More than Meets the (Heterosexual) Eye: Soldierly Queerness, Wartime Bisexuality, and Fred Zinnemann's Films Starring Montgomery Clift

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Abstract
When it comes to director Fred Zinnemann's two films starring Montgomery Clift – 1948's The Search *and 1953's* From Here to Eternity *– there is certainly much more going on at the level of intriguing subtext than typically meets the (heterosexual) eye. In the years following the end of the Second World War, fears surfaced regularly in US society about whether soldiers returning home would successfully be able to fit back into the hegemonic expectation of being heterosexual family men, given that research findings revealed many of them had participated in homosexual acts with some regularity during their years of overseas military service. Such concerns are indeed raised at the level of subtext quite efficiently in* The Search*, through the living arrangements and emotionally charged interactions of Clift's character and one of his fellow military officers, and a bit more blatantly and elaborately in* From Here to Eternity*, which to the careful viewer reveals itself to be a bisexual love story involving two military men. Accordingly, this article provides in-depth subtextual analyses of the bisexual undertones evident in both films, which were necessary in an era when Production Code Administration restrictions prohibited explicit references to non-heterosexuality in all US cinematic offerings.*

Keywords: *cinema, military, queerness, subtext, wartime bisexuality*

On the surface, director Fred Zinnemann's two films starring Montgomery Clift – 1948's *The Search* and 1953's *From Here to Eternity*– appear to offer straightforward narratives about the actions of heterosexual US soldiers either during or shortly after World War II. However, careful analysis of the more subtle attributes of these two works suggests that there is more going on at the level of intriguing subtext than has typically been noticed by many viewers. Although to date Zinnemann has not always received the amount of recognition he deserves as a talented filmmaker, close readings of the latent contents of these two noteworthy films reveal his impressive ability to explore potentially controversial subject matter in subtle ways that many audience members (past and present) have either simply overlooked or

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chosen to ignore, most often by focusing almost exclusively on what is occurring at the manifest level of the films' contents.

Both *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity* were made and released during the decade following the end of the Second World War, when queerness in any detectable form was equated with deviancy throughout the United States. During this period, widespread fears circulated about the "wartime bisexuality'" that many servicemen returning home had engaged in during the war years and the effects of such non-heterosexual activity on the state of American masculinity. Although, at the manifest level, neither of these films appears to address these controversial topics, at the latent level they can be readily identified as a result of the textual flexibility provided by their overall contents.

Zinnemann's choice of Clift to star in these two films by itself encourages their contents to be decoded in somewhat flexible ways, as the performer challenged traditional conceptions of masculinity and sexuality throughout both his career and personal life, having personally expressed that he did not "want to be labelled as either a pansy or a heterosexual [because] labelling is so self-limiting" (McCann 1991: 61).

As such, Clift's atypically striking beauty, erotic ambiguity in his cinematic performances, and sexual nonconformity in his real life combined to epitomize, in the assessment of Elisabetta Girelli, "the shift from monolithically heterosexual models of virility (such as, for example, the images John Wayne projected, with whom Clift starred in *Red River*, 1948) to a greatly more nuanced, complicated portrayal of male identity" (Girelli 2014: 1).

In part, this new on-screen representation of American manliness strayed from the formidable physicality of preceding cinematic heroes in favor of featuring males who were more slightly built, capable of sensitivity, willing to openly express tenderness, and suggestive of sexual uncertainty, qualities that in earlier decades were regularly equated with effeminacy (Cohan 1997: 201-203; Mellen 1977: 192). In addition, it stemmed from Clift's status as a "new" kind of man in the late 1940s and 1950s who "refused to make judgments on sexual [orientation]" (McCann 1991: 47) and whose "sense of identity was so uncertain that he once openly wondered whether he had swapped sexes with his twin sister in the womb" (Lancaster 2005: 10).

