

Manhood and
American Political
Culture in the
Cold War

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problematic way (as we will see in the next chapter), in Washington. It would be exceedingly difficult, though, to find anything remotely comparable to the representation of liberalism that came from Schlesinger's pen. He was in many ways *sui generis* in his admixture of anti-Communism, Freudianism, existentialism, neo-Christian realism, and Jamesian pragmatism, in his habit of seeing in every single issue the opposition of political issues to and "soft" principles, and in his perpetual reduction of fundamental "hard" questions of psychology. Still, there is something illuminating about *The Vital Center's* excesses and their appeal, something that speaks to the mood, the anxieties, and even the secret self-contempt of liberal intellectuals in the tense years of the early cold war. In the end, the crisis of American masculinity that Schlesinger proclaimed was never far apart from a crisis of liberal masculinity. The fixation on virility was the reflex of a liberalism struggling, in the shadow of the Hiss trial, to atone for its deficiencies and sins in a political culture growing increasingly suspicious of the liberal intellectual.

Schlesinger's effort to recast the liberal as a cold warrior and redeemer of manly virtues did not prevent a centrist Democratic presidential candidate from suffering two defeats in the 1950s; it did not even prevent Schlesinger himself from being attacked as a Communist sympathizer by Joe McCarthy. But *The Vital Center* did succeed in establishing a liberal discourse markedly different from that of the 1930s. In the process, it placed a ban on "soft," utopian thinking, reinvented the liberal's relationship to power, and in the name of liberalism seized the masculine high ground for a tradition too long associated with bleeding hearts, effete intellectuals, and striped-pants diplomats. The result was a liberalism that—save for its tendency to overcompensate for previous failures and lapses—was barely distinguishable from conservatism.

CHAPTER 2

Anti-Communism on the Right

The Politics of Perversion

[Those who call themselves liberals] present America exactly as the Communists want us to see it. And, by doing so, they destroy our faith, our hope and our love; they confuse our minds and hypnotize our wills; they subvert our morale; they soften us up for the easy kill.

—E. Merrill Root (1960)

When Reverend Billy Graham thanked God for the men who, "in the face of public denouncement and ridicule, go loyally on in their work of exposing the pinks, the lavenders, and the reds who have sought refuge beneath the wings of the American eagle," he spoke a language that had become commonplace in the early cold war years. The *pinks* were liberals, those who were close to, and thus tainted by, *red* Communists; the *lavenders* were homosexuals, otherwise known in the parlance of the era as "sex perverts" and linked to the former types by virtue of a shared moral laxity. Graham, who responded to the 1954 Senate condemnation of Senator Joseph McCarthy by comparing the Senate's action to Nero's fiddling while Rome burned, implied that liberals, homosexuals, and Communists posed a threat to American life, and that somehow political, moral, and sexual subversion went hand in hand. Of course, the association of Communism and sexual perversity was not unknown in the liberal imagination, as we have seen. But the idea of a pink, red, and lavender trinity undermining the nation was always more a fantasy of conservative anti-Communists, those whose resolute determination to root out godless Communism from American life involved combating, in Graham's words, the "easy-going compromise and tolerance that we have been taught by pseudo-liberals in almost every area of our life for years."¹

If the hardboiled anti-Communist liberals of the vital center held “Doughface” progressives in contempt, the hardboiled anti-Communist conservatives of the time held liberals in a contempt that evolved, under the pressure of the cold war, into a political weapon underwritten by fear and paranoia. In the late 1940s and the 1950s, right-wing animus was aimed as much at liberalism as it was at Communism, for one begot the other in the imagination of arch-conservative anti-Communists. Despite the emergence of a strident liberal opposition to Communism as well as the “hard” anti-Communist stance of Harry Truman, James Byrnes, Dean Acheson, George Kennan, George Marshall, and other statesmen working in the Truman administration, Democrats were on the defensive throughout the 1950s, charged by the right wing with a host of deficiencies and offenses often encapsulated in the accusation that they were “soft on Communism.” That open-ended phrase, employed indiscriminately and often with a willful disregard for the shades of meaning that the designation “liberal” had acquired since the onset of the cold war, could imply anything from advocacy of an overly “permissive” foreign or domestic policy insufficiently mindful of the Communist menace, to sympathy for the USSR or an appreciation of the virtues of a socialist state, to outright political subversion or espionage. While the ultra-conservative congressmen who fulminated against “soft” liberals may not have been the majority in the Republican party, the weightiness of their accusations, in the tense climate of the early cold war and especially after the onset of the Alger Hiss case, gave them an influence in political life out of proportion to their actual numbers on Capitol Hill. Reverberating in classrooms, pulpits, and American Legion halls, in national, state, and local political organizations, in books, pamphlets, and political journals large and small, the voices of conservative anti-Communism deplored the red menace and the liberals who left America vulnerable to it. The attack on soft liberals was not confined to right-wing Republicans or John Birch Society members. Graham, a Southerner and a registered Democrat, also espoused a conservative anti-Communism which shared the Republican conviction that the Roosevelt and Truman administrations were hopelessly soft on Communism and had in fact sold out America at Yalta and failed Chiang Kai-shek in China.²

Whatever the form or context, the accusation of softness always carried with it the insinuation that liberals lacked sufficient masculine toughness to rise to the occasion of the cold war, and were downright feminine in their New Deal political orientation. The epithet “bleeding heart,” which gained wide usage in the 1940s and 1950s, epitomizes the feminization of liberalism in the early cold war years. Eleanor Roosevelt had long served as the archetypical do-gooding, fellow-traveling, liberal bleeding heart—“momism” politicized. It was not difficult for right-wing anti-Communists in the 1950s to turn the eastern establishment internationalists working

under Democratic administration—men of affluent Ivy league backgrounds, cultured and vaguely aristocratic, cosmopolitan in thought and demeanor and thus suspiciously un-American—into the most sinister, effeminate figures. Cold war tensions inspired an extraordinary amount of rancor in partisan politics and brought to the fore old grievances against liberals, some of them ideological in nature, some of them intertwined with long-festering class antagonisms and “status anxieties”; indeed the right-wing, resentful of the old moneyed eastern establishment elites, exacted a price for nearly twenty years of Republican exile from the White House. The perceived failures of Democratic administrations to protect national security and halt Communist expansion in the world provided the right wing an opportunity for retribution against elite patrician liberals who had supported the New Deal and its insidious, creeping state socialism.³

Yet the nature of the invective heaped on liberals and Communists suggests that right-wing anti-Communism also became entangled with anxieties of a different sort. With its masculine bravado and its scorn for feminine attributes, with its language of sexual deviance and perversion, conservative anti-Communism speaks (less metaphorically and more genuinely than Schlesinger’s self-conscious, stylish neo-Freudian imagery) to the convergence of anxieties about Communism, liberalism, and sexuality. Certainly the rhetoric that vilified “pinks,” “lavenders,” and “reds” was strategically and opportunistically employed as a weapon with which to stigmatize political opponents. But that rhetoric relied on (and mobilized) real anxieties about both Communism and sexual disorder in American life.

Given the obsession with national security, it is easy to underestimate the social issues that increasingly preoccupied conservative Americans in the early cold war years. As the liberal intelligentsia in the 1950s fretted about relatively abstract problems such as the erosion of self in a mass society or the “quality” of American culture, and while liberal politicians adopted a centrist politics that lacked the sense of moral purpose and social reform zeal that had stirred liberals in the past, right-wing conservatives in the 1950s were busy working up considerable fervor about a variety of social ills, which together seemed to signal the moral degeneration in America. They deplored the decline of traditional small-town American values, the advent of secularism, juvenile delinquency, sexual immorality, divorce, pornography, crime, apathy, welfare statism, the corrosive effects of commercialism, popular entertainment, and (for the most reactionary of conservatives) racial or ethnic integration. To a degree not seen in the prewar years, conservative Americans were stirred by a dread of internal moral degeneration, one that helped to give meaning and shape to their brand of anti-Communism.

Anti-Communists on the right were fond of saying that moral decay, just as it brought about the fall of Rome, paved the way for the Communist

penetration of America. It was the liberal establishment that many conservatives began to hold responsible for the sorry state of American moral life, and thus the “soft” liberal was increasingly accused of moral laxity, an “easy-going” permissiveness (as Graham would have it) that invited a multitude of social evils, among them a creeping sexual immorality. In condemning the liberals who had weakened America and left it vulnerable to Communist infiltration from within and without, many conservatives, using anti-Communism as their vehicle, attacked modern liberalism on *moral* as well as political grounds. “McCarthyism” greatly accelerated the association between liberals and moral laxity, and that association would endure on the right. The repudiation of liberal tolerance and moral relativism would become, with varying degrees of intensity, a defining element of conservative politics for the rest of the century, reemerging with renewed strength in the Reagan years.

The anxieties about morality, sexuality, and manhood that surfaced in conservative rhetoric and politics—the subject of the following chapter—had more immediate historical implications, however. Those anxieties helped to propel forward the phenomenon known as McCarthyism, whose demons drew upon heightened fears of sexual as well as political subversion of the nation. Adding to an already tense political atmosphere in early 1950 was the disturbing disclosure that ninety-one homosexuals had recently “resigned” from the State Department, a fact that provided McCarthy and his allies with useful substitutes for real Communist subversives in government service and put liberals and the entire Roosevelt-Truman foreign policy establishment under close scrutiny. The damage done by the ‘McCarthyites’ two-pronged red-lavender offensive against the “sissy” liberal establishment was suggested in 1955 by David Riesman and Nathan Glazer, who noted the sad fate of left-wing and liberal intellectuals in their time: those who “came forward during the New Deal and who played so effective a role in the fight against Nazism and in ‘prematurely’ delineating the nature of the Communist as an enemy, today find themselves without an audience, their tone deprecated, their slogans ineffectual.”⁴ The sexually charged accusations of softness that surfaced so often in the political culture of the 1950s were not inconsequential in the history of cold war American politics. Those charges helped to relegate liberals to a degree of political isolation and disrepute from which they would not fully recover until 1960.

“Twenty Years of Treason”

The event that would prove so damaging to American liberals and set the stage for the recriminations and suspicions that would plague American politics in the a decade to come was the Alger Hiss case. In 1948, just as

some observers were predicting its demise, the House Un-American Activities Committee hit the political jackpot. In his testimony before HUAC, senior *Time* magazine editor and former Communist Whittaker Chambers named Hiss as a Communist party member. Hiss was a respectable liberal who had worked in the Roosevelt administration, and his rank and stature made the accusation singularly explosive. Urbane and sophisticated, Hiss was the perfect embodiment of the eastern establishment liberal of the kind the ultra-right loved to hate. A Harvard Law School graduate and former protégé of Felix Frankfurter, Hiss had clerked for Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes on Frankfurter’s recommendation, and had then moved on to an impressive career in government service, first as a New Deal attorney in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and eventually as a high-ranking official in Roosevelt’s State Department. A liberal internationalist, Hiss had also been a delegate at the Yalta conference and had served as Secretary General at the inaugural meeting in San Francisco that established the United Nations. By the time the accusations against him surfaced in 1948, he was the president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a position to which he had been recruited by John Foster Dulles.⁵

When Hiss responded to Chambers’s HUAC testimony by threatening to sue his accuser for slander, an incredulous Chambers opted to raise the stakes and tell all, confessing that both he and Hiss had worked in the Communist underground in the 1930s and had passed classified State Department documents to the Kremlin. Protesting his innocence, Hiss claimed only to have known a man in the 1930s named George Crosley to whom he had once rented a room—the same man who now appeared as Whittaker Chambers to implicate him in espionage. As first-term California congressman and HUAC member Richard Nixon led the effort to “get” Hiss prosecuted, many influential liberals rallied to Hiss’s defense, while others, like Arthur Schlesinger Jr., sought to distance liberals from Hiss and the Communism that he had apparently more than flirted with in the 1930s. For anti-Communist liberals, the position one took on Hiss’s guilt or innocence became a kind of ideological litmus test that sorted out the realists from the sentimentalists, or the “hards” from the “softs” (as some described the division) within the liberal camp.⁶ For many on the right, Hiss’s guilt was taken as an indisputable fact—one that proved both the legitimacy of the HUAC mission and the rumors of New Deal “treason” that had circulated for years.

The political impact of the Hiss trial is well known; the case made, compromised, and broke political careers, while Hiss’s specter hovered over partisan politics for at least a decade, giving Republicans political ammunition against Democrats and hastening the end of their twenty-year hiatus from the White House. Yet the personal drama of the two principal actors in the

case was in many ways paradigmatic for the era that was unfolding. Chambers, who was by 1948 both a devout Catholic and anti-Communist, privately confessed to the FBI that, following his induction into the Communist underground, he began to have homosexual experiences, telling agents that he finally “conquered” his homosexual “affliction” at the same time he broke with the party and conquered his Communist “affliction.” Initially reluctant to reveal his sexual past to the FBI, Chambers decided that it was better to do so at the onset of the trial, for the damaging information was bound to come out in the courtroom. Chambers confessed all to the FBI, and considerably more than he needed to—the promiscuous life he had secretly led as a “homosexual” and a married man, the parks and hotels he frequented, the compulsion with which he sought male sexual partners—in some kind of cathartic ritual of self-denigration that served to demonstrate both the depravity of his former life as a Communist/homosexual and his repentance for past sins and transgressions.⁷

Although Chambers’s confessions to the FBI were confidential, his sexual past became widely known nonetheless. As the Hiss defense team cast about for information with which to damage Chambers’s credibility, it accumulated some odd collaborators in the process. Chambers’s former comrades provided the Hiss defense with information about Chambers’s past sex life, as did “anonymous” sources. On the other side of the ideological divide, Joseph Alsop, influential Washington journalist, cousin of Eleanor Roosevelt, and eastern establishment icon known for his ultra-militant, anti-Communist foreign policy views, tipped off the Hiss defense team to homoerotic themes in a German novel that Chambers had once translated for publication, the narrative of which seemed to mirror Chambers’s own “obsession” with Hiss. (That Alsop, himself a closeted gay man whose homosexuality was something of an open secret in his own inner circle, helped discredit Chambers in this way adds a certain irony to the scenario, though not an altogether unique one in the strange history of cold war politics.) For his part, Hiss believed (or at least advanced privately) the utterly improbable theory that the man who was merely his former boarder had fabricated, over a decade later, the entire tale of their activities in the Communist underground because of his long-simmering resentment of Hiss. The source of that purported resentment was allegedly Chambers’s unreciprocated infatuation with Hiss in the 1930s. In short, Chambers’s “abnormal” advances to Hiss had been spurned. With the help of a prominent psychiatrist, the Hiss defense lawyers translated this explanation of Chambers’s motives for making false charges against Hiss into what they called “a theory of unconscious motivation.” Hiss privately called it “fair vengeance.”⁸

While Hiss’s lawyers had developed a motive for Chambers’s accusations, one that rested on his emotional and sexual instability, they advanced the

“unconscious motivation” theory delicately in the courtroom, calling attention to Chambers’s odd and excessive affection for, and seeming obsession with, Hiss in the 1930s. A homoerotic poem that Chambers had once written, “Tandaradei,” was read aloud during the trial, and Hiss’s lawyers brought psychiatrists into the courtroom who testified to Chambers’s “psychopathic” personality (in the second trial, this included one reference to his “sexual abnormality”). But Hiss’s lawyers were unwilling to push the issue further and make Chambers’s homosexuality central to the defense, fearing that such a stunt could backfire in several ways. The FBI had gathered information about Hiss’s stepson, Timothy Hobson, who had been previously discharged from the Navy for “psychiatric” reasons, including homosexuality. When the FBI questioned Hobson in the course of its investigation, a “broad hint” was dropped that the reasons for his discharge from the Navy would not be revealed if the Hiss defense did not make an issue out of Chambers’s sexual past. In the end, the hint apparently prevented Hobson, a key witness in the Hiss defense, from testifying altogether. According to some accounts of the trial (especially those by Hiss partisans), Hiss’s lawyers pleaded with him to let Hobson take the witness stand to refute Chambers’s testimony about certain crucial facts at issue in the case. Hiss, however, fearing the consequences for the young man’s reputation and well-being, nixed the only defense strategy—outing Chambers directly—that might have won him an acquittal. Hiss and his lawyers also seemed to worry about Hiss’s own reputation, since outing Chambers directly could boomerang, causing an association between Chambers’s homosexuality and Hiss in the jurors’ minds. From the onset of the case, speculations had circulated that Hiss was himself homosexual, rumors whose basis need only have been Hiss’s suave, well-coiffed, super-refined, urbane manner—the obscure mark of a gay man in the suspicious culture of the time. In any event, Chambers’s sexual past became widely known to trial observers, and certainly Hiss’s lawyers gave jurors more than a hint about the dubious character of Chambers, the “moral leper” and author of suspiciously homoerotic poetry.⁹

Underlying the most politically significant of the postwar political trials was a subtext that speaks to the sexually charged climate of anti-Communist cold war politics. Hiss’s previous friendship with Chambers/Crosely, a man widely seen as unkempt, imbalanced, fanatical, and by his own confession sexually compromised, as well as Hiss’s own explanation of this friendship—perceived by many observers as halted or strangely muted—made more than a few followers of the case wonder if something was missing from the story. While some thought Hiss was shielding his wife Priscilla, speculations also circulated about a previous sexual liaison between Chambers and Hiss, or Chambers and Hobson—something that would explain the inconsistencies

in the accounts given by both the defendant and the accuser about their mysterious friendship in the 1930s.¹⁰

What is significant here is not the truth or falsity of the speculations, but rather the ideological fallout of the case's sexual subplot. Chambers's confessed homosexuality fed the imagination that linked Communism and "sexual perversion" together; his mysterious friendship with Hiss tainted the latter with Chambers's "sordid" past. *Witness*, Chambers's 1952 bestselling autobiography that established his legacy for a large audience, chronicled his metamorphosis from an underground Communist agent into a devoted Catholic, anti-Communist, husband, and family man. Reviewing *Witness*, Schlesinger wrote of the "ugly and vicious stories invented and repeated [about Chambers] by respectable lawyers and college professors which purported to 'explain' everything. . . . The anti-Chambers whispering campaign was one of the most repellent in modern history."¹¹

If Chambers could be redeemed thanks to his willingness to renounce Communism and homosexuality, Hiss could never be redeemed, nor could those who came to his defense be forgiven easily. Tried twice after the first trial ended in a hung jury and convicted of perjury in January 1950 (since the statute of limitations precluded conspiracy charges), Alger Hiss became, in the conservative imagination, the embodiment of the weak-willed, effete, and ultimately treacherous eastern establishment liberal, whose "softness" left him prone to transgressions of a political, moral, and perhaps even of a sexual nature.

