability. The outcomes described by Zald and Ash (1966) and Lang (2013) may also apply to the case of the COC. It remains unclear, however, if institutionalization may lead to cooptation, facilitate movement goals, and/or result in organizational change (Meyer 2003). Thus, in line with Morgan (2007), I view the effects of institutionalization as an open question.

Most studies of organizational institutionalization and its effects examine either how government-created organizations (e.g., women's policy agencies, McBride and Mazur 2006), or individual actors in government organizations (e.g., Banaszak 2010, Pettinicchio 2012), align with and/or are sympathetic to a movement's cause. SMOs may share with policy agencies, NGOs, and lobbying organizations the desire to harness government resources for their own ends, but in contrast to those organizations, SMOs can deploy a wider range of tactics and usually have different organizational structures. Thus, SMOs may be institutionalized differently and with different effects than these other types of organizations or individual institutional activists. By examining the institutionalization of an SMO, this study generates new insights regarding the process and effects of organizational institutionalization.

Beyond focusing on the effects of institutionalization on SMOs, I also pay attention to the effects of institutionalization on the government. To do so I turn to theories of social institutionalization, which refers to the ways in which social behavior is directed through formal rules and informal norms. Altering one or more social institutions has often been a central objective of SMOs. Many ways of organizing social behavior have taken the form of social institutions, such as family, church, sexuality, and gender (Martin 2004). Pursuing legal reform and policy goals may be one way SMOs go about attempting to effect shifts in social institutions. Yet, how social institutions can be altered through SMOs' collaborations with governmental actors

remains unclear. I will therefore identify the ways in which governmental actors attempted to alter the social institution of sexuality in the Netherlands in cooperation with the COC.

## DATA AND METHODS

In this article I examine the process of organizational institutionalization as sustained exchange relations over time and evaluate the effects of those relations. I use the COC's engagement with governmental organizations between 1986 and 1994 as a case study (Stake 1995) to examine the process and effects of institutionalization. The role of the COC as a central actor in the LGBT movement<sup>7</sup> (Duyvendak 1994) coupled with its long history offers a rare opportunity to trace changes in its relations with government organizations and actors and their effects over time. While the COC occupies the main focus of the analysis, I also consider government actors and organizations, particularly the two ministries responsible for executing GL policy during the period analyzed.

The period of time analyzed in the study, 1986-1994, corresponds with the three cabinet periods, Lubbers I, Lubbers II, and Lubbers III, in which the Dutch government formulated and executed the first wave of coordinated GL policy in the Netherlands. Each successive cabinet updated the first white paper entitled *Overheidsbeleid en homoseksualiteit* (hereafter referred to as: *Government Policy and Homosexuality*). Those white papers were the basis for the development of Dutch law and regulation of GL issues. The COC's 1983 policy brief, *Homoseksualiteit in het overheidsbeleid* (hereafter referred to as: *Homosexuality in Government Policy*), was included to inventory the policy goals the COC attempted to secure from government. I compared the five relevant variables identified from the theoretical discussions (the COC's goals, exchange relations, consultation, funding, and organizational structure) over time to identify the process through which institutionalization occurred and its effects.

I gathered qualitative data in the form of thousands of pages of documents between 2013 and 2016 from the following five archives: the International Institute of Social History<sup>8</sup>, IHLIA LGBT Heritage, the Archive of the Dutch Parliament<sup>9</sup>, the Dutch National Archive<sup>10</sup>, and Atria<sup>11</sup>. Types of government documents gathered include: policy documents; minutes of parliamentary debates; minutes of parliamentary Extensive Committee Meetings (UCVs<sup>12</sup>) on GL policy; ministerial publications; minutes of relevant meetings between governmental actors and members of the GL advocacy field; correspondence between governmental actors regarding GL policy documents; and correspondence between governmental actors and members of the GL advocacy field. The types of documents gathered produced by social movement actors include: minutes of the COC's annual conferences; minutes of meetings organized by the COC; COC publications, such as its magazine for members (*Sek*) and a number of pamphlets and books; and articles from the *Gay Krant*, a gay and lesbian newspaper.

