

Surveilling Queerness and Queering Surveillance: The Techno-Social Making of Queer Identity in the US and Canada, 1939-Present.

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This dissertation positions itself at the intersection of two disparate areas of study: Queer theory and surveillance studies. It aims to tease out the ways that technologies of surveillance and Queer lifeways evolved alongside one another, and how the acts of watching and being watched sculpted the range of ontological possibilities that Queerness has, both historically and currently, indicated. As a text, the dissertation itself is divided into three main articles, each exploring a different facet of the mutually constitutive relationship between Queerness and surveillance.

This dissertation begins with a broad historical examination of the ways that surveillance—in the forms of various technologies of apprehension, delineation, and abjection—encircled a set of labile and nascent notions of sexual identity. Additionally, I argue that surveillance and sexuality converge most productively (and disastrously) at moments of great historical transformation and geopolitical upheaval: the Second World War, the Cold War, and its proxies. Next, I investigate the ways in which residual institutionalization—represented by the liminal space of national borders and boundaries—operates on sexual and gender identity vis-à-vis the deployment of surveillant technologies that aim to transform sex and gender into objects of scientific measurement and scrutiny. Here, the border becomes a space of gendered performance wherein one’s perceived gender identity is compelled to align with documentary and “scientific” evidence. The implications of the systematic, technological probing of sex and gender at the border span far beyond the border itself. Indeed, as Toby Beauchamp (2018) has shown, gender identity and gender performance exist under a moving mesh of surveillance that is continuous with questions of national security and geopolitics. Additionally, I demonstrate how the surveillant dynamics in place at the border can be leveraged in protest of the cis/hetero/homonormative standards they enforce. Finally, I explore the effects of

deinstitutionalized, corporate surveillance on the ontological status of Queerness as a radical injunction against the status quo. Taking Eve Sedgwick's notion of the Queer as that which exists "in the open mesh of possibility, gaps, overlaps, dissonances, and resonances" (Sedgwick 1993: 8), I show how highly granular data extraction and analysis techniques foreclose upon a definition of the Queer that locates itself in the negative—in relation to what it is not or what it is in excess of—rendering the Queer unable to survive the transformation into capital implicit within a surveillant regime aimed at producing novel revenue streams. Taken together, these articles demonstrate how Queerness, by way of its articulation with various surveillant technologies, shares valences with broad, geopolitical and biopolitical phenomena, including national security, biosecurity, warfare, and statecraft. It also demonstrates the ways in which sex, sexuality, and gender have remained a focal point for the global operation of power, elaborating on Sedgwick's (2008) assertion that any sufficiently advanced society must have a theory of homosexuality.

This dissertation makes clear the ways that the surveillance of sex, sexuality, and gender has intensified, far beyond the scope of Foucault's analysis, through the rapid periods of technologies and social transformation brought on by the Second World War, the Cold War, and the so-called Internet Revolution. At these points of transformation and cultural upheaval, I trace the ways that surveillance and sexuality have both evolved through time as a consistent dyad (although sharing valences with many other forces). Both sexuality and surveillance exert a force on one another, each necessitating and initiating the shape one another can take.

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Introduction

The main purpose of this dissertation is to expose two distinct theoretical domains—that of Surveillance Studies and that of Queer Theory—to one another’s insights and to reveal and analyze their synergies and dissonances. It does so not only to highlight the collision of Queer Theory and Surveillance Studies, but also operates to reveal the way that sexuality and gender have remained a fulcrum in the operation of power throughout the 20th Century and into the third decade of the 21st. More specifically, this dissertation attempts to highlight the intermingling between broad diagrams of power and techniques of governance (as outlined in the main canon of Surveillance Studies) and the intimate micropolitics of human sexuality, gender performance, and sex itself. This perspective aids us in grappling with the ways that power contracts space and time by collapsing the scales on which human sociality occurs. Moreover, by examining this strange assemblage of the highly particular, yet systematic technologies and techniques of state and corporate surveillance, and the amorphous, inexact object of “Queerness”, we might uncover some of the ways that surveillance reaches into the affective and symbolic realm of what it means to feel and be Queer, or human at all.

Although it might seem as though Surveillance Studies and Queer Theory each provide a parallax perspective on the nature and effects of power, both subdisciplines share a common philosophical antecedent in the work of Michel Foucault. While surveillance studies’ understanding of the inculcation of identity draws heavily from Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* (1995) and his elaborations on the panopticon as the supreme metaphor for institutional power, his *History of Sexuality, Volumes 1-4* stand at the beginning of a long history of post-structuralist Queer thinking around the nature of sexuality and gender and the ways in which structuralist notions of both dissolve when subject to careful historical or ontological scrutiny. Due to this

shared ancestry, the task of introducing Queer Theory and Surveillance Studies to one another has been greatly aided by a similar, albeit diverging evolutionary trajectory that begins with the poststructuralist iconoclasm of the 1960s.

Despite my use of the term “antecedent” with reference to poststructuralism, contemporary surveillance studies continues to employ Althusserian, Foucauldian, and Deleuzian frameworks in its interpretation and analysis of surveillant systems (albeit in modified forms that are, arguably, cored out of some of their essential components). One might, for example, have great difficulty locating a text in surveillance studies that does not retrace Foucault’s reformulation of Jeremy Bentham’s “panopticon” and its place in the creation of modern criminal, as well as the production of the “soul” as the object of torture. And indeed, Deleuze’s most enduring legacy in the sociology of surveillance may be his short, rather informal, 1992 essay “Postscripts on the Societies of Control”, which, in thinking through the ways in which the discursive regimes of Foucault are made material through an emerging digitality, provided a vantage point from which to assess the increasing ubiquity of computation and the increasingly granular, interlinking, and dynamic systems of categorization and management that they allow. In the substitution of the “password” for the “watchword”—the ethos of guiding principles of an institutions—one finds a new diagram of power engendered not in the stamp of institutional conformity vis-à-vis the discursive production of human typologies, but in the networked modulation of a agential “information” that acts on its own accord with the all the heft of material infrastructure.

It is, at this point, worthwhile to outline the definition of surveillance that emerges from this history of ideas. I define surveillance, here, in line with a range of surveillance scholars (see Marx 2015 for a comprehensive list), as the collection of information about an individual or

group of individuals for the purpose of coercion or control. The manner in which this coercive element is actualized may be illusive, as is the case when surveillance is enacted with the purpose of intervening in identity formation, or in sculpting the range of ontological possibilities that one may inhabit. Surveillance is, in my understanding, a ubiquitous force that intervenes in the most proximate and fundamental aspects of our lives. It is not merely about watching or being watched. It is, as Foucault demonstrated, a central tool to the organization and expression of power.

This dissertation introduces three main interventions into the scholarly corpus. First, it extends Foucault's examination of the history of sexuality to include an analysis of rupture in the formulation of "truth" that moves beyond the realm of scientific thought and epistemology and recognizes the wider context of geopolitical conflict as a major driving force behind the production of *episteme*. Second, it explores the ways in which surveillant technologies are intrinsically entangled with Queer ontology and the central role they play in the production and performance of identity. Third, it expands on Puar's assertion that Queerness articulates with geopolitical considerations and the construction of both the figure of the enemy (the terrorist) and national ethicality on the global stage. Here, I show how these strange and dangerous connections and assemblages are not novel, but, in fact, have a long history and, moreover, have mutated in our time of diminishing sovereignty in the face of hyper-capitalist, corporate governance.

My use of the term "assemblage" draws from both Deleuze (1980) and Jasbir Puar (2007), I employ the term—sometimes understood as a more abstract, "theoretical" formulation (although it predates it) of Actor-Network Theory (see Latour: 2017) as a coming together of disparate objects, technologies, ideas, categories, cultures and subcultures, historical events,

domestic and foreign policy, subjects and subject-positions, worldviews and lifeways. It is, thus, a way of coming to terms with the complexity of forces at play behind any social phenomena. I find this approach valuable as it reveals the verbs underpinning the nouns we so casually deploy with an uncareful Platonist bent.

Before outlining how each of the forthcoming chapters will contribute to the main goals of this text, it is first necessary to provide, briefly, some background information on the main theoretical pillars that support my thesis. The following summaries, theoretical perspectives, and citations should not be seen as dogmatically adhering to, or as epigones of these early poststructuralists. Rather, they should be understood as clusters of thought—or ways of thinking—that orbit the work of Foucault and his contemporaries as well as those he influenced.

I am no acolyte of any single historical thinker, and yet, in order to understand how surveillance is implicated in the very genesis as an intelligible category of being, one must start with Foucault. Much of volume I of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* is dedicated to describing the transformation of the Queer body as one engaged in animalistic debauchery, to a text ripe for hermeneutical interpretation—that is, a transformation from a body that engaged in sex, to one that possessed a sexuality. While the vast majority of the texts regarding sex and sexuality that emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century proliferated (and proliferated with great speed and frequency) around the most mundane aspect of human desire, it was the psychiatric, developmental, and criminological discourses surrounding “queerness” that would come to be seen as a fundamental speciation event in the historiography of the *scientia sexualis* of *Homo sapiens* (Foucault 1990), Eve Sedgwick, in their foundational work *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990), implicates this event—and the resulting emergence of the homo/heterosexual binary—in the division of the Western world into two distinct categories: the heterosexual and the

homosexual. Not only does Sedgwick assert the utter oddity of exalting sexual object choice over all other potential rubrics of sexual identity, practice, and classification, she also notes the ubiquity of the homo/heterosexual binary as a litmus test of cultural legibility through which all persons must pass. In other words, while mostly concerning a small subsection of the population, the homo/heterosexual binary holds “continuing, determinative importance in the lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities” (Sedgwick 1990: 1). In short, in response to the impulse to divide the human species into two distinct categories of sexual being, a whole system of micro and macro levels of surveillance was deployed.

Writing in a similar vein, Lee Edelman notes in *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (1994) the pervasive paranoia implicit in the epistemology of Queerness itself, stating that

In the ultimate phrase of knowingness, ‘It takes one to know one.’ Interpretive access to the code that renders homosexuality legible may thus carry with it the stigma of too intimate a relation to the code and the machinery of its production, potentially situating the too savvy reader of homosexual signs in the context, as Sedgwick puts it, ‘of fearful, projective mirroring recognition.’¹ Though it can become, therefore, as dangerous to read as to fail to read homosexuality, homosexuality retains in either case its determining relationship to textuality and the legibility of signs. (Edelman 1994: 7)

We may take this most primitive form of lateral surveillance and the climate of mutual suspicion and paranoia as fundamental axioms that undergird all other developments in sexual surveillance, technological or otherwise.

Although it is tempting to interpret this process as one of pure hegemony—or the creation of the very possibility of hegemony centered around sexual object choice—its inverse correlate must also be recognized. To be rendered legible comes alongside the ability to read others: to

¹ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “Comments on Swann,” *Berkshire Review*, 21 (1986): 107

recognize kin and kind, like and unlike. It is to give shape to an identity that can be inhabited and that may clarify and guide the process of self-fashioning. Moreover, it provides the possibility for community. As this dissertation is dedicated to mapping the many technologies of surveillance through which sexuality has been and may be read, it must also trace the genesis of new kinds of community, ranging from psychiatric and deviant kinship to the biosocial realities on which Donna Haraway and others have so prolifically written (Rabinow 1996a; 1996b); Haraway 2003; 2016) In other words, I am tracing the connections between historical “situations” (war, transnational movement, ubiquitous computation, etc.) that simultaneously permit and define “the Queer”, and supply the epistemological justification for its existence as a category of persons, whilst also generating the means through which to recognize the “self” in the “other” and, together, create the meaning that exists inside the empty space of categorical “containers.” I link this view, of “filling up a container” of an otherwise empty category with both Lauren Berlant (2011) and Katie Stewart (2007) in the way that a confluence of affective forces might open up numerous avenues for meaning-making and the unfolding of life and new lifeways. That is not to say that Queerness is internally defined. It is, perhaps, valuable to think in terms of a dialectical tension between self/group identification and the (pseudo) scientific schematics and surveillant dynamics of national security that encircle it.

Sitting at the Crossroads of Surveillance Studies and Queer Theory

Writing at the juncture of Surveillance Studies and Queer theory is to write at the centre of a great number of tensions, definitional ambiguities, irreconcilable perspectives, and conflicting theoretical standpoints. From my own perspective, these difficulties and—to borrow a term put to work by both Judith Butler (1990; 1993) and Donna Haraway (2016) the “trouble” that surrounds them, are of the productive sort. In other words, when we seek out the “trouble”, we

might arrive at a whole new set of questions that need answering and new avenues of thought that call for exploration. It is also important, as Sara Ahmed (2015) notes, to pay attention to what might not seem to pose any trouble at all, as what we gloss over as unproblematic, or seemingly natural or naturalized might also conceal the workings of the power of normativity. We might also pay attention to how the collision between these various strands of belief, semiotics, politics, technological development, and the human desire for freedom and self-actualization, end in the creation of pernicious systems of domination, extraction, and violence. Neither productivity nor violence is single-sided, and both proceed together irrespective of the ethical dilemmas they drum up in their wake.

In examining these productive tensions, seeking out, as Kafer and Grinberg (2019) write, how “queer surveillance helps illuminate how identity is always caught up in competing modes of politicized production” (592). In other words, identity is always produced through the lens of some—sometimes many competing—political projects, either of hegemonic, biopolitical exclusion, or even emancipation. Philips and Cunningham (2007) provide some much-needed insight:

Queer studies can offer surveillance studies a new historical and theoretical perspective on the social consequences of surveillance practices, leading, at least, to better questions, and avoiding the typical dead ends and faux paradoxes of the privacy policy discourse: “rights of individual” vs. “needs of society,” or “privacy” vs. “safety and security.” Conversely, surveillance studies can offer queer studies an understanding of the legal, technical, and economic infrastructures mediating new forms of identity practices. Together, they offer a framework for the political analysis of infrastructures of identity and visibility. (38)

It is this reference—to infrastructures of identity and visibility—that this dissertation concerns itself with. Here, infrastructure may refer to a wide array of sociopolitical architectures and

artifacts, including institutionalized medicine, the military, psychological testing, pharmaceutical development and distribution, and border policing. Each of these areas of inquiry either constitute their own technologies of prehension, description, interpolation, and control, or employ them in order to create and enforce distinctions between categories of persons. It is through these technologies—and their historical development—that we can come to understand the ways in which Queerness (as both a state of being and radical political injunction) developed, and continues to develop, over time.

Inverting this perspective—wherein Queer theory informs surveillance studies—I also contend that surveillance studies is well-positioned to comment on and advance Queer theory. Indeed, surveillance studies, with its focus on the development and proliferation of novel technologies of surveillance and categorization, as well as its devotion to assessing the social impacts of ubiquitous computation, can offer Queer theory interesting inroads into the contemporary landscape of Queer identity politics as discourse increasingly occupies online/digitally mediated spaces. A great deal of productive scholarship has already begun to trace and untangle the cause/effect relationships at play in the emerging dynamic between sexuality and new media technologies, including work conducted by Benjamin Haber and Daniel Sander (2018); David J. Phillips (2002); Mary L. Gray (2009); Adrienne Shaw and Katherine Sender (2016) and many others. And yet, what these scholars fail to articulate (with the exception of Phillips) are the ways in which these technologies are ensconced within broader systems of surveillance, categorization, and control, and as a corollary, how these surveillant architectures are entangled with the twin projects of national security and statecraft.

The Unifying Theme of National Security: Enclosure, Rupture, and Resistance

In addition to addressing the association between surveillance and Queerness, this dissertation necessarily traces historical forces that lie behind several major paradigm shifts in how Queerness was/is defined and understood, as well as the transformation and evolution of the surveillant technologies pulled into orbit around it. It is my contention that these major shifts have occurred in response to increased cultural anxieties surrounding issues of national security, statecraft, and/or the sovereignty of the state.

Each of the following three articles takes up one or more of these intertwined threads. First, I focus on the history of Queer surveillance, beginning just before the onset of the Second World War, and continuing on until the late 1960s, at the height of the Cold War. Here, I adopt a punctuated perspective on history, wherein I attribute major transformations in the cultural attitude towards Queer persons, and the techno-social modalities through which they are assessed and marginalized, to periods of great social upheaval. Additionally, I highlight how these cultural and technological shifts not only constitute an array of exclusionary apparatuses, but also serve to provide new ways of being, becoming, and living as Queer. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the ambivalence of technological and scientific evolution amidst a scholarly corpus myopically focused on societal decay.

The second article concentrates on the lived experience of Queer, Trans, and Gender-Queer persons in crossing the US/Canada border in a post-9/11 context. Here, I highlight the ways in which imaging technologies, documentary identification, performativity, and spatiality coalesce in the production of both “good” and “bad” citizens. At the centre of this nexus is the conflation between gender “deviance” and the culturally embedded notion of “the terrorist” (see Beauchamp 2019; Puar 2007) and the threat they might pose to the safety and sanctity of the nation if permitted to traverse national boundaries uninhibited. Although a site of significant

trauma, I also show how the border—and its associated procedures and screening practices—is transformed into a space of protest wherein institutionalized power dynamics are uprooted and inverted.

The third and final article approaches the theme of statecraft from an alternate perspective, questioning how the relationship between Queerness and surveillance has transformed in light of the postmodern, post-statist geographies outlined by both Hardt and Negri (2000) and Bratton (2014) wherein the “horizontal loop geometries” (Bratton 2014) that once characterized the nation state give way to a *nomos* (see Schmitt 2006) located in the contested geographies of global information architectures and in the globalized “policy worlds” (see: Shore, Wright, and Però, 2011) characteristic of the supranational institutions of empire (see Hardt and Negri 2000). Here, international policy, international law, and technological infrastructure intertwine to create a kind of power that is both local and everywhere, but always reliant on the production of capital. As such, identity itself is produced and reified not through the machinery of the state, but through the information economies of data extraction that undergird this developing global economic paradigm. Queerness is, thus, recast as something to be performed vis-à-vis the (re)arrangement of the symbolic properties of various commodities. It has come to be stripped—as both Jameson (1991) and Fisher (2009) claim is characteristic of the pastiche aesthetics of late capitalist postmodernity—of the political motivations that once underpinned it as a radical political ontology. This new diagram of power, predicted on the creation of identity by way of commodity fetishism (as well as a system of information extraction that feeds off of Queer identity to elicit the purchase of evermore signifying material), can only ever tolerate the existence of an identity with positive dimensionality—that is, one that locates itself in what it *is* rather than what it *is not*. A Queerness rooted in the absence of

signification—such as in Sedgwick’s definition, wherein Queerness exists in the interstitial margins between categories of signification—is not useful as a target for the production of information, and as such, it is subjected to increasingly granular forms of analysis that serve to eliminate any interstria it could potentially occupy.

Further Points of Unification

The dictates of the sandwich dissertation model permit—and in many ways tempt—dividing one’s topic into either three distinct lines of argumentation, three populations under study, or three historical time periods. Indeed, the title of my dissertation gestures rather specifically towards the latter. I do believe, however, that highlighting the disjunctures that render each article unique and worthy of independent consideration distracts from the larger, less obvious themes that I hope to address. While a history of queer surveillance, written alongside an analysis of the experience of being trans* at international borders, and an oblique look into the possibility of queer dissent in an age of hyper-surveillance, might all seem to be distinct projects, they are held together by an overarching theme of Queerness and being Queer. My goal here is to undo some of the comfortable dogma that has come to surround Queer ontology as it appears in public discourse—in common parlance—and to trouble some of the conventional wisdom that has come to surround “Queer life” as it is—and was, in the past—enacted and experienced.

This is not, however, an etymological investigation. I am not interested in tracing the history of the word “Queer” (see Bravmann 1997 for an investigation of the term and its Queer theory proper). There is an important distinction to be made between the changing definitions of the word “Queer” and that of “Queer ontology”. In other words, it is the state of “being Queer”—whatever that has and might come to mean—and how it relates to technologies of

surveillance and their interpolative capacities that interests me, here. Additionally, I am not interested in remaining faithful to whatever current trends surround the term Queer and the minute distinctions that are made in both public and academic discourse to differentiate what is deemed “Queer” from myriad other designations. If we are to take seriously that all such labels are historically contingent, consistently in flux, and the result of numerous interpenetrating power relations, terminological distinctions must be seen as both pedantic and eminently mercurial. Moreover, the increasing number of axes along which the LGBTQ+ community has been divided has led to a kind of semantic cloistering—a lamentable state of affairs when political unity is needed most in order to protect the rights, freedoms, and lives of our community’s most vulnerable members. As such, I use the term “Queer” rather interchangeably with “Gay”, “Lesbian”, “Bisexual”, “Trans*” etc. While I do admit that each “category of person” possesses its own unique array of political and social challenges, I contend that the very process of assigning Queer persons to discrete categories of being is a historically contingent effort that fails to remain sensible in the process of examining disparate time periods. In other words, the shifting terrain of how gender and sexuality are made sensible—and the historical evolution of the technologies that make such sense-making possible—render a standardized lexicon impossible.

Indeed, these complexities are encapsulated expertly by Kafer and Grinberg, editors of a special issue of *Surveillance and Society* dedicated to understanding the intersections between Queerness and surveillance (2019), wherein they state that:

Queerness is an animating difference without a fixed referent—a site of non-normative disruption that accrues to different bodies at different times and in different contexts to name the boundary between security and disposability. As such, queer surveillance gestures toward the spatial and temporal contingency of identity formations that hegemonic structures of visibility, acceptability, and legality continually make and unmake. Attending to the queerness of surveillance

demands a vigilance to the ways in which norms mutate access sites of control and how different intersections of queer and trans identity can be rendered threatening or secure in relation to certain abject Others. (595)

While this position (one that places contingency at the forefront) may seem to constitute a direct assault against so-called “identity politics”, I object to any such accusation. Identity politics are, from my perspective, a politically useful tool to be deployed when convenient or necessary. For this perspective, I am greatly indebted to Barbara Smith (2000) and her book *The Truth that Never Hurts* for parsing the tangled threads of a Queer, Black, Lesbian identity and social movement. While I recognize the importance of identity politics as a politically useful configuration that mobilizes identity in the service of advancing or improving the conditions of Queer life, I am wary of its usefulness within a historically-sensitive analysis of Queer ontology. Indeed, when subjected to cross-cultural analysis—in addition to the temporal—the categories that drive identarian politics are further destabilized. Moreover, when the increasingly minute identarian differentiations that characterize contemporary identity politics are taken as ontological truths and *a priori* modes of authentic “being”, we ignore the mechanisms of power that actively drive a splintering wedge between the letters of the LGBTQ+ alphabet in order to categorize, manipulate, and profit off of Queer lives, as well as quash the possibility of a united opposition to a white supremacist/cis-gendered/heteropatriarchy.

All this is not to say that I consider the lived experiences of all Queer persons to be identical. Rather, I adhere to the definition of Queerness put forward by Kafer and Grinberg (2019), that:

While we are sympathetic to this position, our commitment to the term “queer” is driven by a reading practice that disaggregates queerness from the appointment of non-normative genders and sexualities. Less the surveillance of the LGBTQ+ subjects, queer surveillance is an analytic that emphasizes how non-normativity is produced and administered across sites of power. This is not to ignore the

specificity of queer and trans experiences under surveillance regimes but rather to consider how queer and trans lives are rendered secure or disposable when distilled through the nominalizations of surveillance system. (597-598)

As such, while I do not necessarily employ terms such as “intersectionality” to describe the relationship between Queerness, race, gender, and class, I understand Queerness to encompass all of the aforementioned sites of “difference” upon which methods and techniques of social exclusion and abjection play out. Indeed, as Puar (2007) demonstrates, Queerness is, itself, always already tied to notions of otherness and non-belonging, drawn out along national boundaries--a phenomenon highlighted by Edward Said in his formulation and analysis of “Orientalism” (2004) and its ties to sexuality.

To explain these uneasy, sometimes mercurial and evolving set of relations between these interpenetrating categories of otherness, I employ the term “assemblage” vis-à-vis Jasbir Puar. In doing so, I align myself with her critique of intersectionality and its dominant place in both Queer and feminist thought, as well as her use of assemblage to describe the complex, occult articulations between various disparate scales and sites of social phenomena. Here, the notion of assemblage is useful on two fronts. First, it can reveal the ways that the tectonic arena of geopolitics both sculpts and is sculpted by racial, sexual, and gendered categories and lifeways—that is, it exposes the way that these far flung and seemingly unrelated phenomena coproduce one another and are entangled on a theoretical plain. Moreover, it provides a way of visualizing the biopolitical project as outlined by Foucault (2010) wherein sex, gender, reproduction, and race are enrolled in the political project of statecraft and governmentality. Second, thinking in terms of assemblages allows us to move away from the ridged “rubric” of intersectionality and its propensity to envision subject-positions as a stacking of stable identity formations. Puar writes: “[I]ntersectional identities and assemblages must remain as interlocutors in tension . . .

intersectional identities are the byproducts of attempts to still and quell the perpetual motion of assemblages, to capture and reduce them, to harness their threatening mobility” (Puar 2007: 213). Thus, while intersectionality might allow us to comprehend the complexity of layered subject-positions, it fails to account for the entropic, Epicurean clinamen of unstable alliances between different lifeways and categories of being, as well as the tumultuous tensions between internal and external forces that shape and impact the Queer as an inhabitable identity.

It is important, at this juncture, to differentiate mine and Puar’s use of the term “assemblage” from its traditional use in surveillance studies as outlined by Haggerty and Ericson in *The Surveillant Assemblage* (2000). While Haggerty and Ericson employ the notion of assemblage to great effect in describing the interlinking of various systems of quantification, information extraction, and calculation, I, in line with Puar, employ the term to examine both smaller and larger formations in a way that is more interested in the coproduction of categories of being and strategies of population management and the logistics of governmentality. Additionally, by privileging a Queer perspective, my use of assemblage runs counter to the ways in which the “surveillant assemblage” solidifies identity in that it aims to disrupt the stability of identities across time and space.

A Brief Note on Race

The above quote by Kafer and Grinberg also reflects my perspective on race. It would be folly for me to claim sexuality as the primary axis along which humanity is divided without addressing the issue of race and the intersectional experiences of Queer persons of color. While racism must be understood as the systemic, structural foundation of our (US and Canada) settler states and their existence on Turtle Island, it also functions to rob Black and Indigenous peoples of their own histories and place within the academic literature. In other words, the systemic

oppression of Black and Indigenous persons is felt through their absence in the historical literature. That being said, Queer theory is built upon a foundation of Two Spirit and Queer of Colour critiques, from Frantz Fanon—for his radical ontological critique, which is quite Queer despite his erasure of homosexuality in *Black Skin, White Mask* (1967; cited in Ahmed, 2006), to the artwork of Jean-Michel Basquiat, and the writings of Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and Jodie Byrd.

This dissertation is especially indebted to the work of Jasbir Puar, José Estaban Muñoz, and Sara Ahmed. More than any other, it was Puar's work in *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007) that piqued my interest in the ways that Queer assemblages collapse geographies, timelines, and cultures, and how Queerness itself intersects issues as far flung as national security and foreign policy. Muñoz is central to this work on two fronts. First, owing to his (now seminal) *Disidentifications* (1999), I became aware of how Queer persons have, throughout history, carved a “third way” through culture—neither fully aligning themselves with the mainstream, nor rejecting it outright. This became important to my own work in revealing how the harsh surveillance measures enacted around sexuality and gender identity could give rise to the creation of new lived identities and possibilities for Queer flourishing, inspiring neither total withdrawal, nor violent rebellion. Second, by way of his book *Cruising Utopia: the Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009), Muñoz reminds us that there is hope, or at least the promise of hope, in the imagined, dreamed-up futures we allow ourselves the ability to dwell on and within.

Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* (2006) stands as one of the primary orienting texts for the final paper in this dissertation, “Accidental Orientations.” There, Ahmed's unsettling critique of how our ontological realities are shaped by the objects that surround and orient us, is

used to understand how Queer realities are in the process of being foreclosed upon by ever-tightening circles of surveillance and behavioural manipulation.

