Evidence of an Emerging Homosexual Subculture during World War II in Case Studies of Queer Clandestine Agents

by

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Abstract

This thesis traces the uneven emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture during World War II through cases studies of two queer clandestine agents operating in France from the Special Operations Executive and the United States Army Military Intelligence organization. The emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture, facilitated by the mobilization of single men, accelerated because the single-sex environment of the military provided opportunities for same-sex desiring men to congregate. This phenomenon was national and often transnational in nature, as men from several Allied nations interacted. Collectively, this historical moment was formative in the development of a distinct homosexual identity. During this period, medical, psychological, legal, and social ideas about homosexuality began to codify, and military screening accelerated this process. Same-sex desiring men, however, were also forming distinct cultural artifacts, communication styles, and uses of public space to create a collective identity.

Same-sex desiring men not only participated in the war effort, but also participated in clandestine activities. The operational cover identity of these queer agents co-existed with their civilian identities; their public identities co-existed with their emerging homosexual identity. This thesis reclaims from the past the stories of these homosexual agents and contextualizes them within the Allied clandestine operations and within the uneven emergence of a homosexual subculture. The 1940s was a period of fluid sexuality, fundamentally different to our modern categories and boundaries of sexual identities. It was a period of ambiguous or uncertain performances of sexualities, at times divorced from personal identities, a landscape of shifting and unreliable sexualities. Homosexual (in legal, medical, or psychological categories), queer (in common parlance), and gay (a label emerging among homosexual men as a means to self-identify while remaining hidden to normative society) circulated as labels for same-sex desiring men in this period. Building upon Matt Houlbrook's lead, "queer" is used in this analysis as a fluid identifier for men who experienced same-sex sexual relations regardless of their personal identities. It encompasses the range of same-sex expressions that flourished in this period.

The wartime experience of queer, clandestine agents leaves a historical residue of the development of a distinct homosexual subculture. It is useful to illuminate these agents' experience of homosexual culture-building while conducting clandestine operations in order to detect nascent cultural artifacts and signifiers, the development of cultural colloquialisms and language codes, tentative public community-building efforts, and the opposition these emerging forms faced within the broader heteronormative culture. This thesis reflects the convergence in scholarship between gender, sexualities, masculinities, queer studies, nationalities, and international relations. It resides at the intersection of these approaches and employs queer clandestine agents as signposts marking the stages of development, however fraught and uneven, of a distinct homosexual subculture during the war.

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The doctoral journey is not one you walk alone. I have benefited enormously from the generosity and intellectual curiosity of my many mentors. I must thank Professor Geoffrey Hayes for his humour, expertise, and patience as we explored the many twists and turns in World War Two Paris and for his friendship. Professor Andrew Hunt showed me a clarity and a passion for this vocation of history that I hope to emulate. Professor Veronica Kitchen, always perceptive, pushed me to extend my analysis and raised new questions to explore. A recent but already dear mentor, Professor Brian Lewis of McGill University, inspires me to continue this work. His body of work, his passion for queer history, and his deep kindness challenge me to imagine a scholarly future of inquiry, discovery, and reclamation.

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List of Abbreviations

CIS = Critical Intelligence Studies
IR = International Relations
NA = The National Archives, United Kingdom
OSS = Office of Strategic Services
S.O.E. = Special Operations Executive

Figures

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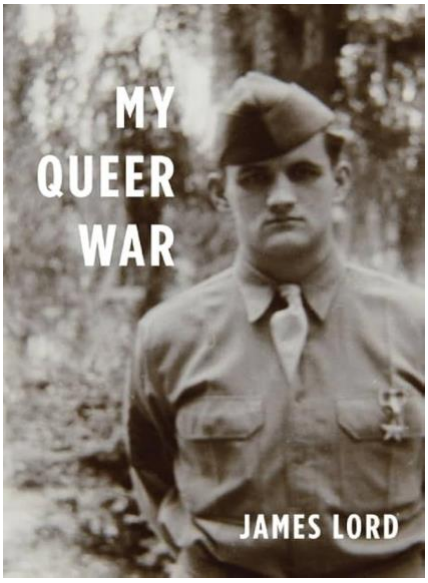

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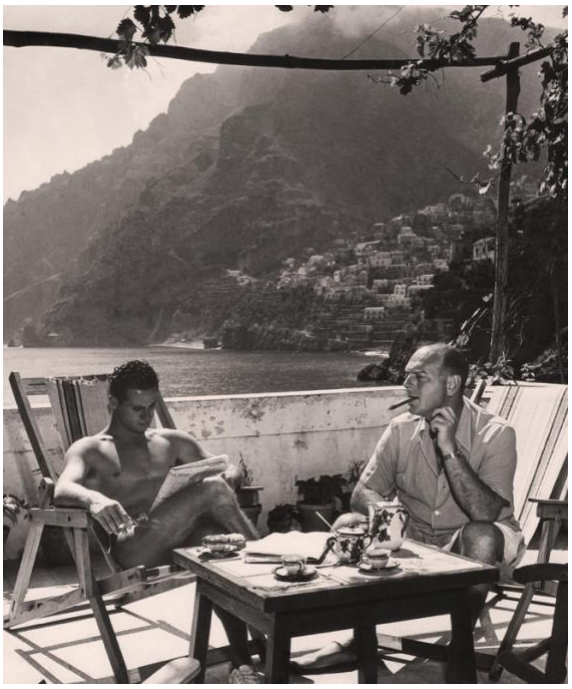

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Chapter 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introductory prologue

Espionage organizations emerged during World War II in response to an operational need to obtain intelligence and to sabotage the German advance. These organizations operated outside the normal parameters of combat, residing neither among combat troops nor logistical organisms, but instead acting as a secondary, if essential, front in the war. Churchill's admonition to set Europe ablaze was a call for a citizen-wide effort to resist the Nazi forces by any means necessary. In response, agents operated outside the state-sanctioned levers of military structure, international relations, and diplomacy with a mission focused on sabotage, disruption, intelligence-gathering, and resistance, alone or in concert with resistance or guerrilla efforts in the occupied European nations. These subversive actors were instrumental to Allied campaigns.

Concurrently, the emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture, facilitated by mobilizing geographically separate single men, accelerated because the single-sex environment of the military provided opportunities for same-sex desiring men to congregate. This phenomenon was national and often transnational in nature, as men from several Allied nations interacted. Collectively, this historical moment was important in the development of a distinct homosexual identity. During this period, medical, psychological, legal, and social ideas about homosexuality began to codify, and military screening accelerated this process. Same-sex desiring men, however, were also forming distinct cultural artifacts, communication styles, and uses of public space to create a collective identity.

Same-sex desiring men not only participated in the war effort, but also participated in clandestine activities. The operational cover identity of these queer agents co-existed with their civilian identities; their public identities co-existed with their emerging homosexual identity.

This thesis reclaims from the past the stories of these homosexual agents and contextualizes them within the Allied clandestine operations and within the uneven emergence of a homosexual subculture. The 1940s was a period of fluid sexuality, fundamentally different to our modern categories and boundaries of sexual identities. It was a period of ambiguous or uncertain performances of sexualities, at times divorced from personal identities, a landscape of shifting and unreliable sexualities. Homosexual (in legal, medical, or psychological categories), queer (in common parlance), and gay (a label emerging among homosexual men as a means to self-identify while remaining hidden to normative society) circulated as labels for same-sex desiring men in this period. Building upon Matt Houlbrook lead, "queer" is used in this analysis as a fluid identifier for men who experienced same-sex sexual relations regardless of their personal identities. It encompasses the range of same-sex expressions that flourished in this period.

The wartime experience of queer, clandestine agents left a historical residue of the development of a distinct homosexual subculture. It is instructive to illuminate these agents' experience of homosexual culture-building while conducting clandestine operations to detect nascent cultural artifacts and signifiers, the development of cultural colloquialisms and language codes, tentative public community-building efforts, and the opposition these emerging forms faced within the broader heteronormative culture. Queer clandestine agents carry the dust of homosexual culture-building during this period.

This research project reflects the scholarly convergence between gender, sexualities, masculinities, queer studies, nationalities, and international relations. It resides at the intersection of these approaches and employs queer clandestine agents as signposts marking the stages of development, however fraught and uneven, of a distinct homosexual wartime subculture.

1.2 Historiography

Theorists and historians of gender and sexuality within intelligence organizations have examined the linkages between nonnormative sexualities, nationalities, identities, and espionage. Scholars have studied the participation and acceptance of homosexual soldiers during the world wars of the twentieth century, the heteronormative assumptions binding the fields of espionage, diplomacy, and international relations, and have offered post-modern critiques of identity formation. The connections, however, that generate queer, homosexual, and gay subjects concurrently situate queerness as antithetical to masculinity, military courage, and full citizenship. By examining how heteronormativity limited expressions of same-sex desire and how queer subjects resisted such restraints, this project seeks to link the *convivial* dependencies between same-sex desire and masculinity—between social inclusion and ostracism, shame and pride, identity and space, queerness and militarism, theatricality and subterfuge.

Locating this analysis at the intersection of the queer turn in international relations studies, the third wave of socio-cultural interrogation of the Second World War, and post-modern critiques of social masculinities and national individualities complicated discourses on (homo)sexuality, identity, and military espionage. These questions are foregrounded in recent critical studies of masculinity, (homo) nationalism, sexuality, and (queer) international relations. This project extends and diversifies the criteria of analysis by positing that occupation of public, private, and interstitial space and the development of unique queer cultural artifacts, signifiers, and colloquialisms are acts against the dominant and heteronormative power and regulatory structures.

Interstitial space (domestic, private, and fractional) is a critical analytical frame that aids the detection of queer social infrastructures and the tenuous practices in those spaces that served

to extend homosexual subculture. The concept articulated by Homi Bhabha emerged in discourses on spatiality in culture.[1] This spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences located the *in-between* as a new paradigm for relational theorizing with connectives, thresholds, borders, and networks. Interstitial space is *in-between*: a space that connects as well as separates, irrespective of distance. Interstitial space informs an expanding host of scholarly inquiries in the cultural and life sciences, including but not limited to urban planning, social reform, international relations, and cellular science.[2] Interstices are non-normative spaces in any geography, intimate, interstitial, or fractional spaces which represent a key component not only in cities, but also broadly in social infrastructure. Mary Manjikian extended the use of interstitial space as an analytical paradigm to argue that espionage activities occur in the interstitial space between soft diplomacy and hard military campaigns.[3] Agents, Manjikian argues, are interstitial actors who conduct their activities between legal and illegal frames, who serve the state while concurrently *personae non gratae*, and who exist in the "queered" state between visible socio-national participation and clandestine subterfuge. Bhabha and Manjikian engage in the politics of spatial subjectivity[4] where use of space is a fundamental generator of culture and human behaviours.

The emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture during the war was an iterative process of transgression against these dynamics. As a homosexual subculture emerged, queer men asserted social agency by occupying heteronormative spaces and developed distinct homosexual social logics which resisted the powerful agency of heteronormative behaviours.

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[1] See Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
[2] John M. Andrick, "Interstitial space and the Spiritualist séance: psychical geography, telephonic imaginary and social possibility in 1870s Britain." *Journal of English Studies* 27, no. 2 (2023):185.
[3] See Mary Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies. The Spy in the Closet,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).
[4] Gillian Rose, "The interstitial perspective: a review essay on Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13 (1995):368.

Interrogations of forms of power enliven these studies. For Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, sexuality is a historically specific organization of power, discourse, bodies, and affectivity.[5] There is an unacknowledged emancipatory ideal in this notion, as categories of sexual difference are constructed within the discourse as necessary features of bodily identity and therefore this "being-in-process" understanding of bodily identity insinuates liberatory capacities. Emancipation, identity, and bodies were dominant themes in 1990s political and academic discourses, as the women's and gay rights movements agitated for more political and social power in contemporary society. Butler's work advanced the study of sexuality by arguing that sexuality is a variable cultural accomplishment with a set of meanings within a specific cultural field.[6] Butler suggests that acts, gestures, and desires produce effects on the body. This performative impersonation through acts and desires reveals the key social construction of gender as a performative accomplishment.[7] Questioning the performative aspects of sexuality allowed scholars to interrogate historical expressions of sexuality, divorced from ideas of an ahistorical, immutable sexual identity, as well as to examine the peculiar historical manifestations of sexuality.

This rejection of a single, immutable identity and sexual expression foregrounded the emergence of queer theory as a framework through which to investigate sexual activity and sexual expression divorced from binary understandings of heterosexual and homosexual identity. Application of queer theory as an analytical lens shifted focus from sexual identity to sexual expression and historical experiences of desire. Heavily influenced by the work of Judith Butler and Eve Sedgwick among others, queer theory builds upon feminist challenges to the idea that

[5] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity,* (New York: Routledge. 2011), 92.
[6] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 111.
[7] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 136.

gender is part of the essential self and furthers gay and lesbian studies' close examination of the socially constructed nature of sexual acts and identities.[8] While gay and lesbian studies focused its inquiries on natural and unnatural homosexual behaviour, queer theory expands its focus to encompass any kind of sexual activity or identity that societies have categorized as non-normative or deviant.

The concept of queerness focuses on mismatches between sex, gender, and desire. Queer theory examines the discourses of homosexuality developed in the last century to place the "queer" into historical context. Queer theory holds that individual sexuality is a fluid, fragmented, and dynamic collectivity of possible sexualities, and that it may vary at different points during one's life. Its criticism of stable (and correlated) sexes, genders, and sexualities develops out of the specifically lesbian and gay reworking of the poststructuralist figuring of identity as a landscape of multiple and unstable positions. This redrafting opened the analytical frame to welcome diverse expressions of sexuality unbound to identity and imparted a scholarly generosity that permitted historical actors to dictate the vocabularies of their lived experience.

Researchers have also looked at how the scientific construction of "perverse" bodies was part of a complex cultural story related to sexuality, homosexuality, and sexual identity. Images of "queer" bodies coincided with discourses about the surveillance and punishment of homosexuality. Through processes of categorization and codification, medical sciences constrained queer bodies within the register of visibility and identity. Yet sexually pathological identities were troubled by representational and categorical uncertainty, articulated by an unformed and changing vocabulary of sexual and identity categories.[9] Such uncertainty was

[8] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 2, 3, 11, 13, 17.

[9] Dana Seitler, "Queer Physiognomies: Or, How Many Ways Can We Do the History of Sexuality," *Criticism* 46, no. 1 (Winter 2002):74.

characteristic of attempts of human science to render sexual identity both visible and pathological.

Queer theory and literary criticism challenged historians to address region, religion, class, and race in any account of homosexual formation. Queer men congregated in large cities like London and Paris because such urban space safeguarded private expressions of homosexual selfhood and provided commercial space in which to socialize and the social anonymity afforded by large populations.[10] Sean Brady argued for the importance of a movement away from an emphasis on the law as "producing" criminal homosexual identities and toward an emphasis on the historical geography of homosexual formation as the factor of paramount importance in this period.[11]

Geographic space is central to efforts to detect early homosexual culture. In this respect, Brady mirrored the work done by Matt Houlbrook in Houlbrook's work on men's role in generating finely calibrated cognitive maps and imaginary and habitual sexual geographies in queer London.[12] In the city, Houlbrook argued, one can see the accumulated historical traces of queer male networks. The focus on the city reflects current trends in critical academic thought, particularly the spatial turn in history, cultural studies, and human geography. The city becomes the analytical focus, indeed the city is regarded as the constitutive part of the cultural and social formation of metropolitan modernity.[13] Houlbrook explored the diversity of sexual difference and "normality," as well as the way men understood their desires amid the competing understandings of sexuality and masculinity in urban queer culture where differences in class,

[10] Sean Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain, 1861-1913,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 12, 13.
[11] Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain, 1861-1913*, 16.
[12] Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 51.
[13] Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957*, 4.

race, age, and place complicated performances of their queer identities .[14] Where Houlbrook focused on sexual micro-geographies to examine the interplay of the public and private,[15] Brady examined how the concept of masculinity as social status fostered a pervasive social perception of the vilified, effeminate, unmanly sodomite in Britain that did not depend on any classification of sexual desire.[16] These works illustrate that an examination of marginal or deviant sexualities provides a way to comment on the prevailing constructions of masculinity.

Citizenship, nationality, and sexuality are interconnected in a creative and self-supporting praxis. Deborah Cohler corroborated the foregoing idea by linking marginal sexuality to notions of citizenship in her work on the emergence of a distinct lesbian identity during the First World War. Cohler argued that the prewar rhetorical and cultural links between male homosexuality and feminism formed the foundation upon which representations of female homosexuality could be built.[17] Understanding that lesbianism emerged with the nationalist transformations during World War I, Cohler used feminist cultural studies, queer theories of modernity, and literary modernism to examine the intersection of nationalism and sexuality and to decode the shifts in the gendered possibilities for women during wartime.[18] For Cohler, wartime gender inversion signalled women's assertions of citizenship in the British public sphere before and during World War I and highlighted the constant tension between sexual subjectivity and the nation's eugenicist future.[19] If earlier historians had decoded the relationship between citizenship and

[14] Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957*, 8.
[15] Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957*, 54.
[16] Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain, 1861-1913,* 23.
[17] Deborah Cohler, *Citizen, Invert, Queer. Lesbian and War in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2010), 109.
[18] Cohler*, Citizen, Invert, Queer. Lesbian and War in Early Twentieth-Century Britain,* xi.
[19] Cohler, *Citizen, Invert, Queer. Lesbian and War in Early Twentieth-Century Britain*, 109.

masculinity, Cohler's work extended this analysis to trace the sites of contestation between performances of marginal sexualities and citizenship.

The social upheaval of the war challenged masculine citizenship and the dominant social forms of masculinity. Historians of World War Two have explored sites where men contested hegemonic expressions of masculinity. The collection edited by Heike Bauer and Matt Cook highlighted the recent work by queer theorists and historians on a queer mode of life as potential method to deconstruct queer masculinity, as well as the dominant hegemonic masculinity at a historical moment. This collection is important to the scholarship on the subject because it built on the pessimistic turn in queer studies, which has complicated queer skepticism about notions of identity and community. It questioned how we think about identity in the past and the various meanings and utilities of identity at and across different moments in time. Its categories of analysis—representing, living, and thinking—as well as its concept of a "sense of being-in-process" are critical tools to examine the relationships of race, gender, and sexuality. These categories bolster queer method as a useful tool to interrogate hegemonic and marginal masculinities and sexualities, especially in periods of war, when gender and sexual performances are more fluid.

The variability in the expressions of queer sexualities during the war allowed queer men to contest contemporary assumptions about gender, sex, desire, and citizenship. Emma Vickers' work on same-sex desire in the British Armed Forces exposed how men and women could experience same-sex desire but not define their sexuality by it. Vickers work challenged an exclusive heteronormative narrative of the war, British military masculinity, and homosociability.[20] The exploration of same-sex desire is an act of historical retrieval in order to

[20] Emma Vickers, *Queen and Country. Same-sex desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-1945,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 10.

analyze the complex interactions between same-sex desire and the State. The historical specificity of desire and the prevalence of homosex in same-sex military environments separate from same-sex sexuality parallels the emergence of the term "queer" to denote those who experience same-sex desire and the notion of "passing."[21] By examining same-sex desire, Vickers traced the sinews of interconnection between the State, the individual, sexuality, citizenship, and the law. In the act of (re)claiming, Vickers foregrounded Stephen Bourne's work highlighting gay men's contributions to the war effort. Bourne examined the armed services, the home front, and the world of arts and culture to demonstrate how individuals contested prevailing notions of hegemonic masculinity.[22] Both of these works used queer theory to illuminate the marginal and the deviant, historicizing homosexual experience and (re)claiming a queer historical past and in so doing, offered a critique of masculinity and opposite-sex indifference and hegemony.

What scholars can detect in these works is the intersection of constructionist, essentialist, and queer theories: the excavation of identities and the particular sites of sexual expression and sexual performance driven out by queer approaches to research. In the twenty-first century, a second generation of sexuality scholars refocused their research on locating specific sites of sexual performance and sexual expression outside the contemporary binary understanding of sexuality, this in an effort to bring to light non-normative historical sexual experiences. To do so, this scholarly research moved beyond identity as a category of analysis to a queer, diffuse, imagined landscape of multiple expressions of sexualities, employing queer interrogation of sources to find "supra-identities."

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[21] Vickers, *Queen and Country. Same-sex desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-1945*, 14, 16, 17.
[22] Stephen Bourne, *Fighting Proud. The Untold Story of the Gay Men who served in Two World Wars,* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2017), xvi, 1.

Cultural artifacts act as markers of emerging identities and sexualities. Jeffrey Schneider used queer analysis of clothing as a site of gender and sexual contestation to examine how military uniforms marked social performances of hyper-masculinity in Germany in World War I and were a sartorial artifact to express externally an internal and authentic gender identity, regardless of sexual performance.[23] Through queer analysis, Schneider demonstrated how effeminate, opposite-sex desiring men, civilian men, and homosexual men used military uniforms as a form of drag performance to perform socially rigid understandings of sexuality and gender identity associated with the uniform. Schneider explored the gendered nature of visibility and its ramifications for sexuality.[24] By the early 2000s, queer scholars had largely dispensed with the quest for a site of homosexual identity formation, characteristic of lesbian and gay studies, and focused on (re)imagining, (con)testing, and locating sites of sexual difference outside a western and binary understanding of sexuality. This fluidity, however, fractured the study of sexuality into increasingly narrower analyses of sexual experience while politicizing and problematizing the goals of the gay political movement.

The contemporary fluidity of sexual forms complicates historical interrogation and politicizes its findings. Contrasted with Jeffrey Weeks, who lived through the 1970s tumult of the gay liberation experience, Houlbrook aimed to discover men with affective ties that cannot be subsumed into any categories of identity recognized today. Houlbrook views the past in less teleological terms than those scholars in the school of gay and lesbian studies, and seeks diverse modes of sexual difference, almost nostalgic for various modes of queer identification that have

[23] Jeffrey Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan* and Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture and Theory* 72, no. 3 (1997):185.
[24] Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan* and Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," 188.

been marginalized by the consolidation of the modern queer subject.[25] Houlbrook is indebted to the study of masculinity as a means to problematize same-sex desire in the past. In contrast to the centrality of homosexual subcultures to Weeks and lesbian and gay studies, these subcultures vanish in Houlbrook's queer history.[26] Weeks was interested in a teleological view of gay history as a process of recovering and reclaiming. Houlbrook, on the other hand, repudiates the historical task of recuperation and renders the past as other, different from our modern understandings and categories of identity.[27]

Foucault provided researchers with a box of tools to denaturalize the history of sexuality. Weeks took this argument further, asserting that Foucault provided a call to arms against linearity and progressivism and offered a recognition of the significance of the social in creating a heterogeneous assemblage of practices.[28] Identities present paradoxes, especially sexual identities; all identities are provisional as they breach contemporary sexual boundaries. Sexual identities are simultaneously historical and contingent and fictional, but necessary fictions.[29] There is no end to identity, even in the post-identity queer world. Sexualities are still hierarchically organized and shaped by complex inputs of Foucauldian power: gender, race, class, age, (dis)ability, and ethnicity. In Foucault, sexual stories are deeply concerned with moral and political change. These necessary fictions implicate the political dependencies between state

[25] Chris Waters, "Distance and Desire in the New British Queer History," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14, no. 1 (2008):140.
[26] Waters, "Distance and Desire in the New British Queer History," 144.
[27] Waters, "Distance and Desire in the New British Queer Histoy," 147, 149, 150.
[28] Jeffrey Weeks, "Remembering Foucault," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14, no. 1-2 (January – April 2005):191. Week's scholarly goal was to recuperate gay and lesbian history, reclaiming a distinct homosexual past in contrast to the work of Matt Houlbrook who employed queer theory to allow for sexual fluidity in the past, a fluidity that often renders the homosexual past as invisible.
[29] Weeks, "Remembering Foucault," 193.

actors, intelligence operations, foreign policy, international relations, and the construction of gendered nationalities and nationalized masculinities.

Scholars of international relations have responded to the implications of gendered and masculinized intelligence operations and logics. The last five-year period has been important for paving the way to 'a critical turn' in Intelligence Studies. Following the 'critical' turn in International Relations (IR) (1980s), and subfields such as Critical Security Studies (1990s) and Critical War Studies (2000s), Critical Intelligence Studies (CIS) turned scholars' attention to the power subtleties hidden in international relations. By challenging established frameworks of understanding, an epistemological turn in Intelligence Studies started. Several scholars have introduced multiple perspectives about intelligence, which include constructivism, post-modernism, post-positivism, and feminism.

Among these Critical Intelligence Studies, gender and queer perspectives emerged. In this context, to reveal the gendered patterns in intelligence, scholars instrumentalized queer IR theory; in doing so, these scholars constituted the missing linkage between gender and queer studies in intelligence as well. By asking queer questions about intelligence, state, and foreign policy practices, scholars challenged traditional understandings in not only Intelligence Studies, but also in IR. By problematizing mainstream understandings of espionage in which intelligence practices are covertly accepted as dirty, deviant, unwanted, and queer, Intelligence Studies scholars reconsidered the study of international relations, taking into consideration invisible, queer foreign policy practices, and in particular, intelligence.

Queer IR embraces several dimensions: (1) The politics of (homo)sexuality (asking questions about queer people); (2) sexualized-gendered logics in IR (including masculinity-femininity assignment); and (3) the queerness phenomenon (rendered invisible, ambiguous, and

non-binary phenomena). Intelligence activities are "queer" because they take place between the hyper -masculinized (military) and hyper -feminized (diplomacy) binaries of foreign policy. Within this foreign policy framework, the intelligence community behaves as a transgressive actor.[30] Intelligence practices, therefore, are conducted in between hard power and soft power, in so called 'interstitial spaces' that present an ambiguous and 'queer' situation in international relations.

The queerness phenomenon in politics is not limited to intelligence activities, but is also an inclusive concept, asserting that states are queer. While simultaneously following overt and closeted foreign policy actions, states act in both a normative and non-normative way through their foreign policy. Overt and closeted practices are complimentary opposites: they are both tools of a state's foreign policy. Nevertheless, states mutually deny their "dark sides," which include internationally unaccepted sub-rosa practices such as military intervention and bribery, and in a case of exposure, they 'rescue the state by blaming the Intelligence Community'.[31] Thus, unlike what are regarded as the legitimized and 'normal' communities of foreign policy, foreign service, and the military, the intelligence community is regarded as 'abnormal'—as dirty and deviant. The actions of intelligence operatives have a queer ontological status, since such events are often excluded from a nation's formal history and thus treated as illegitimate or fantastical outside the formal politics of treaties and invasions.

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[30] Mary Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies The Spy in the Closet,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 11.

[31] Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies The Spy in the Closet*, 251. For further discussion of the study of the sexualization of the spy in the intelligence community, see for example, Melanie Richter-Montpetit, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Sex (in IR) but Were Afraid to Ask: The 'Queer Turn' in International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 46, no. 2 (2017): 220–240. For a queer analysis of the interdependencies between nationality, national self-perception, queer sexuality, racialized bodies, and the purposeful construction of a discursive "other", see Jasbir K. Paur's influential work, *Terrorist Assemblages. homonationalism in queer times*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007, 2017).

In these critical analyses, the focus is on the politics of (homo)sexuality and the way that sexualized-gendered logics permeate international relations. The intelligence community, and particularly agents in the field, follow managed sexuality logics and the related "body politics" and harm to intelligence agents, as the intelligence community mobilizes and manages their bodies (especially LGBTQ+ agents and heterosexual women). While the notion of a (homo)sexual operative runs contrary to contemporary depictions of a modern hyper-masculinized spy, Sedgwick counterposes a heteronormative idea of a gay spy with the presentation and understanding of the gay spy which has existed continuously in the intelligence community.[32]

1.3 Method

This research project methodologically employs this recent scholarship on masculinities, sexualities, nationalities, and gender to trace queer agents participating in the uneven emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture. It relies on queer theory as a methodological framework in which to contain ambiguity and fluid social performances of sexuality while concurrently uncovering the praxis of collective and self-creative activities that drove the development of homosexual communities and cultures. A close reading of absences made possible by queer theory is an instructive barometer of cultural development and cultural acceptance by the dominant wartime culture. It follows the ephemeral traces of homosexual culture-building and its collisions with the dominant culture to identify how homosexuals (re)imagined existing cultural forms (clothing, speech, occupation), legitimate uses of common cultural goods (public, private, and interstitial spaces), and social constructs (masculinities, nationalities, and gender expressions) to establish a collective homosexual identity. Extending Houlbrook's rubric of

[32] See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

queer identities to denote all erotic and affective interactions between men and all men who engaged in such interactions, the historical task of recuperation of a homosexual past follows the fluid nature and breadth of these affective queer interactions to trace the iterative development of a homosexual subculture that led to a shared identity by the nineteen-sixties. Queer theory challenges historians to address region, religion, class, and race in any account of homosexual formation. By using a rubric in this research project of queer public visibility, the development of identifiable cultural artifacts and social logics, and an exploration of queer emotionality, the contours of an emerging homosexual subculture surface.

1.3.1 Space as a proxy for visibility

In recent scholarship, there is an investigative movement away from an emphasis on the law as "producing" criminal homosexual identities and toward an emphasis on the historical geography of homosexual formation as the factor of paramount importance in this wartime period. The focus on the city reflects current trends in critical academic thought, particularly the spatial turn in history, cultural studies, and human geography. The city is the constitutive part of the cultural and social formation of metropolitan modernity. The urban experiment in homosexual "self-making" includes a diversity in sexual differences and several forms of understanding desire amid the competing identifications of sexuality and masculinity. Differences in class, race, age, and place profoundly fashioned urban queer culture. In the city and broader spatial topographies, the accumulated historical traces of queer male networks and imaginary and habitual sexual geographies appear through a careful reading of the sources.

A careful reading of these sources interrogates how queer men employed public, private, and interstitial spaces to foster queer culture, queer place-making, and to make visible queer identities. This analysis investigates the spaces in which homosexual culture formation became

visible and in which spaces was such cultural emergence restricted, scrutinized, and rendered unseen. Tangentially, the research project assesses the extent to which these spaces improved or diminished an agent's clandestine operational effectiveness, drawing connections between operational performance, an agent's sexuality, and use of queer-linked spaces.

1.3.2 Clothing as a proxy for the emergence of collective visual signifiers and cultural colloquialisms

Covert agents affixed several contested notions of sexuality and citizenship to the symbolism inherent in dress. Nationalities, social artifacts, and visual-cultural symbols: all were connected to the social performances of masculinity through clothing. The male body at war, clad in uniform, embodied national masculinity and rewarded the soldier with a reciprocal materialization of personal and national honour. By applying queer readings to the inherent symbolism of the uniform, this clad queer body concurrently disrupted expected performances of sexualities and military masculinities. Queer agents reimagined the cultural signaling of the uniform through their sartorial choices as an ethnically centred medium on which to code a homosexual visual language of sexual preference, availability, and queer identity.

Civilian clothing used not only as a covert disguise by undercover agents but also as a personal marker of self further complicated the correspondences between hegemonic military masculinities, gender, sexuality, citizenship, nationality, and legitimacy. Civilian clothing appropriated the visual markers of uniformed clothing (suits, footwear, headwear) to profit from the social masculinities attributed to military dress. At the same time, visually identifiable characteristics of a collective homosexual aesthetic in dress emerged. Queer agents tailored uniforms, adopted civilian forms of dress characteristically queer, and transfixed in both military and civilian clothing elements of the other to arrogate dress as a medium of homosexual communication.

Clandestine operations further problematized queer agents' use of clothing as undercover work required the assumption of foreign national dress. Agents assumed cultural artifacts from the countries in which they worked including cultural-sartorial signifiers, language, social mores, and behaviours. In this way, agents "passed" as foreign nationals through a remarkably *theatrical* process. Queer agents, however, obfuscated typical approaches to clandestine "passing" by using theatrical drag and gender-inverted performances to advance their objectives. They further (re)shaped and (re)imagined sartorial forms to broadcast sexual desire, aesthetic-as-identity, and collective membership in a definable cultural subgroup.

The cultural sartorial signifiers that celebrated queer subjects concurrently organized queerness as antithetical to masculinity, military courage, and full citizenship. Queer method is a useful way to interrogate hegemonic and marginal masculinities and sexualities, especially in periods of war, when gender and sexual performances were more fluid. Tracing the way that queer agents (re)fashioned the social symbolism of cultural artifacts is instructive to demonstrate how new forms of queer identity manifest in the fluctuating social position of queer masculinities in both uniforms and civilian dress.

1.3.3 Emotionality as insight into the lived experience of participants

The conflicting expressions of male queer emotion in the memoirs of several of the men studied here parallels the worried accomplishment of a distinct homosexual identity. A history of queer emotion during the war is unwritten. For contemporary queer men, a conflicted relationship with their sexuality marked their identity. Identities present paradoxes, especially sexual identities; all identities are provisional as they breach contemporary sexual boundaries. Sexual identities are simultaneously historical and contingent and fictional, but these fictions are necessary, as Foucault contends. The necessary fiction of wartime queer emotion must be

historicized given the moral and political implications of these emotions. The complex interconnections of class, age, geography, masculine social position, and homophobic ostracism produced queer emotions.

An investigation into queer emotion problematizes the study of masculinities as a way to interrogate same-sex desire and its dependencies on masculine social positions. The concept of masculinity as a social status fostered a pervasive social perception of the vilified, effeminate, unmanly sodomite that was not dependent on the sexual classification. This perception had implications for queer emotions. An agent's success in accomplishing those constructed heteronormative markers of masculinity conferred social belonging and full citizenship. Queer men questioned prevailing constructions of masculinity and its influence in the production of male emotion. These necessary fictions implicate the political dependencies between intelligence operations, the construction of gendered and nationalized masculinities, and the expression of queer emotion. For queer agents, their (in)ability to achieve the performative aspects of a national embodiment of masculinity generated a range of conflicted emotions. By interrogating their emotions of courage, social fitness, manliness, desire, and love, an imagined matrix of interrelated and mutually generating sentiments surfaces in which this analysis traces the conflicted emotional experiences of queer agents.

1.3.4 Purpose of this method

These methodological approaches to the historical materials are coterminous, uncovering the building blocks of this pre-Stonewall and pre-Wolfenden Report homosexual subculture. An examination of these artifacts captures the bi-directionality of queer culture at this historical moment: expanding yet constricting, regressive yet "becoming-as-being," fraught yet joyous. This rubric of queer visibility, identifiable cultural artifacts, and the lived experience of

participants renders the homosexual past as other, different from our modern understandings and categories of identity, situating its emergence within the suspended social mores of the war period. This analysis further assesses how queerness aided, abetted, or failed queer agents in their pursuit of clandestine objectives. While the boundaries of this analysis prevent a full appreciation of queer culture during the war, this analysis does nonetheless provide a study into five agents' experience of the uneven development of a homosexual subculture.

1.4 Sources

The primary sources investigated in this thesis are held at the National Archives (Special Operations Executive Records, Personnel Series) and the Imperial War Museum in the United Kingdom and at the Yale University Manuscripts and Archives Library (Donald Chase Downes Papers Collection and James Lord Papers Collection) in the United States. These primary materials are varied and include mission reports, debriefing documents, recruitment, training, and performance assessments, personal letters, sound recordings of interviews, and documentary film interviews. While these documents are critical to understanding the social position of homosexuals in the military, several of the records remain sealed and inaccessible for security reasons. The research for this thesis complemented these historical records with the wartime memoirs of four queer agents whose subjective realities show this homosexual culture-building enterprise. These post-war memoirs were published in the following years: Donald Downes (1953), Hardy Amies (1954), Denis Rake (1968), and James Lord (2010). Two memoirs were written in the decade following the war, memoirs that are raw, angry, and reactionary. The two others, written several decades later, reflect the shifting of memories, the organization of emotion, and the wisdom of age. These memoirs contain the complications of historical memory: self-aggrandizement, score-settling, and the memorialization and myth-making that occurs with

the passage of time. Where possible, other contemporaneous memoirs, including those written by Maurice Buckmaster, Head of 'F' Section in the Special Operations Executive (1958), and those written by mission colleagues in France, Richard Heslop (1970) and Nancy Wake (1985), verify, correct, or contest the claims made by these queer agents.

The memoirs shift in style, tone, intent, and veracity. Hardy Amies' memoir is a dispassionate accounting of events, one in stark contrast to Donald Downes' sly and angry tirade against his political masters. James Lord's memoir is a Greek elegy, a sad, at times mournful, and often apologetic unravelling of his internal homophobia and process of self-acceptance while betraying the mid-twentieth-century heterosexual propensity to downplay one's efforts, itself an expression of middle-class humble masculinity. Finally, Denis Rake's memoir is a fantastical tale of adventure, mishaps, and comedy, a memoir occasionally better suited to a nineteen-sixties television spoof of wartime espionage than an accurate remembrance of his contributions to the Special Operations Executive. His memories of escaping the Gestapo hidden in a barrel of sewage, fleeing the *milice* dressed as a nurse, or crossing the Pyrenees dragging a broken foot behind him seem to make mockery of the fact that most Allied agents, arriving in Nazi-controlled France, were captured and killed within days of landing. Yet, it is the memoirs used to collaborate, contest, and provide nuance to Denis' memoir which illustrate the complexities of historical memory. Maurice Buckmaster remembered Denis as a sort of temperate hero whose willingness to volunteer, his commitment to his duty, and his courage demanded admiration. Richard Heslop, on the other hand, remembered Denis as a traitor, on account of their capture by the *milice*, a traitor both for his incompetence and for his homosexual relationship with an *Abwehr* officer. Nancy Wake's memories were kinder. She remembered Denis as an object of

affection and good humour, despite his unreliability and his 'rakish' mischief-making. These differing perspectives highlight the quick-silver nature of historical memory.