I engaged in open coding in Atlas.ti following the inductive content analysis method (Elo and Kyngäs 2008) to examine the process of institutionalization and its effects. One family of codes focused on where and with whom relations between the COC and governmental actors and organizations took place and what was exchanged in those relations. Another family of codes focused on the effects of those relations, including organizational change, effects on governmental actors and organizations, and effects on the social institution of sexuality. I translated the citations from the original Dutch into English.

## THE HISTORY OF THE COC AND INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Before the phase of institutionalization that began in the 1980s, the COC engaged in tactics of identity building and protesting. The first two names of the organization, the "Shakespeare Club"<sup>13</sup> and the "Center for Culture and Relaxation"<sup>14</sup> reflected the organization's function of providing a safe haven for its members. The COC offered a space for its members to learn about

homosexuality, make friends, and potentially find partners while being shielded from the homophobia in society at large (Warmerdam and Coenders 1987). While homosexuality had been decriminalized in the Netherlands with the introduction of the Napoleonic Code in 1811, legislation in 1911 raised the age of consent for same-sex sex acts to twenty-one years.<sup>15</sup> That legislation, *248bis*, and legislation against lewdness and public sex were used to heavily police (homo) sexuality for many decades. The COC “came out” in 1964 when its chairman, Benno Premsele, appeared on television and openly discussed his homosexuality in an interview. He was only the second person to do this on Dutch television without being anonymized. During the 1960s the COC attempted to secure legal personality for the organization, which was refused by the government. In 1969 the COC attempted to influence parliamentary discussions on the removal of *248bis* by helping to convince the Labor Party (PvdA<sup>16</sup>) to oppose *248bis* and by sponsoring the first GL protest in the Netherlands, which took place on January 21, 1969 at the Dutch parliament.

During the 1970s the COC did not ignore the government but became primarily focused on goals associated with gay liberation and cultural change and, partly as a result, underwent some organizational and tactical changes. In 1971 the COC changed its name to the “Dutch Association for the Integration of Homosexuality COC” (Warmerdam and Coenders 1987). The COC became a federated organization with a national office in Amsterdam and around fifteen local chapters throughout the Netherlands. Members elected the national board and decided upon the direction of the COC at yearly members’ conferences. *248bis* was struck down in 1971, and the COC was granted legal personality in 1973. During the rest of the 1970s, the COC had some further contact with the government, for example by advocating for the end of the ban on gays serving in the military, which was removed in 1974, but during the 1970s the COC was primarily concerned with goals of cultural change and raising awareness about and acceptance of homosexuality.

From 1979 a coalition called the Pink Front organized a yearly GL protest event entitled Pink Saturday, in which the COC was a central player. At the Pink Saturday held in the city of Amersfoort on June 26, 1982, counter-protestors attacked the demonstrators. In response, the COC attempted to secure from the government social policy on homosexuality that would protect GLs from violence and increase the acceptance of homosexuality.

### *The Lubbers I Cabinet*

During the Lubbers I Cabinet<sup>17</sup>, the COC presented its goals related to government policies in the form of a policy brief, which served as the catalyst for the realization of social policy on homosexuality. The COC’s tactic of pursuing organizational institutionalization was successful, solidifying exchange relations between the executive branch of government and the COC. The COC provided the government with policy expertise and assisted in policy execution, and in exchange the government enabled the COC to influence the policy and provided it with subsidies. The Ministry of Justice coordinated the consultative status for the COC during the Lubbers I Cabinet, providing the COC with both structural and project-based subsidies. The COC’s organizational structure was indirectly affected during the Lubbers I Cabinet by the increased financial resources it received. The COC did not achieve many policy goals during the Lubbers I Cabinet, but by securing the introduction of social policy on homosexuality it set the stage to achieve many of its policy goals in subsequent cabinet periods.

In reaction to the violent events in Amersfoort in 1982, the COC sent a policy brief entitled *Homosexuality and Government Policy* to Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, of the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), in 1983 with more than 70 specific policy proposals, to be implemented by relevant ministries (NVIH COC 1983). The COC’s 70 proposals amounted to the following policy goals it demanded from the government: strengthen the GL movement; protect GL rights and interests in international relations; research, register, and heavily prosecute antigay violence and verbal discrimination; allow foreign partners to be entitled to a residence permit; include homosexuality in sexual education; promote GL studies at the university level;

make inheritance possible for nonmarried couples; and include GL themes in state-sponsored media.