Any attempt to speak for the Queer community as a collective must fail, in some way, to account for the intersectional differences that move beneath the surface of sexual and gender identity. Recognizing this deficiency in my use of Queer as a collective noun, I must also acknowledge that the histories and theoretical perspectives that I have collected and developed largely privilege the white male experience. This is due, more or less, to a dearth of scholarly materials that directly address the complex intersections between race, gender, and sexuality while simultaneously centering surveillance as an orienting theoretical motif. The work of Simone Browne (2015) is a rare exception, in this respect. Therefore, in my definition of Queer, I address “non-normativity” writ large. In other words, the reader should remain sensitive to the ways that “non-normativity” is produced not only along the axes of sexuality and gender, but also—and perhaps more fundamentally—along those of race, ethnicity, and national belonging. It is not my intention to erase these important distinctions from our cultural memory. Rather, I wish to highlight their absence in a way that is poignant and unsettling. It should also be noted that in my own position, as a white gay man, I can only claim to apprehend the modes of intolerance and systemic oppression that I too have experienced. I am unable, unequipped, and unwilling to speak for those over whose stories I have no ownership.

Epistemological and Metatheoretical Considerations

In terms of an epistemic orientation, I make no great distinction between theory and metatheory. I do not believe, for instance, that theory must always be derived from empirical evidence. As Clifford and Marcus—in addition to their many interlocutors during the literary turn in

anthropological thinking—demonstrated as far back as 1986 (2011 version cited), the very act of representation is toxic to the “Truth” of one’s data. Moreover, as Kuhn argued, intelligible conversations across vast swaths of time might not be possible, rendering suspect any genealogy of meaning behind an object. Thus, much of the work I cite, and on which I have modeled my own thinking, flirts with the negation of its underlying methodological principles. It is for this reason that I scale back the claims that I allow myself to make. I am far more interested in upending the current order of things than I am in establishing a new one.

Compounding my apprehension towards positivist and post-positivist epistemology is Queerness itself, as well as how it is represented. Indeed, Queer Theory, as a scholastic enterprise, has, since its inception, positioned itself in opposition to the enlightenment/modernist/positivist projects of categorization, classification, axiomatization, prediction, and simulation, as did its philosophical antecedents within the various feminist epistemologies of science. There is a long history of association between positivist epistemology and the upholding and re-inscription of various axes of hegemony, ranging from the devaluation of Indigenous epistemologies to Tuskegee. And yet, I have found myself in need of some tangible element (of either history or of the present) in which to situate an exploration of the intersection between surveillance, science, and Queer self-fashioning. Thus, I have located some measure of satisfactory reconciliation between my commitment to Queer theory and the desire to wander away from purely esoteric considerations in a promiscuous approach to methodology that finds its epistemic justification in the wildly desperate (and potentially incompatible) spheres of what Jack Halberstam (2011) refers to as “High” and “Low” theory—where, to paraphrase, Spinoza meets SpongeBob SquarePants. I do not claim to be an acolyte of either the “high” or “low”, but rather locate my position somewhere between the esoteric considerations of post-

structuralist Queer theory and the more grounded, material, meaty reality of Queer life. Indeed, the tension between formulating an ontology of Queerness, and the disavowal of anything *like* an ontology of Queerness (in favour of privileging a historically dynamic set of material and bodily relations) has provided fruitful ground from which to explore the “perpetual spiral”—the Ouroboros—of historical contingency, power, identity, and Queer self-fashioning.

I consider promiscuity—methodological or otherwise—to constitute a Queer injunction against the contours of heteropatriarchy as they are expressed within the positivist enterprise. Promiscuity is not only anathema to the Oedipal foundations of heteronormativity, it also serves to work against the monolithic, in terms of methodological orientation, signification, and the linearity of post-enlightenment historicity. Promiscuity thus, to me, functions as multiplicity or multitude (see Tampio, 2009) in the short-circuiting of hierarchical formations.

This same logic—of undoing the arboresque—can be found underlying my choice of pseudo-genealogical analysis. Genealogy works against the monolithic on two fronts. First, in the purest Foucauldian sense of the term, genealogy counteracts the infinite contingencies of archaeological research by examining the shifting terrain of truth and ethics as they relate to the broader sphere of governmentality. Second, genealogy, like archaeology, upsets the linearity of history itself—that is, it works against the ascendent, monolithic model of history that characterizes the Enlightenment tradition. I have, for these reasons, gravitated towards a genealogical analysis that attempts to lay bare the ways in which transformations in epistemological orientation, and ruptures in the fabric of truthmaking, dovetail with Queer ontology/ ontogeny, the “conduct of conduct” (see Foucault 1982), and the twin projects of statecraft and national preservation.

I have used the term “pseudo-genealogy” to describe my primary methodological orientation in order to highlight the incompleteness thereof, as well as my reliance on the “situation” as the harbinger of epistemic rupture. While Foucault traces the direct epistemic lineage of various truth-making technologies and practices, I have deviated from his archival rigour in favour of an approach that accepts the fragmented reality of Queer history (however non/anti-linear it might be) and aims to establish footholds in those places that (for whatever reason) impelled documentation. As Osbourn (19) has noted, rather than following the procedural unfolding of events as the source of epistemic rupture, Foucault takes the problematic as his orienting “object” of analysis, specifically the twin problems of freedom and governance and their uneasy synergies and dissonances. Thus, while Foucault’s genealogy was written as a response to the problem of governing so-called “free” subjects, I have elected to pick apart specific moments in history wherein the rubric of sense-making and knowledge production that undergirds sexuality, masculinity, femininity, and gender identity are shaken up and settle into new formations. In other words, I am interested in the tangled and sometimes contradictory, yet none-the-less coexisting, formulations of Queer life and the ways of knowing that go alongside it, or work to actively eliminate it.

And yet, left here, one might consider such a project to track closer to Foucault’s archaeological methods, developed in his early work, beginning with his own dissertation. Indeed, Foucault’s explorations of the non-linear evolution of madness as the object of medico-legal scrutiny, (1954; 1961), the development of shifting medical epistemologies and various “ways of knowing” the human body (1963), and the underlying grammar of various epochal “epistemes” (1966), all gesture towards the labile, mercurial status of categories—such as the Queer or the homosexual—in such a way that aligns with the overarching goals of this

dissertation. However, as Rudi Visker (2008) points out, in invoking Nietzsche, Foucault's genealogy aims to abandon the "disquieting" neutrality of epistemic rupture (as engendered by his archaeological method) in favour of a more grounded form of analysis that ties shifts in the underlying grammar of knowledge and "truth" itself to governmentality, statecraft, war, and a kind of "national ethics" of survival. Here, I return to Puar (2007), wherein sexuality and gender are transformed and implicated with geopolitical forces, achieving their historical plasticity not through the happenstance of infinite contingencies, but by way of an ever-evolving set of political tensions and the requirements of waging war whilst also maintaining the moral high ground on the international stage. To Puar, Queerness is many things simultaneously: a pejorative; a method of torture, an economic strategy (pink washing), and a mode of political resistance. Its plasticity is due to the "deforming mesh" (to take a term from Deleuze (1992) out of context) of the Realpolitik. It is these complex and contradictory entanglements—these Queer Assemblages—that I have tried to trace both backwards and forwards in time.

This dissertation adheres closely to the overall structure put forth by Miller and Rose in their 1997 article "Mobilizing the Consumer: Assembling the Subject of Consumption, which shows the historical emergence of an entirely novel category of being and its relation to a wider diagram of power. Although we explore very different phenomena, we are similarly interested in the co-constitutive relationship between a causal force (be it the abstraction of "power", an economic system, or advertising) and the production and maintenance of nominalistic categories of being. In "Mobilizing the Consumer", Miller and Rose are interested in the ontology of the "consumer" as a category or kind of person that coheres in response to and because of, advertising. More broadly, they seek to map out how "human individuality, personality and psychology elaborated by the psychological sciences have played a key role in the construction

of consumption technologies.” (Miller & Rose, 1997: 2) If some reductionism might be permitted, they are interested in the autopoiesis of the consumer rationale and the forces that are at work behind it.

In my own work, I have set out to trace the ways in which the category of “the homosexual” has evolved in relation to a number of specialist discourses, giving birth to myriad technologies of surveillance and apprehension that would, in turn, come to reshape what it means to be Queer and live a Queer life. Like Miller and Rose (1997), it is the discontinuities, disjunctures, and the shifting terrain of epistemic derivation surrounding the category of “the homosexual” (in place of “the consumer”) that interest me, here. It is the underlying arrangement of knowledge production, sense-making, hegemony, and the authoritative capacity for nominalist creation—what Foucault called the *episteme* (1970)—that stretch and deform what is signified by the terms “homosexual” and/or “Queer”. As a heuristic of sorts, I have sought to understand the ways that events of extreme societal impact—wars, plagues, nuclear standoffs etc.—have shifted the epistemological and ontological terrain on which definitions of and expectations surrounding “the homosexual” rested. The result is an array of interrelated and amorphous categories of being that emerge, crystalize, and dissolve in relation to certain kinds of “situations”.

I do not employ the term “situation” uncarefully. Rather, drawing on Lauren Berlant’s (2011) interpretation of Alain Badiou and Brian Massumi, I see “the situation” as avoiding the problems inherent in the “problematic” (Osborne, 2003) as an orienting concept. “The situation”, as I see it, is free from the directionality implicit in the problematic (the problematic is a kind of directional intentionality that drives a genealogical line, itself a heteronormative structure), and from the immediacy of “the event”, which figures more prominently in analyses that centre “affect”. Quoting Berlant, I see “the situation” as being in relation to the event, wherein the event

is “a drama that shocks being into radically open situations” (Berlant 2011: 5). The event is a “genre of unforecasted experience” (Berlant 2011: 5), but “the situation” is something that has arisen and grabbed hold of some thread or fixated on some path of orientation. Positioning my argument here—at the “situation”—allows us to think in terms of a “genre of social time and practice in which a relation of persons and worlds is sensed to be changing but the rules for habitation and the genres of storytelling about it are unstable” (Berlant, 2011: 6). It allows us to imagine “a state of things in which *something* that will perhaps matter is unfolding amid the usual activity of life” (Berlant, 2011: 5). Few find themselves in a position of sufficient authority to assess a situation as a problematic, yet we are all thrown into situations that require us to get our bearings and make sense of a new regime of affordances and foreclosures.

Although this dissertation is, to a large extent, composed of pseudo-genealogical analysis, it also makes use of empirical data. It is here that I turn towards “low theory” in order to justify my methodological choices. “Low theory”, and its mirror image, “low methods” stand as Queer interventions into the physics of scholarship by way of their insistence on recognizing the freedom implicit in the possibility of failure or not being taken seriously (Halberstam, 2011). As such, for one whose ethnographic project is shot through by their own community involvement and opinions, and for whom there is a great deal at stake in the kinds of questions they are asking, low theory and low methods permit taking a step away from academic impartiality and embracing the Queer relations at work. By “Queer relations at work”, I am referring to a number of ways that the empirical data I have gathered are the result of methodological choices that violate a number of standards in the way qualitative research is generally conducted. I do not, for instance, employ “grounded theory” in my data collection or analysis. I have no code book, nor an ossified interview schedule. Rather, my data, and thus my analysis, stems from a few main

methodological choices. First, I engaged in a thorough reading of historical documents and secondary sources that circumambulate the topic of Queer history and its relationship with social/technological transformation as well as warfare, national security, and bio/necropolitical governance. My main method here was to highlight those instances of Queer history that are cross-cut by surveillance and surveillant technologies and to elaborate on the centrality of surveillance in the project of Queer self-fashioning, Queer abjection and heteronormative hegemony, gender performance, and the construction of the erotic itself.

Second, I engaged in a limited ethnographic study of a small enclave of Queer persons recoiling in horror at the political climate of the Trump-era and the anti-Trans*, anti-Queer, and anti-“other” actions and rhetoric of that administration. These data stem from the “event” surrounding the election and appointing of a homophobic and Trans*-phobic administration and the resulting crucible of Queer crisis, fear, and anger. Gathering these data required frequently hanging out in Queer spaces, both in so-called “meat space” and online. It also required a series of intensive, unstructured interviews with Queer persons I encountered through my forays into Queer territories ranging from “safe spaces”, to gay bars, and to a sexually charged dungeon. Although I was trained as an anthropologist, I must contend that the notion of “participant observation” makes little sense when one is as Queer as their participants. “Participant observation” in the Queer community is my everyday life. I contend with the same issues as many of those that I encountered. As such, this work is less of a formal ethnography in the traditional sense, and more of an amplification of Queer voices, one of which is my own. Although a contentious position (see Marcus 2005), I uphold that there is value in configuring the ethnographer as “witness” to atrocity, albeit in a manner where the witness might also contribute to the conversations of the witnessed.

Third, my forays into the world of digital surveillance and the elimination of a radical Queer ontology vis-à-vis the evolution of highly granular forms of data analysis and classification/categorization could be considered a-methodological, or, perhaps, perched precariously on the dividing line between theory and methodology. I'm inclined to agree with this perspective and make no apologies for playing around in the world of abstraction. I do, however, contend that the very existence of the digital platforms on which this phenomena plays out allows the crystallization of theoretical space inside the place beyond the screen. Abstraction is made real and engendered in the assemblage of code, hardware, software, and interface—a notion hinted at by Deleuze (1992) and DeLanda's (2004) use of "the virtual." Unpacking this complex relationship between the abstract, the virtual, and the "real" (and their relation to the "Queer" in the broadest sense possible) is a tempting avenue for future research.

In keeping with theoretical considerations my predilection for "low theory" and "low methods" does not mean that I have turned away from their opposite. Indeed, it is the tension between these two antipodes of interpretation that has been a motor for my work. Tension is, after all, transformed into motion much easier than that which is stable. One of Halberstam's main contributions to the Queer literature—and one that I wish to emulate—is an injunction against the pure esoterica that has dogged Queer Theory since its antisocial turn and a rearticulation of the highly theoretical "politics of the negative" (see: Halberstam 2008) in a way that privileges the visceral over (or in opposition to) the idealistic and its Heideggerian shadow that wanders dangerously close to fascism (to say nothing of Heidegger's Nazi apologetics. Here Halberstam formulates a decidedly "low" interpretation of the anti-futurity and anti-assimilationism of the anti-social turn and, in invoking the Sex Pistol's "No Future" in lieu of

Edelman's seminal text of the same name, transforms them into a crust-punk rebellion against the heteronormative colonization of Queer relationalities (Halberstam 2008).

I argue that this punk aesthetic is central to this (and any) ethnographic project. Ethnography has always had an uneasy relationship with notions of empiricism, shot through as it is by complexities unfamiliar to other methods. Ethnography, when approached honestly and earnestly, contains an affective dimension not easily captured as "data", but that is always present at the periphery, exerting its gravitational pull. In surrendering to the sloppiness of affect and emotion—and interpreting these invisible forces not as biases, but as data in and of themselves, punk irreverence shows its utility as a method of investigation. Moreover, ethnography itself, when divorced from academic pretentiousness and the hierarchical dynamic between researcher and their subject is, in my opinion, always a low method: it is, in essence, as Clifford Geertz (1998) put it, simply "deep hanging out." There is an element of punk irreverence and iconoclasm underpinning this approach: in taking the "other" seriously as the arbiter of knowledge, ethnography undoes the very notion of academic authority and reverses the relationship between expert and layperson.

Of course, only one of the following papers employs ethnography as a method. However, there is also something decidedly "low" about writing on Queer history (chapter one). Queer history, for the most part, is located in the bathhouses, tea rooms, bathroom stalls, subway stations, public parks, alleyway, barracks, and prison. As a Queer author myself, I draw no distinction between myself and those who populate the uneven terrain of our history. Indeed, in line with Heather Love, I revel in the "backwardness" of Queer history, and in the decidedly

“low” need to, as an author, “reach[...] back and towards isolated figures in order to rescue or save them” (Love 2009).²

Another dimension of my work is the privileging of viscerality over (or in opposition to) idealism. I argue that, as opposed to a site of potential error or bias, viscerality is central to “low methods.” As such, many of the questions that this dissertation seeks to answer (particularly in Chapter 3) were inspired by my own bodily reaction and anxious unease with the continued and exploitative “queering” of online marketing and the evolution of the surveillance apparatus upon which it depends. This feeling of unease propelled my own research and writing and, as is the case with Chapter 2, became the basis of a number of productive conversations with my participant interlocutors. In sum, my point is this: that low methods and low theory can exist alongside capital “T” Theory, adding an oblique perspective that serves to ground esoterica and provide thickness and dimensionality to abstraction. This synergy, between the high and the low is best exemplified in Chapter 3 which explores the abstract relationship between digital surveillance technologies and highly granular systems of classification and the ability for Queerness to exist as an ontological status and political position. While somewhat abstract, the second half of Chapter 3 delves into a more grounded approach that offers strategies of digital guerilla warfare that might allow for a reclamation and reimagining of “The Queer.”

The writing of this dissertation largely took place in an era where sex, sexuality, and gender were at the forefront of political discourse. Then-President of the United States of America, Donald Trump had recently tweeted that Trans* persons would no longer be allowed to serve in the US military, his now infamous “locker room talk” recording had gone viral, and questions surrounding his relationship—both financial and intimate—with Stormy Daniels were

² And this is to say nothing of the erotic connections forged across time and between the living and the dead: these being Queer in and of themselves.

frontpage news. The question of who could use what bathroom was, at the time, a major point of public contention and my inner-most circle was, for the first time since the 2008 legalization of gay marriage, confronted by the uniquely Queer question of whether our neighbours to the South considered us deserving of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. As such, this dissertation was largely born out of that uneasy situation: one in which very little had been clarified and even less had been put into policy. All we knew was that something was happening, and it was most likely bad. This is a dissertation made out of fear—that most primal, base, and “low” of emotions. Without the low, the high could not have materialized.

Introduction to Chapter 1

The following article, which has yet to be submitted to an academic journal, is an attempt to provide a broad overview of some of the major transformations in surveillant technologies as they pertain to the management, sanitization, and subjective production of Queer individuals and communities. Here I have followed Foucault's advice, given in a 1977 (published 1980) interview with Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino, wherein he states that: "I believe one's point of reference should not be the great model of language and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history that determines us has the form of a way rather than that of language: relations of power, not relations of meaning" (1980). Thus, I felt that it was prudent to dispense with the language games and definitional contestations that have come to characterize contemporary discourse surrounding Queer identity and identity politics writ large. Rather, I focused on those periods of great social and political upheaval—the Second World War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the 1960's civil rights movement and sexual revolution—that have come to define the Twentieth Century in the Western world. Each of these events represents a different kind of war—a different kind of battle. They were waged against a great external enemy; a Communist empire that threatened the West not only from the outside, but from within; an enemy embedded within a territory occupied by Western powers on dubious moral grounds; and a threat from within the body itself.

Given the scale of such subject matter, it might seem strange to centre the question of sexuality amidst all the cacophony and destruction that these time periods have come to represent. And yet, I am not the first to do so. Indeed, this article was only made possible by the militant work of careful scholars of Queer history. My contribution is to bring Queerness into view alongside what I think is its inseparable partner: surveillance. I do so for the reason that, as

Foucault noted, Queerness has been at the centre of power relations—themselves inextricably bound up with surveillance—since ancient times. As such, I feel that a Queer history of surveillance can tell us something interesting about the nature and physics of power in the 20th and 21st century, beyond the scope of Foucault’s analyses. Moreover, by looking at how surveillance measures and technologies were deployed around questions and issues of sexuality and gender, we might discover more about not only the “fact” of Queer history, but the ontological complexity of Queer lifeways and the making of Queer life.

Queer history cannot be, in my opinion, separated from surveillance for a number of reasons, the most obvious of which comes from the poststructuralists—most notably Foucault—and succedent theorists of gender and sexuality that took up their torch. Here, Queerness is not only tied to surveillance, it is the *result* of surveillant practices implicit in medical and criminological discourse, as well as the discursive practices of “girl-ing” or “boy-ing” that move over subjects since the moment of their birth.

This article, then, in an attempt to elaborate on and supplement these works, reveals some of the historically-embedded ways that Queerness has come under the surveillant gaze, tracing how technologies of measurement and description evolve alongside shifting historical contexts and redefine (although decidedly *not* in an overly deterministic sense—I espouse a soft determinism on this point) what being Queer is and what it can mean.

At the same time, I demonstrate the ways in which Queerness has become entangled with and embedded in several strange assemblages that operate on a scale seemingly divorced from issues pertaining to sexual identity. In these assemblages, sexual identity links up with questions of national security, biosecurity, statecraft, and military prowess, revealing the ways in which Queerness articulates the local with the global, and the bedroom with the battlefield.

Strange Bedfellows: Surveillance, National Security, and the Making of Gay Male Identity In Canada and the United States of America (1939-1989)

This paper traces the ongoing relationship between surveillance technologies, national security discourse, and shifting cultural notions of sexual “otherness”. Covering the period immediately prior to the Second World War up until the end of the Cold War in 1989, it illuminates how surveillance gives rise to not only new regimes of Queer oppression, but also new possibilities for Queer identity and ontology. Drawing on Puar’s highly influential and oft-cited Terrorist Assemblages (2007), this paper forges an important connection between Queerness, statecraft, and national security, with respect to the political history of Canada and America in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century. In doing so, this analysis reveals how the definition of Queerness, and the technologies used to capture and describe it, coevolved in response to a series of crises. I argue that, at each of these points of rupture, Queerness was redefined and reterritorialized in relation to novel assemblages of national security discourse, surveillance technology, and potential Queer lifeways. The result is a long historical trajectory of techno-social coproduction with respect to both the identification of Queer persons and the various rationales surrounding their exclusion and abjection.

Keywords: Queer, Surveillance, Gay, WWII, Cold War, Vietnam War, Homonationalism, Assemblage

This article is a story of how surveillant technologies are implicated in the trans-historical unification or “stitching-together” of the most intimate spheres of human life—our sexual practices and identity—with the tectonic, planetary-scale terrain of global geopolitics and biosecurity. It should not be considered, in any way, to be a comprehensive history of Queer life in the modern era. Rather, it traces key historical instances at which surveillance can be shown to create or foreclose upon the conditions of possibility for certain kinds of feeling, self-fashioning, intimate encounters, and partnerships. It is also the story of the strange things that have come to orbit sexuality and the manner in which sexuality is interwoven with the function, management, and governance of domains and populations far beyond the confines of the bedroom.

Although this paper takes the period from the Second World War to the end of the Cold War as its object of analysis, this should not be taken to as defining the limits within which surveillance and sexuality are entangled. Rather, I have chosen this periodization due to the intensification of surveillance practices during wartime (which was a continuous state of affairs for Canada and the US from 1939/1941 respectively, until the fall of the Berlin Wall), as well as an increasing sense of anxiety concerning sexual deviance (mostly gay male sexuality and “sodomy”) precipitated by the logistics of warfare.

I am writing this kind of article in order to avoid writing the *other* kind: the kind that serves as an abacus for all the various atrocities enacted in the name of preserving heteronormativity. While this project will inevitably contribute to that historical catalogue of oppression, it also aims to show how events of great importance and enormity register in the smallest spaces and the most quotidian facets of Queer life. In other words, in addition to demonstrating the role surveillance plays in the subjugation of Queer persons, I hope to reveal how Queer persons eked out a living in the cracks between interpenetrating modes of

surveillance and how surveillance technologies themselves led to the consecration of new, liberatory identity categories and the formation of non-heteronormative collectivities.

My main argument—that the conditions of possibility surrounding sexuality are intimately linked with the development and evolution of novel regimes of surveillance—is pursued through a number of historical instances that constitute moments of great social and political crises, rupture, and transformation. Quoting Christopher Chitty’s (2020) investigation of the capitalistic origins of sexual hegemony, “cultures of sex between men were politicized amid much wider forms of dispossession during periods of geopolitical instability and political-economic transition; they are therefore world-systemic phenomena” (p. 35). Working in this vein, I examine two distinct historical moments of global geopolitical upheaval—the Second World War and the Cold War politics and satellite wars of the late 1940s through to the late 1960s—in order to investigate the ways in which homosexuality entered into political discourse and discussions surrounding national security, as well as how the meaning of homosexuality, and the conditions of possibility surrounding it, shifted alongside the technologies designed and mobilized to apprehend it. Here, I take aim at the following: the design and implementation of psychiatric testing aimed at rooting homosexual males out of the US Selective Service and the US Military during the Second World War; the “Lavender Scare” and the layered systems of surveillance put into place to purge homosexuals from government service in both the US and Canada during the Cold War. While attempting to mitigate the problem of Queer men and women’s susceptibility to blackmail vis-à-vis their economic and political destruction, the surveillant apparatus erected around these individuals enable new identities, communities, and lines of kinship.

A Note on Abjection

Throughout this paper, I employ the term “abjection” to refer to a set of evolving relations between Queer populations and the broader heteronormative and heteronationalist society in which Queer persons are embedded. While the term “heteronormative” has gained some purchase in the common vernacular, heteronationalism is a far more nebulous concept. I use the term heteronationalism here to describe the ways in which the notion of heterosexuality—and the demand that citizens adhere to the practices and prohibitions surrounding it—contribute to the projects of nation building, warfare, national security, and the biopolitical management of populations. To quote Lauren Berlant:

Insofar as an American thinks that the sex she or he is having is an intimate, private thing constructed within a space governed by personal contexts, she or he is having straight sex, straight sex authorized by national culture; she or he is practicing national heterosexuality...heterofamilial American identity reigns as a sacred national fetish [ostensibly] beyond the disturbances of history (1995: 8).

When taken together, heteronormativity and heteronationalism contribute to the base architecture of Queer abjection as it is mobilized or engendered vis-a-vis the deployment of various strategies of surveillance and management that define the limits of acceptable sexual practice.

The term abjection itself also requires some unpacking. Although I describe it in terms as the impetus for a set of relations that mediate the boundaries between Queer people—as both individuals and a collective—and those who live and operate under the rubric of compulsory heteronormativity and heteronationalism, the exact nature of these relations must be teased out. Here, I rely on work conducted by Surveillance Studies scholar Torin Monahan (2017), who describes abjection as

Signify[ing] not only extreme need or destitution, but also a kind of social exclusion wherein the existence of the individual is called into question. Abjection

implies a fundamental lack of fit with existing social and spatial orders (Sibley 1995) rendering the abject subject unknowable and largely invisible, at least as a collective ethical responsibility (Kristeva 1982; Murphy 2006: 192)

Here, the term “abjection” not only highlights the driving force lurking behind the exclusion of the “Queer” from “existing social and spatial orders” as Monahan suggests, but also the ways in which Queer exclusion is made manifest along multiple axes of marginalization, including destitution, the necropolitics of AIDS, familial rejection, housing precarity, and the dogging frictions of dysphoria that interpenetrate Queer experiences. In my reading, abjection is located in the ways that these axes of oppression cross-cut one’s sense of belonging and those material conditions that circumscribe the ability to belong at all (and in this I include the incomplete and unequal ways that the supposedly inalienable rights of citizenry are applied to them). Abjection renders all that occurs under its sign a question to be answered while simultaneously rationalizing an a wide assemblage of normalizing strategies.

Following Monahan, I am less interested in the psychic nature of abjection itself than in the subject position of the “abject Queer” and the designs and machinations set into motion around them. Indeed, this dissertation shies away from speculating on the psychic interiorities of those who would relegate Queerness the realm of the abject, or those states of revulsion and unresolvability that underpin compulsory heteronormativity. In doing so, it displaces abjection from psychoanalytical discourse and, thereby, avoids challenges of navigating the presumed mind / the unconscious/ the Oedipal scaffolding of psychic interiors across time and space. Indeed, in the tradition of Foucault and Deleuze, I endeavour not to decouple psychologies from the material, historical, epistemic, and ontological contexts in which they emerge .Rather than seeking a resolution of the parallax nature of “worlds” or “worlding” highlighted by those who cleared the pathway leading to the ontological turn, What I am aiming to do, here, is to avoid

what I perceive to be an innate essentialism in psychoanalytical approaches. It is not my intention to dismiss the psychoanalytical work of Julia Kristeva (1982), who locates the abject within the liminal spaces between life and death (i.e. the simultaneous presence and absence of the corpse; the skin the forms on the surface of a glass of tepid milk, signifying the barrier between spoilage and sustenance; or, perhaps, the Queer who lives, but connotes the end of a genealogical lineage, or, in the post 1980s world, the deathscape of HIV/AIDS). Nor do I dismiss the very similar notion of pollution outlined by Mary Douglas (2007), who saw taboo as something applied to that which exists in the liminal space between the boundaries of culturally-imposed classificatory schematics. Rather, siding with Halberstam (2005), while I believe we have become “adept within postmodernism to talking about ‘normativity’, [we are] far less adept at describing, in rich detail, the practices and structures that both oppose and sustain conventional forms of association” [read here as abjection] (4). Therefore, I am interested in describing the subject position of the “abject Queer” not as an ontological status resulting from psychic revulsion, per se, but as the result of set of material conditions and technological assemblages installed around the Queer that produce their conditions of possibility and, as a corollary, sculpt the reflexive “folding in” through which one interprets their own position therein.

