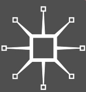

Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies

The Spy in the Closet

Mary Manjikian

palgrave
macmillan

Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies

Mary Manjikian

Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies

The Spy in the Closet

palgrave
macmillan

Mary Manjikian
Regent University
Virginia Beach, VA, USA

ISBN 978-3-030-39893-4 ISBN 978-3-030-39894-1 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39894-1

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2020
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

To Ara

Acknowledgments

This volume grew out of a panel discussion presented at the International Studies Association Annual Conference in San Francisco in April 2017. The panel, on gender and intelligence, represented the first cosponsored panel by two diverse groups within the International Studies Association—the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies group and the Intelligence Studies group. It also served as a reminder of the ways in which intelligence studies itself is moving into a more interdisciplinary space, with intelligence studies borrowing and learning from fields as diverse as gender studies, literary theory, and critical theory approaches within international relations.

For this reason, I would like to acknowledge the pioneering efforts in this regard of scholars like Stephen Marrin at James Madison University, Jan Goldman at The Citadel, and Cristina Matei of the Naval Postgraduate School. Your insights have helped to shape my thinking and hopefully helped me to produce a better book.

I'd also like to thank, as always, our hardworking library staff at Regent University, including Harold Henkel in particular. In addition, I am grateful to my research assistant Brian Lennart for his editorial assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers who provided early and later feedback on this manuscript. Their comments have challenged me and helped me to clarify my thinking on several matters, particularly in regard to how this work does and does not fit into the larger project of queer theory. (More on that in Chap. 1!)

Any errors in the manuscript are of course my own.

Contents

1	**Introduction**	**1**
	Why Don't IR Scholars Study Intelligence?	3
	Bringing Intelligence Back In: To the Study of International Relations	6
	Bibliography	16
2	**The Queerness of Intelligence**	**19**
	Asking Queer Questions About Intelligence	20
	Intelligence Activity as the Third Way	33
	The Queer Mission of the Intelligence Community	40
	Accepting the Reality of Our Queer Foreign Policy	53
	Bibliography	62
3	**Queer Spies**	**67**
	Intelligence Agents: Bodies Behaving Queerly in Space	68
	The State as Container/State as Vault: The Spy's Queer Moral Status	77
	Her Naked State/Our Naked State: The Myth of Artemis and the Ethics of Spying	80
	Bibliography	97
4	**Treason, Agency, and Sexuality**	**101**
	The Prevailing Orthodoxy About Treason	102
	Three Narratives About Homosexuality	108
	Bibliography	139

5 Queerness, Secrecy, and Revelation 143
Intelligence and Secrecy 145
What Is a Secret Society? 148
The Mythology of the Intelligence Community 156
Parallel Organizations as a Violation of Statecraft 157
Intelligence, Stigma, and the Wall of Separation 166
Accountability, Performativity, and the Wall of Separation 170
Outing, Policing, and Disciplining Intelligence Activities 176
Bibliography 185

6 Coming Out as an Intelligence Agent 189
Memoirs as Sourcebooks 192
The Silence of the Spy and the Ability to Tell His Story 193
Other Types of Queerness: The Double Agent and the Torturer 205
Coming Out as a Spy 207
Conclusion 212
Bibliography 216

7 The Politics of Covert Activity 219
IR Theory and the "don't ask, don't tell" of Covert Activity 223
Queer Presidents/Queer Precedents 238
Rescuing the State by Blaming the Intelligence Community 251
Queer Behavior and the Theater of Accountability 253
Conclusion 255
Bibliography 260

8 The Future Is Queer: New Developments in Intelligence Activity 263
Prying Open the Closet: The Erosion of Secrecy in an Era of Big Data 265
Join Us in the Closet: Adding New Actors to the Intelligence Community 267
Artificial Intelligence: Robots, Bots, and Spies 273
Normalization: Spying Emerges from the Closet 274
Bibliography 277

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Among all the functions which governments—both authoritarian and democratic—engage in, intelligence activities are often the least discussed and least understood, both by the general public and by academics. Rather, the existence of covert and clandestine activities such as government programs to support candidates in foreign elections or training and equipping foreign fighters functions as something of a "dirty little secret" both in Washington and surely in other national capitals as well. Politicians, news media, and the general public—as well as academic analysts—are aware that such activities do occur, but prefer not to look too closely at them or to acknowledge what they are seeing.

And even though the United States spends nearly one trillion dollars annually on national security programs and agencies, and that intelligence functions are routinely carried out by seventeen federal agencies, along with state and local intelligence fusion centers,[1] the study of these activities and functions is particularly poorly integrated within the discipline of international relations. Indeed, while almost five million Americans (nearly two percent of our population) now hold security clearances, as Christopher Andrew noted in 2004, "intelligence … is all but absent in most contemporary IR theory," including, tellingly, in theorizing about the Cold War.[2]

Here one might begin to address this conundrum by asking why the work produced by intelligence studies scholars is not better integrated into the study of international relations. Indeed, the intelligence studies community—both in the United States and in other English-speaking

© The Author(s) 2020

M. Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39894-1_1

countries—appears to function as its freestanding entity, with its own journals, its jargon, and its own set of accepted assumptions and theories, many of which are unique to itself. It is indeed striking to see the degree to which the intelligence studies community has developed largely in isolation, unaffected by and perhaps even hostile to trends within the larger international relations discipline—such as an attempt to move beyond Western and American-centric analyses, to include voices of the subaltern, or to consider the contingent nature of knowledge itself.[3]