The COC received little response to its demands until the State Secretary of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW<sup>18</sup>), Annelien Kappeyne van de Coppello (VVD), sent a letter to the COC dated July 27, 1984, in which she explained that the government was taking so long to reply to the COC's policy brief because, "just as elsewhere in society, a process of getting used to homosexuality will also have to occur within the government" (Kappeyne van de Coppello 1984). Some months later parliament passed a motion requesting that the cabinet adopt policy to combat the discrimination of homosexuals (Tweede Kamer<sup>19</sup> 1984-1985). Meetings with the COC occurred in January 1986 to update the government on the SMO's policy demands, and the Minister of Justice Frist Korthals Altes (VVD) presented the white paper *Government Policy and Homosexuality* (Tweede Kamer 1985-1986) to parliament on April 24, 1986.

The Ministry of Justice became responsible for the coordination of the policy, and the policy focused heavily on preventing antigay violence. The white paper was primarily an inventory of the policy measures that the government had already taken and focused, for instance, on research that had been solicited by the government, antidiscrimination policies implemented for government employees, and subsidies given to GL organizations. Also, some tentative policy plans were presented, such as the criminalization of verbal discrimination against GLs.

As the government, in the words of Annelien Kappeyne van de Coppello, "had to get used to homosexuality" (Kappeyne van de Coppello 1984), it needed assistance and expertise in formulating GL policy. The COC, which had already played a role in initially calling for the policy, was given an advisory role. The COC was invited to provide input on the policy in its developmental stages at two consultative meetings that took place at the Ministry of Justice (Ministry of Justice 1986).

In return for providing the Ministry of Justice with advice on the formulation of the policy, the COC received policy influence and structural and project-based subsidies. Structural subsidies were generally reserved for the dominant political representative of a social group, in this case the COC (Davidson 2015). Government funding for other GL organizations was primarily project-based, and subsidies for those organizations were not more than 1/10th of what the COC received, with the exception of the Schorer Foundation<sup>20</sup>. The organizations included in the white paper, aside from the COC, either focused on a specific task or a specific group. In 1986 the COC received  $f399,088$ <sup>21</sup> in structural subsidies from the government (Tweede Kamer 1987-1988).

The organizational structure of the COC was not directly affected by its relationship with the government during the Lubbers I Cabinet, but by receiving a relatively large amount of structural funds and funds to engage in projects the COC took on some new personnel in its national office. The COC also engaged in a broader range of activities than it had previously done, as the COC added lobbying, policy influence, and policy execution to the tasks in which they were already engaged.

Already during the Lubbers I Cabinet both the COC and the government were affected. By engaging in exchange relations with the government, the COC was not only able to influence GL policy, but it also had more resources and could engage in more activities and projects than it had previously done. The government, in formulating and executing GL policy, came to see GLs as full citizens who deserved the government's protection from violence.

### *The Lubbers II Cabinet*

During the Lubbers II Cabinet<sup>22</sup> period, GL policy expanded and was given a new institutional location, resulting in the COC achieving more of its policy goals. Exchange relations between the COC and the government intensified, as the COC was more heavily involved in consultation and given increasing amounts of subsidies by the government. The demands the



COC and the government made of each other increased, resulting in organizational changes for the COC.

With the installment of the Lubbers II Cabinet, GL policy was relocated to the Ministry of Social Work, Public Health, and Culture (WVC), with Elco Brinkman (CDA) as the coordinating minister, where it expanded far beyond the previous cabinet's focus on violence. Brinkman presented the cabinet's white paper on homosexuality (Tweede Kamer 1987-1988) on June 28, 1988. Antigay violence continued to be taken seriously, as the cabinet initiated training and registration programs in the police force, helped found a center to register discrimination against GLs, and proposed a bill to criminalize publicly insulting or promoting hate of GLs. Some other policy measures presented in the white paper included the extension of benefits to nonmarried government employees, placing advertisements for government positions in GL media, subsidizing an exhibition on homosexuality, subsidizing GL media, developing programs on GL awareness within the military, and increasing the budget of GL policy.