In this manner, abjection comes not from disgust, but is *produced* through the discursive formation of an evolving *scientia sexualis*, and the tools and technologies that it necessitates and interacts with in a spiral of synergistic coproduction. Thus, while disgust may play a part in the experience of abjection, it is the *result* of a wider set of machinations. Here, I am drawing on parallels between Puar’s notion of homonationalism, which is largely devoid of a psychological correlate in terms of national sentiment, or “public feeling”, but is, rather, metered out in the form of propaganda, legal discourses, parades, statistics, empty metrics, and the movement of

money across the global geopolitical battlefield. It is this assemblage of materialities that coalesce into manufactured consent for the deployment of condemnation on the global stage, economic sanctions, or military troops, all in the name of the “liberation of Queers” from brutal “Islamic irrationality.”

A Note on Homonationalism

This analysis is in dialogue with—and, in fact, takes aim at—recent work that locates the association between sexuality and statecraft in the relatively recent emergence of homonationalism and pink washing as facets of Israeli and US foreign policy (Puar 2007; Puar 2013; Currah 2013; McCaskell 2018). Here I argue that this association—the so-called “Queer Assemblage” combining Queer politics with geopolitical hegemony—existed long before the rise of homonationalism and its offshoots (see: Serykh, 2017). To Puar, Currah, and McCaskell, homonationalism is rooted in US exceptionalism and is a reimagining of the so-called “woman problem” frequently used to demonize the Near East. Their argument runs thusly: that both the United States and Israel leverage their relatively good treatment of homosexuals in order to continue to justify Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestine and the United States’ continued aggression in the Middle East. This political leverage relies on the veneration of a particular “type” of gay male couple: white, affluent, professionals that adhere to the formula of the heterosexual nuclear family as closely as possible. Moreover, while a successful strategy in the realm of foreign policy, homonationalism also allows an “acceptable” segment of the homosexual population to be folded into a political base otherwise opposed to their lifestyle. The “benefits” of this incorporation are two-fold: first, gay couples who adhere to the strict criteria of homonormativity are granted conditional access to the benefits of full, heteronormative

citizenship and, second, conservative politicians can attract gay voters away from the left, padding their base and strengthening the pro-Israel, anti-Palestinian/anti-Arab movement.

Despite attempts to locate homonationalism at the centre of a network of connections between sexuality, statecraft, war, and occupation, this paper aims to illuminate the associations between the state and its borders, questions of national security, and the biopolitical governance of populations that pre-exist and pre-empt homonationalism. Indeed, homonationalism, from my perspective, was long preceded by a pervasive heteronationalism that established the crude cartographic assemblages between localized sexual identity and the wider spheres national security, war, and international politics.

Looking Forward, Looking Back

Being a relatively new subdiscipline of academic inquiry, surveillance studies has tended towards fleshing out its theoretical basis in the impersonal realms of government and corporate surveillance and the asymmetrical accumulation of information vis-à-vis vast technological infrastructures. Subsequently, a relatively small portion of the extant literature addresses the intimate spheres of familial or sexual surveillance (for notable exceptions please see: Koskela, 2002; Marx, 2003; Gregg, 2013; Write, Heynen & van der Meulen, 2015; Beauchamp 2019; Clarkson 2019; Schram 2019; Orne & Gall 2019). Moreover, even less has been written that attempts to situate sexual surveillance within its historical context or that elaborates on Foucault's project in *The History of Sexuality vol 1-4*. This article does, in some ways, employ a genealogical approach to the investigation of sexual identity as a flexible, historically contingent variable subject to fluctuation. The periodization that follows is rough and uneven. Evidence is patchy. Indeed, the "snapshot" view this article adopts is due more to the glut of materials that

take up a queer perspective on the Second World War and the Cold War than it is indicative of any saltatory transformations in the discourse surrounding sexuality and the embodied experience thereof.

Without recourse to socio-biology, I am reminded of Niles Eldredge and Stephen J. Gould (1972) who, due in part to lack of fossil evidence, argued against evolutionary gradualism in favour of a model known as “punctuated equilibria” wherein evolutionary change occurred in short bursts. As with Eldredge and Gould’s scant fossil record, available evidence might produce the illusion of leaps and bounds in sexual history. A highly granular survey of historical materials may very well evince the gradual evolution of knowledge and identity. Here, I aim to cover a large swath of history, from 1939 until the late 1960s, and as such, I sacrifice a high-resolution perspective in order to access the theoretical leverage a wider cross-sectional analysis provides. Such is the problem with identifying “rupture”: it smooths over the bumps and cervices where interesting fragments of history reside. My use of the term should, therefore, be taken as shorthand for, to paraphrase Queen Elizabeth the II, “Fixed points around which the course of history turns”³. A simplification to be sure, but one that does its work in the correct register for the purpose at hand.

A consequence of the relative newness of surveillance studies as an academic subdiscipline is its nearly myopic focus on the development and sociological consequences of complex computational technologies, specifically the entanglements between corporate and state surveillance and the surveillance-military-industrial complex made evident by Edward Snowden’s revelations (see: Haggerty & Ericson, 2000; Taekke, 2011; Deibert 2013; Lyon & Bauman, 2013; Reigeluth, 2014; Tufekci, 2014; Lyon, 2015; Zuboff, 2015; Cheney-Lippold,

³ Adapted from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the II. “A speech by the Queen at the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge

2017; Lupton & Michael, 2017; Srnicek, 2017; Burke, 2020; Coupe, 2020). While integral to our understanding of the contemporary surveillance landscape and potential futures of surveillance, these writers, and the oeuvre they build upon and contribute towards, more commonly look forwards than backwards at the long history of technological advancement that pre-empted and made possible the kinds of the hyper-surveillance they address. Indeed, the past, I assert, provided the conditions of possibility for such invasive technocratic interventions. Our highly technologized surveillance society, and the major transformations rendered mundane (or, alternately, the monotony of catastrophe as outlined in Berlant's (2011) *Cruel Optimism*) in day-to-day life that accompany it, cannot be seen as dangling on the complex entanglements of post-9/11 paranoia, or the rise of finance capitalism which redistributed a great deal of state power to the corporate realm. Rather, like homonationalism as a form of governance, surveillance has long and continuous history, much of which registers in the domain of sexuality and the maintenance of ridged gender binaries and hierarchies. Moreover, those writers (Puar, 2007; Schulman, 2012; Ritchi, 2015; Mandelbaum, 2018) that do forge a connection between sexuality and the global landscape of geopolitics and statecraft seem to focus only on the tragic manipulation of gay men and their complacency in the establishment of palatable forms of homonationalism that bridge partisan divides and advance US/Israel foreign policy. In the space that follows, we will see how the surveillance of sexuality and its connection to geopolitics, national security, and the continuation of democracy and Westphalian sovereignty rest on the maintenance of heteronationalism and homosocial boundary-maintenance until the mid-to-late 20th century.

While there can be no doubt that the proliferation of high technology has tightened the circle of surveillance and enabled new forms of lateral and self-surveillance, it must also be

recognized that there is dearth of historical material that looks at how surveillance unfolded in the past and was implicated in the formation of subjects and in shaping their lifeways. Those authors who have taken up a historical perspective tend to focus on how surveillance produced the categories along which race, racism, and racial violence occur (see: Thompson & Genosko, 2009; Browne, 2015; Fair, 2017). Those that adopt a historical perspective bereft of racial politics have, broadly, tended to ignore sexuality as an axis of power along which surveillance was enacted and have, instead, tended to focus on non-Western contexts and historical instances of political upheaval therein (See: Williams *et al.*, 2009; Fonio & Agnoletto, 2013; Skouvig, 2017; Morris, 2018). In summation, we have, on one hand, a surveillance studies that approaches issues of Queerness so long as they articulate with contemporary surveillance technologies (Ferrante, 2017; Manning, 2018; Schram, 2019; Clarkson, 2019; Borck & Moore, 2019; Orne & Gall, 2019; Singh, 2019; Kornstein, 2019) and, on the other hand, a historically-oriented surveillance studies that glosses over how Queerness is entangled with projects of racialization and globalised modes of imperialism. As such, this article should be understood as gesturing towards a significant gap in both the Surveillance Studies literature and in Queer theoretical thinking. While it should not be seen as in itself sufficient to remedy this lack, it does work towards highlighting some of the major points of departure, rupture, and transformation that demand more thorough investigation.

Psychological Casualties: Psychiatric Testing and Queer Exclusion at the Dawn of the Second World War

The interwar years just prior to the US entry into the Second World War marks the first time that psychiatric interpretations of same-sex activity and attraction would be considered alongside the

concern of national security in the theater of war (Jackson 2010). Coming out of the tail end of the Great War, the American war machine turned its attention to reducing what it called “psychological casualties”—that is, those individuals who were psychologically impacted by their military service in such a way that they either deserted or were hospitalized in the interwar period (Bérubé, 1990). During this time, the treatment of psychological casualties would cost the US government over a billion dollars and as such, psychiatric screening became a matter of sound fiscal policy and of securing the budget for another potential war in Europe (Wake, 2007). Given the pervasive atmosphere of culturally ingrained homophobia and the paranoia surrounding sexuality outlined above, it might seem strange that prior to the German invasion of Poland, the US military had no official policy regarding admitting homosexuals to its ranks. Yet, as war loomed over the horizon and the potential for US involvement seemed increasingly plausible, quiet rumblings began in Washington over the “homosexual problem” in the US Armed Forces (Bérubé 1990).

Psychiatric screening on behalf of the US Selective Service would begin under the direction of Harry Stack Sullivan, an already-established physician working in the newly emerging field of preventative psychiatry and, coincidentally, a gay man himself. First appointed as a psychiatric consultant to the director of the Selective Service in late 1940—due in part to his own lobbying on behalf of psychiatric medicine and arguing, among his contemporaries, for the importance of preventative psychiatry inside the War Department—Sullivan was tasked with assisting in the Service’s mandate of “registering, classifying, and selecting men” for all existing branches of the US military (Wake 2007; Huzar 1942:201). Although it was Sullivan’s ultimate goal to spare “men of a certain queerness” from failing to integrate into what he saw as a hostile, hypermasculine climate, as Wake (2007) notes, failure to qualify for military service carried its

own stigma and, rather than reducing homophobic sentiment vis-à-vis the medicalization of homosexuality, his efforts served only to entrench prevailing cultural attitudes that homosexuals were damaged, defective individuals who posed a threat to military cohesion. Morale was central to Sullivan's concerns regarding admitting homosexual men to the military. Fearing their inevitable decline into schizophrenia or a handful of other nervous disorders on the battlefield, he hypothesized that a neurotic affect could spread among the troops, weakening unit cohesion and the ability to fight effectively (Bérubé 1990). To Sullivan, the question of homosexuality was not a moral one, but rather a matter of success on the warfront and, he felt, a matter of the maintaining a democratic Europe (Wake 2007). This moment marks the formation of a queer assemblage between homosexuality, national security, and democracy and its subsequent reflection and consecration in US wartime policy.

Sullivan's work, and the history of preventative psychiatry in general, sits at a point of major epistemological transition during the late 1930s and early 1940s. While the need to psychologically screen draftees was identified prior to the onset of the First World War, the dominant paradigm during this period was the "brain-disease model", wherein mental disorders—and here I include "gender inversion", which was how homosexuality was medically interpreted at the time—would manifest in the bodily characteristics the afflicted. Quoting Bérubé (1990):

"The brain-disease model classified various mental and "moral" (emotional) abnormalities—among which homosexuality was included—as symptoms of brain lesions and neurological disorders caused by heredity, trauma, or bad habits such as masturbation, drunkenness, and drug addiction. Most physicians considered neurology to be the most scientific approach to mental disease, and it was for this reason that the primary focus of military screening for mental defects during World War I was on intelligence and the nervous system rather than on personality disorders. If any homosexuals were rejected as such in World War I, it was because they had physiological disorders or had prison or insane asylum records as "sex perverts," not because they had homosexual personalities or tendencies (500).

[...]

The framers of the Army's interwar physical standards listed feminine characteristics among the “stigmata of degeneration” that made a man unfit for military service. Males with a “degenerate physique,” the regulation explained, “may present the general body conformation of the opposite sex, with sloping narrow shoulders, broad hips, excessive pectoral and pubic adipose [fat] deposits, with lack of masculine hirsute [hair] and muscular markings.” A young man with a “scant and downy beard” or a “female figure” was also to be closely observed for evidence of “internal glandular disturbances.” In addition to these “anatomical” stigmata of degeneration, the interwar standards listed “sexual perversion”—a broad category that included oral and anal sex between men—as one of many “functional” stigmata of degeneration (518).

During the final years of the interwar period (somewhat late in comparison to Europe), this anatomical model of mental illness would succumb to a major theoretical paradigm shift towards psychoanalysis as a method of outlining not only physiological deviations or criminological histories, but personality types—what Foucault referred to as “species” of individuals (Foucault, 1990; Bjerre, Barrow, Badger, 2021; Bérubé, 1990). At this point, we see a transition between the body as the site of defect itself and the body as an indicator of what might lie beneath, in the interior of the subject’s psyche where their fundamental nature as a human being might be subject to scrutiny. While during the First World War, and in the early years of the interwar period, a body might betray “inversion” through the literal expression of “feminine” traits such as a female pattern of fat deposition or other indicators of an estrogenic glandular disorder, the intervention of Sullivan and his psychoanalytically-oriented contemporaries led to the body to being conceived of as a sort of “looking glass” through which the soul might be glimpsed, albeit only obliquely and with proper training. Under this new framework, the body can be seen as subtly betraying one’s inner constitution. For example, a suggested method of psychiatric screening was to strip the boy or young man under one’s charge nude prior to the psychological interview. In this state, his insecurities might be laid bare in a social experiment wherein the

nakedness of one's body was rendered equal to the nakedness of their inner self. Additionally, the physician (acting in a psychiatric capacity, but rarely a trained psychiatrist) would pose questions about how a patient felt when examined physically, or had their genitals or anus inspected (Bérubé, 1990). Signs of concern or a preoccupation with a sense of violation were to be considered indicators of latent homosexual tendencies (Bérubé, 1990). In this way, the normalizing gaze of psychiatric medicine could extend itself beyond the surface of the bodies under its scrutiny and walk amidst thought itself.

Put another way, the technological development of preventive psychiatric diagnostic methods rooted in psychoanalysis allowed the sorting and classification of various human typologies, and for the physician to see internal truth of a person by way of discursive and/or physical probing. Here one might see a resurgence or echoes of what Foucault referred to as pastoral power (1990) and the model of the confessional. While the appearance of the confessional at this juncture may seem anachronistic with Foucault's own periodization, such recapitulations should be seen as a matter of ebb and flow: of disappearance and resurfacing under renewed circumstance. The peeling back of each layer of physiological disguise and the extraction of detailed description regarding the physical sensations of the examination of one's own genitals and anus directly mirrors the normalizing effects of religious screening and the maintenance of parochial authority seen in the tense sexual atmosphere of the sixteenth century confessional booth. It might be tempting here to invoke Foucault's treatise on the *Birth of the Clinic* (2012), and yet, what we see here is very much a reversal of clinical logics. While the clinic atomizes the body into disconnected parts, organs, tissues, and bone, pastoral power seeks the metaphysical components or "texts" that lie behind and supersede the physicality of the body.

Such is the muddled nature of the forms of power in Foucault's oeuvre: none can be considered primary or set neatly into a linear periodization or progression.

Loose Screws in the War Machine

Of course, this nexus of power dynamics and newfound methods of surveillance, detection, and biopolitical exclusion could not stifle the inevitable. The logistics of war demand, first and foremost, the amassing of young bodies in port cities—both for reasons of shipping them off to combat and to train them for work in heavy, war-related industries—and thus their exposure to bohemian eccentricities unfamiliar to rural youths. As Michael Bronski (2011) points out, this mass migration proved to constitute somewhat of a sexual panic in and of itself. As with the economic stimulus programs associated with the New Deal that brought together young, single men, tensions ran high surrounding the possibility of enabling deviant behavior or the sexual exploitation of younger men by older men in positions of authority, to say nothing of the anxieties surrounding potential Queer behaviour occurring in what is not only a highly masculine, heterosexist space, but a symbolically charged realm of heteronationalism. If the fear was Queer behaviour, these fears were well founded, and not only in America. The Diary of John Atlock, a gay man arriving in London in 1945, describes the sight of Airforce men in makeup. Here he notes the peculiar contrast between RAF blue and the rouge on their young faces. Atlock would decide, then and there, to move to the city permanently in search of sexual liberation (Vickers 2010). Indeed, the war years would see not only the relocation of men from one city to another, but the much more pronounced transition between rural, farming life and the metropolis. Many young men were, for the first time, exposed to Queer life and those questioning their sexual orientations could experiment and find some answers.

At this juncture, it is important to note that, contrary to popular or folk knowledge, thriving queer communities existed prior to the Stonewall uprising of 1969 and although the late 1930s would be a period of erasure from the public sphere for Queer persons, this is not synonymous with their absence or the inability to seek out establish Queer spaces (Vickers, 2010; Chauncey, 1995). For Americans, entry into this new world of forbidden pleasures meant passing through the fine mesh of Sullivan's screening process. Although Sullivan himself felt that his methods were likely to eliminate fifty percent of potential psychological casualties (Wake, 2007), avoiding rejection on the grounds of homosexuality proved relatively simple. During the interwar period, only a handful of trained psychiatrists were available, and as such, most screening would be conducted by physicians unfamiliar or blatantly suspicious of psychiatry's epistemic and physiological grounding (Bérubé, 1990). The result of this educational deficit was the *de-facto* paring down of screening criteria and a great deal of latitude being granted to the individual physicians conducting interviews. Humorously, Bérubé (2010) mentions the case of Robert Fleischer, who, when asked by a physician "if he liked girls", responded in the affirmative. He *liked* girls just fine. He just didn't *like* like them (409).

Once inside the armed forces, a combination of tragedy, shifting social norms, and military culture assisted in the assimilation of gay men into the heterosexual matrix of war. In contrast to the empowering images featuring woman who now flooded once male-dominated (if not exclusive) workplaces, American culture came to centre the image of the vulnerable, wounded soldiers and highlight the emotional fragility of young men shipped off to war (Bronski, 2011). Indeed, the devastation, paranoia, and utter loss of battle would serve to open up new avenues for tenderness, physical contact, and emotional vulnerability between men. As Bronski (2011) notes:

The physically and emotionally vulnerable "new American man" was a reality for men living under the stress of battle and threat of death. For the first time in

American History, large-scale, highly organized single-sex social arrangements were considered vital to national security. Men on battleships and battlefields lived together in close quarters with little privacy. The physical intimacy and stressful conditions often led to emotional and sexual intimacy. Servicemen in these all-male groups turned to their fellow troops for emotional and psychological support. The stress of leaving home, shipping out, active battle, and years of war allowed men to be vulnerable with one another in way impossible outside of this environment (206).

Thus, we can implicate a different kind of surveillance in permissibility of male same-sex tenderness—that of the spectacle. Although we often think of privacy as the first line of defense against bigotry, in the case of the Second World War, it would be the media spectacle of devastation and brotherly comradery that would alleviate some of the suspicion surrounding close homosocial bonding. Although it is true that the vast majority of the surveillance studies literature interprets the panopticon as the supreme metaphor for power, Thomas Mathiesen (1997) notes a reversion to the kind of media spectacle that the panopticon supplanted in the early 19th century. Here, the few are looked on by the many, producing a “viewer society” wherein behavior is first modeled and then recapitulated. Images of men weeping, men holding one another, men engaging with one another socially in various stages of undress were now commonplace and were not only accepted but valorized. With tight-knit homosocial collectives, tied together by both physical and sexual intimacy, now normalized and considered vital to national security, we can see the contradiction between the viewer society and spectacle of the battlefield and the attempt to, through medical surveillance, eliminate or reduce the number of homosexuals among the troops. Here homosexuals and homosocial behavior are both a threat and vital to national security—a logic which only coheres around the liminal boundary of the closet and separation of homosexual acts from the homosexual as species.

Sadly, the surveillance and purging of homosexual men⁴ from the ranks did not terminate with the intake process. Homosexual liaisons remained a violation of the US Article 15 of the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* and, for a brief period, soldiers caught engaging in “homosexual acts” were court martialed and sentenced to five years of hard labour under the orders of then Secretary of War Henry Stimson (Bronski 2011). Although these court martials would become too costly to continue, they were, nevertheless, replaced by military discharges under Section 8—deemed “blue discharges” as they were printed on blue paper unique to discharges for mental illness. A Section 8 discharge predictably carried great social stigma and also precluded former service members from Veterans Affairs (VA)-sponsored health care and the guaranteed benefits of the GI Bill such as college tuition and mortgage insurance (Bronski, 2011).

Unfortunately, the situation for gay men in Canada was no better than in the United States. The opportunities for illicit erotic encounters and self-discovery carried the same risks and potential for discipline. There are, however, many accounts of pleasure, companionship, and love embedded in the web of surveillance and suspicion that the war produced. Interestingly, the surveillant gaze itself became one of the ways of exploring one’s sexuality. Much in the same way that the fictitious woman was employed as a conduit through which male same-sex desire was expressed during the pre-WWI era (Sedgwick, 2016), artistry became the mode through which men could embrace feminine tendencies and appreciate the nude male form without arousing suspicion (Jackson, 2010). Thus, watching, or even encouraging one’s companions to pose in various stages of undress could be seen as an innocent action, or, in a moment of desperation, used as an excuse for whatever illicit activity might be occurring. Here, the kind of

⁴ My focus is and has been on gay men. Although I do not recount them here, there are most certainly separate lesbian histories of recruitment, service, and surveillance during the Second World War.

surveillance and observational transparency demanded by artistic practice acts in opposition to the larger regime of surveillance in which it is embedded. As such, art can be seen as having presented both a criticism and means of subversive action against anti-homosexual surveillance long before contemporary art took up the charge of criticizing the expansion of digital surveillance.

More recent theoretical work provides a fruitful analytic for interrogating the ways in which art has troubled, contested, and rallied against machinery surveillance. Monahan (2017) explores the interpolative dimensions of aesthetics and how artwork might “agitate from within, or on the margins of the perceptible” (564) vis-à-vis a countervisuality that reverses the hegemonic ordering of ideology and reveals the phenomenological and experiential components of power or subjugation. In examining the homoerotic artwork of the Second World War, the use of interpolative counter-visuality is evident. In depicting service members as paragons of masculinity as well as the objects of homoerotic sexual desire, such artwork serves to entangle two seemingly contradictory lines of representation: the service member as hero and the service member as a Queer figure. The overall interpolative effect, here, is the aesthetic conflation between the two on the part of the observer, such that they cannot see one without the other. Thus, to undergo interpolation as a citizen gazing upon the body of the hero, one is also placed in the position of participant within a homoerotic dyad. Much of this art remains today and stands as a testament to the erotics of war. Indeed, some has propelled its creators into notoriety and/or spirals of speculation regarding their sexual proclivities, Grant MacDonald and Eric Ardwinkle among them, with their work on permanent exhibit in the Canadian War Museum (Jackson, 2010).

Art aside, most of the homosexual activity to occur during the war years would be conducted in secrecy, although within a climate of permissible homosocial bonding and affection. As such, the boundaries between the erotic encounter and the intimate friendship are difficult and contestable from a historical perspective (Jackson, 2010). This boundary was further complicated by the additional layer of perceived gender deviance. While engaging in homosexual liaisons was a relatively accepted behavior among service members, being a “sissy” was much more universally reviled⁵ (Jackson, 2010). Acceptable homosexual behavior was, therefore, predicated on the maintenance of masculinity and a masculine affect. By adhering to societal norms surrounding the masculine and feminine, men were able to position themselves within the obscure boundary between homosocial bonding and the quasi-illicit sphere of gay pleasure: a space that gay sex could occupy with all its myriad connotations of necessity, pragmatism, desperation, and playful experimentation. Indeed, gay sex was much more tolerated by the rank and file of the Canadian military than it was by the Canadian government or the upper echelons of military power. Masculinity, loyalty, and dependability were much more important in determining one’s character than same-sex activity (Jackson, 2010). And yet, the power of the Court Martial, the dishonorable discharge, and the uneven and sometimes shocking (mis)application of military discipline must not be understated. To the Canadian military leadership, it was necessary to maintain the military as a heterosexual space and, from the government’s perspective, remove any possibility that homosexuality could come to be associated with valor, heroism, or the liberation of Europe from the hands of the Nazis (Jackson, 2010). Arguments for these purges ranged from the maintenance of *esprit de corps*, to the protection of the nation’s morals, to the guarding of the family unit (which homosexuals were

⁵ Stories do persist of “sissies” who were respected members within their ranks. Notably a field pharmacist who whose overtly feminine affect was considered part of his charm (Jackson 2010).

thought to disrupt) as the major organizational diagram underlying all of democratic civilization (Jackson, 2010).

Although it was largely the government and military brass who were responsible for the persecution of same-sex activity among the Canadian military, surveillance cannot be seen as a merely top-down process. Lateral surveillance has enjoyed significant theorization (see: Andrejevic, 2002, 2006), and yet little has been accomplished in terms of determining how lateral surveillance factors into the shaping of sexual identity and same-sex attraction. It will come as no surprise to Queer-identified readers that, in one's youth, one watches and waits for signs of Queerness among their peers and might attempt to turn or orient another towards a certain kind of experimentation. To be Queer inside a compulsory-heteronormative culture is to always be under surveillance, but it is also to conduct surveillance—to be ever on the lookout for signs, body language, hidden meanings, and what lies behind the surface of every gesture, good or bad. Although lateral surveillance is usually considered to have a stifling effect on human behavior and to reinforce the status quo in this sense it must also be seen as opening up new erotic opportunities.

In summation, the Second World War stands as a tragic yet transformative moment in the history of Queer men—at least in the US and Canada. Although an oppressive regime of surveillance, abjection, and ostracization encircled the Queer experience during the war years, it inadvertently generated the opportunity for same-sex intimacy, homosexual experimentation, and even arguably the emancipation of young gay men from rural isolation and sexual ignorance. Thinking about how surveillance surrounds a singular object—gays during the Second World War—also shows the complexity of the systems of surveillance in simultaneous action. While it is tempting to theoretically reduce surveillance to various periods wherein a new primary

modality surfaces and dominates, the war years show how lateral surveillance, psychiatric surveillance, disciplinary modes of behavioral modification, art, and media optics all converge into a contradictory assemblage of rules, regulations, expectations, and deliberately overlooked transgressions. At the same time, the transition between a view of homosexuality as a neurological, feminizing disorder to one wherein the homosexual concealed a hidden etiology within their psyche is an important landmark in the evolution of Queer surveillance. Although it only circulated between professional psychiatrists and government officials, such a paradigm shift was largely responsible for the convoluted nature of Queer surveillance at the level of policy making and the difficulties in parsing the straight from the gay and the confused or desperate.

Out in the Cold

With the end of the Second World War and the subsequent reorientation of the US war machine from the threat of fascism to the threat of communism, national security discourse would turn inwards, concerning itself with the possibility of an imminent internal threat in addition to problem of a symmetrical war between superpowers and the various proxy wars that emerged in its wake. With the apocalyptic threat of a nuclear strike at least partially contained by Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), and with actual enemy engagement being played out in the far-off geographies of the Global South and the Far East, national security became a matter of domestic policy and the careful curation of nationalistic sentiment. This was not a battle over territory in the same way as the Second World War; it was a matter of ideology.