Of course, the Hiss case appeared to lend credibility to grievances that had been accumulating in right-wing circles since the 1930s. The charge that liberals were soft on Communism had its ideological roots in the idea that the New Deal had betrayed the classical, individualist, free-market liberalism upon which America was founded. Indeed, many conservatives in the 1930s and 1940s found it almost unbearable that the New Dealers had appropriated the term "liberal," for *real* liberals were enemies of statism (hence the repeated references to the "pseudo-liberal" or the "perversion" of liberalism in conservative rhetoric). If modern liberals' enlargement of government and establishment of a welfare state appeared to be the antithesis of classical liberal individualism and in fact smacked of creeping collectivism, their "tolerance" of Communism, evidenced in the "cozy" relationship between liberals and Communists during the Popular Front era, as well as Roosevelt's alleged appeasement of Stalin and "sellout" of United States at Yalta, fed the dubious idea of a nexus between liberalism and Communism. The Hiss case seemed to confirm what the ultra right wing had been saying for years: that the New Deal was fundamentally socialist and un-American, while Hiss's odyssey from New Deal liberal to Soviet spy gave new credence to the belief, as an intelligence officer once told a congressional sub-

committee, that "a liberal is only a hop, skip, and a jump away from a Communist. The Communist starts as a liberal."¹²

The two Hiss trials had spanned a year and a half, and by the time Hiss was hauled off to federal prison in January 1950, a series of events—the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb, the arrest of Justice Department official Judith Coplon for espionage, the arrest of KGB agent Klaus Fuchs in Britain (who would implicate the Rosenbergs)—had converged with the Hiss case to create a political climate that allowed Republicans to seize the anti-Communist high ground (the Rosenbergs were arrested in the summer of 1950). When Dean Acheson, Truman's Secretary of State, vowed on the day Hiss was sentenced not to turn his back on Hiss in a gesture of Christian loyalty to his old friend, the pledge was taken by critics as brazen disloyalty to America. Nixon insisted that Acheson must be suffering from "color blindness—a form of pink eye toward the Communist threat in the United States." Conservatives went on the offensive and called for Acheson's head, blaming his leadership for the suspicious blunders and failings that resulted in the Maoist victory in China. In 1950, as the vilification of Acheson as an Anglophilic "pink" accelerated in right-wing circles, his aristocratic pretensions and waxed moustache became fraught with symbolic meaning, his loyalty to Hiss indicative of a larger conspiracy of effete eastern establishment foreign policy elites. The very image of Acheson was capable of provoking extraordinary revulsion in some right-wing circles. About the Secretary of State, Republican Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska thundered: "I look at that fellow. I watch his smart-alek manner and his British clothes and that New Dealism, everlasting New Dealism in everything he says and does, and I want to shout, Get out! Get out! You stand for everything that has been wrong in the United States for years."¹³

As the Truman administration came under increasing assault, congressional races grew ugly by late 1950 as Democratic candidates found themselves vulnerable to singularly vicious smear campaigns. Nixon obviously recognized the great utility of his "pink" epithet, employing it to discredit and defeat his Democratic opponent in the California Senate race, incumbent Helen Gahagan Douglas, whom Nixon dubbed "the pink lady." Warning audiences that Douglas was "pink right down to her underwear," Nixon circulated the "pink list"—her congressional voting record which allegedly demonstrated that she followed the Communist Party line.¹⁴ It wasn't the first time Nixon had baited a political opponent in this way, but Nixon's campaign against Douglas (as well as his later tactics against Adlai Stevenson, whom he also smeared as a "pink") speaks to the ease with which conservatives were able to stigmatize Democrats in the aftermath of the Hiss trial as "pink," feminine, suspiciously soft.

McCarthy, to cite the most obvious example, shaped his personal identity and his political mission around a contrast between the privileged, effete Ivy League liberals from the eastern establishment, and the sturdy, self-made, patriotic men—*real* men—from the heartland of America. Several weeks after Hiss was convicted, McCarthy officially began his crusade in Wheeling, West Virginia, where he gave his famous speech to the Republican Women's Club, claiming to have a list of 205 Communists in the federal government. McCarthy insisted that the United States was now in a global "position of impotency" and blamed Communist gains in the world on those "bright young men . . . born with silver spoons in their mouths" who worked in the U.S. State Department, men who had presumably been weakened by lives of ease, privilege, and luxury. To McCarthy, American impotence in the face of global Communist expansion could only be the work of aristocratic, effeminate statesmen, most notably Acheson, that "pompous diplomat in striped pants, with a phony British accent . . . [who] endorsed Communism, high treason, and betrayal of a sacred trust." Here was the same man who was steadfastly loyal to his Harvard classmate, Alger Hiss, and presided over the State Department that had previously betrayed America at Yalta, lost China to the reds, and was now, McCarthy charged, infested with Communists.¹⁵

McCarthy's rhetoric was relatively tame among the genteel ladies of the Republican Women's club, but it soared to new and rude heights in venues where rancor and vulgarity were less offending. Soon after the Wheeling speech, he began a campaign to impugn the manhood and thus the political legitimacy of Democrats. McCarthy ranted about the "left-wing bleeding hearts," the "pitiful squealing" of "egg-sucking phony liberals," those who held "sacrosanct those Communists and queers" in the State Department who had sold China into "atheistic slavery." Assailing the "dilettante diplomats" who "cringed," "whined," and "whimpered" in the face of Communism, McCarthy vowed to rid the State Department of "the prancing mimics of the Moscow party line." General and former Secretary of State George Marshall was a tool of the Soviets, a "pathetic thing," McCarthy proclaimed. But it was always Acheson who evoked the greatest fury in McCarthy, and he repeatedly called attention to the suspicious femininity of the "Red Dean" of the State Department, the "Dean of Fashion," the man who could only speak out against Communism "with a lace handkerchief, a silk glove, and . . . a Harvard accent." Styling himself "Tail-gunner Joe," McCarthy posed as the antithesis of the "pretty boys" from the East, a real *man's man* who went straight for the "groin," as he boasted, and would "kick the brains out" of his political enemies. The lines were thus drawn, and in a crude version of the choice between being a soft, Doughface wailer or a manly, anti-Communist doer, a swaggering McCarthy posed his own ultimatum

to several reporters: "If you want to be against McCarthy, boys, you've got to be a Communist or a cocksucker."¹⁶

Even when spared the rude insinuations of a McCarthy, liberals could still be assailed for their lack of masculine toughness in highbrow circles. Conservative intellectuals often emphasized how fundamentally timid liberalism was, philosophically and psychologically. Postwar conservatives, like liberals, had developed a penchant for political psychologizing in the 1950s, and thus the liberal "habit of mind" came under new scrutiny. Richard Weaver, professor of English at the University of Chicago, suggested in the *National Review* what less erudite conservative politicians often implied when he compared the liberal's softness of mind to the hardness and rigidity of more able men. Seeking to expose the "roots of liberal complacency," Weaver suggested that underlying the liberal's wishy-washy denial of the existence of "either-or choices" and rejection of "logical rigor" was a sentimentality born of a weak, timorous psychological disposition: "It is the sentimentality of the new liberal which leaves him incapable of accepting rigid exclusion. And this propensity to moral and intellectual flabbiness leads to an inordinate fear of a certain type of man, of which MacArthur and Taft are good examples. Such men reveal, by the very logic of their expression, that they think in terms of inclusion and exclusion. Their mentality rejects cant, sniveling, and double-talk." Weaver pointed to the liberal's "almost hysterical reaction" to the "man of Plutarchian mold," his outpouring of "supercilious dismissal" when he encounters an "individual of clear mind and strong personality."¹⁷

Weaver's portrait of the modern liberal shared the rhetorical flavor of Schlesinger's depiction of the frightened, neurotic, intellectually dishonest Doughface who, unlike the tough-minded Jacksons and Roosevelts of the world, rejected hard facts and choices in favor of sentimental fantasies. But Weaver's targets were New Deal liberals and their allies who, having actually held political power, could be held responsible for the lethargic, complacent state of the nation. Like James Burnham and other conservative thinkers, Weaver implied that the modern liberal had weakened the nation and its once strong, self-reliant citizenry. His rhetoric reflects conservative's mounting critique of liberal welfare statism (and the torpor it bred) in the late 1950s. To Weaver, "the complacency of this often financially well-to-do liberal" was rooted in his materialist philosophy and his "idealization of comfort." Having made comfort the primary aim for which society strives (and, presumably, having made government responsible for ensuring that all citizens have access to it), modern liberals, Weaver implied, had encouraged the advent of the soft, self-indulgent, low-achieving, indolent, spiritually and intellectually empty modern individual. Softness, Weaver insisted, was at the core of the liberal's materialist philosophy, which "now shows a

definite antagonism toward all strenuous ideals of life," hence the liberal's rejection of "the code of the warrior, of the priest, and even the scholar, [which denies] the self for transcendent ends. . . . The liberal preaches an altruism that is sentimental, and therefore he is hostile to all demands that the individual be something more than his natural, indolent, ease-loving, and complacent self." Yet complacency, Weaver stressed, is the very attribute the liberal denounces in the conservative. "It is not an unknown thing to have the very vices one is denouncing slip up on one from the rear in some pleasing disguise. This the liberal has done by not being truly circumspect, and by giving into certain weaknesses that disqualify him for leadership."¹⁸

More often than not, however, the attack on "soft" liberals who give in to weaknesses came not from the professoriat but from the oft-noted groundswell of anti-intellectualism in the 1950s, nearly all of which was directed at left-wing or Ivy League liberal intellectuals. In a 1952 article in *Freeman* devoted primarily to demonizing New Deal liberalism and its "lachrymose sentimentality and shriveled academic abstractions," novelist Louis Bromfield responded to the introduction of the term "egghead" into political discourse by offering his own definition of the typical "egghead," which merged intellectuality, femininity, and liberalism into a single ridiculous caricature:

Egghead: a person of spurious intellectual pretensions, often a professor or the protégé of a professor. Fundamentally superficial. Over-emotional and feminine in reactions to any problem. Supercilious and surfeited with conceit and contempt for the experience of more sound and able men. Essentially confused in thought and immersed in a mixture of sentimentality and violent evangelicalism. A doctrinaire supporter of middle European socialism. . . . Subject to the old-fashioned philosophical morality of Nietzsche which frequently leads him into jail or disgrace. A self-conscious prig, so given to examining all sides of a question that he becomes thoroughly addled while remaining always in the same spot. An anemic bleeding heart.¹⁹

Bromfield welcomed the defeat of Adlai Stevenson, regarding it as a sign of the "femoteness" of the egghead from the masses of ordinary Americans.

The animus that the "egghead" evoked in the 1950s, which reflected and overlapped with the aversion to the eastern intelligentsia inflamed by the Hiss case and McCarthy's crusade, made for a potent brew. By the end of the decade, after the worst excesses of the red scare were over, the ultra-right could still fulminate against left-wing intellectuals as the most menacing of figures in American life. E. Merrill Root, a poet and a scholar himself (professor of English at Wheaton College in Illinois), told the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution in 1959 that the "greatest danger" confronting

the United States was not military attack from outside the nation, but rather "inward cultural subversion" at the hands of liberal intellectuals, those "witless dupes and tools who call themselves 'liberal' in the ironic modern sense of that perverted term." Through their domination of higher education, "avant-garde" liberal professors "soften us spiritually" and "render us impotent." When they criticize the founding fathers and "sentimentalize collectivism and even Communism" in the textbooks they write, they "subvert our faith" in America.²⁰

If it seemed to Root that the liberal had "perverted" the original meaning of the term "liberal," this was in part because modern liberalism appeared so hopelessly soft, so obviously contrary to the rugged, manly, hard individualistic values that had once defined the term in its classical sense. Like Schlesinger's Doughface, the liberal was—in much 1950s right-wing rhetoric—feminine in principle, effeminate in embodiment, and emasculating in effect.

Panic on the Potomac

The perversion tropes, the language of weakness and impotence, of inclusion and invasion, and the scorn for effeminacy and timidity that surfaced so often in conservative anti-Communist rhetoric of the 1950s surely speak to anxieties about national defense against an implacable Communist enemy that seemed to threaten the nation from within and without. But that language also had a more specific context. It was born of a political culture that confronted a new demon in American political life: the homosexual. The explicit link between political, moral, and sexual subversion surfaced in national politics a few weeks after McCarthy charged that the State Department was infested with Communists, and a month after Hiss was convicted. On February 28, 1950, members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, after grilling Dean Acheson about security protocol in the State Department, aggressively questioned Undersecretary of State John Peurifoy, who disclosed that the ninety-one employees who had departed from the State Department since 1947 were homosexuals. The result was to unleash what historian John D'Emilio has called the image of the "homosexual menace" in government. That image rested upon the fundamental assumption that homosexuals were by definition morally bankrupt and, as such, politically suspect.²¹

Politicians of both parties expressed alarm at what had long been rumored about the State Department, but never publicly confirmed. Conservatives quickly pounced on the issue to attack the Truman administration. Republican Party national chairman Guy Gabrielson circulated a letter to seven thousand party members claiming that "sexual perverts . . . have infiltrated

our Government in recent years" and they were "perhaps as dangerous as the actual Communists." He spoke of the new "homosexual angle" in Washington and implied that party members had a duty to express their outrage, especially since moral "decency" constrained the media from "adequately presenting the facts" to the American public. Republican floor leader Kenneth Wherry (R-Nebraska) called for a full-scale investigation of the matter after the chief of the District of Columbia vice squad, Lieutenant Roy E. Blick, informed a Senate committee that "thousands of sex deviants" prowled around the nation's capital, and a large percentage of them worked for the federal government. Wherry insisted that Blick had "in his possession the names of between 300 and 400 Department of State employees suspected or allegedly homosexuals." Wherry became the most outspoken Republican on the issue of "perverts" and the dangers they posed to national security, declaring that the government "must be cleansed of its alien-minded plotters and moral perverts. Moral rearmament, frankness, and honesty with the people must be restored."²²

Republicans had already been staking their political fortunes on the issue of national security and denouncing the Truman administration's security lapses and foreign policy failures, as well as its alleged corruption. The Peurifoy revelations provided more ammunition against Democrats. Other Republicans joined in the fray. Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire not only attacked the Truman administration for its tolerance of subversives and homosexuals within the federal government, but also implied that the Roosevelt administration had nourished a cabal of pinks, lavenders, and reds within its ranks. In a speech before the Senate entitled "Who is the mastermind in the Department of State?" Bridges demanded to know: "Who put Hiss and Wadleigh [a confessed member of the Communist underground whom Chambers also identified] in our State Department? Who put the 91 homosexuals in our State Department? . . . We must find the master spy, the servant of Russia who moved the puppets—the Hisses, the Wadleighs, and the others—in and out of office in this capital." Bridges called for an investigation that would reach back to the Roosevelt administration and put William Bullitt, the first American ambassador to the USSR, on the stand. Bridges demanded to know who persuaded Roosevelt to recognize the Soviet Union, and who convinced former Soviet ambassador Joseph E. Davies to write *Mission to Moscow*.²³

Always the opportunist, McCarthy understood the political utility of the scandal, hence his "Communist and queer" epithets. After the Peurifoy disclosure, the image of the homosexual menace became most useful to the Wisconsin senator. When the Tydings Committee convened in March 1950 to investigate McCarthy's charges of Communist infiltration of the State Department, a defensive McCarthy, lacking evidence for his allegations, at

one point fell back on the lavender threat. He stressed that some of the individuals he had previously counted as Communists were actually homosexuals, a fact that demonstrated, he told the committee, the "unusual mental aberrations of certain individuals in the department." McCarthy proceeded to quote "one of our top intelligence men in Washington," who believed that "practically every active Communist is twisted mentally or physically in some way." Tipped off with information and names of alleged homosexuals by his allies in the FBI, McCarthy later informed the Tydings Committee that he had evidence of a "convicted homosexual," who had resigned from the State Department in 1948 and now held a "top-salaried, important position" within the Central Intelligence Agency, despite the danger he posed to national security. That official was Carmel Offie, a former member of the diplomatic corps in the Roosevelt administration who had served in the first American embassy in the Soviet Union under Bullitt and eventually found his way to the CIA. Offie, one of the earliest victims of the purge of suspected homosexuals from the federal government, was quickly forced out of the CIA after McCarthy outed him.²⁴

While Wherry led the crusade against "sex perverts" in government, the scandal also worked both to legitimize "McCarthyism" and to increase McCarthy's own popular appeal. For many observers, the revelations of the presence of so many homosexuals in the State Department provided a smoking gun. It didn't really matter whether the infiltrators were homosexuals or Communists—it was taken as self-evident that homosexuals, like Communists, endangered the security of the nation. The pro-McCarthy *New York Daily News* reported that, of the first 25,000 letters that McCarthy received about his campaign against subversion in the State Department, "a preliminary sampling of the mail shows that only one out of four of the writers is excited about the red infiltration into the higher branches of the government; the other three are expressing their shocked indignation at the evidence of sex depravity." Whether or not these figures are at all accurate is unknown, but *The New York Daily News* certainly did as much as it could to inflame readers about the homosexual menace, repeatedly calling attention to "a State Department infiltrated by sex perverts and Kremlin agents of the Alger Hiss type." *Daily News* columnist John O'Donnell wrote about the scandal at every opportunity, and repeatedly depicted McCarthy as a bold and manly patriot, a "blue-jawed ex-marine" who bravely combated a conspiracy of effete, overeducated traitors and sex perverts in government. When faced with criticism, McCarthy "calmly rolled with the punches [and] picked off his opponents," one of whom was Millard Tydings, who, O'Donnell noted, had "perverted the Senate directions to investigate State Department Reds into a political investigation of . . . McCarthy." Referring to the presence of so many homosexuals in the State Department, O'Donnell

wrote that “no situation such as this has ever confronted the Republic. And because it is something new, none of the boys is certain how to handle it. Complete revelation will mean the blasting of reputations which go back to the early days of the New Deal.” O’Donnell’s comments prompted this letter to the editor from a woman in Long Island:

The homosexual situation in our State Department is no more shocking than your statement that “they are uncertain what to do about it.” Let every American who loves this country get behind McCarthy or any committee which will thoroughly investigate and expose every one of these people by name no matter who or how highly placed they are. Let heads fall where they may. This is no time for compromise. Democrats or Republicans—we must rid our Government of these creatures.²⁵

Though Republicans had made the “sex pervert” issue their own weapon with which to discredit past and present Democratic administrations, there was in fact a bipartisan consensus on the necessity of removing homosexuals in government service. In June 1950, a Senate subcommittee headed by Clyde Hoey (D-North Carolina) began its official investigation of “homosexuals and sex perverts” in government.