These complementary, although often conflicting sites of historical memory, allow the reader to parse the memoirs, sifting fact from fiction, hyperbole from humility to perceive how homosexuals were viewed from multiple perspectives. Despite the varying accounts of the same actions, the same events, and the same people, these viewpoints do provide multidimensional insights into how those queer men understood themselves, the war, and their participation in the emergence of a broader homosexual culture and how the sexual and social performances of homosexual men were conceptualized, categorized, and assessed by contemporaries. By reading across these memoirs, it becomes clearer what was observed and what was hidden, what was lauded and what was vilified about homosexual men. The complexity and vagaries of historical memory make simplifying and categorizing contemporary understandings of homosexuality elusive and inexact. Nevertheless, the memoirs stand as an important example of queer self-expression and self-creation. Four of the five agents examined in this thesis wrote post-war memoirs. These creative acts illustrate a desire to understand the war, their contributions, and experiences of the war, but perhaps most importantly, their need to reconcile their wartime effort with their homosexuality and their emerging selfhood during the conflagration of World War Two.

This thesis ascribes privilege to the queer voice in the memoirs. This voice attains a subjective authority to disclose the lived experience and emotional reckoning of queer men during the war not present in official documentation. Memoirs represent a source to understand queer place-making as agents attributed particular importance to specific locations beyond any operational necessity for their presence at those sites. Official records capture the geographic

sites these agents traversed in logistical, strategic, or military terms; personal recollections trace the subjective emotional resonances these sites contained during any homosexual identity-making or culture building. The memoirs, however, can be factually incorrect. For example, recollections of imprisonment in camps at Girona, Gerona, Jaraba, and Miranda were regularly confused; here the official documentation corrects the narrative in the memoir. But the emotional or personal importance in recalling those imprisonments suggests an ordering of incidents in the construction of their homosexual selves. Similar to the study of hagiography, the memoirs contain an internal narrative logic and, through their constructed narrative style, the incidents included or discarded, the personal immediacy of some recollections and the dispassionate recitation of other events, traces the subjective experience of queer agents in war. The memoirs and the official, archival documentation are partners in elucidating the subjective, lived experience of these queer men.

Finally, a private intimacy suffuses these historical records, exposing the potential of the source documents to reveal the subjective experience in this emerging homosexual subculture. The materials are deeply personal. Memoirists wrote with candid emotion, expressing heartache, joy, longing, and pain in remarkably public ways given not only the intensely private nature of these sentiments, but also the social risk in admitting one's homosexuality in the postwar years. Unconventionally, to honour the candid bravery of these queer writers, forenames will be used in this analysis. Use of their given names does not diminish the importance of their experiences, contributions, or emotions. Instead, it reminds the reader of the humanity of these historical actors, acknowledges their wartime service, and their significant courage to reveal publicly and in print their homosexual identities during a period of social ostracism and persecution.

1.5 Scope

Case studies ground this analysis. This thesis examines three British agents from the Special Operations Executive and two American agents from the Office of Strategic Services and the United States Army Military Intelligence Corps. The wartime memories and activities of Denis Rake and James Lord are the primary focus of this thesis while the experiences of the others corroborate, challenge, and parallel the experiences of Denis and James. They volunteered. They were of varying ages with different levels of life experience, education, and ability. Collectively, they engaged in civilian artistic pursuits or industries. Four wrote post-war memoirs about their experience. Overall, they were not particularly effective agents. Nevertheless, the war records and personal reminiscences of these queer agents allow us to trace the fragile homosexual culture-making that occurred amid the demands of war. While discrete differences necessarily exist between the British and American experience of homosexual culture-building, the similarities in the historical records attend to similarities in their experience of the uneven development of a subculture, as well as how these men personally accomplished an emerging queer identity.

This thesis examines three clandestine British agents of the Special Operations Executive: Denis Rake, Hardy Amies, and Brian Stonehouse. It also considers two American operatives, Donald Chase and James Lord. These five men left behind a clearly-articulated and unique queer perspective of their wartime experience. This viewpoint animates their mission and operational debriefs and their personal recollections and memoirs. This thesis amplifies their queer voices as a counter-balance against an exclusive reliance on official records that continue to prejudice a holistic view of the queer experience during the war, records that render queerness as consistently marginal and pathological.

Major Denis Rake was an agent in the Special Operations Executive. Denis had an extensive background in the creative arts. He travelled with the *Sarrasani* Circus as a child performer and spent fifteen years working in musical comedies, reaching his professional peak with the leading role in Friedlander and Conrad's musical *Mercenary Mary* in 1939. He was mobilized in 1939. He served as a radio operator, having previously taken radio transmission courses as early as 1915. Denis operated under the operational code names of JUNIPER and RECEIVER and maintained two separate false identities in France as "René Dieudonné" and "Denis Joseph Rocher." In 1940, he survived two shipwrecks, first aboard the Pollux, a minesweeper on which he served as an interpreter, and later as interpreter on the Lancastria. In 1942, Denis volunteered to the Special Operations Executive under Maurice Buckmaster in Section "F". He worked in 1942 for the SPRUCE and PRIVET networks and in 1944 for the FREELANCE network. Denis, fluent in French, served as an interpreter in Nantes. Denis' first mission as radio operator was in the SPRUCE network working alongside Edward Zeff. He maintained his covert cover as a singer and drag performer at *La Cigogne* cabaret in Lyons and later at the *Boeuf sur le Toit* in Paris. Denis was arrested in 1942 crossing the demarcation line, was imprisoned, and, when released, he went to work for Edward Wilkinson in Paris.[33] Denis attempted, with Edward Wilkinson and Richard Heslop, to cross the demarcation line again near Limoges. This time, the three agents were arrested and imprisoned by the Territorial Surveillance. [34] Denis was held in two prisoner-of-war camps in Spain: at Castres and at the Chambaran camp. When finally released, Denis escaped through Spain and returned to London,

[33] Denis was arrested crossing the demarcation line. "On arrival at LYONS they were put in a van, taken to the Gendarmerie, where…they were told that they had been recognised as British officers." "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[34] "Summary No. 170 F. Section Pro-Forma – Richard Heslop Decoration Proposed," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/701/1.

where he was reassigned as a training officer. Finally, in May 1944, Denis volunteered to return to France as a radio operator for the FREELANCE network working with Nancy Wake and the French Resistance. Denis was involved in the German attack at Chaudes-Aigues near Mont Mouchet, where he was wounded. Afterward, he continued his work as a radio operator until being evacuated from France. The army later awarded Denis the Military Cross for bravery and membership in the Order of the British Empire; the French Government gave him the *Croix de Guerre* with Palm and appointed him a *Chevalier* of the Legion of Honour. Denis was openly homosexual.

Lieutenant Colonel Sir Edwin Hardy Amies was required to serve in the Special Operations Executive on account of his language experience. The army commissioned Hardy as a second lieutenant from Officer Cadet Training Company onto the British Army General List on 18 May 1940. Hardy transferred from the General List to the Intelligence Corps on 15 July 1940, and later completed parachute training.[35] Hardy, posted to Belgium, worked with the various Belgian resistance groups and adapted the names of fashion accessories as code words for his missions. He organized sabotage assignments and arranged for agents to be parachuted with radio equipment behind enemy lines into the Ardennes. Hardy was an integral part of Operation Ratweek, an assassination project developed by the S.O.E. to eliminate double agents and Nazi sympathizers in Belgium. Hardy rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel, leading Section "T" at the S.O.E. responsible for Belgium. In 1946, the Prince Regent of Belgium knighted Hardy and made him an Officer of the Order of the Crown on 17 September 1948. Hardy was a British fashion designer, founder of the Hardy Amies label, and designer to Queen Elizabeth II. He was

[35] The S.O.E. required parachute training for its agents who had various levels of success in acquiring the skill. See George Wilkinson, "Disposal Officers. Confidential Memo from I.H. Shearer, Maj. For Lt. Col. Comd. to "A" Branch. Disposal Officers. Subject George Wilkinson. REF: F/399/79/A/56 January 11, 1945." Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1593/4.

discreetly but openly homosexual. He met his partner, Ken Fleetwood, in 1953 and the pair remained together for forty-three years.

Captain Brian Stonehouse was an English painter, sometime portraitist to the British Royal family, and Special Operations Executive agent. Brian worked as an artist but joined the Territorial Army at the beginning of World War II. He was later conscripted into the Royal Artillery. In 1940, he worked as an interpreter for French troops in Glasgow who had been evacuated from Norway. In the autumn of 1941, he was training for a commission in the 121 Officer Cadet Unit when the Special Operations Executive contacted him. Because Brian was fluent in French, the S.O.E. recruited him as a wireless operator with code name of CELESTIN. On 1 July 1942, Brian parachuted into occupied France near the city of Tours in the Loire Valley. By August, he was in regular contact with the S.O.E. station in London. Yet Brian became careless, transmitting too much for too long. As a result, German direction-finders triangulated his position, and the *milice* arrested him on 24 October 1942 in *Château Hurlevent* near Lyon.

In Castres prison, the Gestapo placed Brian in solitary confinement and subjected him to frequent and brutal interrogations. In December, he was transferred to Fresnes prison in Paris and further interrogated. Eventually Brian was shipped to Germany with other S.O.E. prisoners, including Albert Guerisse, the Pat O'Leary Line organiser, as well as Guerisse's Australian radio operator, Tom Groome. In October 1943, they arrived in Saarbrücken and in November were sent to Mauthausen concentration camp. Brian spent time in a Luftwaffe factory camp in Vienna. In mid-1944, he was transferred to the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp in Alsace with Guerisse. Brian saved his own life by drawing sketches for the camp commandant, guards, and their families. From Natzweiler-Struthof, Brian was sent to the Dachau concentration camp from

which he was liberated by American troops on 29 April, 1945.[36] General Dwight D. Eisenhower personally commended Brian for his survival.[37] At home in London, the army awarded him a military Member of the Order of the British Empire commendation. After the war, he remained in the military and was promoted to captain while working for the Allied Control Commission in Frankfurt, where he assisted with the interrogation of Gestapo and SS members. Following the war, Brian moved to the United States where he had a successful career as a fashion illustrator for Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, and Elizabeth Arden. In 1979, Brian returned to the United Kingdom and continued his work as a portraitist. One of his last portraits was of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. Brian was discreetly homosexual his entire life.

Technician Third Grade James Lord was an American writer and biographer. James graduated from New Jersey's Englewood School for Boys (now Dwight-Englewood School) in 1940 and attended Wesleyan University, though he never earned a degree. James volunteered for general service in the United States Army in 1943, later joining the Ritchie Boys, following aptitude testing specializing in military intelligence. James completed his training across the continental United States. James was then stationed first in the United Kingdom and later spent time in France; he concluded his service working with the French Auxiliary assessing German prisoners-of-war and displaced persons. James was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious achievement by Major General Twaddle, having distinguished himself with high professional attainment and exemplary devotion to duty. In his memoir, James recounted coming out during the war, though his romantic and sexual activity in Europe was limited. After the war, he was discreetly homosexual, sexually and romantically active.

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[36] "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

[37] "Letter from B.J. Stonehouse to parents, Frankfurt, November 9, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

Donald Chase Downes was an American writer of detective novels. He attended Kent School and Phillips Exeter College. In 1926, Donald began studies at Yale University, and later became a teacher at various boarding schools in New England. He worked for five years on Cape Cod before volunteering at the Office of Naval Intelligence in 1940, for which he went to work at Robert College in Istanbul. He returned to the United States in 1941 and joined the British Security Coordination organization. Donald spied on the American First Committee, working closely with Colonel Eugene Prince of the U.S. Army Counter-Intelligence Corps. Donald discovered Nazi activity in New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco, Cleveland, and Boston, tracing money transfers from the Nazis to the America Firsters. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Donald arranged with John Pepper, his boss at the British Security Coordination, to transfer to the Office of Strategic Services. Donald was at first based in Washington, and worked under William Donovan and George K. Bowen, the head of Special Activities. Other senior figures he worked with included David Bruce (Head of Intelligence), Allen Dulles (Head of the New York office) and William Lane Rehm (Head of Finance). Donald was reassigned to North Africa in 1943 and was on Salerno beach during Operation Avalanche in 1943, the Allied landings during the invasion of Italy. Donald returned to the United States in August 1944 but was sent back to Europe in February 1945 to work undercover as a correspondent for a news agency. Donald remained in Europe after the war, where he took an interest in military justice and the prosecution of war criminals. After the war, Donald published his memoir and several spy thrillers, one of which, *Orders to Kill,* was made into a film directed by Anthony Asquith in 1961. Donald was discreetly homosexual for his entire life; he only alluded to his homosexuality tangentially in his 1953 memoir. Several of his unpublished novels

in the Yale University Manuscripts and Archives Library deal with the theme of a homosexual agent working during the war.

1.6 Concluding remarks

A close reading of the sources makes possible a charting of the queer possibilities that emerged during the war. Queer men were aware that they were participating in the emergence of a self-conscious collectivity, an exercise in which they had greater opportunities to experience different modes and expressions of queerness, to resist accepted constructions of gender expression, masculinity, and citizenship, and to (re)imagine and to produce new queer cultural artifacts and social logics. The unusual circumstance of their lives—a world at war, their artistic natures, clandestine service, disavowed activities, and queer sexualities—afforded provisional and impermanent occasions to experiment in the development of homosexual social logics in an iterative and collective process of creation. Through a nuanced interrogation of the wartime experience of these five clandestine agents, it is possible to witness the embryonic and fragile nature of the emerging forms of queerness in a collective, self-conscious group of homosexual men.

Chapter 2: Space, intentionality, and sexual geographies

2.1 Introduction

The connections that generate queer, homosexual, and gay subjects while also constituting queerness as dependent on private, commercial, and interstitial spaces are often antithetical to expressions of same-sex desire. Yet, geographic space, sexuality, and the emergence of a homosexual subculture in the mid-twentieth century were inexorably linked as gay men and lesbians increasingly created queer, urban networks of commercial and public spaces. Queer agents additionally used these spaces for espionage: to enhance operational cover, and to remain clandestine.

As John D'Emilio and George Chauncey demonstrated, urbanization fostered the emergence of large, urban lesbian and gay communities investigated the development of a modern "ethnic" homosexuality.[1] Anthropologist Gayle Rubin located a modern "ethnic" homosexuality in the wave of twentieth-century urbanization, and recent scholarship further supports the link between industrial modernity and the contemporary homosexual community. This transnational gesture toward identifying geographic sites of homosexual culture surveyed urban sites such as Moscow, Paris, Amsterdam, London, Lisbon, and San Francisco. Importantly, Higgs' work mobilizes Michael Sibalis' research on gay urban imaginaries and the shifting gay ghetto in Paris.[2] Historians extended this line of inquiry to explore how queer men mapped homosexual networks onto commercial, public, sexual, ethnic, and urban sites in the early

[1] See John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities. The Making of the Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983) and George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).
[2] See Michael Sibalis, "Paris." in *Queer Sites. Gay Urban Histories since 1600*. Ed. Higgs, David. (New York: Routledge, 1999):10-37.

twentieth-century.[3] This work on the correspondences between space, urban life, and queerness continues with work on urban territories, borders, acceptance, and control of homosexuality in diverse urban settings.

It is fair to ask why the war was instrumental in the emergence of a distinct homosexual subculture and equally fair to wonder why queer spaces that existed prior to the start of the war changed during the war and became important sites of a broader queer culture-building enterprise. Most of the public, commercial, and private sites examined in this thesis existed before the commencement of the war. Prior to the war, these spaces were more marginal, fewer in number, and located in specific quarters of the city and at the margins of social acceptability. They were intensely local by nature. They were certainly culturally specific to the city, the country, the language, and the locale in which those sites were located. The mass mobilization of single men for the war effort and the geographic displacement of these men from their home countries created conditions in which more single, homosexual men could meet and meet these men did. They congregated in existing queer bars, hotels, and other sites of queer culture. The transnational nature of their citizenships and branch of armed service created conditions for the cross-pollination of emerging queer dress codes, languages, and social logics. These men actively sought out these established queer spaces in which to socialize. Denis worked at *le Boeuf sur le Toit* and met romantic partner Max Halder at its bar. James was invited by his friend Harrison Allicott to meet at *le Boeuf* for a drink to unwind and relieve the pressures of their service. It was at *le Boeuf* that James met his first romantic partner while in service in Europe.

[3] See Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957,* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006), Florence Tamagne, *History of Homosexuality in Europe: Berlin, London, Paris, 1919-1939,* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), and Hugh Ryan, *when Brooklyn was queer,* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2019).

During the war, these sites became congregations of different, and yet commonly aligned men, both by military service as well as by sexual preference, and that comingling allowed for an acceleration of a collective consciousness of a homosexual community.

Because these men were in service and often in uniform in both private residential settings and in commercial bars, there was a comingling of military culture and homosexual culture within these spaces that wasn't present prior to the war. These sites became inhabited by men in uniforms, resulting in an unconscious or unsubtle colonization by the military into these queer spaces. In many ways, the presence of military customs, structures, and restrictions influenced the tentative organizational structures and groupings of homosexual life going forward. While a broad statement and not fully examined in this thesis, the ways in which homosexual men began to organize themselves reflected the stratification of the different types of men in the military. The particular patronage afforded to specific queer bars, hotels, or other sites replicated the custom of billeting officers and enlisted men at different hotels, the existence of officers' clubs, and the traditions of the mess hall. Homosexual men could transgress the boundaries established by rank, class, and authority in queer sites where commissioned and non-commissioned officers and enlisted men socialized together. Homosexual men navigated the breakdown of those established protocols and relationships particularly in queer sites, developing alternate ways to establish queer relationships. When they returned to exclusively military sites, those traditional stratifications re-emerged.

The interconnections between queerness, espionage, and 'space' expose the problematic nature of homosexual covert agents in international relations. This chapter considers the intersection of sexuality, queerness, war, and commercial space as a means to understand the complex interactions between same-sex desire and the operational objectives of undercover

agents in the United Kingdom's Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.) and the US Army's Military Intelligence Service. Matthew Sweet's work on the intersection of homosexuality, espionage, criminality, and exile in wartime London's hotels provides a way to explore how queer agents accessed, navigated, and inhabited commercial and public urban space. This chapter uncovers the strategies queer agents employed to exploit queerness to further their espionage activities as they also assigned primacy to commercial sites to express queer desire. As case studies, queer agents Denis Rake, S.O.E. operative, and James Lord, US Army military intelligence officer, demonstrate how queer men colonized public commercial space for operational purposes and traversed networks of sexual opportunity. Queer agents used queer, public commercial urban space purposefully and intently, employing their queer sexuality as an operational cover, as a strategy to disguise their covert purpose in plain sight, and also as a site of connection to networks of queer men for homosocial and sexual adventure.

2.2 Queer Paris, queer London, and espionage

In the mid-1940s, Paris was the chief site of European queer culture, followed closely by London. A queer geography was already established in Paris by the time of the German occupation. With the rise of the Nazi party in Germany in the mid-nineteen thirties, Berlin witnessed an exodus of queer commercial and artistic enterprises and a migration of queer people to Paris. The Montmartre, Pigalle, and Montparnasse quarters of the city dominated the pre-war Parisian homosexual geography. For hundreds of years, homosexual men have sought sexual adventure in the streets, squares, and parks of Paris. The principal cruising site in Paris between 1850 and 1960, was the *Champs-Élysées*—not the avenue, but the wooded parkland along both sides of the street from the *Place de la Concorde* and the *Rond-Point*. This area was known both

for its heterosexual prostitution and homosexual cruising areas.[4] An abundance of public urinals, *pissoirs* or *vespasiennes*, provided hundreds of additional cruising opportunities. By the 1930s, in fact, Paris boasted more than one thousand public urinals, sites of opportunistic sexual liaisons. With countless other parks, avenues, public arcades, and squares, the banks of the Seine gave public view to sexual cruising and bathing in the river.

With changes in transportation, public institutional sites further provided opportunities for queer encounters. Railway stations including the Bastille terminus and the busy suburban terminal of Saint-Lazare witnessed frequent indecency arrests. From the 1940s, the Invalides Station, the city terminus for the buses to and from Orly Airport, saw intensive homosexual activity. In all sites of passage, railway, bus, and subway, homosexual activity was mapped on its institutional edifices.

The most significant development was the establishment of an extensive network of bars, nightclubs, and bathhouses which gave queer men a place to socialize and encouraged the formation of gay enclaves within the city, notably in Montmartre, Pigalle, and Montparnasse. Commercial establishments catering to a predominantly homosexual clientele were nothing new, originating in Paris in the eighteenth century. By 1910, the district of Montmartre in northern Paris emerged as the centre of anarchism, bohemianism, and illicit sexuality, including prostitution, lesbianism, and male homosexuality. A small but significant gay commercial world comprising bathhouses, bars, and restaurants had emerged in Paris by the early 1920s, including the *Grand Café* on the *Boulevard de la Madeleine* and the fashionable *Café de la Paix* on the

[4] Michael Sibalis, "Paris," in *Queer Sites gay urban histories since 1600*, ed. David Higgs (New York: Routledge, 1999), 17.

Boulevard des Capucines facing the Opera House.[5] The emblematic event of homosexual life in Paris in the interwar years was a series of masked balls held annually during Carnival on Shrove Tuesday and the Thursday of Mid-Lent at Magic-City dancehall on the *Rue de l'Université*, near the Eiffel Tower. Queer men held private "fag" balls (*bals de tapettes* or *bals de tantes*) during Carnival. Between 1922 and 1939, thousands of men, most costumed and many in extravagant female drag, attended the balls at Magic-City. These balls were the most visible manifestation of Paris' thriving homosexual subculture in the 1920s and the 1930s.

There were many specialized bars and nightclubs for gay men, lesbians, and their friends on the Left Bank of Montparnasse, on the *Champs-Élysées*, and especially in Montmartre. One of the most famous venues was *La Chaumière* on the *Rue Gabrielle,* where night owls mingled with drag queens. There was also *Chez Graff*, a busy tavern and restaurant on the *Place Blanche*, a few steps along the sidewalk from the Moulin Rouge. Some venues were very elegant like *Le Boeuf sur le Toit,* which opened in January 1922 just off the *Champs-Élysées*. A fashionable cabaret and restaurant inspired by Jean Cocteau and frequented by Édith Piaf, Igor Stravinsky, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Westminster, and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, *Le Boeuf* became a queer commercial site of artistry, bohemianism, criminality, espionage, and homosexual sociability.

The subcultures of criminality, espionage, and homosexual adventure mingled within the bars and nightclubs of Paris and London. As Matthew Sweet demonstrated, nightclubs emerged as a location of professional interaction between criminals, spies, officers, and homosexuals—frequently, individuals belonged to all four categories. Same-sex-desiring men patronized the

[5] Cafés were a frequent and important site of clandestine connection for S.O.E. agents, particularly to meet local resistance agents and cells. "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942, p.4," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3.

bars of London and Paris' grand hotels including the Ritz Hotel in London and cabarets like the *Boeuf sur le Toit* in Paris. Homosexual subculture and the secret state jointly occupied the hotel bar, coalescing two clandestine networks into the same space, one where a set of prescribed, coded languages enabled exclusive communication between patrons, and where one code of silence competed with another. Sweet highlighted that the wartime secret state permitted the possibility of this collision between homosexual subculture and espionage activity, in contrast to the later volatility of the combination of homosexuality and espionage that saw a number of defections to the Soviet Union in the following decade. This bar space functioned as a geography of sexual opportunity. In London, queer officers flocked to the Arts and Battledress Club and to a second location of *Le Boeuf sur le Toit,* which opened in London during the war to meet demand. The lower bar in the Ritz Hotel in London, affectionately known as the Pink Sink, was another site of the complex interactions of criminal, spy, and homosexual subcultures. Denis Rake used his queer identity as cover while operating in France, finding public employment at a cabaret in Lyons called *La Cicogne* (The Stork) and again in Paris at the *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*. James Lord frequented the Statler Hotel in Boston and *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* while in Paris. These locations represent a network of homosocial sites, a charting of sexual geographies, and an imaginary map which queer men subversively read to traverse opportunities for sexual expression.

Queer men also extended their patronage to the growing number of London hotels that served homosexual clientele. Queer officers flocked to the Arts and Battledress Club on Orange Street, the lower bar at the Ritz in Soho, and the second site of *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* in London, newly opened in response to increasing demand and catering in particular to officers and the moneyed class of the city.[6] Homosexual clubs emerged in Soho to accompany the Arts and

[6] Emma Vickers, "Queer sex in the metropolis? Place, subjectivity, and the Second World War," *Feminist Review* 96 (2010):63.

Battledress Club, including the Crown and Two Chairmen, the Swiss Hotel, and Sam's Café, the latter to complement the Cave of the Golden Calf in Mayfair and the Queens Head in Chelsea. By extending queer culture into physical and imagined urban spaces, queer men could invest meaning into those spaces, recasting their public use as part of an extended imaginary of homosexual place-making and sites of sexual opportunity. Repeated ways of using urban space purposefully if covertly generated maps in Paris and in London of a private queer world with their own landmarks, histories, and possibilities.[7]

In examining how queer agents used public, private, and interstitial spaces, patterns emerge. The manner in which queer agents used space reveals the fluidity of their public, private, and intimate performances of sexuality. Queer agents approached these spaces purposefully, frequently closeted, occasionally accidentally, regularly opportunistically, and sometimes operationally. These patterns (behavioural, sexual, interpersonal, emotional, and operational) display a remarkable consistency among the case studies of Denis Rake, Donald Downes, and James Lord in how they traversed these different queer spaces. The memories of these three men provide a telling entry to the analysis though one not necessarily representative of all queer men or all queer agents. Yet their actions, choices, and memories are suggestive of patterns of how queer men and some queer covert agents used public, private, and interstitial spaces. Deliberate use of certain queer spaces may have further concealed the agent within the occupied areas of France. At the same time, how these agents used space could jeopardize their operational covers and thus thwart their operational success.

Hotels transformed during the war from sites of leisure, sociability, and travel to sites of exile, criminality, espionage, and queer subcultures, where official military and government

[7] Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London. Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 65.

business coexisted with thieves, hustlers, criminals, spies, and homosexuals. Public, commercial, urban queer spaces were important sites of queer sexual adventure and often sites of covert activity. Homosexual men met for sexual and social opportunity at hotels, hotel bars, and cabarets. Interstitial sites within hotels such as toilets, reception areas, storage areas, and stairwells offered additional sites for sexual adventure and clandestine communications. Public parks further complicated the sites of connection between agents, saboteurs, criminals, and homosexuals.

The Vichy government made efforts to constrain and limit queer culture in Paris. Prior to Vichy France, French law treated heterosexuality and homosexuality similarly; sexual relations between consenting male adults had been legal in France since 1791. Pétain changed the penal code between 1940–1944, reintroducing a distinction between natural and unnatural sexual relations into jurisprudence and linking this effort to a Vichy pro-family framework. The new law reflected the concerns of the Parisian police and the French navy about the deleterious effects of homosexuality on sailors,[8] reflecting similar transatlantic concerns from American leaders about the sexual activity of sailors in New York.[9] For young and poorly paid sailors, often still in their teens, engaging in homosexual prostitution in Paris was their best opportunity to supplement income. While the Vichy government did not call into question the right of adult homosexuals to their own sexual activity, contemporary homophobic panic over immorality in

[8] Michael D. Sibalis, "Homophobia, Vichy France, and the 'Crime of Homosexuality' The Origins of the Ordinance of 6 August, 1942," *The GLQ Forum* 8, no. 3 (2002):304.

[9] The moral panic surrounding sailors and homosexuality reached a peak in the public press in New York in the infamous Swastika Swishery scandal. Senator David Walsh was accused of allegedly participating in male homosexuality in a male bordello in Brooklyn with serving sailors. The resulting scandal involving FBI surveillance and evidence planting, German illegal immigrants, male homosexuals, alleged Nazi spies and sabotage, the British Intelligence Service, British conspiracies, the American anti-war movement, the ACLU, the American Communist Party, and President Roosevelt led ultimately to a Senate hearing. The confluence of the demands of war, homosexuality, and moral panic was often focused on the moral health of those young men serving. See for example, David O'Toole. *Sex, Spies, and Videotape. Outing the Senator,* (Worcester: James Street Publishing, 2005).

France must contextualize the Vichy government's legal manoeuvring. Likewise, Vichy Regent and Admiral François Darlan's insistence that something be done about civilians who slept with sailors and thus damaged the navy's reputation requires consideration. Vichy concerns about the moral health of young men, and the dangers in interacting with foreigners and foreign influences, promoted a focus on cleansing Paris' streets of moral decay and ensuring national security. The German preoccupation with appropriate and sanctioned tourism by German soldiers on leave in Paris drove efforts to protect young German men from moral decay.

These efforts to constrain queer culture and its supposed corruption of young men's morals, particularly young German men, found expression in the limitations placed on German soldiers visiting Paris on leave. German Army High Command offered German soldiers on the eastern front trips to Paris as a way to rest and rehabilitate. The German government controlled the tourism of their personnel in France, and accordingly, oriented it in the cultural directions desired by the Nazi leadership.[10] Tourism by soldiers was part of a broader reward system. Tourism reinforced German dominance in Paris and allowed occupier-tourists to view themselves as civilized. By May 1941, over one million Germans had toured Paris. German military leaders, however, increasingly complained of sexual tourism, specifically in the dancehalls of Montmartre.[11] German leadership included tours to unnamed artistically and culturally significant Paris nightspots. German officials observed that some of the "nastiest dance clubs of French whores of the worst sort were in Montmartre."[12] France had acquired a sexualized imagery as the homeland of sexual licentiousness and pornography. Wartime France

[10] Bertram M. Gordon, "Warfare and Tourism. Paris in World War II," *Annals of Tourism Research* 25, no. 3 (1998):632.
[11] Gordon, "Warfare and Tourism. Paris in World War II," 621.
[12] Julia S. Torrie, "'Our rear area probably lived too well': tourism and the German occupation of France, 1940-1944," *Journal of Tourism History* 3, no. 3 (2011):318.

had become an exotic fantasy and a site of sexualized tourism. The tension between soldiers' desire, surveillance and control, and the restlessness of the French population, caused these tourist explorations to constrict and adjust during the occupation. In 1941, the movement of German tourists through Paris was still relaxed; a German tourist who escaped surveillance to visit *Le Boeuf* could do so unencumbered. By 1944, however, French resistance activity had increased, and Nazi officials mandated that German soldier-tourists were required to carry a gun to enter a cabaret or be accompanied.[13] Nazi authorities progressively prioritized moral health, even as soldiers sought sex and adventure. Vichy's moralistic, anti-alcohol, anti-homosexual policies reflected Nazi fears about nightclubs in Berlin. These policies focused on Parisian clubs, including, *L'Étincelle*, a Montmartre club that advertised the "*prettiest models"* in its shows and where, in 1943, a transvestite performed in a show at the *Folies Bergère*. German soldiers frequented homosexual bars, indeed, numerous gay bars in occupied Paris, like *La Sans-Souci.* These were popular with German soldiers on leave despite official prohibition of homosexuality. *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* was the premier homosexual bar frequented by German soldiers, French nationals, intellectuals, artists, Allied soldiers, and served as a site not only for homosexual sociability, expression, and sexual opportunity, but also as a site of bohemianism, anarchy, espionage, intrigue, and artistry.

Denis Rake made *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* the primary site of his clandestine cover as a S.O.E. agent in Paris. This decision was operational based on his professional experience, his knowledge of Paris, and his connection to sources in the Parisian and queer community that complemented his operational cover. *Le Boeuf* was inimitably fitted to strengthen Denis' cover. Stage training provided the entry point to Denis Rake's operational cover in France. As a child

[13] Torrie, "'Our rear area probably lived too well': tourism and the German occupation of France, 1940-1944,"328.

performer, Denis Rake claimed to have toured Europe with the *Sarrassani* Circus[14] as a tumbler, and later was trained as a tenor by his mother, herself a well-known soprano. Starting in 1929, Denis spent fifteen years as a musical theatre actor and dancer in productions in London's West End. Denis reached his professional apex starring in *Mercenary Mary,* which opened at London's Hippodrome on October 7, 1925. By 1939, under the stage name Denis Greer, he worked with Ivor Novello in *The Dancing Years.* Novello, a Welsh actor, dramatist, singer, and composer, became one of the most popular British entertainers of the first half of the twentieth century. *The Dancing Years* was a musical with book and music by Novello and lyrics by Christopher Hassall. The musical was first produced at London's Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, on 23 March 1939, directed by Novello's frequent collaborator, Leontine Sagan. Novello starred opposite Mary Ellis with Denis in the chorus. It was at this time that Denis entered the war effort, as a French translator and an S.O.E. agent.

Denis drew upon his theatrical background to create an effective and plausible cover while in France. Denis disappeared into the musical performance scene in Paris and Lyons after landing in southern France by way of armed trawler, submarine, felucca, before finally coming ashore at Juan-les-Pins by rubber row boat.[15] Denis noted that his "papers were made out in the name of Denis Joseph Rocher, *artiste du music-hall*, which was a very good cover for me, because I had appeared in cabaret in London, Paris, and Brussels and other places before the

[14] Denis' involvement in the Sarrasini Circus is disputed as no historical evidence remains of his employment or touring with the company. Denis, however, recalled his experiences in detail and remembered a "Mrs. Jarrett" as the matron who cared for the child performers. While this episode may have been true, it does serve the purpose of allowing Denis to recall himself as a "well-behaved and very affectionate little boy." Portions of Denis' memoir clearly were written to present a particular version of himself to the reader. Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* (London: Leslie Frewin, 1968), 28.

[15] Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* (London: Leslie Frewin, 1968), 73

war."[16] By 1942, Denis worked as a cabaret singer at *La Cicogne* night-club[17] in Lyons and indicated during patrol stops that, before the war in Brussels, he had worked in several theatres including the *Gaité,* the Alhambra, and the *Palais d'Été*.[18] The interconnectedness of queer culture, performance spaces, and hotels and bars is evident in the commercial ownership of these venues.

Denis focused his operational cover and employment in Paris on *le Boeuf*. There, he performed as a drag performer and impersonator.[19] Adopting the nickname of *L'Hirondelle*, Denis performed mimetic drag at *Le Boeuf* in the evenings, imitating Piaf, known colloquially herself as the "little swallow" and close friend of Jean Cocteau. This secondary employment did not impede his work as an S.O.E. agent.[20] On the contrary, it complemented his undercover work and provided relief from the pressures Denis felt working clandestinely for the Special Operations Executive.[21] Denis remarked that "[t]hough both Zeff [a fellow S.O.E. agent] and I

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[16] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 97.

[17] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 112.

[18] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 124.

[19] Mimetic and exaggerated mimic drag performance was a part of military, male, homosocial culture during the war in both Allied and Axis forces. Drag performance allowed men to seek entertainment, resolve sexual anxieties, and provide a feminized outlet and a safety valve as a release from the abnormal state of single-sex environments. In some cases, drag shows also opened up a social space in which gay men expanded their own culture.

[20] The S.O.E. taught its recruits that, in order to maintain an effective cover, their cover story must contain elements of truth about the agent's specific and unique life experiences as outlined in the World War II S.O.E. Training Manual. Also see S.O.E. agent Richard Heslop's comments on building an effective cover as follows: "Put as much truth as possible into your story without, of course, compromising friends. Be as at home as possible in the part you're acting," "You must take as a profession something as far as possible in keeping with the work, the special work you are to undertake," and "The danger with a cover story is that you're apt to forget details." "False Identities by a British Liaison Officer working with the F.F.I. Sunday, 28th October, 1945, Home Service London, p. 1, 2, 4," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/701.

[21] Denis' employment at the *Boeuf sur le Toit* served to blur his operational cover. While Denis and Maurice Buckmaster recounted his work at the bar, the homosexual clientele, its location in Montmartre, and Denis' drag performance caused some confusion for other agents when they came in contact with Denis. Another source "mentioned DENNIS, a very tall, good looking W/T operator belonging to the organisation who is now running an enormous dress shop in PARIS and doing very well. Source was warned not to contact him 'as he was not being a

were really and truly burdened down with far too much work, I still had time to live up to my cover as a cabaret artist."[22] Continuing to work as a musical performer provided additional mental and emotional benefits: Denis noted that he was "quite sure that this work, which was more or less routine for me, helped me to face the abnormality of my secret life much more calmly than I would otherwise have done."[23] During the Nazi occupation of France, the queer inflections of cabaret culture temporarily flickered, returning only after liberation. *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* was an important exception, as a nexus for queer, spy, and criminal subcultures to collide.

Le Boeuf was a site of intertwined artistic performances, clandestine connections, and sexual adventure. Within the memoirs of James Lord and Denis Rake, there are four instances of queer agents in queer spaces meeting and interacting, highlighting the curiously interlocked logics of queerness, subterfuge, sex, and commercial space. Harrison Alliot Jr., a fellow U.S. Army military intelligence officer, suggested that James Lord visited *Le Boeuf* as a site of sexual opportunity following James' long period of European abstinence. Harrison suggested that he and James "get together at that gay club in the *rue du Colisée*, the Cow on the Roof."[24] James did not know the club. Harrison explained that it was "[j]ust off the *Champs Élysées.* It's one of the smartest spots in Paris. Cocteau and Picasso and everybody used to go there before the war."[25] James' impression of the club was revealing when he noted that "The Cow on the Roof was in fact an ox, and it bellowed aloud, calling gay men to carouse at the long bar and beyond in the

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good boy.'" "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[22] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 111.

[23] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 111.

[24] James Lord, *My Queer War*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010), 308.

[25] Lord, *My Queer War*, 308.

latitudinous rooms, where room was rampant for almost anything."[26] James commented that the club was "so gay as to make that Statler [a homosexual bar in Boston] seem staid."[27] After a conversation with Harrison in the club, James went on to meet a man with whom he had sex, his first sexual encounter since arriving in France a year earlier. *Le Boeuf* served as a site of sexual refuge and of sexual re-awakening for James, but it is worth noting that neither Harrison nor James ~~v~~iewed the homosexual bar as a prohibited space. The queer sexual body was rendered visible and pre-eminent in this queer commercial space, while identities like military intelligence officers became secondary.