While the Second World War would see the formation of a queer connection between homosexuality and national security, the Cold War would introduce a propensity for communist

ideology into the mix. Indeed, in the cultural imaginary of Cold War America, homosexuality and communism were seldom differentiated—one seen as leading inevitably and irrevocably to the other (Johnson, 2006). As such, in the stifling paranoia of the Red Scare, a new Lavender Scare would surface. While the Red Scare would be conducted under the auspices of then senator Joseph Raymond McCarthy with his well-documented hatred of communists, the Lavender Scare would result mostly from the work of one John Peurifoy, the then Secretary of State (Johnson, 2006). Indeed, it was Peurifoy’s statement before Congress and the press that ninety-one homosexuals occupied positions in the State Department that would embroil the State Department in its most damaging, partisan scandal of the McCarthy years (Johnson, 2006). This “homosexual problem” resonated deeply with the public and functioned as a smear campaign against the Truman government whose radical expansion of the State Department was seen as both fiscally irresponsible and as a magnet for spies and other undesirables (Johnson, 2006). Here, homosexual men were understood to be primary leaders in State Department jobs, but also a security risk due to their allegedly loquacious nature and propensity for alcohol consumption, making them prime targets for sensitive gossip sessions, honey traps and enemy recruitment (Johnson 2006). Indeed, these fears are evident in a May 1950 Senate Committee report drafted by Nebraska senator (R) Kenneth Wherry, regarding the dismissal of the infamous ninety-one:

The obligation upon society to eradicate this menace and to lift the minds of moral perverts from the extreme depth of depravity to which they have sunk is recognized. But while this wholesome and necessary process is fostered, there should be expeditious action to insure [sic] that departments and agencies of our Government are cleansed of moral perverts, especially to guard and protect security secrets upon which the life of our beloved country may depend (Wherry, 1950 in Keen & Goldberg, 2001: 88).

Much like the pre-screening tactics used to determine one’s fitness for the Selective Service at the beginning of US involvement in the Second World War, as a result of Peurifoy’s

announcement and Wherry's report, all applicants to the State Department were placed under review with a specific eye towards homosexual tendencies, with their friendships and familiar relations triangulated against lists of known homosexuals. The result of Peurifoy's claim that ninety-one homosexuals had been rooted out of the State Department and the Department of External Affairs would prompt a public witch-hunt that would, in some ways, eclipse McCarthy's War on Communism and his obsession with eliminating communist ideology from the American cultural industry. Soon the number of suspected homosexuals in the US State Department would rapidly expand—from ninety-one to thousands—prompting the name "The Fairy Deal" to refer to Truman's expanded social services and the large swaths of government jobs and agencies needed to enact it (Johnson, 2006). This policy—of homosexual elimination within the State Department—would be signed into law by President Eisenhower in 1953 in Sec. 8 of Executive Order 10450, which granted the authority to refrain from hiring or to categorically dismiss any State employee guilty of:

- I. Any behavior, activities, or associations which tend to show that the individual is not reliable or trustworthy.
- II. Any deliberate misrepresentations, falsifications, or omissions of material facts.
- III. Any criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct. Habitual use of intoxicants, drug addiction, sexual perversion.
- IV. Any illness, including mental condition, of a nature which in the opinion of competent medical authority may cause significant defect in the judgement or reliability of the employee with due regard to the transient or continuing effect of the illness and the medical findings in such case
- V. Any facts which furnish reasons to believe that the individual may be subjected to coercion, influence, or pressure which may cause him to act contrary to the best interest of the national security (United States Senate Report 10450, 1953, § 8).

The situation in Canada was similar but distinct in several important ways. Rather than the high-profile witch-hunts that the United States enacted in the name of freedom and transparency, the Canadian response was much more intense but also much less visible (Kinsman and Gentile.

2010). Indeed, Canadian LGBTQ rights pioneer Jim Egan would write almost exclusively on the American situation simply because he was unaware that a similar wave of surveillance and purges were taking place right under his nose (Kinsman and Gentile, 2010). Much in the same way that Washington was seen as a bastion of debauchery, Ottawa, too, had come under scrutiny for the number of homosexuals employed in its Department of External Services—a place where gay men and women could find decent, well-paying jobs with a culture that did not generally discriminate against them, except at its upper-most echelons (Kinsman and Gentile, 2010). Here, I draw on work done by Lauren Berlant (2011) and her notion of cruel optimism to describe the Janus-faced scenario presented to gays and lesbians seeking meaningful employment in the bureaucratic machine of the New Deal and its Canadian equivalent. Although Berlant’s own vision of cruel optimism references our damaging attachment to the prospect of the “good life” or “American dream” in a time of highly neoliberalized state of monetary extraction, such cruel attachments precede the dissolution of the New Deal and, in fact, figure centrally in its operation. The question is, a New Deal for whom? And for whom might the optimism of a stable salary and government job might conceal a cruel underbelly of suspicion and abjection? The cruel optimism is, thus, an ironic manifestation of New Deal politics. The promise of a bold new direction for capitalism and relief for its discontents is, here, eclipsed by the same politics of deservedness and stratification, albeit along axes of medico-legal and biosocial acceptability rather than class.

Interestingly, in the Canadian context, the surveillance of homosexuals would extend beyond those involved in the State Department, Department of External Affairs, or other sensitive positions. Indeed, police praxis at the time was to visit known cruising areas, catch gay men “in the act” and press them for names of other known homosexuals. Thus, a list might be compiled—one that might be leveraged in any number of given circumstances from the courts to

hiring, to firing. These lists were composed of the names of the friends, family, and acquaintances of those placed under arrest for lewd public behavior. As such, a network could be established and one's centrality to the sprawling web of liaisons, friendships, and one-night stands could be taken as proof positive of one's own sexual deviancy.

And yet, it seems that the atmosphere in the clandestine gay and lesbian haunts was far more optimistic and not without some levity. Some police insurgents were seen as so crudely equipped and elementary in their affect as to elicit laughter among those targeted. Single men occupying single tables in known gay bars, hiding behind unfolded newspapers and conspicuously snapping photographs is a common trope (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010). One can imagine the hidden exhilaration in escaping such an obvious trap: of dodging a clear interloper who finds themselves thoroughly out of their element and unable to muster even the feeblest attempt at belonging—or afraid to. Here, surveillance opens up new avenues for erotic possibility. There is, and was, a romanticism to being on the run. There is an erotic element to the explicitly illicit, due, in part, to surveillance and the exhibitionism it empowers (Koskela, 2004). Such is, and was, a fundamental tenant of Queer theory and its battle against heteronormative hegemony. The Queer has always been that which circles back upon the foundations of heterosexuality in order to mock its dogmatic foundations. It is, as Sedgwick puts it, to exist in the “open mesh of possibility, gaps, and overlap (1993:8) and as José Muñoz (2009) posits, a utopia of anti-heterosexism not yet achieved, but only glimpsed in moments of flagrant disregard for sexual norms and in the ecstasy of their violation.

The image of the spy lurking in the gay bar harkens back to the centrality of anti-communist rhetoric that underpinned much of the Lavender Scare. From a Canadian perspective this link between homosexuality and socialist thinking was much clearer. Indeed, there is a glut

of material that attempts to link these two orientations: sexual and ideological, Queer and communist, together. Former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker would say at the time that:

There are many cases in which the loyalty of the individual is not a question. But that individual may still not be reliable as a security risk.... because of defects of character which subject him to the danger of blackmail....it is a fertile field for recruiting by the USSR, where public servants are known to be the companions of homosexuals. Those are the people that are generally chosen by the USSR, in recruiting spies who are otherwise loyal people within their countries. (Kinsman & Gentile 2010:11)

While these are remarkable words to come from a Prime Minister, the most egregious accusations lived much deeper, below any aspiration for federal office (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010). Many more comparisons would be produced by both Congress and the press. Indeed, in a 1950s, right wing, anti-queer memorandum, Queerness would be equated with communism on the grounds that it “transgressed sexual, class, social, and political boundaries” (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010: 8). Such logic can be found in R.G Waldeck’s “Homosexual International”, a 1960 political manifesto wherein he states that “homosexual officials are a peril for us in the present struggle between West and East: members of one conspiracy are prone to join another” (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010: 8-9). The response from the legislature was harsh and a slew of new laws were crafted to target those caught in homosexual liaisons. Alongside the now-outmoded crimes of buggery and gross indecency, the umbrella term “sexual psychopath” would emerge—now in civilian contexts—as a legal category of persons subject to indefinite detention upon conviction (Kinsman, 1995). And yet, even without a conviction, the suspicion of sexual impropriety was seen as evidence enough to warrant state intervention, with 1948 seeing the introduction of a cabinet directive to move state employees who raised “doubts” to “less sensitive” positions (Kinsman, 1995: 140).

Between the United States and Canada, such rhetoric would see thousands of admitted or suspected homosexuals unceremoniously dismissed from their positions in either the State Department or the Department of External Affairs. Thousands of men and women would be escorted from their offices, boxes in hand, marching towards an unknown future wherein their kind had been plainly marked as undesirable and untrustworthy. While the Vietnam War raged on and young men of every kin and creed were sent to be shot, blown up, bombed, and tortured overseas, it was the domestic homosexual who was seen as their enemy at home, silently or unwittingly assisting in the death machine of US anti-communist foreign policy. This implication is one that should be brought to the forefront of Queer memory: that we were thought to be so egregious a species that we would turn on our own nation and contribute, albeit indirectly, to the deaths of our own young men. The moral here, is that among Queer persons, even those privileged enough to be afforded temporary harbour by the State government are always already set aside under the rubric of heteronationalism.

Analogical Reductionism and the Machine that Ate Gay People

In titling this subsection “the Machine that Ate Gay People”, I have unapologetically stolen a turn of phrase from Peter Mantello and his (2016) paper *The Machine Ate Bad People: The Ontopolitics of the Precrime Assemblage*, and yet, the similarities I outline here do not terminate with clever diction. While Mantello’s work refers to the systems of surveillance put into place to determine the likelihood of crimes being committed by certain individuals at certain locations (dubbed precrime), the notion of precrime resonates clearly with the way in which Queer persons were subject to detection and elimination during the Cold War period in both Canada and the United States. Moreover, the metaphor of the “machine” is much less metaphorical in this usage,

for it was an actual machine—labeled the “fruit machine” and designed to detect homosexuals—that leads us along a new avenue of surveillance and a new assemblage of machinic technologies, national security, and sexual object choice.

The bizarre history of the “fruit machine” is one in which both the United States and Canada are implicated. The traditional means of detection—visiting known cruising areas and interrogating those caught for the names of their friends—was, it seems, deemed outmoded and RCMP officers were facing the newfound unwillingness of homosexual men to implicate others and to name names. Moreover, the act of entrapping, interrogating, and following-up on the leads generated by homosexual men was proving to be an expensive and time-consuming endeavor (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010). A new, more efficient means of detecting homosexuals was needed: one that harnessed a kind of scientific objectivity not found in the psychoanalytic or anatomically based (looking for outward signs of gender inversion) screening methods of the Second World War. A 1961 Security Panel document argues in favor of new research on homosexual behavior with an eye towards eliminating homosexuals from the civil service and for preventing their hire:

Consideration be given to setting up a program of research...with a view to devising tests to identify persons with homosexual tendencies. It is hoped that such tests might aid in the identification of homosexuals already employed in the government service, and eventually might assist in the selection of persons who are not homosexuals for service in positions considered vulnerable to blackmail for intelligence purposes (Kinsman & Gentile, 2010: 180).

In response to this demand for a cheap, scientific, and “objective” way of detecting homosexuals, Ottawa would commission Professor F.R. Wake, former chair of Psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario for a “special project” (Kinsman, 1995). Here, Wake—basing his conclusions on a review of American research conducted in-person, over the border—argued that a battery of psychological and psychosomatic tests was needed to replace costly

RCMP field investigations with any degree of reliability. As such, the assemblage known as the “fruit machine” would emerge as a technological apparatus for both creating and destroying homosexuals.

The machine itself consisted of a series of tests, each gleaned from American psychological labs operating during the 1950s. The first, the Hess-Polt pupillary test, adapted from the Wake’s work in the US alongside E.H. Hess and J.M. Holt at the University of Chicago, would measure pupil dilation and employ visual tracking to assess a subject’s response to various visual stimuli. Stimuli would vary from famous paintings to images taken from muscle-man magazines (a popular version of soft-core gay porn disguised as fitness material), to images of Christ on the cross.⁶ The order in which a subject’s eyes tracked the given material was taken as evidence of prioritization. The image of Christ, for example, was used to assess whether or not a male test subject would fixate on Jesus’ groin (Kinsman, 1995). The inclusion of the crucified Christ, and his potential sexualization, I believe, gestures towards an attempt to embed a moralistic dimension rooted in religious taboo and revulsion into the test protocol. A sacrilegious act such as sexualizing the Christ in the ecstasy of death—to say nothing of the long history of the ecstasies—conceals the lingering desire to cast homosexuals not only as a conduit for Soviet blackmail, but as creatures of habitual immorality. Although concluding that more research would need to be done, Wake settled on a final testing protocol consisting of the Hess-Polt pupillary test with suitably homoerotic visual stimuli; an apparatus to measure skin perspiration; and a plethysmograph modified to detect pulse rate (Kinsman 1995:157).

⁶ The use of the Christ and muscle magazines to detect homosexuality came from Wake’s review of work conducted by then-graduate student Allan Seltzer under the supervision of E.H. Hess at the University of Chicago (Kinsman, 1995).

The problems with the function and implementation of the fruit machine were two-fold. First, in order to calibrate and ensure the function of machine, Wake would require the RCMP to provide tests subjects consisting of “fifteen normal males; fifteen normal females; fifteen homosexual males; and fifteen homosexual females” (Kinsman 1995: 157). Although the RCMP had established networks of gay men it could draw participants from, it had no similar contacts within lesbian circles and, as such, felt paralyzed to recruit. Additionally, as noted above, members of the RCMP meant to calibrate the machine towards “normalcy” were reluctant to undergo testing for fear of erroneously (or correctly) being identified as homosexual. Second, issues with adapting the machine for a variety of body sizes, pupil sizes, head shapes, and varying homeostatic base levels meant that the machine could not accommodate anatomical variations in the sample population. For these reasons, research into—and the prospect of—a working fruit machine would come to an end in 1967 after only five years of operation (Kinsman, 1995).

While a demonstrable failure, research into, and the drive to produce, the fruit machine evidences a shift in conceptualizations of homosexuality and their associated etiologies and the methods of surveillance employed to detect them. Rather than seeking out physical deformities indicating “gender inversion”, or subjecting targets to psychological testing and manipulation, homosexuality is further abstracted and woven into the body’s autonomic nervous response system. In this space, one cannot lie that they “like girls just fine”. Like the Pavlovian dog, Queers were presumed to salivate at the sight of flesh.

My aim here is to gesture towards a kind of analogical reductionism as a point of rupture in the history of sexuality. Here, homosexuality is dissolved into a series of biometric signs and signals that are made to speak vis-à-vis a translational apparatus and subsequent battery of tests.

This shift from psychoanalytical testing to machine-mediated surveillance marks an important transition in the history of Queer abjection—one exemplified by the creation of the “fruit machine”, by Canadian psychologist Frank Robert Wake. Here, expertise is not possessed by an individual who arbitrates between the heterosexual and the homosexual. Rather, it is the collection and analysis of individual data points that reduces the subject to a series of signals. This can be interpreted as an early incarnation of what Deleuze referred to as the “dividual”: the negation of the subject as a totality and its replacement by a diverse set of discrete measurements and indicators. Moreover, we can once again return to the model of pastoral power as that which draws out the confession of one’s transgressions in all their lurid detail. And yet, the temporal frame in which this pastoral power is exercised has shifted alongside its technologization. The confessional no longer scrutinizes the past, but rather produces the very behavior it condemns. When one’s pupils dilate in response to the nude Christ figure, the crime is committed. The confession is implicit in the act itself.

While the specialist discourse and experimental technologies deployed in order to enact this temporal shift aimed to improve the efficiency with which it detected homosexuals, the irony is that in cases where the machine was successful, it was due to the confession of its victim immediately prior to or following their interrogation (Kinsman, 1995). In other words, it was the thin veneer of “science” and the reputations of those “experts” to whom it was attached that allowed the fruit machine to operate. It was the pressure the fruit machine exerted in the minds of its victims—and not the biometric indicators it was designed to detect—that would be responsible for its meager success rate. As such, the abstraction of the subject into data was, at this time, merely symbolic.

At the same time that physiological and/or biological responses were being employed in the detection of Queer persons in the West, a different sort of methodology was unfolding east of the Iron Curtain. In work conducted by Kate Davidson (2019), emotion and affect take centre stage as the defining criteria for homosexuality and the ability (or inability) for homosexuals to serve national interests. The conclusions drawn by Soviet investigations into homosexual behaviour reached markedly different conclusions than their counterparts in the West. While homosexuals were still considered to be potential security risks—due in part to their ostensible emotional neediness—it was this same emotional sensitivity that made them particularly well suited to spycraft. Indeed, quoting Davidson: “[i]n the East, it was thought that the homosexual’s abilities to hide true emotion and to be particularly attuned to (especially) other men’s emotional needs—skills borne of and necessitated by his social isolation—meant these people were especially suited to intelligence work” (225). Although this conclusion might be taken as indicative of a more lenient attitude towards homosexuality, it is important to note the large exodus of gay men that fled Eastern Germany seeking “emotional and sexual fulfillment” (Davidson, 2019: 225) in the West end of the city where more tolerant attitudes prevailed.

Conclusions

The association between Queerness and national security far precedes the post-9/11 context outlined by Jasbir Puar in *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007). The assumed parity between “sexual deviance” and a threat to statecraft and the sanctity of nations has undergone a number of transformations since the dawn of the Second World War. Each of these transformations has leveraged new and emerging technologies in an effort to identify Queer persons or to sterilize their communities and lifestyles. Whereas clinical diagnostic technologies were set to the task to

untangling the complex psychosexual orientations of potential draftees in order to winnow homosexuals from the potential pool of military labour, an invention such as the “fruit machine” demonstrates a concerted effort to shift the pathophysiology of Queerness to an occultic symptomatology of guilt and (un)belonging that bypassed the need for complex sting operations and interrogation. Moreover, each new technology of detection and/or intervention prompted a discursive rupture in the definition of Queerness, altering both what it meant to be understood as Queer and how Queer persons were able to conceive of and fashion themselves.

Although each of these major historical and discursive shifts—and their associated technologies of prehension, description, and identification—carried the negative effects of rejection and abjection with them, they also opened up new avenues for Queer sociality. Indeed, if discourse determines the perimeter of what is conceivable within any specific episteme (as it was for Foucault, 1970), then it follows that we can understand major shifts in the science of sexuality as not only reimagining Queerness in a definitional sense *per se*, but also as recasting the boundaries of sociability and the kinds of relationalities available for Queer persons to live out.

While I have, in this article, attempted to bring some light to a series of dark chapters in the history of Queer sexuality, I do not desire, in any way, to paper over the trauma inflicted on the Queer community by the institutionalized discrimination that I have described above and by the (in many instances) pseudo-scientific instruments and reasoning that enabled it. Rather, I have endeavored to show how technologies of surveillance and Queer identity exist in a co-constitutive relationship that plays out on a global scale—in the language of statecraft, national security, and warfare—and not just within the micro-sociological spaces of identity politics and individual subjectivity. Queerness troubles not only that which is close to us, but that which is far

away and difficult to apprehend. It operates on the most geographical scale imaginable, finding its way into geopolitics and the making and unmaking of nations. It follows wars, nuclear standoffs, partisan politics, and the inner workings of the scientific establishment. It is, therefore, an important link between the microcosmic and macrocosmic spheres of influence that surveillance exerts, and as such, stands an important and necessary object of scrutiny for the future of surveillance scholars.

An Addendum to Chapter 1: Strange Bedfellows: Surveillance, National Security, and the Making of Gay Male Identity In Canada and the United States of America (1939-1989)

Some Lessons From the Second World War

There is a conspicuous absence in this analysis of the Second World War that must be accounted for: that of the plight of homosexuals persecuted under the Nazi regime and their continued confinement after the liberation of the concentration and death camps. These are stories of men subjected to the strappado, ripped apart by dogs, suffocated by gas, beaten by officers and fellow prisoners, and brought past the threshold of starvation, if not outright starved to death. There is no other side to this story—no fragment of redemption to be found here. Moreover, I wished to account for a uniquely American and Canadian experience of gay men during the war years, and as such, the travesties enacted against European homosexuals remain outside the purview of this study. Much has been written on those who wore the pink triangle and its re-appropriation as a symbol of survival and revolt. This symbol would find its way into the HIV activism of the late 80s and 90s and stands, perhaps, as the only unifying feature to emerge from the utter wreckage and calculated destruction of entire peoples on an industrial scale.⁷ This history must never be forgotten, but neither should it be sentimentalized in the way that the American and Canadian experience—with all its hidden and secret pleasures—might justifiably be.

Although I do contend that there is no redeeming dimension to the history of Queer persecution under the Nazis, I do think it worthwhile to consider—in line with work done by Jack Halberstam—the ways in which fascism echoes in the male homosexual cultural imaginary. Taking the artwork of Tom of Finland as an example, Halberstam (2011) contends that

⁷ For pertinent materials, please see: Plant 1986; Setterington 2013; Rorholm and Grambell 2019

contemporary gay male culture is shot through by the discombobulated remnants of a fascist aesthetic that centres hypermasculinity and hypermasculinism. This Brekerian aesthetic, Halberstam argues, invokes not only a brazen misogyny, but also venerates an Aryan body (in both literal and symbolic terms as the body of the nation) that defines itself in relation to its mirror image: a feminized caricature of the Jewish, Romani, communist, or intellectual ‘other’. Here, Halberstam interrupts the oft-invoked story of the destruction of the *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft* and the tragic exile of Magnus Hirschfeld in order to subject it to an alternate history: one of gay male/Nazi collaboration. Indeed, according to Halberstam, the legal rubric surrounding homosexuality was unevenly applied by the Nazis, and a blind eye was turned towards homosexual activity occurring between men of appropriate pedigree, so long as it served to reinforce a tightly regulated hypermasculinist homosocial environment. Although an uncomfortable revelation, Halberstam’s contention that elements of fascism persist within the gay male imaginary highlights an important, yet often disavowed, artifact of the Second World War: an entire lexicon of erotically charged symbols of fascist masculinity that, when invoked, intertwine sex and desire with genocide. Here—in the leather-clad, militaristic hierarchies of sexual dominance and submission present in the work of Tom of Finland—the ambivalence between persecution and collaboration by and with the Nazi regime is sublimated into pure *eros* vis-à-vis the coproduction of sexuality and politics.

The incorporation of fascist aesthetics within the psychosocial fabric of gay male fantasy poses several interesting questions regarding the ways in which Queerness encounters, modifies, subsumes, deconstructs, and rearticulates unthinkable horror. Such encounters—like the one between fascism and homosexuality—rub up against the boundaries of what we can and should conceive of as “Queer” and how we might retain, in good conscious, its status as an

emancipatory project and counter-hegemonic identity. Indeed, these uncomfortable inclusions move beyond the Queer pessimism of Edelman (2004; 2013), with Berlant (1997; 2011), and even Halberstam (2011). While these authors—central though they may be to Queer discourse—might lament the futurelessness, the cruel optimisms, and the unbearability of Queer life, they stop short of either fully embracing or fully rejecting the dark perimeter of Queerness where it encounters monstrosity.

Introduction to Chapter 2

Elaborating on the major theme of the first article in this dissertation—that of the articulation between Queer identity and national security regimes—this article investigates the experiences of Queer and Trans* persons in crossing the US / Canada border. Here I explore how the post-9/11 context of airport securitization, and the related atmosphere of heightened suspicion and paranoia, contribute to the outsider status of Queer, Trans*, and gender nonconforming individuals and subject them to undue trauma and scrutiny during border-crossing events.

This article relies on ethnographic data collected among Trans* and Queer participants over the course of twelve months, collected through 2017 and 2018. Taken together, these data indicate a particular geographic contingency to sex and gender performance, as well as the identity politics that circulate and characterize the lives of Trans*, Gender Queer, Non-Binary, and Queer persons. At liminal places, such as borders, one must perform identity differently than quotidian life requires and, on certain occasions, must perform gender identities contrary to those that they truthfully inhabit. Moreover, the border is a place at which one might leverage their identity in the pursuit of a political goal: turning the expected power dynamic on its head and transforming abjection and suspicion into the tools of countercultural protest.

The Geography of the Closet: The United States/Canada Border as the Site of Sexual Identity Making and Gender Performativity ⁸

The passing of the controversial American FOSTA-SESTA bill package—paired with a hostile American political climate targeting Queer persons—transformed the US/Canada border into a site of intense sex / gender surveillance and scrutiny beginning in 2016. Due to a developing association between Queer identity, the use of LGBTQ networking and dating applications, and illicit sex work, Queer individuals have been placed under extreme pressure to engage in both technological and performative (bodily) identity-disavowal while crossing the border between Canada and the United States. Conversely, the Canada/US border has also become the site of subtle protest against compulsory heteronormativity and has been reconfigured by Queer persons as a space within which to demonstrate solidarity and sexual kinship with those most affected by the US administration’s homo/trans-phobic agenda during the Trump presidency. Drawing on interview and recent historical data, this chapter explores the various strategies employed by Queer persons to either avoid the scrutiny of border agents or to protest the state of US policy and/or laws. Here, I explore the ways in which both “the closet” and “coming out” have become matters of geo-spatiality and are strategically deployed by Queer persons as methods of contesting state authority and power. Finally, this chapter concludes with a critical examination of the relationship between notions of homonationalism, pink-washing, and US exceptionalism as put forth by Puar (2007), and the biopolitics of homo/trans-phobic abjection as made evident by the Queer experience of moving between national boundaries.

Keywords: Queer, Surveillance, Borders, Trans*, Travel, Protest

⁸ Adapted from a chapter in Habib, J. (forthcoming). *The Other Border*. WLU Press.

Introduction

While there is a long history of considering the performance of sexuality and gender identity in relation to interpersonal networks, scientific discourse, and linguistic “speech acts”, relatively little has been written on the impact of space and place on the fluidity of performative expression. Much of the extant literature on the geography of Queerness tends to focus on asylum seeking and immigration, as well as the disjuncture between the “pinkwashing” and “heteronationalism” (see: Puar 2007) of recipient nations and the performative requirements unfairly saddled on those seeking safety (see: Gorman-Murray 2007 Gorman-Murray 2009; Chavez 2013; Fobear 2013; Fobear 2016; DasGupta 2019; Boussalem 2021; Castiillo 2021; Abbey 2022). While this body of literature—located in the study of human geography—illuminates the complexity of identity performance in the high-stakes context of fleeing persecution, violence, and potential death, this article concerns itself with the experiences of white, semi-affluent, Canadian citizens who are either gender non-conforming, Trans*, or who openly engage in fetishistic lifestyles (e.g. leather culture, rubber culture, pup-play, sub/dom relationships, domestic discipline, etc.). Indeed, while the geographic literature is primarily concerned with an complexities of racial otherness intersect with Queer affectation and gender performativity, by privileging the “assemblage” over intersectionality, this dissertation is less of a radical departure from the geographic literature than a recognition of the other, myriad forces at play in the apprehension and performance of acceptable identity under the blank, unmarked, neutral category “whiteness”, as it signifies under white, capitalist, heteropatriarchy, In doing so, its concerns are located more proximate to the Canadian and US publics, in that it traces how homonationalism and heteronationalism intersect on domestic populations rather than in the

wider geopolitical spheres of global diaspora and the grim calculus that occurs at the juncture of “human rights” discourse and nationalistic propaganda.

In keeping with this dissertation’s theme of excoriating psychic interiors in order to draw attention to more materialistically-grounded forms of analysis, I draw on Halberstam’s (2015) interpretation of Queer geography, where, in centering itself on the relationship between bodies, spaces, and practices reveals a spatiality of the performance of gender and sexual identity. This process-centred perspective is, in my view, is highly amenable to thinking through as a dynamic assemblage of temporary relations shot through by the multiple lines of the surveillant gaze. Such a perspective is valuable as it reveals both a spatial and temporal context for identity performance, and shows how the identities we inhabit shift, evolve, and adapt in response to the ways that various lines of visibility press and exert force on the perimeter of the subject.