Nowhere was the image of the “homosexual menace” more clearly delineated than in the report authored by the Hoey subcommittee entitled “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government.” The report declared that “those who engage in acts of homosexuality and other perverted activities are unsuitable for employment in the Federal Government.” Persons who indulge in such “degraded activity are committing not only illegal and immoral acts, but they also constitute security risks.” The operative assumption of the report, bolstered by the testimony of psychiatrists, was that “those who engage in overt acts of perversion lack the emotional stability of normal persons.” Because the homosexual’s “moral fiber” had supposedly been weakened by sexual gratification, the authors concluded that homosexuals were serious national security risks highly susceptible to extortion by foreign espionage agents.²⁶

In charging that “one homosexual can pollute a Government office,” the report also implied that homosexuality was a kind of contagious disease that spread through the government and contaminated the entire body politic. The authors noted that the homosexual has a “tendency to gather other perverts about him” because “he feels uncomfortable unless he is with his own kind.” Thus does he “attempt to place other homosexuals in Government jobs.” According to the report, the other (and perhaps more disturbing) way that a homosexual could corrupt a government office was by spreading his contagion to otherwise heterosexual employees: “These perverts will fre-

quently attempt to entice normal individuals to engage in perverted practices. This is particularly true in the case of young and impressionable people who might come under the influence of a pervert.” Moreover, the authors of the report stressed that homosexuals were ever more difficult to identify since their outward appearance did not necessarily correspond to the stereotype of the male homosexual with “feminine mannerisms” or the female homosexual with “masculine characteristics.” Because homosexuals now seemed increasingly able to pass as straight, the authors called for more effective methods of detecting homosexuals in government service.²⁷

The report established an official rationalization for what was already the consensus in Washington: homosexuals were unfit for government employment. According to the report, blackmailers looking to extort information from a government employee made a “regular practice of preying upon the homosexual.” Heterosexual indiscretions had long been considered a means by which foreign agents extorted confidential information from government employees. But homosexual relations were assumed to be far more dangerous because the social taboos against homosexuality were so pronounced. Thus the homosexual, when threatened with exposure of his “perversion” by an agent provocateur, would be more inclined to betray his country rather than endure public exposure of his homosexuality. Moreover, the report stressed the prevailing psychiatric judgment that “indulgence in sexually perverted practices indicates a personality which has failed to reach sexual maturity.” Depicting homosexuals as weak-willed, immature, and narcissistic, the authors noted that perverts were “vulnerable to interrogation by a skilled questioner and they seldom refuse to talk about themselves.” Implicit in the entire report was the fundamental assumption that the homosexual was more likely to engage in subversion because, by virtue of engaging in homosexual acts, he had already proven himself prone to succumbing to weakness, that is, to perverse desires that a well-adjusted individual would resist. In D’Emilio’s words, the report assumed that homosexuals, “immature, unstable, and morally enfeebled by the gratification of their perverted desires . . . lacked the character to resist the blandishments of the spy.”²⁸

Central to the assumption that homosexuals were extraordinarily vulnerable to blackmail was the stereotype of the male homosexual as slave to his sexual passions. Representative Arthur L. Miller (R-Nebraska) helped to encourage that stereotype. A physician who sponsored legislation to increase penalties for sex crimes and in effect regulate homosexuality in the District of Columbia, Miller proffered his own “medical” opinion on the subject of homosexuality to two reporters from the Hearst-owned *New York Mirror*. His comments were originally part of a speech he gave to the Nebraska State Medical Association, a speech which he entered into the Congressional

Record in May 1950. Congressman Miller drew a connection between class, intellectuality, and homosexuality, insisting that “perversion is found more frequently among the higher levels [of society] where nervousness, unhappiness, and leisure time leads to vices.” Miller stressed that while “the homosexual is often a man of considerable intellect and ability,” he is driven by organically based, uncontrollable sexual impulses that drive him to satisfy his urges at any cost. In what has to stand as one of the most absurd medical opinions advanced by any physician, Miller warned that “the cycle of these individuals’ homosexual desires follow the cycle closely patterned to the menstrual period of women. There may be 3 or 4 days each month that this homosexual’s instincts break down and drive the individual into abnormal fields of sexual practice.” Yet Miller saw a glimmer of hope for the homosexual: with “large doses of sedatives and other treatments during this sensitive cycle . . . he may escape performing acts of homosexuality.” Miller cautioned, however, that we are still “far from a solution” to the problem of sexual maladjustment in government and the military.²⁹

Against the backdrop of such egregious misinformation about homosexuality, the “homosexual menace” became entangled with national security concerns. Senator Wherry and Congressman Miller helped to circulate the idea that Stalin had come into possession of Hitler’s “master list” of homosexuals around the world who could be enlisted for the purposes of subversion. Miller pointed out in his speech that “the Russians and the Orientals still look upon the practice [of homosexuality] with favor.” Lack of any citable cases of homosexual blackmail in American government did not stop Miller from insisting that “espionage agents have found it rather easy to send their homosexuals here and contact their kind in sensitive departments of our government.” Nor did it prevent Wherry from calling for new laws to guarantee the “security of seaports and major cities against sabotage through a conspiracy of subversives and moral perverts in Government establishments.”³⁰

Like conservatives from the Midwest, Republicans on the East Coast spoke out about the “homosexual menace” in government. In a May 1950 speech to the Republican State Committee in New York, Thomas Dewey, governor of New York and Truman’s opponent in the 1948 presidential election, “accused the Democratic national administration of tolerating spies, traitors, and sex offenders in the government service,” according to the *New York Times*. Some observers saw a smoking gun in the disclosure of large numbers of homosexuals in the State Department. The *Brooklyn Tablet*, the weekly Catholic newspaper with the largest circulation in the nation, applauded McCarthy’s efforts to cleanse the government of traitors on the grounds that “the presence of close to a hundred perverts in the State Department—even though Hiss has been forced out and convicted and the perverts

fired—justify [sic] a complete and thorough search for further evidences of the Communist conspiracy within the departments of our government.” The front page editorial called upon readers to write to their congressmen and senators and demand answers. “What are YOU doing about it?” the editorial asked readers. The excitable O’Donnell of the *New York Daily News* considered the problem of homosexuals in the federal government the “primary issue” of the 1950 congressional race. At issue in the campaign was the “truth or falsity of the charge that the foreign policy of the United States, even before World War II, was dominated by an all-powerful, supersecret, inner circle of highly educated, socially high-placed sexual misfits, in the State Department, all easy to blackmail, all susceptible to blandishments by homosexuals in foreign nations.”³¹

The tendency to link homosexuality with the State Department of the Roosevelt administration in fact went back to the 1930s and 1940s. The notion of a “supersecret” circle of aristocratic “sexual misfits” undermining U.S. foreign policy was clearly a reference to Sumner Welles, Roosevelt’s Undersecretary of State. The Harvard-educated Welles, who was close to the Roosevelt family and came from a similar patrician background, and upon whom Roosevelt relied in matters of foreign policy (to the displeasure of Cordell Hull, Roosevelt’s Secretary of State), became suspected of homosexual indiscretions by members of the administration in early 1941. When J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI confirmed the validity of the rumors, reporting that Welles had made “lewd” sexual advances to several railway porters and was also observed looking for homosexual partners in parks and public restrooms, Welles’s enemies in the administration, Hull and Ambassador Bullitt, urged the president to fire Welles. Roosevelt refused, perhaps heeding pleas from Eleanor Roosevelt on Welles’s behalf. But the Undersecretary’s opponents pressed the issue, and circulated the idea that Welles’s homosexuality made him a “pawn” of the Soviets. After a three-year cover-up of the allegations of homosexuality, the increasing possibility of a congressional investigation into Welles’s personal life moved Roosevelt to request his resignation on the eve of the 1944 election. It was not the first time a New Dealer had been the object of such an investigation by the FBI, but Welles was the first high-ranking government official whose career was ruined by one. The sexual allegations against the Undersecretary were well-known in Washington, though not officially acknowledged. The reports on Welles would add to Hoover’s ever-growing file of “sex deviates.”³²

The Welles incident had passed quietly in the war years, but it was resurrected in the early 1950s to cast doubt on the Roosevelt and by extension the Truman administration. Combined with tales that had circulated for years about the decadent, libidinous atmosphere of the first U.S. diplomatic mission to Moscow (the tales were not entirely untrue—the embassy in the

thirties apparently experienced more than its share of partying and sexual carousing of all forms), the Welles story only added fuel to the notion that Democratic administrations—full of urbane, aristocratic, bohemian, disolute internationalists—had for decades been infiltrated by sexual and political subversives. Sniffing out sex perverts wherever they could be found, McCarthy, Wherry, Bridges, and their allies, including Senators Pat McCarran, Karl Mundt, and William Jenner, eagerly followed up on leads secretly fed to them by Hoover's FBI and friends in the security division of the State Department. They also followed tips from anonymous letters sent to them which identified certain individuals in government agencies as homosexuals. The onset of the Korean War in June 1950 shifted public attention away from the scandal, but the dismissal of suspected homosexuals continued unabated as the Truman administration sought damage control and a restoration of the reputation of the diplomatic corps before McCarthy and his cronies did any more damage. In addition to the State Department, other federal government agencies, including the Civil Service, the CIA, and the Secret Service, began to investigate and dismiss suspected homosexuals from their ranks.³³ What became known on Capitol Hill as the "purge of the perverts" had begun.

Max Lerner, a journalist of the "vital center" variety, expressed what could be considered a liberal point of view on what he called the "Panic on the Potomac." In a twelve-part series on the scandal in the then-liberal *New York Post*, Lerner attempted to present a cooler, more reasonable assessment of the issue, one that sought to steer clear of "the exploitation of the morbid, the cheap and easy attack on sexual deviants, [and] the sentimental defense of them as an oppressed minority." Lerner denounced the "homosexual panic" in government encouraged by Wherry and others who exploited the issue for their own political purposes. In his lead article, Lerner called readers' attention to the "hunted," the victims: "They are human beings, we must assume: they do get hurt, they lose their jobs, their lives are shattered" by allegations of homosexuality. Of special concern to him was the typical casualty of the purge—the man in the State Department who had no Communist or radical associations, who was doing a good job and lived quietly, and whose only sin was that at some point in his life he "had some kind of homosexual relations." In light of the hysteria that pervaded the discussion of homosexuals in government, Lerner showed unusual sympathy for the accused (especially for the men who had apparently only dabbled in homosexuality). Lerner stressed that the victims of the purges (the "pink-slipped") understood that they had little recourse against such charges. The accused could attempt to win an acquittal, but "they never appeal" because they "would never live down the publicity and the whisperings."³⁴

Lerner conceded, however, that the presence of homosexuals in government did pose a national security problem, and like a true liberal he called upon the authority of experts to illuminate it. "The hunting down of jobholders on a mass scale for their private sexual life is something new in Washington. . . . I want to help take the problem [of homosexuality] out of the darkness of rumor, into the open," he wrote, "out of the wild procession of hunters and hunted into the area of fact and science. . . . the problem of homosexuals is primarily one for doctors, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, social statisticians." Lerner pointed out that anxious and ill-informed government officials made no distinction between casual, harmless homosexuals and compulsive, dangerous ones; nor did they distinguish sensitive posts in the government, where potential blackmail could be considered a legitimate concern, from lesser, nonsensitive posts. Lerner insisted that the government needed disinterested scientists to illuminate the nature of homosexuality and the varying gradations of homosexual proclivities. "We need to put the whole problem in the hands of the scientists," he repeatedly stressed—only then could the innocuous homosexuals be sorted out from the dangerous ones. Most homosexuals, Lerner thought, could control their urges, and thus their sexual proclivities were irrelevant to their ability to function as government officials. But a small percentage, he said, were "compulsive homosexuals" who were in fact security risks. "There are some men whose sex impulses involve them in criminal tendencies. There is no room for the criminal in the government. He is not merely a security risk, but a form of disease in society. The disease must be isolated, and an effort made to cure it."³⁵

Lerner's call for scientific expertise fell on deaf ears, for Washington inquisitors had no interest in splitting hairs over who was a homosexual and who was not, who was a true security risk and who was not. Lerner doggedly pursued politicians and government officials in an effort to force them to confront how unreasonable and even pointless such an indiscriminate purge of the federal government actually was. In an interview with Wherry, Lerner asked the senator whether the purge of the State Department could prove endless, given the Kinsey report's statistics on the widespread existence of homosexual behavior among American men. Wherry wasn't interested in Kinsey's statistics, which in any case he highly doubted, nor would he define in concrete terms precisely what constituted a homosexual. "A homosexual is a diseased man, an abnormal man," he replied, summarily dismissing the question. Lerner also pursued State Department officials, Civil Service Commission officials, senators, and FBI officials in an effort to determine whether there were any cases of homosexuals actually being blackmailed by foreign agents, but was not able to track down "a single case." The panic was

heightened, Lerner noted, by the oft-told story in Washington of Hitler's "master list" of homosexuals, which Stalin now possessed and was poised to use for the purposes of blackmail and subversion of American officials. Lerner agreed that the Nazis had in fact used people's vices for the purposes of extortion, and the Russians could do the same, but he could find no actual cases supporting the theory that the Russians were using this list to blackmail officials in the U.S. government.³⁶

For some observers of the purge, however, there were legitimate reasons other than those involving blackmail and security (strictly speaking) that were grounds for disqualifying a homosexual from employment in the State Department. Lerner summed up this rationale by describing it as "a theory of the relation between virility and the needs of diplomacy in the age of the atom bomb." The theory, he said, was told to him by a "Harvard professor with considerable government experience." According to the unnamed professor, "it takes a virile man . . . to be able to meet Russian diplomacy today. It requires the kind of toughness that an effeminate man simply would not have." Lerner rejected this "he-man theory of government" and cited it as an example of the "militarization of our thought." But it was no doubt a common sentiment in Washington at the time, especially since—in the absence of real cases of homosexual blackmail that anyone could cite—an alternative rationale for the purge was necessary.³⁷

Lerner's view of homosexuality, while much more tolerant than that of the Wherrys and the Millers of the time, was in many ways characteristic of the 1950s liberal intelligentsia—an admixture of sympathy, pity, and condemnation for the "afflicted," infused with a faith in scientific expertise to solve the "problem." Though Lerner emphasized the gradations in homosexual behavior and continually made distinctions between "compulsive homosexuals" ("police blotter" cases) and innocuous homosexuals (the "random, occasional or even latent kind") who posed no danger as government officials, he spoke in general terms of homosexuality as a pathology, one that with proper psychiatric treatment could be "cured." Lerner's attitude reflected the assumptions of the medical profession in the 1950s, which tended to support the decriminalization of homosexuality and to regard homosexuality as a pathology, one rooted not in congenital or biological traits but rather induced by psychological, familial, or social forces (assumptions that made possible the notion of a "cure"). The Washington sex scandal, Lerner wrote, "may prove a healthy development. It has broken the taboo [sic] on the discussion of sexual deviations." Lerner agreed with Democratic Senator Lister Hill of Alabama, who had stressed that "we now have the chance for an educational job [sic] about sexual deviations and inversion comparable to what the Surgeon General's Office has done on venereal disease." In the last article in the series, Lerner expressed a kind of lesser-of-

two-social-evils sentiment, concluding that, "while homosexuals are sick people, the ruthless campaign against them is symptomatic of an even more dangerous sickness in the social atmosphere."³⁸

Lerner speculated about the possible implications of the use of sexuality as a political weapon. "When you try to use the twisted sex issue as a weapon for twisted political purposes," he wrote, "there is a danger of a boomerang." He meant that political exploitation of such a prickly issue could eventually bring everyone under scrutiny; no politician was immune. After all, he stressed, if the incidence of male homosexual behavior was as widespread as Kinsey's studies indicated, no group, party, or region of the nation was without its homosexual element.³⁹