Queering the American soldier

A detectable form of queerness in both *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity* stems from their representations of Clift as an American soldier. In what ultimately turned out to be his first cinematic on-screen appearance in March 1948 (as he had filmed Howard Hawks' *Red River* first, but its theatrical release followed six months later as a result of legal complications), Clift in *The Search* plays Ralph "Steve" Stevenson, a US Army engineer who discovers and befriends, among the ruins of Allied-occupied Germany following the end of the World War II, a starving young boy (Ivan Jandl) who became separated from his mother, his last surviving family member, while they were both imprisoned in Auschwitz. Realizing that the child, whose actual name is Karel Malik but Steve gives the moniker Jim when he refuses to reveal that (or any other) information, has been left to fend entirely for himself, Steve decides to take the boy under his wing and raise him like his own child, unless or until the whereabouts of his missing mother can be determined. As a result of this somewhat unexpected plot development, Clift's portrayal of an American soldier in the film incorporates various elements of queerness that call attention to themselves among perceptive viewers. As Elisabetta Girelli summarizes the resulting cinematic state of affairs:

> Clift's ambiguous masculinity combines with the intensity and idiosyncrasy of Steve's role, creating a powerful alternative text that complicates the plot. The result is a film underpinned by the suggestion that America and its Armed Forces are not monolithic or standardized but open to difference, to gender and sexual indeterminacy, and to relationships lying outside proscribed social models; in other words, the suggestion of queer Americanness. (Girelli 2014: 54)

What Girelli means by that assessment, at least in part, is that whereas Americanness in relation to the US military during the historical era in which the film was made and released was typically linked to traditional "masculine" attributes such as strength, emotional distance, virility, and heterosexual prowess, Clift's slim and somewhat delicate physical stature, decision to provide extreme nurturance to a young boy he has just met, and lack of any apparent romantic or sexual interest in a female figure in *The Search* tend to undermine such conceptions, thereby offering a distinct alternative to more traditional

conceptions of masculinity; along these lines, it is important to note that Steve is never shown in the film without wearing his official military uniform (Girelli 2014: 55). As the narrative unfolds, therefore, the character of Steve is implicitly compared and contrasted with the character of Mrs Murray (Aline MacMahon), an American who serves as the director of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), whom Girelli insightfully argues represents "official Americanness" in *The Search*, thereby enabling Steve/Clift to disrupt traditional associations pertaining to the typical male American soldier (Girelli 2014: 56).

As a military professional working amid an emotionally charged environment of urban devastation, and with countless terrified children who are survivors of unimaginable horrors, Mrs Murray renounces traditional "feminine" traits in favour of more "masculine" and "soldierly" ones, thereby explicitly associating Americanness with attributes such as virility, military discipline, order, and self-control (Girelli 2014: 56). Steve, on the other hand, offers an excess of nurturance, tenderness, and emotional availability to the young boy he decides to take under his wing, to the point that the two become virtually inseparable; in fact, Steve becomes so attached to the child that he decides to take him back to the United States with him if his biological mother cannot be found. This situation, too, is indeed quite queer, for, as Girelli notes, the resulting excess of feelings evident between both man and boy exceeds traditional social patterns and expectations. She emphasizes that it is odd (or queer) for an adult male to become so close to a young boy who is not his own offspring, especially given that the adult in this particular instance is a young, physically beautiful US soldier who does not himself possess the sorts of muscular physique, aggressive masculinity, or readily apparent heterosexuality that were typically associated with US soldiers of his era (2014: 60).

Girelli is not suggesting there is an actual sexual component to Steve and Karel's relationship, but she indeed recognizes that there is a sensual component to it, as evidenced by Karel's constant need for Steve's corporeal presence, which is akin to the pleasures a child typically derives from the closeness of a mother's body (Girelli 2014: 61). In a key sequence during which Steve and Karel are reunited after the boy has run away to search for his lost mother, for example, the two males are presented in a distinctly "mother and child" pose, bodies

pressed tightly together and the elder lovingly providing comfort while stroking the younger's hair, in a scene that is presented similarly to that of the reconciliation of lovers (Girelli 2014: 63). Over the course of its narrative, therefore, several different queer strands end up surfacing in *The Search* to suggest everything may not be exactly as it appears on the surface.