Returning to the sociological literature, the notion of the closet is often trapped within cultural narratives of temporality—both large and small, as engendered by the post-closet sentiments of homonationalist discourse, and by the use of the closet as demarcating a “before” and “after” of Queer ontogeny. On the larger side, the closet is framed as a thing of the past: a cultural artifact of the pre-Stonewall era. On a smaller scale, the closet is a matter of life history. It is something one outgrows or outlasts and stands as a marker of Queer self-acceptance and maturity: a meaning derived from both the ‘coming out’ of a debutant as a sexually-mature woman and the notion that one may have “skeletons in their closet” (Chauncey, 2008). Indeed, it is the cultural durability of these binaries of primitive/modern, young/sexually mature, and secret/honesty that Eve Sedgwick (1990) thoroughly deconstructs in her pathbreaking work *The Epistemology of the Closet*. And yet, despite Sedgwick’s injunctions, the movement between the closet and “outness” is largely conceived, in the West, as unidirectional: a modernist progress

narrative of either society or the individual transitioning from one temporal reality to another (Scott, 2018). When and where spatiality is invoked in a critique of the “coming out” process as a singular, temporal event, it is most often done so with an eye towards social network analysis and the selective disclosure of sexual/gender identity between various clusters of social relations. These critiques are, perhaps, best exemplified through the incongruent identities that subjects may present across various social-media platforms and the ability to curate and perform myriad “selves” in order to satisfy disparate audiences (Gray, 2009).

In contrast, this paper is interested in the geographic elements of the closet and the spatial contingencies of sexual identity and gender performance. Here, the Canada/US border is interpreted as a boundary or experimental space at which sexuality and gender are distilled, identified, labeled, confirmed, or denied. It is a site of interpenetrating matters of national security, individual suspicion, documentation, medical discourse, and transnational disparities in social mores, laws, and policy. As such, I argue that the border becomes a liminal boundary at which already-established identity performances, or those in transition, must be re-negotiated, altered, reversed, or crafted for outright deception. Comfortable embodiments must be—as I will show in this chapter—either discarded or, conversely, melodramatized. Indeed, we are dealing with both boundaries of the self and nations—the crossing of either of which prompts the development of new configurations of identity in relation to privacy, subterfuge, safety, and political protest.

This geography of performative difference is, itself, mirrored in the performative nature of border security *writ large*. In the absence of a real and actual line of demarcation between nations, it is the simulation of surveillance and safety and the security theatre conducted by TSA agents and border patrol that constitute the liminality of transnational movement (Lalonde,

2019). In other words, the border itself has come to be contested from an ontological perspective. Here, I engage with recent border scholarship that contemplates the geographical stability of the border itself and imagines its transformation from a solid line to an overarching apparatus of Deleuzian (1992) control (Lalonde, 2017; 2019). Indeed, in a post-Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) world, the function of the border seems to have been uprooted and dissolved into a vast network of surveillance and suspicion. No longer a defined boundary, the border has become a crooked line, twisting its way across the United States and seeking those who fall outside of a rapidly vacillating definition of rightful citizenship. There is no reason to assume that such a configuration is unique to the US/Mexico border. Indeed, we are now witness to the deterritorialization of our own Southern border, between the US and Canada. The securitization of travel within one's own country is a salient of the creeping expansion of the US/Canada border and the neo-liberalization of control over moving bodies. In these spaces where the international is mirrored by the domestic, identity is placed under scrutiny and sexuality and gender are enrolled into a strange surveillant assemblage (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000) of trustworthiness and national belonging. As with border-crossing, the same collection of documentary, performative, and bodily evidence is called upon to ingratiate oneself with the state apparatus. One must account for oneself. A narrative that stitches together sexuality and/or bodily "otherness" must cohere. All this is not to say that the landscape of surveillance and securitization surrounding sexuality and gender are the same in Canada—where I live and work—as they are in the United States, or that crossing into Canada from the US represents the same level of threat or requires the same amount of preparation and willingness to undergo scrutiny. While it is true that the norms and procedures that characterize international movement have seeped into the fabric of day-to-day life in Canada, there are major differences in terms of

the scope and scale of the surveillance measures put into place and their impact on the lived reality of Queer and Trans* persons.

Although some scholarship does address the movement of Trans* and Queer persons across various national boundaries (Beauchamp, 2019; Clarkson, 2019; Costanza-Chock, 2020), race has been, historically speaking, the primary analytical axis along which borders and boundaries have come into resolution with respect to surveillance studies (see: Pallitto & Heyman, 2002; Wiebe, 2009; Patel, 2012; Browne, 2015). While I do not argue for complete congruence between Queer and racial identity politics, I do advance the argument that Queer and racialized populations are analytically intertwined. Indeed, as Puar (2007) notes, the suspicion of terrorist activity falls largely on racialized persons and the figure of the terrorist is thoroughly Queer coded. As such, the racialized body is one that is always approached, apprehended, and measured within a Queer register. White supremacist, cis-normative cultural forces that mark racialized bodies as “deviant” that interpret them as Queer manifestations or “shadows” of normative gender and sexual expression.

While the research surrounding the intersection between surveillance and sexuality that came out of the 1990s and early 2000s centred largely around the abjection of white, cis-gender, gay men (see: Chauncey, 1994; Johnson, 2006; Bérubé 2010; Kinsman & Gentile 2010), recent scholarship has shifted focus in order to highlight the experiences of Trans* and gender-Queer individuals (see: Beauchamp, 2019; Clarkson, 2019; Borck & Moore, 2019; Kornstein 2019). This emerging avenue of research reveals the ways in which the heteronormative hegemony of the past has transformed or evolved into a system of cis-normative cultural values that privilege monied, white, cis-gender, gay men at the expense of Queers of colour (see: Puar 2007) and Trans* and gender-Queer persons (See: Mathers, Sumerau & Cragun, 2018; Armitage, 2020).

Working alongside these authors, this article examines the experiences of both Trans* and Queer cis-gender persons as they move across the Canada/US border and encounter the mechanisms of institutional surveillance and discipline located there.

This research is the result of several interviews conducted with five main participants. Interviews did not consist of discrete individual events, but were, rather, a series of ongoing conversations that took place across the span of several months, and going into considerable depth on a variety of topics. Initially, I had intended this article to more closely examine the privacy-preserving practices of Queer persons with respect to their use of social media. As my writing turned in a more theoretical/historical direction, it became clear that the empirical portion of my dissertation would, necessarily, be forced to narrow its scope. At the same time, while engaging in discussions related to digital privacy with my network of informants, Donald Trump would, perhaps surprisingly, assume the American presidency. I cannot understate the shockwaves that this event sent throughout the local Queer community and through those digital spaces in which Queer persons, myself included, congregate. All of a sudden, our Southern neighbour seemed to be a foreboding, unwelcoming place. The fervor surrounding Donald Trump as a public figure—that blizzard of MAGA slogans and thinly-veiled dog whistles that characterized his ascent as a politician—seemed to be ratified and enshrined as “what those people down South” believe (however uncharitable this view might be). Several months later, Trump would tweet his intention to ban Transgender persons from military service. Taken alongside then Vice-President Mike Pence’s track record on LGBTQ issues—including his (ostensibly former) support for conversion therapy—our suspicions seemed to be confirmed: this was an administration that posed a real and existential threat to the Queer community.

The tone of our discussions abruptly changed. While we had been, originally, discussing Facebook and Twitter and the potential that one might be “outed” to their family or peers at work or school, there was now an enormous, imposing question of whether or not we could safely travel to the United States with our identities intact. Thus, it became important to investigate the ways in which my participants were navigating this new and hostile climate and the strategies they were employing to facilitate their travels. One’s digital privacy remains, of course, an important consideration in this regard. The introduction of the FOSTA-SESTA bill package—a bill package that, while ensconced in the time-tested language of “save the children”, actually served to further criminalize those employed as sex workers or in the sex industry more broadly—would necessitate an increased level of self-scrutiny regarding what one was willing to share online and what protective measures they were willing to take in order to guard their ability to move freely between the US and Canada. Indeed, one of my participants, Jelena, carefully scrubbed her mobile devices of any and all information that revealed both her status as a transgender woman and her intention to (legally) film pornographic videos in the US.

Not all of my participants carried the burden of living as a transgender person or sex industry professional in a judgemental, highly antagonistic climate. Indeed, two of my participants, Gregory and his husband, Michael, are two cis-gender, white men. Both hold high-paying jobs in the tech-sector. They are homeowners, well-to-do, and thoroughly unassuming. Rather than approaching the US/Canada border with apprehension, Gregory and his partner are able to leverage their privilege to transform border crossing events into a protest of sorts: one with the stated goal of making the border agents as uncomfortable as possible, should they ask too many invasive questions. Here, the unique dynamic of the border crossing event is turned on its head. Rather than the border being a site of interrogation and a point at which complex

identities are, through the use of “scientific” devices and body scans, collapsed and made to fit—however uneasily—into a ridged sex/gender dichotomy, it is, instead, a site of rebellion and a space in which one might speak against the laws and policies of the place they are entering.

Methodologically speaking, I rely heavily on the poetics and politics of ethnography as fleshed out by editors James Clifford and George Marcus in their 1986 book *Writing Culture* (2011) in that I see my work as the production of Queer literature rather than an exposing of historical truth that was always already there. Here, I avoid embracing a “view from nowhere” or the “God trick” (see: Haraway, 1988) wherein the disembodied masculine father occupies a privileged epistemic locus that draws its supposed objectivity from a (presumably) neutral, disinterested (in the political sense), “clinical” distance from its object of study. Indeed, I reject the very notion of an “objective” assessment of Queer history as the presumption of a stable locus of from which objectivity might be achieved runs counter to Queerness as both mode of analysis and inhabited identity. Rather, I privilege the partial truth as it is written and lived by Queer persons and refracted through the lens of myself as a writer, or “witness” possessing intimate—sometimes erotic—empathy. Referencing Love (2009), this charged empathy stands as an epistemic position generated by the thread of affective potential woven through the Queer literature and the act of “feeling backwards” through history. As such, the role of the ethnographer as “writer” is so thoroughly intertwined with the production of culture as an “artifact” or “document”, that their influence cannot be divorced from any insight contained therein. In this article, I have tried to make my presence known. Indeed, Queer theory itself seems to require this kind of promiscuous movement between orthogonal, parallax perspectives, all the while acknowledging that the breadth of these perspectives is irrevocably encircled by the author’s own horizons. Additionally, this work contains elements of what might be considered a

“militant anthropology”. That is, I have not refrained from placing value judgements upon the cultural systems of abjection and control that operate on the lives of my participants (see: Scheper-Hughes, 1995). Thus, my values, ethical orientation should be understood as occupying a central space in this work. I am a Queer author offering up an analysis of Queer abjection.

Although not directly related to either borders or border-crossing, many of this article’s insights hinge on the passing of the FOSTA-SESTA bill package, ratified by then-President Donald Trump in April of 2018. FOSTA-SESTA represents the culmination of a sustained effort by US lawmakers to eliminate safe harbour for sex traffickers on digital communications platforms (Tripp, 2019). And yet, whether by accident, or design, FOSTA-SESTA has both failed at its ostensibly intended purpose of curbing sex-trafficking and has, instead, served to complicate the lives and livelihoods of sex workers, Queer and Trans* persons, and Queer and Trans* sex workers (Tripp, 2019). Here, I argue that the offline effects of FOSTA-SESTA are the result of several assumptions and conflation that become evident at the site of institutionalized measurement and “accounting for oneself” that borders represent:

- 1) What is known colloquially, among my informants, as “walking while Trans*—the prevailing assumption by law-enforcement professionals that Trans* women are all sex workers;
- 2) The assumption that all sex workers are victims of the illegal sex trade;
- 3) The assumption that Trans* women desire entry to the United States for the purpose of sex work;
- 4) The assumption that all Queer people are Trans* and that all Trans* people are Queer; and,
- 5) The assumption that the use of Queer-centric apps or the possession of Queer-centric photographs are associated with the illegal sex trade.

Together, these conflation move between the surface of institutional logic, as part of the circuitry of polyvalences that operate on and within—and serve to constrain—what appears as intelligible sex and gender presentation and what indicated criminality. In service of this argument, I offer two illustrative anecdotes, interspersed with analysis drawn from the work of

Toby Beauchamp (2019), Mark Fisher (2009), and Donald Morton (1995), as they relate to the Christmas Day attempted “underwear bombing” conducted by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab.

Jelena

It’s the summer of 2015. Jelena pulls her hair up into a messy bun. She is nervous and noticeably shaking. She takes a prescription anxiolytic and tries to act natural—as though she is unaffected by her current predicament, the political climate, and all the bad news she has had to absorb. Border crossings have become one of the few scenarios that warrant anti-anxiety medication these days. She has come a long way since she began her transition. In anticipation of the TSA, Jelena has made sure to wear a bra and to do a simple “panty tuck” to conceal her penis and testicles from superficial scrutiny. And yet, she wears no makeup. Years of hormone replacement therapy have softened her features and given her face and body the smooth curves that cisgender persons often conflate with femaleness. Prior to arriving at the airport, she has taken other, more technologically sophisticated precautions. She has left her work phone—used for coordinating sex work and other intimate encounters—at home. She has purged her personal device of all social networking applications. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Signal have all been deleted. Once she clears security, she will reinstall them. This lesson was hard learned. On her way to a six-month stint in the US, her phone was confiscated by a border guard:

He searched through my photographs and uncovered a collection of nude images. He commented on my genitals and began to ask questions. When I resisted his line of questioning, he responded: ‘I’m allowed to ask any questions I like. You, however, are welcome to withdraw your application’. I found that shockingly aggressive.

This time, however, Jelena is crossing the border for a quick work-related visit. She is traveling to Los Angeles to participate in a T-Girl⁹ porn-shoot, a fact she must hide from suspicious border agents. With the passing of FOSTA-SESTA, such work not only remains an illegal avenue for undocumented employment¹⁰, but now carries with it concerns regarding human trafficking and the exploitation and sale of sex workers—a reality that Jelena finds both terrifying and patronizing. “It is clearly a smokescreen for sexual moralizing”, she asserts:

It’s a way to screen for potential venereal diseases and unsanctioned sexual behavior. It places pressure on women traveling alone and unmarried women. Even condoms are considered evidence of potential solicitation. It’s just a way to increase security around sexuality and autonomy. I remember one time the border agents uncovered a dildo in my luggage, and I was questioned about it. Anything sexual is seen as a potential issue.

Jelena is not naïve. She knows and anticipates that she will be subject to increased levels of security and so she takes precautions. In addition to being the star of several pornographic movies and a full-service sex worker, she has been an advocate for Trans* and Queer rights for a long time. As such, she knows the ropes of dealing with international travel and can anticipate how she will be treated:

I usually buy a ticket to some event in the city I’m traveling to: a ten dollar ticket to a wrestling event or concert so I have a viable excuse for my time there. I’ve also coordinated alibies with friends and supplied border guards with their numbers.

This time, however, she is pulled in for secondary screening with a backscatter X-ray machine. Attention is immediately directed to her genitalia. Here, she is forced to explain her anatomy in

⁹ T-Girl is an abbreviation of “transgender girl”. Although sometimes used in conversation, it also refers to a category of pornographic material.

¹⁰ By undocumented I mean anyone traveling for work without the proper Visa.

front of strangers in order to answer the border agent's questions. She states: "It was humiliating, and I was certainly red in the face".

Such experiences reveal how geographic boundaries and various technologies of surveillance—backscatter X-rays, radio-waves, power-residue tests, manual pat-downs—coalesce to produce the border as a confessional space. Technologies like backscatter X-ray machines force bodies to speak a specific kind of medicalized "truth" and bear witness to the authenticity of one's gender performance. Despite her negative experiences, Jelena still plans on traveling. Her advocacy for Trans* persons and sex workers has placed her in a number of dangerous scenarios and her resilience is admirable. She does view her whiteness as part of this resilience, stating that: "Racialized folks are more often targeted, especially as their gender identity intersects with various forms of racialization."

Although Jelena's documentation has been gender-affirming for every border crossing, she has encountered difficulties due to a name change and an old alias associated with a criminal offence.

For a long time, I flew under the radar, but one day it seems like their databases finally identified who I was. The border guard asked me 'have you ever traveled under an alias?' and I knew right then I needed to be honest in order to establish my trustworthiness. You have to appear trustworthy in these kinds of situations.

Suspicious Packages: On Human Trafficking and Exploding Underwear

On Christmas Day, 2009, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab boarded a flight from Amsterdam while concealing an explosive device in his underwear. The payload, however, failed to detonate properly, producing only burns on Abdulmutallab's genitals, hands, and thighs. As Beauchamp (2019) notes:

The attempted bombing and its attendant anxious discourse about dangerous bodies' threats to national security and public safety functioned as leverage for

US state efforts to increase formal surveillance measures. In particular, security agencies called for more thorough screening procedures for air travel. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA), an agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), installed new advanced imaging technology (AIT) machines in many US airports. These machines, some using X-rays and others using radio waves, allow security officials to see beneath travelers' clothing, producing sketch-like images of the physical body and any objects attached to it. More recent versions of the scanners include pink and blue scan buttons that require TSA agents to input each traveler's gender in order to begin the scanning process (50).

Thus, in response to an unsuccessful terror attack, the focus on non-normative—that is, non-white—bodies would be expanded to include a focus on genitalia as a potential site of deception and an emerging national security concern. Looking at the work of Jasbir Puar (2007), the body of the “other” is already always interpreted within a Queer framework, rendering the suspected terrorist a Queer figure in the truest sense. Thus, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab precipitated the formation of a new assemblage of confluences (see above) between the Queer, Trans*, and racialized populations that move disjointedly between nations. This new hyper-vigilance surrounding the most private and sensitive of embodied spaces would be enacted not only through an increased attention towards one's anatomy on the part of the TSA (or other border agents), but also vis-à-vis a whole host of technological devices and procedures that place anxieties about gender and sexuality at the forefront of US homeland security. Paramount in this securitization process is the privileging of genitalia as a site of truth or trustworthiness. Anatomical verification and biometrics, with their connotation of “scientific objectivity” are added, alongside race and country of origin, to the post-9/11, post-underwear bombing reality of domestic and international travel. Returning to Beauchamp, we see that:

Biometric surveillance [...] produces and reinforces the boundaries around categories such as race, gender, sexuality, and citizenship [and that it does so] by insisting that it operates outside of such categories. Backed by Western science's claim to a neutral gaze and the supposedly unambiguous truth of the

physical body, biometric technologies engage bodies as objective data points untouched by social and political influence (95).

Put simply, we are confronted by a concept of genitalia as the bodily site at which authenticity is produced and normativity established (Aas, 2006). As such, one's "private anatomy" also becomes, in its mirror image, the matter of public interest. Inconsistencies between one's documentary identification, one's gender performance, and the medicalized form of "truth" produced through X-ray, radio waves, or manual pat-downs are seen as evidence of deception or "hiding something", as though one's true sexual or gender identity is an illicit commodity to be smuggled.

The machinery that undergirds the technological determination of gender identity works to promote and reinscribe a false gender dichotomy, quite literally overlaying an incongruous form onto those who do not fit easily into the category of male or female or whose gender identities do not match either their documents or their perceived appearance. After the body in question is colour-coded, any anatomical structures that deviate from a prototypical male or female form are flagged as potential security concerns (Clarkson, 2019). Not only does this process pose problems for those whose genitalia is culturally understood as not matching their gender identity, it also categorically excludes gender-Queer and Non-Binary persons. Here, the coevolutionary relationship between technology and gender identity is laid bare: machines, such as the backscatter x-ray and its successor, the millimeter wave scanner, are programmed with a strict gender binary in mind. That is, the gender binary—and the associated assumptions regarding the shape and form of those assigned to a certain category of gender—are embedded into the machinery of surveillance itself. In turn, this machinery reinscribes the gender binary through its operation, tying "gender deviance" and the existence of non-normative body types to notions as broad as national security and terrorism.

This disjuncture—between the colour-coded gender binary enforced by the TSA and gender-Queer and Non-Binary persons—can be interpreted not only as the result of institutionalized suspicion surrounding those who deviate from doxic notions of gender normativity, but also as a disjuncture between the modernist project of measurement and delineation and the onset of post-modernity and the expectation that one creates their own identity. Here, I draw on Mark Fisher’s *Capitalist Realism* (2009), Donald Morton’s “Birth of the Cyberqueer” (1995), and Fredric Jameson’s *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) to argue that, while the disciplinary apparatuses outlined by Foucault (1975)—and exemplified by border security practices—operated vis-à-vis the expectation of uniformity, postmodernity (or as Fisher calls it: capitalist realism) relies on pastiche (see Jameson, 1991), the expectation of self-creation in line with demands of capitalism (Fisher, 2009) and the production of identity by way of a bricolage of consumer totems that combine to generate one’s sense of self (Morton, 1995). In this way, we can see a conflict arising between the machinery of discipline—which elevates genitalia and their biological “truthiness” as the epistemological standard of determining gender identity—and a postmodern landscape wherein the biological is decentred in deprioritized in favour of a gender identity rooted in self-determination and the paraphernalia of self-expression.

Compounding the state’s interest in genitalia as one possible locus through which legitimate citizenship might be assessed is the introduction of new legislation that problematizes Trans* and unaccompanied female bodies as potential victims of sex trafficking. FOSTA-SESTA, also referred to as the “Allow Victims to fight Online Sex Trafficking Act” and the “Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act” has increased the level of statue scrutiny applied to both bodies and the digital devices attached to them. Here, cellphone data—such having one or

several Queer-centred dating applications installed on one's device—can prompt invasive lines of questioning or even result in having one's entry to the US or Canada denied (Tejada, 2017). FOSTA-SESTA's aggressive treatment of sexual paraphernalia as suspicious items has culminated in the absurd, with law-enforcement officers in Pennsylvania's Allegheny County considering possession of condoms as evidence of prostitution and charging suspected sex workers with "processing an instrument of crime", a first-degree misdemeanor (Gilchrist, 2018). News of such excesses quickly spread through Queer, Trans*, and sex-work communities who had already seen the dissolution of many of their online communities, message boards, and client solicitation lists due to pressure placed on digital platform owners and online content providers under the auspices of FOSTA-SESTA (Cole, 2018a; 2018b). Being Queer, Trans* or involved in sex work now requires one to divorce themselves from any minutia that might indicate illicit activities—however loose the connection might be.

With the legibility of sexual and gender identity being a central focus of bodily movement between the US and Canada (Beauchamp, 2019), it seems imperative that both Canadian and American foreign policy be called into question. As queerness is swept up into global geopolitics, the surveillance apparatus that has been erected around Canadian and American Queer and Trans* persons stand in stark contrast with notions of US and Canadian exceptionalism with respect to sexual preference and gender identity. Thus, it is possible to discern an ideological contradiction in the efforts of the US and Canadian governments to surround sexuality and gender identity with an increasingly tight and technologized security apparatus and their need to espouse and advocate for sexual rights and freedoms on the international stage. Returning to the notion of the Canada/US border as laboratory, I explore the

limits of homo/fetish-nationalism as they crosscut the everyday experiences of Queer and Trans* persons in motion.

Lorelei

The border is not a stable entity. Indeed, much in the same way that ICE has extended the US/Mexico border far beyond a line that divides nations—transforming it into an uneven grid of suspicion and terror—the US/Canada border is similarly exploded, albeit by far less remarkable institutions. Domestic airports, Ministry of Transportation hubs, passport offices, educational institutions, and even liquor stores¹¹ are sites at which Canada secures its boundaries and at which citizenship, national belonging, and the validity of one's identity are called into question. In this way, the experience of border-crossing and passing under the gaze of the national security apparatus is woven into the fabric of day-to-day life (Lalonde, 2019). For Queer and Trans* persons, quotidian engagements with institutional surveillance present myriad obstacles that require various performative strategies, reversals, and disidentifications (see: Muñoz, 1999).

Unlike Jelena, my informant, Lorelei, has only recently begun her transition, and as such, her experiences with moving through spaces that require identity verification are markedly different. Lorelei has not crossed the Canada/US border since beginning her transition. And yet her experiences with domestic security have heightened her anxieties about eventual transnational travel:

I've flown 3 times since beginning my transition [in this case, since starting HRT and starting to present femme], all St. Johns to Toronto and then back. Each time I've had male ID and hadn't changed my name yet. The first flight, I just looked like a feminine guy and I didn't really have any trouble. I deliberately wore men's clothing and no makeup and a sports bra to try and present as masculine as possible, and I think that helped the situation and I went through with no trouble. The second and third times, I went the opposite

¹¹ For a discussion on how liquor stores contribute to the institutionalized surveillance of identity, citizenship, and national belonging, see Thompson & Genosko 2009.

way: bold makeup and unambiguously femme clothing. I haven't had much trouble that way, but I have had some people question my ID or make little comments. For example, last time I flew from Toronto, the ticket-taker gave a pretty loud "This ticket is for a *Mister* Munroe" and I had to 'out' myself in front of a line of people. As terrible as it sounds, I do think that it helps that I don't "pass" and I still have a very masculine voice. I'm pretty visibly trans.

Here, Lorelei's gender performativity is subject to reversal. Traveling without gender-affirming documentation, she is forced to revert back to older performative scripts of masculinity. In this way, it is the inauthentic performance of "maleness" that is read as authentic when taken in conjunction with her documentation.

In a weird way, I've been trying to strike a balance. Getting read as trans is unpleasant and can attract the wrong kind of attention, but with all my male ID I really don't want to be questioned or have to explain myself or my presentation. What I go for is trying to appear female to the general public, but then play it down when interacting with people who are going to see my ID. Just small things - covering my breasts with my jacket or bag, lowering my voice, that sort of thing.

Airports can be a space of gender liminality—a place where one must abandon their true identity and revert back to the dysphoric gender performances of their past lives. The unstable geographies of the Canadian national security apparatus bends performance to its will and demands that one align themselves with documentary evidence or medicalized images that supersede one's own truth—even it requires encountering the trauma of existential disaffirmation. The boarder itself is a machine tuned to the negation of ways of being that exist outside of its own preconfigurations; here, the lives that move across it are placed into a state of suspended animation wherein their literal belonging—to one's own or another nation—can be revoked for any and all purposes.

Elliot

Even when one possesses gender-affirming documentation, border crossings are fraught with anxiety and the trauma of past experiences. Paired with the precarious status of Queer and Trans* persons under the recent (Trump) US administration and the forced repeal of various civil protections on a state-by-state basis, border-crossings are somber events marked by fear and doubt.

Elliot is a 29-year-old married Transman who frequently travels to the United States alongside his cisgender wife and did so before acquiring gender-affirming documentation. Elliot and I frequent the same online communities and frequently see each other in person. We have an established rapport and often speak about the trials of living as Queer. When discussing border-crossing events, his affect shifts from his seemingly homeostatic state of unabashed boisterousness. He takes on a sombre tone:

The last time I visited the US by plane I had my name changed, a gender marker that matches my gender expression, so I pass without having to out myself. I am always concerned every time I enter the US I'm afraid of being detained, questioned, dehumanized, treated without dignity or respect, having to interact with people who let their negative personal opinions of who I am and how I live impact the work that they are doing.

It is worth noting the Elliot presents as a tall, bearded trucker-type man with fistfuls of chest hair that he proudly shows off. He is conventionally attractive, as is his wife, who typically adopts a stylish 1950s aesthetic.

If I'm being honest, rape and assault are up there too. I have heard too many stories about US Trans men having a hard time with people in positions of power (doctors, police officers, judges, county clerks, etc.). I was nervous and I was also randomly selected for additional searches. The political climate only makes matters worse. There has been a green light given to anti-transgender bigots that it is okay to withhold services and care to Transgender people in some states. I mean even when it's legal there are still some people who would allow you to bleed out or die while under their supervision.

At the time of acquiring this information, there was a kind of collective Queer trauma and fear that our rights would come under immediate attack. It seemed like blanket permission to harass, and even kill us had been granted, or at least covertly encouraged, by the highest of offices.

A couple years ago I was crossing by car. My gender marker was not changed, so I was even more nervous for that encounter. They searched our car and kept my wife and I for at least an hour, interrogating us while we were going to visit a friend for New Year's Eve. Before that time, I crossed with a "female" name and gender marker to go to Florida. The border guard after we were detained and questioned, jokingly said as he was about to hand our passports back, "So you're sure there's nothing we should strip search you for?". I was shocked honestly and disgusted that a traumatic experience like that would be used as a joke by a 'professional' like that.

I tend to think that there is a stickiness to trauma. Lauren Berlant (2011) was correct in saying that trauma orients us towards more trauma in an inescapable cycle. Once more, we see the geographic landscape at which disciplinary institutions exist and (as I argue later in the conclusion of this dissertation), the threat of Queer violence on which they are established).

That New Year's Eve crossing was particularly memorable. The agent we spoke with took our passports and then didn't really speak to us much after that. He was on his computer looking things up, looking at our passports, and then at us. He then told us that we would have to have our car searched and we would have to go into the building to be asked some more questions. We drove up and the workers seemed rather unorganized, so I was unsure of where to park. Coldly, they directed us to the space they wanted us in and made us get out of the car, instructing us to leave everything in the car. I don't remember where our passports were, but they likely had them. We went into the building, there was like 8-10 other people in there. One girl was sitting alone crying. We were asked about our names, our jobs, where we lived, why my girlfriend at the time had Ontario ID when we were crossing in BC, if we had prescription medications, if we went by any other names or alias.