Consultation intensified, as the COC and WVC engaged in more frequent meetings and increased communication. At a committee meeting on GL policy on November 11, 1986, members of both the cabinet and the opposition voiced their desires for GL SMOs to provide knowledge and expertise regarding GL policy (Standing Committee for Justice 1986). One such consultative meeting took place on May 25, 1987, where the COC was joined by a number of other, smaller GL SMOs to discuss GL policy with Minister Brinkman. In stating, "the presentation at the ministry is, in international comparison, a unique meeting. It gives expression to the shared responsibility of the Dutch government for homo-emancipation, which is translated into gay and lesbian policy" (Ministry of WVC 1988: 4), Brinkman acknowledged that the COC and the government were working together toward "homo-emancipation" and that the government was giving space to GL SMOs, including the COC, to provide information and expertise on GL social policy.

The COC understood more subsidies as being correlated with more policy influence (COC Conference 1989: 10) and based on its level of subsidization, the COC saw itself as the closest government partner of all GL organizations. The structural subsidies the COC received from the government increased each year during the Lubbers II Cabinet, with the COC receiving *f*403,350 in 1987, *f*553,350 in 1988 (Tweede Kamer 1987-1988), and *f*633,000 in 1989 (Standing Committee for Welfare 1991).

The COC unsuccessfully attempted to secure organizational changes from the government. The COC wanted the cabinet to engage in more proactive policies and to ensure that coordination among the ministries happened in more than name. In an attempt to make communication more efficient and force all ministries to cooperate, the COC tried to exert pressure on WVC and the other ministries through parliament:

Parliament...should force Minister Brinkman to really coordinate an active GL emancipation policy. Such a policy with its own budget and a required yearly report to parliament should be developed not only at WVC but in every ministry. There should be a continuous analysis of how proposed legislation of each ministry relates to gay men and lesbian women. (NVIH COC 1989a: 28).

The COC was, however, unable to generate enough pressure in parliament to effect significant organizational change in the executive branch of government.

By contrast, WVC was effective in securing organizational change in the COC by using subsidies as both a reward and a threat. In 1989 WVC requested that the COC develop a so-called "Action Plan", in which proposals for organizational change would be presented. WVC wanted to make communication with the COC more efficient. It did so by demanding that the COC employ a director, which was the central objective of the Action Plan (NVIH COC 1989b: 2), and WVC made it clear that continued subsidization would be contingent upon the employment of a director. The COC had, until then, been led by a national board elected at the members' conferences, and employing a director would shift power in the organization to a paid professional and result in a more bureaucratic organization. If the COC complied with the

ministry's wishes, subsidization would not only continue but increase, as WVC would then pay for the director's salary.

Even before the Action Plan resulted in the employment of a director to satisfy the wishes of the Ministry of WVC, internal discussions had been taking place in the COC regarding the tactic of maintaining organizational institutionalization, a theme that had already dominated the 1988 annual members' conference. A central question addressed there was, "do we try, together with civil servants and politicians, to give form to government policy or do we leave it to them and give critique after the fact?" (COC Conference 1988: 2). The members of the national board of the COC explained that they found it necessary to continue engagement with the government, as the issue of homosexuality had finally gotten onto the national political agenda. The board gave three key reasons for sustained interaction with the government. First, the board argued that the nature of policy on homosexuality was so broad that the COC should increase instead of decrease its presence. Second, the board argued that, "if we are not invested in this area, others, such as politicians and civil servants, will not be either" (COC Conference 1988: 5). Third, the board argued that partnership is "the socially accepted way of working" (COC Conference 1988: 5). The board elaborated the last point, stating, "Changes in the Netherlands . . . seldom come about suddenly. . . . Changes come gradually. There are more movements that—just like the GL SM—want large changes. . . . Sooner or later they will all engage in the method previously discussed" (COC Conference 1988: 5-6). The national board found it necessary to partner with the government to achieve its goals and was able to convince the membership to concede to the demands made by WVC. The COC maintained and improved its relationship with WVC by ratifying the Action Plan, and a director was employed from April 1, 1989 onward.

Through continued exchange relations, the COC and WVC came to increasingly resemble each other. By the end of the Lubbers II Cabinet the COC had become more professionalized, hierarchical, and bureaucratic, mimicking the structure of the ministry itself. Simultaneously, WVC came to behave more like a social movement by promoting GL emancipation. To that end, the government set an example by adopting internal antidiscrimination policies, promoting the acceptance of homosexuality through the arts, and strengthening the COC and other GL organizations to influence society through their various activities.