Even today, intelligence studies analyses focus almost exclusively on the Western intelligence tradition, with an emphasis on the rise and practice of intelligence in the United States and England, along with some comparative work on Western Europe. And literature produced by the academic intelligence studies community (which often includes retired intelligence practitioners among its ranks) tends to fit into one of four formats: Analysts have taken an institutional approach in considering the structures of the intelligence community, how they function and how they are policed or regulated by other actors. In addition, analysts have produced case studies that have been historical in nature, examining phenomena like how particular leaders have utilized intelligence or the circumstances which led to intelligence failures. Also, there is a growing literature that is methodological, asking questions about how one might articulate and test assumptions or identify bias in carrying out intelligence analysis, including some which is interdisciplinary.

Finally, if intelligence studies have been integrated into larger studies within international relations, it has often been through the utilization of a "crime frame," thus establishing intelligence as a sort of deviant international relations.[4] Elizabeth Anderson, a former National Security Agency analyst who later became an academic, has faulted the scholarship produced by practitioners as "journalistic in nature," since what is produced is often simply a narrative of the events themselves from an operational perspective which focuses, in her words, on "action, adventure, and scandal."[5] That is, intelligence scholars have sought to understand events like the 1985 Iran-Contra scandal, which occurred under then-president Ronald Reagan *not* as one of many ways in which states practice politics—but as a "scandal"—because to acknowledge intelligence activity as international relations would upset many of our long-standing (and unquestioned) assumptions about what does and does not constitute normal international relations.

Why Don't IR Scholars Study Intelligence?

At the same time, academics within the larger discipline of political science have tended not to include intelligence studies as a variable within traditional international relations analyses, nor to include organizations like the Central Intelligence Agency within a study of public administration bureaucracies, and not to include studies of the intelligence community within larger studies of, for example, foreign policy elite decision-makers.

Here, one can certainly identify legitimate logistical or practical reasons why academics might avoid adding intelligence agencies to their data sets or cases for comparison. First, the closed nature of the intelligence community and its overwhelming emphasis on secrecy (often for real reasons of national security) make it particularly challenging to study. Analysts become used to working with sources where keywords—including dates, names of places, and names of individuals—have been redacted through a publication review process, even when a successful Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request has been filed. In cases where documents have been released, or an official has been compelled to speak with an academic interlocutor, problems may arise concerning the representativeness of the information being made available. Is it possible that the organization has safeguarded its image through redacting information of an embarrassing nature, rather than merely withholding that which is strategically necessary?

Historian Kaeten Mistry presents this perspective in describing the difficulties she encountered in researching the part which the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) played in attempting to influence Italy's elections in the aftermath of World War Two. She writes:

> None of this is to imply that the CIA did not channel covert funds … Rather, it emphasizes the difficulties in authoritatively supporting claims dependent on evidence that is withheld, inaccurate, or perhaps non-existent. Agency records could settle such scores, particularly in curtailing the useful myths surrounding critical and triumphant interpretations. Yet with the declassification process in statis, it poses a dilemma for historians.[6]

As a result of these difficulties, she argues that much of what the academic intelligence community accepts as "knowledge" is deeply intertwined with mythologies about agencies like the CIA, along with wishful thinking, rumors, and even conspiracy theories. For this reason, she

suggests that the study of intelligence is often rather divorced from other types of academic endeavors.

A second compelling reason for this academic divorce is that the intelligence agencies are often regarded as so unique in their culture, their leadership styles, and their missions that analysts may conclude that it makes little sense to include them in a more general database of agencies or agency activities and that it also may be pointless to generalize about the behavior of, for example, the Central Intelligence Agency in making a statement about how agencies behave. Here, intelligence scholars themselves point to the phenomenon of "intelligence exceptionalism" in arguing that the intelligence community has unique or distinctive rules, values, and procedures. As Turner notes, intelligence activities may differ from other traditional activities of foreign policy since the guiding principle is secrecy, the activities may include illegal activity including violating other nation's laws, and the use of techniques like deception and deniability by those producing information creates problems for analysts regarding the credibility of information obtained.[7] Proponents of this "exceptionalism" viewpoint argue that analysts, lawmakers, and the general public should not expect the intelligence organizations to behave like any other government agency since they have a unique mission. Furthermore, proponents argue that an intelligence agency does and must have special or unique powers and policies, including less oversight of its practices by the legislative branch, more secrecy in the conduct of its affairs, fewer budget constraints, and less transparency overall regarding its budget, as well as an acceptance of the understanding that such powers may and often do violate legal and/or ethical understandings in areas such as transparency and public oversight of the agency's practices and policies. In this way, the literature on "intelligence exceptionalism" can be read as a sort of defense of the IC and its practices, created from within the IC itself, in order to establish conditions for what Nathan refers to as a "dispensation"[8]—a justification for why the IC should not be held to the same standards with reference to adherence to regime sovereignty or understandings in the areas of transparency, constitutionality, or adherence to human rights regimes.