They went through our wallets and we could see them going through our car with little concern for our belongings. We sat there for like an hour while the guy who was working with us seemed to be shouting out names that were not our, nor anyone else's in the room because no one went up to the counter. I was very anxious while this was all happening. I felt very invaded and

unimportant, like I was guilty of something when I was not because I was being treated as such. I am sure that they knew I was nervous because I was so upset that this was happening and I felt as though it was because I was a transgender person even if that wasn't the case at all, because the US has such a bad reputation for people in a place of power, using it to abuse transgender people. I acted as normal as I possibly could while being terrified and enraged and very unsure of what was going to happen next. Eventually they let us go and we were allowed into the US. It was the kind of relief one feels after escaping unscathed, but it also makes you want to puke.

Such encounters demonstrate the fear and anxiety—including the fear of sexual assault or prolonged detention—associated with border crossing while Trans* or Gender-Queer. Moreover, to have one's presumption of innocence stripped, with the sole reason being one's status as Trans* or Gender-Queer, demonstrates the ways through which one's bodily "deviations" operate within, when taken in the post-9/11 context of the Patriot Act, what Giorgio Agamben calls a "state of exception": a biopolitical state of being wherein one is reduced to "bare life" vis-à-vis the cancellation of the normal statutory protections that apply to all citizens. Here, the lines that demarcate male from female and those that separate citizens from terrorist dovetail, subjecting those who sit outside what the state deems to be "normative" to an atmosphere where one is guilty until proven innocent or otherwise exonerated. The notion of "bare life" is also tied to the affective economy of belonging, a sense of self-assuredness partitioned along the unequal axes of difference that make up one's being. In other words, to be reduced to "bare life" is to have one's sense of home—and the protections and privileges associated with belonging—negated under the "exceptional" case of transnational movement in a post-9/11 world.

Gregory and David

Sexual and gender performances at the US/ Canada border are not always meant to dodge suspicion or to blend in with the crowd. Indeed, some Queer individuals harness the increased security and scrutiny on their gender and sexual identity in order to stage small, personal protests

against homo/transphobia and the association between safety, transparency and cis-gendered heteronormativity.

Gregory is a white, cis-gender, 34-year-old network security specialist. His husband, Michael, is a white, cis-gender 33 year-old industrial programmer. Gregory and his Michael, travel frequently between the US and Canada to participate in a variety of fetish events mostly related to rubber fetishism and BDSM. Participation in these events requires the transportation of large amounts of “gear” that has the potential to arouse the suspicions of border guards or, as in the case of Gregory’s friend David, prompt accusations of obscenity and child-trafficking. I arrive at Gregory’s house in the middle of a heatwave. It is oppressively hot and humid. He opens the front door and I’m confronted by a brick wall of cold air. “Thank God for air-conditioning”, he quips, noting that I look a bit damp. “Let’s go to the rec-room in the basement. It will be even cooler down there”.

There are no secrets in Gregory and Michael’s home. Upon descending the staircase, you do not arrive in the recreation room immediately. Rather, you are plunged into the centre of a fully equipped leather dungeon. “Don’t you worry about the fire department in case of an emergency?”, I ask. “To be honest, I’d love to get a fireman down here.” Gregory and Michael’s dungeon is fastidiously clean and organized. Various leather implements hang on the wall arranged by size and material. A rubber suit dangles over a laundry tub, polished to an almost metallic finish. Drawers are labeled. Its overall effect is more clinical than intimidating. I wander over and look at a leather table covered in various straps and chains. Two Hitachi personal massagers sit side-by-side, both plugged in. “Back pain”, he says with a wink. We both laugh. Paired with his impeccable organizational skills, Gregory’s disarming affect transforms an otherwise intimidating, severe space into something curiously pedestrian. It seems, to me, more

of an artist's studio than a place of deviance. As we will see, this openness and willingness to transform sexual otherness into opportunities for humor or education structure Gregory and Michael's encounters at the border.

Although Gregory holds a Nexus card—a kind of license that divides travelers into two, uneven tiers of “trustworthiness” (read: race, class, employment status, and citizenship), with Nexus holders belonging to the privileged caste—he often travels with fellow fetishists who do not possess a card and must, therefore, pass through the regular security checkpoints. Whenever Gregory is questioned about his reasons for entering the US, he uses the opportunity to describe, in lurid detail, the purpose of his visit and the nature of the events he will be attending.

I find when I describe what various pieces of equipment are for and where I'm heading, they tend to wave me past. They don't want to hear the details. There's a certain pleasure in flaunting Queerness and freaking them out a bit.

Here, Gregory recalls returning to Canada after attending a fetish event and being selected for secondary screening. While sorting through his luggage border guard retrieves a solid steel butt-plug attached to a suspicious looking machine with electrical leads and a digital interface. “What is this?”, the border guard inquires...“And should I ask where it's been?” Gregory uses this opportunity to explain not only what the object in question was used for, but how it feels, and why one would want to attach a TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) device to a sex toy. He does not give the border agent an opportunity to back out of the conversation and instead commandeers the interaction to suit his own agenda. “At least it's not as weird as those furies”, the agent says, projecting his distaste for the situation on a different, perhaps more misunderstood group of fetishists. You can tell that Gregory is enjoying regaling this story and

that he sees it as a great personal victory. He beams at me and laughs. “I’m definitely on a list somewhere now!”

Such interactions raise two central points. First, border scrutiny can be harnessed as a means of declaring one’s sexual rights and freedoms and as a way of circumventing heteronormative power structures by re-directing the forces of shame and embarrassment onto agents of the state. Indeed, Gregory’s experience seems to invert those of Jelena and Lorelei with the optics of the traditional Foucauldian confessional reflected back against the source of authority. Second, the ability to wield sexuality in this way seems limited to privileged castes of LGBTQ individuals, cis-gendered white men. Gregory recalls a story involving his friend David:

He was returning to Canada after CLAW (Cleveland Annual Leather Weekend) and a border guard found a trick card (a type of fetishist business card) procured from a guy named “Cyberpup” inside a tote bag decorated with a drawing of a man licking a boot. At this point the border guard became suspicious that he was attempting to bring obscene materials into Canada. The agent assumed the word “pup” in Cyberpup’s name was code for a kid. He was essentially being accused of pimping out a kid.

Here again we see the conflation between Queerness and human trafficking at work. David is immediately placed under suspicion for child-trafficking due to his involvement with the fetish community. Although cis-gender, David brushes up against the conflations outlined above, attracting suspicion that he is involved in child trafficking due to the difficulties implicit in categorizing and interpreting his Queerness.

Homonationalism and Fetishnationalism

In her now highly-influential *Terrorist Assemblages* (2007), Jasbir Puar carefully undoes the concept of civil rights—especially as they pertain to Queer persons and Queer persons of colour—as a solely domestic policy issue. Her biting analysis cuts through doxic Western

progress narratives of post-Stonewall, post-HIV crisis Queer politics and shows, instead, the cynical manipulation of Queer civil rights on the international stage in the formulation of foreign policy and the practice of realpolitik.

Homonationalism, roughly defined, is the provisional granting of Queer civil rights in order to justify aggressive foreign relations with nation-states that fail to protect or actively persecute their own Queer populations. Delivered in the context of the US-supported Israeli occupation of Palestine, Puar's central thesis is aimed at pointing out the contradictions and frontstage/backstage deployment of power and sexuality embedded in homonationalism as a political strategy. Here, she highlights a precarious dependence on homonormativity to render homonationalism palatable to the voting public. Queerness itself is only incidental to homonationalism. Rather, it is cisgender, white, homosexuals—those that reproduce or parody the “traditional” heteronormative nuclear family—that form the central pillar of LGBTQ acceptance and respectability politics. There is, of course, no room for radical Queer politics in this imaginarium, only a sanitized version of homosexuality, or rather, a mirror image of the cis-heteronormative, Malthusian couple, possessing a troubling (albeit tolerable and ultimately harmless) medico-spiritual affliction. In addition to fueling aggressive engagement with foreign powers, these “homonormative” subjects are also, unwittingly, enrolled in a broader system of capitalist extraction wherein their relatively high dual-earning potential and lack of dependents is leveraged by the state for economic gain. Indeed, the conditions of armistice between Queers and the state, according to Puar, seems to hinge on a highly exclusionary combination of disposable income, homonormativity, and complacency with ideological warfare.

There is, however, always a deeper, more sinister side to such agreements. Accepting the bargain for civil rights in exchange for homonormative patriotism only serves to further

marginalize those who fall outside of the LG respectability politics that play out under the LGBTQ umbrella. Indeed, those that sit outside of the rubric of homonormative identity have been subject to an increased level of suspicion stemming from concerns of national security and deception. To be homonormative is to be transparent: a “good gay”, so to speak. To be Trans*, “Queer”, or bisexual is to infuse undo complexity in the political machinery operating at the centre of the entire homonationalist enterprise. I think that we can see this kind of logic reflected clearly in the above conversations.

While nation-states desire the international credibility of providing their citizens with civil rights, these sentiments rub up against more immediate concerns of national security and the need for states to exercise control over the sexuality, gender, and sexual behavior of their citizenry. Borders are one such location at which these contradictions are forced into confrontation and individuals like Jelena and Lorelei are relegated to the margins of intelligibility by a state apparatus that leverages Queerness for its own political and economic gains. Here, the desire to manage potential terrorist threats or the possibility of illicit sex work brush up against the contradictory need to manage nation reputations on the international stage. As the border is subject to deterritorialization and escapes the confines of an easily delineable national boundary, encounters that press upon these uneasy relationships are multiplied within the lives of those most affected by the irreconcilability of identity, documentation, technological imaging, and human rights discourse. Jelena and Lorelei are both entangled within a confusing web of rights and privileges that dwindle and disappear as they move across an uneven terrain of securitization.

These examples also point to a uniquely Canadian elaboration on homonationalism, which Wahab (2015) has explored as both foreign policy and means of domestic economic

development. Using Toronto's now notorious Fetish Fair as its primary site of exploration, Wahab's fetishnationalism notes the willingness of the Canadian government to harness boundary-pushing sexual practices as a method of generating revenue and, paradoxically, as a way of both showcasing the multicultural tolerance of Canada's most populous city and condemning what it views as Islamic radicalism. Stories of those akin to Gregory and David's showcase how fetishism is placed under increased scrutiny at sites of identity verification and transnational movement. While the state promotes itself as a bastion of sexual freedom and capitalizes on a sanitized form of sexual deviance (Wahab 2015), the freedom citizens enjoy is collapsed at places of institutionally-embedded boundary production, including points of re-entry into Canada. While fetishists enjoy the freedom of events like Toronto's Fetish Fair and the many Pride celebrations that occupy our nation's attention in June, it is only within these designated spaces and times of tolerated "debauchery" (usually contained within sites of conspicuous consumption and the pursuit of capitalizing off of niche markets) wherein deviance may be harnessed for capital and thus, however briefly, excused. Outside of these sanctioned periods of sexual alterity, entering Canada as a fetishist prompts questions of illicit activity, pedophilia, and human trafficking. Indeed, the tensions between fetish/homonationalism and domestic governance are both blurry and razor sharp.

Conclusions

Sexual and gender identity are as deeply tied to geography as they are to temporality (Halberstam 2015). In response to the bodily and performative scrutiny associated with crossing national boundaries, Queer and Trans* persons are tasked with negotiating a hostile climate of documentary and medico-technical verification that supersedes (in the eyes of the state) their

ability to define their own truths and live-out their actual identities. In certain cases, this results in the public ‘outing’ of individuals as Trans* or non-gender conforming, or the requirement that they perform gender identities that are no longer their own, subjecting themselves to the trauma of re-living gender dysphoria or interrupting their transition process. At the same time, certain, privileged Queers (white, monied, cis-gender) are able to harness state scrutiny and reconfigure the power-dynamics implicit in border crossing events to suit their own political agendas.

Additionally, the US/Canada border cannot be understood as an easily defined “line” that divides one nation from another. Rather, the national security apparatuses of both nations cross-cut the entirety of their respective territories, manifesting themselves in the quotidian identity politics of domestic bureaucracy. Paired with the performative requirements of crossing national boundaries, these experiences of domestic identity verification contradict the foreign policy goals of both nations, exposing the irreconcilability of both homo and fetish-nationalism and the securitization and cultural problematization of Queer and Trans* bodies as either untruthful or willfully deceitful.

Introduction to Chapter 3

While the preceding material of this dissertation sought to investigate the tripartite, co-evolutionary relationship between technologies of surveillance, Queer identity, and national security/statecraft, this paper examines how surveillance ramifies in the lives of Queer persons in a postmodern context—one wherein the notion of “The State”, as it is conventionally understood, has come to be replaced (at least partially) by the multinational corporation and the “global assemblages” (see Ong and Collier 2005) through which they operate. In stitching together this article with the two that preceded it, I invoke work by Benjamin Bratton (2015) and Hardt and Negri (2000) to discuss the ways in which the twin projects of statecraft and national security have become synonymous with protecting transnational corporate interests, reconfiguring “warfare” into an asymmetrical fight against extra-state criminality, and ensuring the expansion of a global information economy predicated on data brokering and digital surveillance technologies.

Under this new paradigm—wherein technological infrastructure and the flow and storage of digital information blur and contest the boundaries of state sovereignty (Bratton 2015)—Queerness has taken on a new set of antagonisms. While Queerness was once (and is still, in some ways) subjected to aggressive abjection and exclusion predicated on the threat it ostensibly posed to successful warfare, the keeping of state secrets, and national biosecurity efforts, Queerness now stands in opposition to the successful delineation, categorization, and monetization of identity. Indeed, a Queerness that, as Sedgwick (1993) claims, lives in the interstitial margins between categories—ever careful to avoid being pinned down and subject to definition—poses a direct threat to an information economy that relies on the neat and tidy compartmentalization of identity. Inverting this dynamic, the mobilization of a digital

surveillance archipelago, capable of operating at increasingly higher degrees of granularity, poses an existential threat to a Queerness rooted in countercultural praxis—leaving only a husk of postmodern “pastiche”, bereft of the political undercurrents that once characterized it as a movement, and repurposed as a revenue stream, relying on the use of commodities and paraphernalia to articulate (see Fisher 2009; Morton 1995).

In response to this existential threat, I have dedicated the second half of this article to the rethinking of Queer resistance in light of the ubiquity of digital surveillance and the reconfiguration of Queer abjection from one articulated by the State, to a corporate model rooted in late capitalism. And yet, drawing on Hardt and Negri’s (2000) notion of “Empire”, such measures now place one not in contravention of national security/biosecurity measures, but in opposition to a new global architecture of surveillance capitalism and international law (such as copyright, data protection etc.). Thus, to exist Queerly under the auspices of this new arrangement of extra and para-State articulated power, is to once again wear the hairshirt of the criminal or terrorist. Indeed, when all identity is subsumed within a system of extractive and exploitative hyper-capitalism, any identity that resists commodification is rendered not only unintelligible, but illicit.

Accidental Orientations: Rethinking Queerness in Archival Times ¹²

This paper critically interrogates the viability of “Queer” as an ontological category, identity, and radical political orientation in an era of digital surveillance and Big Data analytics.

Drawing on recent work by Matzner (2016) on the performative dimensions of Big Data, I argue that Big Data’s potential to perform and create Queerness (or its opposites) in the absence of embodiment and intentionality necessitates a rethinking of phenomenological or affective approaches to Queer ontology. Additionally, while Queerness is often theorized as an ongoing process of negotiations, (re)orientations, and iterative becomings, these perspectives presume elements of categorical mobility that Big Data precludes. This paper asks: what happens when our data performs Queerness without our permission or bodily complacency? And can a Queerness that insists on existing in the interstitial margins of categorization, or in the “open mesh of possibilities, gaps, and overlaps” (Sedgwick 1993: 8), endure amidst a climate of highly granular data analysis?

Keywords: Queer, Surveillance, Big Data, Late Capitalism, Performance, Data Double, Data Capitalism, Surveillance Capitalism

¹² Adapted from Schram, B. (2019). Accidental Orientations: Rethinking Queerness in Archival Times. *Surveillance & Society*, 17(5), 602–617. <https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v17i5.8688>

Introduction: On the Impossibility of Queerness

The last half century of scholarship has shown Queerness to be a matter of curation—a way of comporting oneself in opposition to or defiance of heterosexist norms (Butler 1988; Butler 1990; Ahmed 2006). “Queer” no longer implies a fulfillment of some biological inevitability, but a becoming: an iterative solidification of identity or a resistance to the “straightening devices” of our collective medico-legal hallucination of what constitutes sexual or gender normalcy. No longer a euphemism for deviance, Queerness positions itself now as a positive, radical alternative to all normative ontologies. As such, for many individuals who live under its sign (or lack thereof), Queerness constitutes a potent antidote to the oppressive regimes of categorization that one might trace through the interpenetrating histories of surveillance, sexuality, and power.

In the work of both Michel Foucault (1990) and George Chauncey (1995), it is surveillance that precipitates the very identification of sexuality as a site from which power might be articulated. To Foucault, the “homosexual” emerges as the target of both medical and legal scrutiny that aimed to unite the “soul” of the subject with their sexual history, marking them as a distinct “species” of deviant. To Chauncey, surveillance becomes most important with respect to sexuality after the medico-legal demarcation of the homosexual from the heterosexual. With homosexuality now deemed a medical, judicial, and cultural problem, a tense atmosphere of male–male sociality emerged, characterized by unrelenting suspicion and the subsequent need to “read” the behaviors of other men for signs of homosexual inklings and to carefully scrutinize one’s own behavior to ensure an uninterrupted narrative of heteronormative masculinity.

Taken together, Foucault and Chauncey gesture toward a historical fracture in the way that sexuality, gender, and identity appear in relation to one another. On the precipice of the Victorian era, sex between men or between women, although considered unbecoming, was

possible without calling into question the fundamental nature of those involved. With the rise of Victorian sensibilities, however, we are introduced to a wide variety of medical and criminological systems of classifications as well as the proliferation of cultural and domestic practices surrounding the maintenance and performance of heteronormativity in both the workplace and on the home front.

In its contemporary usage, “Queer” is a rejection of all these historical schematics that sought to produce the “Other” from raw materials of sex, gender, and deviance. To the Queer theorists of the 1990s, Queerness was a way of living at the margins of intelligibility—at the points of disjuncture and disarticulation between different modes of being and historical contingencies. It was not a clinical condition or immutable state of being. Borrowing Eve Sedgwick’s (1993: 8) words, Queerness was identified as existing in the “open mesh of possibilities, gaps, and overlaps” where “the constituent elements of anyone’s gender [or anyone’s sexuality] aren’t made (or can’t be made) to signify monolithically.” Elusive and iconoclastic, Queer theory emerged as a method troubling systematized circumscription, scientific sense-making, and legalistic scrutiny. In other words, Queerness was theorized—during this time period—not as a stable identity or state of being, but as a project set in motion against the social categorization and delimitation of sexuality and gender. Seen from this perspective—as an interstitial, evolving phenomenon—Queerness not only addresses a certain fluidity in gender and sexual identity but also grants us a language with which to talk about and understand the circumvention of all systems of classification and their associated power-dynamics. Thus, “Queerness,” as defined by the theorists of the ’90s, achieved escape velocity from its association with sexual alterity—inserting itself into a diverse array of discourses that

sought or relied on an “outside” space and that did not return to binary (male–female, heterosexual–homosexual) modes of thinking.

This definition of Queerness fleshed out in the works of theorists like Judith Butler (1990), Eve Sedgwick (1993), and Lee Edelman (1995) requires margins and interstitial spaces for its subjects to inhabit. It must defy the essentialisms that come alongside the familiar categories of gender and sexuality by existing outside their reach, in a space unconquered by scientific or legal description. In this sense, Queerness is a response to all monolithic organizing principles that surround gendered and sexual behavior. And yet, it cannot be seen as a mere shadow or counterpoint to heterosexism since that position might also fall victim to classificatory scrutiny and the kind of foundationalist thinking born out of neat binaries and simple dialectical oppositions. Queerness requires a space that is transient and appears on no map: a space where all those among us deemed monstrous and unhuman might go to lick our wounds and set up shop before setting off to seek the in-between.

Queerness has lived in these spaces for nearly six decades now, with literary formulations expanding most notably during the past four. The theoretical canon born from this period has served as a place of temporary refuge, promiscuous theorization, and ad hoc identity experimentation. It has provided a fertile ground for a new politics of recognition, belonging, and legal protection. Its existence is also unsustainable. This paper investigates how the rise of our current “surveillance society” serves to undermine the radical potential of Queer scholarship by demonstrating how surveillance works to eliminate the margins and in-between spaces where Queerness was once fostered. It also gestures toward new Queer potentialities that emerge in the construction of Big Data archives and, as a corollary, new ways to disrupt or short-circuit the

flows of power that move through the techno-surveillant assemblage in which Queer people are embedded.

At this juncture, it is important to differentiate the particular brand of Queer theory toward which this article is directed from more populist manifestations of Queer discourse. This article takes aim at the sort of Queerness developed out of a tradition of radical feminist scholarship, psychoanalytical thinking, and structuralist and post-structuralist theorization. Such an intellectual history has little in common with contemporary identity politics or the homonationalist respectability politics that Jasbir Puar (2007) and others have so elegantly problematized. Indeed, as Julian Awaad (2015), referencing David Eng (2010), has pointed out, such formulations of Queerness have already become “unmoored from [their] original references to a political movement and to a critique of normative and exclusionary practices” (20) “and has come to demarcate more narrowly pragmatic gay and lesbian identity and identity politics, the economic interests of neoliberalism and whiteness, and liberal political norms of inclusion” (xi). Moreover, “gay marriage,” while an important milestone in the quest to establish LGBTQ legal parity (one born out of the tragic dispossession of Queer persons robbed of a solid legal claim to their deceased partner’s estates during the HIV/AIDS crises), can only guarantee political or economic traction for a small fragment of the Queer population. Indeed, the move toward legalizing gay marriage required harnessing the power and privilege associated with monied whiteness to sustain a homonormative parody of heterosexist society. And yet, the real tragedy of Queer theory may be that as we move toward a new era of Big Data archives and dataveillance that rely on highly granular forms of classification and social sorting to fuel a new and hungry information-based economy (Lyon 2015), this homonormative vision may be all that remains of a once radical and disrupting literature. Given the unbridled expansion of surveillance into the

quotidian mechanics of identity and self-making, the prospect of a Queerness that remains free, uncircumscribed, or counter-normative seems increasingly untenable. In this paper, I argue that our emerging climate of intensive dataveillance not only negates the potential for Queerness to exist in opposition to normative systems of classification or capture but that the targeted advertisements and algorithmic curation that consumer-oriented dataveillance enables might also “turn” or “disorient” us either toward or away from intended performative scripts. Here, I draw on work by Tobias Matzner (2016) and Sara Ahmed (2006) to provide an interpretation of Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson’s (2000) “surveillant assemblage” that recognizes both the performative capacities of our “data doubles.” Additionally, I present several strategies for recovering Queerness—albeit in ways that radically depart from embodied expressions of gender or sexuality—inside the growing archive of information and the overlapping circuits of information extraction.

The degree of granularity at which subjects are assessed, classified, and sorted has shifted under our new regime of corporate and state-sponsored digital surveillance (Andrejevich, 2007; Tufekci, 2014; van Dijck, 2014). Big Data analytics are, by design and purpose, anathema to categorical ambiguity; they aim to both increase the resolution at which subjects come into view and to shrink the categories into which they are sorted down to the size of their subatomic parts (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000). These units of analysis are plastic and malleable. They adhere to the shifting contours of lives in motion. Borrowing from Rob Kitchin (2014), Big Data can be identified by a few major characteristics. Their archives are large in volume, fast moving and changing, exhaustive in scope, fine grained in resolution, relational in nature, and both flexible and scalable. Key to Kitchin’s definition of Big Data is relationality. That is, the propensity for data to “leak out” from one archive and join with another. The liquid properties of dataveillance

(see Kitchin, 2014; Pasquale, 2015; Bauman & Lyon, 2013) constitute a free-flowing nexus of information overlap. As such, it works to effectively eliminate the in-between spaces in which Queerness once took root, while anticipating and preventing breakage, rupture, or escape and rendering the notion of an “outside” to categorical scrutiny meaningless.

The notion of the “data double” is key at this juncture. Separated into a series of discrete data “flows,” the subject is dissolved into a homogeneous medium of digital information from which they may be reconstituted and categorized. The “surveillant assemblage” responsible for these processes of abstraction and reconstitution place the subject under continuous surveillance, allowing the categories into which their data doubles are sorted to shift in response to the steady flow of new information. This agile, adaptive regime of uninterrupted classification and reclassification eliminates the subject’s ability to move in the margins between stable categories and precludes the possibility of establishing the kinds of interstitial spaces so necessary for the production of a Queer ontology that claims to move through the “open mesh of possibility, gaps, and overlaps” (Sedgwick 1993: 8).

This does not mean, however, that one’s classification within the surveillant assemblage must remain static. Indeed, the prospect that one may appear to identify as LGBT in one data set but not another is central to thinking about Queerness during these times. Here, I opt to make another distinction: that between LGBT politics and Queerness. LGBT identity politics, while often located in partnership or association with Queerness follows a different, more pragmatic trajectory than the one we have traversed. LGBT politics are, by definition, comfortable with categorization. This does not mean that LGBT people are comfortable with the surveillance to which they are subjected. Rather, it means that the project of LGBT liberation adopts a standpoint perspective, and is, as such, a pragmatic formulation that has, unfortunately, been

colonized and settled—as previously noted—by a homogeneous politics consisting of monied, white heteronormativity set in opposition to the image of the sexually-repressed, violently homophobic figure of the “Muslim woman terrorist,” herself a product of an assemblage of surveillant practices and mechanisms (Awaad, 2015; Eng, 2010). Moreover, I do not want to separate the production of accidental or technologically modified Queer orientations from those that are in some sense “authentic.” Authenticity is already a slippery concept, crosscut by various cultural and microcultural expectations. Moreover, to place digitally mediated sexual orientations in a separate ontological realm of the “digital” is to reinforce the notion that digital “spaces” are ontologically distinct and do not intersect with “real world” ontologies (see Boellstorff, 2016).

In other words, all expressions of Queerness, whether critically examined in this article or not, can be seen as authentic. Yet, those that I take issue with—those developed out of decades of critical theory—however authentic they may be in their individual expression must be understood to be sitting on shaky theoretical and epistemological grounds. While it might be argued that Big Data analytics capable of the high-resolution identification of various “typologies” of Queer persons might constitute a degree of political recognition previously unavailable to Queer peoples, such a system of identification is largely tied to their exploitation by corporate entities and refers back to the financial exploitation of Queer persons within a homonormative program. Thus, what might seem to be recognition is really an erasure of those who exist outside of the financial and societal privileges conferred by homonormativity. Moreover, much of the “recognition” conferred by high-resolution data gathering is entirely superficial (see Bivens 2015) and, aside from offering token forms of recognition, quickly sorts individuals back into more profitable categories.

This techno-social production of homogeneity and erasure of difference can be observed in other political arenas as well. In her analysis of voter manipulation in the 2008 US federal election, Zeynep Tufekci (2014) provides a striking example of this process in action. While election campaigns once relied on the coarse-grained approach of pamphleteering or broadcast propaganda aimed at specific neighborhoods, zip codes, or other low-resolution identity markers, modern campaign efforts harness Big Data's capacity for hyper-specificity and targeted intervention. The internet has provided a nexus point at which the myriad systems, interfaces, and digital spaces that we inhabit may interpenetrate freely; it is the conduit through which all the data we generate must pass in the homogeneous form of digital information. This allows the formation of diverse data sets that may stitch together disparate domains of private and public life and generate powerful predictive models rooted in cross-referential inference and statistical extrapolation. These models are highly granular in scope and shift the scales of targeted campaigning from the level of the neighborhood or broad demographic category to that of the individual voter. Big Data enables campaign messages to be tailored to suit a specific target's tastes or reservations. A single user's financial history, credit card statements, magazine subscriptions, domestic or international flight purchasing patterns, and many other points of data may be harnessed by campaign strategists to tailor a broad suite of individualized engagement tools.