What Lerner did not say was that there was also a danger of "boomerang" for those who spoke out against the "Panic on the Potomac." Just as few politicians were willing to challenge McCarthy and his brethren on the Communist issue lest the taint of "softness" damage them, even fewer wanted to tangle with the right wing on the issue of perversion in government. Indeed, in the 1950s any politician's seeming "defense" of homosexuals in government service would have been a political kiss of death. Two journalists and well-connected members of the foreign policy establishment, brothers Joseph and Stuart Alsop, did speak out in general terms against what they called the "mental illness" that had overcome Washington. No doubt the right wing's unprincipled attack on the Roosevelt administration and the foreign policy establishment—men of the Alsops' own patrician background, education, and breeding—was especially offensive to the brothers (the sentiment that led Joe Alsop, presumably, to help the Hiss defense team discredit Whittaker Chambers with the taint of homosexuality). In a July 1950 article in the *Saturday Evening Post* ("Why Has Washington Gone Crazy?"), the Alsops spoke of the "miasma of fear" and "creeping neurosis" that was infecting Washington. Nearly everyone seemed to be looking over their shoulder, wondering if their phones were wiretapped and growing ever more distrustful of their government. Two "mental images," the authors noted, explain the national nervous breakdown: the image of the "handsome young man with high cheekbones" in government service who stands accused of betraying his government, and the image of "a large, mushroom-shaped cloud." Resentment of traitorous elites spurred by the Hiss case, and general anxieties about nuclear war, underlay the McCarthy phenomenon, the authors implied. But the claim that "the government is now in the hands of perverts and traitors" was baseless, the Alsops insisted. They mocked the ridiculous antics of McCarthy, who could be observed in his office shouting "cryptic instructions" to mysterious allies on the telephone, and in whose anteroom lurked "furtive-looking characters" who might be "suborned State Department men." In another column, Joe Alsop ridiculed Wherry's move

to elevate homosexuality to the level of “serious issue” and a “clear and present danger” to national security, calling it “vulgar folly.” To a hard-line cold warrior like Alsop, the real danger to national security was not internal but external: Communist expansion in Korea, Vietnam, and elsewhere in the world, the battle against which the McCarthies only undermined with their self-serving, foolish crusade.⁴⁰

The Alsops’ article enraged McCarthy, who responded by gay-baiting Joe Alsop. The senator wrote a letter to the editors of the *Saturday Evening Post*. The letter noted that the Roman Empire had fallen because its leaders became “morally perverted and degenerate.” Any intelligent officer knew, McCarthy claimed, that a “moral pervert” was vulnerable to blackmail, and he professed to be incredulous that Wherry’s call to remove “perverts” from our government, a “long overdue task,” would be considered “vulgar” and “nauseating” to the *Saturday Evening Post*’s editors. In an obvious innuendo aimed at Joe Alsop, McCarthy stressed that “I can understand, of course, why it would be considered ‘vulgar’ and ‘nauseating’ by Joe Alsop.” McCarthy took another shot at the journalist, noting that “certainly the *Post* knew what it was doing when it hired Joe Alsop to write this article for it” (omitting Stuart Alsop from authorship). Naturally, McCarthy added some old-fashioned red-baiting, insisting that the article was “almost 100 percent in line with the official instructions issued to all Communists and fellow-traveling members of the press and radio by Gus Hall, national secretary of the Communist Party.”⁴¹

Joe Alsop was nearly impervious to red-baiting. (“Not a sparrow fell during the cold war that Joe Alsop did not believe was shot by Moscow’s cannon,” Leslie Gelb once wrote.) But Alsop was vulnerable to gay-baiting, and McCarthy had delivered a low, barely oblique blow. Outside of the official inquisition in government, professional protocol and legal liability typically made explicit charges of sexual impropriety unacceptable or unwise to voice directly; thus innuendo, “code-talk” and rumor-mongering often served as informal tools with which to damage the reputation of an individual. Suggestive, coded language was commonplace; terms like “cookie pusher” and “striped-pants diplomat,” for example, had been used for years to denote homosexuals in the diplomatic corps. McCarthy ensured that the “private,” innuendo-laden letter to the *Post* was made “public”; indeed he read it into the *Congressional Record*, as if the issues at hand had extraordinary significance. Despite the Alsop brothers’ proposals for subsequent anti-McCarthy articles to the *Saturday Evening Post*, its editors didn’t publish another piece by the Alsops critical of McCarthy—a testimony, perhaps, to McCarthy’s success in bullying the press. Yet the Wisconsin senator ultimately failed to intimidate the Alsops, for the brothers didn’t stop criticizing McCarthy and his allies in their syndicated newspaper columns.⁴²

McCarthy, however, continued to make political use of the homosexuality issue. When he became chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in 1952, the parent body to the subcommittee that had authored the report on the “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government,” he became privy to a considerable amount of information that he and his allies frequently deployed to smear government officials. McCarthy’s staff included some figures of unlikely partisanship. Young Robert Kennedy, thanks to his father’s intervention, landed his first official job in Washington as general counsel to McCarthy’s Subcommittee on Investigations. Kennedy’s first task—a dubious beginning to a career that would become the stuff of history—was to examine the influx of homosexuals into the State Department. Kennedy’s superior was McCarthy’s chief counsel, Roy Cohn, the former assistant U.S. attorney who had helped prosecute the Rosenbergs and remained a closeted gay man until he died of AIDS in 1986.⁴³

McCarthy used the findings of the Senate’s report on “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government” in his 1952 political manifesto, *McCarthyism: The Fight for America*. He quoted the report extensively in this election-year broadside, highlighting its conclusions that many homosexuals were permitted by the Truman administration to resign for undisclosed reasons and then promptly relocated to other departments of government. McCarthy added that, “in addition to the security question, it should be noted that individuals who are morally weak and perverted and who are representing the State Department in foreign countries certainly detract from the prestige of this nation.” McCarthy proceeded to denounce the State Department’s conduct of foreign policy, implicating members of the Roosevelt administration, including Hiss and Sumner Welles, in a conspiracy to “sell out” China to the Communists. Much of the broadside was devoted to attacking Acheson, who, McCarthy emphasized, had vouched for Hiss’s character in his first trial, facilitated Hiss’s rise in government, and secured for Hiss his position of secretary at the Dumbarton Oaks meeting. Obliquely, the broadside implied a conspiratorial connection between elite pinks, lavender, and reds.⁴⁴

To the ultra-right, the pink-red-lavender trinity was inseparable from its affluent male breeding grounds—the eastern establishment, the Ivy League, and the diplomatic corps. While the image of the State Department liberal internationalist—overeducated and worldly, enfeebled by wealth and refinement, tainted by exposure to suspicious foreign ideas, an appeaser of Communism and quite possibly a red dupe—belongs to McCarthy and his brethren, the image of the suspiciously effeminate “striped-pants diplomat” was not McCarthy’s invention. The belief that the State Department’s effectiveness and prestige had long been compromised by feckless, feminized

diplomats could be heard in many quarters, even before the 1950 “sex scandal” became public news. Schlesinger had made reference in *The Vital Center* to the State Department that “Americans had reasonably regarded as a refuge for effete and conventional men who adored countesses, pushed cookies, and wore handkerchiefs in their sleeves,” hailing their replacement by more able and expert men. By the early 1950s, the State Department had become an object of scorn and ridicule, its reputation marred by the image of the “striped-pants” diplomat as well as its perceived security lapses and foreign policy gaffes. While the polite *Saturday Evening Post* ran an article in 1950 entitled “Why Americans Hate the State Department” that spoke in euphemisms about the “cookie pushers” who had made the State Department a “favorite whipping boy” for Americans, the *New Yorker* ran a cartoon the same year that satirized the reputation of the diplomatic corps. The cartoon depicted a former State Department official applying for a new job and assuring his prospective employer that he was fired from State merely for “incompetence.” Elsewhere, conservative journalists mused that “until the recent purges of the State Department, there was a gag around Washington that you had to speak with a British accent, wear a homburg hat, or have a queer quirk if you wanted to get by the guards at the door.”⁴⁵

Others took the reputation of the State Department more seriously. In 1953 Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, responding to “rumors,” instructed recently appointed American ambassador to the Soviet Union, Charles Bohlen, to travel on the same plane with his wife to the Soviet Union. After an extraordinarily nasty confirmation battle, such a gesture would presumably quell lingering doubts that Bohlen was anything but a “normal” family man. The Harvard-educated Bohlen had worked in the Roosevelt and Truman State Departments, had served in the much-maligned first American embassy in Moscow in 1934–35 under Ambassador William Bullitt, and had been a member of the Yalta delegation, a résumé that rendered him positively diabolical in the eyes of the right wing—a symbol of the elite liberal softness and decadence that the State Department had come to represent. Worse still, Bohlen refused to accede to demands that he repudiate the ill-conceived policy of “appeasement” at Yalta. Bohlen’s vast experience in Soviet diplomacy had earned him Eisenhower’s nomination, but the president was then unaware of his nominee’s skeletons, since Bohlen had never undergone a full loyalty-security investigation. In the end, Bohlen’s confirmation was viciously fought—through the usual smear and innuendo—by McCarthy and his cronies, who exploited rumors about Bohlen and the results of the FBI security-clearance inquiry into his private life, which alleged that he associated with sexual perverts.⁴⁶

The allegations leveled against Bohlen seriously damaged his reputation and came close to destroying his career. Others in government service

accused of homosexual indiscretion, including Bohlen’s own brother-in-law, were not so fortunate. Unlike Bohlen, who had the support of Eisenhower and whose bitter confirmation process played out a mounting tension between the McCarthys and the Eisenhower administration, the vast majority of governmental officials suspected of homosexuality were unable to salvage their careers. As Robert Dean’s impressive research into the internal machinery of the sex inquisition has shown, its victims were either dismissed or forced to resign from their positions, typically after humiliating investigations into their private lives that could be initiated on as little grounds as an anonymous letter, a report of a suspiciously “effeminate” voice or demeanor, gossip and hearsay, or simple guilt by association (i.e., with a known homosexual). Personal grudges, age-old feuds, or professional rivalries could motivate such accusations, while the accused had few rights traditionally associated with due process. The sex inquisition mirrored the Communist inquisition in its form and methods.⁴⁷

The purge of homosexuals from government accelerated under the Eisenhower administration. Eisenhower revised Truman’s loyalty program to include “sexual perversion” as grounds for disqualification or dismissal from all federal jobs, while Dulles and his subordinates policed the State Department aggressively, lest Dulles suffer the fate of his predecessor at State. The purge, the intensity of which was driven by the assumption of a closely knit homosexual “cell” within the State Department, eventually brought down several high-ranking men in the diplomatic corps, including Charles W. Thayer (Bohlen’s brother-in-law), former director of the Voice of America who had previously served, along with George Kennan, Bohlen, and Carmel Offie in Bullitt’s Moscow embassy in 1934–35. Thayer was also accused by informers of harboring Communist sympathies (allegedly cultivated during his wartime liaison with Tito’s partisans as an OSS officer in Yugoslavia), thus encouraging the idea of a secret international network of reds and lavenderes with allied cells in the State Department. Another prominent member of the Foreign Service whose career was ruined by charges of homosexuality was Sam Reber, Deputy High Commissioner of Germany and, like Bohlen and Thayer, a product of the eastern establishment. Yet hundreds of lesser-known employees in the State Department—from attachés to clerks to ambassadors—were forced out of government service on the grounds of suspect sexual orientation in the late 1940s and the 1950s. The “lavender purge” of the State Department, combined with the “red” purge of those with suspect political affiliations—including “China hands” John Paton Davies, John Stewart Service, and John Carter Vincent—demoralized the State Department, depleted the Asian and Eastern European divisions of some of its ablest officers, and did incalculable personal harm to its victims, several of whom committed suicide.⁴⁸

As D'Emilio and Dean's research has suggested, more federal government employees were dismissed as security risks in the "McCarthy era" on the grounds of sexual deviance than were dismissed on all other grounds, such as Communist sympathies, suspicious affiliations, or generic misconduct (e.g., alcoholism) of a compromising nature. They were overwhelmingly but not exclusively men. According to Dean, more than 400 suspected homosexuals were dismissed from the State Department under the Truman administration between January 1947 and January 1953, a number nearly double the number of individuals dismissed as security risks for all other reasons. Such statistics likely underestimate the number of victims of the purge, since many employees "quietly" resigned for undisclosed or contrived reasons. Hundreds more were fired or forced to resign under the Eisenhower administration, whose new loyalty-security guidelines resulted in the dismissal of homosexuals from government service at a rate of forty per month in their first sixteen months of implementation. Moreover, the purge of homosexuals extended to many other federal government agencies, and the armed services dismissed homosexuals with a new urgency. Discharges from the military on the grounds of homosexuality had averaged slightly more than 1,000 per year in the late 1940s, but by the early 1950s dismissals for homosexuality averaged 2,000 per year and by the early 1960s had risen by another 50 percent. Finally, the federal government's example encouraged state and municipal governments to dismiss suspected homosexuals through loyalty-security investigations, gave tacit permission to federal agencies like the FBI to gather information on suspected sex deviants, and gave local police forces free rein to harass gays and lesbians in their communities.⁴⁹

The principal rationale for the purge—the security risk posed by homosexuals in government—appears to have been something of a lavender heretrix. No cases of genuine "homosexual blackmail" of government officials by foreign agents were uncovered (or have been uncovered by historians). The only example that the Hoey subcommittee could cite as justification for the purge was an incident in 1913 involving an Austrian intelligence officer who betrayed the Habsburgs after he was blackmailed by agents of the Russian czar, who threatened to expose his homosexuality. Another tale circulated in Washington concerning the Prince Eulenburg affair in early twentieth century Imperial Germany, which involved a secret cell of aristocratic homosexuals who had formed a "state within the state" under the kaiser's nose.⁵⁰ Unless genuine cases of homosexual blackmail of American government officials were hushed up to avoid the exposure of embarrassing lapses in national security protocol, none were ever touted as proof of the legitimacy of the purge.

In one known case of an American civilian who was the victim of a homosexual extortion plot by Soviet agents during the cold war, the denouement

did not play out the scenario that government officials would have predicted. In 1957, Joe Alsop took a trip to the Soviet Union and found himself the target of a set-up by NKVD agents, who rigged his hotel room and photographed him in a sex act with a young Soviet agent provocateur. When the NKVD demanded that Alsop become a Soviet agent or endure the humiliation of the photographs being made public, the steadfast anti-Communist journalist treated the Soviet agents with contempt, mocking their plan and telling them that he refused to be blackmailed. But Alsop was deeply shaken by the incident, and ashamed that he had allowed himself to fall prey to an extortion attempt. He sought the advice of Ambassador Bohlen, who advised Alsop to leave the U.S.S.R. immediately and make a full disclosure of the extortion attempt to the CIA. Alsop was later debriefed by the agency, and in what was professed to be routine counterintelligence protocol, the agency forwarded a report of the incident, and an accompanying history of Alsop's self-confessed sex life, to Hoover's FBI (the scrupulous director already had a file on Alsop with incriminating information on the journalist's private life). The Moscow incident, which caused Alsop immense pain and humiliation, did not die there. Alsop had been a vocal critic of the Eisenhower administration's military defense cost-cutting, and, as his FBI file indicated, a critic of the bureau itself. Hoover wasted no time relaying the news of the sex-extortion attempt to Alsop's enemies in the White House. News soon spread through the administration and to one member of the press that Alsop was a confessed "fairy." If the desire was not simply to exact revenge on Alsop but to intimidate him, such subterfuge wasn't successful, for the journalist continued to be a critic of the administration, harping on an alleged missile gap and other failings in Eisenhower's timid foreign policy. The extortion incident continued to haunt Alsop for the rest of his life, even fifteen years later when the photographs mysteriously reappeared in circulation and reached the desks of several prominent members of the press.⁵¹

While Alsop's Groton-Yale pedigree, Anglophilic leanings, and less than closeted homosexuality made him a fitting symbol of the eastern establishment in the eyes of men like McCarthy, his blustering anti-communism might have made him a singularly satisfying challenge for the Soviets. Throughout his career, Joe Alsop remained an unreconstructed hawk who waged his own cold war with his typewriter. A grossly exaggerated estimation of Soviet military capabilities led him to espouse several reckless positions, including the idea of launching a preemptive nuclear air-strike against the U.S.S.R. The double life that this consummate cold warrior led for so many years, the skirmish with McCarthy, the extortion attempt in Moscow and its political fall-out at home, captures on multiple levels the ironies, the inanities, and the political opportunism underlying the entire panic about homosexuality in government.

Ironically, Alsop's enemies at home, nourishing grudges and exploiting the incident for their own purposes, were able to make more effective use of his homosexuality than were the Soviets. The Alsop incident also demonstrated how the national security state machinery and Hoover's FBI could vindictively turn on an American—even a hard-line cold warrior like Alsop—for reasons that had nothing to do with the protection of national security. But perhaps the larger significance of the incident, which evidently escaped the notice of government officials, was that Alsop had proven the conventional wisdom of the national security state wrong: his actions contradicted the image of the enfeebled homosexual who would sooner become a traitor to his country than suffer public exposure of his homosexuality.