Similar strands of queerness run through *From Here to Eternity*, an adaptation of James Jones' bestselling novel of the same title, in which Clift plays Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt, an independent sort of soldier in the US Army whose personal motto, to the dislike of many of his military colleagues and superiors, is if "a man don't go his own way, he's nothin'." This type of attitude is atypical in Prewitt's everyday environment, in which conformity and strict adherence to orders are the expected norms. As a result of his noteworthy difference, Prewitt is not treated particularly well by his military colleagues; in fact, his new superior officer, Captain Dana Holmes (Philip Ober), goes so far as to command his fellow soldiers to subject Prewitt to "the treatment" – various forms of harsh punishment for offenses Prewitt has not actually committed – in order to break his resistance to doing what he is told. Nevertheless, Prewitt continues to consistently maintain that he will be a "thirty-year man" in the US Army – despite how poorly he is being treated within it, on a continual basis, after only his initial five-and-a-half years of enlistment – in a manner that is tinged with masochism, because he seems to particularly enjoy its homosocial and/or homoerotic aspects (Lancaster 2005: 84).

David Lancaster suggests that the queer aspects of Clift's portrayal of a soldier in *From Here to Eternity* raise issues of masculinity versus femininity, as well as the blending of tenderness and resolution, in relation to what it means to be a man (2005: 85). Girelli agrees with this assessment, acknowledging that Prewitt, through his defiance as well as his slight stature and sense of brittle strength, represents a complex blend of sensitivity, tenderness, vulnerability, and sexual ambiguity not commonly associated with the masculinity of an American soldier (2014: 104). She rightfully elaborates:

> Through a deviant military identity, Prewitt expresses a deviant masculinity, without negating either his maleness or his belief in the army; instead, his character denaturalizes orthodox notions of the soldier and the man, positing a queer alternative that has its roots in the army itself. […] The unlimited quality of Prewitt's character makes

> it impervious to categories; refusing to be bound by external interpellations, in *From Here to Eternity* Clift shapes its protagonist through rebellion and multiplicity, confirming once more his own subversive and queer persona. (Girelli 2014: 107, 119)

When all is said and done in both films, therefore, it becomes evident to the discerning (and frequently non-heterosexual) viewer that there is something decidedly queer about the military characters that Clift plays in them, although the specifics of the resulting queerness may not be readily apparent. In this regard, consideration of the phenomenon of wartime bisexuality among members of the US military, in relation to the cinematic subtext of both films, offers additional potential insight.

Wartime bisexuality and cinematic subtext

In the years following the Second World War, the United States experienced a post-war masculinity crisis. In large part, this perceived crisis was motivated by fears that the masculine capabilities of American men had become compromised during the war years as a result of the atypical conditions that soldiers returning home had experienced regularly during their time overseas, including deriving pleasure from the homoeroticization of other soldiers' bodies as well as the phenomenon of wartime bisexuality: the reality that a sizable percentage of US servicemen had engaged in homosexual activity with other military men during their years abroad fighting in war, often as a substitute for their regular and/or preferred forms of sexual gratification (Costello 1985: 104; Hart 2013: 293, 297).

As John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman demonstrate in *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, the war liberated millions of US servicemen from social conditions that typically repressed erotic expression and introduced them to a variety of new sexual possibilities and opportunities, including those with other males (1988: 260). In this regard, military buddy relations among presumably heterosexual servicemen enabled the concept of virility to take on homosexual dimensions during the war years, as long as its participants did not regard themselves as actually being gay (Cohan 1997: 86). As novelist Harold Robbins recalls of his own wartime bisexuality while serving in the US Navy:

> I was on a submarine, and if you're on a submarine for twenty-two days, you want sex. We were either jacking each other off or sucking each other off. Everybody knew that everybody else was doing it. If you were able to handle it, you could get fucked in the ass, but I couldn't handle it that well. (Kroll 1995: 42-43)