### *The Lubbers III Cabinet*

By the end of the Lubbers III Cabinet<sup>23</sup> the COC had secured the implementation of almost all of the policy goals it had demanded from the government in its 1983 memo. Nonetheless, during the Lubbers III Cabinet the COC also witnessed the adoption of the Equal Treatment Act (AWGB<sup>24</sup>) that allowed for the discrimination of GLs in some circumstances, experienced 25% subsidy cuts, and was pressured to change its organizational structure yet again.

By August 27, 1992, when the final policy document of *Government Policy and Homosexuality* (Tweede Kamer 1991-1992a) was presented to parliament, most of the policy demands of the COC had been at least addressed, if not met. The issues that the government had not addressed or resolved related primarily to two domains. The first regarded adoption, insemination, and sperm donation, and the second regarded sexual education and anti-discrimination policies in schools. The second realm was primarily ignored in the policy, because the Ministry of Education and Science<sup>25</sup> refused to challenge the relative autonomy of government-subsidized religious-based schools. The first wave of social policy on homosexuality ended in 1992 in the anticipation of the codification into law of antidiscrimination legislation that would include homosexuality as a protected category.

The government expected antidiscrimination legislation, the AWGB, to be passed very soon after August of 1992, legally codifying many elements included in GL policy. The AWGB would, however, only be passed on March 2, 1994, and while the law included homosexuality as a category protected from discrimination, the law also included an exception in which GL teachers in confessional schools could still be discriminated against<sup>26</sup>. The inclusion of that

exception was the result of a constitutional struggle between GLs' right to be protected from discrimination and the right of confessional schools to autonomy, with the ruling CDA being caught between both positions. Ultimately, a compromise was struck so that the AWGB could be passed and legally protect GLs from discrimination in most employment sectors while allowing for discrimination in confessional schools in certain circumstances.

During the Lubbers III Cabinet, GL policy remained located at WVC, and Hedy d'Ancona (PvdA) replaced Brinkman as Minister of WVC. In the white paper presented to parliament on December 23, 1991 (Tweede Kamer 1991-1992b), it is clear that the Lubbers III Cabinet and d'Ancona maintained the exchange relationship with the COC and the COC's consultative role in the development of GL policy. In the white paper d'Ancona primarily deferred to the COC and presented the policy as if it had been outsourced to the COC. Regarding most of the issues, d'Ancona explained to parliament that the COC had received a subsidy to address the issue.

During the Lubbers III Cabinet the issues of funding and organizational structure became increasingly intertwined, as the government used subsidization to influence the COC as an organization and its relation to other GL organizations. From the beginning of the cabinet period until the white paper was presented, WVC strongly urged the COC to professionalize, particularly through the employment of paid staff. The COC was, however, divided on the issue of professionalization.

While the national office had utilized employed staff<sup>27</sup>, the local chapters had not done so. At the 1989 yearly conference, two questions arose: should the COC's national office employ more staff, and should local chapters be allowed to employ staff? The COC realized that financial benefits garnered through institutionalization are accompanied by risks, and a central risk discussed at the conference was financial dependence:

An important negative consequence of professionalization is that it will have to be funded for a large part by the government. And there is still within the GL movement and the COC the fear that the government will not always continue to be as favorably disposed as it is now. That can eventually result in the government making the subsidy conditional, by which we will end up on the leash of the government. . . . Aside from that the chance exists that the government will cut the subsidies in the future and that the work will collapse (COC Conference 1989: 5).

Despite the gravity of the concern about dependence on government funds, the national board of the COC answered that dependence could be prevented as long as concrete agreements were made between the COC and the government. The national board also emphasized positive aspects of professionalization, including the continuity of the organization and support for volunteers. The national board summarized these benefits by saying, "professionalization leads to more pros than cons" (COC Conference 1989: 1).

The board and members present at the conference decided to allow for an expansion of paid staff at national and local levels of the COC. That process of professionalization occurred together with increased subsidies to pay for the salaries of staff. Structural subsidies from WVC to the COC rose from f633,000 in 1990 to f657,000 in 1991 (Standing Committee for Welfare 1991). The total amount of money spent on GL SMOs and projects reached its peak in 1990 at f2,849,000 (Tweede Kamer 1989-1990) and was slightly less in 1991 at f2,620,000 (Tweede Kamer 1990-1991).