While the federal government's purge of politically and sexually suspect "security risks" from its ranks and the phenomenon known as McCarthyism were distinct (yet overlapping) manifestations of anti-Communism, it was the radical right that pushed the political/sexual inquisition to its limits, mobilizing fear and paranoia in the American public with allegations of "twenty years of treason" and baseless accusations and smears against individuals in government. Fears of homosexuality and sexual disorder were not at the root of anti-Communism or McCarthyism. But neither can such fears be disentangled from the constellation of troubling social changes and tensions that made Americans feel so vulnerable to Communist subversion at home, and therefore made them tolerant of the excesses of anti-Communism, or sympathetic to the McCarthyites' crusade. In exploiting and shaping Americans' fears and longings for an older, simpler, unspoiled America—before the arrival of internationalism, New Deal statism, commercialism, secularism, and urban cosmopolitan values had infected it—McCarthy and his allies promoted an anti-Communism that served as an ideological buffer against the evils of modernity. "Elite" liberals came to embody those evils, among them sexual immorality.⁵²

Richard Hofstadter made the point many years ago that McCarthyism reflected a broader, longstanding "revolt against modernity," though he confined that revolt largely to McCarthy's base in the heartland of the nation and did not recognize its moral/sexual dimension. The dangers of moral leniency and the "drift toward sex anarchy" in America's heartland. The sense often in the 1950s, and not just by folks from anti-Communism, both in its virulent (McCarthyite) form and its more moderate manifestations. Moral disorder bred political disorder. When Pitirim Sorokin, the founding chairman of the Harvard sociology department, warned in a 1956 book that "fertile soil for the development of social and political anarchy is provided by our incipient sex anarchy, which breeds a cynical transgression of all moral and

social imperatives," he voiced fear of the ivory tower a concern that was shared by many conservative moralists at the time.⁵³

Pinks, Lavenders, and Reds

The obsession with political and sexual subversion did not, strictly speaking, reflect cold war national security imperatives only—that is, the possible blackmail of homosexual government officials who could be forced through extortion to aid the Communist cause. On occasion, a more direct association between Communist subversion and sexual disorder was made in anti-Communist rhetoric.

Weak, lonely, maladjusted, alienated, neurotic conformists lacking a sense of self: the typical psychological profile of the Communist recruit that emerged in academic and popular discourse contained a virtual catalogue of the same psychic ailments that were so often said to plague ordinary Americans in the 1950s. That these ailments appeared *writ large* in the shadowy figure of the Communist made them all the more disturbing. And not always, but often enough, lurking somewhere in the Communist's (or fellow-traveler's) attraction to proletarian politics was also the individual's misguided sexuality, another preoccupation of the mid-century psychiatric profession. The link between political and sexual subversion, therefore, could also rest on the assumption that Communism, as an ideology and a way of life, somehow appealed to maladjusted individuals' psychosexual weaknesses, frustrations, and perversities, even offering an enticing life of freedom from—or rebellion against—bourgeois sexual constraints.

Nowhere was the link between Communism and sex deviance more explicit than in the myths that sometimes circulated in right-wing circles that envisioned a homosexual-Communist conspiracy. R. G. Waldeck, a political writer, novelist, and self-proclaimed expert on homosexual-political intrigue in world history, described the nature of that link in an article that appeared in a weekly Washington publication, *Human Events*, entitled "Homosexual International." The author claimed that the homosexual threat was increasingly worldwide in scope, and that homosexuals were joining forces with the Communist movement in the U.S. and elsewhere. Waldeck's obscure article would be rather unremarkable had it not circulated on Capitol Hill. In May 1952, after the Truman administration announced that it had removed another 119 homosexuals from the State Department in the previous year and the "purge of the perverts" issue was renewed, Representative Katherine St. George (R-New York) read the article into the *Congressional Record*. St. George introduced Waldeck's article by stating that "the dangers to our own country and our whole political structure from this kind of international ring is [sic] dangerous in the extreme and not to be

dismissed lightly." Waldeck's article warned that the problem facing the government was not simply sexually compromised blackmail-prone government officials: "Members of one conspiracy are prone to join another conspiracy." In other words, since (by definition) homosexuals are "enemies of society," they naturally become "enemies of capitalism," Waldeck claimed. "Without being necessarily Marxist they serve the ends of the Communist International in the name of their rebellion against the prejudices, standards, ideals of the 'bourgeois' world."⁵⁴

Waldeck offered no current evidence of an international homosexual-Communist conspiracy and relied on myths about Communist sexual freedom as well as her own vivid imagination. She claimed that "the alliance between the homosexual International and the Communist International started at the dawn of the Pink Decade. It was then that the homosexual aristocracy—writer, poets, painters, and such—discovered Marxism." "Why did this bleak doctrine charm people who up to now had posed as decadent aesthetes?" she asked. In addition to the usual reasons that typically explained intellectuals' attraction to Communism, Waldeck stressed the particular emotional and sexual vulnerabilities of sexual deviants: the homosexuals need to purge themselves of "guilt concerning their forbidden desires" by altruistically participating in a worker's liberation movement. But homosexuals also joined the Communist movement, she noted, for self-serving reasons: to get "closer to their proletarian epehebes." Also attractive to homosexuals was the clandestine nature of underground Communist rituals, which fed the homosexual's need for secret, perverse thrills. Ultimately for Waldeck, it was the realization of a "classless society where everyone would be free" that appealed to the homosexual's "need for freedom from bourgeois constraint."⁵⁵

The idea that Communism promoted free love or sexual immorality went back to the early days of the Bolshevik revolution, when tales began to circulate about the new Communist regime's aim to abolish marriage and the family. In 1956, Russian émigré sociologist Pitirim Sorokin explained that the Soviets, after the 1917 revolution, sought to "eliminate 'capitalistic' monogamy and to establish complete sexual freedom as a cornerstone of the Communist economic and social regime." Such statements exaggerated the nature of the Bolshevik's new socialist policies: marriage was made a civil institution, but it was hardly abolished; gender equality was promoted with new policies such as state-sponsored child-care, but the family was scarcely abolished; divorce was made easy, as was state-funded abortion, but this was not "free love," which was a matter of individual choice. If the Soviet government in the early years was in fact relatively permissive on matters of sex and homosexuality, things changed when Stalin later declared the Soviet Union's allegiance to monogamy and the family and repudiated the policy

of tolerance toward homosexuals. In fact, he began to persecute them viciously in the 1930s. Yet tales of Soviet free love continued to circulate in the 1950s, despite the fact (as Sorokin pointed out) that mid-century Soviet society was rather starchy and conservative in its attitude toward sex and marriage. Had Waldeck or St. George read Arthur Koestler's recollections of the strict "bourgeois" morality and behavior expected of Communist Party members, they might have recognized how dubious was the notion that Communism promised "freedom from bourgeois constraint" in matters of sexuality.⁵⁶

Waldeck's notion of an international homosexual-Communist alliance that threatened American national security may have been extreme even for the time, but it was not that much more far-fetched than the theories that emerged in national security circles that linked men like Charles Thayer to secret international cells of lavender-red conspirators. Waldeck's tendency, however, to blame "liberal laxity" for both the homosexual infiltration of the State Department and what she called more generally the "homosexual invasion of American life" was not so atypical among conservative anti-Communists. For what Waldeck really seemed to deplore was the "pseudo-liberal" attitude of "tolerance" toward the "homosexual invasion." Waldeck called on Americans to "combat the 'love-and-let-love' line which, peddled by the pseudo-liberal fringe, claims that sexual perversion does not prevent a man from functioning normally in all other contexts, and it was just like Senator McCarthy to 'persecute' the poor dears in the State Department. This line is fatal in that it lulls society into a false sense of security."⁵⁷

The McCarthyites' self-serving deployment of the homosexuality issue and their move to collapse the threat of Communism and homosexuality in the public mind was seemingly obvious to critics who were paying attention, even if the use of sexuality as a political weapon against liberals was rarely publicly commented upon or criticized. But in their 1955 essay, "The Intellectuals and the Discontented Classes," Nathan Glazer and David Riesman discussed its obvious political utility to the right. They recognized the power of the rhetoric used against eastern-bred, ultra-educated men of the Democratic administrations who, the authors stressed, had ironically ascended to the top of the list of groups despised by the radical right: "How powerful," the authors asked rhetorically, "is the political consequence of combining the image of the homosexual with the image of the intellectual—the State Department cooky-pusher Harvard-trained sissy thus becomes the focus of social hatred and the Jew becomes merely one variant of the intellectual sissy—actually less important than the eastern-educated snob!" Riesman and Glazer saw the sexually tinged charges against over-educated "sissy" liberals as the product of the radical right's status anxieties and resentments. They also viewed those charges as both a reflex and an

exploitation of the growing fear of homosexuality in American life. The authors pointed out that “the sexual emancipation which has made the Negro less of a feared and admired symbol of potency has presented men with a much more difficult problem: the fear of homosexuality. Indeed, homosexuality becomes a much more feared enemy than the Negro.”⁵⁸

What political scientist Michael Rogin has more recently called “political demonology” has a long and complex history in American political life; sexual fear and fantasy have often underlain the demonization of those imagined as threats to order and civility in America—from “licentious” Catholics to Indian “cannibals” to black male “rapists.” As Rogin theorized, in the counter-subversive imagination, the subversive signifies disorder, a loss of restraint, boundary invasion; his attributes are wildly exaggerated, his power magnified, and thus he is transmuted into an alien, hideous, monstrous figure—a reflexive caricature of the counter-subversive’s own buried anxieties and obsessions. According to Rogin, the demonization of political enemies serves strategic propaganda aims, but it also permits the counter-subversive imagination to indulge in thoughts and fantasies forbidden by the culture.⁵⁹

Riesman and Glazer were right to suggest a historical parallel between the fear of the homosexual male and the black male—both were perceived threats to the social and sexual order, and both were “demonized” in the manner that Rogin suggests. During and after Reconstruction, the black male was transformed by white Southerners into a figure of frightening sexual potency—a rapist and a threat to white womanhood. Such an image was part and parcel of the effort to enforce racial segregation and maintain economic exploitation of African Americans through terror and violence, but it also reflected white Southerners’ fear and loathing of the breakdown of racial barriers that had previously (under slavery) precluded open (acknowledged) miscegenation. In contrast, the image of the homosexual as an oversexed, insatiable, preying sex-deviant in the early cold war years served efforts to uphold sexual and gender conformity in the nation, and reflected growing anxieties about a disintegration of sexual boundaries in a rapidly changing nation. And like the black male who was figured as a sexual predator, at once repulsive and irresistible, the homosexual was imagined as a predatory sex-deviant whose perverted practices were simultaneously appalling and seductive, so much the latter that his sexual contagion was dangerously easy to spread to otherwise “normal” individuals.⁶⁰

Fears of homosexuality and sexual deviance were not new in American life; what was new was the perception that male homosexuality was dramatically on the rise. Riesman and Glazer, in attempting to explain the unparalleled political exploitation of homosexuality in their time, speculated that “homosexuality is itself spreading, or news of it is spreading, so that

people are presented with an issue which formerly was kept under cover.” Other social critics, medical authorities, and opinion makers were more unambiguously confident of its statistical rise. Psychiatrist and popular author Abram Kardiner spoke in 1954 of the enormous rise in male homosexuality in America, noting a 100 percent increase in homosexuality over the previous thirteen years and dating the onset of the increase to U.S. entry into World War II. While the first Kinsey report in 1948 (unintentionally) did much to encourage the idea of a growing incidence of male homosexuality in American life, the Washington sex scandal also played a significant role in bringing the issue to the attention of the public. A 1950 article in *Coronet* magazine noted that the congressional investigation into homosexuals in government had brought the formerly unspeakable topic of homosexuality into the national headlines. It was now time to break the “longstanding taboo” against talking about the problem, the author declared. Americans are unaware of the magnitude of the danger: “homosexuality is rapidly increasing throughout America today,” he warned. Whether the rise of homosexuality was real or imagined, the perception of an “epidemic” of homosexuality was expressed repeatedly in social commentary and psychiatric discourse in the 1950s.⁶¹

Despite the deserved reputation of the 1940s and 1950s as a repressive era for gay Americans, homosexuality may have been more visible in American life than ever before. According to historians, the Second World War was a turning point in gay and lesbian history, a nationwide “coming out” experience for many gay members of the military. Uprooting men and women from their homes and local communities, the war brought them together in sex-segregated institutions and provided a space within which to pursue same-sex relationships. To be sure, the majority of gays and lesbians remained closeted in their public lives, lest they be subject to discrimination, fired from their jobs, and/or confronted with harassment or violence. But the rise of gay and lesbian urban enclaves and communities in the postwar years suggests the extent to which the war, and the accelerated social and economic changes it provoked, helped to establish a larger or at least more noticeable gay subculture in America.⁶² The real or imagined presence of increasing numbers of homosexuals in American life was felt by many anxious heterosexual observers, whose visceral response was often an inflated, brittle, hyper-allegiance to the traditional heterosexual family.

The establishment of one of the first homosexual advocacy organizations in the United States, the Mattachine Society, offered anxious observers evidence of both a newly open homosexuality in American life and an unambiguous link between Communism and homosexuality. Founded in 1951 by several former Communist Party members, most notably Henry Hay, the organization was initially secretive and its structure was modeled after

the Communist party. The Mattachine Society gradually became more open and activist in challenging sexual discrimination in the early fifties and distanced itself from its radical origins, but not before a Los Angeles newspaper took notice of the organization and discovered that Mattachine legal advisor Fred Snider had previously been an “unfriendly witness” before HUAC (he had taken the Fifth Amendment). In March 1953, Los Angeles *Mirror* reporter Paul Coates informed readers of the society’s ties to the Communist party and reminded them that homosexuals were known national security risks. Coates speculated that “sex deviates,” scorned by the heterosexual majority, “might band together for their own protection” and “swing tremendous political power.” He warned his readers of the imminent danger of such a scenario: there were roughly 200,000 homosexuals in the Los Angeles area alone, he estimated, and a “well-trained subversive could move in and forge that power into a dangerous political weapon.” Hoover’s FBI must have concurred; the bureau infiltrated the Mattachine Society in the 1950s, and through its informers kept the organization under FBI surveillance.⁶³

Like other anti-Communists, J. Edgar Hoover spoke of Communism as an ideology and a lifestyle that spread like a disease and would subvert moral life and the American family. Communism, he believed, was an “evil and malignant way of life . . . that eventually will destroy the sanctity of the home . . . [thus] a quarantine is necessary to keep it from infecting the nation.” In his 1958 anti-Communist tract, *Masters of Deceit*, Hoover characterized American Communist Party members as weak-minded, emotionally unstable social outcasts who became Communists because they were unable to cope with normal society. Communists, he wrote, were “twisted, mixed-up neurotics” whose stated reasons for joining the Communist movement masked deep-rooted personal problems and inadequacies. Americans joined the Communist Party, Hoover said, for a variety of reasons—a need for belonging, a sense of guilt attributable to their “well-to-do” backgrounds, a “persecution complex,” a feeling of personal failure, or for “sexual pleasure.” Hoover did not explain precisely what he meant by “sexual pleasure,” but by 1958 it was almost taken as a given that the party provided a social outlet for frustrated sexual misfits. Hoover added, however, that those who join solely for reasons of sexual pleasure often drift out of the party eventually, since self-indulgent individuals are not the disciplined stuff from which “hard-core,” self-denying Communists are made.⁶⁴

While *Masters of Deceit* did not make the explicit connection between homosexuality and Communism, Hoover elsewhere paired the demons of moral and political subversion together. His pledges that the FBI would stamp out “Communists and sex perverts” in government (including the FBI itself), his surveillance of the sexually and politically deviant Mattachine Society (whose leaders enraged Hoover by placing him on their regular

mailing list), his undercover steps to discredit alleged Communists and fellow-travelers as sexually “deviant”—all suggest that for Hoover, the “enemy within” was both ideological and sexual. That Hoover was himself gay—a plausible conjecture but one that has not been established with ample evidence—is a subject better left to biographers. Whatever the director’s sexual orientation, Hoover’s FBI was the primary intelligence-gathering instrument upon which the purge of homosexuals and Communists from government relied, and the institution that—in the name of national security—gathered, maintained, and deployed information on the sexual indiscretions and “deviations” of countless individuals as a means to intimidate and neutralize political enemies, especially (but not exclusively) leftists and Communists.⁶⁵

Though Hoover attempted publicly to steer clear of partisan politics, he was of course an arch-conservative who openly supported and covertly aided McCarthy and his allies, privately railed against “phony” liberals, and did much in his long career as FBI director to stigmatize them as both soft on Communism and morally compromised. In the 1940s and 1950s, his preferred target was Eleanor Roosevelt, whom he seemed to revile with an intensity that bordered on obsession. (When asked why he never married, Hoover was reportedly fond of saying that it was because “God made a woman like Eleanor Roosevelt.”) Like many on the ultra-right, Hoover regarded Roosevelt as the insidious overbearing force behind her husband’s leftist politics (she too had committed the unforgivable sin of initially coming to the defense of Alger Hiss). Hoover also blamed her for protecting Sumner Welles and interceding on his behalf when the allegations of homosexuality came to the attention of her husband (she did so because Welles’s “softness toward Russia served the interests of the Communist party,” Hoover told his aides). Convinced that Eleanor Roosevelt was a degenerate, negro-loving Communist sympathizer who had numerous male and female lovers, including at least one black man, Hoover kept her private life under bureau surveillance and maintained a voluminous file on the activities and sexual indiscretions of Roosevelt and her friends.⁶⁶ Hoover’s FBI was no doubt one source of the tales that circulated in right-wing circles of decadent, morally corrupt liberal elites who undermined the moral fiber of America.