Despite any sexual dalliances they may have engaged in with other men during the war years, US servicemen who returned home to the States thereafter were expected to forgo all such interactions, for, as Louis Lyndon cautions in a *Woman's Home Companion* article from the mid-1950s, "There are certain deep and perfectly normal masculine drives that were 'permitted' during a war [that] are not permitted in a suburban backyard" (1956: 107). As a result, the post-war years in the United States quickly gave rise to a "wave of officially sponsored homophobia" (May 1999: 83), and it was therefore expected that men who did not wish to appear deviant would forsake the various sorts of close relationships with other men they had forged overseas, in favour of deriving their most significant life experiences from an exclusive romantic and sexual relationship with a special woman. On the one hand, this means by the time both *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity* premiered, any film exploring the topic of queerness in the form of wartime bisexuality would not be regarded as being appropriately entertaining by the clear majority of its audience members. On the other, it means that even if a filmmaker wished to explore such a topic directly in a US film, he or she was nevertheless explicitly prohibited from doing so by the restrictive regulations of the Motion Picture Production Code, which specified what sorts of subject matter could and could not be presented overtly on the screen. Accordingly, the only viable way that such subject matter could be explored in any film was at the level of cinematic subtext, which involves the foregrounding of particular images, gestures, character behaviours, lines of dialogue, narrative ambiguities, and related cinematic attributes that astute audience members might pick up on but that the Production Code Administration censors likely would not. This is certainly the means by which the subject matter of wartime bisexuality is raised in *The Search* and explored much more extensively, albeit equally covertly, in *From Here to Eternity*.

The topic of wartime bisexuality continuing beyond the end of the war is raised at the latent level of *The Search*'s contents via the living arrangement and close interactions of Steve and his fellow, G. I. Jerry

Fisher (Wendell Corey). After Steve lures the famished Karel to his jeep with a half-eaten sandwich, he forces the reluctant boy into the vehicle and, holding him in place so he cannot escape, drives him to the home in which he is staying until he returns to the United States. Upon entering the dwelling, Steve yells to an as-yet-unseen individual upstairs, "Hey, Fisher, I've got a present for ya!" Fisher is intrigued, but his initial excitement fades quickly as he enters a downstairs room to find a young blond boy covered with lice, and Fisher's bowlful of live goldfish scattered across the carpet. The affection between the two men is immediately apparent; it is presumed they have been military buddies for several years. As well, this fish-out-of-water scenario is significant, as it clearly symbolizes the transition in the scene of the two men moving from threats (for example, Steve threatens to inject the youth with the contents of a hypodermic needle in order to shut him up) to compassion in ways with which they seem a bit uncomfortable or at least a bit unfamiliar, as they together begin to treat the boy's wounds. It is at this moment that the two soldiers consciously abandon their military instincts in favour of emotional sensitivity. Seconds later, after Steve admits he has no idea what the boy's name is, Fisher smirks when he asks, "Who picked who up?" This queer line of dialogue immediately calls to mind the anonymity of gay male cruising rituals, which then raises questions about the shared background of these two men and the specifics of their shared living arrangement, especially as they mutually decide to let the boy remain in their home and jointly care for him. It certainly hints at the concept of wartime bisexuality that may be extending beyond the conclusion of the war itself, especially as viewers subsequently learn that Fisher has a wife and young son waiting for him back in the States.

Certainly, some viewers will maintain that placing so much significance on a single line of dialogue is a bit of a stretch. However, the reality that Clift specifically asked Zinnemann to delete the take near the end of *The Search* in which he ad-libbed "Don't cry, dear" to the boy beside him – fearing that the audience might detect his own non-heterosexuality as a result of having called the male child "dear"– itself suggests the significance of even a single line of dialogue in relation to Clift's on-screen performances (Girelli 2014: 63-64). Furthermore, this sort of queer decoding of the film's contents is strengthened in the later scene in which Fisher, during a heated argument, refers to Steve as a "sentimental sucker" because he has taken such a strong liking to the