However, I contend that it is not logistical capabilities or even methodological concerns alone which cause traditional international relations to give short shrift academically to the phenomenon of intelligence. Rather, it is because there is something subversive about the practices and values of intelligence which both cause it to fit awkwardly, if at all, into traditional

international relations theoretical paradigms, and furthermore, because a full-fledged analysis of the role of intelligence in international relations threatens to destabilize some of the understandings which form a sort of ground truth for a mainstream international relations scholar. In examining the discourse of intelligence studies, we encounter a reflection of this assumption about the subversiveness of intelligence. In scholarly histories of the organization, we encounter language describing the CIA as having "siphoned off money" from legitimate organizations and operations, or having performed an "end-run around" legitimate politics and procedures.[9]

As Daugherty has noted in describing public attitudes towards the Central Intelligence Agency:

> In the wake of Vietnam and Watergate … the very idea of spying and acting covert became disreputable … For most of my adult life, any mention of the spy Agency has prompted suspicion of unlawful meddling, dirty tricks, scandal, and a kind of bullet-headed redneck American approach to foreign policy.[10]

That is, there appears to be something unseemly or perverse about the activities of the intelligence community in particular. As an example, we may consider the claims that Russia, led by its intelligence community, succeeded in penetrating US domestic politics through interfering in our 2016 presidential elections. The crime which America's president and his administration are accused of is collusion, which is defined by Dictionary.com as:

> 1. A secret agreement, especially for fraudulent or treacherous purposes; conspiracy and 2. Law: a secret understanding between two or more persons to gain something illegally, to defraud another of his or her rights, or to appear as adversaries though in agreement (i.e., collusion of husband and wife to obtain a divorce).[11]

That is, collusion—a type of irregular politics and irregular interstate relations—is described in terms which are overwhelmingly not political or legal, but rather both ethical and moral. While an armed intervention might be described in language derived from international law and military agreements, there is no similar body of language used to describe actions by intelligence agents. Instead, the language—as seen in the

etymology of the term “collusion”—is drawn from criminal law and ethics. It is not neutral but highly normative. Collusion and espionage, while they may be the bread and butter of activities for the intelligence community not only in the United States but internationally, are described not as part of international relations but instead as something unseemly, dirty, and rotten. They are described in terms that present them as fraudulent activities—unnatural, unreal, and twisted, rather than straightforward.

Thus, in a discipline like international relations, which focuses on identifying and upholding the rules of the international system, it is difficult to know where to place an organization or set of organizations that appear to be plagued by scandal and allegations of corruption, whose very existence feels somewhat disreputable. Perhaps to admit certain truths about intelligence would thus mean admitting certain truths about the discipline and practice of international relations as a whole—including identifying the problems which it has failed to solve, the gaps which it leaves in our knowledge about the international system as a whole, and ultimately the hypocrisy of certain types of statements which we make about state behavior while ignoring other ways in which states behave.

Bringing Intelligence Back In: To the Study of International Relations

In this work then, I interrogate exactly this understanding—that there is something dirty, disreputable, and “queer” in the activities of intelligence—in order to better integrate intelligence into the study of international relations as a whole. Here, queer theory is deployed as part of the newly emerging field of critical intelligence studies.

In a recent essay about this subfield, Hamilton Bean presents critical intelligence studies as concerned with apprehending and considering the “forces of domination and subordination in both societies and organizations” with an overall mission of emancipation, a breaking free from traditional understandings and a breaking down of those understandings which are proven to be false or predicated upon a faulty foundation. Here, he notes that critical studies—of whatever field we choose to examine—often have a goal of “problematizing” the understandings that we accept unquestioningly within our fields. Here Bean identifies a largely unquestioned consensus that the goal of intelligence studies is to improve intelligence analysis. However, as he points out, there is a significant divide

between the projects of improving intelligence analysis and of problematizing intelligence analysis. Problematizing intelligence analysis involves reconsidering the categories and methodologies we use, and also includes asking why we adopted such methodologies and categories in the first place. Problematizing a field may lead to the jettisoning of previously unexamined assumptions, methodologies, and findings.[12]

This work, therefore, has several goals: First, to advance critical intelligence studies through showing how queer theory and gender theory help us to apprehend the spy and how his identity has been constructed both internally within the intelligence community and externally (from without) by other branches of the defense community, as well as by mainstream and popular cultural representations of this individual. Utilizing memoirs, in particular, I show how intelligence community practitioners—both individually and in the aggregate—have created their brand of identity politics. To be a spy is to be many things—to present one face to the world while simultaneously maintaining a different interior and professional identity, as well as to "play with" identities through sharing some facets of one's true self with one's family and community while keeping other facets hidden. In Chap. 5, I consider how the ideas of performativity and the closet can lead to a richer understanding of what it is to be a member of the intelligence community's clandestine services.

But in this work, I examine not only the figure of the intelligence analyst but also the role and agency of the intelligence community within international relations. Here, I claim that there is something fundamentally queer about espionage, as well as clandestine and covert activity (terms which I define later in this work). In establishing this claim, I show how spies thus exist as part of what Puar has termed the "queer assemblage" in international relations.[13]

Queer Phenomenology

The claim that intelligence is queer is not a claim about sexuality—either of the intelligence community (IC) itself or of the sexuality of a particular agent. Instead, we are asking, as Daggett does, how a phenomenon is queered within international relations. Phenomenology is a branch of philosophy dedicated to the study of "phenomena"—which includes how things appear, as well as how they appear in our experience. Phenomenology is thus concerned with how we experience things and how we attach meaning to things that we experience.[14] Daggett asks us to consider the

queer phenomenology of the drone—how drone warfare is considered relative to traditional forms of warfare, and how traditional gendered notions of warfare are and are not relevant in considering drone warfare.[15]

Similarly, we can consider intelligence's queer phenomenology. We might begin with the claim (often made by intelligence practitioners) that intelligence is "the world's second oldest profession."[16] In making this claim, practitioners rightly acknowledge that as long as people have formed societies, they and their leaders have engaged in practices like intelligence collection—usually to identify and respond to threats. (While today intelligence activities are largely the province of the state, in the past, a leader might have had his own intelligence arm—whose aim was to identify and perhaps neutralize threats to his power position.)