Denis' interaction with a German intelligence officer in the bar reveals the complex correspondences between queer sexuality, identity, and subterfuge. Denis met Max Halder, an Abwehr military intelligence officer at the bar. When Denis met Max, he turned "and saw a man of about forty, slim, very good-looking, with glorious deep blue eyes which were as sensitive as an artist's."[28] Denis, wary but attracted, navigated his numerous covert names— "Rocher," his cover name, "Greer," his stage name known in the bar, and "Rake," his given name. Max asked Denis what to call him; Denis decided on his cover name. Denis, however was focused on the "kindly expression in his eyes and on his sensitive features which was unlike any I had ever seen on a German before."[29] Colonel Maurice Buckmaster, Head of 'F' Section responsible for France in the S.O.E., recalled this meeting between Denis and the Abwehr officer differently. Buckmaster focused on the interaction between two covert enemy agents when he recalled that "Denis knew that whatever was going on [he] would have to play it out, so he sat down and soon

[26] Lord, *My Queer War*, 310.
[27] Lord, *My Queer War,* 310.
[28] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.
[29] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 140.

he and the S.S. man were talking amiably."[30] Buckmaster described Max as an apparently "very wretched man, sensitive and artistic, who had found himself, owing to his family connexions, recruited into the S.S., in spite of his detestation of Hitler."[31] "Sensitive and artistic" suggests coded language that indicates Max's homosexuality, while "wretched" suggests the state of being homosexual in Nazi Germany. Buckmaster posited that Max "often came to the *Boeuf sur le Toit* to get away from things."[32] Queer and espionage subcultures conflated at the bar while competing coded languages preserved queerness, identified sexual opportunity, and exposed intelligence identities.

The bar precluded any scrutiny of the patrons' queerness, conferring safety from exposure either to their homosexuality or to military allegiance, credibility, and trust to individuals, and entry into the subcultures of homosexual men, covert subterfuge, and the adjacent artistic performing culture. In one instance, during the conversation between Denis and the barman, Denis indicated that he needed to obtain new identity papers in Paris. The barman suggested he see Jacques Artel. Max interrupted the conversation by asking Denis over his shoulder if he knew Jacques. Denis was mindful not to disclose his covert intentions. "He [Max] seemed to know what I was thinking because, before I could answer his question about knowing Jacques, he nodded to a notice above the bar - 'This bar is prohibited to officers in uniform' and raised his shoulders."[33] Max intimates both the nature of his military service and his queerness by addressing his lack of uniform. Max said that he "was thinking about going to see Jacques

[30] Maurice Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone,* (London: Oldhams Press, 1958), 93.
[31] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 93.
[32] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 93.
[33] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139. This prohibition was common across Paris. "The following notice was put up outside certain places of entertainment in PARIS;- 'No men or women of German nationality in uniform allowed in this establishment'." "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

myself at the theatre this evening."[34] Denis wondered if this interaction meant "that Jacques…[had]…turned collaborator?"[35] When Max excused himself to go to the restroom, the barman at *Le Boeuf* assured Denis about Max, telling Denis that he had "[s]omething to do with the commissariat. You've nothing to fear from him. He's violently anti-Nazi…I tell you you've nothing to fear, but I shouldn't tell him everything you're up to."[36] The barman was intimating that Max was trustworthy, despite it being known that he was a German Abwehr officer, not only because he was known, but also because he was queer. Queerness further enforced credibility and acceptance when Denis later met Jacques to obtain his forged papers. Having arrived, "it was in his [sitting room at the *Comédie Française*] that Jacques Artel received us. He recognized me [Denis] at once."[37] Seeing Denis and Max together, Jacques asked "'[h]ow did you two get to know one another?' Artel asked."[38] Having met at *Le Boeuf* conferred acceptance, established trustworthiness, and provided entry to the network of queer artistic men.

In Vichy Paris, with German patrols, a queer S.O.E. agent could disappear in plain sight as a drag performer in a homosexual cabaret bar in Montmartre. Denis did not express a premediated intent to use his drag persona as a cover during his covert operation in Paris when he departed England.[39] The consequence, however, of relying on his past as an openly

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[34] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.
[35] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.
[36] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 140.
[37] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 141.
[38] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 142.
[39] Denis was not unique in using cross-dressing to enhance his operational cover. Dudley Wrangel Clarke, commander of "A" Force the clandestine agency tasked to deceive the Germans in Africa, famously used women's clothing for subterfuge with unexpected results. Transiting from England via Madrid to Africa, Clarke "was arrested in a main street dressed, down to a brassiere, as a woman. The interpreter states that the police consider it a homosexual affair, and will probably fine and release him. But the Germans apparently think that they have got on

homosexual performer led Denis to gravitate toward known commercial establishments to inform his cover: *La Cicogne* in Lyons, the *Grand Ecart* and the *Chez Ma Tante* in Pigalle, and *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* in Montmartre in Paris. In these homosexual cabarets, the queer body became visible and prominent, while the identity of the agent disappeared. Homosexuality was publicly projected upon the queer body, sexualizing the agent while concealing the agent's clandestine activities. Queerness further imparted access to an urban network of homosexual men. It provided the *bona fides* required for entry to this subculture. One subculture could be used to meet the aims of the other, while access to homosexual contacts advanced the objectives of the clandestine agent through admission to a trusted homosexual community. Queer bar culture was a non-national, non-militarized space in which allegiances were known but non-defining. Denis Rake's performance as a drag artist at *le Boeuf* improved the operational effectiveness of his cover by mobilizing a web of past professional experiences, accessing systems of artistic contacts, and benefiting from the neutral non-national homosexual space from where heterosexual German soldier-tourists were restrained on the margins of Paris.

2.3 Sites of sociability

Hotels and bars were sites of sociability, sexual exploration, sexual adventure, and emotional connection. Hotels figure prominently in establishing or reinvigorating social

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to a first-class espionage incident." "Cypher from Madrid to Foreign Office, from Mr. Yencken to Sir A. Cadogan, October 18, 1941," Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, NA, FO 1093/252. Police photographs captured "Wrangel Clarke when arrested in Madrid for masquerading as a woman." Efforts were made by those at the highest level of command, including Churchill himself, to ensure his release, and if Clarke did not demonstrate any signs of mental derangement, to continue to Africa for his assignment. Clarke was released with a fine and transited through Gibraltar to Africa. "D.D.M.I (Inf) War Office Most Secret Cipher Telegram from War Office to A.M.A. Lisbon, Desp. 2010 October 19, 1941," Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, NA, FO 1093/252 and "D.D.M.I (Inf) War Office Most Secret Cipher Telegram from War Office to A.M.A. Lisbon, Desp. 2230," Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, NA, FO 1093/252. In this incident, the contemporary connection between cross-dressing and homosexuality was evident.

connections and in offering access to potential sexual and romantic relationships. Hotels became consistent sites for social connection. While in Greece, Denis met a Greek prince at a hotel reception hosted by Lady Bentinck, the wife of a British minister in Athens[40] with whom he would have a romantic and sexual relationship, until it was exposed in the Greek media. The publicity and pressure made the two end the relationship. On the evening of their first meeting, "[b]efore the reception broke up, the Prince offered to drive me back to my hotel…. And when, in the car, he took my hand and said that he hoped we would see one another again very soon, I said I hoped so too."[41] Hotels became intertwined with social and sexual opportunity, but also and equally with queer culture and queer use of space. On leave from S.O.E. training in Scotland, Denis returned to London. "In those days I used to drink in the Ritz Bar, which was a famous rendezvous before the war. Everybody there knew me, and I used to take to the Ritz those foreign gentlemen who were going to be agents."[42] Accessing the queer space of the lower bar at the Ritz, the "Pink Sink", produced unintended collisions between pre-war and covert identities. "Of course, the barman, who knew me by my professional stage-name, used to say, 'Hello, Mr Greer', or something, and these boys would say 'Greer?' But I thought your name was Dieudonné (that was my cover-name in S.O.E.) and I would say, "Well, you know, that's my professional name. I have another name too."[43] Similar to Denis' experience at *Le Boeuf sur le*

[40] Lady Bentinck was married to Reverend Sir Charles Henry Bentinck who pursued a military and diplomatic career before entering the ministry later in life. Following the war, in 1919 he returned to the Foreign Office and in 1920 was posted with the rank of counsellor to Athens where he again acted as *chargé d'affaires* for a considerable period. He was also British delegate to the international financial commission which had been established in Athens following the Greco-Turkish War (1897) to oversee the public finances of Greece. He married Lucy Victoria Buxton (20 April 1893 – 27 June 1978), daughter of Sir Thomas Buxton, 4th Baronet, and Anne Louisa Matilda O'Rorke, on 9 May 1922. whose great-grandmother was Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria.

[41] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 43.

[42] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 56.

[43] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 56.

Toit in Paris, queer and espionage subcultures co-existed at the Ritz. This intermingling of hotel, queer, and espionage subcultures was further demonstrated when Denis was in transit at Gibraltar, returning to operations.[44] Denis headed down to dinner at the Rock Hotel.[45] "When I went down to the dining-room I had another shock, for the head waiter led me to a table at which were already sitting five young RAF officers with whom I had had drinks and dinner at the *Boeuf sur le Toit* in London only the week before."[46] Queer social connection abounded in hotel space.

2.3.1 Hotels

Allied commanders in Britain and the United States regularly commandeered hotels for military use during the war, transforming a commercial public space into a militarized, single-sex space. This space was transitory, temporary, all-male, regulated, and resistant to the extension or appropriation of its space for queer expression and queer sexual opportunity. The army experience, while famous for forging bonds between men, also created transitory spaces in hotel where queer longing could emerge. By 1942, the Chelsea Hotel located on the Atlantic City boardwalk billeted U.S. Army personnel. In its lobby, while getting his billet following recruitment, James Lord saw a good-looking GI in the distance, a man wonderfully fair, features almost too fine, a Botticelli of angelic allure, tall and slender.[47] Watching the GI hoist his duffel bag onto his shoulder, and following him upstairs, the "angelic Botticelli immediately matured

[44] This mingling of espionage and hotel cultures created opportunities for an agent's cover to be verified. At Gibraltar, Denis provided cover for a transiting agent. "When BROMWELL reached GIBRALTAR he said that he was a captain in the R.A.F. When questioned about this he referred to Captain GREER [one of Rake's aliases], who said he [Bromwell] should be taken to Security, where he announced that he was a lieutenant." "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[45] The Rock Hotel was a common gathering spot for S.O.E. agents in transit. See "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942, p.1" Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3.

[46] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 71.

[47] Lord, *My Queer War*, 4.

into a Caravaggio boy of the streets."[48] Queer longing was quickly followed by rejection and despair as James' new roommate recognized the incongruence of queer longing within the male, militarized space. James felt the rejection of his roommate who had "[k]nown without knowledge, without understanding, yet with the sly menace of the male of the species."[49] James felt he had betrayed his lonely and loathsome self, feeling that the stagnant confine of the hotel intensified his pain.[50] James' queer longing continued to surface. While assigned to the 856th Chemical Warfare Company, a permanent branch of the US Army based in Reno Nevada since 1920, James met Johannes "Hanno" Kessler. They quickly became friends, often travelling together by car during leave. In one instance, they stayed in a rooming house in Lovelock, Nevada across the street from Tonto's Eatery. They took a room for the night sharing a double bed. Hanno indicated that he slept nude. When Hanno was nude, James "gave in to the universal itch of genital curiosity and saw that in the measure men most appreciate natural selection had been munificent."[51] Despite the fact that James' "cock was hard as a rock, desire bursting in my blood [he knew that he] toed the verge of the abyss, the catastrophe of a lifetime."[52] Shared space did not confer permission for queer desire in this instance or later following a shared trip to Modesto, California. Shared space, unlike queer commercial space, was fraught with uncertainty, uncertainty about one's sexual proclivities, interest, or reciprocation. There the men stayed at the five-storey brick Hotel Modesto, which served a growing population of 16,830 in 1940. James observed Hanno again when he came out from his bath "all lustrous inside that magnificent skin."[53] While homosocial male behaviour was necessarily accepted and encouraged in the

[48] Lord, *My Queer War*, 5.
[49] Lord, *My Queer War*, 5.
[50] Lord, *My Queer War*, 5.
[51] Lord, *My Queer War*, 52.
[52] Lord, *My Queer War*, 52.
[53] Lord, *My Queer War*, 67.

militarized, single-sex environment of the US Army, it did not sanction the queer gaze to seek sexual opportunity. Later when they got into bed, Hanno "exhaled aloud very slowly, as if to rise to a summit of release, turned ever so gently beside me, and his long, svelte leg touched mine all the way down to my foot."[54] James' queer longing was evident in this commercial hotel space, but in the end his "love for him overpowered my lust for him."[55] In discussing his GI roommate and his admiration of Hanno, James evoked contemporary visual cues of the muscular athlete celebrated as a masculine icon, as well as the notion of the redemptive quality of athleticism, resulting in a trained and mastered body.[56] In the 1940s, there was a predominant focus on men's hygiene, cleanliness, beardlessness, and bodily attractiveness that informed definitions of male desirability and provided visual markers of class identity.[57] This queer aesthetic reflected a focus of the gaze in admiration on the object of desire; an unrequited queer longing extended the cultural focus on male attractiveness and sexual desirability.

2.3.2 Hotel bars

Conversely, hotel bars were often sites of sexual exploration and sexual adventure. American and Allied homosexual and bisexual servicemen seeking sexual opportunity and socialization congregated at the bar at the Statler Hotel in Boston.[58] Homosexual servicemen and

[54] Lord, *My Queer War*, 67.
[55] Lord, *My Queer War*, 67.
[56] See Steven A. Riess, "From Pitch to Putt: Sport and Class in Anglo-American Sport." *Journal of Sport History* 21, no. 2 (1994):138-84.
[57] Paul Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," History Compass 8, no. 10 (2010):1198. See also, for an American perspective, Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War. American Masculinity during World War II,* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004, 2010).
[58] The art deco style Statler Hotel in Boston was constructed in 1925 and opened in 1927 by hotelier E. M. Statler whose chain of hotels catered to a population that had become more mobile thanks to the automobile. His chain was the first to introduce hotel rooms with private baths and showers and running water in every room and he introduced the "do not disturb sign" and complimentary newspaper delivery. Between 1907 and 1927, E.M. Statler opened hotels in Buffalo (1907), Cleveland (1912), Detroit (1915), St. Louis (1917), New York (1919), a second in Buffalo (1923), and Boston (1927). For more information, see James Gilbert Ryan & Leonard C. Schlup, *Historical Dictionary of the 1940s*, (New York: Routledge, 2006).

civilians discovered a new consciousness of their collective identity in bar subculture which expanded to meet the demand.[59] This exemplifies the expansion of queer space and queer socialization into heteronormative spaces during wartime. At the Boston Statler, homosexual and heterosexual socializing occupied the same space, suggesting a local tolerance for homosexual space-making in hotel bars. When James and his acquaintance Jerry first visited the Statler bar, James was shocked to find the bar "packed with servicemen, several rows deep, standing…against the bar, too many to count, 100 maybe, maybe 150, most of them drinking beer from the bottle, loud with flighty talk and piercing laughter."[60] Expressing his shock at finding so many gay servicemen at the bar, both American and Allied, James questioned Jerry on the ability of homosexual men to occupy this public bar and remarked that "this is a public place. People who don't know could come in, couldn't they?"[61] Determined expansion of queer culture into public space was prominent in Jerry's response when he replied, "we have a right to lebensraum, haven't we? Anyways, there's a straight seating area right up there to keep things looking honest."[62] Visible queer place-making relied on the visual and cultural messaging of military uniforms imposed on queer bodies to reframe what was occurring as masculine, heterosexual homo-sociability. To explain their queer invisibility, Jerry commented that "[d]ecent people don't want to know. And anyways, they couldn't tell if their grandmothers sold snuggle on the side."[63] Queer place-making in the bar extended to the rest of the hotel when Jerry offered the advice to James to reserve a room in advance "because when cruising the bar, you'd want someplace to do it if you pick up a trick."[64] Military uniforms strengthened and disguised queer

[59] John Costello, *Love, Sex and War 1939-1945,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1985), 173.
[60] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.
[61] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.
[62] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.
[63] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.
[64] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.

space-making at the Statler. Deviant masculinity and military masculinity were inextricably intertwined by the interconnectedness of war and sexual activity[65] and uniforms bestowed on queer men an image of heterosexual military masculinity, a social position that facilitated homosexual self-making in specific urban and commercial spaces like the Statler Hotel bar. Queer spaces flourished beneath the social veneer of heterosexual cultural assumptions suggested by American and Allied uniforms. Yet, in this queered bar space, military uniforms and homosexuality behaved symbiotically to erase social distinctions like class, race, religion, education, origin, and rank among others. Homosexuality crossed all ranks and created command risk.[66] James noted this when he observed that his friend Hanno's new lieutenant boyfriend was "[p]robably a little ill at ease as one of the few officers amid the mob of enlisted men,"[67] at a time when queer officers congregated in other bars, their choice to socialize together exclusively more in line with the established segregation of commissioned, non-commissioned, and enlisted service men in mess halls, clubs, and hotel billets. In this queer space, the combination of uniforms and homosexuality produced a kind of homogeneous social equality, a correspondence between and among servicemen that rendered their social status, social mobility, and social power moot.

2.3.3 Commercial bars

This correspondence between homosexuality, uniforms, and the blurring of social distinction continued in dedicated homosexual bars not found within hotels. Homosexual bars provided an exclusive geography of sexual and social exploration, often located in urban

[65] Corinne Peniston-Bird & Emma Vickers, eds., *Gender and the Second World War. Lessons of War,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 4.
[66] Concern stemmed from the risk that a senior officer's homosexual entanglements might distort his military judgement. John Costello, *Love, Sex and War 1939-1945*, 167.
[67] Lord, *My Queer War*, 112.

commercial space, but also in residential spaces which queer men reimagined as commercial sites for homosexual socializing. Across geographies, rising demand for commercially driven enterprises in Paris, London, Boston, and Berlin in which homosexual men could meet foregrounded bars emerging as a central gathering place for ethnic communities of queer people to emerge.

In Boston, as recalled by James Lord in his memoir, there were three distinct homosexual bars: Napoleon's, Spooner Place, and the Duck Club. Each bar provided queer space for homosexual servicemen to socialize and seek sexual opportunity, albeit in varying ways. Homosexual bars were often located in residential neighbourhoods, their purpose and clientele disguised amid the homogeneity of urban living. Napoleon's was a gay club in a residential dwelling on a street on which "the houses all looked stunted, their doors steeped in secrets."[68] Visiting for the first time with his friend Jerry, at the doorway James watched as Jerry "pressed a button, a piercing light lit the doorway, a peephole popped open, and he said, 'Hi there, honey child, it's your uncle Wiggly.'"[69] This interaction of coded language assessed belonging in a controlled and covert access rite. "Honey child was a black six-footer wearing a purple T-shirt and an apple green skullcap. 'Hello, auntie,' he said, 'you bring me chitlins and okra, you come in, you bring your boyfriend.'"[70] In one interaction, racial inclusion, coded language, use of queer slang, and access to queer space demonstrate the intersectionality of this varietal space created by the extension of queer culture into urban residential space.

This interaction denaturalizes categories of (homo)sexuality and gay identity, expanding them within a multi-racial, polyglot, separately identified, and purposeful queer space. James

[68] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.
[69] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.
[70] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.

entered the bar tentatively; Jerry gave James over to Honey child, and said he would "trust him [James] in your hands, honey, you give him a push."[71] This rite of passage and assumption of common trust extends the use of coded language seen in Denis' interactions at *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* and at the *Comédie Française* as a covert means to evaluate belonging, trust, and to vouchsafe access.

Spooner Place, also located in a residential area, catered more exclusively to servicemen. When James visited, he commented on the large number of servicemen patronizing the bar and observed in the main salon that "[o]n the divan lolled a soldier and two sailors, one of them British, wearing his navy blue bonnet down over the left eye. The marine stayed standing by the glass door."[72] Homosexual congregation crossed nationality and service branches of the armed forces. In conversation, Jerry answered James' question about the number of homosexual personnel. "That many gay servicemen you can't keep it a secret. So what? Are they going to arrest a hundred, hundred and fifty of Uncle Sam's soldiers and sailors every weekend on suspicion of going down on you? Not likely."[73] The unusual conditions of a mobilized society in war allowed homosexual desire to be more easily expressed in action. Armed forces recruitment interviews were the first time many men had public discussions of their sexual inclinations when they were explicitly asked if they liked women. Induction into the army forced introspection about one's sexuality.[74] The war had disrupted the patterns of daily life while the spread of the gay bar contained the greatest potential to reshape homosexual consciousness.[75] The intersection

[71] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.
[72] Lord, *My Queer War*, 96.
[73] Lord, *My Queer War*, 97.
[74] John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities. The Making of the Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 25.
[75] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities. The Making of the Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970,* 32.

of mass mobilization of young single men, the homogeneity and unprecedented access created by single-sex living, tolerance practiced with many inconsistencies in the application of policy toward homosexuals,[76] and the demand that fueled the spread of gay bars accelerated the extension of queer space. About the bar space, James noted that there was "[a] touching integrity to all of this, I felt, playful good humor in the face of nature, which hadn't necessarily done any of us a favor…[i]t was good to be taken for granted for what you were."[77] As queer men more openly congregated for social and sexual activities, bars catering to homosexuals provided commercial space in which a collective homosexual consciousness could emerge.

The Duck Club was a bar and meeting place run by plastic surgeon Dr. Duckett Smythe from his apartment on Beacon Street. On entering, James declared: "[w]e've all got lives to live."[78] This declaration further extends the notion that homosexual bars were sites of identity formation. Bars served as sites of sexual opportunity as well, often on premise. When Dr. Smythe "let me inside…[James saw] five or six boys in various uniforms sitting around."[79] Dr. Smythe made introductions wanting James "to meet Paddy O'Higgins, a Canadian paratrooper passing through."[80] There was sexual interest. Later, Paddy invited James to "[c]ome into the guest room. I think there are a couple of pornographic sketches by Jean Cocteau."[81] Afterwards, Paddy took James to dinner at the Ritz,[82] exemplifying how homosexual sociability connected with hotel commercial space. Homosexual bars, though, were not exempt from preference or prejudice. This was evident one New Year's Eve at the Duck Club, when James noted that he

[76] John Costello, *Love, Sex and War 1939-1945*, 163.
[77] Lord, *My Queer War*, 97.
[78] Lord, *My Queer War*, 103.
[79] Lord, *My Queer War*, 104.
[80] Lord, *My Queer War*, 104.
[81] Lord, *My Queer War*, 105.
[82] Lord, *My Queer War*, 105.

was "[u]nprepared for the aggression of the unnatural, I wasn't much taken with men dressed up as women."[83]

2.3.4 Public toilets

Public toilets were a site where the queer body oscillated between public and closeted, sexually flourishing yet denied. Public toilets became sites of conflated and overlapping connections where clandestine sex and clandestine agent communication could occur, where sexual and covert adventure coexisted, where sexual and undercover danger collided. This collision was self-evident to homosexual intelligence officers like James during his training. "The Army Specialized Training Program at BC [Boston College as a Ritchie Boy[84]] was specialized mainly in that its curriculum consisted of a single subject: France…including the abundance of public toilets and their convenience as clandestine meeting places for secret agents."[85] Public urinals in Paris, *pissoirs* or ve*spasiennes*, were numerous and provided hundreds of additional cruising spots. A later suppression of the city's *vespasiennes* reduced the number of public urinals to only about three hundred and fifty by 1961, as municipal officials sought to crack down on their use by homosexuals.[86] Parisians continued to associate public toilets with clandestine activities and sexual adventure. Queer culture charted imaginary maps of public toilets which homosexual men drew upon to seek sexual opportunity. In Boston, it was noted that "the Statler's good anytime after five. The Napoleon after nine…afternoons the downstairs gents at the Museum of Fine Arts…And the Duck Club…[and] that big house out on

[83] Lord, *My Queer War*, 118.
[84] US Army military intelligence officers gained the nickname "Ritchie Boys" after being assigned to Camp Ritchie, the secret military training center in Washington County Maryland while they attended Boston College for studies concerning France and French culture and at camp received training in interrogation of prisoners and counter-intelligence. See Beverley Driver Eddy, *Ritchie Boy Secrets: How a Force of Immigrants and Refugees Helped Win World War II*, (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2021).
[85] Lord, *My Queer War*, 78-79.
[86] Michael Sibalis, "Paris," in *Queer Sites*, 22.

Commonwealth Avenue, Mr. Mad Africa, if you in for the pee-pee gang bang."[87] At times, queer use of hotel bar and public toilet space commingled. James recounted an instance at the Statler Hotel where "[a]n English marine lance corporal in dress uniform wedged along in front of me, said, 'Hi there, Yankee Doodle, what say we make out below stairs in the gents,' his fingers fooling free and easy with the buttons of my fly."[88] Public toilets provided covert space for clandestine activity to occur—sexual, operational, or otherwise.

2.3.5 Brothels

As urban commercial space, queer agents used brothels purposefully to achieve operational objectives. Within the brothel, however, the queer body asserted itself, rendering this heterosexual site a location where queer sexuality could develop. Brothels were regularly used by agents as sites of safety and refuge while undercover, chiefly to avoid detection by authorities. Use of these sexualized spaces buttressed their operational effectiveness. While fleeing capture in Perpignan, Denis contacted the local Dutch consul to seek aid.[89] "I didn't tell him I was a secret agent, but I did admit to being an escaped British officer,"[90] a distinction that conferred Denis additional protections under the Geneva Convention. The Consul suggested that he stay in a brothel for a night and "gave us a name of a Madame whom we were to tell that the Dutch consul had sent us."[91] Denis recognized the operational efficacy in using a brothel as a hiding place when he noted that "[t]he brothel was a very good idea… because the police rarely

[87] Lord, *My Queer War*, 97.
[88] Lord, *My Queer War*, 87.
[89] Denis fled with two sergeants. "On the train from Marseilles to PERPIGNAN source [Rake] provided FOSTER and HALL [the two sergeants] with illustrated papers" "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[90] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 177.
[91] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 178.

inspected brothels; not only that you didn't have to fill out a fiche if you stayed all night, which was really a very civilised arrangement."[92] Brothels were unknown to Denis: he noted that he "had never been in a brothel before, not even in my youth in Belgium or France. I had been to a place called The Pyramid in Paris, but that was more like a restaurant."[93] In addition to abetting espionage, the sexualized brothel site simultaneously hosted diverse sexualities. In one instance, Denis contacted a S.O.E. colleague for aid in getting a French identity card. He was hidden in a brothel while he waited and was queried about his presence. "The prostitute was very inquisitive and kept demanding who Denis was and why Renée [fellow S.O.E. agent] wanted him and whether he was an escaped prisoner; she explained she loved soldiers, and could hardly be restrained from staying to comfort Denis herself."[94] In a separate later instance, Nancy Wake, the nurse and journalist who joined the French Resistance and later the Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.) during World War II,[95] hid Denis in a flat with a prostitute after policemen knocked on his hotel room door looking for identity papers after he had arrived in France for his second deployment. "The girl declared that she adored soldiers and would be prepared to console me without charge as part of her war effort. I [Denis] was able to persuade her that neither she nor

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[92] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 178.

[93] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 178.

[94] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone,* 87.

[95] Nancy Wake was a highly-respected S.O.E. agent who worked with the French Resistance. As part of a three-person "Freelance" team of operatives headed by John Hind Farmer (codenamed Hubert) on April 29-30, 1944, Nancy parachuted in Auvergne province to meet French Resistance leader Henri Tardivat. The third member of the team was radio operator Denis Rake. The team was to be a liaison between London and the local maquis group headed by Émile Coulaudon (Gaspard). The operation was a disaster after German forces attacked Coulaudon's resistance forces at Mont Mouchet whose forces suffered massive casualties. Despite this setback, Wake's contributions to the war effort are well documented. After the war, Wake was awarded the George Medal, the United States Medal of Freedom, the Médaille de la Résistance, and thrice, the Croix de Guerre. She worked for the intelligence department at the British Air Ministry, attached to embassies in Paris and Prague. See M.R.D. Foot, *S.O.E. in France. An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France,* (London: Whitehall History Publishing, 1966), 265 and "Operation Instruction No. F119, Part I Nancy Wake," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545.

any woman could really console me, and when she understood what I meant I could see that I had avoided hurting her feelings."[96] Denis' queer sexuality interrupted the commercial assumptions of brothels. The role that women performed in this sexualized space as sex workers and as covert agents highlights how women's agency in sexualized environments was multivalent: commercializing sex, resisting social oversight, advancing resistance or covert activities, and seeking personal enjoyment. Jealousy, however, was by no means unidirectional or exclusively female. Later in his service Denis fled France to neutral Spain in order to return to London. En route, Denis was captured and incarcerated in a detention camp at Jaraba where he met the great love of his life, Alex Shokolovsky. This prison camp atypically allowed detainees to move freely within Jaraba.[97] Denis' lover Alex's bisexuality caused jealousy within a brothel's sexualized space. "A day or two later I decided to join the brothel-party in *Calle Caiud*…Alex sometimes went, which rather upset me, but he meant so much to me that I could even overlook it. After all, he wasn't really being unfaithful."[98] Brothels as commercial spaces obscured identities and thus rendered them meaningless; for covert agents with multiple or no public identities, brothels allowed for the absence of identity. Brothels were socially complex and multivalent sites of non-normative sexualities, concealed identities, and shifting allegiances where the anonymous nature of their commercial enterprise collided with the fluid and artificial identities of covert agents.

2.3.6 Urban parks

[96] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 106.
[97] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 190.
[98] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 191.

Public urban parks were well-established sites of queer sexual adventure. The principal cruising site in Paris was the *Champs-Élysées* wooded parkland. Police records document that the area was known both for its heterosexual prostitution and homosexual cruising.[99] By the 1960s, the Tuileries Garden had become the busiest park for cruising among the many frequented by homosexual men.[100] In Boston, cruising for sex in parks occurred in various public spaces including Cambridge Common, Arlington Street, and the banks of the Charles River in front of Harvard.[101] Public parks functioned as sites of homosex, casual and often anonymous. Guardsmen in the Brigade of Guards often behaved as rent boys, young men selling sex for payment, and were sought out by older wealthy men, an exchange rooted in social and economic inequality.[102] These sexual encounters could occur in a variety of locations including parks. They were part of queer culture in wartime London, where homosex and male intimacy were accepted aspects of masculine sexual normality—male identity did not depend on the anatomical sex of a man's partner.[103] Among working-class men in the interwar period in England, male affection could easily cross the nebulous boundary to sexual activity without impinging on the masculinity of the men involved.[104] For James Lord, public parks became an extended site of sexual imagination, adventure, and renewal. On one occasion, James wandered around Harvard Yard, enviously watching the well-bred undergraduates in their J. Press[105] sport coats and servicemen

[99] Sibalis, "Paris," in *Queer Sites*, 17.
[100] Sibalis, "Paris," in *Queer Sites*, 22.
[101] For a discussion of mid-century Boston sites of queer culture, see Eric Cervini, *The Deviant's War: The Homosexual vs. the United States of America*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2020).
[102] Matt Houlbrook, "Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities, and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, circa 1900-1960," *Journal of British Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 2003):359.
[103] Houlbrook, "Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities, and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, circa 1900-1960," 360.
[104] For a discussion on the nature of working-class same-sex affection, sexual behaviour, and self-image, see Helen Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-sex Desire in Industrial England, 1895-1957,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 2-3.
[105] Jacobi Press, a Latvian immigrant, came to New Haven, CT in 1896. He began working for Goldbaum Tailors and quickly became a partner at Goldbaum & Press. In 1908, Jacobi bought out Mr. Goldbaum to form his own tailoring

wearing tailor-made uniforms, none of whom gave him the eye.[106] But soon afterwards, on a secluded strip of lawn behind the rhododendron hedges, James bumped into "someone I knew by way of hello only, a PFC from down the hall you ran into in the washroom named Jerry Weinbaum…a guy who laughed a lot, tall, not bad looking."[107] In conversation, Jerry revealed that he was gay to James, explicitly using "gay"[108] as cultural in-speak to reveal one's homosexuality. Jerry kissed James. Public sexual activity followed. James noted that "there I was with Jerry in the confusion of our bodies in the grass, now pitch dark, and our clothes were a mess."[109] Sexual adventure in a public park was predicated on a mutual understanding of a coded language of revelation and identity that quickly established potential sexual partners. Jerry asked James if he knew the meaning of being asked if you are gay. Jerry explained: "[i]t's a password. We use it between ourselves so other people won't know we're talking about being queer."[110] The deliberate use of these continuous forms (queer, gay) linguistically indicated the continuities and the sense of being-in-process that marked the codification of identity by homosexuals through the adoption of a communally generated subcultural language. This use of coded language to establish identity and belonging mirrors the identity checking, slang, and linguistic codes used to gain entry to homosexual bars in residential neighborhoods. Public sites of queer culture depended on the use of this coded language to provide admission to the subcultural micro-geographies of queer culture. Coded language was used to interpret the imaginary networks of

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shop which came be to known as J. Press. The business became the premiere tailor to the continuous influx of Yale University students. Obtaining a first J. Press suit became a rite-of-passage for any underclassman. In 1940, the Department of War granted J. Press the license to tailor military uniforms. At the time, Yale had the largest officers training school of universities on the East Coast therefore it was not just students at Yale who bought their uniforms at J. Press, but men from all over America who were in officer training school. See Lisa Birnbach, *The Official Preppy Handbook*, (New York: Workman Publishing, 1980).

[106] Lord, *My Queer War*, 80.

[107] Lord, *My Queer War*, 83.

[108] Lord, *My Queer War*, 84-85.

[109] Lord, *My Queer War*, 85.

[110] Lord, *My Queer War*, 85.

queer spaces in public sites and to identify members of this subterranean community. In 1945, when James was in liberated Paris, he went to *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* with a military intelligence officer colleague where he met a French trooper named Roger. After drinks, the two men left the bar whereupon "Roger took my hand and we wandered…into the gardens behind the Petit Palais."[111] The gardens were a site of male and female prostitution, criminal activity, and spontaneous heterosexual and homosexual sexual adventure. Indeed, Roger assured James that "[i]t's perfectly safe in here. Nobody cares who does what. And then he kissed me."[112] They engaged in sexual activity and afterward "we subsided, yielding and clasping and fooling with our clothes in mutual forgetfulness…while every motion made us both cleave together in the unique spasm of surrender."[113] The men parted with James "[w]alking back toward the Egyptian obelisk in the square, I realized that my sexual life had been revived after a very long hiatus."[114] These two sexual encounters, first with Jerry and latterly with Roger, bookend his descriptions of his sexual life: an initiation into homosexual sex at Harvard Yard and at the end of the war a moment of revitalization in a public park, a re-awakening of his sexuality following his abstinence since his arrival in Europe. James had limited his sexual activity to his time in America; this encounter was his first sexual act on the European continent.

2.4 Conclusion

Queer culture appropriated public and commercial spaces to extend the performative spaces in which homosexuality was enacted. Commercial space was also colonized for the dual purposes of clandestine operations, sociability, and same-sex activity. The emergence of a homosexual network of commercial and appropriated public spaces coincided with the gathering

[111] Lord, *My Queer War*, 311.
[112] Lord, *My Queer War*, 311.
[113] Lord, *My Queer War*, 311.
[114] Lord, *My Queer War*, 312.

and emergence of an ethnic, queer subculture. These spaces became important sites to which homosexual men attached emotional, social, and personal importance; these wartime sites remained fixed in the imaginaries of selfhood and as signposts during their wartime service. Sex performed in public spaces, in rooms above bars, in toilets or in parks, became memorialized during wartime in the recollections of these men. The correspondence between public sexual activity and queer emotionality foreshadows a later discussion of how domestic, private and interstitial spaces (natural settings, transit, Resistance camps, cowsheds, prisoner of war camps) were used by homosexual men to validate and implicate their sexual desire in heteronormative, transitory spaces. Denis, Donald, and James each memorialized the revival of their queer sexualities during wartime in sites of nature and conjoined rebirth, revival, and resurrection with the natural world, innocence, otherworldliness, and respite.

Chapter 3: Disputed spaces, sexuality, and surveillance

3.1 Introduction

Public awareness of same-sex desire, a nuanced tolerance of its activity, and increased surveillance and regulation circumscribed queer sexual activity in private and interstitial wartime spaces. As John Costello and John D'Emilio have demonstrated, the war was a period of changing sexual behaviours. Sexual diversity was publicly visible. Newly militarized environments allowed men to habituate to other men's bodies, raising anxieties about same-sex desire. Medical, psychiatric, and military authorities reacted to these anxieties by attempting to categorize and restrict queer sexual activity. Lauren Costello argued that the regulation of civilian and military space challenged the dominant belief that homosexual desire was deviant, heterosexual desire orthodox.[1] Public discourse about how space and place tolerated same-sex desire destabilized the privileged position of heterosexual desire while simultaneously constraining expressions of queer sexuality. While not specifically assigning space as a category of analysis to expressions of queer desire and queer acceptance within battalions, Emma Vickers explored the contemporary tension between collegial acceptance of homosexual servicemen in her work on "good fellas" and the official military order to condemn homosexual servicemen through court-martial.[2] An examination of queer desire's emergence in private and interstitial spaces shows how Foucauldian systems of surveillance and power emerged in the form of active military oversight, systems of internal and external homophobia, and the interoperable dynamics of sexual, racial, class, and rank-associated power.

[1] See Lauren Costello, *Queering the Terrain,* (Riga: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008).
[2] See Emma Vickers, *Queen and Country: Same-Sex Desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-1945,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

The interstitial spaces in which social infrastructures develop and coalesce foreground the development of queer social relationships where the queer experience of the power asymmetries in everyday space become apparent. These interstitial spaces served as shared imaginary territories in which queer men developed newly-emerging forms of queer social logics and tested the boundaries of acceptance by the normative culture. A theoretical and empirical science of territoriology has been conceptualized by two spatial/temporal theorists, Andrea Brighenti and Mattias Kärrholm, who sought to relate territorial formation to a host of related spatial concepts, including domesticity and interstitial spaces.[3] Territories, argue Brighenti and Kärrholm, should not be conflated with space or place, but rather understood as defining spaces and places "through patterns of [social] relations" determined largely by the configuration of borders, thresholds, and interstices.[4] A territory can be characterised as an imagined entity, a kind of psychical geography where, without categories to imagine social relationships and other emergent forms of being, "even the most carefully planned space would be an empty shell."[5] Territories then, Brighenti and Kärrholm suggest, can be regarded "as social attempts conducted inside shared environments, with unfolding potentials for connections, expectations, observations, and interactions." Examining the territoriology of queer culture-building shows how interstitial space served to further social possibility for queer men.