The period in which the government gave generous subsidies was, however, short-lived. WVC announced in 1991 that it would cut the subsidies of all social work organizations, including gay and lesbian organizations, by 25% in 1992 (National Board NVIH COC 1991: 3). The COC first attempted to convince parliament to exempt it from the cuts (Standing Committee for Welfare 1991: 2), but it was unsuccessful. The COC then filed a lawsuit<sup>28</sup> against the government in an attempt to forbid the subsidy cuts, but the lawsuit was also unsuccessful. Yet again the COC was unable to pressure the ministry and other organizations of the government to meet its demands.

WVC had its own plan for how GL SMOs would deal with the budget cuts: thematic clustering. WVC explained to parliament that, "In order to ensure that the work can be done in

a more efficient way and with less subsidy in the long run, organizations will be classified within a cluster” (Tweede Kamer 1991-1992c: 8). The cluster was a central focus of the 1991 COC conference, where the board elaborated:

On June 26 the Ministry of WVC announced that based on the advice of the minister, it would decrease the COC’s structural subsidy by 25% in 1992. Other subsidized gay and lesbian organizations face the same fate. This measure was announced as part of a movement toward a new subsidy system, in which the organizations in question will have to be located at one subsidy address as of January 1, 1993. Non-compliance of an organization will result in a complete refusal to subsidize that organization (COC Conference 1991: 1).

WVC’s threat that it would refuse to subsidize organizations that did not comply was successful in ensuring widespread compliance, and a so-called “homocluster” was created. Organizations that were members of the homocluster were housed in the same building, which had been the location of the national office of the COC.

The establishment of the homocluster initiated a new phase in the organizational institutionalization of the COC and other GL SMOs working with and through governmental institutions and shifted relations in the advocacy field in ways that strengthened the COC in relation to other GL organizations. The COC’s dominant position within the cluster was critiqued by other participating organizations, with the *Gay Krant* reporting that, “at this moment the COC receives and divides the subsidy money from WVC, but, according to a number of groups, that should actually be done by a coordinating, independent organization” (Bootsma 1993: 5). Wouter Ritsema van Eck, a representative of an organization called Orpheus that was a member of the homocluster, complained that, “the result is that the other organizations all have to have a sort of contract with the COC in which the funneling of the subsidies is arranged...it gives the impression that the nine other organizations have become a sort of COC-chapter” (Bootsma 1993: 5). The COC had been unsuccessful in streamlining communication with all of the ministries, but WVC succeeded in streamlining communication with the GL organizations it subsidized.

While the budget cuts of 25% weakened the COC, particularly due to its having hired salaried professionals, the resources it received from the government from the mid-1980s enabled it to become a professionalized organization with a relatively large budget that could engage in a number of activities and projects that it would otherwise not have had the resources to do. Through the government’s subsidy regime that resulted in the formation of the homocluster, other GL organizations became partly dependent on the COC and its decisions, particularly regarding financing and housing. At the same time that subsidy cuts weakened the COC in relation to governmental actors, the homocluster secured the primary position of the COC within the GL advocacy field.

## DISCUSSION

The most constant and intensifying factor throughout the period studied was exchange. The COC chose to make strategic tradeoffs at various moments over the span of the period studied in order to maintain its exchange relations with the executive branch of the Dutch government. The exchange of expertise from the COC for policy influence and subsidies from the government was central to the process of institutionalization. In maintaining exchange relations, the COC did not become coopted but instead achieved most of its goals and helped transform the government into an active agent attempting to alter the social institution of sexuality to accommodate homosexuality. By 1992 the COC had been very successful in achieving almost all of the goals it had demanded in 1983, as the COC had increasingly achieved more of its goals in each subsequent cabinet period. Exchange intensified in each subsequent cabinet period, as the COC became more included in consultation on policy development and received increasing yearly subsidies, at least until broader austerity measures resulted in cuts for the COC in 1992.