"first kid that comes along and looks at you with his big blue eyes," in a conversation that is akin to a "lovers' spat." After Fisher leaves the room in a bit of a huff, and Steve comforts Karel by telling him not to worry about the interaction he just witnessed, Fisher quickly returns to make up: "You know, we're a couple of fools behaving like that in front of the kid – are we trying to raise him right, or aren't we?" This concluding moment re-establishes the queer normality of their makeshift "non-traditional family." However, in an apparent attempt to assure viewers who may have picked up on such queerness at the latent level of the film's contents that there is likely nothing out of the ordinary going on in the relationship between these two men, the next scene focuses explicitly on the arrival of Fisher's wife and son for a quick visit at the manifest level of the film's contents.

A similar approach to utilizing cinematic subtext in order to raise and explore the topic of wartime bisexuality is evident, yet more blatantly and elaborately, from beginning to end in *From Here to Eternity*, which to the discerning viewer appears to offer a bisexual love story between Clift's character, Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt, and Sergeant Milton Warden (Burt Lancaster), a well-respected man's man whose colleagues regularly refer to simply as "top" (short for "top-kick"), military terminology that has a somewhat different meaning when applied to the sexual interactions of two men. The queer chemistry between these two attractive males becomes immediately apparent during their first meeting, when Warden interrupts Prewitt as he plays pool by himself just moments after arriving at Schofield Barracks. Gazing deeply into the other's eyes, in a manner atypical between two adult males during the Hollywood studio era, each man acknowledges that he has already heard of the other. The intensity of eye contact between them, effectively achieved through a combination of close-up shots and eyeline matches, continues unabated as the film progresses, signifying that their attraction toward one another does the same. (It becomes incredibly palpable during the scene, to be discussed in additional detail a bit later, in which the drunken Warden, sitting in the middle of a road with the apparent male object of his (mutual) affection by his side, starts running his hands freely through Prewitt's hair and across various parts of Prewitt's taut body.) With regard to cinematic subtext, such uses of eye contact and eye line matches could be utilized skilfully during the years when the restrictions of the Motion Picture Production Code prohibited explicit on-screen exploration of "sexual

perversion" of any kind to imply complex relationships that could not be overtly represented at the level of a film's manifest contents.

Prewitt's queerness in the film is subtly suggested during an early scene when he shows no interest in going out for a night on the town in order to meet women, to the extent that his military buddy Private Angelo Maggio (Frank Sinatra) feels compelled to ask, "You got any prejudices against girls?," and again later that same evening during his initial interactions with Alma (Donna Reed), his female love interest in the film who works as a hostess at the New Congress Club, when they first meet; she refers to Prewitt multiple times as being "a funny one" and suggests he does not look like a soldier, to which he takes momentary offense. In a sequence intercut with that one, Warden's queerness is similarly subtly implied when Karen Holmes (Deborah Kerr), his captain's wife and his own female love interest, accuses Warden of being an individual who engages in "back-alley loving" when he arranges for them to meet in a popular pick-up spot, and still further in the same scene when she reveals "I've got a bathing suit [on] under my dress" and Warden responds awkwardly (if the statement is interpreted literally), "Me, too." Such queerness is reinforced at numerous other points in the film, such as when Prewitt is featured "down on his knees" scrubbing floors, trimming grass by hand, and carrying out other tasks of "the treatment" (about which one of his male tormenters, with his crotch positioned squarely in the soldier's face, specifically comments, "Still on your knees, huh, Prewitt"); both Prewitt and Warden are portrayed in passive positions, with their female love interests on top and in control, during the film's limited romantic moments involving men with women; Prewitt appears to "cruise" Warden by following him outside a bar, after closely watching the sergeant walk across the room and exit, in order to initiate personal conversation (the eye contact between them in this scene is once again intense and queerly palpable as Warden reveals he has been keeping tabs on Prewitt's romantic life); and Warden, during a serious conversation with Karen about their failed attempt at a heterosexual romantic relationship while he is simultaneously preoccupied with concern about what has potentially become of the AWOL Prewitt, rushes away from the woman at a crucial moment when he glimpses a man walking nearby who resembles Prewitt from behind. In this latter scene, it is quite evident that Warden's relationship with Prewitt is far

more important to him than the one he has casually been pursuing with his captain's wife.