Historically, the broadcast model of campaign propaganda presented voters with a unified, monolithic platform, allowing public opinion to form in response to a stable set of partisan policy choices and promises. Inevitably, these coarse-grained strategies failed to appeal to or adequately address all voters. Large segments of the population, primarily minorities, found themselves relegated to the margins of mainstream political discourse, alienated by both sides of

the party divide. It is within these cracks—these spaces of inadequate political representation—between disparate ideoscapes (Appadurai 1990) that resistance was fostered and civil rights movements grew. Read through a Queer lens, the elimination of the gaps or spaces that the broadcast model of campaign propaganda failed to penetrate is also the elimination of a wider array of political opinions or identities. It is to reassert the binary logic of bipartisanship in a way that erases a spectrum of political loci. Here the logic of binaries connects, in a broader sense, to the reification of the male–female or homosexual–heterosexual binaries against which Queer scholarship directs its critique. It might be argued that Big Data sets capable of addressing voter concerns or parsing categories of gender and sexuality at a higher granularity than ever before might represent a move toward more equal representation. The problems with this interpretation are twofold. First, to dislocate a political candidate from the ideological parameters they purport to represent is to weaken the foundations of democratic society. No political party may stand for anything if they, through the targeted alteration of their platform, stand for everything. Second, to reduce the experience of “Queerness” into subatomic components or “moments” of data-double performativity is to reproduce the heterosexist gaze that the history of Queer theorization sought to undermine. This difference is compounded by technological means in situations where “Queerness” is intentionally fostered by commercial platforms that function by way of large scale dataveillance wherein binary categorization is inevitable. Indeed, to return to the question at hand: whether or not high-granularity datasets might lead to more adequate representation for all by providing additional data that “fills in the gaps.”

Such representation is still marked by anti-democratic political campaigns that obfuscate and twist the central party-line, as well as the multiplication of “Queer” interest groups that enhance their own visibility and thus their potential to be managed and controlled by way of

surveillance in ways that more radical forms of Queer thinking attempted to circumvent. Furthermore, even when technologies attempt to “fill in the gaps” with highly granular solutions that promise elevated visibility and political agency, the results often fall flat. In “The Gender Binary Will Not Be Deprogrammed: Ten Years of Coding Gender on Facebook,” Rena Bivens (2017) shows how Facebook permits users to select from a wide array of fifty-eight gender identity categories yet, in its deeper architecture, reduces the possibility space of gender expression to only three options: male, female, and other, with the binary taking precedence over the (intentionally rarified) third category. Thus, Facebook simultaneously challenges the liquid malleability of Queerness by providing a set of categories through which users might self-identify—in itself a challenge to radical Queer politics—while also reinforcing the familiar M–F gender binary. As such, Facebook undermines the Queer project on two levels. First, it presents users with a system of highly granular classification, effectively eliminating the ability of Queer users to move through an “open mesh of possibility” (Sedgwick 1993: 8). Second, it reaffirms the “validity” of the gender binary, crystallizing it within the operative architecture of the software itself—where it exists in a state of greater “realness” than the more superficial categories of “authentic” gender expression. This process mirrors observations by Kathryn Conrad (2009) that contemporary digital surveillance practices are inherently conservative and serve to impose normative modes of gender expression onto Queer individuals.

To be categorized, while subject to its own complex politics of surveillance and coercion, is to be recognized by the political establishment and to assert some manner of recognition. Yet, it is also to relinquish a valuable arena of calculated erasure and disaffection where pathologized bodies may congregate and strengthen their claim to individuality and their right to exist outside established orders of belonging and value. Put another way, it is to lose the ability to choose

when and how one is erased and how one is rendered both invisible and visible. For Queer people—especially Queer Persons of Color—important identity work is accomplished in these areas of reclaimed exile. Here we might use the term “identity squatting” to clarify and elaborate on work done by José Muñoz (1999) who named disidentification as the primary characteristic of Queer life for Persons of Color. To theorists like Muñoz, to be both Queer and of Color requires a constant negotiation at the borderlands of exclusion and sanctioned lifeways. Queerness never settles into any singular system of classification: it is a process of continuous disidentification, movement, and repair. Like nomads, Queer Persons of Color must drift between categories (often deemed paradoxical, such as being both Muslim and Genderqueer). In this way, identity is strategized and negotiated in response to external pressures, applied along axes of race, gender, and sexuality that impel flight, denial, and reinvention.

As such, Queerness exists mostly in the liminal spaces between the various, rigid identity categories that one flees when their religion or traditions come into contact with their homosexuality or their politics label them as “bad gays.” There is always a retreat to the most stable category within which one might survive. The avoidance of fixed categorical identification—a necessary part of intersectional Queer identity—requires, by its own logics, the avoidance of stability, title, address, and one’s “transformation” into static object of scientific, medical, legal, or political scrutiny. In this sense, Queerness provides political agency not because it rejects the movements of power—indeed, to flee categorization is to recognize power’s inherent dangers—but because it subverts the rigid mechanics through which power operates. This may seem untenable since it is power in the first place that necessitates categorical nomadism. And yet it is a refusal to let power dictate identity—a possibility soon to be foreclosed upon by technological developments in the art and science of human classification. If

disidentification, as a technique or strategy, acknowledges a “ludic space of textual indeterminacy” (Morton 1995: 373), it certainly does not celebrate it. For Queer Persons of Color, it is no refuge. Rather, it is a heavily fraught territory under continuous threat of colonization by various scales of surveillance seeking to absorb the margins that surround them and to incorporate them into systems of intelligible belonging, normative identity, racial stereotyping, and commodifiable aggregates. And yet, disidentification, or the occupation of spaces of textual indeterminacy, posits a place outside of discourse to flee toward. While discourse, in the Foucauldian sense of the term, operated at a level of granularity associated with various subtypes or “species” of human being (e.g., the homosexual), contemporary data analytics includes techniques that address the individual subject and their subatomic components. When the individual subject itself—rather than the homosexual or heterosexual, for example—becomes the target of converging, strangulating discursive analysis, there can be no space or cracks between categories in which to fall, no space to claim in the name of disidentification.

While the tightening of categories does serve to render Queerness, in some sense, “impossible,” the next section shows how it also might facilitate the accidental performance of non-heteronormative sexual or gender identities, albeit within their own classificatory or categorical parameters.

Tracing Queerness: Accidental Orientations

Up to this point, I have been uncritical of a definition of Queerness that places it within the margins of categorization or even how “the Queer” itself might constitute an anti-heteronormative ontology. Queerness is a fraught terrain, crosscut by tense identity politics and difficult, irreconcilable theorizations. Thus far, I have concentrated on establishing how a

particular “brand” of critical Queer theory might be rendered “impossible” by contemporary dataveillance. This section engages with Queerness in a different register. First, it interrogates a definition of Queerness that is rooted in the reconstitution of desire as a strategy for sexual deregulation. Second, it aims to critically examine the question of agency in the production of Queer identity against a backdrop of consumer surveillance and targeted advertising. Third, it considers how the curation of cyberspace, as a result of consumer surveillance, may inadvertently or “accidentally” generate Queer ontologies that are incongruent with users’ own internal subject positions, though they are no less Queer because of it. Although I have taken pains to highlight the potential for incongruent identities—that is, the accidental performance of one’s data or information to perform Queerness in their absence—it is also worth considering that the continuous orientation toward objects of Queerness might capture one’s own self-identification, entraining it toward the predetermined rhythms of dataveillance and curation.

In his 1995 article “Birth of the Cyberqueer,” Donald Morton questions how a Queerness anchored in the fulfillment of desire might accomplish, or more accurately, fail to accomplish its own emancipatory agenda. Morton argues that, rather than serving to undermine heterosexism, a Queerness defined by desire only serves to further dissociate the project of LGBT liberation from the material domain and, as a corollary, from any tangible impact. Referencing Sedgwick’s essay “White Glasses” (1992), Morton takes aim at what he perceives to be a nefarious current of bourgeois apologetics underpinning Queer theories of desire. Originally written as an obituary for Sedgwick’s close friend Michael Lynch toward the end of his battle with AIDS, “White Glasses” takes up Sedgwick’s desire to reformulate herself as gay man through the appropriation of the titular white glasses—a symbol of “Queerness” that marked Lynch as a cultural innovator inside the gay community. Morton identifies this transformation—of object into symbol of Queer

belonging or Queer becoming—as an emergent form of commodity fetishism that, he claims, has colonized and subverted efforts toward true LGBT liberation. Morton does not interpret Sedgwick’s definition of queerness as emerging inside a vacuum. Rather, he sees her work as exemplifying a larger trend toward stripping LGBT politics of their materialist concerns and re-orienting them toward a “notion of sexual deregulation proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari ... in which desire becomes a space of ‘pure intensities’” (Morton, 1995: 370). Morton sees these intensities, and the freedom to organize identity in relation to them, are emblematic of cyberspace, which he positions as a “bourgeois designer space in which privileged Western or Westernized subjects fantasize [that they may] choose their own histories” (375).

In the same way that cyberspace presents users with an open frontier capable of adapting to, or being honed by, one’s own desires, so too do some corners of contemporary Queer theory permit the production of sexual or gender identity through the realization of desire vis-à-vis the manipulation of commodity-based modes of signification. In Morton’s (1995) own words, “the white glasses produce the same effect as VR [virtual reality] goggles: the bourgeois subject, whose desire is (relatively) autonomous, is in a position not only to have the latest commodity first but also, more broadly, to write her own virtual history” (378). What Morton seems to have uncovered is the beginning of the encircling and partition of Queerness through capitalist means. Although such a formulation of Queerness might be considered authentic from an individual level of expression, it dispenses with the larger goals of critical Queer theory that aim to move nimbly through the webs of signification that a commodity-driven model of Queerness might permit. Here I am not trying to say that such a rendering of Queerness is incorrect or “wrong” for an individual or group to espouse. Merely, that it represents a shift in the politics of critical Queer theory—gesturing toward its death and aiming for a reinvention of the term rooted in

consumer-driven surveillance practice. It is to accept, enroll, and appropriate the politico-consumer forces that undermine Queerness as a radical political movement or injunction.

Of course, Morton could not have anticipated the tying together of commodity fetishism, sexuality, and notions of “the virtual,” and yet he provides a provocative nexus of articulations from which it is possible to explore the intersections between Queerness and systems of commercial and participatory surveillance. It is now thoroughly apparent that cyberspace does not constitute a field of ludic possibility in which Western subjects may freely craft their own histories. Indeed, contemporary cyberspace is marked more by its tendency to manufacture or produce consumer desire than by its malleability and responsiveness to the pre-existing whims of “users” (see Turow, 2006; Andrejevic, 2014; Tufekci, 2016). As such, it is prudent to explore the ways that the surveillance and curation of cyberspace has come to impact Queer ontology and how our emerging information economy (see Castells, 2000) structures the kinds of identity performances and modes of being available to platform users. Indeed, referencing Robert Payne’s (2015) work on networked promiscuity, we can envision the curatorial potential of dataveillance as enrolling a multitude of human behaviors, including sexual gratification and Queer identity formation, into a matrix of entrepreneurial extraction. My intention here is to resurrect and repurpose arguments borrowed from Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer’s (1993) writing on the culture industry, albeit within a bold new context wherein consumer desires are not only fabricated and adopted as tokens of identity signification, but where dataveillance-based hyper-capitalism has infiltrated domains that were once private and tightly guarded and acted to sculpt them in its own image. Moreover, it is important to consider that one’s performance of digital identity is, in some sense, not one’s own—that is, it is owned by those corporate entities that determine both how an individual is categorized and the curatorial

response to one's own internal social sorting. Thus, the modes of being made available to platform users are subject to new forms of fracture, ownership, and commodification, both creating the potential for accidental Queer orientations and harnessing the power of Queer labor to solidify categorical boundaries and bolster curatorial strategies. In this way, we can see the political potency of Queerness as a radical ontological injunction doubly undermined.

As Matzner (2016) points out, current trends in surveillance and Big Data analytics have moved beyond a representationalist framework for understanding information and now interpret and act upon their performative capacities. Drawing on Butler's (2011: 1993) concept of citationality, Matzner highlights Big Data's ability to perform in the absence of the body by generating archival points of citation—points of data that correlate with established identity narratives or life trajectories. Citationality is, thus, concerned with the subjectifying capacity of relational acts wherein the “power of the speech act stems from its relation to similar acts, where particular structures of power and authority are already established” (Matzner 2016: 205). As such, the data footprints we leave behind contribute to the formation of narratives that confirm or deny our membership within an array of normative categories. In other words, Matzner is arguing that data not only signifies or gestures toward one's subject position, but actively constructs it through a performance that more or less aligns with the narrative arc of previously established identity categories. To Matzner, these citational data are leveraged to construct images of the “terrorist” face, body, and lifeway.

To Butler (2011), the citational performance of gender or sexual identity references deeply seated cultural expectations regarding the divisions between sexuality, gender, and citizenship. Unlike Matzner, however, Butler points toward the intentionality of the performing in managing her own citational performance. If we examine her now famous dictum that “since

the age of sixteen, being a lesbian is what I've been" and that "to say that I 'play' at being one is not to say that I am not one 'really,' rather how and where I play at being one is the way in which that 'being' gets established, instituted, circulated, and confirmed" (Butler 1993: 310–11), her intention to constitute the "I" as lesbian seems self-evident. Indeed, Butler (1988: 522) directly claims that gender is both intentional and performative. And yet, when data perform without permission, in the way that they might perform for individuals marked as terrorists, no intentionality, beyond that possessed by algorithmic sorting technologies, is required. As Matzner (2016: 207) states, "[the] focus on algorithms ... taken up in research on pre-emptive digital surveillance [and] based on risk calculus [provide a context where] Butler's and Derrida's reflections show that no intentional, authoritative actor is necessary to engage the force of citationality." In this way, data may perform Queerness in the absence of intention, referencing or "citing" datapoints that reflect established Queer ontological trajectories.

It is important to note here that by "intentionality" I mean only the intention to perform Queerness. All digital practices are, in some sense, entered into voluntarily and, as such, exist along a continuum of intentionality related to a desired use, effect, or affective result. The question here is not about intentionality as an existential concept, rather the absence of intentionality refers to an instance of "accident," curiosity, the slip of a finger, a misplaced "like," or a Google search from which a new curatorial landscape might arise. It is about an accidentally performative instance that may prompt a continued performance of Queerness due to an algorithmically induced entry into a new landscape of signs, signifiers, commodities, and connections. This possibility exists in defiance of Morton's contention that "Queerness" represents a ludic system of signification tied to the bourgeois capacity for self-determination. Indeed, Morton's critique of Queerness is rooted in its realization through desire: the ability to

write one's own history through the curation of personal objects of signification. And yet, when data perform without permission, intentionality and "desire" are rendered irrelevant alongside any need for continuity between one's self-perception and the performance one's data enact. And so, an already questionably radical version of Queerness—one rooted in the manipulation of commodity signs—might be subject to forces of digital curation and coercion that move Queerness further away from its radical potential.

In his book *We Are Data*, John Cheney-Lippold (2017: 194) describes a scenario in which Google is able to speak univocally and without rebuttal on the subject of sexuality and gender. He notes that "[despite] the complexities of your lived experience ... Google analyses your browsing data and assigns you to one of two distinct gender categories (only "male" or "female") [and that] your algorithmic gender may well contradict your own identity needs, and values." Further, he goes on to state that "because Google's gender is Google's, not mine, I am unable to offer a critique of that gender, nor can I practice what we might refer to as a first-order gendered politics that queries what Google's gender means, how it distributes resources, and how it comes to define our algorithmic identities" (194). Thus, we are presented with the statistical application of gender identity by a monolithic corporate entity that harnesses its predictions regarding who we are—those programmed visions—to curate an entire online world of manufactured desires, orienting objects, and commodities.

In a similar vein, a 2013 article in *The Guardian*, titled "Facebook Users Unwittingly Revealing Intimate Secrets, Study Finds," Josh Halliday reveals that by mapping and comparing users' "likes," its algorithms can determine a specific user's sexual orientation with eighty-eight percent accuracy. While the ability to predict a subject's sexual orientation is thought-provoking, it is the remaining twelve percent of users—those whose sexuality either remains opaque or is

incorrectly determined—that interests me here. The potential for one’s data double to betray their bodily desire and perform either Queerness or heteronormativity in opposition to the subject’s intent is perhaps the most provocative point of intersection between Queerness and Big Data analytics. If Queerness gained its connotations of self-determination by way of the realization of affective desire, it must presuppose a freedom of desire or the presence of an object toward which desire might orient itself. Yet as Mark Andrejevic (2014: 65) notes, “we are entering a world in which the searches we perform online, the information we show about our friends, family, and acquaintances, and the world we see around us will be designed in increasingly sophisticated ways to influence our behavior and responses.” Thus, the field of “objects” toward which one might direct desire is limited by curation. Moreover, the presentation of objects may lead away, or present an alternative “pathway,” from that which might fulfill the genuine expression of sexual or gender identity.

In *Queer Phenomenology*, Ahmed (2006) argues for a conception of Queerness rooted in a spatial frame and constituted through a “turning away from” or a reorientation in opposition to a heteronormative line drawn through our collective consciousness by the straight path of genealogical progress. To Ahmed, to be Queer is, from its onset, an act of resistance against the “straightening devices” of heteronormativity: those same Freudian, Oedipal discourses that Deleuze and Guattari (2009) implicated in forming the very fabric of capitalist hegemony. In an era where our past behavior—those points of data that constitute our citationality—inform and dictate the array of objects toward which we might orient ourselves, this definition of Queerness is rendered impotent. Returning to Andrejevic (2014: 66) we now live inside a system:

in which the information [or objects] made available to consumers by powerful new information and communication technologies will be filtered so as to promote consumerism Rather than exposing us to the wide range of viewpoints that characterize a vibrant democratic culture our information filters will increasingly

show us the information that is most likely (according to market research) to create a positive association with accompanying advertising and to keep users coming back for more [and most importantly] ... such forms of influence go far beyond the associational image-based advertising of the twentieth century by trading upon detailed information about consumers' social, personal, and professional lives, about the psychological and emotional states, and even, eventually, about their genetic makeup.

As Tarleton Gillespie (2014: 167) points out, the algorithms that determine the curation of our own personal, individual “cyberspace” not only “help us find information, [but] also provide a means to know what there is to know and how to know it.” Frequently referenced in popular discourse as the “filter bubble,” the shrinking of cyberspace in order to better adhere to one’s overall historical tendencies hearkens back to the question of citationality and the ongoing solidification of identity in reference to past behaviors. In this new configuration of surveillance and Big Data analytics, the digital objects or others in relation to whom we might orient ourselves are subject to a process of curation directed by our citationality and the manufacturing of desire. When our internet search histories, purchasing patterns, or social networking activity belie an indicator of either “Queerness” or heteronormativity (as defined by way of citational reference to narrative construct), we are swept along a road of curated objects that may orient us toward a kind of accidental Queerness or its opposite. These processes are iterative and self-perpetuating. In the same way that gender discourses are self-reifying and strengthen with repeat performance, the citational imprint and subsequent curation of object choices exist in a feed-forward process. This represents the destruction of Queerness as a subversive act. This is, of course, not to delegitimize Queerness as an individual identity but rather to complicate its viability as a political injunction when transposed onto digital spaces.

When Queerness is perpetuated through curation and entrainment to normative trajectory, it ceases to either contain or supply radical political potency. Of course, it is possible outside of

any digital or new media context to be misidentified as either Queer or heteronormatively inclined, and yet, what is so nefarious about the digital surveillance and curation of orienting objects is the inability of subjects to “speak back” or to “clear the air” regarding their true orientation. As with most dataveillance, the flow of power is decidedly one-sided. To correct the algorithmic determination of one’s digital milieu requires both knowledge of one’s accidental Queering and the ability to “speak” the language of code. It requires an un-boxing of the black box—a tricky negotiation bound up with the educational inequality that computational literacy evokes, itself often crosscut by gendered lines.

While I have argued the case here that Big Data and its associated project of digital curation constitute an undoing of Queerness as a radical political injection, it has been argued that the circulation of intimate media between partners, friends, and eavesdroppers might, in itself, serve to trouble the fragile nature of heteronormativity, exposing the Queerness hidden by quotidian heteronormative performativity (Manning and Stern, 2018). I contest this on two fronts. First, I reject that unmasking the non-heteronormative dimensions of obligatory heteronormativity constitutes a reification of Queerness. Rather, it merely serves to expand the boundaries of the category of “heterosexual.” Second, the circulation of intimate media serves to “open up” sexual desire and identity to public scrutiny, permitting their categorization, and, as such, initiating curatorial action. To be “read” is not only to be marked as Queer, but to be enrolled in a process of further homonormative “Queering”. This process is deeply ensconced in commercial enterprise and, as such, exists in line with Morton’s (1995) cautionary observation that the cyberqueer is inexorably wedded to consumerist processes. And yet, his note that the “bourgeois subject, whose desire is (relatively) autonomous, is in a position not only to have the latest commodity first but also, more broadly, to write her own virtual history” is rendered false.

Big Data's capacity for performance, as articulated through citationality, is stripped of the need for both intent and agency. To Morton, Queerness is a process of self-motivated production through the manipulation of agents of signification. Yet, underlying his critique is the assumption that those objects through which Queerness is constituted (or made to signify) are chosen under the auspices of one's own genuine desire and are, thus, indicative of a ludic, bourgeois postmodernity. Contrary to Morton, I would conclude that these new iterations of Queerness are artifacts of the late modernist project. While Morton was interested in demonstrating how ludic postmodernity could not escape systemic oppression and domination by foregoing material analysis in favor of affectivity, Queerness under the new surveillance assemblage has shown its potential to be subsumed, adapted, and reincorporated into the very systems of oppression it once rallied against. Where Queerness was once a matter of reclaiming unnoticed spaces and marginal positions, its radical potential is undermined by the manner with which dataveillance and predictive analytics capture and undermine the agency and desire of even commodity-driven Queer expression—a version of Queerness already deeply ensconced within the white, homonormative remaking of “Queer culture.”

Although this argument privileges “code” and algorithm in the accidental orientation of subjects, it is worth considering the machinic and human assemblages that serve to “execute” the unintentional performance of Queer identity. Social sorting, categorization, and curation are certainly artifacts of algorithmic governance, and yet, code cannot function in the absence of a device to transform code into the “orienting” forms of media under scrutiny here. Borrowing from Wendy Chun (2011), it can be said that implicating code in the transformation or Queering of sexual identity treads dangerously toward the metaphorical and that the primacy afforded to code—in all its unknowable invisibility—is tantamount to invoking the occult. Chun's

cautionary *Programmed Visions* must, indeed, be contended with. The orienting processes I have described here do not function without nested forms of labor, produced and reinforced by both individuals and corporate entities. It is not code that places portable computers into every pocket nor does it force the daily subjective encounters we employ them toward (although code and software do prompt us to lose ourselves in doing so). Orienting code only functions insofar as we absorb the cultural media presented to us, incorporating it into our fashion, lifestyle choices, and general sense of the world. This too is labor, and while it is tempting to ascribe sole agency to the algorithmic production of sexual otherness or Queering, it is merely one actor in a network of subjective becoming. I consider orienting code to be a “prime mover” of sorts—a beginning to a new hermeneutics of subjectivity that, if taken up on its initial curatorial selections, prompts a cycle of reorientation toward new objects and others in ways that deviate from the straight line of heteronormativity.

Haunting Archives: Reclaiming Queerness through Melancholia

Thus far, I have discussed radical Queerness as existing in the margins between categories and, to a lesser extent, as a depoliticized entity intertwined with commodity fetishism in order to satisfy a Deleuzian notion of unbound desire. I have shown how both of these interpretations of Queerness are complicated by our current regime of dataveillance. I have argued that, as a greater portion of our day-to-day activities move into digital spaces, a Queerness located in the margins or interstitial spaces has become untenable and that a Queerness that depends on the actualization of desire is undermined by the challenges to personal agency and desire that Big Data analytics pose. Queerness may now occur by accident—as the result of miscategorization, over-eager analytics, and the curation of digital environments. The margins and in between

spaces where it once took hold have all but been eliminated by adaptive systems of classification and social sorting.

While it may now be impossible to escape the unrelenting categorization and loss of authentic desire that Big Data analytics seem to have ushered in, the emotional toll of an offline identity lived in the cracks can be made to speak across the fiber-optic cables that unite on/offline ontological realities. Taking up Muñoz's notion of melancholy—defined here as the psychic burden of marginal identity—I argue that it is possible to formulate new modes of resistance rooted in both the destructive and emancipatory potential of sadness and the weight it carries. This is translational work, moving between the domains of digitality and affect, attempting their unification. Although the systems of surveillance and Big Data collection that operate beneath the surface of our digitality are machinic and unfeeling, the reinterpretation of affect to mean the occupation of psychic space and the use of cognitive or other bodily resources allows a clear path for Queer affect to enter and affect Big Data archives.

I begin here with the notion of Melancholia, borrowed from Muñoz (1999), as the primary affective “material” through which we might short-circuit digital memory. Melancholia holds a central place in the life of Queer persons, and as such, provides a logical point of departure in the formation of a Queer intervention into digital surveillance. Quoting Muñoz (74):

Melancholia for blacks, queers, or any queers of color, is not a pathology but an integral part of everyday lives ... it is this melancholia that is part of our process dealing with all the catastrophes that occur in the lives of people of color, lesbians and gay men ... it is a mechanism that helps us (re)construct identity and take our dead with us to the various battles we must wage in their names—in our names.

Living as Queer persons do in a state of continuous compromise and partial belonging makes Melancholia a constant companion. It is a life of precarity, dogged by the persistent threat of

both emotional and material eviction. Melancholy haunts the “coming out” processes most markedly: that time of upheaval when all negotiations, armistices, and boundaries are either dissolved or solidified. Coming out, as it unfolds for many Queers, often requires strategizing an array of performances and appeals drawn from a desire to maintain a sense of normalcy, community, or safety. To be Queer is, more often than not, to wound both oneself and others. It is a tactical orchestration of both strength and vulnerability, need and rejection, belonging and exile. Melancholy is embedded in this process of “coming out” and expresses itself in the heavy toll of psychic exhaustion brought on by compulsory identity obfuscation and calculated performance. Yet, as Muñoz (1999: 74) points out, Queer Melancholia is not indicative of some persistent pathology. Rather, it is a productive force contained within a shared history of marginalization and political erasure. It impels us to “take our dead with us” and “wage war in their names.” Melancholia is to be haunted. It is to have vengeful spirits rattling around in one’s attic. As Big Data analytics eliminate those spaces of refuge that once existed in the in-between, Melancholia remains, albeit robbed of a home. It is this persistent Melancholia—this haunting—that I propose as a response to the elimination of categorical interstia. I propose a haunting of archives: an insertion of the dead weight of our collective memory as Queer persons into the growing catalog of our digital information. This is not merely the desire to metaphorically replicate a sense of trauma through an emerging technological medium. Nor is it a desire for some brand of politically motivated revenge or the destruction of informational assets. Rather, it is to be done in the spirit of accuracy and completeness. It is to be done in the name of reprogramming a system of modernist teleology—bent on the classification of all its human subjects—by way of introducing all those broken, half-lived lives excluded from its original calculus. It is a corrective issued, in the name of the Queer, to those systems of highly granular

categorization that benefit from the informational wake of our trauma. Our only recourse is necromancy: to bring the dead with us. It is to spread contagion through the architectures of an all-encompassing archive—to make it reflect the melancholy, absurdity, and loss that Queerness connotes. It is to bring the weight of Queerness to bear on an emerging surveillance economy that seeks the recognition and classification of Queer persons for the sole purpose of hardwiring them into the circuits of global information capital. A haunting requires a total re-evaluation of the relationship between truth and fiction and a renegotiation of the perimeter drawn around reality. The power of the ghost—all those ghosts of Queer injustice—is to induce doubt: to render the difference between personhood, body, memory, and illusion unclear. It is also to follow one around the house, stalking to the point of madness, breakdown, and insomnia. To haunt the archive with the ghosts of our dead is to not only introduce nonsense into the archival architecture but to grind it to a paranoid halt.