The majority of Americans, to be sure, weren’t privy to Hoover’s internal world of debased leftist and Communists, but millions of American readers encountered similar ideas in Lee Mortimer and Jack Lait’s 1951 book *Washington Confidential*. The book, which climbed to number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list a month after its publication, was written by two conservative journalists as a kind of tell-all exposé of Washington life. It depicted the nation’s capital (the “district of confusion”) as a den of iniquity, riddled with corruption, gambling, drunkenness, prostitution, and all

manner of sexual immorality and deviance. The authors' primary targets of contempt, however, were the loose liberals of Democratic administrations whose twenty-year reign in the White House had helped to turn Washington into "the dirtiest community in America." Mortimer and Lait devoted an entire chapter to the homosexuals they claimed were so ubiquitous in Washington, "a garden of pansies" where so many of them "make love under the equestrian statue of the rugged Andrew Jackson, who must be whirling on his heavenly horse every time he sees what is going on around his monument." The authors were especially fixated on the Civil Service and the State Department, where "homos," they said, tend to flock like birds of a feather: "Like immigrants from foreign lands, for these people are aliens in their own . . . they attract those who speak their language and live their kinds of lives." Mortimer and Lait resurrected the Sumner Welles incident, and without naming Welles told the story of the Undersecretary's indiscretions in the Pullman car in ample detail ("one high State Department official was a notorious homo who preferred young Negro boys . . ."). Quoting extensively from Congressmen Miller's "expert" views on homosexuality and blackmail, Mortimer and Lait deplored the lax policies of the Truman administration and insisted that 6,000 homosexuals remained on the government payroll.⁶⁷

Washington Confidential made explicit the connection between political and sexual transgression that had been implicit in so much political discourse. The authors vilified the "parlor pinks," the "reds," the "lavenders," the "negrophiles," the "lesbians," the "decadent" diplomats—those who together constituted the liberal left that had arrived in Washington in the 1930s, when it became "fashionable to be liberal" [and] to love all radicals including revolutionaries." Singled out for special exhortation were the aristocratic left-wing elites in "Gorgeous Georgetown," the trendy Washington enclave that was home to Eleanor Roosevelt (who conceived of it as "a genteel bohemian community" for she and her "sandal-shod" friends"), Dean Acheson, actress Myrna Loy (she "played enough spy roles in the movies"), Felix Frankfurter, Henry Hopkins, and scores of rich New Dealers and debauched leftists. The authors noted that when Roosevelt and her equally rich and hypocritical leftist friends "discovered" Georgetown, they drove out of the neighborhood the poor, "gentle Negroes" who had lived there for over a century. Home to "many rich fairies and lesbians," Georgetown, the authors claimed, might lack "the streetwalkers who plague every other section" of Washington, yet "what it lacks in ambulant magdalens is more than made up for by homosexuals of both indeterminate sexes. It seems that nonconformity in politics is often the handmaiden of the same proclivities in sex."⁶⁸

Mortimer and Lait revealed just how feverish the anti-Communist imagination could become when they described the sexual means by which leftists and Communists entice people into their depraved political world. "Wealthy left-wingers with mansions in Georgetown" invite "humble government employees" to their "exotic, erotic parties." Of course, "this sudden entrance into a world of wealth, taste, refinement, liquor, and libido is irresistible to hoi polloi." To lure the dispossessed into political subversion, "the reds and bleeding hearts play up their 'love' for negroes at every opportunity." "Most negroes are patriotic," the authors pointed out, but a few are taken in by the "crocodile tears of the Eleanor Roosevelt brand of reformer" and the "white gals" of the Communist party, whose superiors urge them "to give themselves to colored men." American left-wingers learned these tricks from their Soviet masters, who regularly infiltrate "perverted circles" in foreign countries, and entice people into "acts of adultery and abnormality" at lavish parties replete with "pornographic exhibitions, unlimited liquor, and every form of dope—and a hidden talking moving picture camera recording it all." Mortimer and Lait claimed to have seen some "stills" from one such "drunken, depraved orgy," which involved a gossip writer who had become a "transmission belt for the Communist line" thanks to his degeneracy (and the film's record of it). "The use of sex as a means of recruiting is a basic [red] tactic," Mortimer and Lait warned.⁶⁹

With its shameless tabloid sensationalism, *Washington Confidential* would be difficult to treat seriously if it were not for the bestselling book's massive readership (the paperback edition sold millions). Mortimer and Lait, both of whom wrote for the Hearst-owned New York tabloid, the *Daily Mirror*, had just enough "respectability" to be regarded by readers as legitimate journalists, and just enough latitude as Hearst reporters to raise unsavory "issues" that were beyond the boundaries of more reputable journalists. With its lurid descriptions of criminals, prostitutes, drug dealers, sex pervers, corrupt and whoring government officials, bohemian leftists, and twisted Communists, as well as its tendency to blame soft New Dealers for the lawlessness and dissipation of the nation's capital, *Washington Confidential* satisfied the same appetite in the American public that made so many of Mickey Spillane's novels bestsellers in the 1950s. Mortimer and Lait, of course, presented the link between liberalism and moral disorder as fact, not fiction.⁷⁰

The idea that leftists and Communists led morally dissolute lives and used sex as a means of enticing weak-willed, maladjusted, or young vulnerable individuals into their ranks appeared in much tamer form in popular magazines and publications. A 1948 *Life* magazine article, "Portrait of an American Communist," profiled a young man, "Kelly," who was lured into

the party at twenty years old. Kelly found the party appealing for a number of reasons, especially the intellectual prowess of its members (whom he desired to emulate), the social life and sense of camaraderie that the party offered, and its sexual intrigue. Kelly, young and inexperienced, was literally seduced by the women in the party “who went to bed in the same way they carried placards—as a service to the party.” While Mortimer and Lait had portrayed female Communist party members as near prostitutes for the cause, the *Life* writer reported that, according to Kelly, new party prospects received “encouragement, adulation [and] sexual satisfaction,” especially Negroes, whom “party girls were assigned to enfold.” (Kelly soon found, however, that life in the Communist party was no party; after he became a full-fledged member, he found that his was a life of “boredom and grim discipline.”) As in other depictions of Communists, the individual’s sexual needs or frustrations, while not always the principal motivation for joining the party, typically figured into the general psychological profile of the maladjusted Communist recruit.⁷¹

Scholars also noted the sexually charged allure of Communism. John Kosa, author of *Two Generations of Soviet Man*, included within his psychological profile of the Communist the “neurotic” type, most prevalent in “countries where Communists make up a small deviant minority.” Forlorn, alienated, perhaps even prone to write romantic poetry that idealizes Communism, the neurotic’s lack of a “love object” leads him to concentrate his “tender emotions upon the party and gain an almost sexual satisfaction from his relationship to the Communist movement.” As we have seen, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. also cast the Communist’s attraction to the party in psychological terms, stressing the erotic appeal of clandestine party rituals and the opportunity to satisfy homosexual or sadomasochistic impulses.⁷²

The idea that Communists in the United States were psychologically maladjusted or emotionally unstable people gained wide currency in the fifties, and provided the “rationale” for the notion that they were therefore prone to be sexual misfits. Two intersecting assumptions were usually prominent in the stereotype of the American Communist that appeared in popular books and magazines, government propaganda, and scholarly works: first, Communist recruits were social outcasts who, having been rejected or scorned by society because of their inability to “fit in,” developed a latent or manifest hostility toward “normal” society and thus joined the ranks of the Communist Party as a form of rebellion. Second, Communist recruits were feeble-minded, self-less, alienated individuals adrift in society and incapable of making decisions or asserting themselves on their own; thus they longed to be told “what to do” and “what to believe” by an external authority (the party). As one *New York Times Magazine* writer noted in 1953, these individuals flee from the “hard duty of decision” into a “closed system of thought”

that offers them a psychologically comforting and authoritative “truth.” For both sets of reasons, which often converged in popular analyses, the maladjusted individual—prone to blame “society” for his problems, idealistic insofar as he seeks an external “cure” (revolution) for what ails him internally—is easily seduced by the feeling of empowerment that the party offers him, even though the party actually controls him. And with this newfound sense of empowerment, he is easily duped by the lies, myths, and utopian promises of Communism, an ideology that ultimately serves as a kind of therapeutic religion for the individual. Popular representations of Communists in magazines and books such as *Masters of Deceit* often reflected the basic assumptions of scholars and psychoanalysts, who stressed the party members’ individual and collective “neurosis”—the byproduct of a mass society. However the psychological malady was presented, it was generally assumed by both popular writers and scholarly experts that no sane, well-adjusted individual in the mid-twentieth century would ever embrace Communism. In *One Lonely Night*, when Mike Hammer explains to Oscar Deamer, a Communist whom he is about to strangle, “you were a Commie, Oscar, because you were batty. It was the only philosophy that would appeal to your crazy mind. . . . You saw a chance of getting back at the world,” Spillane echoed many social critics whose primary explanation for the appeal of Communism was the psychological instability of its devotees.⁷³

Morris L. Ernst and David Loth, two self-styled experts on American Communists, published their *Report on the American Communist* in 1952. Using anecdotal “profiles” of party members, the report depicted Communists as “damaged souls.” The authors suggested that the party was “heavily populated with the handicapped—some of them physically, but more of them psychologically.” These weak, emotionally crippled, or physically unattractive people find the Communist Party appealing “because their handicap is neither so noticeable nor so much of an obstacle in the party as it has been in the world outside.” Communists, they claimed, tended to be pessimistic, humorless people in whom “intellectual preoccupations predominate rather than athletics” (Paul Robeson was the exception to the rule, they noted). Ernst and Loth claimed that people joined the party because of emotional disturbances as well as sexual needs, but the authors sought to dispel the popular myth that “life in the Communist party was one long sexual orgy.” The party encouraged monogamy, they noted. Moreover, like Hoover, these self-styled experts on Communism pointed out that the party expected self-discipline and fidelity from its all members. The party leadership “frowns on excessive intimacy, even in marriage,” since “tenderness for a sexual partner might diminish the profound devotion which must be reserved for Stalin and Russia.”⁷⁴

Life in the party may not have been especially licentious, but sexual relations and marriage between party members looked perverse and abnormal to Ernst and Loth. The sex life of the Communist, they wrote, was “casual, rather random, somewhat less monogamous than the average of their income and education in the country, and also less sentimental or even intimate.” The impersonal, blasé attitude toward sex was in part the product of the Communist Party members’ “declaration of independence from the morals of bourgeois society.” Citing the Kinsey report as a standard by which to measure, the authors also claimed that there is “a reasonable . . . quota of homosexual or suppressed homosexual tendencies” in the party. They pointed out that (unnamed) psychoanalysts see common psychological traits in the Communist and the homosexual, since both “want their shame and enjoy the guilt of lying, cheating, and deceiving their friends.” (The authors also noted that “there is not the degree of impotence among men” in the party, again mentioning Kinsey’s data as a standard.) Moreover, Ernst and Loth observed a gender role reversal in the Communist marriage: “the tendency seems to be that in Communist marriages the wife is the more dominant partner.” This relationship is more prevalent in the top echelons of the party, the authors said, noting the common assumption among party members that CPUSA leader Earl Browder was “henpecked.” (The source of such an idea was apparently “Red Spy Queen” Elizabeth Bentley, who told federal investigators that Raissa Browder took her orders from the Kremlin, one of which was to keep her husband in line.) A similar point was made about Ethel Rosenberg. A psychological profile that reached Hoover’s desk and circulated within the federal government claimed that “Julius is the slave and his wife, Ethel, the master.” Ernst, a friend of Hoover’s, was the author of the report.⁷⁵

The idea that Communism somehow unsexed the sexes and stripped women of their femininity was reinforced in popular magazine articles in the 1950s, which often portrayed women in the Soviet Union as masculinized workhorses for the Communist machine. Images of physically hefty women, unadorned and unattractive and toiling away in industrial occupations that required heavy labor, summoned pity from American commentators. So deficient in femininity and charm were Russian working women that they appeared to be barely women at all. A *Look* magazine writer pronounced in 1954 that “nowhere in the world is female beauty held in such low esteem—needless to say, there is no Miss U.S.S.R.” The writer also noted the exceptional opportunities Russian women had to become educated professionals—doctors, scientists, engineers, high party officials. But she could only lament in the end that “a woman in Russia has a chance to be almost anything—except a woman.” While American observers reported that Soviet Communism scorned housewifery as a bourgeois heresy, they also noted

the absence of consumer goods in the U.S.S.R., which meant that Russian women were deprived of the accoutrements necessary for their feminine beautification. Seen through the lens of American domesticity and consumerism, Communism in practice appeared to erase masculinity and femininity in the process of making men and women equal in their enslavement to the Soviet state.⁷⁶

Such perspectives on Soviet women are unsurprising given the domestic ideology of the time and the revulsion for Communist tyranny. But the idea that Communism reversed somehow the natural order of gender relations and even empowered women at the expense of men is a more complex reflex of deep anxieties rooted in American life, not Soviet reality. In another of Mortimer and Lait’s wildly successful exposés, *USA Confidential*, the authors claimed that Marxian teachings encouraged (along with other social trends) female dominance and a matriarchal order in which “men grow soft and women masculine.” The perils of a society breeding soft men and hard women was becoming a recurrent theme in popular and psychiatric discourse in the 1940s and 1950s, and their expression here and elsewhere in anti-Communist rhetoric reveals the way in which cold war anxieties intersected with growing concerns (as we will see in the next chapter) about the problem of “momism” in American culture. Moreover, as Rogin has shown, science fiction novels by Philip Wylie such as *Tomorrow* (1954), as well as cold war era films such as *My Son John* (1952) and *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), obliquely blamed misguided women and parasitical mothers for atomic devastation or Communist malfeasance.⁷⁷

The most well-known of these films is John Frankenheimer’s *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), based on the bestselling Richard Condon novel (1959) in which a U.S. senator and anti-Communist crusader, Johnny Iselin (an undisguised Joe McCarthy figure), becomes a dupe of his imperious wife, who is actually a secret agent working for the Kremlin. Central to Mrs. Iselin’s plot to take control of the U.S. government is her son, Raymond Shaw, a former Korean War POW who has been psychologically programmed while in captivity to robotically obey the directives of the Communists, including his mother, and to kill on command. In this surreal nightmare of Communist perfidy, Mrs. Iselin (played by Angela Lansbury in the film) appears as a Communist dragon lady and an oversolicitous mother who controls her weak and foolish husband, nearly seduces her brainwashed son, and comes close to turning the American government over to the Kremlin.⁷⁸

This is a narrative of Communist cunning, to be sure, and that cunning has a maternal face. Mrs. Iselin’s incestuous desire for her son Raymond consciously disgusts him, yet it is the source of her grip on his unconscious. While momism is the source of Communist subversion here, Rogin’s conviction that *The Manchurian Candidate*, as “a Kennedy administration film,”

sought to “reawaken a lethargic nation to the Communist menace” misreads the film’s sardonic perspective and misplaces its political preoccupations. Warning the public about the sinister machinations of Reds intent on infiltrating the U.S. government by secretly boring from within was an obsession of the early 1950s. By the late 1950s, domestic subversion as an imminent threat was regarded, at least by cynical liberal anti-Communists of Condon’s type, as an outmoded and destructive preoccupation of the recent past. In many ways, *The Manchurian Candidate*’s darkly comedic narrative aimed to disrupt the cold war conventions of the early 1950s. But its primary theme—the programming of Raymond’s psyche—speaks above all to the obsession with mind control and brainwashing that grew in American culture after the Korean War, and was followed by the “psywar” vogue that peaked in national security circles in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Indeed, if *The Manchurian Candidate* reflects the Kennedy administration’s anti-Communism at all, it is in its fascination with psychological coercion and warfare.⁷⁹

If *The Manchurian Candidate* satirized momism in its depiction of Mrs. Iselin as a destroying mother by taking it to its absurd extreme (open incestuous lust for her son), it clearly parodied McCarthyism—the dopey, sleazy, alcoholic Senator Iselin announces that fifty-seven Communists have infiltrated the U.S. government, a number he has determined by staring at a catsup bottle. Condon’s novel was published in 1959 and the film produced in 1962, long after the political excesses of the early fifties were widely scorned. The Communist threat to the United States does appear very real and portending in the narrative. But *The Manchurian Candidate* points to perils that emanate from the far right as much as the far left. Its twisted, disorienting conspiracy plot mirrors for the viewer the calculated distortions and schemings of those whose aim it is to confuse, condition, and control people’s minds. That Senator Iselin becomes a tool of the Communists ultimately suggests that the dim and unprincipled right wing is capable of doing the kind of damage to democracy that would only serve to further Communist aims in the end—thus Condon’s collapse of the two sets of “totalitarian” forces (Johnny Iselin/McCarthyism and Mrs. Iselin/Communism) into a single force that would subvert American freedom. The politics of *The Manchurian Candidate* lay in the vital center; so too, perhaps, does its anti-Communist style. Frank Sinatra, an honorary member of the Kennedy clan, played the role of Major Ben Marco, the army officer who successfully resists the psychological conditioning that has debilitated his fellow soldiers, and whose savvy intelligence finally allows him to crack the enigma of Raymond’s brainwashed state.