One formulation applicable to this study is the small-group innovative practice thesis put forward by organizational management theorist Santi Furnari. Furnari offers a model of interstitial spaces characterized by "micro-interaction dynamics," in which individuals of

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[3] Andrea Mubi Brighenti, & Mattias Kärrholm, *Animated Lands: Studies in Territoriology,* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 1-2.

[4] Andrea Mubi Brighenti & Mattias Kärrholm, "Domestic Territories and the Little Humans: Understanding the Animation of Domesticity." *Space and Culture* 21, no. 4 (2018):22.

[5] Brighenti, & Kärrholm, *Animated Lands: Studies in Territoriology*, 23-24, 30.

different backgrounds and outlooks participate in a shared activity or common purpose, enabling "new activities and ideas developed in [these] interstitial spaces to be constituted into new practices."[6] Importantly, Furnari calls some individuals "catalysts"—those who sustain the group's interactions by assisting in "the construction of shared meanings by coordinating and energizing common activities."[7] A close reading of these micro-interaction dynamics in private and interstitial queer spaces can trace the uneven development of an ethnic homosexual subculture as these efforts to build queer social logics conflicted with heteronormative wartime culture. More recently referred to as urban interstices, these sites have been deemed transitory border spaces that oscillate between connection and disjunction. Queer accounts of interstitial geographies also assign transgressive potential to these quotidian sites which Peyrefitte and Sanders-McDonagh describe as "the liminal zones, the interstices or crevasses of space: the spaces that are carved out outside the norm."[8] Yet the liminal's contingent nature has not gone unperceived by critics, especially by feminist, queer, and trans geographers such as Catherine Nash and Loren March who note its capacity to marginalize. While most theories about liminal geographies bypass queer and trans accounts of space and spatial practices, as Kath Browne showed, trans geographers Natalie Oswin and Loren Nash have argued that the experiences of queer and trans subjects might be especially adept in expanding how liminality is theorized,[9] especially with regards to experience with the power asymmetries of everyday space.

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[6] Santi Furnari, "Interstitial Spaces: Microinteraction Settings and the Genesis of New Practices Between Institutional Fields." *Academy of Management Review* 39, no. 4 (2014):439.
[7] Furnari, "Interstitial Spaces: Microinteraction Settings and the Genesis of New Practices Between Institutional Fields,"452.
[8] Magali Peyrefitte & Erin Sanders-McDonagh, "Space, Power and Sexuality: Transgressive and Transformative Possibilities at the Interstices of Spatial Boundarie." *Gender, Place & Culture* 25, no. 3 (2018):331.
[9] Loren March, "Queer and Trans* Geographies of Liminality: A Literature Review."
Progress in Human Geography 45, no. 3 (2021):462.

An examination of how queer agents traversed private and interstitial spaces draws upon intersecting analyses of civilian and military masculinities, nationalities, and performances of homosex, gender, class, and race. Queer agents' class and masculinities further complicated this tension between collegial acceptance and official regulation. Nye, O'Connell, and Higate's work on military masculinities foregrounded later work by Pattinson, Smith, and Chand on gender roles as well as working-class and industrial wartime masculinities. Chris Smith's work on civilian masculinities at Bletchley Park, Peninston-Bird's work on masculinities and gender, and Noakes' work on how gender and national identity subsume personal identity, show the differences between military and civilian masculinity. Queer masculinities were further complicated by the elasticities in "trade" masculinity as well as the practice of homosex as D'Emilio and Houlbrook highlight, illuminating the contemporary wartime disconnect between sexual activity and identity. The intersections of these competing collective performances may be traced in private and interstitial spaces. Working-class masculinities encountered queer elite masculinities. Queer agents expressed their civilian and military identities within military and collegial systems of surveillance. Men contested established hierarchies of ethnic and national dominance through sex. They disrupted assemblies of economic, racial, and sexual power through violence. They further navigated private and interstitial spaces as sites where queer culture was less uncertain.

Some allowance must be made for the difficulties inherent in tracing sexual expression in various geographies. How people experienced space was contingent on location. A close reading, however, reveals common experiences and similarities across geographies that suggests a conjoint experience of homosexual use of space and its outcomes. British and American agents detailed analogous outcomes in private and interstitial spaces, suggesting a broader cultural

reaction to the emergence of same-sex desire. Like geography, revealing queer expression in private and interstitial spaces is further complicated by the difficulties in tracing non-normative sexual modalities and transgressive love in wartime. As Annette Timm in her study of sexual violence and transgressive love in World War Two and the Holocaust suggested, obscured or incomplete evidence of non-normative sexual modalities in the historical record problematizes efforts to connect queer domestic assault, homophobia, and identity-making with the structures of surveillance, race, class, and law which fashioned them.[10] Private and interstitial spaces restricted same-sex desire, containing it with military regulation and collegial surveillance which destabilized queer sexuality.

This uneven access to the developing social infrastructures inherent in interstitial spaces attached in the queer memoirist's work an attribution of value to particular wartime memories that occurred in these fractional spaces. Particular constitutions of space are understood as constitutive of particular knowledges of the self and of the world, of self and other.[11] Memoirists offer memoirs to specify the position from which their arguments are made and thus locate these positions in a particular kind of space, the social map. The social map charts class, gender, race, and sexuality. Though this map can be extraordinarily complex, its elements always remain in some sense visible, transparent to self-reflexive analysis.[12] This space produces an interiorized, unified, and conscious self, and, through what Bhabha describes as a narcissistic dynamic, it is a space which also constructs the external world as a transparent territory laid out before that self. Additionally, it produces a vision of the world which assumes mimetic knowledge is possible: a

[10] See Annette F. Timm, "The Challenges of Including Sexual Violence and Transgressive Love in Historical Writing on World War II and the Holocaust." *Journal of the History of Sexuality. Special Issue: Transgressive Sex, Love, and Violence in World War II German and Britain*, 26, no. 3 (2017):351-365.
[11] Gillian Rose, "The interstitial perspective: a review essay on Homi Bhabha's The Location of Culture," 369.
[12] Rose, "The interstitial perspective: a review essay on Homi Bhabha's The Location of Culture," 368.

map of the social.[13] For these queer agent memoirists, interstitial space was a place-of-becoming wherein the emergence of a new social logics, politics, and aesthetics could be detected.[14] These practices relate to questions of informality. They are frictions where informal space rubs against the formal, with interstitial practices arising in the gaps where such confrontations produce informal social practices that are intertwined and intersecting. Domestic and interstitial spaces are critical analytic paradigms which thus interrogate the Foucauldian micro-practices of power and productions of desire as well as surveillance. This conceptual approach opens up the spatial imaginary in a critical manner, connecting the actual with the potential by noting categories such as class, ethnicity, military rank, and gender.[15] These memoirs create a queer narrative ethnography that operates as interstitial storytelling which negotiates queer men's social position in relation to heteronormative culture. Queer men were nomadic figures who linked personal experiences to social collisions and whose memories illustrate the tenuous boundaries that restrict queer culture-building into the broader society. As queer men mediated the tensions of these social encounters, narrative episodes of social micro-interactions involving queer and non-queer men in the memoirs show the fragile emergence of queer territories.

3.2 Domestic private space

Private domestic spaces became sites of conflicted sexuality, disruption, and occasionally assault. In their memoirs, agents were especially candid about their domestic and sexual circumstances. Sexual fulfillment was based on private sexual creativity and mutual self-realization behind closed doors,[16] and these memoirs provide a glimpse behind that closed door.

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[13] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 214-223.
[14] Ross King & Kim Dovey, "Interstitial metamorphoses: informal urbanism and the tourist gaze," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 31 (2013):1022.
[15] King & Dovey, "Interstitial metamorphoses: informal urbanism and the tourist gaze,"1023-1024.
[16] Simon Szreter & Kate Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 58.

These agents were teenagers or young adults who grew up during the interwar period, a period less sure of its imperial destiny and moral certainties. The First World War irrevocably altered the social, cultural, sexual, and class dynamics in Europe, all affected by a new dearth of eligible young men for marriage, the social anxiety of war-wounded men returning home, the emergence of modernity, and the shift to a feminized interwar environment.[17] The period, however, was one of increased economic opportunities, which led not only to smaller family sizes, but also more private space for intimacy,[18] including private space for same-sex desire. Any insight into sexual behaviour and the contemporary understanding of domestic space is necessarily constrained by what is revealed in the memoirs and what remains untold. This recognition of the narrativity of memoirs[19] must inform any examination of sexual activity that lends validity to the personal account, accepting that these accounts are coloured by memory, passage of time, and alteration in memoir production. With this in mind, analysis of memoirs can provide clues to the performance and the forms of queer sexuality in private domestic space.

3.2.1 Domesticities, co-habitation, and violence

Denis' recollections of sexual domestic space demonstrate the conflicted performances of queer sexuality, co-habitation, and the consequences when this domestic sexual behaviour became public. At eighteen, Denis lived in Dinant, Belgium, where he met a diplomat stationed in Brussels. An intimate relationship developed between them and Denis went to live with the diplomat.[20] Their relationship and domestic living arrangements lasted several months, during

[17] Robert A. Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," The American Historical Review 112, no 2 (April 1, 2007):430.
[18] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 26.
[19] Lisa Z. Sigel, *Making Modern Love. Sexual Narratives and Identities in Interwar Britain,* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012),6.
[20] Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent* (London: Leslie Frewin, 1968), 40.

which Denis recollected that "[t]rying to think back, I don't remember ever being aware that in loving this man I was being out of the ordinary."[21] Eventually, however, "[m]y friend's wife had also come back to Belgium and this made things difficult for us…in those days divorce for diplomats was not quite *comme il faut*. So our friendship gradually petered out."[22] Denis expected that his domestic sexual relationship would continue, and that his friend would choose him over his wife, despite the pressure of social mores and the demands of his diplomatic employment. Denis learned, however, that private activity could not withstand the risk of public scrutiny.

Where queer men traversed public spaces to render their sexuality visible, in private spaces those same men on occasion became victims of violence from their partners, particularly if private activity were exposed to public judgement. Public exposure could lead to domestic violence and sexual assault in private spaces. Denis met a Greek prince at a reception hosted by Lady Bentinck, whose husband was a minister. Denis and the Prince developed a queer, intimate friendship based on a strong mutual affection.[23] Denis left work in the theatre and the prince installed him in an apartment on "Cephisia Street…though at the same time it demanded from me a dependence which made of me, in a way, a kind of prisoner."[24] Queer sexuality in domestic space was frequently entangled with sexual violence. In assessing his relationship with the prince, Denis admitted that "there were…some darker moments, when, without the slightest

[21] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 41.
[22] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 41.
[23] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 44.
[24] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 44-45.

warning, he would become violent and make me the object of his violence."[25] Denis felt that, despite the Prince's violence, he still loved him.[26] Soon, unstable politics in Greece interrupted their private life. The Prince's political status meant his privacy was violated by national instability.[27] In most domestic relationships, privacy was considered fundamental for intimacy; this emphasis on privacy in their approach to sex stands in contrast to modern openness.[28] As the Greek political situation worsened, Denis and the Prince tried to be discreet, but the "high position of the Prince did not make it possible for his relationship with me to be kept from public knowledge."[29] Media speculation intensified. "In some sections of the Press I was openly referred to as the spoiled English favourite of royalty"[30] who didn't know what all the fuss was about.[31] As details from the private sphere leaked into the public, Denis recalled that "our relationship went from bad to worse, much as I loved him, I felt that I would not be able to stand it much longer… I just could not bear the quarrelling. So one day I packed my bags and left."[32] While queer affection and the queer body may have appeared safer in private domestic spaces, these spaces were also sites of violence.

3.1.2 Opportunistic domestic space

[25] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 44.
[26] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 44.
[27] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 45.
[28] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 14.
[29] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 45.
[30] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 45.
[31] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 45.
[32] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 45.

Queer men navigated contested and uncertain private domestic spaces in pursuit of intimacy and sexual opportunity. Violence and assault remained a constant threat which transcended nationality and geography: British and American queer agents alike recounted incidents of domestic violence. After basic training, James was transferred to a waiting area in San Francisco where he "trudged up and down those lonely hills, longingly eyeing the flaxen-haired Adonis in a uniform like my own or a snappy sailor in tight trousers, fearful at the same time of criminal consequences, disgrace, and shame."[33] Eventually, James entered a local bar where he met a Mexican man interested in him. James, however, "[c]ouldn't help feeling, though, something had to be wrong with his enthusiasm, …it'd be swell to let him stand me a shot of tequila. Just around the corner. His place."[34] James agreed to go back to his apartment where "Mex hopped onto the bed, fondling the filthy bedclothes, told me to sit down, have a swig, handing over the bottle. Hell, so I had a swig."[35] James recalled the quick assault. "Scalding all the way down, my innards on fire, while Pancho lurched onto me, pawing my crotch, fetid gasping in my face."[36] James reacted in fear and in fury by shoving the Mexican back across the "depraved bed. Out the door heading long down the staircase…[with] Pancho behind me, squealing I'd got to suck his meat, fairy gringo, he'd come in the Yankee mouth."[37] Outside in the rain, James evaluated the assault and his role in it. James agreed that he "was a fairy, a queer schlemiel."[38] He questioned what kind of homo would fall into so sordid a snare, willingly coaxed to the bedside of a man so odious, only to run away when his hand closed on his cock.

[33] James Lord, *My Queer War,* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010), 18.
[34] Lord, *My Queer War*, 19.
[35] Lord, *My Queer War*, 19.
[36] Lord, *My Queer War*, 20.
[37] Lord, *My Queer War*, 20.
[38] Lord, *My Queer War*, 20.

"The answer lay across the bay behind prison walls,"[39] an allusion to Alcatraz and James' belief in the essential criminality of his homosexuality. This sexual assault reveals the interconnections of race, violence, class, criminality, desire, and foreignness within the plurality of same-sex desire in urban spaces[40] and the transnational and transcultural dimensions of wartime sexuality. This episode attests to the queer experience of domestic space by interrogating and understanding the frameworks and categories through which people understood their lives,[41] as well as historicizing sexual experience while rejecting that experience can be inferred from circumstances.

Homosexual identity formation is situated in the "closet" of private domestic space, normally urban,[42] in which identities-being-fashioned retreated into deeper denial, shame, or guilt as the result of dominance, sexual assault, or violence. Domestic space was an important historical geography in homosexual identity formation. Examining the intersection of race, nationality, and class highlights the sexual hierarchies and assemblies of homophobia within queer culture. "Yankee," "gringo," and "Pancho," (the latter a generic term for a Mexican, and often slang for "trouble"): these epithets exemplify the racial and national otherness embedded in James' interaction, producing a subliminal class and racial struggle where the middle-class white fairy will submit to the working-class Mexican. Private domestic space reversed the power of economic class in public spaces, providing his Mexican partner agency and dominance over James. The effete New England middle-class fairy is the target of Pancho's predatory assault on white American military fairies, an identifiable and easy target. While this episode suggests that

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[39] Lord, *My Queer War*, 20.
[40] Chris Water, "Distance and Desire in the New British Queer History," GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies 14, no. 1 (2008):147.
[41] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 50.
[42] Sean Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain, 1861-1913,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 13.

Pancho wanted homosex with James, it also demonstrates how working-class men held the dominant stance in homosex. The appeal of "rough trade," a physical relationship with a sexually available working-class man transcends and reinforces class boundaries.[43] Queer sexuality or homosex was to the working class a behaviour, not an identity. In calling James a fairy, "Pancho" alleged James' queerness, without affirming his own. The accusation is not self-identifying. Pancho's dominating position in the exchange reinforces the lower status of the *fairy* as a demeaned sexual vessel and also reinforced Pancho's heteronormative social position within Mexican culture. Pancho remained untouched by the association with homosexuality despite engaging in homosex. James also juxtaposed Pancho with his observations of a flaxen-haired Adonis in a uniform or a sailor in tight trousers. James transcribed contemporary images of overt white masculinity onto flaxen-haired men in uniform and sexualized images of sailors straining against their pants with a race-based image of the generic Mexican. His further description of filthy bedcovers, sexual pawing, fetid breath, and his squealing advance a cultural view of Mexicans as dirty, animalistic, uncontrollable, and aggressive. This predatory image of sexual conquest reflected contemporary American assumptions that homosexual men were neurotic, untrustworthy, and inwardly sick, and that queer sexuality was a locus of secrecy, shame, and public danger.[44] These images of filth, unbridled want, and sexual urgency reflect James' inner conflict with his sexuality, a sexuality he associated with disgust, shame, guilt, and criminality.

3.1.3 Militarized domestic space

Sexual assault within the military or intelligence services had operational consequences. James' relationship with Winfield Jones, his superior in France, in the US Army intelligence

[43] Hugh David, *On Queer Street. A Social History of British Homosexuality 1895-1995,* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), 43.
[44] Miriam G. Reumann, *American Sexual Character. Sex, Gender, and National Identity in the Kinsey Reports,* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 173.

service, exposes the intersection of sexual assault, power, and operational implications. He was transferred to military intelligence headquarters in Dijon. There James met Captain Winfield Jones, who ran operations. James' first impression of Winfield pegged him as the archetypical handsome captain of the football team. Winfield carried himself in the "homosexual aesthetic": Oxbridge chic, fashionable, athletic, at-ease, multi-varietal New England upper-class man[45] comfortable with his position in the world. On a later occasion, Winfield invited James to dinner at a restaurant across from the ducal palace in Dijon. On seeing Winfield again, James was stupefied, having forgotten how handsome Winfried was; but James now considered Winfried a fool.[46] During dinner, James noted how the "captain was suavely in command of our soirée and seemed to remain cold sober."[47] Winfield invited himself back to James' apartment for a nightcap: when Winfield then sat down on James' bed, he patted the spot beside him.[48] Inviting seduction, Winfield opened his shirt down to his navel, baring a Praxiteles torso, and laughed and touched his fingertips to his nipples.[49] When James did not respond, Winfield "came to me, took my hands, placed them where his fingertips had been, and kissed me on the mouth."[50] Stepping away, James asked him to stop. But Winfield suggested that James liked it and was only playing hard to get. James reported that Winfield "started fondling the front of my pants, and what he felt inside proved him to be right.[51] Winfield then pressed James' hand onto Winfield's crotch[52] and in taking off his shirt, suggested that he and James "do what we want to do, have a good fuck and

[45] David, *On Queer Street. A Social History of British Homosexuality 1895-1995*, 80.
[46] Lord, *My Queer War*, 260.
[47] Lord, *My Queer War*, 261.
[48] Lord, *My Queer War*, 263.
[49] Lord, *My Queer War*, 263.
[50] Lord, *My Queer War*, 263.
[51] Lord, *My Queer War*, 263.
[52] Lord, *My Queer War*, 263.

call it a day.[53] After this remark, Winfield seized James by the waist pushing him down onto the bed. James' reaction was clear and unequivocal: "Don't!' I [James] cried, and a flash of recall summoning that sordid room in San Francisco, the Mexican's mouth stinking of tequila, and I pushed him away."[54] Winfield freed his hands, narrowed his eyes, and asked James if he was not "good enough for you? You stupid little fag. I don't get turned down by the likes of you."[55] Winfield snatched up his clothes and left. James was swiftly punished for declining this advance. "Captain Winfield Jones…wasted no time on preliminary niceties. Thirty-six hours later an order came like a very effective click in the clockwork of military machinations"[56] that reassigned James away from Dijon to an assignment in a prisoner of war camp in Mannheim, Germany after comfortable administrative work in Dijon. James had little recourse following the assault.

While normative culture began to shift away from the family, toward community, and finally toward individual rights in the 1940s,[57] social and moral critics viewed homosexuals as unnaturally individualist on account of their isolation from family and the broader community. This social individuality was a mark of modernity,[58] a reframing of the traditional focus on the family onto the individual, an anxious movement away from belief that the real social unit was the family, not the individual.[59] Homosexual men's social isolation, however, meant that assault and violence in private domestic spaces was less likely to be addressed and far less likely to be reported, if ever, to authorities than heterosexual assault and domestic violence, doubly closeted

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[53] Lord, *My Queer War*, 264.
[54] Lord, *My Queer War*, 264.
[55] Lord, *My Queer War*, 264.
[56] Lord, *My Queer War*, 264.
[57] Stephen Brooke, *Sexual Politics, Sexuality, Family Planning, and the British Left from the 1880s to the Present Day,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 12.
[58] Reumann, *American Sexual Character. Sex, Gender, and National Identity in the Kinsey Reports*, 166.
[59] Richard Davenport-Hines, *Sex, Death and Punishment. Attitudes to sex and sexuality in Britain since the Renaissance,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1990), 287.

and hidden by queer sexuality and its unacknowledged domesticity. Power hierarchies can engender sexual violence,[60] and within the command structure of the Military Intelligence Service the presiding officer held power. Private domestic spaces became sites of partner violence and sexual assault, overseeing injury to the queer body and abetting how this was hidden. These limited examples of assault in queer domestic space pierce a queer invisibility around violence, and call for investigation: how did the indiscernibility of the queer body in private space enable violence? Did private space obstruct the performance of queer sexuality or did private space incite a sense of entitled admittance to the queer body? Did the extension of queer culture into domestic private space engender incidents of homosexual sexual assault? How prevalent was violence against queer men during wartime? The historical record is limited on queer private space during the war. Despite the difficulty in uncovering the dynamics between queer men in private space, it remains a useful site of inquiry to trace the micro-interactions between queer men as they developed new forms of domesticity and intimate relationships.

3.2 Interstitial spaces

Homosexual men occupied interstitial spaces (nature, transit, Resistance camps, military headquarters, cowsheds, prisoner of war camps) to validate and implicate their sexual desire in heteronormative, transitory spaces. Interstitial spaces were temporary, transitory, or impermanent. They provide a methodological tool to understand how men's queer sexuality and an agent's covert imaginary "body" competed for primacy. The interstitial space is in transit between a point of origin and a destination; likewise, the queer body is between locales and social performances. A beach can be observed as an interstitial space between the war front

[60] For a discussion of the historiography of writing a history of violence and sexual transgressions, see Timm, Annette F. "The Challenges of Including Sexual Violence and Transgressive Love in Historical Writing on World War II and the Holocaust." *Journal of the History of Sexuality. Special Issue: Transgressive Sex, Love, and Violence in World War II German and Britain*, 26, no. 3 (2017):351-365.

inland and the freedom of the sea beyond. Swimming can function as a space between detention and freedom for prisoners given leave. Prisoner-of-war camps and temporary military headquarters were ephemeral, imposed spaces with their own rules, customs, and behaviours which previously did not exist and would subsequently disappear. Examining how agents performed their sexuality in these interstitial spaces recognizes the intermittent conflict between the demands of queer sexuality and the operational anxieties placed on the agent's body. Agent's bodies were regularly non-sexualized or assumed to be heteronormative. The performativity evinced by a close reading of queer agents' sexual and bodily expression in these interstitial spaces reveals how the queer body transgressed against agents' covert identities. The imaginary body of the covert identity, a constructed body upon which nationality, language, identity, and purpose are implicated, sanctions no social or sexual performance that does not amplify or accede to the imaginary body's construction. Queer social infrastructures and social practices were constrained, overlooked, and mediated to privilege both the operational priorities of the covert agent as well as existing heteronormative military cultures. Reading for interstitial space shows how the queer body was rendered invisible while the non-sexualized covert agent's body took precedence.

3.2.1 Beaches, water, and grief

Recollections of beaches, water, and swimming in memoirs frequently foreshadow queer longing, loss, and grief. In the memoirs of queer agents, beaches, bathing, and swimming feature as sites of queer sexuality, an intermediate space between war and the freedom of the sea, between detention and liberty, between private intimacy and covert operations. These queer agents memorialized these sites of bathing and swimming as places in which they alternately projected their homosexual or covert identity depending on their personal or operational needs.

Denis, Donald, and James separately recounted similar experiences of their homosexuality in several examples in their memoirs. While attempting to return to Britain in 1942 following his escape from military prison in France, Denis was recaptured while crossing the Pyrenees and detained in neutral Spain.[61] It was there that Denis met the great love of his life, Alex Shokolovsky, in the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp before he was transferred to the detention camp at Jaraba.[62] Detained on their honour, prisoners were given freedom of movement in Jaraba. Alex and Denis spent a lot of their time bathing in the hot springs,[63] a bathing space that afforded private freedoms while incarcerated.

In 1944, Denis was back in France working with Nancy Wake and the Maquis. He was transferred to work temporarily as the operator for Alex, his sometime lover in France, and to meet him at a restaurant, *Faisan,* in Châteauroux. Arriving to Alex in an argument with his team, Denis intervened. "I knew as soon as he saw me and he would forget his quarrel, so I went into the restaurant. He let out a whoop of joy and threw his arms around me, embracing me warmly."[64] Immediately, the men made plans. "When this drop [of supplies to the Maquis] is

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[61] "They [Rake, Foster, Hall] were then taken to prison at Gerona [now Girona], where there were hundreds of prisoners. The work of part-time British Consul at GERONA is done by a man named APSLEY, who refused to believe the source's story that he was British." "Interrogation of Rake, May 9, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[62] Denis' detainment at Miranda de Ebro was well-known by S.O.E. command in London. Verification of identity was complicated by a German national impersonating Denis elsewhere in Europe. S.O.E. command coordinated with M.I.5 to confirm Rake's identity. Official correspondence documents the authentication process. "Can Z.M. confirm identity of Sergeant Harry Foster 1st Battalion South Lancs taken prisoner June 1940 and S.O.E. confirm Denis Joseph RAKE who went to France May 5th 1941 (reference Gielgud)? Both in Miranda." "Cross Reference – Extract from CXG 21 to Madrid, Telegram, December 23, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. "Dennis [sic] Joseph RAKE evacuated by O'Leary is S.O.E. agent and should be handed to their representative after interrogation by you." "Cross Reference – Extract from CXG to Madrid 70, Telegram, December 26 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. "It appears that you have an S.O.E. agent named RAKE at present in Miranda awaiting repatriation." "Memo, March 16, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[63] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent*, 190.

[64] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent*, 233.

over, we'll have a twenty-four-hour break. Oh, Den-Den, it is good to see you."[65] Alex and Denis drove to a nearby wood and in a clearing encoded the message to London requesting supplies. Here the focus of the interaction changed, with a shedding of their agent performances and shifting to more personal identities. They made plans to be alone. "[W]e went down to the lakeside and stripped and swam. When we had had enough, we came out of the water, lay naked in the tall grasses and let the sun dry us and our love submerge us."[66] Lakes, beaches, and the activity of swimming or bathing became sites of interstitial space in which new social forms of homosexual socializing and foreplay emerged, where those homosexual social rituals developed, if only temporarily, unrestrained by any oversight.

Donald was equally explicit in his association between swimming and his homosexuality when he recounted breaching the beachhead on September 9, 1943 at Salerno and the ensuing chaos of the American landing. As the salvos for the evening ended, Donald suggested that he and a major with whom he was travelling might go for a swim in the Gulf of Salerno. The major agreed, and the men crossed the beach to swim, psychically transiting to an interstitial space. Undressed, they remembered the war around them, "dressed in a pistol belt with holster and 45 banging against our bare thighs…as bare as two plucked turkeys, we stepped from vehicle track to vehicle track down to the water's edge."[67] Donald was aware of the major's body moving next to his. "The major, sunburned by swimming through the African summer, …, had that perfection of muscle, lithe and flowing in every curve, which reminded me of Cellini's 'Perseus'..."[68]

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[65] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent*, 234.
[66] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent*, 234.
[67] Donald Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage,* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953),20.
[68] Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage*, 20.

Donald's queer gaze was alert to the proximity of the major's body. "The red sunset tinted the major's almost hairless body all the shades from deep pink to copper, and as he walked the colours played on the rippling of his muscles."[69] Becoming aware of his gaze, Donald realized he "must have stared because he [the major] said, 'What's the matter?'"[70] Explaining away his gaze, the two men swam in the gulf.[71] "While we splashed about the colours faded quickly in the west…We ran up and down to dry ourselves in the still hot sand."[72] This example illustrates the uncertain emergence of these developing queer forms of socializing, particularly given the uncertainty the sexual interest of the major in Donald.

Finally, James recalled visiting the Donner Pass with Hanno, his friend at the 856th Chemical Warfare Company in Reno, Nevada. The two men stopped at a large lake in which they later swam.[73] Later returning to base, Hanno stopped at a gas station to wash his face, James recalled, and came back from the men's room as handsome as Adam.[74] James' fascination with Hanno's body continued during an overnight stay in Modesto, when Hanno came out from his bath, "all lustrous inside that magnificent skin."[75] Later, while stationed at the headquarters in Rennes, France in 1944, James wrote that while bathing and "surrounded entirely by men, whom I saw not only clothed but naked daily in the showers, I felt no sexual hunger for any of them

[69] Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage*, 20.
[70] Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage*, 20.
[71] Donald's account of this experience at Salerno contains the only public, published admission of his homosexuality. When his memoir was published, reviewers commented on this perceived admission of homosexuality. An unpublished manuscript, written by Downes about a fictional gay undercover agent in the war, contains the only other textual evidence of his homosexuality. The manuscript is fictional but does read as semi-autobiographical. Given that it was written after the war during his residency in Italy, the manuscript seems a creative effort in homosexual self-making at an arm's length. See "Cauldrons Bubble," Donald Chase Downes Papers, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, (MS 1453), Series 1, Box No. 4, Folder No. 45.
[72] Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage*, 20.
[73] Lord, *My Queer War*, 44.
[74] Lord, *My Queer War*, 45.
[75] Lord, *My Queer War*, 67.

despite a nagging awareness of which ones were attractive or might even be gay."[76] James' lack of sexual appetite suggests that he placed priority on his military and intelligence responsibilities and suppressed his sexual desire or, alternately, he experienced a lack of sexual attraction to any of these men. Recollections of swimming, bathing, and beaches consistently suggest that these interstitial spaces facilitated an intimacy between identities-being-in-process, homosexuality, and its interruption by the demands of the covert identities of these agents.

Contemporary public manifestations of sexualized images of men, male nakedness, and sexualized public imaginations changed during the war. All-male environments familiarized men with each other's bodies and provided opportunities for homosexual men to read each other's bodies for clues to character, status, class, and same-sex desire.[77] While sexual intercourse, discourses about sex, and sexual imagery were taboo outside the heteronormative privacy of marriage, unmarried and queer men were familiar with vivid sexual imagery found in popular songs as well as comics and artistic nudes.[78] The years immediately preceding the war witnessed a shift in sexual attitudes, when body consciousness emerged alongside a more sexualized public aesthetic that paid careful attention to personal appearance, clothes, and physical healthiness,[79] hallmarks used to judge character, mores, and status. Contemporary notions around cleanliness and looking "smart"[80] helped to define male and female standards of attractiveness. The war accelerated the proliferation of public sexualized images with the rise of the pin-up girl and Vargas girls, women drawn in a seductive manner often seen in advertising. Vargas Girls became so popular that, from 1942 to 1946, thanks mostly to the high volume of military demand, more

[76] Lord, *My Queer War*, 227.
[77] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 57.
[78] Paul Fussell, *Wartime Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 105.
[79] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 30.
[80] Szreter & Fisher, *Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 87.

than nine million copies of the magazines were sent free of charge to American troops overseas and in domestic bases. Bomber and fighter aircraft pilots adapted these images as nose art, and similar images adorned barracks and other common spaces.[81] For homosexual agents, the rise of sexualized images of men's bodies, those images of muscular servicemen with chiseled jaws and purposeful stares in posters for the war effort, and access to men's physical bodies in the all-male environment of the barracks, bodies to which queer men were sexually attracted, coincided with the masculine homo-sociality of the military.

A close reading of this interstitial space shows the precariousness between homosexual and covert identities, where covert identity overrides the queer body. These agents felt sexual attraction, sexual desire, or longing. When they left these interstitial spaces (beach, sea, hot springs, bathtub, showers, lakes), they had to hide their queer sexuality to maintain their operational cover. Grief followed this extension of queer sexuality into interstitial spaces. Death followed Denis and Donald, occurring on the day after their rendezvous: Alex was killed in a hail of bullets running from a German patrol, the American major, who swam with Donald at Salerno, was killed by bombs from a German Junker streaking the beach, dead in a ditch under his jeep. James' love of Hanno was unrequited, his longing unsatisfied, as Hanno was reassigned within a week and transferred to another base. In each example, the agents' covert identities were rendered paramount: after Alex's death in Châteauroux, Denis subsumed his grief into his work with the Maquis; Donald walked away from the major's corpse to go to the command post for his assignment; and James continued his intelligence work, now unaroused by the sight of naked men in the showers while undercover in France. Homosexual bodies have been historically understood as perpetually cathected to death, yet, in these instances, these interstitial spaces

[81] John Costello, *Virtue under Fire: How World War II Changed our Social and Sexual Attitudes,* (Boston: Little Brown, 1985), 144-155.

cathected queer unrequited longing to grief and private mourning. By locating these episodes in the natural environment of the beach, swimming, or bathing, these recollections suggest the memoirists' belief in the naturalness and rightness of their sexual expression while co-locating it with grief and loss.

When queer sexuality was performed while undercover in these spaces, the homosexuality of the agents breached their cover, acting like a "coming out" moment which negated temporarily their covert identity while in theatre. Heterosexual agents went in this "queered space" being undercover. This meant going into a "closet" where personal identity was hidden from public consumption. For queer men, however, their civilian identities were often already "closeted", performed only in public, private, and interstitial spaces where same-sex expression was tolerated. When a homosexual agent went undercover, there might be multiple, competing "closets": the closet of covert identity, used for espionage; the closet where sexuality was only performed in spaces bound by peer acceptance; and the closets of assumed nationality, profession, language, even gender. When queer sexuality was performed in these interstitial spaces by the covert queer agent, these "closets" collapsed the clandestine cover. The assumed identity was pierced, and nationality, language, and profession often collapsed to reveal a public expression of their sexuality and subjective emotional state. This revelation was antithetical to the assumed covert identities. Yet this rupture in the closet created an interstitial space where queer men could reveal their emotional, sexual, and interpersonal needs while in theatre. These examples show how queer sexuality extended into interstitial space. The deliberate inclusion of these moments in the memoirs speaks to the importance of these disruptive acts against their covert identities. The maintenance of their covert identities was contingent on their willingness to perform them; these identities were also contingent on their willingness to "closet" their queer

sexuality. When queer agents engaged in sex, for instance, this revelatory moment disrupted interstitial spaces, rendering agents' covert identity secondary and contesting the assumed heteronormative use of these spaces. In this interstitial space, however, operational objectives and personal loss reanimated the primacy of their covert identities. Operational necessities were reinstated by a commanding officer or regularly by the queer agent themself, and a performance of queer sexuality only flickered in these interstitial spaces before being rendered subordinate.

3.2.2 P.O.W. camps

As an aberration to interwar public space, prisoner-of-war camps were an imposed, manufactured interstitial space, purposefully created for a limited period of time, interstitial by their temporary nature, governed by their own social logics in which queer sexuality was complicated by race, nationality, power, detention, abuse, opportunity, and desperation. While opportunistic homosexuality between male prisoners deprived access to the opposite sex was endemic in Nazi concentration camps,[82] Allied prisoner-of-war camps were also sites of expressions of queer sexuality, adventure, and emotional relationships between queer men within and without detention. This sexual activity occurred despite the non-fraternization rule imposed by the US Army on service men while in Germany which stipulated that United States Army personnel were "expressly forbidden to engage in any social - or most especially…sexual - relations with German civilians, men, women, or children, because the official position specifies that there are no 'good' Germans."[83] James had a sexual encounter with a German POW, Karl, who was in House No. 9 of the camp at Mannheim. James recognized that he and Karl were much alike beyond the artifice of the uniform, seeing Karl as a man physically appealing, fair,

[82] John Costello, *Love, Sex and War 1939-1945,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1985), 160.
[83] Lord, *My Queer War*, 268.

sturdy, virile.[84] Within the camp, they spoke softly in German, sitting on the lawn. James made clear that he did not speak German, after which Karl laughed quietly, "and he must have known how winningly, because he put his hand on my knee and ever so gently began patting it."[85] James agreed to Karl's touch, reflecting on how long it had been since touch had stirred such feeling in him. Karl "put his hand on my thigh and pressed hard, cocking his head to one side in a quick movement, a question, a challenge, and the pressure hardened."[86] James recalled that his own desire intensified, seeing Karl's erection, and he observed how certain Karl was that he could have James.[87] In the next instance, James' covert identity, his body as agent, not sexual actor, reasserted itself. James knew he could not accept him. James acknowledged that he felt too much pity towards Karl, who showed too much need, producing excessive disparity.[88] James mused that their "eyes told a story too foreign to us both to accept the longing of our bodies…I lifted his hand, holding it long enough to say 'enough,' then set it aside and stood up."[89] James' body as agent had asserted dominance in his actions. For James, the complexities of race, language, opportunity, dominance, and power disallowed any emerging queer forms of socializing or romantic ritual within the interstitial space of the camp. His colleague, Harrison 'H' Alliott Jr., on the other hand, regularly had sex with German prisoners; his queer sexuality was unbridled and unrestrained by convention or regulation. Of the German prisoners, Harrison observed that "[t]hey didn't really hate us. They were just hungry. You could say they were war-starved, and fucking with the enemy, well, it was like they were fighting again."[90] Harrison extended the

[84] Lord, *My Queer War*, 280.
[85] Lord, *My Queer War*, 280.
[86] Lord, *My Queer War*, 280.
[87] Lord, *My Queer War*, 281.
[88] Lord, *My Queer War*, 281.
[89] Lord, *My Queer War*, 281.
[90] Lord, *My Queer War*, 307.

fighting metaphor in suggesting that "every orgasm is a kind of victory when you're swimming in the other guys come and there's nothing else. It's all just sex is what it's all about."[91] While in a military setting, governed by US Army rules and regulations, a Foucauldian oversight and surveillance of queer sexuality took place, as queer sexuality dictated and shaped its own sexual logics, opportunities, and restrictions, bound by particular space—in this case, the interstitial nature of the prisoner camp. Queer sexuality found expression in desire and opportunity but competed for primacy with the needs of the body of the covert agent, overseen by military rule and regulation. The intersection of power, dominance, detention, and queer sexuality was illustrated in the fluctuating sexual power dynamics between Karl and James. With Karl as the initiator and James as the recipient, the two recognized how similar they were and the urgency of their desire. Ultimately James the agent reasserted control over James the sexual actor by extinguishing his desire. Conversely, Harrison used this interstitial space to extend the reach of queer culture and queer sexuality, as well as the battlefield, in analogizing queer sexual activity within the continuing struggle between combatants.