The COC's organizational structure was altered through institutionalization to become more bureaucratic, which was reflected in its professionalization and employment of a director. The COC's participation in the homocluster also affected its relation to other GL organizations. The COC was not, however, coopted, as the five ways of conceptualizing cooptation addressed (deradicalization, shifting goals, diminished ability to achieve goals, service provision, and shifting tactics) were not found to result from institutionalization. Regarding deradicalization, the COC was always a fairly moderate organization with an openness to working with and through the government to effect change. The shifting of goals is related to deradicalization, as goals are expected to become more moderate. I did not observe such a trend in the period studied. The COC continued to pursue the goals it had demanded from 1983 during the three cabinet periods. While it did not achieve everything it wanted, the COC achieved the vast majority of its goals. The COC engaged in service provision to the degree that it executed some of the projects it had helped formulate in the policy, but policy execution was but one aspect of the COC's advocacy, which also included influencing policy, lobbying the government, organizing protests, running bars and clubs, and other activities. Regarding shifting tactics, the COC sought government institutionalization as a tactic to achieve its goals from 1983. The prioritization of institutionalization and a policy strategy was not a result of institutionalization but came in response to the violence that occurred in Amersfoort in 1982.

The COC was not coopted, but the process of maintaining exchange relations remained steeped in imbalanced power relations. That imbalance of power was most strongly reflected in the government's ability to pressure the COC into tradeoffs regarding organizational changes, such as employing a director and expanding professionalization. Additionally, the COC's relation to other GL organizations was fundamentally changed by its participation in the homocluster. The government could have formulated and executed the policy without the COC's participation, but the COC needed access to the policy arena through the ministries and the financial resources provided by them in order to achieve its goals. Nonetheless, the COC, through succumbing to the ministry's demands and maintaining exchange relations, was able to advise the government on which GL issues were most pressing at the time and how the government could best address them. The result was that the government took serious steps to change the social institution of sexuality to accommodate homosexuality.

From an organizational perspective the government changed less than the COC, although the government mobilized the issue of homosexuality on various organizational levels. Each cabinet delegated the GL portfolio to a particular ministry, and that ministry devoted resources to discussing GL policy objectives with the COC and other GL organizations. Civil servants devoted time to formulating and executing GL policy. The responsible minister presented progress reports to parliament, and the ministry funneled resources to the execution of specific policies as well as to organizations, such as the COC.

Institutionalization not only resulted in tradeoffs for the COC, as the government also made concessions. The largest effect of institutionalization for the government was its shift toward actively altering the social institution of sexuality to increasingly accommodate homosexuality. While the social institution of sexuality had been heterosexualized (at least in part) through government law and policy for many decades, that shifted during the Lubbers Cabinets. The government's shifting relation to the social institution of sexuality began with the government's protection of GL citizens and extended to the promotion of the social acceptance of homosexuality and the deprioritizing of marriage as the central organizing principle of socio-sexual relations. That effect should not be overstated, as the social institution of sexuality was not replaced by sexual anarchy. Heterosexuality remained a central organizing principle of the social institution of sexuality, but the centrality of heterosexuality was weakened and the social institution of sexuality expanded to acknowledge and account for homosexuality. The COC was ultimately successful in harnessing governmental resources for its ends and leading the government to become a partner in changing the social institution of sexuality.

## CONCLUSION

This article examined the ways in which social movement institutionalization takes place and the effects of organizational institutionalization for the SMO and government actors involved. The case of the COC's institutionalization between 1986-1994 has generated three findings. First, the process of institutionalization for SMOs centers around sustained exchange relations. Second, although the process involves tradeoffs, institutionalization can facilitate SMOs and does not necessarily result in cooptation. Third, institutionalization results in changes for and to both SMO and government actors.

On the basis of this study, Suh's (2011) definition of institutionalization as "social movements traversing the official terrain of formal politics and engaging with authoritative institutions such as the legislature, the judiciary, the state, and political parties to enhance their collective ability to achieve the movement's goals" (p. 443) can be refined. Sustained exchange is an integral way in which SMOs "traverse the official terrain of formal politics" (Suh 2011: 443). The case studied here further supports Suh's argument and the findings of Alvarez (1999), Landriscina (2007), and Giugni and Passy (1998) in demonstrating that institutionalization can be an effective way for an SMO to enhance its ability to achieve movement goals.