But the linguistic phrase "world's second oldest profession" also calls to mind prostitution, the world's oldest profession. In attaching this label to intelligence, then, practitioners are also implicitly making an analogy: Prostitution is to marriage as intelligence is to legitimate state foreign policy practices. Just as prostitution (or paying for sex) is regarded as a deviant sexual practice—in contrast to the norm in which one doesn't pay for sex but has it with a partner in the context of an ongoing relationship—intelligence can be viewed as a deviant set of practices within international relations in contrast to the legitimate foreign policy practices of actors like the defense or diplomatic communities.

In her seminal work on queer phenomenology, Ahmed introduces the notion of "orientation"—or how objects are situated in relation to one another to create a space. One could situate objects, she notes, to create either a dining table or an eating table. The placement of objects thus encourages certain types of activities while constraining others. Phenomenology, she argues, thus includes "how bodies are turned toward the objects around them and how this 'direction' matters in understanding orientation."[17] One's "orientation" may be regarded as normative, while another may be regarded as non-normative or in Cynthia Weber's terminology, "perverse."

In this volume, then, we consider how intelligence activity—including covert activity—has been situated in relation to "normal international relations." Normal international relations practices are overt, in keeping with acknowledged international law including the law of armed conflict, and are "owned" and acknowledged by the state. In contrast, states (and policymakers) may conduct intelligence operations in secret—engaging in practices that deviate from "normal international relations," including

violating the sovereignty of other states through interfering in domestic elections, assassinating other world leaders, and funding domestic insurgencies. If a state is asked to account for its participation in such activities, it may deny knowledge of the activity or its part in the activity.

Here, we can consider, for example, a verbal exchange that occurred during the first series of televised electoral debates in the United States in the summer of 1960. Before the debate, democratic candidate John F. Kennedy received an intelligence briefing in which (according to many historians) he was made aware of ongoing American plans to carry out covert operations in Cuba aimed at overthrowing the regime of Communist Fidel Castro. However, such plans were classified and not a matter of public knowledge at that time. During the debate, Kennedy called out then-president Nixon, accusing him of being "soft on communism" and demanding to know what, if anything, Nixon planned to do in response to the rise of Castro. In memoirs later written by members of the Nixon Administration, these officials fault Kennedy for having put Nixon in an impossible situation.[18] Nixon knew full well that there were plans underway for an armed invasion of Cuba, but he was forbidden to say anything publicly about these plans—particularly in such a public setting as a television broadcast where all of his utterances would be "on the record." Kennedy knew that Nixon would be unable to respond truthfully and fully in this public setting and thus was able to humiliate him, making him look weak and as if he had no plan when in point of fact he did. That is, Nixon was forbidden to speak of his nation's queer foreign policy since the terms of the debate were such that only normal foreign policy could be uttered and spoken about.

We might also consider recent impeachment proceedings in the United States, in which diplomats, congresspeople, and the press also grasped for language which they might use to describe and label the activities of individual associates of President Trump, who traveled abroad to Ukraine beginning in the summer of 2016. A situation in which American officials who work for the president, rather than for the state, and who hold no formal diplomatic credentials seek to meet with foreign officials was described as "a backchannel" or an "irregular channel"—in contrast to a regular or official channel in which legitimate diplomats with diplomatic accreditation and official titles carried out official activities with their official counterparts abroad.[19] Describing these events required creating a new set of understandings and new set of juxtapositions between the

activities of official and unofficial actors, and between official (normative) and unofficial (non-normative) practices.

In this volume, then, the claim that intelligence is "queer" is not meant to imply that unofficial, sub-rosa intelligence practices themselves are somehow emancipatory or liberating, either to the international system or to those who live in a world in which power and justice claims are often inequitably distributed and responded to. Indeed, one can easily claim that unofficial, sub-rosa forms and variations of state activity are perhaps more unjust and more illegitimate than official forms of state intervention by great powers within the international system. Thus, some may fault the author for not using "queer" in the usual sense—which carries with it this emancipatory or liberatory thrust, or the notion that queer analysis (along with queer activism) should ultimately seek to liberate subjects from the oppressive patriarchal state, creating new modes of organization and being.

In terms of whether it is appropriate to use queer theory in a way which may imply a degree of sympathy or understanding for those who work directly within and for the intelligence community—an organization which is often described as a tool of oppression and brutality—I believe that if recent American political experiences like the Congressional testimony of American ambassadors like Marie Yovanovitch and Phil Reeker have shown anything, it is that the "faceless bureaucrats" who serve within government structures are in many ways as powerless as those who exist outside the state and its structures, as subject to the whims of their state's leaders and as voiceless to resist or dissent as anyone else. And just as disempowered individuals may join the military as a way of procuring access to goods (like education) which may be scarce or out of reach for certain members of society, individuals may join the intelligence community for a variety of reasons. It is, I feel, too simplistic to say that organizational members are always "all in" with the goals of the state, or that those within an organization form a monolithic bloc of individuals who mindlessly follow orders and do not think critically. It is thus well worth considering the motives, lives, and voices of those within an organization like the intelligence community.