3.2.3 Requisitioned space

Other military sites, such as military intelligence service headquarters and recruitment centers, were interstitial sites that interrupted civilian and, often requisitioned, space and suppressed queer sexualities. Queer agents were subject to the same regulations within military environments and experienced a suppression of queer sexuality. James observed that this military interstitial space was antithetical to expressions of queer sexuality when he noted that his fitness inspection at recruitment "took place amid a joshing and jostling crowd of stark-naked rookies-

[91] Lord, *My Queer War*, 307-308.

to-be. This lavish vision of so many penises might have been exciting to a homo. It wasn't."[92] James recognized the admonition against expressions of queer sexuality when he was faced at intake "with the ultimate question of manliness: a blasé, believe-it-or-not lieutenant psychiatrist says, "Do you like girls?"[93] James understood that an answer in the negative entailed "confinement in a federal penitentiary for the remainder of your unnatural life, sexual leprosy not wanted, queers unfit to honor the flag of their forebears."[94] Later in his service, after being rejected by his friend, Keith in the Chemical Warfare Service, Keith made it clear to James that punishment was expected because James was a "pansy."[95] James was aware that "[h]omos were guilty as charged in the U.S. Army in 1943, and don't you forget it."[96] This presumption of guilt created deep anxiety for queer men. Given the threat of court-martial, queer agents rendered their queer sexuality invisible, choosing only to perform their queer sexuality publicly through coded language and allusion. James encountered Major L.W. Aldrich, the head of intelligence for all western networks operated by the US Army while stationed in France. While sexual cues, social signifiers, clothing, and behaviour suggested Aldrich was queer, James found in his interactions with Aldrich that the body of the agent was consistently paramount, performed publicly and rigidly. James observed that he "saw them [Major Aldrich and his driver-factotum Peter Fahnestock] several times speeding around town, laughing their heads off, and I wondered."[97] Behaviour and circumstance were suggestive. When James later needed assistance, Major Aldrich indicated that he would "rather like to help, because I think we have more in common

[92] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7.
[93] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7.
[94] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7.
[95] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[96] Lord, *My Queer War*, 38.
[97] Lord, *My Queer War*, 227.

that you might suspect."[98] Military interstitial spaces had self-enforcing regulations which patrolled, shaped, or overlooked expressions of queer sexuality.

3.2.4 Queer bodies in motion

Routes of transit, interstitial spaces between a point of origin and a destination, were sites where the active patrolling of queer sexuality was most evident, and where this surveillance was intended to support, promote, and prioritize the body of the covert agent and its covert identity over expressions of queer sexuality. The automobile industry's interwar growth democratized personal travel and individual freedom of movement, coinciding with expanding residential developments and municipal infrastructure. Highways opened up land to feed the growth of real estate developments, which quickly surpassed railroads as a political force. By the late 1930s, California had built roads across all the mountain passes separating its cities, and public promotion of the highways was seen as a progressive tool for the common man.[99] The war period saw the U.S. Army receive the first military Jeep prototype in November 1940. Its heavy torque and durability made it a staple in nearly every branch of the military. Access to personal vehicles and to military-supplied transport served to create new sites of sexual freedom and sexual opportunity not previously available to teenage and young adult service personnel.[100] For James, "Hanno's car became the magic conveyance of our comradeship, our unspoken

[98] Lord, *My Queer War*, 247.

[99] James A. *Dunn Jr., Driving Forces: The Automobile, Its Enemies, and the Politics of Mobility*, (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), 114.

[100] Agents commented frequently on the novelty of automobile use, the "armouring" of an automobile, and the freedom associated with its use in their official reports. See "Report by Major Farmer, Circuit: FREELANCE October 26, 1944, Redacted under FOI exemption 40(2). Closed until 2031," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545, "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3, and "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

understanding."[101] The car was a site of longing but not sexual adventure. For Denis and Donald, automobiles were sites of grief following their respective unfulfilled romantic interludes with Alex and the major on the beach at Salerno. After Alex's death in a car under a hail of German bullets, Denis recalled that "[o]ne thing that kept me from going absolutely mad with grief and my sense of loss was that the war took no notice of what had happened to me personally, and I still urgently needed to play my part in it."[102] When Donald arrived at the scene of the jeep crash in which the major died the day after swimming together at the beach, Donald could hear the major's voice, "almost expressionless, droning in yesterday's tomato field. I remember his naked muscles in the sunset, his face. My lower lip kept beating an involuntary tattoo against the upper one."[103] Wartime death recast automobiles as sites of grief and loss, sites of repressed queer emotions, publicizing covert identities while obscuring queer sexuality and emotions. The interstitial nature of transit obscured visible indicators of queer sexuality. Transit via automobile and train provided sites of sexual opportunity that were consistently unexploited in favour of the agents' military and covert identities.

Trains and train terminals were interstitial sites where queer sexuality sought expression but was suppressed to these men's identities as servicemen or covert agents. External and self-regulation of homo-sociability and sexual activity was conscious, deliberate, and intentional. While enroute to Chicago by train in assigned Pullman cars after his basic training, James recalled that "a world-weary master sergeant came along to explain about upper and lower berths: two men to a berth, and keep your hands off your neighbor's you know what."[104] The

[101] Lord, *My Queer War*, 46.
[102] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent*, 236.
[103] Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage*, 23.
[104] Lord, *My Queer War*, 14.

confined space of the pullman car and its intimate berths created a site of sexual opportunity, both individually and in pairs. This interstitial site became problematic for operational control on account of a central commitment to the sexual-self that had emerged in the interwar period, an exploration and understanding of sexuality and sexual activity. Consequently, social anxiety arose about the sexuality of young adults and teenagers. This anxiety was class-specific where concerns about male purity, especially about male masturbation, were a primary concern of the middle rather than the lower class.[105] Moralizing by the middle classes on male purity and the management of teen or young adult sexual activity drove the surveillance effort by both civilian and military authorities. The mingling of itinerant, displaced, and sexually aware teenage recruits in unruly interstitial transit spaces heightened the need to manage homosex among servicemen. Numerous sites of sexual opportunity were presented to men in transit.[106] James had been assigned a berth with Billy, a handsome Southerner. Lying in bed, listening to his breathing, James recognized that "the physical presence of the boy sent fear shivering down my veins as the unthinking rule of nature's innocence excited desire."[107] While James' desire was evident, it was rendered secondary and invisible in accordance with James' fear that "[a]ny fool would see that I was queer, crazy about this pink-cheeked kid. And I'd be rendered to shackles of guilt."[108] James continued to associate queer sexuality with trains while he was stationed in Paris, focusing specifically on the *Gare St. Lazare*, a known site of sexual opportunity in the queer geography of

[105] Miriam G. Reumann, *American Sexual Character. Sex, Gender, and National Identity in the Kinsey Reports*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 167 and *Szreter & Fisher, Sex before the Sexual Revolution. Intimate Life in England 1918-1963*, 19-20.
[106] Sexual opportunity was not limited to queer men. Victor Hayes described watching the beautiful women in the concourse of the station while travelling to Lyon by train, and again later at a rendezvous at a Spanish train station. "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942, p.1, 3," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3.
[107] Lord, *My Queer War*, 15.
[108] Lord, *My Queer War*, 15.

Paris. On his first visit, James took in the architecture of the station, but also had "an eye on beautiful young men, having forgotten for months how beautiful young men could be."[109] While the interstitial impermanence of trains and train stations presented opportunities for sex, in the case of queer agents, sex was rarely had. Queer sexuality was rendered secondary to covert or operational imperatives.

3.2.5 Interstitial spaces and surveillance

Operationally, the realization of queer desire and its frequent conflict with the achievement of mission objectives required superiors to oversee agents' transit. Analysis of this surveillance reveals two anxieties about queer espionage in interstitial space. First is the fear that an agent would abandon their operational duties to pursue a sexual or romantic encounter. Nancy Wake's memoir is rife with exasperated yet amused observations about how Denis Rake *did* forgo his mission objectives in pursuit of queer desire.[110] Wake writes about how Denis' sexual and romantic activity often interrupted operational plans. In doing so, Wake identifies interstitial spaces with sexual activity. Examples abound: "On landing in France by Lysander he [Denis] had met the man he had been having an affair with several weeks before in London, and they had decided to have a last fling."[111] This sexual encounter delayed Denis' rendezvous with his team. Later, when espionage operations needed staff, Denis was able to drawn upon his sexual experience to provide potential candidates: "Denden knew there was an S.O.E. operator in

[109] Lord, *My Queer War*, 198.

[110] Nancy's affection for Denis was evident throughout the historical records. See for example, "Finishing Report, Form T.4 for Commandant "B" Major Group, May 4, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545, "Report on 96 Hours Scheme, 10/27/163, Nancy Wake," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545, and "Letter F/MAC/395 to Ensign Wake, F.A.N.Y from Special Forces Headquarters, November 20, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545.

[111] Nancy Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1985), 117.

Châteauroux because that is where he had spent his idyllic week while we were waiting for him in the Auvergne."[112] Oversight was key in managing this prospective sexual activity overtaking mission objectives. Colleagues were required to manage the agent's same-sex activity to ensure the team stayed cohesive. Wake commented, "[h]owever, a radio operator is an important person in the field, and we were not going to give him [Denis] a reason to leave us and go straight back to his lover, which was exactly where he had been."[113] This consistent surveillance required effort. "We had to be careful the way we handled Denden because we knew he was just itching for an excuse to go and join his current lover further north."[114] As a queer agent, Denis asserted his sexuality in this queer, interstitial space between performative operational identity and queer expression of sexual activity. Both the operational identity and the same-sex desiring body were unstable, defined by opportunity, geographic space, nation, and time. The queer body was rendered doubly hidden, first by the performance of an uncover identity, and second by a social surveillance and control of its expression and activities.

The queer sexual body, however, coexisted with operational identity, emerging and retreating within this performed identity. Expressions of queer sexuality were seen as threatening, disruptive to operational objectives and requiring control from heterosexual colleagues. Queerness was seen as dangerous. This threat, however, was articulated in a remarkably traditional and normative idiom. In detailing Denis' queer sexual expression, Nancy Wake expresses a desire to protect the innocence and honour of young French men. Wake stresses the effort that she and her colleagues exhorted to control Denis' queer sexuality and the consequences of its expression. "They (S.O.E. headquarters) owe us a special debt of gratitude

[112] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 131.
[113] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 117.
[114] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.

that…there were no court cases after the war, and that Denden was not torn to pieces or, alternatively, shot to death by an irate r."[115] This incident suggests that queer sex flexed its agency regularly while undercover and that a pattern of agency emerged. Collegial cooperation contained queer sexuality from coming into view. "[H]e (René Dusacq) helped me [Nancy Wake] keep Denden under control. When I returned from visiting other groups [of Maquis], an irate farmer came to me, stating that his son had complained about an alleged advance from Denden."[116] Wake acknowledges that colleagues understood the need to manage Denis' sexuality during the war. "Bazooka [René Duscaq], like us, was fond of him [Denis], but we could not close our eyes to the problems which would arise if we let him run wild amongst the good-looking young men in the Maquis."[117] Managing this queer sexuality was an operational imperative: situational, time-bound, and geographically located, it fluctuated as environmental conditions changed. As the spaces in which agents operated shifted, expressions of queerness and operational identity loosened as each alternately took precedence in its public, social presentation. Retreating from a battle on the plateau against German forces with the Resistance, "[a]bout thirty of us installed ourselves in an unfinished house on the outskirts of Saint-Santin. It belonged to the parents of a good-looking young man in our group on whom Denden had designs. Therefore, Bazooka, …, was detailed to watch over this young man's honour."[118] The transitory movement of the same-sex desiring body, new geographic locations of place, parental authoritative surveillance over the honour of their offspring, group status, age, physical

[115] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 126.
[116] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.
[117] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.
[118] Wake, *The White Mouse The Autobiography of Australia's wartime legend,* 130 and "Report by Major Farmer, Circuit: FREELANCE October 26, 1944, Redacted under FOI exemption 40(2). Closed until 2031," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545

attractiveness, and sexual intent coalesced to circumscribe Denis' sexual desire. The queer body used space as a key measure to emerge and become visible, making the operational identity transparent. While the operational identity did not need regulation, the queer body, in becoming visible, required constant surveillance and management.

There is an unbridled libido and adventurousness to queer sexuality presented in normative, heterosexual terms. There was a need to protect against this male sexual advance and to protect family honour. Depictions of the young men who became the object of this queer gaze feminized these young men, seen specifically in the language used to describe the interaction, the surveillance activities implemented to protect from or limit the gaze, and the reactions of the family or other mission team members. Yet, within this heteronormative framework, queer sexuality destabilized heteronormatively gendered sexual relations and sexual roles. This uncertainty happened when the queer body was equated to the heterosexual body and tasked with expressing itself within a heteronormative set of sexual behaviours and patterns. This surveillance language judged this sexual desire toward femininized young men implying a need to impose a heteronormative approach to protecting family honour, virginity, and controlling sexual activity among the young. The emotional expressions found in these examples are also revealing. Anger, wildness, exasperation, impatience, and a desire for gratitude emerge, signalling that operational queer sexuality in transitory spaces was uncontrollable, unpredictable, and sudden, therefore necessitating constant surveillance. Expressions of queer sexuality in these sites were transgressive and penetrative requiring management and control from heteronormative commanders and leaders. Heterosexual memoirists observed that this queer sexual expression appeared unmanageable. Queerness disrupted real and imagined identities, challenged visible social performances, and made transparent assumed identities. Surveillance was a method of

controlling the expression of this sexuality. Foucauldian systems of power and surveillance and their consequent self-codifying, acceptable, heteronormative behaviours were regularly transgressed by these queer agents. While there was an overt and conscious surveillance approach to managing queer sexuality to ensure operational objectives were achieved or at least not threatened unnecessarily or compromised, this tension between sexual expression and the management of the expressed sexuality was ever-present. This surveillance of queer sexuality, this rendering of same-sex desire as invisible or secondary to the agent's covert identity, was instrumental to operational success.

3.3 Conclusion

The use of geographic spaces as sites of sexual expression, was fluid, contradictory, often opportunistic, and exhibited its own internal logics of custom, intent, consequence, and success. Queer culture appropriated public, urban, and commercial space. In doing so, queer culture appropriated the imaginary and physical geographies of opportunity and expression. The appropriation of these sites rendered queer sexuality visible and oftentimes additive to the success of an agent's operational cover. Public and commercial spaces provided sites for queer agents to co-mingle the desire for romantic and sexual connection with a plurality of same-sex desires while also enhancing, reinforcing, and validating their covert and operational identities as agents and military personnel within this queer geography. The queer body occupied visible public space and thus extended queer culture-building into otherwise heteronormative commercial sites. Queer culture and the queer sexuality of these agents masqueraded in urban commercial space by extending the imaginary maps of queer socializing onto public wartime space. For covert agents, public urban "queered" space provided a site for identity formation,[119]

[119] Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus & George Chauncey, *Hidden from History,* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 7.

where agents in wartime could exploit their social role as military personnel while extending, developing, and codifying their covert homosexual identities. Private domestic spaces, however, were sites of contested sexuality, sites of occasional violence and assault, and thus sites of dislocation and repression. Queer private, domestic, and interstitial sites exemplified Furnari's micro-interaction dynamics where queer men participated in shared activities, where the social logics developed in these spaces enabled the embryonic development of new practices of intimate relationship or domesticity. Finally, interstitial sites were contested sites where a sexualized queer agent's body was overlooked, controlled, and sublimated to the imaginary body of the covert agent. Interstitial sites destabilized queer sexuality, rendering it secondary to their covert identities. These interstitial sites failed to provide space for queer sexuality to coexist with operational objectives. In public, urban, commercial space and in interstitial spaces, these covert agents used space in ways that furthered their operational and personal objectives, enhancing their cover, advancing the mission, identifying sexual opportunities, and developing their identities.

Chapter 4: Refracted masculinities and sexualized uniforms: Queer readings of covert agents' sartorial display

4.1 Introduction

Clothing and disguise are essential parts of covert activity in the public imagination. From a prosthetic nose to James Bond's tailored tuxedos, clothing and disguise play a critical role in how the covert agent is constituted visually. Clothing can signal sexual opportunity, define adversaries, telegraph strength, conceal, obscure, or change identity, and advance the aims of the agent to obtain forbidden or secret information. In wartime, camouflage, military uniforms, national dress, local fashion, cross-dressing, and costuming can equally be used in a guise of concealment by covert agents.

Not unique to queer men, clothing, and particularly uniforms, played an integral role in the creation and performance of heterosexual masculinity within a rank-based military culture. Notions of heterosexual civilian masculinity had evolved during the interwar period as men (re)imagined archetypes of masculinity that had emerged during the Victorian period with its emphasis on muscular Christianity and the mythologizing associated with heroes of World War One. The rise of public education, the hardships of the industrial collapse of the nineteen-thirties, and the prospect of a second war, reshaped how heterosexual men performed their masculine identities. The growing obsession with men's sport and physiques transformed the visual signifiers of interwar masculinity and, as Geoffrey Hayes has demonstrated, an appropriate social performance of heterosexual masculinity was difficult for those whose clothing, physical size, background, or emotional sensitivity were somehow suspect or too feminine.[1] The modern man

[1] Geoffrey Hayes, *Crerar's Lieutenants. Inventing the Canadian Junior Army Officer, 1939-1945,* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 32-34.

proved his masculine worth through his intelligence and knowledge, his discipline, and physical endurance, expressing his authority through a reasoned, balanced, and democratic manner.

This heterosexual rank-based culture of the armed services stratified men into social military classes determined by arm of service and rank, a stratification with consequences for how men performed their masculinities. The traditions of the mess hall segregated men based on rank and enforced particular heterosexual masculine behaviours, styles of dress, and forms of comportment within those particular sites. Officers were billeted exclusively in particular hotels, their billets determined by rank and suffused with notions of class. Geographic sites (hotels, billets, bars, mess halls), rank, arm of service, uniform, physical appearance, marital status, among others, coalesced to reinforce particular modes of heterosexual masculine performance and stratified along military social class lines. Clothing communicated these class distinctions, distinctions that were deeply implicated in the performance of heterosexual masculinities in the armed forces. The uniform, the trench coat, the swagger stick, the Sam Browne belt, the cigarette case, and the shoulder pips were signs of status in an army and a society that kept close watch on such things.[2] Queer men benefited from the visual signifiers the uniform proclaimed about a robust masculinity and the social position it conferred on its wearer. In other instances, however, queer men mimicked particular aspects of this heterosexual masculinity for operational or social success and regularly challenged the social implications of a performed heterosexual masculinity to instead communicate queer identity, desire, or belonging.

Clothing became a performative aspect of queer masculine identity when queer men went into uniform. Studying how queer men sexualized and (re)imagined clothing, and particularly uniforms, foregrounds a historicity of desire and human beings as subjects of queer desire.[3] As

[2] Geoffrey Hayes, *Crerar's Lieutenants. Inventing the Canadian Junior Army Officer, 1939-1945*, 224.
[3] David Halperin, *How to Do the History of Homosexuality,* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2002), 9.

Pattinson, Vickers, Robb, Chand, Higate, and Nye have shown, peripheral masculinities,[4] like queer masculinities, were grouped around a dominant hegemonic military masculinity wherein a covert agent's sexuality intersected with several performances of these agents' queer masculinities. These queer subjectivities, visually constituted, emerged in sartorial choices, rendered visible sexual messaging and performed sexualities. Clothing design, use, and modification were vehicles for performing queer masculinities and for embodying queer sexualities. Men associated clothing with their self-image, not men's bodies,[5] while unavoidably equating modernity with a homosexual aesthetic.[6] Queer agents affected a modernist (re)fashioning of a queer sexualized aesthetic onto homogeneous military uniforms. This reimagining and queer colonization of the uniform emerged as an emblem of a subcultural performance of queer sexuality and disrupted the assemblies of non-combatant masculinities that held a subordinate position in the hierarchy of military and civilian masculinities in wartime.[7]

This chapter focuses on the experience of five agents, all of whom were artists in civilian life: S.O.E. operatives Denis Rake, Hardy Amies, and Brian Stonehouse, OSS operative Donald Downes, and US Army military intelligence officer James Lord, who worked respectively as a stage actor (Rake), a fashion designer (Hardy), a Vogue magazine fashion illustrator (Stonehouse), an educator (Downes), and an author (Lord). These covert agents affixed several contested notions of sexuality, citizenship, and masculinity to the performed symbolism inherent in dress. The male body at war, clad in uniform, embodied national masculinity and thus

[4] Paul R. Higate, *Military Masculinities. Identity and the State,* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 30.
[5] Brent Shannon, "Refashioning Men: Fashion, Masculinity, and the Cultivation of the Male Consumer in Britain, 1860-1914," *Victorian Studies* 46, no. 4 (Summer 2004):616.
[6] Erika Rappaport, et al., eds., *Consuming Behaviours. Identity, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth Century Britain,* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 29.
[7] Robert A. Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 1, 2007):426.

saturated the soldier with a reciprocal materialization of personal and national honour. A queer reading of the uniform's symbols, however, reveals how these uniform-clad bodies concurrently disrupted expected performances of sexualities and masculinities. Civilian clothing, used as covert disguise as well as a personal marker of self, further complicated the correspondences between hegemonic military masculinities, gender, sexuality, citizenship, nationality, and legitimacy. These five agents (re)imagined and (re)negotiated masculinities and sexualities through civilian, covert, and military sartorial display.

4.2 Sexualized uniforms

4.2.1 Queer desire

For queer agents, uniforms became objects of desire. Queer agents looked to uniforms to discern sexual availability and uncover sexual opportunity. Clothing offered a coded landscape on which queer agents displayed and read messages of sexuality and accessibility. Dress can be understood as expressing identities in coded terms linked to gender, class, race, nation, profession, and sexual orientation, in which sartorially determined codes of selfhood expressed sexual identity. When clothing, however, is homogeneous, as was the case of servicemen, then uniforms became camouflage.

Within the framework of valorized wartime masculinity, uniforms, as visual signifiers similar to print media images and war films, sartorially reassured observers that heterosexuality was present.[8] At the Statler Hotel, queer men regularly wore military uniforms. Given the gendered nature of visibility and its ramifications for sexualities to be publicly decipherable,[9] the

[8] Robert Eberwein, *Armed Forces. Masculinity and Sexuality in the American War Film,* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 69.
[9] Jeffrey Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan and* Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture and Theory* 72, no. 3 (1997):188.

visible gender coding of the military uniform opened up the possibility that uniforms may have been masculine drag for men as well as for women.[10] Uniforms opened up a potent site for sexual coding, in which queer men could communicate desire on, within, and absent from the uniform. Queer agents sexualized the uniform, as an object of sexualized opportunity and a fabric on which to display one's sexuality, desire, and availability. Queer agents relied on a subcultural knowledge of gay coded languages[11] and in the case of clothing, of visual constitutions of sexual display which reinforced the centrality of the body as an object of fascination and desire. As a marker of identity,[12] clothing signified class, status, sexuality, and identity, allowing queer agents to extend queer sexuality into and onto the "uniformed" masculine spaces of sartorial display.

As detailed in Jeffrey Schneider's research on German uniforms, male prostitution, and queer emancipation, uniforms were sites on which the queer sexual gaze sought opportunity and reflected homosexual desire and fantasy.[13] Noting the hypermasculine, machine-like image of the German soldier,[14] Denis reflected that he had "always liked soldiers, and these Germans looked wonderful in their uniforms."[15] Uniforms were the dominant symbol of normative wartime masculinity and had disrupted performances of bourgeois civilian masculinity.[16] Such disruption altered the civilian sartorial codes of homosexual desire, a coded way to identify other queer men

[10] Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan and* Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," 190.
[11] Justin Bengry, "Courting the Pink Pound: Men Only and the Queer Consumer, 1935-1939," *History Workshop Journal* 68 (Autumn 2009): 134.
[12] Paul Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1192.
[13] See Jeffrey Schneider, *Uniform Fantasies: Soldiers, Sex, and Queer Emancipation in Imperial Germany,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2023).
[14] Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," 424.
[15] Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* (London: Leslie Frewin, 1968), 32.
[16] Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan and* Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," 183.

whether by cut of clothing, colour of ties, or presence of flowers in button holes. Queer agents sought new sites of desire in clothing by replacing reading civilian clothing for coded communication to scanning the uniform for markers of queer sexuality. While in San Francisco, James recalled that he "trudged up and down those lonely hills, longingly eyeing the flaxen-haired Adonis in a uniform like my own or a snappy sailor in tight trousers, fearful at the same time of criminal consequences, disgrace, and shame."[17] James couples Hellenic imagery of youthful masculine beauty with military uniforms, the flaxen-haired Adonis queers the uniform, expressing a perceived internal and authentic sexual difference.[18] The queer gaze sought suggestions of sexual prowess in the shape and fit of the uniform. When James noted the "snappy sailor in tight trousers" or ambled around St. Lazare train station in Paris aware that he had "disregarded the tingle in my trousers when observing the contours of theirs"[19] he was coding trousers and male thighs as sites of sexual interest. The uniform which emphasized and displayed a masculinized shape of the leg communicated a sexualized image of strength and sexual prowess.

4.2.2 Sexual opportunity

Queer men coded uniforms as sites of sexual opportunity and sexual adventure, creating a catalogue of sexual conquest organized by uniform type. In Boston, James purposefully and significantly emphasized the type, affiliation, arm of service, and shape of the uniforms in his recollections of sexual adventure. At the Statler, he recalled a "sailor in white sidled alongside me and said, 'Hey, cutie, you must be new. I could blow you right out of the water.'"[20] On another

[17] Lord, *My Queer War*, 18.
[18] Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan and* Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," 185.
[19] Lord, *My Queer War*, 250.
[20] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.

occasion, an English marine lance corporal in dress uniform offered easy sex. While issued by their various militaries, these uniforms had become a coded landscape with signalled sexual opportunity and their own internal strivings.[21] Uniforms permitted queer men to express an inner authentic queer masculinity and a queer sexuality at once. The concerted focus on the uniform suggests that the uniforms played a visual role in exciting desire, in locating sites of sexual opportunity, and in communicating sexuality. While military culture had a hierarchy of masculinities which shifted in competition of social manliness (special forces, fighter pilots, marines, etc.), queer agents accessed and responded to these various performances of military masculinities by sexualizing uniforms, objectifying rank, nationality, status, and physical prowess in an act that identified these constructed masculinities as sites of sexual attractiveness or conquest. Clothing was a powerful indicator of masculinity and sexual desire. When General Patton gave a pep talk to divisional officers, James observed that the "celebrated general was the very model of military swagger in his patent leather boots, riding breeches, pearl-handled revolvers, and stars on his steel helmet."[22] A sexualized focus on "swagger," "boots," and "riding breeches" embeds queer longing in the image while at the same time responding to the heteronormative construction of these elements as essentially masculine and conferring of social status, locating in Patton's sartorial presentation opportunities for queer desire. Trousers, breeches, pants—all were sites of sexual desire, queer longing, and sexual activity. The queer gaze roamed over the uniform, identifying sites of sexuality, sexual opportunity, and subcultural coded displays which signified group membership in queer culture or a queer gaze of desire.

[21] Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Transvestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan and* Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," 186.
[22] Lord, *My Queer War*, 181.

This sexualizing of the uniform was a reciprocal process in which clothing manifested desire while concurrently displaying the male homosexual body to excite sexual interest as Deslandes, Shannon, Rappaport, and Bengry have explored in their work on the intersections between consumerism, male display, and fashion.[23] Queer agents purposely rehabilitated their uniforms to improve their own sexual attractiveness. On receiving his uniform, Denis noted that "[i]t wasn't exactly a Savile Row fit, you know, but it was near enough not to look awful."[24] Denis subsequently had it tailored, as did Hardy, who later hoped that he would be "forgiven for not having resisted appearing at the first showing of the [Lachasse] Collection in my private's uniform and hob-nailed boots?"[25] A tailored, personalized, uniform was transformed into an expression of queer personal style, a class marker, and a public masculine performance.

Class is an elusive concept, but one integral to British society, and to a lesser extent American society. While the influence, power, and consciousness of class held lesser sway in mid-century America than in the United Kingdom, British and American queer men were aware equally of the social mobility and social privileges class, or an association with a particular class, conferred on individuals. This thesis raises a commonly held consciousness of class by these queer agents and the manifestation of this social preoccupation with class in how they modified their clothing and assigned social and sexual value to particular forms of sartorial display. These agents were aware of the inclusive and exclusionary nature of class in their social interactions.

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[23] See Paul Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture." *History Compass* 8, no. 10 (2010):1191-120, Justin Bengry, "Courting the Pink Pound: Men Only and the Queer Consumer, 1931-1939." *History Workshop Journal* 68 (Autumn 2009):122-148, Erika Rappaport, et. al., eds. *Consuming Behaviours. Identity, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth Century Britain.* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), and Brent Shannon, "Refashioning Men: Fashion, Masculinity, and the Cultivation of the Male Consumer in Britain, 1960-1914." *Victorian Studies* 46, no. 4 (Summer 2004):597-630.

[24] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 18.

[25] Hardy Amies, *Just So Far* (London: Collins Press, 1954), 73.

Denis recognized the social pressures on his Greek prince lover and the aristocratic background of his German Abwehr lover Max Halder. James was aware of his friend Harrison's mother's social status in Boston society and enjoyed accompanying her to events. His father was a stockbroker, and until the Wall Street crash, James' family lived "in the lower echelons of the upper classes."[26] This thesis, however, does not provide finely-nuanced examination of the specific impacts of class on the sartorial choices of these agents by country of origin. Instead, it raises a common theme in the emerging homosexual subculture: a jockeying for position within the social stratification of queer culture, an attribution of sexual prowess embedded in particular sartorial forms, a framework of civilian and military clothing choice that associated fashion with queer social groups (dandies, butch, trade for example), and a queer preoccupation with clothing and an appropriation of class markers as a means to signal sexual, social, and romantic availability.

Class, then, became an ornament in queer sartorial display. Clothing functioned as a major class marker[27] through which gender, class performance, rank, arm of service, and male display intersected to decorate an erotic, visual self.[28] The sartorial style of men in uniform updated ways of dressing in the creative arts, as well as at Cambridge, Oxford, and in New England, where it was considered chic, fashionable, and variable.[29] Unlike the rigid social boundaries of the class system and the anxieties around class transgressions, queer agents had no such boundaries[30] as homosexuality transcended class. While unconcerned with class from a

[26] See James Lord, *Six Exceptional Women: Further Memoirs,* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1994).
[27] John Stevenson, *The Pelican History of Britain. British Society 1914-1945,* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 340.
[28] Shannon, "Refashioning Men: Fashion, Masculinity, and the Cultivation of the Male Consumer in Britain, 1860-1914," 620.
[29] Hugh David, *On Queer Street. A Social History of British Homosexuality 1895-1995,* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997), 80.
[30] Richard Davenport-Hines, *Sex, Death and Punishment. Attitudes to sex and sexuality in Britain since the Renaissance,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 190), 304.

sexual position, queer agents continued to display class markers and sexual signalling through their clothing as a social position as evidenced in both Hardy and Denis deliberating drawing attention to the two pips on their shoulders – a clear social class marker in a society which placed emphasis on such ornamentation. These displays marked queer agents out with a refined, educated, and cultured civilian masculinity. Class and clothing were inextricably bound. When James travelled by train to his military intelligence officer training, he noted upon looking around that his colleagues were not "exactly supercilious bookworms or varsity sweater jocks, still they were college kids, complimenting one another on their collective escape from GI uniformity."[31] Similarly, when Hardy was travelling in Britain for training, he noted that there "were thirty or forty candidates for the Intelligence Corps…[who] ranged from university professors to head waiters."[32] Clothing served as a visual signifier communicating class and sexuality at once while rank and arm of service conferred social position. When James wandered around Harvard Yard, he observed "the well-bred undergraduates in their J. Press sport coats and occasional servicemen wearing tailor-made uniforms."[33] James' meeting of Winfield Jones exemplified the intersection of class, clothing, and queer signalling. U.S. Army Captain Jones, also captain of the football team, "could almost have…stepped right out of the varsity locker room at New Haven, curly-haired halfback, shrewd eyes, broad shoulders and slim of hips, the reckless grin, attired in clothes cut to his figure by J. Press, a winner and knew it."[34] The image of Captain Jones is built from the visual markers of athleticism, class, and collegial sexual prowess.

[31] Lord, *My Queer War*, 73.
[32] Amies, *Just So Far,* 73.
[33] Lord, *My Queer War*, 80.
[34] Lord, *My Queer War*, 255.

The linkages between male sartorial display, class, and homogeneity in social markers could prevent those not attuned to reading the coded messages in clothing from perceiving the wearer's homosexuality. Queer attention to curly hair, shrewd eyes, broad shoulders, slim hips, and a reckless grin signalled queer desire, while the tailored uniform from J. Press, a modified standard uniform retooled to emphasize physique, suggestive sexual prowess, and class status was a site of queer desire and queer sexual signalling. This shape also delineated the ideal combatant: athletic, obedient, self-controlled, tightly focused, with no looseness or indication of discomfort among him.[35] After all, James immediately recognized that, in Winfield, there was "in all probability a sexual winner, his lush mouth smiling."[36] Class position, however, could blind observers to the presence, even existence, of homosexuality. American spy Mary Bancroft talking to her lover, Allen Dulles, later to become the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, "had recently learned that there was a homosexual underground operating among the Foreign Offices of England, Switzerland, Greece, and our own State Department and through which information traveled."[37] A colleague of Mary's had indicated "how essential it was for us to tap this homosexual underground by having, as he put it, 'Washington send us a guy with a pretty bottom'."[38] Dulles refused to believe such a network existed, which caused some amused consternation on Mary's part when she reflected that "[s]uch innocence [of Allen's generation about homosexuality] – and it was genuine – probably would never have been found in anyone of my generation."[39] She could even remark that the Hungarian intelligence service "had concluded that Allen [Dulles] and Gero von Gaevernitz, his assistant, must be having an affair

[35] Paul Fussell, *Uniforms. Why We Are What We Wear,* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002), 14.
[36] Lord, *My Queer War*, 255.
[37] Mary Bancroft, *Autobiography of a Spy,* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1983), 132.
[38] Bancroft, *Autobiography of a Spy*, 132-133.
[39] Bancroft, *Autobiography of a Spy*, 133.

because they were constantly together and Gero was so extremely handsome!"[40] Class membership could mask sexualities without the subcultural knowledge to decode sartorial displays.

Queer men viewed uniforms as sites of sexual provocation, with a visual focus on shoulders, hips, legs, crotch, and boots as a more sexualized public aesthetic and a more popular body consciousness emerged during wartime. Soldiers' torso, limbs, and face functioned as specific objects of admiration and desire,[41] given the symbolic role toned and appealing physiques played in hegemonic masculinity. The visual markers of dress coupled with clean-shaven faces, attractiveness, and bodily cleanliness were markers of social and class identities[42] which the queer gaze used to discern sexual desire and sexual opportunity. Of the several uniformed men James met during wartime, he noted that one had a "dulcet resonance of the South when he spoke, that, too, was attractive,"[43] another had a face "filled with light, head a crest of unruly wheat…handsome,"[44] a third was "as handsome as Adam,"[45] a fourth "wonderfully fair, features almost too fine, a Botticelli of angelic allure, tall and slender,"[46]or "only thirty-eight, slim and very good looking"[47] while one man finally left him "slightly stupefied, having forgotten how handsome he was."[48] The contemporary heteronormative construction of male, wartime attractiveness (fair, athletic, handsome, potent) with its close connections to national self-image saturated queer desire. Homosexual men sought matching

[40] Bancroft, *Autobiography of a Spy*, 191.
[41] Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1192.
[42] Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1198.
[43] Lord, *My Queer War*, 15.
[44] Lord, *My Queer War*, 41.
[45] Lord, *My Queer War*, 45.
[46] Lord, *My Queer War*, 4.
[47] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 49.
[48] Lord, *My Queer War*, 260.

performances of these masculine traits in those who also signalled queer desire through their appearance or sartorial choices. In contrast to these images of male beauty, while at a party James recognized that he was "[u]nprepared for the aggression of the unnatural…[and] wasn't much taken with men dressed up as women."[49] Distinctive images of appealing male faces and bodies defined male attractiveness on which queer agent could encode sexual interest.[50]

4.2.3 Personal grooming

Personal grooming with its attention on appearance and a related form of vanity associated with gender and sexual non-conformity[51] allowed men to improve their standing in the social hierarchies of masculinity by visually composing archetypes of masculine virility and prowess. This association between grooming and masculine virility further created opportunities for a queer masculinity to be expressed through a careful attention to grooming and tailoring.[52] When James met Winfield Jones, he remarked that he had "never before seen an officer of any rank so elegantly attired…His bespoke uniform fitted perfectly to a slender, if rather straight, physique."[53] This visual display proclaimed notions of the redemptive quality of athleticism and mastery over a trained body[54] and the aesthetics of the physical prowess of a masculine body.[55] Aspects of queer sexuality and queer availability extended to sites on the uniform suggesting sexual non-conformity, erotic possibility, and desire. Tailoring was a sartorial indulgence frequently associated with homosexuality.[56] Winfield's tailoring broadened his sexual signalling.