The popular interest in subliminal psychological conditioning and mind control was heightened by a series of widely read books in the 1950s, from

Fredric Wertham’s 1954 *Seduction of the Innocent* (on the corrosive influence of symbol-laden comic books on youth) to Vance Packard’s 1957 book *The Hidden Persuaders* (on subliminal messages in advertisements). But the obsession with ideological brainwashing for the purposes of political subversion became acute during the Korean War, when some American POWs were subjected to psychological conditioning by their Communist captors. The issue made headlines in 1953 when twenty-one American soldiers who had been captured in Korea refused repatriation to the United States after the war ended. Here is the source of *The Manchurian Candidate*’s interest in mind control. That American GIs would reject their homeland, choose to live in “Red China” and even sing the Communist *Internationale* shocked American observers, many of whom concluded that these “traitors” had been “brainwashed” (with Chinese techniques). Other American POWs confirmed that their captors did in fact attempt to brainwash them with repetitive indoctrination and humiliation tactics. Much public discussion ensued, as American military officials, experts, and journalists debated the motives, the intelligence levels, and the mental stability of the “turncoat GIs.” Some observers spoke of the turncoats’ visible “girl-lessness” [*sic*] before they left for Korea. A 1954 article in *Newsweek*, “Korea: The Sorriest Bunch,” cast the men who refused repatriation as a sorry bunch of losers and misfits, and even suggested that half of the men were “bound together more by homosexuality than Communism.”⁸⁰

Though some observers isolated the “turncoats” as the dregs of the military, the controversy inevitably raised the larger, nagging problem of the soft, conformist American self, weakened by affluence and all that came with it, including smothering mothers. The failure of the United States to achieve a clear victory in Korea brought more hand-wringing about the questionable performance of American soldiers in this war. Their allegedly poor preparedness for military duty and combat, combined with the twenty-one “brainwashed” GIs—seemingly weak-willed, malleable, and unable to withstand the ordeal of captivity and the enemy’s manipulations—confirmed the warnings of several leading psychiatrists. Since World War II, they had been insisting that too many American servicemen were psychologically ill-equipped for the emotional and physical rigors of military service, a symptom of being coddled and over-mothered. If “moims” were ever truly considered “subversives” in the conscious life of Americans in the 1940s and 1950s, it was largely for the sin of maternal overbearance.

To many Americans, Communism as a way of life seemed frighteningly oppressive, depressingly bleak, and vaguely perverse in the way it coldly corrupted human relationships. To others, Communism represented more than an Orwellian nightmare; it appeared so deeply immoral and fiendish that it had to be exorcized from American life through ritualistic exorciation.

No one promoted the idea of Communism as intrinsically wicked more than the Reverend Billy Graham. Ranked as the fourth most admired man in the world in a 1958 Gallup Poll, Graham's successful career as an evangelist would be "unintelligible outside of the milieu of dread and anxiety" that marks the culture of the cold war, as historian Stephen Whitfield has suggested. Rarely did Graham preach a sermon that did not condemn the red menace, often in the most apocalyptic of terms; redemption itself became a defense against Communism. So long as Communism was understood by Graham and his audience as "Satan's religion," it had to stand, above all, for sin and immorality. To Graham, Communism wasn't so much an anti-capitalist movement or even an imperialist movement, but rather a "great anti-Christian movement." "My own theory about Communism is that it is masterminded by Satan," Graham said in 1957, for "there is no other explanation for the tremendous gains of Communism in which they seem to outwit us at every turn, unless they have supernatural power and wisdom and intelligence given to them." In a cold war climate of anxious hyper-masculinity, Graham could hail the great enemy of Satanic Communism—Jesus Christ himself—as "every inch a 'He-man.'" Indeed, "Christ was probably the strongest man physically that ever lived," Graham told his audience. "He could have been a star athlete on any team. He was a real man."⁸¹

In a 1949 sermon entitled "The Home God Honors," delivered in Los Angeles ("the wickedest city in the world"), Graham claimed that Communists sought to sabotage America by striking at the very heart of Christian values—the home. He told his audience that "a nation is only as strong as her homes," and warned of the impending boundary invasion by fifth columnists: "One of the goals of Communism is to destroy the American home. If the Communists can destroy the American home and cause moral deterioration in this country, that group will have done to us what they did to France when the German armies invaded the Maginot line."⁸²

Like Hoover, Graham left it up to the imagination of his listeners the precise means by which Communists could destroy the home, and thus bring moral and political collapse to the nation. But Graham's message was no doubt understood viscerally by audiences as they listened to sermons detailing the many sins of Americans—adultery, divorce, wives who "wear the trousers" in the family, loose talk, teen promiscuity, suggestive clothing, orgies and wife-swapping, sex maniacs and perverts, dirty books and magazines—all of which, insofar as they too were masterminded by Satan, could be imagined as part of the same diabolical plot to undermine the family and thus weaken Americans to Communist infiltration.⁸³ If there is still something missing in this absurd logic that connected Communists with the moral degeneration of America, we might consider the man whom Graham accused of doing more to undermine American morals than any

other individual: Alfred Kinsey. The sexologist, whose studies of sexual behavior in the United States showed that Americans were hardly virtuous and sexually restrained, personified the liberalism that weakened the nation's morals—the murky "missing link" between Communism and the deterioration of American morality.

The Kinsey reports were perhaps the most important catalysts in the rising perception of a breakdown in sexual order in American life. Kinsey's first study, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, published in 1948, examined the sexual behavior of a sample group of American men, revealing that 50 percent of married men surveyed had committed adultery; 85 percent had sexual intercourse prior to marriage, and 69 percent had at least one sexual encounter with a prostitute. Few of the statistics, however, violated conventional sexual norms so much as those on homosexual behavior: a full 50 percent of American men surveyed admitted they had been sexually attracted to other men; 37 percent had at least one postadolescent homosexual experience leading to orgasm; 10 percent of men had been "more or less" exclusively homosexual for at least three years of their lives between the ages of 16 and 55; and 4 percent of men were exclusively homosexual throughout their lives. Of the men who remained single at age 35, the report found that 50 percent had overt homosexual experience leading to orgasm. The unexpectedly high rates of homosexual activity among men, along with the suggestion that homosexuals were not always outwardly identifiable by their demeanor and thus did not typically conform to the prevailing stereotype of the effete homosexual, implied to readers that there might be more homosexuals in American life than previously thought. Taken together, Kinsey's data appeared to show a glaring disparity between what Americans professed to believe in and what men actually did in their private lives.⁸⁴

Sexual Behavior in the Human Male was an immediate bestseller, much to the embarrassment of the cautious *New York Times*, which had refused to advertise or review the book (and later reviewed it favorably), and to the horror of moralists who accused Kinsey of condoning the sexual behaviors that he rather dryly described. Conservatives were not by any means alone in criticizing Kinsey; influential liberal intellectuals like Reinhold Niebuhr and Lionel Trilling also did so, while plenty of other critics attacked Kinsey's statistical methodology. But the most strident voices of protest—the ones that questioned Kinsey's right even to publish the book regardless of its accuracy—came from the right, and especially the religious right. The most common charge was that Kinsey, by failing to denounce the sexual behaviors he described, had lowered the moral standards of the nation. An editorial in the *Catholic Mind* attacked Kinsey for being at war "against purity, against morality, against the family." In a *Reader's Digest* symposium on the book

entitled “Must We Change Our Sex Standards?” (the uniform answer was “No”), minister Norman Vincent Peale denounced Kinsey’s approach because it implied that statistics were indicative of what is normal. Peale assailed Kinsey for his failure to use the term “abnormal” when describing (unspecified) sexual behaviors. “No matter how many murderers there are, murder will never be normal,” he decried. Clearly, critics’ preoccupation with Kinsey’s normalization of the abnormal had much to do with his statistics on male homosexuality, as opposed to his data on adultery, premarital sex, masturbation, or sex with prostitutes, all of which may have been considered generally immoral, but were hardly so “abnormal.” In the same symposium, J. Edgar Hoover also weighed in on the report and also rebuked Kinsey for presenting the abnormal as normal. Hoover insisted that “man’s sense of decency declares what is normal and what is not.” Descending to oblique red-baiting, the FBI director warned that “whenever the American people, young or old, come to believe that there is no such thing as right and wrong, normal and abnormal, those who would destroy our civilization will applaud a major victory over our way of life.”⁸⁵

It was Kinsey’s second study, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), also an immediate bestseller, that inspired Billy Graham to denounce Kinsey as public enemy number one. “It is impossible to estimate the damage this book will do to the already deteriorating morals of America,” Graham insisted. If it was profoundly unsettling to discuss men’s sex lives, it was an “affront to womanhood,” as the *Schenectady Union Star* put it; to discuss female sexuality openly. Twenty-six percent of wives surveyed by the Kinsey research team reported that they had committed adultery before age forty; 50 percent of women said they were non-virgins before marriage; 90 percent of women had engaged in premarital petting; 28 percent said they had been sexually attracted to other women; and 13 percent had at least one homosexual experience resulting in orgasm. Kinsey’s statistics on women who were primarily or exclusively homosexual were “only about a half to a third” of the corresponding male figures.⁸⁶

Sexual Behavior in the Human Female was perhaps more disconcerting than was Kinsey’s previous study of males. Aside from the general objection to discussing female sexuality publicly, the statistics themselves were more than upsetting. Men, “being men,” were no doubt expected to transgress the boundaries of official sexual norms, to some extent (especially in the areas of premarital sex or adultery, for example). Thus the data on male sexual behavior, while deeply troubling to many observers and shockingly high in some categories (e.g., male same-sex attraction), were perhaps less disturbing than were the statistics on female sexual behavior. Much more restraint was expected of women, especially in the areas of chastity and fidelity. Representative Louis Heller (D-New York), whose admission that he

had never read Kinsey’s study didn’t preclude his call to ban the book, scolded Kinsey for suggesting that the “bulk of American womanhood [had] sinned before or after marriage.” Heller pronounced Kinsey’s statistics “highly questionable” on the basis of interviews with fewer than 6,000 women, “many of them frustrated, neurotic outcasts of society.” To Heller, women were not just women, individuals in their own right; they were “our mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters,” against whom Kinsey had hurled “the insult of the century.” Henry Pitney Van Dusen, head of Union Theological Seminary, said the worst thing about the report, if Kinsey’s facts were correct, was that it revealed “a prevailing degradation in American morality approximating the worst decadence of the Roman Empire.”⁸⁷

It was inevitable that some moralists would accuse Kinsey of “aiding the Communists’ aim to weaken and destroy the youth of your country,” as one writer of hate-mail to Kinsey put it. On several occasions, religious critics stained the implications of Kinsey’s research with the color red. A Presbyterian minister in Indianapolis told his congregation that there was “a fundamental kinship between that thing and Communism. . . . The influence of this report, though it may seem to be a thousand miles from Communism, will in time contribute inevitably toward Communism, for both are based on the same basic naturalistic philosophy.” An editorial in the weekly newspaper of the Indiana Roman Catholic Archdiocese claimed that Kinsey’s studies “paved the way for people to believe in communism and act like communists.” While its editors acknowledged that Kinsey wasn’t himself a Communist, they added that “we couldn’t for sure tell you in what respect the Kinsey view of nature and human morality differs from the communist.”⁸⁸ Such pronouncements were extreme, just as the Roman Catholic Church’s anti-Communism was extreme. But they do suggest the way in which the collective sexual sins of America—which Kinsey had merely revealed, not invented or explicitly endorsed—could become enmeshed with, and even displaced onto, Communism.

In his sermons on the “Sin of Tolerance,” Graham explained that the word “tolerant” was synonymous with “liberal” or “broadminded.” It meant a willingness to “put up with beliefs opposed to one’s convictions and the allowance of something not wholly approved.” Warning his audience about the sins of immorality, alcohol, divorce, delinquency, Godlessness, and “wickedness in high places,” Graham insisted that “over tolerance in moral issues has made us soft, flabby, devoid of convictions.”⁸⁹ In the imagination of Graham and other conservative anti-Communists, it was liberal permissiveness and moral relativism that invited the subversion and perversion of all that was normal and sacred in America: freedom, private property, God, the patriarchal family, and sexual purity. Communism, insofar as it was to be the final, hideous denouement of a naive liberal softness and

permissiveness, promised to turn asunder all “natural” hierarchies and relations completely: free man and the state, God and mankind, the individual and the collective, the spiritual and the carnal, and at the most elemental level, man and woman. Popular images of mannish Soviet women and slavish emasculated Soviet men provided one negative referent against which America could be defined, its moral superiority imagined, its order and civility restored.

Those who sought to stifle or smear Kinsey’s controversial sex research did some damage to the sexologist, but they were largely unsuccessful in halting the currents that were bringing a greater degree of sexual openness in mid-century American life—currents that Kinsey’s work symbolized. Representative Heller’s effort to sponsor legislation that would have, in effect, banned the Kinsey reports went nowhere. After the publication of *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, the Rockefeller Foundation cut off further funding to Kinsey’s institute when its president, Dean Rusk, yielding to pressure from politicians and religious leaders, concluded that the foundation’s underwriting of the controversial sexologist’s research would leave it open to attack by congressional right-wingers. But by then the two Kinsey reports had already done their cultural work.⁹⁰

Critics on the right were correct in ascribing major cultural significance to Kinsey’s reports, for they unleashed a wide-ranging, unprecedented dialogue about sexuality in American life that was largely immune to the forces of sexual containment. The Kinsey reports permitted previously buried or unmentionable issues to be discussed and debated everywhere from college campuses to coffee shops to cocktail parties. And despite Kinsey’s arguably disinterested “scientific” style, his studies did have the effect of normalizing, if not all sexual behaviors, at the very least a more open discussion of the range and nature of sexual behaviors in American life. The Kinsey reports and the controversy they unleashed also had the unintended effect of increasing anxiety and unease in many quarters, whether or not observers were fully conscious of it. The tensions that emerged as a result of the Kinsey studies, as well as other cultural and demographic tides of change—the increasing presence of women in the workforce, the incursions of sex into popular culture, the rising visibility of homosexuals in American life—help explain the urgency and artificiality with which the sanctity of the family, rigid gender role ideals, and sexual restraint were promoted as a defense.

Sexuality was in fact becoming far more present in American cultural and commercial life than ever before, a fact that makes comprehensible the anxieties about sexual disorder that surfaced in political culture. To say that this was a transitional era would be rather meaningless, inasmuch as any era could be considered culturally transitional. Clearly, though, social, cultural, and market forces were unleashing new currents of sexual change

that both helped to inspire, and then bumped fitfully against, an official ideology that insisted on allegiance to the nuclear child-centered family and sexual chastity. These currents brought new and unsettling developments, some of which (arguably) would have been scarcely imaginable before the war. From the publication of *Lolita* (1955) and *Peyton Place* (1956), and the arrival of the first *Playboy* magazine in 1953, to the proliferation of ever more explicit sex and marriage manuals and the willingness to discuss male impotence, female sexual needs, and homosexuality more frankly, from the public discussions about Christine Jorgensen’s sex change operation (1952) to the establishment of the Mattachine Society (1951), mid-century American culture raised previously repressed, unspeakable, or unconfroanted issues and phantoms for many Americans.

An emphasis on the pressures to contain or stifle expressions of sexuality in the 1950s masks the extent to which American culture was becoming considerably less rigid and more permissive. “The surging circulation of *Playboy* exposed how flimsy the floodgates of traditionalism were becoming,” historian James Patterson noted. Moreover, although Hollywood had adhered since the 1930s to Production codes that banned sensitive subjects from being depicted in motion pictures, the codes began to break down with films like *From Here to Eternity* (1953), which featured the theme of adultery, and *Baby Doll* (1956), probably the “dirtiest” movie ever legally permitted, according to *Time* magazine. “Not even the Holy Mother Church could stem the tide,” Patterson observed. Certainly by current standards, Hollywood studios still engaged in censorship in the 1950s, especially when it came to the subject of homosexuality.⁹¹ Indeed, films like *Compulsion* (1958) or *Tea and Sympathy* (1956) clearly had homosexual themes, but never were characters explicitly identified as such, nor was the “issue” of homosexuality or its relationship to the plot lines ever made explicit. Nevertheless, the Hollywood codes were losing their force, and so too were the guardians of American morality like the Catholic Church, losing their power to “contain” sexuality in American cultural life.