The culmination of all this queer subtext pertaining to likely wartime bisexuality involving Prewitt and Warden is the aforementioned scene during which the drunken Warden, sitting in the middle of a road, finally makes his move on the beautiful soldier by his side. As it begins, the drunken Prewitt goes in search of another beer and encounters his intoxicated sergeant sitting in the dirt road; "On your knees," Warden commands, as Prewitt stands over him. When Prewitt plops down next to him, he allows his own thigh to rest atop Warden's and he briefly places his hand on Warden's knee, and then on Warden's forearm. In response, Warden, sharing his own bottle with the soldier, immediately places his hand on Prewitt's shoulder, caresses the hair on the back of Prewitt's head, and runs his hand down the length of Prewitt's triceps. They begin to talk about the challenges each has been facing recently and agree to stick together until the bitter end. Moments later, Warden begins to run his fingers affectionately through Prewitt's hair, softens his forlorn expression into an alluring smile, gazes deeply into Prewitt's eyes, and asks how things are going with Prewitt's love life, all the while massaging Prewitt's head gently or keeping his arm around Prewitt's shoulder. Their interactions during this private moment far exceed those of regular heterosexual and/or homosocial military buddy relations. It is perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that before this situation can progress to the next logical level, their interaction is abruptly interrupted by a jeep, driven by one of Warden's fellow officers, that almost runs them over. The preceding intimacy of their shared moment cannot immediately be re-established thereafter, however, because Maggio stumbles out of the darkness, having made his escape from the stockade where he had been tortured regularly by an abusive stockade guard (Ernest Borgnine), and dies in Prewitt's arms.

In the aftermath of Maggio's passing, Prewitt sheds tears as he plays a tender rendition of "Taps" on his bugle for his deceased friend, and he personally avenges Maggio's death by luring the stockade guard into a dark alley and killing him. As a result of these impassioned plot developments, various critics have suggested that the close relationship between Prewitt and Maggio serves as another prominent example of bisexual subtextual desire in *From Here to Eternity*. However, as I personally concluded upon my first viewing of this intriguing film and

still confidently believe holds true, "Although a good deal of love was evident between [Prewitt and Maggio], there is little evidence, either explicit or implicit, within the narrative to support such an assessment" (Hart 1999: 80). The less obvious, burgeoning romantic and/or sexual relationship between Prewitt and Warden, however, is a different matter entirely, as its perceived existence and validity are well supported by the film's various contents, and their pairing implicitly represents a compelling (albeit covert) love story "running, untamed, throughout the film" (Lancaster 2005: 84). At least in part, what enabled this subtextual love story between two military men to get past the Production Code Administration censors and onto the big screen is the use of alcohol to explain the queer actions of Warden and Prewitt during their most sexually charged scene and the reality that both men explicitly pursue women as the narrative progresses, even though they ultimately choose their love of the homosocial/homoerotic military environment over the love of a good woman (without either even kissing his supposed female love interest goodbye, in the expected Hollywood fashion, as they break up).

The queer contributions of the director and the star

Although there is no way to be entirely certain who is responsible for the resulting queerness that can be identified in *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity*, it is evident that director Zinnemann is at least substantially responsible for its intriguing existence. For starters, it was Zinnemann who adamantly insisted that Clift be allowed to star in both films – to the extent that he informed Harry Cohn, the president of Columbia Pictures, who favoured contract player Aldo Ray for the role, that he would walk off the picture if Clift were not ultimately approved to play the role of Prewitt in *Eternity* – finding himself continually drawn to the actor's extreme sensitivity, electrifying personality, and striking good looks (Buckley 2005: 87; Sinyard 2003: 33, 71). With regard to the actor's atypical beauty specifically, this aspect alone served to ensure that a substantial degree of queerness would be evident in both works. For as Steven Cohan convincingly argues, the eroticism of the "new look" exhibited by Clift was indicative of an open rejection of traditional masculine hegemonic norms, foregrounding a "very unstable signifying relation between 'gender' and 'sexuality' in postwar American culture" (Cohan 1997: 203, 252).