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[49] Lord, *My Queer War*, 118.
[50] Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1196.
[51] Rappaport et al., *Consuming Behaviours. Identity, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth Century Britain*, 64.
[52] Barbara Clark Smith, Kathy Lee Peiss, and National Museum of American History (US), *Men and Women: A History of Costume, Gender, and Power,* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 64.
[53] Lord, *My Queer War*, 223.
[54] Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1195.
[55] Rappaport et al., *Consuming Behaviours. Identity, Politics and Pleasure in Twentieth Century Britain*, 56.
[56] Bengry, "Courting the Pink Pound: Men Only and the Queer Consumer, 1935-1939," 126.

James recalled that Winfield "strode out of the park with varsity swagger, his trousers below the hem of the Eisenhower jacket rather tighter than Ike would have deemed regular."[57] As Matt Houlbrook has demonstrated similarly in his work on the Brigade of Guards, Winfield's tailored uniform identified sites of specific queer fantasies of male physicality and military masculinity.[58] Male beauty was refracted through the uniform, with the jacket drawing the queer gaze to Winfield's status as soldier, and the trousers altering a material sign of erotic, fetishized display.[59] Queer men constructed muscular physicality as the defining aesthetic of male beauty, and Winfield's tailored uniform reinforced his physicality and directed the queer gaze to his thighs to signal sexual opportunity and sexual invitation.[60] Winfield's greeting was an exercise in figurative and visual embodiment of queerness as masculine performance, as well as a queer courtship and mating display with its confident stride, swinging hips, accentuated thighs, and swagger, which signified erotic prospects.[61] This erotic display of a "queered" military uniform illustrates the extension of queer culture onto military clothing and the attendant characteristic of a queer masculinity bound by class, tailored to create coded sites of sexual signalling removed from the overt physical desire for "sexy boys in their underwear in shadowy rooms."[62] Sexy boys in underwear speaks to sexual activity; "queered" uniforms provide a window into how queer agents constructed and performed their masculinities.

4.3 Civilian clothing

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[57] Lord, *My Queer War*, 256.
[58] Matt Houlbrook, "Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities, and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, circa 1900-1960," *Journal of British Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 2003):352.
[59] Houlbrook, "Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities, and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, circa 1900-1960,"365.
[60] See Peter N. Stearns and Mark Knapp. "Men and Romantic Love: Pinpointing a 20th-Century Change," *Journal of Social History* 26, no. 4 (1993):769-95.
[61] See Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
[62] Lord, *My Queer War*, 287.

4.3.1 Civilian counterfeits

The transfixing of effeminacy to civilian sartorial display encumbered queer signalling and disrupted the hegemonic masculinities, queer or otherwise, ascribed to the uniform. Visual display was central to the maintenance of heroic military masculinity[63] and any counterfeiting of masculine visual markers, or any incongruence between the visual signalling of the clothing and the performative behaviour of the queer agent, generated opportunities for the queer self to be rendered visible, exposed to accusations of imitation or exclusion. On October 19, 1944, Patton addressed the officers of the Ninety-fifth division at HQ at Homécourt, shortly after which James visited the front line which lay slightly southeast in the direction of Semécourt. Arriving at the front, James was challenged by a couple of military police who, upon learning that he was an intelligence agent on reconnaissance at the front line "sniggered, glanced at each other with popped eyes, and one said, 'Another tourist.'"[64] A lieutenant observed that James was "too clean to be worth a wet fart. Just do your thing and fuck off."[65] At the front line, James met Timmy Morreton, the best friend of his brother Teddy and school mate at Princeton. At the front, James asked Timmy where the Germans were encamped, whereupon James unslung his carbine and fired a single shot at the treeline. James stated that he would not want to go through the whole war without firing a single shot at the enemy. Timmy's reaction to James indicated the role that sartorial display played in constructing military masculinity. Timmy admonished James when he said: "You don't come along in your clean clothes to shoot your wad for a joke and we're lying in the mud ready for the real thing, the works, the fucking war."[66] Timmy situated cleanliness as the

[63] Patricia Vettel-Becker, "Destruction and Delight. World War II Combat Photography and the Aesthetic Inscription of Masculine Identity," *Men and Masculinities* 5, no. 1 (July 2002):93.
[64] Lord, *My Queer War*, 182.
[65] Lord, *My Queer War*, 183.
[66] Lord, *My Queer War*, 183.

antithesis of military masculinity. The military police claimed intelligence work was a tourist masculinity, one that merely posed as military, peripheral, and diminished in the hierarchies of military masculinities. Cleanliness, subliminally linked with effeminacy, withheld access to the networks of military masculinities founded on shared hardship, fear, heroism, endurance, and camaraderie. Visually constituted, James' clean uniform appeared privileged, upper-class, and artificial. Timmy's reaction to cleanliness proscribed James from sexual activity. Timmy's prohibition not to "shoot your wad" restricted sexual release to men who earned such release through a "muddied," battlefield uniform, equating the grime of battle with the privilege of sexual activity. The body of the soldier had become a marker of personal masculine identity enrobed in a military uniform. While a queer aesthetic turned uniforms into objects of desire and admiration,[67] any counterfeit behaviours that belied the visual signalling of a hegemonic military masculinity were swiftly identified and reordered by the observer to ensure that the uniform complied with its culturally constructed form.

4.3.2 Dissonance

The competing visual messaging of civilian dress and military uniforms created multifaceted patterns of disceptation, obstruction, dissonance, and (re)negotiation of queer sexuality and queer expression. The appropriation of suggestive sites of queer sexuality on, within, and through the military uniform provided space for an extension of queer desire through visual messaging of sexual opportunity and sexual agency. Queer civilian attire was vibrantly and colourfully constituted, a performance of exuberance which conveyed queer desire and visually marked a differently organized set of queer masculinities. Queer civilian clothing was a performative act organized to convey same-sex desire and queer identities that did not profit

[67] Deslandes, "The Male Body, Beauty and Aesthetics in Modern British Culture," 1201.

from the culturally constituted markers of masculinity embodied in the military uniform. When James met Gordon Haney at Napoleon's, he was quick to note that Gordon was tall, slender, in a navy suit, with eyes amber with an intense sapphire tint.[68] In conversation, looking around the bar, Gordon observed that he "must be the only civilian in here. All these beautiful uniforms, and look at me…I'm four-F. You may have noticed. The limp. Could call it the FDR exemption. Caught polio as a kid."[69] His disability created a barrier to accessing the masculine privileges of the uniform; instead, Gordon turned to his navy suit. Gordon's queer gaze sought the "beautiful uniforms" and located in them an overt masculinity.

Queer clothing, however, could be directly oppositional to the conformity and drabness of military uniforms in its vibrant use of colours to signify queerness. Queer civilian clothing could be presented in "a canary yellow turtleneck sweater"[70] or in a "a purple T-shirt and apple green skullcap."[71] Queer colourful dress was an outcome of the cultural reconfiguration of wartime society and the reconfiguration of queer culture as antithetical to military conformity. Queer civilian attire signalled the emergence of modernism, queer consumerism, more sexualized public space, and a way to signal broadly queer sensibilities to an increasingly mobile, urban environment of available queer men.[72] Queer clothing established the cultural trope of a particular type of queer man in many ways similar to the trope of the lesbian that James could immediately decipher when meeting Gertrude Stein in Paris. He commented that "[a]t once and always her figure in those shapeless tweed suits made me think of a burlap bag

[68] Lord, *My Queer War*, 89.
[69] Lord, *My Queer War*, 89.
[70] Lord, *My Queer War*, 93.
[71] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.
[72] See Tim Edwards, *Men in the Mirror: Men's Fashion, Masculinity and Consumer Society,* (Herndon, VA: Cassell, 1997).

filled with cement and left to harden."[73] Clothing, as a mutable cultural artifact, was a basis on which to decipher male or female queerness.

4.3.3 Operational purposefulness in dress

These queer agents, themselves part of the creative class, used civilian and military clothing theatrically, purposefully, and interchangeably to adopt performances of national masculinities, to access or profit from authority, to improve covert operational effectiveness, and to signal sexual and social intent. The ability of a covert agent to pass[74], whether in nationality, language, religious practice, custom, or dress, was an essential skill to succeed in the field. This theatricality led covert agents to refer to their work as an element of play-acting, with dress as an important component of their cover. Dress became a form of sartorial camouflage, a performative enrobing of the agent in local, national, and situational clothing which furthered their operational effectiveness. Denis' cover as a drag performer in the Paris cabaret, *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*, is perhaps the most articulate illustration of the performative use of theatrical clothing to develop an operational cover, exercising a creative reversal of gender roles[75] to obfuscate the agent's presence. Theatricality and the playful use of clothing improved an agent's success in the field: clothing disguised an agent's presence by cannibalizing national visual markers of citizenship and belonging, scrambling visual signifiers of national and foreign masculinities. A theatrical motif permeated these agents' mindset. These queer agents approached their

[73] Lord, *My Queer War*, 252.
[74] Juliette Pattinson demonstrated in her work on female S.O.E. agents in France the intersections between passing, theatricality, and operational effectiveness. Passing is a performative practice employed to maintain or present appropriate cultural performances where covert agents assume the necessary and performative strategies to signal membership in a foreign country, through use of national characteristics of dress, language, idiom, diet, speech, religious, social, and cultural behaviours, and others, in order to operate effectively.
[75] Kevin J. Mumford, "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography and the Emergence of the Gay," *American Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (September 1996):399.

recruitment and enlistment for service as a matter of "military make-believe,"[76] and that in their interview for the job as a secret agent "had expected an encounter with cloak and dagger. But…[it]was all rather like a theatrical audition, you know, and I couldn't help thinking that I hadn't got the part."[77] When S.O.E. headquarters in London made mistakes that affected agents in field, agents thought their apparent thoughtlessness echoed the "pantomime we had had…in Buckmaster's office."[78] Agents measured time and provided assurance with a theatrical idiom. On his first deployment to France, the captain of the trawler transporting Denis to his landing site after his training assured Denis that everything will be "all right in the third act…[and]that the third act would be good."[79] Denis reminded himself that everything would be alright in the third act and that the "the curtain is just going up."[80] In France, James was reassigned to a Colonel Wendell, a hotshot producer from Hollywood, who had received his commission in military intelligence through his connection to Harry Hopkins[81] in the White House. In providing his order to James, Colonel Wendell offered James an approach to his role as military intelligence officer. Colonel Wendell advised James that "somebody's got to play it…cast of thousands...those extras give you a pain, give 'em worse…never been on location myself...but that's the scenario. Improvise, baby, improvise."[82] Sentiments of theatricality saturated descriptions of clandestine work by queer agents.

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[76] Lord, *My Queer War,* 7.
[77] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 24.
[78] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 157.
[79] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 78
[80] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 81.
[81] Harry Hopkins was Roosevelt's closest confidant who assumed a leading foreign policy role after the outset of World War II. From 1940 to 1943, Hopkins lived at the White House and assisted the President in the management of American foreign policy, particularly toward the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union.
[82] Lord, *My Queer War*, 228.

Theatricality figured weightily in sartorial choice with agents equating their experience undercover with play-acting. In some instances, costume was used as guise to facilitate covert activities and remained associated with theatre. Travelling to France for his first assignment by trawler, Denis observed that the boat captain "was dressed in the most extraordinary rig, and looked as if he had come straight out of a musical comedy. He had on a striped jersey, red trousers and a knitted cap topped with a pom-pom."[83] Prior to disembarking the ship, Denis himself "stripped off the striped jersey and filthy red trousers that the ex-chorus-boy from *Mercenary Mary* [a West End musical production] had given me."[84] Costume provided license to transgress the rules of wartime dress. Taken to an extreme measure, Denis was trapped in a hospital on the verge of being captured by the *milice*. A young doctor agreed to help with the escape, meeting Denis in a bathroom, carrying clothing and a white coat. "Put these on and pretend you're one of us,' he [the doctor] said…I dressed as quickly as I could and put on the white coat. Though it was deadly serious, I could not help feeling that it was really like a play."[85] Denis impersonated medical staff to escape, enhancing his guise by walking confidently and assuredly from the hospital, remarking that a male nurse friend of his had told him that medical staff are trained not to run.[86] Queer agents identified elements of play-acting as a foundational component of their clandestine operations and understood their efforts through a lens of detached theatrical performance.

4.3.4 National identities and dress

[83] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 76.
[84] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 81.
[85] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 160.
[86] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 161.

This theatrical performativity of dress informed the construction of national identities and notions of citizenship, a performance covert agents exploited through the assumption of national costume to occupy a social position undercover which allowed access to the foreign culture. The dress of national or local clothing allowed agents to assume cultural signifiers of nationality, citizenship, belonging, and in some cases, cultural masculinities. Denis' description of his covert clothing issued to him by the Special Operations Executive prior to leaving for France is instructive. "There was a dark blue-and-white pin-stripe suit with genuine French labels…a spare pair of trousers; three white shirts; a skiing sweater and trousers…; all the rage now in France…two pairs of French black shoes; a black leather mackintosh; one or two ties; and two or three pairs of socks."[87] Denis adopted sartorial styles that constructed and signalled masculinity in France to pass effectively while in the country. Dress, however, was a contested landscape in which the slightest mistake in comportment of clothing could expose the agent as foreign, and the clothing as set design. Agents interacted with locals to blend in and avoid detection. These efforts were fraught with the multifaceted performance of citizenship and its related nationalized masculinities that were hierarchically organized and shaped by complex relations of power, gender, race, class, age, ethnicity.[88] Dress could betray as well as conceal. The grammar of clothing-as-cover was a complex interchange between performance, custom, deportment, physicality, and tailoring where masculinity, nationality, citizenship, and allegiance intersected. On several occasions, local resisters would indicate that Denis could "pass for French."[89] More regularly, agents were betrayed by their clothing and comportment. In meeting Max Halder, an

[87] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 82.
[88] Weeks, "Remembering Foucault," 196.
[89] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 181.

Abwehr officer in Paris who was in French civilian clothes, Denis could sense almost at once that "he was a German, though he spoke fluent French with hardly any trace of an accent."[90] During his escape from France in 1943, locals were on the whole friendly but could identify an imposter, notably one of the men in Denis' party. Locals "had within seconds of his entering a restaurant or bar detected his alienness, this in spite of the fact that our men spoke perfect French and wore clothing indistinguishable from Frenchmen."[91] On another occasion, not even "a *milice* uniform and a German pass"[92] disguised their foreignness. While often transparent civilian clothing rendered visible the covert agent, it did not necessarily preclude success undercover. Yet camouflage could easily become caricature. After the battles at *Mont Mouchet* at which the French *maquisards* were routed by the Germans, Denis fled the area and "reached Aurillac two days later…[where he]…marched up the village street shod like a Russian peasant,"[93] a national presentation ineffective at assuring his safety. National dress and dress customs carried their own syntax, symbology, and intention and agents were required to navigate this changing panorama of cultural and national associations with clothing.

4.3.5 Dress as access to power

Military uniforms as clothing signalled citizenship, statehood, international legal protections. They emblemized military masculinities, but also presented a contested space where admission to the spheres of governance and protections of the uniform was unfettered,

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[90] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.
[91] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone,* 77.
[92] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 214.
[93] Rake, Rake's Progress *The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 241 and "Report by Major Farmer, Circuit: FREELANCE October 26, 1944, Redacted under FOI exemption 40(2). Closed until 2031," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545

indeterminate, and uncertain for queer agents. Between diplomacy and military activity, covert actions represented a "third way," whose status was morally and legally ambiguous—it is not illegal to carry out covert activities if state sanctioned, yet espionage may at the same time violate international law. As Mary Manjikian argues, in this way, agents have a "queer" legal and ethical status.[94] As James was intimately aware, suspected spies in civilian clothes are not covered by the Geneva Convention.[95] The closeted arm of covert activity[96] discomforted the symbolism of hegemonic military masculinity when agents accessed the honoured status of the uniform.

The military uniform signalled several performative aspects: an intimation of British and American masculinity through demonstrated military heroism,[97] a cultural artifact of the nation's fighting vigor, and a soldier's honour embodied and reciprocally shared with the nation.[98] Covert actions, however, were not a publicly visible cultural construct of male defence of the state, and a covert agent's honour was suspect given the nature of their secret activities. Mass belief in national manliness relied on that external emblem of courage, the military uniform,[99] yet in interactions with covert agents there were no cultural markers by which to assess the agent's courage, contribution, or worthiness to wear the uniform. Hegemonic military masculinity dominated through uniforms as cultural artifacts. Queer men, however, created multiple sites for

[94] Mary Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies. The Spy in the Closet,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 29.
[95] Lord, *My Queer War*, 189.
[96] Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies. The Spy in the Closet*, 11.
[97] Chris Smith, "'Bright Chaps for Hush Hush Jobs' Masculinity, Class and Civilians in Uniform at Bletchley Park," in *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War. Gender and Sexualities in History.* Eds. L. Robb & J. Pattinson, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017):154.
[98] Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," 421.
[99] Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 179.

dissimilar performances of queer masculinities across diverse contexts[100] in order to access the social and legal privileges of the uniform.

In several instances, queer agents, and intelligence officers generally, had to fight to gain access to the protections a national uniform conferred. Even their military status itself was uncertain, as Denis learned following his capture. "When he [the consul] came to see me I told him who I was and that I worked for S.O.E. 'I've nothing for you, I'm afraid,' he said. 'S.O.E. is not regarded as Army.'"[101] At the time, Denis overheard an observer say in a stage whisper that Denis was a British spy,[102] a *persona non grata*. Clothing, status, and treatment were inextricably linked in captivity as Denis and his team in France learned that their status had been revised, that they were now considered ordinary soldiers and were to be moved to the prisoner-of-war camp at *Chambaran*.[103] Denis knew to indicate that he was a captain because he would be better looked after.[104] Similarly, Brian, under interrogation by the Gestapo, admitted to his British identity, believing that he would be shot and it would be easier to trace his remains as a British subject under his real name than under his false identity.[105] A change in dress was indicative of the protection, status, and legitimacy the uniform conferred. As Denis and his colleagues discovered, "[a]t the camp we were well received, were issued with battle-dress tunics and trousers, and

[100] Higate, *Military Masculinities. Identity and the State*, 39.
[101] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 186.
[102] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 159.
[103] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 144.
[104] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[105] "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8, "I.F. 36 September 4, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8, and "S.O.E. Battle Casualty, October 24, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

given a Red Cross Parcel."[106] Uniforms as clothing also served as an enrobing device which allowed the agent to appropriate cultural signifiers of military masculinity and signal their membership in the war effort. Agents recalled arriving "in France by parachute in uniform somewhere near Loches"[107] or of being "unremarkable in that ragtag rabble of GIs, all attired exactly alike."[108] The donning of the uniform marked an internal transformation, feeling "almost in a changed skin overnight,"[109] and could mark an expectation of disciplinary knowledge as when J.C. Masterman apologized and explained to Hardy at intelligence officers training "that he had only put on his uniform the day before his arrival, [when] he…asked me if a Corps were bigger than a Division."[110] The incongruence between the uniform's cultural message of citizenship, masculinity, and sexuality and an agent's inner conflicts could inspire shame in an agent—James' conflicted acceptance of his own homosexuality led him to admit his own "lurid, shaming, guilty secret. Never mind by a blatant lie I'd already betrayed civic decency by putting on the U.S. Army's uniform."[111] The social connotations in wearing the uniform discomforted homosexual men aware of the linkages between queerness, disease, social opprobrium, and treachery.

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[106] Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 171.

[107] "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

[108] Lord, My Queer War, 3 and Brian changing into his "civvies" in France see "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.

[109] Lord, *My Queer War*, 32.

[110] Amies, *Just So Far*, 75. See also "SOE Pool, Amies, Edwin Hardy, April 28, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2 and "Special Confidential Report, December 28, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[111] Lord, *My Queer War*, 3.

Despite any inner misgiving, uniforms conferred authority, status, and power on their wearer. While in France, James "had no trouble approaching; my uniform made way"[112] as he approached the punishing of women by publicly shaving their heads, *les femmes tondue*, for collaboration with the German occupation forces for *collaboration horizontale* or *collaboration sentimentale*. Uniforms could also facilitate domination, as James observed at the site of the shaving, where "there they were, four brawny uniforms, kepis on pinheads and pistols in holsters, laughing."[113] In this scene, the uniform predominated over other forms of clothing conferring authoritative social access to public space. Uniforms could serve as a powerful camouflage for covert agents, seen when Denis suggested that perhaps the agents *en route* to assignment "had perhaps too good a time, thereby attracting attention. I suggest it might be better if agents were sent there [Gibraltar] as private soldiers and not as civilians or officers."[114] Similarly, uniforms could visually indicate control and status. Denis recalled in his debrief after capture that "[h]is interrogators consisted of one Gestapo, four officers (all German), and a French interpreter, whose name was something like PARMENTIER, in civilian clothes. All the Germans were in uniform."[115] While uniforms conferred status and power when worn, they were also sites of conflict for queer agents. James did not feel entitled when he "wore the uniform of the right side with so unconvincing a right to it"[116] as a result of his homosexuality. With uniformed masculinity tied to performance in battle, the covert nature of an agent's work disrupted the public performance of male hardness in battle, similar to how incarcerated

[112] Lord, *My Queer War*, 179.
[113] Lord, *My Queer War*, 179.
[114] "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3.
[115] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. Further details found in "S.O.E. Personnel S.O.E. History Sheet, No. 613 Sept. 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[116] Lord, *My Queer War*, 190

prisoners of war lost their manhood by their perceived passivity.[117] Their uniforms represented a defeated masculinity which reflected their nation and its performance in war: James noted in his observations in a displaced persons camp that "their uniforms, however bedraggled, were the attire of guilt."[118] Defeated and victorious uniforms could both disguise same-sex desire, as James recounted when his and a prisoner's "eyes met across the gulf riven by the war, and a speechless glance would say that we were much alike save for the artifice of the uniform."[119] These examples demonstrate the constructed nature and variability of military masculinities[120] and the cultural use of the uniform as clothing to signify power or helplessness, male bravado or conflicts between masculine expression and homosexuality.

4.4 Military dress as civilian garb

Military clothing and military uniforms functioned as sites of male fashion when employed for adornment, aesthetic expression, and civilian sartorial display. Uniforms of varying shades of khaki and grey were universal in the Second World War, but the cut and outline of different armies still made identification in the field relatively straightforward. A Soviet soldier would, for example, be distinguishable from his German opponent by his general outline, even in the fog of battle. Even as uniforms became increasingly utilitarian in the course of the war, British, American, and French uniforms still retained some distinctive features. Queer agents, however, occupied the uniform and transmuted it for the purpose of civilian display. Similar to

[117] Clare Makepeace, "Pinky Smith Looks Gorgeous Female Impersonators and Male Bonding in Prisoner of War Camps for British Servicemen in Europe," in *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War. Gender and Sexualities in History.* Eds. L. Robb & J. Pattinson, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017):72. On the topic of incarcerated masculinities and the development of this scholarship, see Pattinson, Juliette, Noakes, Lucy & Ugolini, Wendy. "Incarcerated Masculinities: Male POWs and the Second World War." *Journal of War & Culture Studies* 7, no. 3 (2014):179-190.
[118] Lord, *My Queer War*, 168.
[119] Lord, *My Queer War*, 280.
[120] Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," 433.

the work done by Chris Smith on intelligence operatives at Bletchley Park, these queer agents were creatives first, civilians who did not conform to military etiquette and dictates,[121] and to whom formal rank and uniform were only peripherally important. In many ways, queer agents were always civilians first, in and out of uniform, and never saw themselves as members of the military proper; their participation in the war took place outside the mainstream military effort. For queer agents, uniforms were an extension of civilian sartorial display and style. Hardy, as a fashion designer, transfigured military clothing into a civilian performance of articulated fashion. Hardy noted that when "we were recruited into the Corps of Military Police, we were issued with knee breeches, and puttees, and two pair of white woolen gloves. We all thought these were tremendously smart, and wore them on every possible occasion, until Aldershot Command intervened."[122] Denis too recalled his public pride when he "went back into khaki,[123]and was very proud of the single pip on my shoulder which denoted that I was a junior subaltern."[124] These civilian performances, outside of any personal vainglory or pleasure in wearing them, may have had ancillary benefits for their operational covers placing them visibly at the centre of the national war effort. Civilian sartorial display—wearing a uniform on the home front—was an opportunity for queer agents to appropriate the cultural meanings of the uniform, masculine affect, and displays of stolen military valour. Hardy appropriated the uniform for style when he appeared in uniform at a civilian fashion show after tailoring the outfit on Savile Row. Hardy ruefully asked if he could "be forgiven for not having resisted appearing at the first showing of the [Lachasse] Collection in my private's uniform and hob-nailed boots?"[125] and later still "found

[121] Smith, "'Bright Chaps for Hush Hush Jobs' Masculinity, Class and Civilians in Uniform at Bletchley Park," 147.
[122] Amies, *Just So Far,* 73.
[123] The British first introduced khaki uniforms in India in 1848.
[124] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 25.
[125] Amies, *Just So Far,* 73.

myself back at Lachasse making a collection again, this time with two pips on my shoulders."[126] While predominant military aesthetics prized rigid shapes, rough texture, metallic embellishments, and earthy tones, Hardy's subversive tailoring and altering feminized the uniform, coincident with women taking on traditionally male occupations during the war. The wearing of his military uniform during the fashion shows signalled his access to a symbolic militarized masculinity, while the feminine tailoring signalled a reworking of the uniform to suggest individuality. This sexualized, tailored image of a male body also transgressed gendered clothing norms by visually placing the uniform amid a female clothing collection.

The transgressive correspondences between uniforms, civilian clothing, and identity could result in an agent's exclusion from the social, legal, and military protections conferred exclusively by uniforms. During his incarceration, Denis discovered why he was being kept so long in Spain. A military attaché from Madrid told Denis that S.O.E. headquarters believed that Denis "had been executed in Dijon, and that a man now calling himself Denis Rake had been planted by the Germans in an attempt to discover how the escape-routes worked."[127] A photograph was not evidence enough of Denis' identity for the colonel as the Germans "would have chosen someone at least who resembled you."[128] For authorities, the uniform acted as a totem, revealed and concealed status, proclaimed military service, concealed covert activity, and certified legitimacy. Civilian clothing obscured not only these signifiers of belonging and legitimacy, but also the physicality of the body of the agent—in civilian clothing, all of these

[126] Amies, *Just So Far,* 77.
[127] "Cross Reference – Extract from CXG 21 to Madrid, Telegram, December 23, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648, "Cross Reference – Extract from CXG to Madrid 70, Telegram, December 26 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648, and "Memo, March 16, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[128] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 191.

signifiers failed to prove one own's identity. The uniform denoted membership in the broader military organization with its inherent rights, protections, and privileges, and signalled that one was doing one's part as citizen, man, and soldier.[129] This status could confer social, cultural, and legal benefits. In contrast, civilian clothing could exile a covert agent from social interactions and jeopardize their own safety. When in civilian clothing, Denis recalled that he felt his "clothes were very shabby, and I didn't dare go into a place for food in case they should think I was a tramp and call the police."[130]

In light of these risks, civilian clothing was still a necessary sartorial choice for covert operations in that it allowed agents to pass as a foreign national. Adopting foreign civilian clothing marked a transition between home front and covert theatre, from protections of the uniform to risk of covert identity. The donning of civilian clothing in theatre distorted their public performance of nationality, effectively stripping the agent of their legal protections, visual cultural allegiances, and previous identity: this marked their transformation into the "other." As Brian recalled, civilian clothing served as a form of camouflage, noting that he "had been given my "civvies" and false papers after I had arrived in France,"[131] alluding to the deceptiveness of the civilian clothing. Similarly, upon his arrival in France, Denis "put on my mackintosh and beret, picked up my fishing-rod, which was to be my excuse for being out late at night if challenged…in this part of the world a road was as much a part of man's outdoor equipment as his suit."[132] Even escaping from prison, accomplices ensured that Denis and his colleagues "were

[129] Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945*, 14, 16, 19.
[130] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 195.
[131] "Field Arrest Report, Brian Stonehouse, p.3," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.
[132] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 88-89.

fitted out with civilian clothes, chocolate and cigarettes."[133] Civilian clothing, however, did not always hide the previous identities of agents. Denis discovered this when he returned to the Rock Hotel in Gibraltar, where a waiter recognized him even though he "was in civilian clothes."[134] Civilian clothing was in itself a form of uniform for intelligence and covert agents. Indeed, covert clothing drew from the ideals of the gentlemanly classes, well-bred, connected, and patriotic examples of masculine virtue, but amateur and dilettante[135] with a dominant emphasis on middle-class masculinity.[136] Civilian clothing signified the social performance of masculinity based on gentlemanly class and skill. Hardy discovered how civilian clothing and intelligence work intersected when he arrived at Beaulieu Abbey for training. There, he encountered "a pleasant hunchback in civilian clothes. He turned out to be an expert on invisible inks, or it may have been codes, or it may have been both."[137] Good civilian clothing was required for effective covert operations; Denis knew that "[b]armen and waiters are usually knowledgeable as to the best places in which to get good shoes, etc."[138] Unfortunately, Denis also experienced the consequences of getting civilian clothing choice wrong when he was arrested, interrogated, and incarcerated in France, accused of betraying to the authorities fellow S.O.E. colleagues. Denis blamed his incarceration on his S.O.E. issued civilian clothing and insisted on an investigation to prove his innocence. Denis was vindicated when the S.O.E. investigators checked the files and determined that Denis was "right about the suit, shirts and ties."[139] A mistake made in the

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[133] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 172.
[134] "Report by ADRIEN (Victor Hayes) on his return to England, August 13, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/681/3.
[135] Smith, "'Bright Chaps for Hush Hush Jobs' Masculinity, Class and Civilians in Uniform at Bletchley Park," 148.
[136] Smith, "'Bright Chaps for Hush Hush Jobs' Masculinity, Class and Civilians in Uniform at Bletchley Park," 153.
[137] Amies, *Just So Far,* 82.
[138] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[139] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 202-203.

selection of civilian clothing for their undercover work was sufficient to expose their covert activities as outsiders.

4.5 Unconventional dress

4.5.1 Dress for the outsider

An "outsider" position connoted a masculinity of the brigand, rebel, agent, or pirate, one at the margins of the dominant culture, expressed vibrantly through sartorial display. The attachment of the weapon as adornment to the queer body signifies an extension of hegemonic masculinity, a covering of the queer body by the symbols of male aggression. Amid the *maquisards* on the Massif Central, Nancy Wakes remembered that they "returned to our camp to find Denden [Denis] with a loaded carbine slung over his shoulder, a row of grenades fastened on to his belt, and a Colt. The man who was afraid of guns!"[140] At Salerno, Donald and a major were "dressed in a pistol belt with holster and 45 banging against our bare thighs…as bare as two plucked turkeys."[141] Nakedness and weaponry visually signified a wild masculinity, one that estranged the covert agent and the brigand from the state. The episode's unnatural nakedness and theatrical garbing of weapons, however, "queered" this wild masculinity, blurring the line between masculine menace and theatrical artifice. This intersection of menace and clothing shows the correspondence between vibrant, unusual, and opportunistic clothing, untamed, rebellious masculinities, and social positions on the margins of the state. When James encountered French resisters, deemed as French auxiliary, with papers from the Corps XX in October 1944,[142] he was struck by their outlandish clothing and overall appearance. "The leader,

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[140] Nancy Wake, *The White Mouse. The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend,* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1985), 140.

[141] Donald Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage,* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953), 20.

[142] The Corps XX of the United States Army was constituted on October 10, 1943 by re-designating the IV Armored Corps of the Army Ground Forces and became operational in France as part of Patton's U.S. Third Army on August

called Jean-Pierre Rouvres, was a captain with a razor-blade face in a makeshift uniform, plus a yes-man lieutenant with sidelong eyes, baby fat, a snappy outfit and a diamond pinkie ring, Sylvain Parny, accompanied by a sullen bruiser in tight-fitting civvies known only as Georges..."[143] The countercultural sinews hanging clothing, rebelliousness, and masculinity together reflected a disordering of male dress and placed the dress of the outsider (resistance fighter, queer agent, heroic soldier) into a "queered" state of male sartorial dressing where opportunistic clothing use and a disregard for gendered clothing use defied expectancies of male appearance.

Clothing was transmogrified in this queer state of resistance, where sexualities and genders were contested and disruptive. Clothing signalled Denis' change from secret agent to brigand during his work with the *maquis* at *Mont Mouchet*.[144] While the *maquis* were viewed as terrorists, bandits, and criminals by the Germans, Denis and the S.O.E. supplied them with armaments and tactical support. Explaining his new status to Denis, Alex, the team leader of the operatives and Denis' lover, noted that "[t]his is how it's going to be until the end of the war…You're not a secret agent now. You're really just a kind of brigand.'"[145] A transformation of identity was accompanied by a transformation in clothing. Denis reflected on his new status and operational situation. "There was a great difference between my third mission and my first. Now we were really fighting a war…I even had a kind of uniform; a khaki shirt and a cut-down pair of

1, 1944. The Corps XX was credited with service in the Normandy, northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe campaigns.

[143] Lord, *My Queer War*, 176.

[144] "Report by Major Farmer, Circuit: FREELANCE October 26, 1944, Redacted under FOI exemption 40(2). Closed until 2031," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1545.

[145] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 222.

Nancy's slacks."[146] Now that Denis was in a "real" war, he repurposed female clothing to construct a uniform; this was in contrast to his "covert" war in which he wore civilian male clothing. This was a gendered intervention that performed brigand-like masculinity in female-identified clothing, clothing tailored into a makeshift uniform which signalled a heteronormative and hegemonic military masculinity. This gendered intervention demonstrates how queer agents used opportunity, circumstance, sexuality, and gender to endow clothing with agency to enhance their covert effectiveness.

4.5.2 Disordered dress

Queer assemblies of multiple, gender-disruptive identities emerged in the co-mingling of gendered clothing, nationality, civilian masculinities, and civilian men's suits-as-uniforms. James observed queered gender in the sartorial choices on display at a party in Boston in 1942. At the party, "[t]here was a lieutenant waving a shawl of indigo chiffon…a chaplain wearing a bonnet…[a] French sailor seated in his lap…a couple of Anzac pioneers with their hands inside each other's pants, gentlemen in three-piece suits…and numberless jostling of soldiers of all the Allied armies plus some probably of none.[147] Queer servicemen disordered the clothing assigned to them by gender, function, military branch, and nationality. This disordering reconfigured the uniform into an inter-sexed space where masculine and feminine, heteronormative and queer co-existed. The inflections of this clothing choice could extend disorder into queer interstitial spaces inhabited as they were by men cognitively aware of uniforms and national stature. There was a disordered incongruence between queerness, national allegiance, and uniform. Denis was aware that a "notice was put up outside certain places of entertainment in PARIS;- "No men and women

[146] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 231.
[147] Lord, *My Queer War*, 310.

of German nationality in uniform or out of uniform allowed in this establishment."[148] In meeting Max Halder at the *Boeuf sur le Toit*, Denis seemed to know what Max was thinking: before Denis "could answer his question about knowing Jacques [Artel], he nodded to a notice above the bar - 'This bar is prohibited to officers in uniform' and raised his shoulders."[149] Clothing did not mask his identity; in fact this officer was "clothed" in an Abwehr uniform and as a German national despite his performance as French-speaking customer in civilian clothing. When Denis explained how to gain more German intelligence, he explained how clothing and space could intersect. He suggested that "it is easier to start talking to young German officers in a good place rather than go round the cheaper bars talking to privates"[150] marking the close correspondence between class, rank, civilian dress, and social trustworthiness.

4.5.3 Dress as a queered anonymity

The uniform entered a queer state when stripped of its signifiers of rank, allegiance, and nationality to advance covert activity. Visually reconstituted as ambiguous, James' uniform was an object of scrutiny as "the field coat bore no insignia, because intelligence personnel sometimes had to pass themselves off as autonomous agents exempt from the symbolism and constraints of regimentation."[151] Agents approached sartorial messaging in this way to allow "ambiguity of attire to reason for rank."[152] This allowed them to gain privileged access to space, knowledge, resources, or personnel. Indeed, this shedding of identity and coincident clothing was demonstrated on "the 9th November [when]the commandant suggested that all those who were

[148] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[149] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.
[150] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[151] Lord, *My Queer War*, 201.
[152] Lord, *My Queer War*, 201.

in danger of losing their lives should the Germans come, might change their identities completely and be allowed to go."[153] In fleeing a prisoner-of-war camp prior to a German advance, those fleeing would be "fitted out with civilian clothes, chocolate and cigarettes."[154] The uniform obtained a queered use at once visible and sometimes shed depending on circumstance and need.

4.5.4 Uniforms, homophobia, and disceptation

What was queer about a uniform was detected in, scrutinized by, and often imbued with homophobic implications. Denis once "heard of a nasty row between the men [German soldiers] who had been in Russia and were being sent back, and others who had never been there at all. The ones who had fought accused the others of never doing any fighting but just spending their time looking pretty."[155] Queering the uniform as "pretty" and unmanly places the uniform in a queered state of never having been battle-muddied, suggestive of military masculinity but unburdened in its cleanliness by evidence of proven bravery, valour, or hardship. Yet clothing often destabilized hierarchies of homophobia by situating homophobic sites of ridicule within the performative space of the symbolically masculinized, heteronormative uniform. Hardy undertook parachute training to demonstrate his equality with front line soldiers.[156] Afterward, Hardy was "entitled to wear a small parachute on the long-left sleeve of our uniform."[157] His pride was conflicted. "This I did with some pride, feeling, I suppose, that it counteracted the "softness' of

[153] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[154] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 172.
[155] "Interrogation of Rake, May 19, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[156] "S.O.E. Personnel S.O.E. History Sheet, p. 2," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.
[157] Amies, *Just So Far,* 98.

my green Intelligence Corps cap, or better still nullified the effect of the Intelligence Corps badge, of which the rather badly drawn Tudor Rose motif was described by a wag as a 'pansy resting on its laurels!'"[158] The "softness" of Hardy's Intelligence Corp cap and the queer "pansy" residing within the badge motif detracted from Hardy's success in parachute training as an external signifier of his military masculinity. The social position of intelligence officers in the hierarchy of military masculinities ascribed a homophobic symbolism to the "queered" Tudor rose. The connections between rose and pansy as flowers and between queer men and pansy (as common slang for homosexual) embedded in the soft, green cap a femininized, "queered, masculinity within the cultural imagery of the masculinized, military uniform. These sexually disruptive sites of homophobia, located in the uniform, reinforced a heteronormative, hegemonic military masculinity while queering the uniform to admit alternate readings of its visually symbolic messages.