In *Obfuscation: A User's Guide to Privacy and Protest*, Finn Brunton and Helen Nissenbaum (2015: 46) offer obfuscation as one possible avenue for dissent against Big Data analytics. Defined by the authors as “the production of noise modeled on an existing signal in order to make a collection of data more ambiguous, confusing, harder to exploit, more difficult to act on, and therefore less valuable,” obfuscation permits the infiltration of Big Data archives and the introduction of disarray into their operational mechanics. To obfuscate is not only to interrupt and bewilder but to avoid the difficulties of digital abstinence as a method of dissent. Obfuscation favors participation over erasure and malicious compliance over absconding. In doing so, it preserves the active energy of political dissent and the affective positivity of Queer sexual expression that have sustained Queer activism as an emancipatory project for the last several decades.

Brunton and Nissenbaum offer a variety of methods by which obfuscation might be mobilized. While each can be read through a Queer lens, offering a unique avenue through which Queerness might express itself in digital spaces, here I will focus on only two: group identity (digital collectivization) and cloning. I have limited my analysis to these two strategies due to their amenability to the project of Queer haunting and the infiltration of digital archives by the ghostly and unmanageable presence of unbound data. At this point it is important to answer a potential critique: that the use of obfuscatory strategies merely causes an erasure of mourning and a blending-in of the Queer subject inside an archive that homogenizes data, thus undermining any attempt to “wage war by taking our dead with us.” I argue, however, that such a critique, while important and provocative, is drawn from the wrong vantage point. To mourn and to carry the dead with us are both consistent cultural and cognitive burdens. They eat away at our ability to think through things clearly and to wrap our thought around the meaning of individual identities and bodies in relation to each other. Obfuscation in data systems is about transplanting that burden and responsibility into the physical systems that form the basis of data collection and storage. It is to force them to carry the existential weight of mourning by overloading their existing technological capacity to parse and make sense of information. It is designed to use the memory of the dead to occupy random-access memory. It is to distill the hours spent mourning our dead and the missed connections the HIV crisis brought us and bring them with us, wrapped in an essential metaphor—haunting—that allows their translation between mediums.

Other methods of obfuscation carry their own metaphors of Queer intervention. Assuming a group identity online is to dissolve oneself into otherness. In digital contexts, assuming a group identity is to delink one’s digital passports—one’s Google, Facebook, Twitter accounts, and so on—from one’s identity as an individual. It is to adopt a community approach

to an individualistic platform. Platforms like Gmail, Facebook, Twitter, and myriad others depend on establishing links to individual identity in order to collect data that is attractive to advertisers or in order to function as advertisers in their own right. To open one's accounts to multiple users is to allow one's digital footprints to lead in multiple, confounding directions. It is to invite Legion in and to solicit one's own possession. Alongside Brunton and Nissebaum, I am suggesting a digital recreation of Leo Selvaggio's (2015) "URME" project: a transformation of digital information into a swarm of identical prosthetic masks. While URME promotes the collective assumption of Selvaggio's identity (by wearing a 3-D, resin replica of his face) in order to foil facial recognition software and other forms of video surveillance, digital collectivization allows platform users to dissolve into one another's data. It encourages a kind of digitally enabled schizophrenia: a blending of data doubles.

Read from a Queer perspective, group identities are a way of not only "taking our dead with us to the various battles we must wage in their name" (Muñoz 1999: 74) but also the living. While Big Data analytics may produce and depend on systems of classification and prediction shrunk down to the level of the individual, digital collectivization stretches categories to the point of rupture. As such, it counteracts the forces of curation that act on and orient subjects toward or away from inauthentic identity scripts or citational trajectories. This is an accelerationist argument. Delinking data from digital identity detaches Big Data analytics from its object. As such, the cycle of citation, orientation, and becoming is destabilized in such a way that the forces exerted by a totalizing digital archive might tear itself apart in a catastrophe of its own physics. We can find the forces of melancholy at work in the breakdown and collapse of archive. In the same way that Queerness and "coming out" require the maintenance of multiple identities, so too does digital collectivization introduce the burden of multiplicity into archive.

The melancholy of negotiating between identity performances in response to fear and marginalization is, thus, uploaded into archival memory where it can do its destructive work. Digital collectivization is to work a contagious magic in the folds of archive—to trouble it with the psychic panic of non-belonging and the labor of continuous identity work.

Cloning oneself is another strategy through which space might be reclaimed for Queer persons. Cloning is to become multiple and to use the proliferation of one's clones to take up residence in uninvited places. Much like employing group identities that render archives useless through their ability to circumvent having one's digital footprint attached to their real identity, cloning allows one's authentic, individual identity to roam archival systems in the company of dozens of false "selves." While digital collectivization presents Big Data with the problem of the many masquerading as one, cloning operates in an inverse fashion, allowing a single subject to fracture inside a hall of mirrors. Brunton and Nissenbaum (2015: 36) offer Apple's cloning service—part of a 2012 bulk patent purchase from Novell—as one avenue through which this can be achieved. They describe the process thusly:

A "cloning service" observes an individual's activities and assembles a plausible picture of his or her rhythms and interests. At the user's request, it will spin off a cloned identity that can use the identifiers provided to authenticate. ... These identifiers might include small amounts of actual confidential data (a few details of a life, such as hair color or marital status) mixed in with a considerable amount of deliberately inaccurate information. [This information] may draw on the user's actual [patterns] as inferred from things such as the user's browsing history but may begin to diverge from those interests in a gradual, incremental way.

Cloning, as such, is a technologically enabled way to obscure the difference between truth (the real subject) and fiction (its cloned doppelgänger). It is a method bringing the power of doubt to bear on archive and the predictive analytics that it enables. With cloning, the subject is rendered transient and tricky. She is made indistinguishable from her fantasy guardians and disappears into a gang of uniformed cronies. Cloning permits the duplication of self in such a way that

occupies visible space in archive—effectively multiplying the size of one’s “data double” in ways that a physical body restricts. In this sense, cloning is a true haunting. The subject appears unevenly across space and time, moving in and out of view against a backdrop of half-realized apparitions of itself. Hauntings swell to fill the size of their container—whether a house, archive, or asylum. They also stall the positivist, forward-march of empirical science: what Donna Haraway (1988:189) has called the “god-trick” that “fucks the world to make technomonsters.” Cloning, however, carries with it another trick. To repeat oneself—to duplicate one’s imprint—albeit in ways that encourage minor permutation—is to translate the plurality and consistency of Queer trauma into archive. It is to inject the drawn-out repetition of Queer trauma by flooding archive with a million iterations of oneself that stake their claim to a wounded life inside the surveillant assemblage. In this way, the clone augments both time and space. Cloned data profiles do, indeed, occupy storage space but also provide a glimpse at the ontogeny of Queer trauma, as if each new moment were a new clone and each new clone a conduit for recognition.

Both cloning and digital collectivization engage archive in an inefficient project. More directly, they increase the infrastructural requirements that permit the actualization of nascent archival data and its transformation into actionable analytics. To haunt archive is to interrupt its mechanics and grind its operations to a halt. It is to superimpose the existential burden of Queer living onto the circuitry that supports archival function. Big Data analytics run on the power of random-access memory, a finite resource. If Queer memory is occupied, colonized, and burdened by the weight of our own history, so too might RAM be wasted by the disorienting introduction of flak or nonsense code. Unreadable code is the essence of Queerness distilled into syntax. It is the speech act that does not signify intelligibly in the register of normative understanding.

In *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*, Benjamin Bratton (2016: 15) notes that “it may be that our predicament is that we cannot design the next political geography of planetary computation until it more fully designs us in its own image.” Indeed, the manner through which surveillance, analytics, and curation might operate on us promises to transform us in ways that are opaque and cannot necessarily be anticipated or engineered. The accidental orientations that curation implies may act to undo or reinforce processes of Queering or straightening. And yet, to intentionally act to Queer archive permits us to design our own designing and designation as Queer persons. It allows a breakdown in the operation of Big Data analytics and a prying open of the tightening mesh of categorization. While haunting may not supply sufficient space to contest the elimination of the interstia in which Queerness once made its home, it does stake a claim to memory, function, and the form of archive. Ghosts do not require a claim to space; they invite themselves into things as they are. They exist everywhere and nowhere in particular, wasting analytic resources and inserting error into sense-making. Queer life may no longer require a space in between, only a flicker of existence in the circuitry of power: a short circuit, a spark, a fire.

Conclusions

In *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, Muñoz (2009) questions whether an authentic Queerness has ever really existed. Rather than seek out its historical manifestations (however ephemeral), he looks to the future in order to glimpse a Queerness that has not yet crystallized—one rooted not only in the securing of LGBT rights but in the realization of a more imaginative utopia. Writing against the dim future for Queer persons envisioned by his contemporary Edelman (see Edelman 2004), Muñoz chooses to disavow the nihilistic defeatism

that comes from extending the contemporary Queer experience—and all of its attending loss and pain—into the future. Rather, he takes the future as a starting point from which to imagine a new politics of Queer emancipation, one that generates the space in which alterity might flourish and in which the relations of power are reconfigured or equalized.

Like Edelman, surveillance scholarship so easily lends itself to defeatist thinking; it seems to require that we entirely abandon the old critical canon of Queer theorization. Indeed, throughout this paper I have shown how the granularity with which Queer persons are apprehended by the new surveillant assemblage, and the absolute size and stability of Big Data archives, has eliminated the potential for existing in the margins or the “open mesh of possibilities, gaps, and overlaps” as radical Queer scholarship once demanded. Moreover, I have shown how the categories of “Queerness” generated by the overlapping surveillant apparatuses that produce “Big Data” feed back into a dialectic of Queer measurement and control, articulated by way of digitally mediated advertising and, as such, coercive measures. Additionally, I have argued that the twists and turns away from the heteronormative that Queer-targeted advertising compels, and the feed-forward manner through which they operate, constitute both a phenomenological and ontological disorientation of sexual and gender identity when measured from the perspective of the data double. And yet, returning to Muñoz, it is important that we look toward new avenues of intervention and theorizing our Queer present and future. Indeed, this article has shown how a Queer perspective may lead us away from our pessimism. Mourning, obfuscating, cloning, haunting, and identity sharing all have parallels in both the Queer theoretical canon and in its day-to-day realities. Thus, when we think Queerly about surveillance, we discover not only precisely what is at stake but also how we may carve new inroads for resistance.

This article, however, was not meant to merely gesture toward digital interventions into an unpalatable Queer present as our only hope. Rather, its aim was to unsettle, playfully undermine, and subject now academically dogmatic ways of thinking about Queerness to new kinds of phenomena that blur and confuse once rigid boundaries. Where Queerness was once a matter of oppositional retreat and taking up refuge at the margins of intelligibility, new surveillant assemblages have subsumed that potentiality within the counter-project of total-information storage and analysis. Moreover, the ability of the surveillant assemblage to orient and reorient subjects—through advertisements, social networking suggestions, event suggestions, media recommendations, and so on—either toward or away from citational points that reference Queerness should serve to trouble any stale notions of Queer ontology. New possibilities, such as one’s data double being assembled as Queer without one’s knowledge or without one’s embodied complacency, seriously destabilize any presumed ontological divide between the online and off or the performance of homo- or heterosexuality.

To conclude, Queerness as a radical political strategy is under threat. First, the notion that Queerness may take up space in the open mesh of possibility or at the margins of intelligibility is no longer tenable. Second, the consumer-fetishism noted by Morton in 1990 has accelerated into a feed-forward process of making and unmaking the consumer in the image of the Queer or its opposites. Such a landscape, interpenetrated by various directions of surveillance and myriad institutional agendas, raises important questions regarding the epistemology of Queerness: can archival “information” know that you are Queer before you do? And, most importantly, how shall we think through these emerging problems with the promise of powerful general AI and increased cyborgification just over the horizon?

Conclusions

Following in the (admittedly large) footsteps of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Lee Edelman, and Lauren Berlant, these essays aim to apprehend some of the historical contingencies that contributed to the many shapes that Queerness—or, more broadly, sexuality—has taken in the 20th and early 21st century. In doing so, they reaffirm the plasticity of sexual desire and undermine the ontological stability that reductionist readings of Queer identity presuppose. Whether the product of various diagrams of disciplinary power, the deforming mesh of Deleuzian control, or the discursive realism of Butler’s thought, the question of sexuality and its etiology (or archaeology) is always an impossible one, as the answer is located inside a set of ever-shifting relations, power structures, and historical circumstances.

This dissertation also owes an incalculable debt to the pioneering work of Simone Browne, whose “Dark Matters” (2015) illuminated a path forward for discussing the intersectional histories that have functioned, and continue to function, as the *materia prima* out of which surveillance systems, institutions, and practices develop. Indeed, the term “Dark Matters” (Browne 2015) has dogged my thought for a while. While Brown refers to an unseen force that, in an extremely powerful sense, determines the way the universe operates, it also refers to an extremely visible marker—a sense or lifeway of “blackness” itself. She explores this “epidermalization” vis-à-vis Frantz Fanon (1967), whose analysis of the existential burden of blackness orients the optics that surround him and sculpt the embodied experience of blackness. And yet, Queerness comes with its own optics of visibility and invisibility, and, as Eve Sedgwick pointed out, its own epistemology of inclusion and exclusion. What I’m trying to get at here, is that the existential burden of surveillance that surrounds Queerness is difficult to epidermalize. It requires an entire technological assemblage to establish an epistemology of

knowing and not knowing who or what is Queer. Of course, we have recourse Sontag's (1964) essay on "camp" as a deliberate way of confirming one's association with Queerness, as well as those "disidentification" rituals where Munoz (1999) shows how even those lines of "camp" might be modified, played with, and either taken-up or discarded. My point here is that although Queerness exists in some ways as a force of "Dark Matter", such a thing coheres differently, in a more diverse assemblage of epistemic technologies that generate a unique, yet rapidly evolving, existential terrain on which we as Queer people live our lives.

While the work of the aforementioned scholars was instrumental in the creation of this dissertation and formed the basis of my analyses, I would like to now turn my own work back on these writers, more specifically, on the work of Michel Foucault—or, rather, the way in which Surveillance Studies, as a subdiscipline, has abstracted Foucault's work away from the historical particularism that the archivist's archaeological and genealogical methodology demands. Indeed, although Foucault identifies sexuality (and its history) as an "incitement to discourse" around which power coheres, he does not—perhaps lacking the insight of Eve Sedgwick (1990)—see the primary division between heterosexual/homosexual as essentially embedded in the very fabric of cultural complexity. Rather, and perhaps due to Foucault's own sexual proclivities, the emphasis seems to be on the reformation (read: discipline) of young (and not to be forgotten) underage men.

Although the Benthamic origins of the panopticon has become overworn, and is nearly mandatory in the construction of any Surveillance literature review, it is nearly always invoked ahistorically, without reference to Bentham's place within Enlightenment philosophy. As such, Surveillance Studies has largely ignored the importance of the Enlightenment in the development and spread of the panopticon as the supreme diagram of disciplinary power. Enlightenment

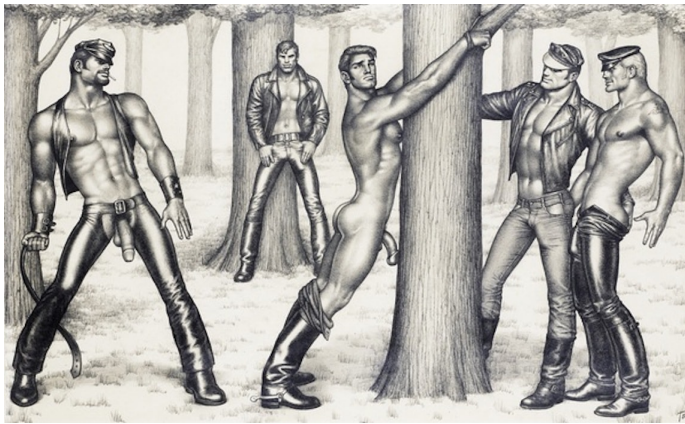
principles and thought are inextricably tied to the emergence of panopticism vis-à-vis the rise of philosophical discourse that imbued certain human beings (of certain national affiliations) with intractable rights, privileges, and responsibilities. Thus, the carceral format which gave birth to the speciation and delineation of criminological and sexual typologies—a virtual taxonomy by the Victorian *fin de siècle*—also marked the invention of a kind of interiority capable of standing in for the body and tortured in its stead. Here, it is the Freudian oedipal consciousness that is interpolated by the carceral format—a format that created, critiqued, and aimed to mend the unfolding of its own diagram.

While the prison stands as the paradigmatic example of panopticism, and its flexibility and adaptability are hallmarks of its usefulness as an analytic, it is worth reminding ourselves that Foucault begins his analysis in the reformatory boarding school and not the prison. I think he is winking at the reader, here. The boy's boarding school has been both eroticized and satirized in the gay sexual consciousness to the point of total saturation. What occurs between the periods of extreme regimentation and in the hallways, showers, dormitories, and—if we are to extend the metaphor to the barracks? All illicit activity, of course. If one was too careless in their affairs, they might meet the sharp sting of the headmaster's cane across their naked buttocks: a scenario that has produced a prolific catalogue of pornography. My point here is, like Browne's "Dark Matter", the diagrams of power—in this case the panopticon—imposed upon young men, gave shape, or perhaps provided a kind of psychic limitation to their erotic imagination. An embodied, existentialist mode through which one must live. "Pink Matter" seems like a foolish isomer of "Dark Matter", lacking, as it does, the reference to theoretical physics or any kind of epidermalization. Any term of real utility would be thoroughly inappropriate here, I fear. And for that, I'm grateful for the precocious filth of my Queer ancestors.

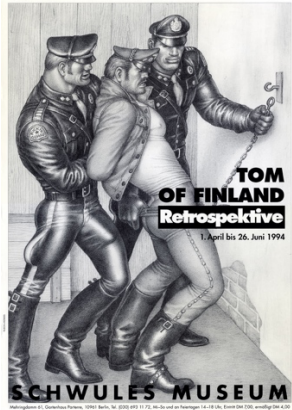
Returning to Foucault's panopticon, I believe he intended it to be supplementary to his investigation of the historical transformation of punishment, from the spectacular violence of the scaffold to the eventual arrival of the systems of carceral management he so eloquently described. Indeed, in my own reading of *Discipline and Punish*, the panopticon was understood by Foucault as one of many historical "inflection devices" [my language] through which the "modern" soul was produced and subjected to torment—and in this regimented Freudian moment of autopoiesis, defined the perimeters, and hidden spaces of the sexual consciousness of a particular zeitgeist (a specific time or age).

Using Queerness and Queer theory as an inroad, this dissertation has shown how the historical "event"—including the introduction, spread, and implementation of novel technologies—must be understood as the primary force in determining the contours of sexual expression, identity, and ontology. In the first article in this collection, "Strange Bedfellows", I explore how the sexual identity and sexual expression of gay men has, historically, been sculpted by the demands of warfare, national security, biosecurity, and the evolution of capitalism and its technological offspring. Here, it is the demands of the nation-state and its underlying economic configuration that are the determining factors in shaping what is considered Queer, in addition to limiting (and as a mirror image, permitting) how, where, and when Queer sex and Queer relationships were allowed to form. While these factors certainly expressed themselves inside the carceral confines of the army barracks and other institutions, the contours of sexual imagination that they instilled moved far beyond the military proper. Rather, they provided the underlying rules, regulations, and moral principles that orient the psychic imaginary of what gay sex looks, feels, and sounds like. As such, I conceive of these abstracted diagrams of power as subordinate to the wider Queer contexts in which they emerged. Any diagram of power that holds men

together is, in some way, subordinate to and reliant on the Queer sex that occurs there. The panopticon, when it emerged and was implemented (metaphorically speaking) across institutions, was as much a machine of Queer sex as one of docile subordination. The two go hand-in-hand, with the one giving birth to the other. The carceral dynamics, corporal punishment, uniforms, restraints, and power differentials of reform schools, prisons, and military barracks have thoroughly embedded themselves in Queer sexual consciousness. Steven Zeeland (1996), his questionable ethics aside, has certainly demonstrated the links between military culture and a hypermasculine desire for (gay) sexual submissiveness. The question is, what will the psychic world of Queerness look like under a different diagram? Who will replace Tom of Finland in the gay imagination?



Tom of Finland | Made in Germany | Galerie Judin | 12.09.-19.12.2020



Tom of Finland Retrospektive (1994) Poster, Berlin: Schwules Museum. Vintage original 23'' x 16''. Germany

These images, in particular, speak towards both the carceral imaginary of Queer sex, but also to the previously mentioned “dark perimeter” of Queer consciousness where Halberstam (2011) details the infiltration of Nazi imagery into the pantheon of Queer hagiography. This is, of course, a natural progression—from the carceral logic of the panopticon, to the ultimate expression of biopolitics in the concentration camp that Agamben (1998) identified. It is, perhaps, worth questioning whether or not the biopolitical/disciplinary power imposed on the Queer imaginary has produced a dangerous dimension to homosexuality.

These questions of the diagrammatic production of the Queer past and future have followed me for a long while and can be traced through the second and third articles in this dissertation. We seem to be in a strange, liminal stage of transition. On one hand, data brokers have access to a nearly inconceivable level of “total information awareness”, and yet we are still required to shuffle between decaying institutions and internalize an institutional logic that seems to persist despite ironically growing weary of itself. This transition, to “control” —a process not really elaborated on by Deleuze, but perhaps Paul Virilio (2006) might have imagined a speedier implementation than our current sluggish reality—seems to exist in a patchwork alongside the

antiquated machinery of a dying way of life. Ben Bratton (2016) warned us that the “stack” would involve an uneven implementation. Speaking candidly, I think the nationalist paranoia surrounding September 11th, 2001, halted the evolution of control mechanisms as the demand for absurd security theatre rose and people needed to see strength from and have confidence in the institutions that, to them, defined national sovereignty. For obvious reasons, the airport became the paradigmatic refuge of 1970s anxiety surrounding fundamentalist Islamic terrorism. As such, carceral machinery and logics began to accumulate and intensify.

My analysis of airports and border crossing events as embodied and (dis)embodied experiences for Queer and Trans* people is aimed at unpacking this transition. Moving from spaces of neoliberal identity politics, that permit (in a relative and, ultimately, extractive manner), gender experimentation and transformation, to spaces of disciplinary enclosure aimed at quelling the anxieties surrounding identity itself, is the issue at hand. Here, we are confronted with a geography or terrain that disrupts and disturbs the performance of one’s gender identity that clashes or is incongruous with one’s documentation. This chapter “The Geography of the Closet” aims to highlight the spatiality of Queer performance and citationality. Moreover, it explores the complexity of negotiating the sometimes-precarious line between Trans* sex work and anxieties surrounding human trafficking. As Pickering and Ham (2014) point out, objects and possessions under scrutiny by TSA or other border agents, take on mutable properties reminiscent of object-oriented-ontologies that ascribe a dimension of possibility space to the fundamental nature of the “thing” itself (see: Harman 2018 for a metaphysical unpacking of Bruno Latour). Pickering and Ham challenge us to consider what “hot pants” signify and how their status as agents is modulated by various intersectional identities, including race, gender, affect, age, nationality, and wealth. Entering into this space of hyper-scrutiny as a Trans* woman

and sex worker, Jelena is forced to modify (if not completely erase) her digital identity, purging texts and intimate images from her mobile device. For Jelena, crossing through airport customs is a performative act of both sexual modesty (in order to disguise her reason to travel: to preform escort services and appear in pornographic films) and unquestionable femininity (in order to avoid a transphobic encounter that revives past traumatic experiences). In a post underwear-bomber world, an absurd focus on genitalia has created a decisively transphobic line across which one must pass while avoiding appearing as “other”, “suspicious”, or “someone they are not”.

Moving beyond the patchwork of control and discipline characterized by the “crooked line” of institutionalized security and sexual surveillance, we can also see how certain types of privileged Queers might leverage the homophobia of border guards in order to shock and embarrass them within the confines of a legal rubric that sanctions their actions. There is, of course, the dark mirror image of this kind of weaponized homophobia that Puar (2007) has described in her analysis of the erotics of torture as they played out at Abu Ghraib. Again, I am drawn to this dark perimeter of Queerness that seems to follow my analyses.

Finally, the third paper in this dissertation takes on a more speculative and theoretical framework. Here, I am interested in the ontological possibility of Queerness as a radical injunction in a world where we can no longer exist as a counterpoint to dominant diagrams of power and classification. Neoliberalism, combined with the surveillance systems of monetary extraction that serve neoliberalism as a broad economic (and foreign) policy, has individualized, through psychological profiling and, as Patricia Clough (2008) points out, sub-psychological (affective) profiling and programming, in such a way that there can be no radical alternative (Queerness), because there is no central category of “being” or “way of being” to contest. Here, I

extend analyses done by Shoshana Zuboff (2019) and Zeynep Tufekci (2014) who concerned themselves with the dwindling possibility of democracy, to include the way that surveillance and big data analytics trouble the very foundations of our identity. I would like, at this point, tucked away in the conclusion, to entertain the notion that the flexibility of sexual and gender identity permitted by the so-called “First World”, is not merely the result of homonationalism or “pink washing” as Puar (2007) has argued, but part of a much broader economic strategy that permits radical difference because radical difference in individual identity is the only “Western” terrain left for capitalism to colonize. We are each our own frontier.

In this paper, I do offer some modes of resistance. I must admit that they are more poetic than practical. To flood data servers with junk data as a way of “offloading” the cognitive, affective, and existential burden of Queer life onto the algorithms and analytic technicians who are charged with making sense of Big Data, is more art than....terrorism? And it saddens me greatly to say that art might be our only tool, our only mode of resistance, at this juncture.

I began this dissertation with an explanation of how, when introduced to and read through one another, the intersection of surveillance studies and Queer theory reveals a number of irreconcilable tensions that might act as a motor for theoretical advancement. Although traceable throughout a long history of socio-technical evolution and discursive transformation, these tensions—between Queerness as an ascribed identity produced through the interpolation of power; Queerness as a radical, countercultural identity oriented in opposition to power; and Queerness as a subtractive identity rooted in the rejection of medical and criminological discourses—remain as salient as ever. Indeed, keeping these tensions in mind—as well as their relationship with surveillant technologies and practices—can offer an informed counter-

discourse to pragmatically-oriented uses of the term within the framework of so-called “identity politics”.

While I, as noted earlier, do not reject Queer identity politics out of hand, I do think that it is worth subjecting to the scrutiny that it deserves. Queerness is, after all, unable to be parsed from its long history and from the cynical manipulations in which it is currently enrolled. Here, I gesture towards the second and third articles contained in this dissertation to show that, far from being reinvented and/or reclaimed as a term that now signifies only a liberatory political agenda, Queerness still operates as a category of exclusion in the borderlands between the United States and Canada, taking on associations of criminality, terrorism, and, if not these extreme connotations, at least that of concealing something fundamental about oneself. Moreover, in the late capitalist information economy, these political dimensions of Queerness are erased and replaced by a kind of pastiche do-it-yourself identity of commodity fetishism, exemplifying the “additive” nature of identity predicted by Deleuze as far back as his 1992 *Postscript on the Societies of Control*. As such, it is difficult to claim, after any degree of critical reflection, that Queerness has shed its previous connotations as a pejorative.

In addition to showing how the term Queer is still reinforced and reified vis-à-vis surveillant technologies in a way that it maintains not only its derogatory status, but also its connection to the function of biopolitical power, I also believe this dissertation has demonstrated the ways in which Queerness cannot be seen as having been *only* a pejorative. Indeed, in the first article—covering the techno-social evolution of Queerness as a category of being between 1939 and the late 1960s—I have shown how, despite the traumatic and exclusionary lines of demarcation drawn between hetero and homosexuality by surveillant technologies, there was also the production of new relational potentialities, new ways of understanding and interpreting

one's desires, and new social configurations within which to seek out sexual and romantic fulfillment.

While surveillance studies offers Queer theory a vantage point from which to observe the techno-social production of sexual “otherness” as a labile category of both abjection and self-discovery, Queer theory offers surveillance studies a way of managing the problem of scale and connecting the spheres of intimate, interpersonal conduct with the global realm of geopolitics, biopolitics, biosecurity, warfare, statecraft, and the physics late capitalism. Queer theory reveals the ways in which technologies of surveillance and apprehension cohere around conduits of coercion—of which sexuality and gender identity are two examples. Moreover, this dissertation has shown how surveillant regimes emerge and evolve during times of great geopolitical import and upheaval. These distinct moments of history impel the creation of new systems of watching, categorization, and management that affect not only the macro-level motions of economies and the logistics of warfare, but the intimate, familial, and social worlds of those caught in their wake.

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