Furthermore, I believe that in seeking to make the practices of intelligence visible both in their own right and also in relation to more "legitimate" forms of foreign policy, the project of political emancipation may be brought forward—since it is necessary to know and name a phenomenon fully in order to question its claims and indeed even its existence. And in making visible the sub-rosa, non-normative ways in which states act, we

can interrogate states' own claims that they are law-abiding upholders of the international system, by calling attention to the hypocrisy which often accompanies these claims.

Thus, in this volume, I suggest that intelligence activities have existed as a sort of "third option"; that is, they are described by Powers as a tool of middle resort (available to US presidents), "lying somewhere between a note of diplomatic protest and sending in the Marines."[20] The intelligence community, then, can be understood as a sort of transgressive actor which refuses to be located neatly between either of the existing binary identities commonly found in international relations (the hard power of the military intervention or the soft power of the note of diplomatic protest), and its activities can be said to occupy a similar queer space.

Thus, making such activities visible allows the reader to also rethink the myths of the unitary state and the unitary foreign policy of that state. I take up these themes in my analysis of paramilitary, covert, and clandestine operations undertaken by the United States in particular, through considering how presidents have exercised their prerogative to undertake such relations as well as how they have read the environment and defending the legitimacy of such operations.[21] In this section, I introduce the figure of the individual who openly presents one's self as heterosexual while engaging in occasional homosexual acts "on the down-low," unable to reconcile the two halves of one's self and not altogether comfortable with their covert desires. Similarly, it can be suggested that states may have an open or public foreign policy with which they pursue their normal, more acceptable desires within the international system (i.e., to strengthen structures of international economic cooperation) while simultaneously having a second foreign policy "on the down-low" with which they pursue the desires which—though they violate norms and propriety—nonetheless still manifest and perhaps are even necessary for state survival (i.e., the need to control a specific natural resource or ensure the outcome of another country's internal elections).

In my work, I demonstrate that the US foreign policy, in particular, has always been queer through inviting the reader to look within the state—to examine both our overt and our closeted US foreign policy, in particular, to consider both the overt hegemonic masculine military and the closeted arm of covert affairs. In this way, I seek to continue what Weber has described as a rapprochement between different schools of IR—"disciplinary, critical, and/or feminist IRs and queer work."[22] Here, she notes that even mainstream IR theorists are coming to acknowledge

that ignoring queer international theories and practices "risks undermining its own claimed expertise in its core areas of interest – state and nation formation, war and peace and international political economy."[23] In understanding the queerness of all these phenomena, it is of crucial importance to consider the figure of the spy, the intelligence community, and the implementation of covert activities as part of a queer foreign policy.

The plan for the book is as follows:

In Chap. 2, I explore more fully the theme of how intelligence activities and operatives have been ignored and silenced in contemporary international relations scholarship, suggesting that the actions of intelligence operatives have a queer ontological status, since such events are often not made a part of a nation's formal history, are often covered over, and are somehow treated as less real than the formal politics of treaties and invasions.

In Chap. 3, I argue that intelligence operatives themselves are queer due to the liminal space they occupy within the structures of foreign policy, as well as the liminal status which all members of the IC have, regardless of their sexuality. That is, we consider the spy and their queer vocation, how the queerness of the spy calls into question other aspects of IR which we might otherwise have taken as given—how they present themselves as being a particular nationality, including the performance of that nationality.

In Chap. 4, I focus on the specific crime of treason and how homosexuality, in particular, has long been understood as a security threat. Here I examine more closely the relationship between sexuality, secrecy, trust, and betrayal, as it has traditionally been understood within the intelligence community. We also consider another type of spy—specifically, the double agent. We also consider how new attitudes within the United States about queer people, including the acceptance of queer employees at intelligence organizations like the CIA, have in some instances led to the cooptation of the queer within the national security apparatus. Drawing upon the work of Jasbir Puar, we consider what it means for this to occur.[24] I also briefly introduce the debate about whether "passing" as queer helps one to "pass" as a spy or whether it is instead a factor which affects one's productivity and serves as a distraction.

In Chap. 5, I turn away from the figure of the intelligence operative to consider the intelligence community as a whole. Here I apply the notion of a secret society—drawing upon the work of sociologist Georg Simmel—to explain how such organizations are configured and how secrecy can act as a source of power or internal social capital. The model of the CIA as a

secret society helps to explain why they are sometimes regarded as a sort of parallel structure in foreign policy, carrying out a "parapolitics" which both is and is not foreign policy. Here, I advance the claim that it is necessary for political structures like the president and the legislature to conduct hearings in which the IC is regularly called upon the carpet to justify and explain those of its actions in the international system, which might be construed as illegal both domestically and internationally. In this way, the formal actors in international relations (like the president) enact a pageant aimed at distancing themselves and the sovereign state from the messy politics of the intelligence community, since being too closely associated with such a subversive actor is bad for a state's image internationally. The IC is thus necessary—while simultaneously being stigmatized, denied, and silenced.