4.6 Conclusion

Sartorial choices in clothing refracted queer agents' masculinities and disordered gendered assumptions about agency, effectiveness, and legitimacy. The queered outsider, in the guise of brigand, resister, and agent, disrupted the dominant cultural signifiers of masculinity while simultaneously unsettling the uniform to enable alternate readings of the uniform and gendered civilian clothing. Uniforms were a contested space where the legal protections of citizenship and military service afforded to covert agents was uncertain but were regularly (re)worked or arrogated to establish identity and access status. At once on the margins of the dominant culture while simultaneously at the centre of a queer refashioning of male sartorial symbols, queer agents tailored civilian clothing and uniforms to disclose sites of queer display,

[158] Amies, *Just So Far,* 98.

sexual signalling, and sexual opportunity, telegraphing an often-troublesome dissonance in how queer agents employed clothing.

Chapter 5: Historicizing queer emotion

5.1 Introduction

World War Two was a watershed in understanding homosexuality in the twentieth century. During the war, an idea of homosexuality defined by a relationship to selfhood, with a changing social status, emerged among congregations of queer people that represented an identifiable demographic, cultural, and political tribe. The social position of queer agents is sited interstitially, and thus at once hidden and visible, conditionally accepted yet frequently rejected, socially ridiculed but occasionally worthy of praise for actions which strengthened, produced, and advanced the urgencies of the collective social body. Christopher Nealon shows how this interstitial position exiles queer people from sanctioned experience, most often rendered as participation in family life and the life of the community, yet also oversees a reunion with some "people" or sodality who reclaim this exile from the original "home."[1] This imaginary shares two characteristics: a determined struggle to escape the medical psychological "inversion" model of homosexuality that was dominant in the United States and Britain in the first half of the twentieth century and a drive toward "peoplehood" that foregrounds the contemporary "ethnic" notion of gay and lesbian collectivity.[2]

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[1] Christopher Nealon, *foundlings. Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 1-2.

[2] Nealon, *foundlings. Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall*, 2. For the purpose of this discursive construct, the inversion model of homosexuality conceptualizes same-sex desiring people as those whose souls are trapped in the body of the "other" suggesting that homosexual men are "feminine" souls trapped in "male" bodies, and lesbians "masculine" souls residing in "female" bodies. The scientific construction of these perverse bodies is part of a complex cultural story related to sexuality, homosexuality, and sexual identity, a construction of perversity in which race, gender, physical deformation, sexuality, and other bodily forms emerge. Central to the emergence of this knowledge were Havelock Ellis, Krafft-Ebing, and Freud whose works accelerated the coming into visibility of sexually pathologized identities (inverts) whose visibility was troubled by representational and categorical uncertainty. Such uncertainty was characteristic of attempts of human science to render sexual identity both visible and pathological. Despite earlier attempts at reconciling the divide between scientific and humanistic, congenital and cultural ways of understanding sexuality such as, the works by J.A. Symonds, the inversion model was the dominant frame in which to understand homosexual behaviour.

While late nineteenth-century works by German Karl Heinrich Ulrichs foregrounded a paradigm shift toward a future conceptualization of an "ethnic" model of homosexuality in his work on uranism (male homosexuality) as an identity and a way of being as opposed to sodomy as a way of doing.[3] The idea that "inverted" same-sex desire was related to an "inverted" gender identity remained widespread till the 1950s. There emerged in the mid-century, however, new ways of thinking about homosexuality and homosexual subculture using the "ethnic" model. This model purported that gay men and lesbians constitute a people with a separate culture, distinguishable characteristics, mores, and social conventions. The inversion model dominated the first half of the twentieth century while the ethnic model rose to prominence during the latter half. The agents examined in this chapter not only witnessed, but also participated in this shift, as the transition between models redefined homosexuals' personhood, citizenship, and place in society.

By World War II, the language of sexology, as well as its medical-psychological approaches to inversion, failed to capture new ways of queer being introduced by the emergence of large, urban lesbian and gay communities. In response, a new vocabulary rapidly emerged during and after World War Two, generated by gay men and lesbians themselves, attuned to their own experiences. This vocabulary would articulate what Nealon calls the "ethnicity" model of American homosexuality.[4] A transhistorical empathy for a persistent, distinguishable homosexual subculture foregrounded the emergence of the ethnic views of homosexuality, expressed initially

[3] Gert Hekma, "Sodomy, Effeminacy, Identity: Mobilizations for Same-sexual Loves and Practices before the Second World War," in David Paternotte, ed. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Lesbian and Gay Activism,* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015), 20.

[4] Nealon relies on the work of anthropologist Gayle Rubin to locate a modern "ethnic" homosexuality in the wave of urbanization that occurred in the twentieth century and recent scholarship further supports the link between industrial modernity and the contemporary homosexual community, identifying as John D'Emilio does, that World War Two was the turning point in this consolidation of a homosexual community.

as a gesture toward genealogical claiming through list-making of famous homosexual forerunners, artists, politicians, musicians, authors, and military heroes.[5]

Similar to Nealon's questions about how gay men and lesbians *felt* as queer identity shifted from pathological to political, the themes that animate this chapter explore the emotions these queer agents experienced in disclosing the complex tension between their subjective understanding of homosexual selfhood as "inverted" while concurrently participating in and reacting to the fraught emergence of a distinct homosexual subcultural community. This approach of loosely using the "inversion" model and the "ethnic" model to understand homosexual "selfhood" during the war is complicated further by ongoing scholarly anxiety over the methodological approaches employed by gay and lesbian studies as well as queer history.[6]

This scholarly anxiety was a debate between ideology and historical self-consciousness. To historicize the emotional experience of these queer agents, the questions posed in this chapter trace the formulation of these agents' historical "experience" to elucidate the psychic, social, and interpersonal dimensions of selfhood during the war. A historicist approach offers queer critics the possibility of situating between views homosexuality as logically prehistorical and as in gay

[5] Nealon, *foundlings. Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall*, 5. See also Rictor Norton, *The Myth of the Modern Homosexual: Queer History and the Search for Cultural Unity* (New York: Continuum Press, 1997).

[6] Historian Jeffrey Weeks experienced the gay liberation movement and the tumult of the 1970s which may have shaped his approach to uncovering a gay history. Weeks and others look to the past to see origins of history of modern homosexual consciousness and the related successes and failures of homosexual self-imagination. Weeks is interested in a teleological view of gay history as a process of recovering and reclaiming an invisible or marginalized subcultural history. British historian Matt Houlbrook meanwhile insists on using the rubric queer to denote all erotic and affective interactions between men and all men who engaged in such interactions prior to the 1960s in order to discover men with affective ties that cannot be subsumed into any categories of consciousness or identities recognized today. Houlbrook's approach is less teleological, instead revealing diverse modes of sexual difference, revealing a nostalgia for the various modes of queer identification that have been marginalized by the consolidation of the modern gay subject. His work repudiates a commitment to the stable self and embraces queerness as a means of escaping rigid identity categories, essentially the difference between writing a gay past and a queer past, and in so doing rejects the historical task of recuperation to instead render the past as "other", as different from our understanding and categories of identity. The methodological differences locate a distinct homosexual subculture in gay history which vanishes in queer history.

and lesbian history as legitimately historical and waiting to be recovered.[7] As Sedgwick acknowledges, an ”essentialist” queer history may allow the scholar to capture a local, affective dimension to gay lives which asks that this chapter link “emotional energy” and “historical work.”[8] By historicizing the experience of these queer agents, it is possible to detect their “essential” emotional and interpersonal experiences within the cultural, social, and military frameworks of their contemporaries. This chapter raises three central questions. What can the affective revelations of these agents reveal about their relationship to self, family, community, citizenship, and nation? How does conflict between the “inversion” and “ethnic” models manifest? Finally, is there a narrative arc to queer emotional expressions that maps the uneven emergence of a distinct ethnic homosexual subculture?

This emotional narrative arc existed in the memoirs, letters, and personal reminiscences of these queer agents. While bedevilled by problems of authenticity and accuracy, these documents illuminate the subjective, emotional experiences of these men during wartime. A close reading uncovers their personal effort to contextualize, organize, and rewrite their memories into assemblies that scaffold a subjective fashioning of a homosexual self. These autobiographical memoirs, with their focus on interiority and on interpreting conflict as a means to shape identity, drive towards constructing a public self through self-reflection and self-transformation.[9] There have been few scholarly efforts to historicize queer emotion during World War Two. Most scholarship has focused on letter-writing from the front lines to the home front, revealing the emotive bonds opposite-sex desiring soldiers felt for their families and lovers.

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[7] Nealon, *foundlings. Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall*, 20.
[8] Nealon, *foundlings. Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion Before Stonewall*, 22 and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 42-43.
[9] Frances Houghton, “Becoming a Man During the Battle of Britain: Combat, Masculinity, and the Rites of Passage in the Memoirs of the Few,” in Linsey Robb & Juliette Pattinson, eds. *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War Genders and Sexualities in History,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 99.

These emotional artifacts, queer memoirs, letters, and personal reminiscences, provided a starting point to historicize queer emotions and write a queer emotional history of the Second World War.[10] The sentiments expressed in the memoirs and other reminiscences are coterminous with the author's rewriting of their own emotional narratives, as they built queer selfhoods and reimagined their subjective memories over their lifetime. Queer men wrote extensively about their strong, at times negative, emotional experiences as much as they did their positive and affective experiences of longing, attraction, and love. The contemporary social position of homosexuals as inverts, as well as its discursive yet denigrating vocabulary, shaped how queer men experienced queer emotion.

5.2 Gestures to the invert model

An inversion vocabulary categorized queer men into three distinct archetypes: pansy, traitor, and sexual degenerate, as defined by Jeffrey Dennis.[11] A detailed, and often coded, language expressed these conceptualized archetypes to identify and segregate homosexuals. The invert model of homosexuality generated an effeminate social posture for queer men, where the femininized image of the pansy was constructed through a vocabulary of artistic allusion, allegations of disorder and disease, taunts, and a continual assessment of manliness.

Contemporary conceptions of hegemonic masculinity imbued this pansy archetype with femininity through an assembly of femininized characteristics ascribed to homosexuals that exiled queer men from the privileges of a male social position. In recruitment, performance

[10] The proposal to write a queer emotional history of World War Two extends the work of Julian Jackson in his suggestion that a close reading of Daniel Cordier's memoir, Jean Moulin's homosexual secretary during the war and biographer, could make possible the writing of an emotional history of the Resistance in France.
[11] See Jeffrey P. Dennis, *The Myth of the Queer Criminal,* (London: Routledge, 2018).

assessment, and mission debrief documents, militaries identified queer agents as "sensitive,"[12] "precious, or as having a precious appearance and manner,"[13] and "effeminate,"[14] with an administrative focus on their "nervous or nervousness,"[15] "gossipy,"[16] even "melancholy"[17] natures. The military assessed the performance of queer agents as "agreeable,"[18] "lively,"[19] "bright,"[20] and "cheerful"[21] as opposed to their implied antonyms of commanding, brave, serious, and vigorous. Attitudes of acceptable heterosexual behaviour aligned sexuality with the conceptualization of gender roles in this particular historical and social context,[22] where homosexuality deviated from normative heterosexuality.

A coded language that alluded to the creative arts as unmanly permeated these descriptions of homosexuals, underlining their unsuitability for military service and thus

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[12] Denis Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent* (London: Leslie Frewin, 1968), 139 and "Special Confidential Report, September 15, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[13] "Confidential Assessment, Hardy Amies, January 9, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2 and "CONFIDENTIAL Note, Major H. Amies, undated," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[14] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.

[15] "L'Officier liquidateur Régional, R. 3375 France Combattante Rake, D.J., Questionnaire Signalatique, June 20, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648, and "Assessment memo from FL 1. to FC, January 9, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.

[16] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941" Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.

[17] Maurice Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone* (London: Odhams Press, 1958), 93.

[18] "Special Confidential Report, Army Form B194G, Promotion Assessment, Hardy Amies December 22, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2 and "Special Confidential Report, May 31, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[19] "Letter from V. M. Atkins to J. O'Donovan, M.O.I. Montague Mansions, December 27, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.

[20] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648

[21] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648

[22] Claire Makepeace, "'Pinky Smith Looks Gorgeous!' Female Impersonators and Male Bonding in Prisoner of War Camps for British Servicemen in Europe," in Linsey Robb & Juliette Pattinson, eds. *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War Genders and Sexualities in History,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 87.

feminizing the homosexuals described. A favourite euphemism for homosexual in the early twentieth century was theatrical frequently combined with musical.[23] Recruitment and performance assessments described these agents as "immature," [24] "humorous,"[25] "has personality,"[26] "artistic,"[27] "imaginative,"[28] and "dramatic." [29] This language revealed a divergence between militaristic and bourgeois representations of masculinity.[30] As a result, S.O.E. assessors deemed queer characters "not military by disposition,"[31] when concepts of masculinity were tied to performance in battle.[32] For instance, an assessment that a queer agent was "more of a soldier in performance than his looks"[33] spoke to the importance of visual display of virile aestheticism to the maintenance of heroic military masculinity.[34] This visual image of military masculinity, however, stood in uneasy conflict with the masculine ideals of quiet duty

[23] Alison Oram, "cross-dressing and transgender," in H. G. Cocks & Matt Houlbrook, eds. *The modern history of sexuality. Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 260.
[24] "Special Confidential Report, Army Form B194G, Promotion Assessment, Hardy Amies December 22, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2, and "Assessment memo from FL 1. to FC, January 9, 1942," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.
[25] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648
[26] "P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648
[27] "Rentre de Dachau, France Combattante, Region Lyon, Questionnaire Signalatique," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1419/8.
[28] "L'Officier liquidateur Régional, R. 3375 France Combattante Rake, D.J., Questionnaire Signalatique, June 20, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.
[29] "Memo from F to DCE/SS, May 25, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.
[30] Jeffrey Schneider, "The Pleasure of the Uniform: Masculinity, Travestism, and Militarism in Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan* and Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten*," *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture and Theory* 72, no. 3 (1997):197.
[31] "Special Confidential Report, Army Form B194G, Promotion Assessment, Hardy Amies December 22, 1944," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2.
[32] Makepeace, "'Pinky Smith Looks Gorgeous!' Female Impersonators and Male Bonding in Prisoner of War Camps for British Servicemen in Europe," 72.
[33] "Special Confidential Report, Army Form B194G, Promotion Assessment, June 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2.
[34] Patricia Vettel-Becker, "Destruction and Delight. World War II Combat Photography and the Aesthetic Inscription of Masculine Identity," *Men and Masculinities* 5, no. 1 (July 2002):93.

and sacrifice. The contemporary notion of a "temperate hero" built masculinities on a rejection of the hypermasculine Nazi "other."[35] Instead, this temperate masculinity focused on duty, images of fatherhood, self-sacrifice, and quiet courage. Homosexual identity, when formulated through a femininized gendered character,[36] fell short of this temperate masculinity. Queer agents were "unreliable"[37] and "timid," [38] as colleagues questioned "how we can rely on the courage of a man who won't even pull the trigger of a revolver?"[39] A homosexual masculinity associated with timidity and femininity limited the ability of queer agents to access the social position of temperate hero, specifically in British culture, and their ability to appropriate its corresponding constructed masculinity.

As Jeffrey Dennis carefully traced, late-nineteenth and twentieth-century medical, legal, sociological, and psychiatric thinking coalesced to create dominant characterizations of homosexuals. These characterizations of homosexuals in turn categorized the origin and social impact of same-sex desire. Homosexuals were categorized broadly into several socially constructed tropes focused on sexual irregularity, effeminacy, anti-social or anti-national behaviour, and criminality. These tropes labelled homosexuals as pederasts, inverts, degenerates, psychopaths, pansies, traitors, delinquents, deviants, militants, and derelicts. These social depictions shaped how queer men emotionally conceptualized their place and sense of belonging in society. James Lord can be used as a case study that exemplified the internalization of

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[35] Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 8.
[36] Matt Houlbrook, "Soldier Heroes and Rent Boys: Homosex, Masculinities, and Britishness in the Brigade of Guards, circa 1900-1960," *Journal of British Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 2003):360
[37] Nancy Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1985), 117.
[38] "Memo from F to DCE/SS, May 25, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/1648.
[39] Maurice Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 72.

homophobic shame and guilt as an "invert." The trope of the diseased homosexual body drove feelings of shame, deception, unworthiness, and secrecy, and an essentialist belief in his inherent criminality.

The language of disease permeates expressions of homosexual shame. James wrote of his belief that he suffered from an "inner affliction…[as] one who dared to live with a difference." He was in fact a creature "abnormal, that abominable thing called a homosexual, a loathsome mistake of nature, a cultural criminal whom any feeling person would naturally put in prison."[40] James lived an "unnatural life," his "sexual leprosy not wanted," aware that "queers [were] unfit to honor the flag of their forebears."[41] Male homosexuals and people with venereal disease were often conflated in medical and psychiatric literature and treated as dirty, dangerous, and contagious.[42] Conceptualizing homosexuality as pollutive, transmissible, and contagious to the social body advanced same-sex desire's diseased connotations. Homosexuals and sexually transmitted diseases collected increasingly oppressive descriptions through verbal violence in the first half of the twentieth century; consequently, homosexuals were depicted as purveyors of disorder in western societies.[43]

The social distinctness of male, single homosexuals ran counter to the 1940s view that families, not individuals, ought to be the fundamental social unit. As such, socially labelling homosexuals with such words as insidious, corrupt, perverted, indulgence, a medicalized vocabulary of unnatural vices, abominable crime, unmentionable personal and sexual practices[44]

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[40] James Lord, *My Queer War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 5-6.
[41] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7.
[42] Richard Davenport-Hines, *Sex, Death and Punishment. Attitudes to sex and sexuality in Britain since the Renaissance,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1990), 2.
[43] Davenport-Hines, *Sex, Death and Punishment. Attitudes to sex and sexuality in Britain since the Renaissance*, 13, 15.
[44] Davenport-Hines, *Sex, Death and Punishment. Attitudes to sex and sexuality in Britain since the Renaissance*, 287.

further exiled homosexual men as this constructed vocabulary of inversion pushed them to the margins. When a heterosexual man rejected James, he admonished James that "homos are sick, perverts" who "ought to see a doctor" and "do something about it," who need to "control" themselves since they are a "gangrene on the body politic."[45] James reacted, "suddenly sickened," imploring for "a tolerance for human frailty" when he asked "[d]o you think I like it that I disgust you?"[46] In addition to the opprobrium that emanated from religion, law, and medicine, American society at large revealed its disapproval of homosexual eroticism and sexuality by sharply curtailing the topic's public discussion. James' sexuality instilled in him a profound, even disturbing, sense of difference from his family, community, and society. The prevalent notion of the diseased homosexual engendered self-hatred in James and encouraged him to interpret his sexuality as an aberration, a flaw, or a personal failing. Induction into the military forced homosexual soldiers to confront their sexuality suddenly, emphasizing its stigma and suggesting it required special concern.[47] While these trenchant stereotypes, in common circulation, were significant for many men in how they thought about themselves, homosexual men like James did not apply them in a straightforward way,[48] often linking a secret life of shame to an ongoing questioning of the social ostracism and defining stereotypes of homosexuality.

This secrecy was rooted in James' perception of his masculinity as a performative failure, as the discursive features of his masculinity were at odds with heteronormative and military discourses. James' shame was a secret shame.[49] James consistently characterized his

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[45] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[46] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[47] John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities The Making of the Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 19, 20, 22, 25.
[48] Matt Cook, *Queer Domesticities Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 5.
[49] Deborah Cohen has investigated shame from the viewpoint of the family of the homosexual and how that perspective, and that of other family members, changed over time.

homosexuality as his "lurid, shaming, guilty secret," his "one guilty secret," animated by his ever-present fear of betraying his "lonely and loathsome self."[50] Applying the work of Butler, Nye, Scott, Sedgwick, and Segal, rather than locating his queer masculinity in a framework of pluralistic masculinities[51] which was attenuated by the variability of military masculinities,[52] James conceptualized his homosexuality as a failed masculinity, a masculinity-of-exile which counterfeited his social interactions. During his recruitment into the US Army, James acknowledged that "by a blatant lie I'd already betrayed civic decency by putting on the U.S. Army's uniform"[53] and yet that he was "prepared to go through with the military make-believe no matter what it cost."[54] James' anxiety was informed by a national masculinity embodied in the identity of the individual soldier. This national masculinity attenuated masculinities of class, religion, and ethnicity.[55] For James, even an award for high professional attainment and exemplary duty was vexed by this secret shame: from his "secret hiding place of remorse rose the phantom caveat" that possessing this medal became "a token of what, in a word, was queer: about myself and about the war, farcical and tragic."[56] Heteronormative masculinity functioned as a continual historic remembrance, a process of iterative regeneration of established masculine attributes founded in tradition and masculine myth as a bulwark against relentless social change[57] that privileged a particular masculine social position. James acknowledged that "[n]o one, to be sure, was accusing me of heroism, but medals awarded in wartime bear heroic intimations."[58]

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[50] Lord, *My Queer War*, 3, 5, 40.
[51] Robert A. Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 2007):419.
[52] Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," 433.
[53] Lord, *My Queer War*, 3.
[54] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7.
[55] Nye, "Western Masculinities in War and Peace," 417.
[56] Lord, *My Queer War*, 197.
[57] Stefan Horlacher & Kevin Floyd, eds., *Post-World War II Masculinities in British and American Literature and Culture,* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), 4.
[58] Lord, *My Queer War*, 198.

This commingling of public masculine achievement in the award for heroism and secret homosexuality felt devious and criminal.

Homosexual shame embodied resentment, anger, disgrace, worthlessness, and manifested as a terrible burden. After being isolated by his peers during basic training, James revealed that he "consequently hated the college and everyone in it with a passion almost equal to the loathing I'd felt for myself."[59] James feared that any "lamentable lapse of restraint might betray to sturdier men-at-arms the guilty presence of a pansy weakling in their midst"[60] and that there would be no leeway "just because you're a pansy."[61] James feared "criminal consequences, disgrace, and shame"[62] when he longingly eyed a flaxen-haired Adonis in uniform or a sailor in tight trousers because these incidents reminded James that he was a fairy.[63] War advertising depicted exemplary Americans as good-looking, blond, tall, and desired by adoring blonde women[64]—a social image from which James was exiled.

As a result of this homosexual shame, queer men felt exiled to the margins. Isolated and wary that their secret could be exposed, they felt uncertain when they participated in the national war effort. For Denis Rake, Hardy Amies, and James Lord, their desire to enlist ranged from uncertain to dissatisfied. Denis decided that he "must try to find out more about it [S.O.E. service] because I was very unhappy about my war effort up to then."[65] Denis' family had a history of military service. Rake's father was the *Times* correspondent in Brussels. In World War

[59] Lord, *My Queer War*, 5-6.
[60] Lord, *My Queer War*, 8.
[61] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[62] Lord, *My Queer War*, 18.
[63] Lord, *My Queer War*, 20.
[64] Paul Fussell, *Wartime. Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 127.
[65] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 16.

One, he helped Edith Cavell assist British prisoners of war escape by forging the signature of the United States consul on papers, thus allowing the prisoners to pass as Americans and cross into Holland. Denis was their courier as a child, his first contributions to British wartime efforts.[66] Using his West End theatrical connections, Denis arranged his interview with Maurice Buckmaster Head of 'F' Section of the S.O.E. at the War Office, through Major Lewis Gielgud, a member of Buckmaster's staff and brother to the actor. Buckmaster interviewed Denis personally; during the interview, he indicated to Denis that they were desperate for wireless operators (a position for which Denis was trained), cautioning Denis that, while he hoped he would accept the role, it was one of the most dangerous assignments on offer. Almost without thinking, he said he would.

Hardy Amies and James Lord were more uncertain about their participation. Hardy was honest that "any latent patriotism or burning desire to defend the Homeland was only fully aroused at the Battle of Britain, and at no time could I bring myself to a fighting hatred of the Germans."[67] James was even more reluctant on April 9, 1942, as he "plodded alongside my proud father to the United States Army recruitment center on Lexington Street in New York City."[68] Their sexuality alienated Hardy and James from a fuller participation in the patriotic outpouring of struggle against the aggressor in part because contemporary discourses on doing one's part and sacrifice failed to admit or laud their military contributions, burdened as they were by the rhetoric, vocabularies, and insinuations against their sexualities in these national

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[66] Patrick Howarth, *Undercover. The Men and Women of the Special Operations Executive,* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 145.

[67] Hardy Amies, *Just So Far,* (London: Collins Press, 1954), 72.

[68] Lord, *My Queer War*, 7. See also "James Lord Enlistment Record, April 9, 1942." World War II Army Enlistment Records, Series Record Group 64: Records of the National Archives and Records Administration, Box 0392, Film Reel Number 3.113, United States National Archives and Records Administration.

conversations. As the social anthropologist Benedict Anderson suggests, nations are imagined communities of vernacular culture,[69] whose ever-changing discourses admit and exclude ideas, persons, and participation in the national social body and state priorities. During the war, patriotic discourse focused on self-sacrificing citizens whose social responsibilities and "doing one's part" expressed their active citizenship.[70] For homosexual men, attaining full membership in the national social body was contingent on the suppression of their queer sexuality.

The 1940s saw the emergence of a multidimensional and loose configuration of attributes associated with manliness, which in turn coalesced to inform rapidly mythologized conceptions of nationhood.[71] This was a tempered masculinity, to paraphrase Sonya Rose, that provided social space where homosexual men could find opportunities to join the war effort. Masculinity, and specifically militarized masculinity, played a part in the gendered, national "imagined community"[72] of the Allied nations. This imaginary admitted multiple dimensions of men's identities and identifications, as well as the complicated ways that their understandings of their desires intertwined with the material, economic, cultural, and social circumstances of their lives.[73] Two principal factors drove Denis' recruitment into the Special Operations Executive. A dearth of available recruits required the S.O.E. to broaden the eligibility requirements to include recruits typically rejected by the traditional armed services. Second, Denis possessed a key skill needed by the S.O.E.: training in wireless radio operation. Unconventionality, an agents' best qualities were frequently not those of conventional serving officers and agents normally worked

[69] Richard Weight & Abigail Beach, eds., *The Right to Belong. Citizenship and National Identity in Britain, 1930-1960,* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998), 11.
[70] Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain, 1939-1945,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 14, 19.
[71] Stefan Dudnik, Karen Hagermann, and John Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in Politics and War. Gendering Modern History,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 178.
[72] Dudnik, Hagermann, and Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in Politics and War. Gendering Modern History*, xiii.
[73] Cook, *Queer Domesticities Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London*, 5.

in plain clothes. S.O.E. and other intelligence organizations set little store by rank.[74] At Bletchley, for example, formal military rank was only peripherally important.[75] This unconventional military environment admitted personalities, masculinities, sexualities, and women from the margins.

Despite their active service, homosexual men continued to feel isolated. Initially, Denis was unhappy that "at Croydon and while we were on ship every single member of the Sergeants' Mess, to all intents and purposes, boycotted me."[76] He was "completely ignored by all the other members of the mess," exasperated that no one "spoke to me at dinner," and that he had been "put into a room with an officer who also seemed to have taken the Trappist vows."[77] This social isolation affected him. He noted that not "a soul took any notice of me" leaving him feeling "like a complete idiot."[78] Denis felt that military regulations exacerbated these feelings of isolation. He disapproved of "S.O.E.'s practice of putting officers and other ranks into different houses while bringing them together for training. We were all going to risk our necks in the field, and why on earth rank counted at all I could never understand."[79] James reiterated these feelings of social isolation during US Army basic training. James recalled being "crouched apart from my platoon on the freezing slough of despond, often failing to stifle my malaise, stop the swell of

[74] M.R.D. Foot, *S.O.E. in France. An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France*, (London: Whitehall History Publishing, 1966), 43.
[75] Chris Smith, "'Bright Chaps for Hush Hush Jobs' Masculinity, Class and Civilians in Uniform at Bletchley Park," in Linsey Robb & Juliette Pattinson, eds. *Men, Masculinities and Male Culture in the Second World War Genders and Sexualities in History,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 147.
[76] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 19.
[77] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 69.
[78] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 70.
[79] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 58.

tears" while virile trainees were glad to "sneer at the absence of grit."[80] His homosexuality isolated him, and this isolation was apparent. Despondently, James identified that "[w]orse was the gnawing solitude…no one spoke to me, met my eye, agreed with my glance, or pretended I was anything like everybody else. Maybe that was the rightful consequence of my knowing I never would be."[81] Brian Stonehouse equally understood that training was something he "couldn't get out of [wishing instead he could] go home where everything is normal.'"[82] For queer men, military training highlighted their failure to meet military expectations of manliness.

Social perception of homosexuals as inverts and its corresponding gendered vernacular of effeminacy, weakness, and exile, continued to isolate homosexual men. The making of what might be called a militarized gender was a practical, continuous social accomplishment. While this militarized gender recognized contradiction and plurality, these homosexual men were not yet "good fellas" at the start of their service, a term Emma Vickers used for homosexual servicemen whose loyalty, reliability, and duty had been tested and thus accepted by their colleagues.[83] Indeed, as these homosexual men's military contributions were not yet established, their identities as dependable, "regular," servicemen, were still subject to skepticism. Their homosexual military identities took on various meanings and utilities at and across different moments in their service.[84] These masculinities were tempered by the prewar dictates of a Britain emerging from the industrial economic collapse of the 1930s, as well as the anxieties of a

[80] Lord, *My Queer War*, 8.
[81] Lord, *My Queer War*, 9.
[82] Brian Stonehouse as quoted in Roderick Bailey, Forgotten Voices of the Secret War. An Inside History of Special Operations during the Second World War, (London: Ebury Press, 2009), 99. Brian was also considered for assignment to M.I.5. See "SECRET. M.I.5. Trace Request, January 11, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.
[83] Emma Vickers, *Queen and Country. Same-sex desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-1945*, 13.
[84] Heike Bauer & Matt Cook, eds., *Queer 1950s. Rethinking Sexuality in the Postwar Years,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 3.

femininized, peaceful country desperate to avoid another military cataclysm. Their social masculinities also necessarily predate the muscular, hyper-masculinized, and fabricated image of the spy James Bond following the war, a fiction constructed in reaction to Britain's reduced geopolitical status in the world. Homosexual agents were constrained by the social descriptions and expectations of inverts, even while a plurality of military masculinities emerged among the services.

Exile and isolation fed feelings of doubt and inadequacy in homosexual men about their contribution to the war effort. While many men and women doubted their courage when faced with the realities of war, homosexual men felt multidimensional doubt. In interviews after the war, Denis commented that "deep down what I wanted to do was to be able to display the same kind of courage my friends who had become flyers had. Being a homosexual, one of my strongest fears was lacking the courage to do certain things."[85] Denis' homosexuality was central to his doubts about his courage. As Houlbrook has demonstrated, the process by which gender (effeminacy) increasingly stood in for sexuality (male same-sex desire) was nearly complete by the 1930s,[86] where effeminacy also stood in opposition to masculine courage.

Illusions about homosexuality and effeminacy were commonly made also about pacifists, suggesting the centrality of the hegemonic masculinity of heterosexuality. Effeminacy, in homosexuals or pacificists, threatened the virility needed to defeat the Germans, where pacifist or homosexual men were construed as irresponsible and sexually suspect anti-citizens.[87] Denis

[85] Marcel Ophuls, director, "The Sorrow and the Pity," includes interview with Denis Rake, (Berlin: Norddeutscher Rundfunk, Société suisse de radiodiffusion, 1969) Filmstrip released in Germany 1969, subsequently released in France in 1971. DVD released in France November 2011, in the United Kingdom DVD released 2017 with 2004 interview content with Ophuls by Ian Christie.
[86] Oram, "cross-dressing and transgender,"272.
[87] Dudnik, Hagermann, and Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in Politics and War. Gendering Modern History*, 189.

possessed an uncertain courage, when Denis displayed a certain "Dutch courage,"[88] a tempered bravado in which an ordinary man could act heroically, when necessary.[89] While Denis would do his part, he felt a counterfeit. These doubts further fed Denis' feelings that he was inadequate for military service. During his S.O.E. training, Denis felt lacking. He felt if the military wanted his services, they would have to "make allowances" since "elementary mechanics were beyond me." At his age he could not "truthfully be bothered with such nonsense," so if that was a problem, he "was better out of it."[90] Denis would not be "coaxed into doing something which [he] believed to be beyond [him]"; his terms were "no explosives, no firearms"; and he "won't kill anybody."[91] In 1941, Denis was forty, old by S.O.E. standards. He knew he "really needed to have some outstanding abilities if I was going to prove to them that I would be able to withstand the rigours of the field I don't think I had any such qualities."[92] Denis felt inadequate to the task, burdened by worries about his age, training, and his perceived limitations rooted in his homosexuality. As Buckmaster observed later, "[i]f Rake had been recruited in the later years of S.O.E., when we could be more selective, it is doubtful if he would ever have got past the first few weeks of his training."[93] Denis was not alone in feeling like an imposter. Hardy observed that "[d]uring most of the time when I was working in S.O.E. I was conscious of having an inferiority complex about the whole thing."[94] Even in 1943, Hardy still felt inadequate, despite that he "was shortly to

[88] Nancy Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend,* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1985), 140.
[89] Dudnik, Hagermann, and Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in Politics and War. Gendering Modern History*, 184.
[90] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 50, 51, 52.
[91] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 54, 55.
[92] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 48.
[93] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 78.
[94] Amies, *Just So Far*, 94. Hardy was recruited in the Special Operations Executive in 1941. See "Minute Sheet, April 24, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2

become a lieutenant-colonel, no one could suppose but that I was a rather unimportant person to have the important job of being head of the country section."[95] Like many stationed on the home front, Hardy "had a sneaking sort of feeling that I was having a pretty soft war, a feeling which was to become increasingly guilty as men would return from the Continent."[96] He sought opportunities to lessen these feelings of inadequacy. He recalled having "the chance of doing something [parachute school] which I hoped would expiate the sins of too easy living."[97] Doubt and feelings of inadequacy led homosexual agents to question their own courage.

When queer agents tested their courage, their reflections on their own bravery provided relief. Queer agents relied on various strategies to summon their courage. Denis, for example, had never thought of himself as a hero. Rowing himself to shore in France to start his first clandestine mission, Denis "had never felt such fear as at this moment was turning my bowels to water."[98] Yet he also knew he could not have lived with himself had he given up.[99] Denis adopted a coping mechanism each time he was aware of his "fear skulking just around the corner of my consciousness…[he] deliberately thought about other things."[100] During his capture in Lyons, Denis counted while under interrogation, a training technique which "empties the mind, and with the mind empty you can put up with quite a good deal of pain."[101] Maurice Buckmaster observed

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and "I.S.R.B. Card E.H. Amies, April 22, 1941," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[95] Amies, *Just So Far*, 98. Hardy recruited and ran agents to infiltrate the German lines. See "S.O.E. Confidential Report as at 31st March 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.

[96] Amies, *Just So Far,* 94.

[97] Amies, *Just So Far,* 95.

[98] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 84.

[99] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 85.

[100] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 85.

[101] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 132.

that Denis "had a faith, a sense of patriotism and a very deep sense of duty. The reason he was so courageous was that he was basically a shy man…[w]e needed such people, because they were the ones who had the courage to conquer their fears."[102] Brian too developed strategies to summon his courage.[103] Brian, waiting for possible execution, steeled himself for the guards "to stop at my door, which they never did."[104] Hardy was relieved when his orders to leave for Dunkirk were countermanded, trusting that his "only fear was that of making a fool of myself."[105] In some instances, Hardy's courage was greater than others. During his parachute training, he recalled that his "knees were shaking horribly against my neighbour's, but looking up to see whether he noticed this, I discovered with relief that they were not my knees at all, but his."[106] By their courage, these queer agents affirmed that they were not traitors to their duty, country, or colleagues. Even so, they experienced social ridicule and scorn through a pervasive homophobic discourse.

Queer men were objects of pity and scorn. Presumed misery defined the disorder of homosexuality. The legal and medical commentary stigmatized and accorded special symbolic significance to men who refused to behave "appropriately" toward other men and the opposite

[102] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 78.
[103] Various commanders remarked on Brian's courage and endurance in the field and especially during his various imprisonments extensively. See for example, "Recommendation for the Award of M.B.E. T/Lt. Brian Julian STONEHOUSE, 230136. General List," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8, "Letter to Capt. L.C.K. Dalton, AGM/779 to Officer Commanding, Joint Intelligence Co-Ord Branch, Control Commission for Germany, January 3, 1946," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8, and "Rentre de Dachau. France Combattante Liquidation "Action" Region Lyon, Questionnaire Signalatique," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1419/8.
[104] Brian Stonehouse as quoted in Roderick Bailey, *Forgotten Voices of the Secret War. An Inside History of Special Operations during the Second World War,* 351.
[105] Amies, *Just So Far,* 75.
[106] Amies, *Just So Far,* 96.

sex. Contemporaries viewed queer agents as "hopeless,"[107] "wretched,"[108] and "sick" [109] in part due to the number of queer men dismissed as physically or psychologically unfit for service. Concerns about soldiers' effeminacy and how unprecedented close living conditions affording opportunities for same-sex contact prompted these expulsions.[110] Beginning in 1922, the Oxford English Dictionary recorded queer as being used to mean "homosexual." Queer as a slur, however, did not gain popular currency until after World War Two.[111] Instead, a queer agent might be belittled as a "fairy, sissy, pansy,"[112] "Scarlet Pimpernel,"[113] and "pervert"; [114] in one instance, a soldier intimating that your "pansy buddy must be a Nazi too."[115] While greater opportunity for homosexuals to form collegial and sexual contacts began the emergence of an ethnic, collective community, queer agents were still viewed as degenerates and traitors to their sex, masculinity, colleagues, and country.