By assuming that movement-government relations are necessarily combative, scholars have overwhelmingly focused on combative movement-government relations. Social movements and governments can, however, engage in cooperative relations of exchange. Cooperation does not take place in a vacuum, and it requires a degree of compromise by all actors involved. Instead of using the conceptually splintered term cooptation to examine movement-government relations, more precise analysis can pinpoint specific tradeoffs that result from movement-government relations of exchange. Engaging in sustained exchange relations over time remains, however, a high-stakes pursuit for the SMO- and government actors involved, and the process of institutionalization may result in both social movement organizations and governments engaging in strategic tradeoffs in their pursuit of social change.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Nederlandse Vereniging tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit COC

<sup>2</sup> In line with the language used in the COC's 1983 policy brief *Homosexuality in Government Policy* and the government's white paper entitled *Government Policy and Homosexuality*, I use the term 'homosexuality' throughout this article. As is the case in the policy documents, in this article the term refers to both gay men and lesbian women.

<sup>3</sup> This study will primarily refer to gay and lesbian abbreviated as "GL." While the movement is currently often referred to as the LGBT movement, bisexual and trans\* issues played a very marginal role in the period of the movement's history analyzed in this article. Some authors include the B and the T driven by a politics of inclusion that emphasizes solidarity. I do not address those letters, as the issues they represent have been excluded from much of the movement. That choice is not motivated by a rejection of the politics of inclusion but was made to avoid making false claims to an inclusivity that was overwhelmingly absent during the period of analysis.

<sup>4</sup> For further reading on pillarization see Rudy B. Andeweg and Galen A. Irwin 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Organizations representative of other identity-based movements, such as the women's and (post-) migrant movements, were institutionalized and legally formalized by the government and became the Emancipation Council/Emancipation Commission (ER/EK) and the National Advisory and Consultation Body on Minorities Policy/National Consult on Minorities (LAO/LOM), respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur

<sup>7</sup> The COC is the oldest operating LGBT organization in the Netherlands and in the world, and since 1946 it has been the largest LGBT SMO in the Netherlands in terms of members and budget.

<sup>8</sup> Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG)

<sup>9</sup> Staten-Generaal Digitaal (SGD)

<sup>10</sup> Nationaal Archief

<sup>11</sup> Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History

<sup>12</sup> Uitgebreide Commissie Vergadering

<sup>13</sup> The name was used from 1946-1949.

<sup>14</sup> Cultuur en Ontspanningscentrum; in use from 1948, it became the official name of the organization in 1949 and was used until 1964.

<sup>15</sup> The age of consent for opposite-sex sex acts was sixteen.

- <sup>16</sup> Partij van de Arbeid
- <sup>17</sup> The Lubbers I Cabinet was formed by a coalition between the Christian Democratic Appeal (Christen-Democratisch Appèl, CDA) and the Liberal Party (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, VVD) and governed from November 4, 1982 to July 14, 1986.
- <sup>18</sup> Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
- <sup>19</sup> The “Tweede Kamer” is the Second House of the Dutch Parliament.
- <sup>20</sup> The Schorer Foundation’s mandate was specifically related to gay and lesbian health provision (Tweede Kamer 1985-1986; Standing Committee for Justice 1986).
- <sup>21</sup> The Dutch currency was then the guilder, also known as the florin, and represented with the sign: *f*.
- <sup>22</sup> The Lubbers II Cabinet was again formed by a coalition between the CDA and the VVD, with the CDA having more seats in Lubbers II than in Lubbers I. The Lubbers II Cabinet governed from July 14, 1986 to November 7, 1989.
- <sup>23</sup> The Lubbers III Cabinet was formed by a coalition between the CDA and the PvdA and governed from November 7, 1989 to August 22, 1994.
- <sup>24</sup> Algemene wet gelijke behandeling
- <sup>25</sup> Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschap
- <sup>26</sup> “Single-fact” construction (enkele-feitconstructie)
- <sup>27</sup> The COC received a subsidy to pay the salaries of 2.5 employees from 1986 (Standing Committee for Justice 1986: 12).
- <sup>28</sup> The COC made use of the law Administrative Jurisdiction of Governmental Orders (Administratieve Rechtspraak Overheids Beschikkingen/AROB), which allows for appeals of governmental decisions.

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