In Chap. 6, we return to the figure of the individual spy, specifically through analyzing memoirs written by intelligence operatives themselves. Here we consider how agents have both outed themselves and been outed and the goals achieved through outing oneself as a member of the intelligence community.

In Chap. 7, we turn more specifically to the politics of covert activity. In this chapter, I offer a queer reading of both covert activity itself and the mainstream narratives regarding covert activity as a practice that exists in contemporary international relations theory. In particular, I suggest that each of these narratives serves to "rescue the state" from charges that it is queer or that the state has a queer foreign policy—through deflecting the charges of queerness to another actor. Thus, the first narrative posits the state may engage in queer behavior (such as conducting covert activities against even its democratic allies) from time to time (on the down-low), but that doesn't make it queer; indeed, there are situations where the international community can benefit from a decision to collectively ignore queer behavior. In this way, one can argue that in certain situations, the international community adopts a "don't ask, don't tell" policy when it comes to the subject of such queer behavior. The second narrative suggests that the state may appear to be queer in its foreign policy from time to time, but that is because the president, independently, behaved queerly, and such behavior is therefore not indicative of the state's identity. The third narrative suggests that from time to time, the intelligence community itself oversteps its role, leading to the carrying out of activities which might create the impression that the state has a queer foreign policy—but

this is due to an agency refusing to perform its expected role, rather than because the state itself is queer.

Finally, in Chap. 8, I conclude by arguing that the US foreign policy has been and will continue to be "queer" due to tensions between diplomacy, military, and intelligence as well as between the presidency, the legislature, and intelligence. In making this claim, I remind the reader of the ways in which nonstate actors such as corporations have historically been involved in American foreign policy from our earliest founding history, as well as the possibility that the "wall of separation" which is purported to exist between the intelligence community and other players like the presidency,[25] the state department, and the military is in fact an illusion or a construct, rather than reality. Here, I suggest that this wall is perhaps coming down, as new technologies and forces of globalization will inevitably lead to a blurring between official and unofficial (or covert) foreign policy, as well as the ability to hide state activities, through new types of transparency and surveillance.[26]

Notes

1. Michael German, "The US Intelligence Community Is Bigger Than Ever But Is It Worth the Cost?" in "Rethinking Intelligence," special issue, *Defense One*, February 6, 2015, accessed August 8, 2018, https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/02/us-intelligence-community-bigger-ever-it-worth-it/104799/?oref=d-river
2. Christopher Andrew, "Intelligence, International Relations and 'Under-theorization,'" *Intelligence and National Security* 19, no. 2 (2004): 170–184.
3. However, this is changing somewhat. Here, see Mary Manjikian, "Positivism, Post-Positivism, and Intelligence Analysis," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 26, no. 3 (2013): 563–582.
4. See, for example, Eveline Lubbers, "Undercover Research: Corporate and Police Spying on Activists. An Introduction to Activist Intelligence as a New Field of Study," *Surveillance & Society* 13, no. 3/4 (2015): 338–353.
5. Elizabeth E. Anderson, "The Security Dilemma and Covert Action: The Truman Years," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 11, no. 4 (2010): 403–427.
6. Kaeten Mistry, "Approaches to Understanding the Inaugural CIA Covert Operations in Italy: Exploding Useful Myths," *Intelligence and National Security* 26, no. 2–3 (2011): 225.

7. Michael A. Turner, "A Distinctive U.S. Intelligence Identity," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 17, no. 1 (2004): 50.
8. Laurie Nathan, "Intelligence Bound: The South African Constitution and Intelligence Services," *International Affairs* 86, no. 1 (2010).
9. Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2007).
10. William J. Daugherty, *Executive Secrets: Covert Action and the Presidency* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2004), p. xi.
11. "Collusion," Dictionary.com. Available at https://www.dictionary.com/browse/collusion
12. Hamilton Bean. "What is Critical Intelligence Studies?" LinkedIn. July 23, 2019. Available at https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-critical-intelligence-studies-hamilton-bean/
13. For more on this point, see also Cynthia Weber, *Queer International Relations* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 143.
14. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. 2003. "Phenomenology." Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/
15. Cara Daggett. 2015. "Drone Disorientations: How 'unmanned' weapons queer the experience of killing in war," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 17(3), 361–379. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2015.1075317
16. See, for example, Joe Mazzafro, "The Second Oldest Profession," *Signal Magazine*. April 30, 2012. https://www.afcea.org/content/second-oldest-profession?page=1
17. Quoted in Dai Kojima. 2008. "A Review of Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*." *Phenomenology and Practice* 2(1), 89.
18. See, for example, H.R. Haldeman with Joseph Dimona. 1978. *The Ends of Power*. New York: New York Times Books, 39.
19. See, for example, Gabriella Munoz. "Irregular Channel: Impeachment Probe zeroes in on Trump Fixer Rudy Giuliani," *The Washington Times*, November 11, 2019. https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/nov/11/rudy-giuliani-ukraine-irregular-channel-center-don/
20. Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA* (New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 1979), 7; John Jacob Nutter, *The CIA's Black Ops: Covert Action, Foreign Policy and Democracy* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000).
21. Bob Jessop, "The Gender Selectivity of the State: A Critical Realist Analysis," *Journal of Critical Realism* 3, no. 2 (2004): 21–29.
22. Cynthia Weber. "What is told is always in the telling: Reflections on *Faking It* in 21st century IR/Global Politics." *Millennium* 45, no. 1 (2016): 119–130.