The star himself was extremely conscious of his personal beauty and its significance as a crucial aspect of the meaning of his on-screen performances; it was common for Clift to be acutely aware of the gestures he used during his performances in relation to his physical appearance and how they would likely be interpreted by their viewers (for example, he frequently was concerned with the ways he was using his hands and asked others if he was doing so in an effeminate manner) (LaGuardia 1977: 65; Lancaster 2005: 52). In this latter regard, Clift's "successful gestures are small ones, but they suggest an Atlantis of submerged significance" (Lancaster 2005: 66). In addition, one of the most effective components of Clift's repertoire of acting techniques in relation to his (homo)erotic appeal is the use of his eyes, which roam and flicker from one part of a potential romantic partner's face or body to another in rapid succession, thereby creating a sense of urgency or intensity in their interaction that would otherwise be lacking (Lancaster 2005: 66). In these ways, Clift regularly enacts on-screen possibilities that push scenes beyond the typical Hollywood conventions (Lancaster 2005: 67). After all, "it is not only the 'performer', but also the 'performance', which can be bisexual," Marjorie Garber reminds (Garber 1995: 142).

The ways that Zinnemann worked with his actors generally, and with Clift on *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity* specifically, also contribute substantially to the degrees of queerness both films contain. The director is regarded by the various performers he worked with as a filmmaker who trusted the intuition of others, created the *mise en scène* of his films in collaboration with his actors, discussed interpretations of scenes with his performers and incorporated their feedback into his final instructions, and did not let his ego stand in the way of acknowledging and accepting good ideas from others (Dixon 1999: 42). "The whole movie was a coming together of parts and personalities that together had a magic," explained Deborah Kerr of working with Zinnemann on *From Here to Eternity*, adding that he made his performers feel safe to trust their instincts and work within the realm of what they personally wanted to do (Dixon 1999: 42). Along these lines, while he was working with Clift on these films, Zinnemann consented to allow Clift to rewrite his own dialogue (as well as that of some of his co-stars), create new scenes, and develop his character as he saw fit while filming *The Search*; permitted Clift to rework and/or rewrite entire scenes with his drama coach and his various co-stars in both films; and remained open to

Clift's various suggestions throughout the entire filming of *Eternity*, claiming that between eighty to ninety percent of them were good ones and thereby acknowledging the actor as a major creative force behind the overall contents of that cinematic offering (Buckley 2005: 88, 92; Leonard 1997: 89, 90, 152; Zinnemann 1992: 62). Without Zinnemann's self-assured personal filmmaking style, it is almost certain that such subtextual queerness would fail to exist so discernibly in these cinematic offerings. For, unlike many other directors of the 1940s and 1950s, Zinnemann was unafraid to deviate when he felt it necessary from the fashionable Hollywood filmmaking approach, which, as he personally explained, "involved a mandatory happy end and marriage as the solution to all problems" (Neve 2005: 145).

In the two films he made with Zinnemann, "Clift's intense on-screen bonding with other males […] implies a bisexuality that the films themselves, regulated by the dominant social and sexuality ideology of the time, leave undeveloped" (Cohan 1997: 220). In the hands of a lesser pairing of director and star, the soldierly queerness and subtextual desire associated with wartime bisexuality that are discernible in *The Search* and *From Here to Eternity*, which are perceived and processed by many viewers primarily subconsciously, would likely have failed to materialize so substantially. This, in turn and to their detriment, would have deprived each film of covertly representing a historically noteworthy pattern of feeling that has not typically been associated with conventionally masculine military behaviour but was nevertheless quite common in the World War II era.

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