By the 1940s, there was a developing association between homosexuality and personal and national treachery. An example from Denis' first mission in France illustrates this point. A radio operator like Denis had an extremely dangerous task: every transmission was hazardous since these transmissions were exposed to detection by enemy surveillance.[116] On his first mission in France, Rake made a mistake during a routine French police control, due likely to the

[107] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 70.
[108] Buckmaster, *They Fought Alone*, 93.
[109] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[110] Miriam G. Reumann, *American Sexual Character. Sex, Gender, and National Identity in the Kinsey Reports*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 167.
[111] Cook, *Queer Domesticities Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London*, 7.
[112] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[113] "Internal Correspondence, Vogue Article, January 9, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive, Personnel Files (PF Series), NA HS 9/29/2 and "Transcript of Interview with Miss Withers, Editress Vogue Magazine, to DCEG from DCEL, January 9, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/29/2.
[114] Lord, *My Queer War*, 36.
[115] Lord, *My Queer War*, 54.
[116] Patrick Howarth, *Undercover. The Men and Women of the Special Operations Executive,* 146.

pressures of clandestine work.[117] As a result, Rake, along with two S.O.E. colleagues, Wilkinson and Heslop, were arrested by the *milice* for espionage.[118] Heslop and Wilkinson had waited for Rake at a rendezvous, and rather than leave when Rake was late, as their instructor had told them to do, they remained in the restaurant, betraying their association with Rake.[119] All three men were arrested.[120] Wilkinson and Heslop assumed that Rake had betrayed them to the *milice*.[121] Denis recalled that during their interrogation by the *milice*, "[w]hen they [Heslop & Wilkinson] came into the waiting room neither of them spoke a word to me.[122] Denis accepted the silence but "what did horrify me was the look of contempt and hatred they both gave me. I realised at once that they believed I had betrayed them.[123] On a personal level, Denis "felt that they were being most unjust in not allowing me to defend myself and in continuing to think the worst of

[117] The *milice* detained Denis as his identity card, issued in Lyons by the Americans, raised suspicion. "Memo from F to DCE/SS, May 25, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[118] Foot, *S.O.E. in France. An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France*, 178.
[119] Howarth, *Undercover. The Men and Women of the Special Operations Executive,* 147.
[120] "Army Form W.3121. Recommendation for Award, A/Major Richard Harry Heslop," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/701/1. "How we were captured, Richard Heslop," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/701/1.
[121] While unknown to Wilkinson and Heslop at the time, Rake had proven that he was flexible in his application of the rules of secrecy demanded of his role. During his training, Rake received instruction in the requirement for secrecy in his clandestine operations. "I [training instructor] also had a talk with him and tried to explain the absolute necessity of security mindedness to him." P.T.C. Training Log and Assessment, Denis Rake, July 31, 1941." Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. Rake, however, was known to discuss his role too freely as his later discussion with Richard Ellis showed. "On the evening of 9th March, in the course of conversation, Sub-Lieut Richard ELLIS, R.N.V.R., stationed at Dartmouth, stated that a friend of his named RAKE was working for what he described as a 'Commando Secret Service.' RAKE is, of course, exceedingly to blame for making such statements to ELLIS, but it is suggested that ELLIS, as a serving officer, should have known better than to repeat such statements in open conversation." "Letter from Captain Bennett to Dermett, March 17, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. This incident was raised to Maurice Buckmaster. "This report appears to refer to Dennis [sic] RAKE, and is sent to you in case you would like to take the matter up with him if and when he returns to this country." "Memo from D/CE.2 to Section F, DCE2/KV/4017, March 21, 1943," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.
[122] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 157.
[123] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 157.

me.[124] For the duration of their incarceration in France and subsequent imprisonment at two prisoner-of-war camps in Spain, neither Wilkinson nor Heslop spoke a single word to Denis. They exiled him from their company on account of his perceived treachery.[125] Finally, when they were released, Denis approached Wilkinson and Heslop to discuss their next plan of action.[126] The response was clear.[127] "'Fuck off!' Wilkinson said tersely."[128] The emotional toll of being falsely accused weighed heavily on Denis. A subsequent investigation into the matter in London revealed that the S.O.E. was satisfied that there was no truth to the suggestion that Denis might have betrayed either Heslop or Wilkinson. Denis maintained that their discovery was the consequence of the inappropriate French clothing issued to them for field operations. S.O.E. investigators "checked with the files [and determined that] You are right about the suit, shirts and ties,' and that apparently was that, for they never questioned me [Denis] about the incident again.[129] Wilkinson was Denis' primary accuser. Wilkinson knew that Denis was homosexual and had lovers from the various Allied forces while undercover. Wilkinson's mild disdain grew into serious antipathy when he learned that Denis was living with a German, Max Halder, in Paris.[130] Wilkinson's reaction exemplified the contemporary association of homosexuality with treachery.

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[124] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 171.

[125] In accounts of their imprisonment at Limoges, Castres, and Camp de Chambaron, unlike Denis, Richard Heslop was praised as "a magnificent officer, one of our two leading lights. Impossible to praise him too highly. His record speaks for itself." "Summary No. 170 F. Section Pro-Forma – Richard Heslop Decoration Proposed," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/701/1.

[126] The prisoners were released *en masse*. "We [Wilkinson, Heslop, Rake, seven others] were released from Chambaran by Commandant Tournier – who told us first of all to change our name and to send letters out in our new names to family and friends and he would change all his records." "Recital of Dieudonné, (Denis Rake), undated," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

[127] Foot, *S.O.E. in France. An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France*, 199-200.

[128] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 172-173.

[129] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 202-203.

[130] Howarth, *Undercover. The Men and Women of the Special Operations Executive,* 147.

Denis' relationship with Max Halder, a German Abwehr officer, excited Wilkinson's existing homophobia and extended his distrust, conflating it with treachery, given Max's nationality and occupation as a German military intelligence officer. Denis' relationship with Max reinforced contemporary associations of homosexuality with distrust, treachery, and unreliability.

5.3 Gestures to the ethnic model

The emotional recollections of these queer agents underline the complex tension between a subjective understanding of homosexual self as "invert" and active participation in the fraught emergence of the ethnic model in a distinct homosexual subcultural community. Mapping personal queer connections between various men identifies their interconnectedness and recognizes the importance these relationships held in the formation of gay communities and an ethnic consciousness of homosexuality. These connections reflect the transnational nature of these emerging queer wartime communities and the fluid mobility of queer personal bonds as they formed between and within civilian and military environments. These relationships reflected the formation of early and personal social groupings of queer men. The memories of these queer agents demonstrate the variety of these groups including British, French, American, German, and Greek civilians and servicemen.[131] The cataloguing of specific men by name in their personal and emotional networks emphasizes the importance of these relationships in how queer agents accepted their own homosexuality and formed communities of emotional, social, and sexual support. In their memoirs, these queer agents recorded imaginary maps of queer sites where they experienced unrequited romantic longing and sexual conquest, as well as the physical geography

[131] The following emotional and personal relationships were memorialized by these agents including British connections (Jacques Artel, Douglas Byng, high-ranking diplomat, Alex Shokolovsky), French (Jacques Artel, barman at Boeuf, Denis' various lovers in France), American servicemen (Johannes Kessler, Jerry Weinbaum, Harrison Alliot, Jr., Bill Anson, Aaron Randolph, L.W. Aldrich, Peter Fahnestock, Winfield Jones), American civilians (Gordon Haney, Dr. Duckett Smythe, Prof. Randy Phillips, Alistair MacCorkledale), German (Max Halder and prisoner-of-war Karl in House No. 9, Heidelberg), and Greek (Greek prince of the royal family).

of the emerging homosexual commercial and social spaces where these emotional bonds formed.[132] It is possible to trace the exploratory emotional connections of these queer men within their own communities and to historicize their experiences within the emergence of an ethnic, homosexual subculture.

The emergence of a distinct homosexual community buoyed queer men in the process of acknowledging their homosexuality and served to lessen feelings of isolation. Self-discovery and a desire to connect to a community. These agents' ability to acknowledge their homosexuality varied. In some cases, agents described a brazen feeling of self-acceptance. Denis "never concealed the fact that he was queer. Indeed, it was always the first thing he mentioned"[133] and Jerry, James' first lover, had declared "[h]ell, yes, I'm queer…What do you think?"[134] Denis accepted his homosexuality as natural when he indicated he didn't "remember ever being aware that in loving this man I was being out of the ordinary."[135] James, on the other hand, sought community and emotional relationships to sustain his self-discovery. James longed "to find a man beside me who would always be my friend to guide me"[136] as he now "had to know myself, to be something, become someone I didn't know."[137] Membership in the emerging ethnic community provided opportunities for queer men to feel that it "was good to be taken for granted

[132] The transnational nature of these connections may be mapped from their memoirs. Agents mapped sites of unrequited longing in Atlantic City, Chicago, Denver, Reno, Donner Pass, Lovelock, Fresno, Salt Lake City, Baltimore, Dilsberg, Aurillac, and Salerno, and sites of sexual conquest in Paris, Lyons, Les Sept Chemins, Lieutades, Mouchet, the River Indre, Dijon, Massif Central, Auvergne, Saint-Santin, Châteauroux, Castres, London, Miranda de Ebro & Jaraba prison camps, Boston, San Francisco, Dinant, Brussels, and Athens. Queer agents also recorded maps of queer establishments including Napoleon's, Duck Club, Statler Hotel, private Boston club, Spooner Place, Ritz Hotel, London, Boeuf sur le Toit, London, Boeuf sur le Toit, Paris, La Cicogne, The Pyramid, Faisan restaurant in Chateauroux, and the St. Lazare train station.

[133] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 117.

[134] Lord, *My Queer War*, 111.

[135] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 41.

[136] Lord, *My Queer War*, 24.

[137] Lord, *My Queer War*, 91.

for what you were."[138] When queer men told one another that, it "[t]akes one to know one. Spotted you long ago",[139] they recognized themselves in others, evoked a powerful mirror of collective personhood where they could jointly declare "[w]e've all got lives to live."[140] Acts of self-definition, (gay, homosexual, queer), plugged homosexual men into networks of other men and thus into ideas about the distinguishing characteristics, propensities, and cultures[141] that defined queer men. During the war years, the process of identifying oneself as homosexual took on juridical and cultural as well as personal significance,[142] a personal significance fraught with emotional tension and social acknowledgement.

This social admission was possible because of the emergence of an identifiable queer community with its own social logics, traditions, and vernacular. When queer men joked that it takes "one to know one. So fess up…Wouldn't come on to you if I wasn't gay myself",[143] social admission accompanied personal disclosure. Specialized language facilitated such revelation, as queer men purposefully initiated men into a coded queer vernacular, noting what "it means to be gay…[i]t's a password. We use it between ourselves so other people won't know we're talking about being queer."[144] The community developed its own ethnic jargon. Rites of initiation, instruction, and welcome were community-based and facilitated by multiple members of this emerging culture. James' lover, Jerry, thought that James was a "late starter" and declared that it was high "time you got to know the world you're going to spend your life in. I can give you a shove in that direction if you want."[145] Later, Jerry brought James to his "auntie" at a residential

[138] Lord, *My Queer War*, 97.
[139] Lord, *My Queer War*, 103.
[140] Lord, *My Queer War*, 103.
[141] Cook, *Queer Domesticities Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London*, 5.
[142] Reumann, *American Sexual Character. Sex, Gender, and National Identity in the Kinsey Reports*, 171.
[143] Lord, *My Queer War*, 84.
[144] Lord, *My Queer War*, 85.
[145] Lord, *My Queer War*, 85.

club in Boston. There, in handing him over at the door, Jerry told "auntie" that he would "trust him [James] in your hands, honey, you give him a push."[146] To instruct and welcome queer men into the culture required communal, trusted effort.

Queer men formed communities of contacts across national geographies rooted in their same-sex desire, and participated in an expanding geography of commercial, social, and cultural spaces into which they extended homosexual culture. Nancy Wake's wry and often anxious observations of Denis while they worked with the *Maquis* revealed Denis' emotional and romantic network in France. Nancy managed his activities as a radio operator, careful never to give Denis a reason to leave "us and go straight back to his lover, which was exactly where he had been"[147] since they knew "he was just itching for an excuse to go and join his current lover further north."[148] Denis' behaviours demonstrated a desire to maintain connection to the queer men that he had met while undercover.

Queer networks of community extended beyond national borders. On landing in France, Denis met the man "he had been having an affair with several weeks before in London, and they had decided to have a last fling."[149] Denis used his queer network to assist his activities with the *Maquis*. When operational need arose, Denis "knew there was an S.O.E. operator in Châteauroux because that is where he had spent his idyllic week."[150] Denis identified and created new queer networks while on mission in France. Nancy noted the expansiveness of Denis' same-sex desire. There was "a good-looking young man in our group [of *Maquis*] on whom Denden had designs."[151] An irate farmer whose "son had complained about an alleged advance from Denden"

[146] Lord, *My Queer War*, 88.
[147] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 117.
[148] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.
[149] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 117.
[150] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 131.
[151] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 130.

complained to Nancy, demanding action that these advances cease. Nancy was aware of the problems that would have arisen had Nancy let Denis "run wild amongst the good-looking young men in the *Maquis*,"[152] the consequences for which Denis could have been "torn to pieces or, alternatively, shot to death by an irate father."[153] From Nancy's perspective, Denis' trouble was that "he actually believed most men were homosexual and if they were not, then they should be!"[154] Denis sought queer connection and queer community in rural France, away from the queer commercial and social spaces of urban Paris and Lyons. Denis' feeling of exile from urban queer culture and desire to build a network of personal and affective relationships speaks to the important role that emerging public, commercial, and social urban spaces played in the formation of an ethnic understanding of the homosexual culture.

The emergence of a queer physical geography of urban, commercial, and social spaces fostered feelings of belonging, acceptance, safety, and connection. Homosexual men recognized a new consciousness of their collective identity in the subculture of bars and camaraderie which expanded to meet the wartime demand.[155] This occurred in bars like the one at the Statler Hotel in Boston and in the Pink Sink bar in the Ritz Hotel in London. This claiming of space for homosexual culture foregrounded feelings of disbelief upon admission. As noted earlier, when Jerry Weinbaum confirmed to James that all the men in the bar were gay, James' concerns about its public nature were washed away by Jerry's assertion that queer men "have a right to *lebensraum*, just like straights."[156] In places like the Statler Hotel, the gardens behind the *Petit Palais* in Paris, or the gay club in the *rue du Colisée, le Boeuf sur le Toit,* queer men felt

[152] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.
[153] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 126.
[154] Wake, *The White Mouse The autobiography of Australia's wartime legend*, 125.
[155] John Costello, *Love, Sex and War 1939-1945,* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., Ltd., 1985), 173.
[156] Lord, *My Queer War*, 86.

acceptance noting that it's "perfectly safe…[n]obody cares who does what."[157] Queer men linked space and emotion, as feelings of acceptance and safety were written on the physical spaces of commercial activity.

Queer men used these new geographic spaces to seek romantic and sexual adventure, imbuing these spaces with a broadening range of emotional attachments as they created imaginary and proprietary networks of homosexual men with whom to connect. In this way, queer men could signal sexual difference. This difference, with its set of presumed norms,[158] generated a range of emotional expressions which mirrored heterosexual romantic emotions. A sense of belonging saturated these emotions as queer men piloted the emergence of a distinct cultural community. Queer longing, queer love, and queer grief were the consequence of interpersonal emotional relationships, signalling an emerging history of queer emotions.

Same-sex longing emerged as men sought to lessen feelings of loneliness and isolation, forming emotional liaisons with other men in the emerging subculture. These queer agents articulated their physical longing for other men in artistic, often Hellenic, descriptions of physical beauty and admiration. James recalled the objects of his longing in particularly poetic terms, noting that he had "memorized the perfection of his profile"[159] or that another was "all lustrous inside that magnificent skin"[160] emerging from his bath. James felt the ache of longing when his object of desire could bring on a "compulsion of tears" or ensure that his "windpipe was parched."[161] Queer longing was the counterpoint to emotions of shame, guilt, cowardice, and treachery. An emerging distinct homosexual subculture of identifiable available men excited

[157] Lord, *My Queer War*, 311.
[158] Cook, *Queer Domesticities Homosexuality and Home Life in Twentieth-Century London*, 8.
[159] Lord, *My Queer War*, 44.
[160] Lord, *My Queer War*, 67.
[161] Lord, *My Queer War*, 44.

these feelings of longing. An unbearable romantic longing suffused James' first romantic crush during the war. James and his crush spent as much time together as possible, leaving base to drive the countryside, stop for a swim, or dine in roadside restaurants while in Nevada. James felt that the "mornings, evenings, afternoons were all made incandescent and secure by…[his] presence."[162] Whether James knew where they were going when they set out, "nothing on earth could have made me happier than to go there with him."[163] To James, they were "like lost children in the forest of make-believe on the tricky border of the intimate,"[164] basking in "the vertiginous simplicity of taking each other for granted."[165] These expressions of queer longing gesture toward the coincident emergence of a distinct queer culture in which men fashioned space to develop emotional relationships.

Opportunities for queer love flourished amid the disruptive national mobilization and migration of enlisted men. Denis recounted two occasions in his memoir in which he fell in love, once with Max Halder in Paris, and the other with Alex Shokolovsky while on the *Massif Central*. Denis confessed that there "have been one or two great loves in my life."[166] With Max Halder, Denis experienced a simple, domestic love, one which supplied normalcy during his uncertain mission in France. Denis found himself "deeply emotionally involved"[167] with Max "a man of about forty, slim, very good-looking, with glorious deep blue eyes which were as sensitive as an artist's."[168] Together, they were content to sit at home, where Denis would cook a

[162] Lord, *My Queer War*, 55.
[163] Lord, *My Queer War*, 65.
[164] Lord, *My Queer War*, 43.
[165] Lord, *My Queer War*, 44.
[166] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 43.
[167] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 143.
[168] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 139.

meal from supplies that Max brought home from his canteen.[169] "Max loved these evenings as much as I did, for when we were together like this, we could forget about the war and the horror it represented for both of us."[170] With Alex Shokolovsky, Denis felt a passionate and latterly tragic love, confessing that he "had loved him as I had never loved anyone before, and though our life together had been short, it had been triumphant and far too wonderful for me to describe it."[171] Descriptions of queer love broaden the exercise of historicizing queer emotions during the war, admitting instances of tenderness into the wartime narrative.

With queer love came queer grief, an isolating, unforgiving emotion more terrible for queer men whose grief was publicly silent and whose unacknowledged pain found no social remedy in military culture. OSS agent Donald Downes recalled his discovery of the death of a beloved major for whom he had feelings; the major perished in an explosion on the beach at Salerno. Looking at his corpse, Donald could hear the major's voice, "almost expressionless, droning in yesterday's tomato field. I remember his naked muscles in the sunset, his face. My lower lip kept beating an involuntary tattoo against the upper one."[172] The death of Alex Shokolovsky to machine gun fire by the *milice* on the *Massif Central* affected Denis deeply. When Alex died in Denis' arms "suddenly to the accompaniment of machine-guns, the memory lingered for many years, and the tears still start to my eyes when I think of him and that awful day in the Massif Central."[173] Denis admitted that the one thing that kept him "from going

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[169] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 143.
[170] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 143.
[171] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 236.
[172] Donald Downes, *The Scarlet Thread Adventures in Wartime Espionage,* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953), 23.
[173] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 43.

absolutely mad with grief and my sense of loss was that the war took no notice of what had happened to me personally, and I still urgently needed to play my part in it."[174] Seeing his grief, Nancy Wake soothed Denis and urged him to set aside his grief and continue with the mission, saying, "[s]tick at it. It all depends on you."[175] When, however, he returned to England in the weeks following the disastrous rout of the Resistance at *Mont Mouchet*, Denis was "admitted to hospital at once, and…spent some weeks in a looney bin."[176] An extensive and varied historiography traces experiences of grief and loss during wartime. Queer grief, however, is absent from emotional histories of World War Two. Within the memoirs of these agents, grief occupied a prominent place in the narratives, signifying the importance these memoirists placed on those moments of grief that went undetected.

5.4 Conclusion

This interrogation of the sources of queer sentiment sketches the margins of a queer emotional history of World War Two. This tentative foray tracks the emotional awareness of queer men of their wartime experience and to historicize these emotions as part of the broader narrative of the war. The social position of homosexuals as "inverts" obscured the discovery of queer passion. The complicated emotional recollections of these queer men reflect the complex tension between a subjective understanding of homosexual self as "invert" and their participation in the anxious emergence of a distinct homosexual subcultural community. The questions

[174] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 236.
[175] Rake, *Rake's Progress The Gay and Dramatic Adventures of Major Denis Rake, MC, the Reluctant British War-Time Agent,* 238.
[176] Denis outlined his experience of 'being completely mad' in his ward in "Letter from Denis Rake to V.M. Atkins, October 4, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648. Vera Atkins sends her best wishes and those of Maurice Buckmaster for a speedy recovery in "Letter from V.A. Atkins to Denis Rake, October 12, 1945," Ministry of Economic Warfare: Special Operations Executive: Personnel Files (PF Series), NA, HS 9/1648.

explored in this chapter link subjective emotional experience to the scholarly goal of historical recuperation. Historicizing the experience of these queer agents detects their emotional and interpersonal experiences within the cultural, social, and military frameworks of their contemporaries. Homosexuality as pathology and a self-affirming act of queer identity equally pervaded queer emotion. The sentiments expressed in the memoirs were coterminous with the authors' rewriting of their own emotional narratives as they built queer selfhoods and (re)imagined their subjective memories over their lifetime. Queer men wrote extensively about their strong, at times negative, emotional experiences as much as they explored their positive affective experiences of longing, attraction, and love. The contemporary social position of homosexuals as inverts and a discursive language of denigration shaped how queer men loved, grieved, mistrusted, and triumphed.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

During the war, queer men shared a growing self-awareness of their collectivity and membership in a broader wartime community with other homosexuals. While a model of a homosexual ethnic community would coalesce decades later, queer men assembled a self-conscious homosexual subculture amid the social upheaval of World War II. In the lived experiences of clandestine agents Denis Rake, James Lord, Hardy Amies, Donald Downes, and Brian Stonehouse, evidence of an embryonic homosexual subculture is visible. The nascent forms of queer social logics, geographies of queer space and sexual adventure, emotional struggles and negotiation, and the development of distinct homosexual cultural forms, artifacts, and language use are unmistakeably evident in their memoirs and personal recollections.

By dismantling the activities of homosexual culture into its discrete components, an assembly of methodological tactics illustrates the tenuous organization to this evolving queer subculture. A focus on spatiality enables a close reading of how commercial, public, private, and interstitial spaces engendered or opposed the extension of queer culture-building efforts. This approach uncovers contemporary social anxieties about homosexuality, demonstrating how queer men interacted in various heteronormative locations in non-conforming ways: reorienting space to permit public displays of same-sex desire, probing space to admit homosexual identities, and scrutinizing space for instances of acknowledgement of queer desire, grief, love, or loss. The queer micro-interactions between and among homosexual men and, among queer and non-queer others, described the uncertainties in the formation of a homosexual subculture.

Interrogating assemblies of masculinities further provided a dialectical method to consider the antithetical or opposite positions of ‘gay’ and ‘straight’ masculinity. Heteronormative and queer masculinities, however, existed in a state of nonduality, where the

separate modes of performing various masculinities were inseparable, each built from, with, and in opposition to the characteristics and symbolism inherent in the other. The analysis of queer emotions illustrated this tension, as these emotional memories were linked to individual understandings of masculinity, manliness, and citizenship. A poly-perspective analytical view of gender, class, status, rank, economic and social position, age, and sexual orientation nuances the exploration of this emerging homosexual subculture.

A focus on spatiality rendered visible queer use of public, private, and interstitial sites in culture-building efforts. By the mid-1940s, Paris was the chief site of European queer culture, followed closely by London. By the German occupation of Paris, the city's queer geography had expanded, as queer commercial and artistic enterprises migrated alongside queer people to Paris following the rise of the Nazi Party. An identifiable queer geography, however, remained largely marginalized to the Montmartre, Pigalle, and Montparnasse quarters of Paris as well as a few neighbourhoods in London. The most significant development was the establishment of an extensive network of bars, nightclubs, and bathhouses which gave queer men a place to socialize and encouraged the formation of gay enclaves within the city. These commercial sites of queer sociability provided a physical manifestation of their homosexual collectivity. These public, commercial sites fostered a sense of connection and belonging among queer men and were regularly the stages on which queer men began to accept their own homosexualities. The sheer number of homosexual men in the bar at the Statler Hotel astonished James, exposing his inability to reconcile the breadth of the queer community with his own sense of isolation. James' own homosexual geography expanded to the Duck Club, Spooner Place, Napoleon's, and various private clubs and homes in the residential neighbourhoods of Boston. In Paris, a friend took James to the *Boeuf sur le Toit* for a drink, a bar particularly important as well to Denis Rake

whose network of romantic connections spanned bars and hotels in London, Paris, Lyons, and Châteauroux.

Denis' use of the *Boeuf sur le Toit* in Paris as his place of employment during his missions in France illustrates the complex interconnections between clandestine activity, queer sociability, sexuality, community, criminality, national allegiance, and the flexible use of gender presentation within the queer and artistic communities. Denis accessed the queer community in specific, intentional, and consequential ways to enhance his clandestine cover, exploiting the forbidden and marginalized nature of this queer commercial space to avoid detection from Vichy and German surveillance. At the same time, *Le Boeuf* was the site of his primary romantic attachment in Paris with the *Abwehr* officer Max Halder, mingling operational purpose with romantic and sexual desire. The established queer community, with its marginalized social and geographic isolation, provided contacts, safety from detection, personal freedom, sexual opportunity, and operational efficiencies to his clandestine cover. Public and commercial queer spaces were the most stable manifestations of queer culture-building. Conversely, queer use of private and interstitial space was fraught with uncertainty, negotiation, and confrontation.

Queer men's use of private space suggested a desire for domesticity whose forms were not yet negotiated. The historical sources offer few examples of queer domestic arrangements. In their broadest terms, queer domestic arrangements emerged in several usages: recruitment billets in hotels and training camps, college dormitories, hotel billets in the United States and France, country-house-turned-S.O.E.-training-centres, and private apartments. Queer domesticity and its various personal, social, and sexual configurations was opportunistic, collegial, and temporary. Queer domestic sites were also interstitial. They functioned in the provisional space inside the

room, separated by the door from the heteronormative hallway where queer men restricted public performance of their sexuality.

That the desire to meet sexual and social needs manifested in sexual assault suggests that queer men understood that private space temporarily suspended the surveillance of their sexuality. A Greek prince assaulted Denis in their apartment on Cephisia Street in Athens. Pancho groped James in his apartment in San Francisco. James rejected Winfield's unwanted attentions in an apartment in Dijon. This domestic violence connected race, economic status, class, rank, criminality, desire, and foreignness within a plurality of same-sex desire in domestic space, and in doing so problematized the emotional effects these assaults had on queer men. Domestic space was an important historical geography in homosexual identity formation, one in which internalized homophobia generated feelings of anguish, shame, guilt, and aggression as the result of dominance, sexual assault, or violence. The personal interactions between Denis, James, and their sexual partners suggest new lines of inquiry into the complex social arrangements being negotiated in early examples of queer domesticity, a period in which the impermanence of "home" and "place" amid the upheaval of the war frustrated the ability of queer men to establish permanent and long-lasting domestic arrangements.

Interstitial spaces, those spaces of the *in-between*, served as the analytical of an examination of the fragile social micro-dynamics of culture-building where queer men iteratively processed failure and (re)negotiated new social forms. Queer efforts challenged the regulation of accepted forms of heteronormative sociability, akin to a complex assembly of Foucauldian structures of surveillance, power, coercion, expectation, and social narrativity about acceptable practices of sexuality. These case studies illustrate examples of the performative failure of queer sexuality in these interactions. The ability to trace these iterative micro-interactions, however,

between and among queer men and between queer and non-queer others demonstrates how fragile the construction of social logics was in the early queer communities and between queer and heteronormative societies. The historical record demonstrates a social awareness of queer sexuality. Sergeants admonished recruits to keep their hands to themselves in shared bunks. S.O.E. colleagues recognized Denis' propensity to abandon mission objectives to seek out sexual adventure. The major rejected Donald's desire for the major's burnished body in the sea at Salerno. The joshing of naked GIs in the shower was off limits to James. Karl's sexual advances in the prisoner-of-war camp at Mannheim discomfited James because of their imbalance of power.

These queer social infrastructures developed tentatively, organically (re)organizing and transforming, failing in their development but reflecting a particular moment in time during the war as part of a process-of-becoming. The interactions in these fractional spaces demonstrated that homosexual social patterns had not yet codified. The war period was generative in the construction of queer social logics and behaviours. Queer men colonized the interstitial territories in public, private, and provisional spaces. They took possession of the negotiable space in various cultural artifacts like clothing and language. In so doing, queer men extended queer culture-building activities into heteronormative social structures.

Clothing became an external manifestation of a queer interiority. These queer men affixed several contested notions of sexuality, citizenship, and masculinity to the performed symbolism inherent in dress. By challenging how heteronormative masculinity was visually constituted in civilian and military dress, queer subjectivities emerged in sartorial choices, rendering visible sexual messaging and performed sexualities. Clothing use and modification were ways to perform queer masculinities and to enrobe queer sexualities.

Queer men sexualized the uniform as a site on which to broadcast sexuality, identity, and sexual availability. Hardy and Denis modified the shoulders and sleeves of their uniforms to appear more attractive and sexually appealing. Winfield augmented this process of alteration, reworking the uniform into a new sartorial object, a presentation of dress defined by its use to advertise same-sex desire. His uniform, with its tapered shoulders, cinched waist, and constricted material in the thighs was rather "tighter than Ike would like," a sartorially (re)invented, uncondoned military article of queer sexuality. This tailoring of the uniform was queer ornamentation, part of a courtship and sexual display that reflected an emerging class-based homosexual aesthetic. This aesthetic visually exhibited the shifting nature of several queer masculinities. A queer reading of military and civilian clothing disrupted heteronormative performances of sexuality and masculinity inherent in clothing gendered male. Homosexual men (re)imagined and (re)negotiated queer masculinities and sexualities through civilian, covert, and military sartorial display.

Use of clothing to signal a queer interiority foreshadowed the development of self-generating queer stereotypes in the community, where sartorial choice visually transmitted membership in a loosely organized framework of sexual and social subgroups of queer men. The memoirs display the subtle organization of various types of queer men within a coded shorthand of categorization in the imaginary of the queer mind. This cultural sorting of men visually communicated information about a queer man's class, preferences, economic status, physicality, sexual proclivities, and romantic interests. The dandy emerges in Winfield: muscular, well-tailored, and athletic with a focus on attractiveness. In Auntie's purple T-shirt, apple green skullcap, and in Vincent Wardour's canary yellow turtleneck, outlandish colours suggesting a counter-cultural rebellion against heteronormative male dress.

Dress, however, was further complicated by queer resistance to categorization and a queer desire to make visible the naked queer body. Sartorial shape-shifting precluded definition as queer men experimented with gender-inversion and theatricality to resist heteronormative classifications of queerness. Denis' mimetic drag performances, his opportunistic adoption of the clothing of the brigand, and his use of theatrical clothing (stripped pants, pom poms, and a red beret while travelling in France) spoke to the variability and breadth of the presentation of queerness. Instances of nudity and the display of the queer male body also clothed queer men in a public declaration of their homosexual bodies and a defiance of social invisibility. Hanno naked in the tub, Donald's bare thighs on Salerno beach, GIs joshing nude in the showers, Harrison's unusually large penis, Robespierre: these and other instances of queer nudity upended the sartorial covering of the queer body and thus foreshadowed the overt presentation of naked queer bodies in public during later periods of social resistance such as the Stonewall demonstrations, Pride parades, and the gay rights movement. Clothing and its absence became media through which queer masculinities and sexualities were visually constituted.

The development of the cultural artifacts of a homosexual subculture accelerated during the war, with clothing as only one component. A collective imaginary of a queer world, with its networks of commercial, public, social, and sexual sites, grew as more and more mobilized queer servicemen interacted in recruitment centres, training grounds, camps, battlefields, and sites of leisure, providing innumerable opportunities for the curation and consolidation of this shared worldview. Cultural colloquialisms, specifically queer colloquialisms and slang, emerged; such examples as the colloquial use of "gay" to self-identify covertly in heteronormative environments and "auntie" as an honorific given to older, trusted, more feminized men. This slang was saturated with humour, emotion, and insider access, impressing on queer men their

collective exceptionality within society. Queer men developed the ability to code-switch, moving effortlessly between queer colloquialisms and heteronormative communication depending on their audience and intent. Queer colloquialisms shorthanded the need to determine another's homosexuality and shared identity. The development of shared cultural and linguistic artifacts reflected the recognition of their common emotional, sexual, and social experiences.

Interiority, sexuality, masculinity, and emotion were inextricably linked. Feminist and queer critiques of the study of masculinities provided an entry point to unravel the complexities of queer wartime masculinity. A set of shifting and emerging queer masculinities were constructed against the dominant heteronormative masculinity, a masculinity bound within the nationalized body of the soldier. Men strove to establish a range of heterosexual and homosexual peripheral masculinities which authenticated their contribution to the war effort on the home front and on the battlefield. Queer men contested the socially constructed nature of this wartime masculinity, reworking its elements to provide new dimensions to queer masculinity; namely, an effete masculinity in Hardy's tailoring and attractive fashion, a prudish masculinity in James with his quiet longing and disdain for sexual aggressiveness, a loyal masculinity in Brian the dutiful son seeking approval, and an overtly sexual masculinity in Denis whose flamboyant sexual energy defined his world.

These masculinities, however, concealed inner conflicts. Queer men's psychic estrangement from heteronormative society affected the expression and regulation of their emotions. These men stood apart from society, nominally citizens but socially separate. As citizens, their social marginality shaped their willingness to participate in the war effort. Hardy could never bring himself to hate the Germans, and only joined the war effort when London was bombed. James joined the U.S. Army not out of patriotism, but instead to hide his emerging

homosexual identity. A gendered and homophobic vocabulary generated an effeminate social posture, where an assembly of artistic allusions, appeals to disorder and disease, taunts, and a continual assessment of manliness constructed femininized tropes of queer men. To military assessors, homosexuals were sensitive, precious, effeminate, nervous, gossipy, and melancholic. Their military performance, however, was defined as agreeable, lively, bright, and cheerful as opposed to commanding, brave, serious, and vigorous.

As a result, queer character was seen to be unmilitary by disposition, where concepts of masculinity were tied to performance in battle. An assessment that a queer agent was more of a soldier in performance than looks spoke to the centrality of the visual display of virile aestheticism to the maintenance of heroic masculinity. A close reading of queer men's emotionality, evident in their memoirs and interviews, traced the struggle queer men faced between accepting these characteristics as true about themselves and striving to attain those traditional attributes of manliness conferred by citizenship, belonging, and social acceptance.

Queer men laid claimed to traditional, heteronormative male qualities, but their emotional responses revealed a belief in their own continuous failure to achieve an appropriate performance of those attributes. These queer men tested their courage in war but always met with a caveat, a doubt in their true bravery. Hardy tested himself in parachute school, graduating to find some equality with his peers fighting bravely on the continent. James expressed doubts about his worthiness to accept a commendation for duty and service in France. In later interviews, Denis acknowledged that many of his actions were an effort to demonstrate that homosexuals could be courageous. Denis' anguish at accusations of betrayal by Heslop and Wilkinson in France spoke to his inner acknowledgement that homosexuality and untrustworthiness were equated as well as his eagerness to disprove this charge.

The emotional conflicts laid bare in the memoirs illustrated a queer interiority riven with shame, rejection, and ostracism. James particularly exemplified queer shame. He felt an inner affliction, believing he was a loathsome mistake who lived an unnatural life as a sexual leper. He felt rejected by his peers. He cried out for a tolerance of his human frailty. He felt a deep despair that he disgusted others and felt a searing humiliation in his encounters with Winfield and Pancho. When describing emotional experience, queer agents disclosed their sense of inferiority, fragmented as it was by conflicts with their homosexuality, yet also suffused with emotions of love, longing, and a desire to belong.

Several of their emotional reminiscences pointed to changing expectations toward their social position, relationships, and sense of belonging during the uncertain emergence of a collective, homosexual subculture. Queer men expressed an expectation to find connection and opportunities for love. Denis and James revealed their experience of longing and love: Denis in his love for a Greek prince, Max Halder, and Alex Shokolovsky, and James for Johannes "Hanno" Kessler and Jerry Weinbaum. New ways to mingle and create community emerged in homosexual bars, hotels, and provisionally in parks, toilets, and beaches. A collective need for queer rituals of loss, grief, and mourning surfaced in how Denis dealt with Alex's death at the hands of the *milice* or Donald's shaken grief at the death of the major on the beach at Salerno.

Suggestively, these memoirs detailed a developing sense of belonging and shared identity. James experienced hotel bars, full almost exclusively with homosexual men, including men he knew socially. He recognized other queer men in military service while at intelligence training in Boston and while stationed throughout France. Denis had a network of lovers across France and the United Kingdom, as well as a community of homosexual artists in Jacques Artel, Douglas Byng, and contacts through the *Boeuf sur le Toit*. Queer men were constructing

homosexual networks of belonging and community whose active curation of relationships with other homosexual men fostered a collective sense of identity.

As case studies, the wartime experiences of Denis Rake, James Lord, Hardy Amies, Donald Downes, and Brian Stonehouse exemplify the tenuousness of this embryonic homosexual subculture: fragile, transnational, and collective, fraught with iterative collisions against heteronormative culture and uneven in its development and expansion. New lines of inquiry will continue to read the dense interchanges between sexuality, citizenship, masculinity, class, race, economic status, rank, and gender to trace the uncertain emergence of a homosexual subculture following World War II.

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