23. Cynthia Weber, "'What is Told is Always in the Telling' Reflections on Faking It in 21st Century IR/Global Politics," *Millennium* 45, no. 1 (2016): 119–130.
24. Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (London, UK: Duke University Press, 2007), 27.
25. Samuel J. Rascoff, "Presidential Intelligence," *Harvard Law Review* 129, no. 3 (2016): 84.
26. For more on this point, see Jack Goldsmith, "Secrets in a Transparent World," in "Intelligence and Cyberwar," special issue, *Hoover Digest* 4, October 16, 2015, 1–5.

Bibliography

Anderson, Elizabeth. 2010. The Security Dilemma and Covert Action: The Truman Years. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 11 (4): 403–427.

Andrew, Christopher. 2004. Intelligence, International Relations and 'Under-Theorization'. *Intelligence & National Security* 19 (2): 170–184.

Bean, Hamilton. 2019. What Is Critical Intelligence Studies? *LinkedIn*, July 23. Available at https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-critical-intelligence-studies-hamilton-bean/. Accessed 24 July 2019.

Daugherty, William J. 2004. *Executive Secrets: Covert Action and the Presidency*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

German, Michael. 2015. The US Intelligence Community Is Bigger Than Ever But Is It Worth the Cost? In "Rethinking Intelligence", special issue. *Defense One*, February 6. https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2015/02/us-intelligence-community-bigger-ever-it-worth-it/104799/?oref=d-river. Accessed 8 Aug 2018.

Goldsmith, Jack. 2015. Secrets in a Transparent World. In "Intelligence and Cyberwar", special issue. *Hoover Digest* 4, October 16: 1–5.

Jessop, Bob. 2004. The Gender Selectivity of the State: A Critical Realist Analysis. *Journal of Critical Realism* 3 (2): 21–29.

Lubbers, Eveline. 2015. Undercover Research: Corporate and Police Spying on Activists. An Introduction to Activist Intelligence as a New Field of Study. *Surveillance & Society* 13 (3/4): 338–353.

Manjikian, Mary. 2013. Positivism, Post-Positivism, and Intelligence Analysis. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 26 (3): 563–582.

Mistry, Kaeten. 2011. Approaches to Understanding the Inaugural CIA Covert Operations in Italy: Exploding Useful Myths. *Intelligence and National Security* 26 (2–3): 246–268.

Nathan, Laurie. 2010. Intelligence Bound: The South African Constitution and Intelligence Services. *International Affairs* 86 (1): 195–210.

Nutter, John Jacob. 2000. *The CIA's Black Ops: Covert Action, Foreign Policy and Democracy*. Amherst: Prometheus Books.

Powers, Thomas. 1979. *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. London: Duke University Press.

Rascoff, Samuel J. 2016. Presidential Intelligence. *Harvard Law Review* 129 (3): 634–716.

Turner, Michael. 2004. A Distinctive U.S. Intelligence Identity. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 17 (1): 42–61.

Weber, Cynthia. 2002. *Queer International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2016. What Is Told Is Always in the Telling: Reflections on *Faking It* in 21st Century IR/Global Politics. *Millennium* 45 (1): 119–130.

Weiner, Tim. 2007. *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. New York: Doubleday.

CHAPTER 2

The Queerness of Intelligence

While the previous short introduction provided a brief overview of the project of this book—namely, the integration of intelligence studies more clearly into IR theory through the use of queer theory—this chapter delves more specifically into the philosophy of queer theory, including its methodologies and its epistemological stances, while seeking to apply these ideas to the phenomenon of intelligence activity. It is meant to serve as a bridge for readers from two diverse constituencies. The chapter thus seeks to introduce the intelligence community reader more generally to queer theory while also acquainting the reader from the field of gender studies and queer theory to key concepts in intelligence studies.

The chapter begins by arguing that intelligence is a set of activities (including clandestine and covert activities) that exist in international relations' "interstitial spaces," forming part of what McCoy has termed a "covert netherworld."[1] In this way, intelligence activities are understood to share common ground with other netherworld activities like arms trafficking, drug trafficking, and human trafficking. Intelligence activities, I argue, exist as part of an invisible geography which seldom appears on maps and which is often treated by analysts as being less ontologically real than ideas like the state, though in point of fact that state is equally as much a construct whose existence rests upon our willingness to recognize it as such.

I then go on to locate queer theory in what Ling and Agathangelou have termed the "house of IR," showing why queer theory, in particular,

© The Author(s) 2020

M. Manjikian, *Gender, Sexuality, and Intelligence Studies*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39894-1_2

relies on ideas which are destabilizing for the discipline of IR as a whole—such as the idea that the ontological hierarchy of the state over other phenomena is actually a matter of our accepting it as such, rather than a fact that it is somehow more real and worthy of study.[2] Next, I introduce the specific ideas of queer theory which I will utilize in analyzing the phenomenon of covert activity, in particular, showing that "queer" can refer to a politics of (homo)sexuality, as well as a more general politics of things which are contingent, stigmatized, and treated as ontologically less real.

In the fourth section, I consider the queer mission of intelligence and the hierarchy which exists between diplomacy, military activity, and intelligence. Here, I introduce the notion of intelligence as a "third way" of achieving goals in the international system.

Asking Queer Questions About Intelligence

In an essay on the politics of knowledge, the analyst J Gibson-Graham suggests that when we imagine any subject to be part of a monolithic social formation and refuse to acknowledge that there might be variations or deviations from that concept, then we lose out on an opportunity to better understand and to create new knowledge. She quotes seminal theorist Eve Sedgwick, who references the "Christmas effect"—the idea that in December, our society is saturated with the phenomenon of Christmas, and it may feel like there is little room for anything else or any alternate modes of being or imaging the social life taking place at that time. Rather, everything coalesces into the one phenomenon, tends to be understood as part of that phenomenon, and is subsumed by that phenomenon.

She then goes on to ask:

> What if … there were a practice of valuing the ways in which meanings and institutions can be at loose ends with each other? …What if we were to depict social existence at loose ends with itself, in Sedgwick's terms, rather than producing social representation in which everything is part of the same complex and therefore ultimately 'means the same thing' (e.g., capitalist hegemony)?[3]

For the analyst interested in how intelligence activity functions in international relations, we might propose that the realist perspective on international relations provides a sort of "Christmas effect," which allows analysts to dismiss intelligence activities as "not part of international

relations." Instead, realist theories of international relations rest on the assumption (derived from Max Weber's 1918 essay "Politics as a vocation") that the state is the only legitimate actor in international relations and that it alone can claim a monopoly on the use of violence. The state utilizes its authority to inflict violence when necessary to produce the order upon which the international system is created. Professional soldiers are ceded this authority by the state to engage in what is regarded as lawful and legitimate violence.

However, as critics have pointed out, this framework does not acknowledge nor account for the plethora of actors we can identify who participate in conflict today—including paramilitary organizations like the organized crime brigades who control the drug activities in Mexico,[4] nonstate actors like Al Qaeda, and private military contractors like Blackwater (later renamed Xe Services), which functioned in Iraq and Afghanistan in the aftermath of 9/11. Since the monopoly of legitimate power belongs to the state, actors who reside outside the state structures—like criminals, terrorists, and pirates—are said to be the illegitimate wielders of unauthorized violence.[5]

But what of the intelligence community—whose meddling and "adventures" often seem to *feel* illegitimate, sordid, and even seedy? How are we to regard activities like paramilitary operations, covert operations, and clandestine operations, which do not fit the criteria of legitimate war, and thus do not share the legal and ethical claims of the Law of Armed Conflict, or the criteria for just war? Here one might argue that the intelligence community and its operations are a subset of activities that fall under the umbrella of (legitimate) state activities since a nation's intelligence community (IC) acts at the behest of its state. Indeed, within the United States, the 1947 National Security Act has provided for the establishment of a foreign intelligence service, noting that this body is granted authority through the president, as well as through the president's National Security Council, which can task it with a variety of functions in the fields of both intelligence collection and activity.

But at the same time, however, this legislation affords a fair amount of discretion to the head of the Central Intelligence Agency in particular, including a significant amount of financial autonomy for the agency as well as autonomy in determining how operations are to be undertaken and how much information regarding these information needs to be shared. In an article which ran in *The Saturday Evening Post* in May 1967 entitled "I'm Glad the CIA is Immoral," a former CIA operative named Thomas

Braden described how his organization had penetrated and helped to fund a variety of student organizations throughout Western Europe in the aftermath of World War Two. To build a network of organizations that the CIA could later use to combat Soviet influence in the region, the CIA worked with a variety of organizations and actors (including people alleged to be Nazi war criminals), not all of whose interests aligned specifically with US interests. Funding was generally in cash, and subterfuge or deception was used in recruiting allies, not all of whom knew they were working with the CIA. Braden defended such actions in utilitarian ethical terms, noting that the payoff in terms of the long-range interests of the United States was far greater than any costs associated with temporary departures from US policy would be.[6]

However, on the surface, an analyst would likely see only the fact that an organization that was ostensibly part of the US foreign policy establishment appeared to be pursuing policies that were both illegal and at odds with the state's publicly stated policies. States, no matter how ostensibly noble their aims, do not have the authority under international law to interfere in the sovereign affairs of other states, including seeking to alter the outcome of the state's sovereign internal elections. Such an act is seen as violating the United Nations Charter, as well as the international law principle of *domaine reserve*.[7] And traditional international paradigms, like realism, do not seem capable of absorbing or explaining such actions.

The intelligence community has thus historically occupied an ambivalent position—in which it appears to sometimes share legitimate authority with the state in the conduct of its operations, while at other times, it has been accused (both internationally and within the United States) of grossly overreaching in carrying out operations which have violated both domestic and international laws and norms.[8] In such situations, the sources of that legitimate authority—including the president and the National Security Council—may disavow knowledge of the operations conducted, distancing themselves in a narrative in which the intelligence community is described as having "gone rogue" or "behaved like a rogue elephant" through acting on its own authority in contravention of explicitly stated US and international policies.[9] In situations where such labels are applied, intelligence activities may be described by policymakers and academics as a type of illegitimate politics, taking place without authority or authorization. And if these activities pose such a challenge to conventional understandings of what it is and what it means to do international relations that they cannot be reconciled, then they have been, for the most part, ignored.