In the end, the images of decadent leftists and Communists that surfaced in conservative anti-Communist discourse reveal anxieties that were less about Communism and more about a changing America—an America that appeared to be nourishing ever more neuroses and a creeping sexual disorder. While anti-Communism became a vehicle for the expression of extra-Communist concerns, the specter of sexual immorality and chaos, projected on to red and pink enemies, added a potent and subterranean dimension to anti-Communism. It helped to lay the basis for what Daniel Bell called “the equation of Communism with sin,” thereby elevating a serious national security issue into a moral issue worthy of extraordinary fervor.⁹²

Adelaide

The ultimate political casualty of the multiple anxieties and resentments of the time was Adlai Stevenson. Governor of Illinois and a cold war liberal Democrat, Stevenson was embraced by the liberal intelligentsia as its candidate in the 1952 presidential election. Stevenson had served as special counsel in the Roosevelt administration in the 1930s and as a special assistant to the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of State during the war; he had also been a delegate to the foundational meetings that established the United Nations. Ivy League pedigreed, urbane, articulate, witty, and often verbose, Stevenson had all of the eastern establishment credentials that the right wing detested, among them a previous "association" with Alger Hiss (whom Stevenson had known at the U.N.). Stevenson had vouched for Hiss's character in the first Hiss trial, a fact that the right wing parlayed into the most sinister of relationships, expressed in the absurd prediction by Republican Senator William Jenner that "if Adlai gets into the White House, Alger gets out of the jailhouse." Anti-Communism was at its high point in 1952, and the fallout from the Hiss and Rosenberg cases, the loss of China, the first Soviet explosion of an atomic bomb, and the onset of the Korean War—all of which had occurred under a fifth successive Democratic administration—surely meant that any Democratic candidate would have been at a considerable disadvantage. Yet, at a time when homophobia was running high and Republicans like Everett Dirksen from Illinois were vowing that, if elected, a Republican administration would "kick the lavender lads" out of the State Department, Stevenson was vulnerable to a determined campaign to impugn his masculinity.⁹⁵

Perhaps in no other presidential election was the hard/soft dichotomy more exaggerated or pronounced. The conservative press frequently called attention to Stevenson's effete liberal demeanor and assailed his "gentlemen" supporters, who were deemed equally suspect. The *New York Daily News* called the governor "Adelaide" and claimed that he "trilled" his speeches in a "fruity voice." His "teacup words" were said to resemble nothing so much as a "genteel spinster, who can never forget that she got an A in elocution at Miss Smith's Finishing School." Stevenson's liberal supporters were "Harvard lace-cuff liberals," "pompadoured lap dogs," and "lace-panty diplomats" who, in the face of McCarthy's accusations, wailed in "perfumed anguish" and sometimes "giggled" about anti-Communism.⁹⁶

"Tail-gunner Joe," more a partisan of Nixon than Eisenhower, touted Nixon's manliness against Stevenson's effeminacy. Predicting that Nixon's election would be "a body blow to the Communist conspiracy," McCarthy elsewhere implied that the "pinkos" in Stevenson's campaign were so effete that they needed a good manhandling. McCarthy told a Wisconsin audience,

"If you will get me a slippery elm club and put me aboard Adlai Stevenson's campaign train, I will use it on some of his advisors, and perhaps I can make a good American of him."⁹⁵

Eisenhower held fast to his tough-minded "Korea, Corruption, and Communism" platform. Although he generally steered clear of vulgar red-baiting and hyperbole, he was not immune to harping on the issue of Communist infiltration of government and the failures of the security-compromised State Department, which, he publicly proclaimed, "weakly bowed before the triumph in China of Communists." His vice-presidential running mate continued to use the strategy that had served his political career so well in the past, mixing masculine bravado with charges of softness and timidity against his opponent. Nixon called Stevenson "Adlai the appeaser," the man with a "PhD from Dean Acheson's cowardly college of Communist containment." Five successive Democratic administrations were responsible for, as Nixon put it, "the unimpeded growth of the Communist conspiracy in the U.S." Therefore, a Democratic victory would surely "bring more Alger Hisses, more atomic spies, more crisis." Alluding to the compromised reputation of the State Department and Stevenson's prior service within it, Nixon told audiences that he would rather see "good old army khaki" in the White House than "State Department pink."⁹⁶

Though Stevenson employed a good deal of anti-Communist tough talk in the campaign, his eloquent speeches did more to contribute to his popular reputation as an effete intellectual. Eisenhower's "plain talk" differed considerably from Stevenson's flowery rhetorical style. "When an American says he loves his country," Stevenson proclaimed in a speech, "he means not only that he loves the New England hills, the prairies glistening in the sun, or the wide rising plains, the mountains, and the seas. He means that he loves an inner air, an inner light, in which freedom lives and in which a man can draw the breath of self-respect." Stevenson's acceptance speech to the Democratic National Convention no doubt projected weakness or insecurity more than the humility and integrity that he wanted to project. "I accept your nomination—and your program," Stevenson said, adding that "I should have preferred to hear these words uttered by a stronger, a wiser, a better man than myself." As Hofstadter noted, "It was not the right note for the times; it made for uneasiness, and many found it less attractive than Eisenhower's bland confidence." Nor, perhaps, did Stevenson's concession of defeat to Eisenhower bode well for his next campaign; he said he felt like the "little boy who had stubbed his toe and was too grown-up to cry but too hurt to laugh."⁹⁷

A surge of anti-intellectualism was everywhere evident during the 1952 campaign. General Eisenhower's stern paternal image, his military, matter-of-fact style, and his homespun Americanism contrasted sharply with

Stevenson's intellectuality, style, and cosmopolitanism, leaving the latter at a serious political disadvantage. The erudite, "abstract" knowledge that marked Stevenson as an intellectual was played up by conservatives, who posed it against Eisenhower's superior, practical, "real world" knowledge. An Eisenhower campaign biography spoke of "Ike" as a man of "rural simplicities rather than urban sophistications," a "typical," "practical" Kansan whose youth was spent close to the land, performing the hard chores of an austere, virtuous rural life. Drawing an obvious contrast to Stevenson, the biographer noted that Eisenhower "is not one to shoot his mouth off. . . . Indeed he is a little suspicious of highfalutin' theory and abstraction. He has grown up in a world of deeds and hard facts. . . . He has an inbred distrust of the 'big talk' of intellectuals."⁹⁸

Such an image of Eisenhower—a sturdy, down-to-earth, plainspoken man from the heartland of America—appealed to many Americans longing for a sense of security and wary of worldly ivory tower liberals whose "highfalutin'" knowledge and exposure to foreign ideas rendered them, at best, unfit for leadership, at worst, politically suspect. Next to plain men of "proven ability"—and here Ike's war heroism was always the ultimate testimony to his real world experience—an intellectual like Stevenson was at a disadvantage from the beginning. By 1952, intellectuals were being scorned for precisely the same attributes that Schlesinger had derided in the progressive Doughface—a dreamy, bookish, self-indulgent intellectuality, a lack of familiarity with the "hard" facts of life, and a fetish for rhetoric.

In the words of one partisan, "Eisenhower knows more about world conditions than any other two men in the country, and he didn't obtain his knowledge through newspapers and books either." A midwestern newspaper proclaimed that "Stevenson, the intellectual, must share the views of his [leftist-professor] advisors or he would not have selected them. A vote for Eisenhower, the plain American, is a vote for democracy." McCarthy and his allies had laid fine groundwork for an Eisenhower landslide; it is hard to imagine the *Chicago Tribune's* sarcastic headline "HARVARD TELLS INDIANA HOW TO VOTE" without the previous two years of McCarthyite assaults on the eastern establishment. Moreover, while Stevenson had served in the military only in an administrative capacity, General Eisenhower had, after all, led the D-Day invasion of Normandy, and in the political climate of the early fifties, the fact that Ike had never even registered to vote might have been less of a liability than one might imagine.⁹⁹

Liberal observers sympathetic to Stevenson articulated privately what other Americans must have perceived. Newsman Eric Sevareid recognized the high-minded moralism that Stevenson projected at the expense of creating a sense of unquestionable paternal confidence. Sevareid wrote to an associate, "in his almost painful honesty, [Stevenson] has been analyzing,

not asserting; he has been projecting not an image of the big competent father or brother, but the moral and intellectual proctor, the gadfly called conscience." Among his own partisans, Stevenson's acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention raised specific concerns about his seeming "dread" of power and responsibility:

I would not seek your nomination for the Presidency, because the burdens of that office stagger the imagination. Its potential for good or evil, now and in the years of our lives, smother's exultation and converts vanity to prayer. I have asked the Merciful Father—the Father of us all—to let this cup pass from me. But from such dreaded responsibility one does not shrink in fear, in self-interest, or in false humility. So, "if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done."

Joe Alsop, a supporter of the governor, professed to be driven "literally to drink" upon hearing this speech in which Stevenson "compared his agony in deciding to run with Christ's agony in the garden following the last supper." Stevenson's stated reluctance to imbibe the cup of presidential power—"Let this cup pass from me!"—apparently struck a hard-line cold warrior like Alsop as pretentiously humble and ridiculously weak.¹⁰⁰

Yet the reputation for effeminacy that Stevenson acquired was not the inevitable result of the persona he himself projected with his "tea cup" words and gentlemanly pretensions. Stevenson's reputation for "softness" also rested upon a determined effort to call into question his sexuality. The 1952 presidential election may have been a high-water mark in the history of dirty politics in America. While Eisenhower maintained his dignity, Senators McCarthy, Nixon, and Jenner played dirty, circulating rumors, stories, and innuendoes about Stevenson. What journalist Marquis Childs called the "ugly whispering campaign" about Stevenson revealed itself in a report that came to Democratic headquarters, which claimed that McCarthy was going to deliver a television attack on the Stevenson campaign in which he would say that the Stevenson campaign staff was made up of "pinks, punks, and pansies." On October 27, 1952, McCarthy appeared on television and smeared the entire Stevenson campaign, as well as the liberal organization Americans for Democratic Action and its spokesman and Stevenson advisor, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., as Communists. Two times McCarthy made the apparent slip "Alger—I mean Adlai." But the "pinks, punks, and pansies" innuendo, part of a larger strategy to discredit Stevenson with damaging "information" about his personal life, was not used by McCarthy in this speech (Democrats had threatened a nasty retaliation that would embarrass Eisenhower).¹⁰¹

The source of the information about Stevenson was the FBI. According to Hoover biographer Kurt Gentry:

The FBI had supposedly obtained, from local police, statements alleging that Adlai Stevenson had been arrested on two separate occasions, in Illinois and Maryland, for homosexual offenses. In both cases, it was claimed that as soon as the police had learned his identity, Stevenson had been released and the arrests expunged from the record, though not from the recollections of the arresting officers. Through a devious route which hid the bureau's complicity, Crime Records had channeled this and other derogatory information to Nixon, McCarthy, and members of the press. Although most newspaper editors had the story, none used it. But it was widely circulated, as anyone who worked in the campaign could attest.¹⁰²

Hoover, receiving reports alleging that Stevenson and Bradley University President David Owen were the “two best-known homosexuals” in the state of Illinois and that Stevenson was known in the homosexual community as “Adeline,” used the law-enforcement grapevine and his associates in Washington to spread the rumors about Stevenson’s homosexuality that dogged his campaign. Hoover placed the reports in one of his special files marked “Stevenson, Adlai Ewing—Governor of Illinois—Sex Deviate.”¹⁰³

The national political unconscious is surely impossible to measure. Stevenson’s two successive defeats cannot be blamed on the sexual aspersions cast on him; liberalism was clearly on the decline given not just what conservatives were calling “twenty years of treason” but what cooler heads were calling “a time for a change” after five successive Democratic administrations. Stevenson could have also been hurt by his divorce and rumors that he was a womanizer. Although the press refused to report Stevenson’s alleged arrests on morals charges because no police record could be officially documented, Stevenson’s enemies, if only by innuendo, stigmatized him anyway by calling him “Adelaide” or “Adeline,” and ridiculing his “fruity voice,” among other suspiciously feminine attributes. If the allusions did not cost him the election, they did earn him a reputation as the consummate effete liberal “egghead.” Lacking a record in military combat, sports, or anything that might have shored up his manly credentials, Stevenson was only “a gentleman with an Ivy League background,” as Hofstadter delicately noted, “and there was nothing in his career to spare him from the reverberations this history set up in the darker corners of the American mind.”¹⁰⁴

Stevenson’s defeat sparked a debate about the relevance of the intellectual in American political life that popularized the term “egghead.” Eisenhower’s landslide victory was taken by some members of the press as evidence of a popular repudiation of intellectuality in America. *Time* magazine, for one,

announced that there appeared to be a “wide and unhealthy gap between the American intellectuals and the people,” while other critics (including Bromfield, quoted earlier) depicted intellectuals like Stevenson as “eggheads,” “oddities,” and “bleeding hearts” who were completely out of touch with the mainstream of America. (The idea that Stevenson was a bleeding heart was rather disingenuous, politically speaking. Although he was criticized for advocating a cut-back of the draft and a halt in the testing of the hydrogen bomb, he was no reluctant cold warrior. Ideologically, Stevenson was hardly distinguishable from his opponent and cautiously conservative on domestic issues. His vice-presidential running mate, John Sparkman, a segregationist from Alabama, ensured that their platform would take a position on civil rights that was to the right of Truman’s.)¹⁰⁵

The image of the bleeding-heart-liberal-egghead had superseded the image of the pragmatic, well-educated manly liberal bureaucrat of earlier years. That shift in imagery dramatized the fact that the era of the liberal-intellectual-as-expert had come to an end. When the new Republican administration arrived in Washington, and that “plain American,” General Eisenhower, settled into the White House—staffing his administration with business leaders from General Motors and other American corporations, reading the fiction of the Old West, watching football games, and playing regular games of golf in his considerable spare time—it seemed to liberals that, in Stevenson’s words, “the New Dealers had been replaced by car dealers.” After twenty years of uninterrupted Democratic rule, in which the educated, liberal reformer had come to enjoy an unprecedented status and respectability in American political culture, the funeral march for the egghead-in-government seemed to smack of a low-blow, philistine attack on the manly credentials of the liberal braintrust. Liberals more defensive than Stevenson bristled at the disrepute they were said to be in, and the loudest voice was Schlesinger’s.

“Now business is in power again,” Schlesinger announced in a 1953 *Parisan Review* article, and it would no doubt bring “the vulgarization which has been the almost invariable consequence of business supremacy.” With the usual rhetorical flourish, Schlesinger observed the “rise to climax of the hatred of intellectuals which had long been stewing and stirring in various sections of American society,” a hatred that now “burst forth in full violence. By early November the word ‘egghead’ seemed almost to detonate the pent-up ferocity of twenty years of impotence.” Schlesinger may have overstated his case when he concluded that the intellectual is “on the run today in American society,” but he understood the grounds upon which Stevenson and his supporters were maligned.¹⁰⁶

For liberals unencumbered by Ivy League propriety, the lesson of McCarthyism (and the smears against Stevenson) was to fight fire with fire.

Max Lerner had been right about the “boomerang” effect, for McCarthy himself proved not to be immune to the lavender taint and the guilt-by-association smear. When the liberal *New York Post* ran a series of articles entitled “Smear, Inc.: The One-Man Mob of Joe McCarthy” in 1951, the writers, Oliver Pilat and William V. Shannon, called attention to, among other things of a suspicious nature in McCarthy’s life, the appearance of a homosexual on McCarthy’s staff in 1947. “The man who flamboyantly crusades against homosexuals as though they menace the nation employed one on his office staff for many months,” the *Post* writers proclaimed. Other journalists, activists, and congressional enemies of McCarthy searched for and accumulated information on his past improprieties, including those of a sexual nature. Occasionally, liberals actually vented their hatred of McCarthy with a hefty dose of the senator’s own medicine, as did the famous liberal journalist Drew Pearson, who not only made some of the same charges in his newspaper column about the presence of a convicted homosexual on McCarthy’s staff, but maintained a file of affidavits from men who claimed to have had sex with McCarthy.¹⁰⁷

Pearson preferred to circulate his affidavits about McCarthy’s homosexuality within insider circles rather than put them into print, but others were not so cautious. Pearson’s dubious testimonies found their way into the hands of the publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*, Hank Greenspun, who had been nursing a grudge against McCarthy (McCarthy had previously called Greenspun an “ex-Communist”). In October 1952, as the presidential election neared, the *Las Vegas Sun* identified McCarthy as a homosexual in its pages, named one of the Senator’s “illicit” sex partners, and claimed that McCarthy was a well-known patron of gay bars in Milwaukee. Readers were informed that “Joe McCarthy is a bachelor of 43 years. He seldom dates girls and if he does he laughingly describes it as window dressing. It is common talk among homosexuals in Milwaukee who rendezvous at the White Horse Inn that Senator McCarthy has often engaged in homosexual activities.” Disturbed by the “homo stories,” McCarthy consulted the director of the Anti-Defamation League about suing the paper, but in the end decided against a criminal-libel suit. By then rumors of McCarthy’s homosexuality freely circulated on Capitol Hill and fueled the speculations that he finally wed his secretary, Jean Kerr, in 1953 to quell public doubts about his sexual orientation.¹⁰⁸

It was the drama of the 1954 Army-McCarthy hearings, however, that fueled the festering rumors about McCarthy and his staff members—chief counsel Roy Cohn and aide G. David Schine. The rumors contributed to the Senator’s increasing disrepute. Cohn and Schine, who had previously embarked on a much-publicized junket in Europe to investigate Communist influence in the Voice of America, had long been targets of ridicule by

McCarthy-haters in the press, as well as objects of whispers about their suspiciously close relationship. When Schine was drafted into the army in 1953, Cohn attempted to use his leverage—and McCarthy’s power—to secure for Schine certain privileges in his military service. At issue in the hearings was the validity of McCarthy’s investigation and charges of Communist infiltration of the U.S. Army (an unlikely hotbed of reds and an unwise target for the Senator), and the Army’s countercharges—that McCarthy and Cohn had bullied the Army in order to obtain favors for Private Schine. The Army’s documented account of McCarthy and Cohn’s repeated interventions on Schine’s behalf, raised, as the Alsop brothers obliquely put it in their syndicated column, “certain suggestions as to the nature of the McCarthy-Cohn-Schine relationship.” Referring to the “sordid tale of Senator McCarthy, Committee Counsel Roy Cohn, and their pet, Pvt. David Schine,” the Alsops questioned, like other observers, Cohn’s “feverish desire to be of service to Schine,” as well as Cohn’s seeming possession of “a peculiar power over McCarthy.” During the Army-McCarthy hearings, enemies of McCarthy relished the unseemly spectacle of “Tail-gunner Joe” flailing about, on the defensive, repeatedly calling “point of order,” flanked by his two sexually suspect young minions. “Bonnie, Bonnie, and Clyde,” Lillian Hellman later called the trio. To more than a few observers and enemies of McCarthy, homosexuality explained much of what underlay the actions and abuses of power that were at issue in the Army-McCarthy hearings.¹⁰⁹

The suspicions about the three men—genuine, inflated, or manufactured—surfaced dramatically when Senator Ralph Flanders (R-Vermont) delivered to the Senate a devastating, innuendo-laden attack on McCarthy. Likening McCarthy to both Hitler and Dennis the Menace, Flanders spoke of the “mysterious personal relationship” between Cohn and Schine. “It is natural that Cohn should wish to retain the services of an able collaborator [Schine], but he seems to have an almost passionate anxiety to retain him. Why?” Flanders then raised the question of McCarthy. “Does the assistant [Cohn] have some hold on him, too? Can it be that our Dennis . . . has at last gotten into trouble himself? Does the committee plan to investigate the real issues at stake?” Given Senate protocol, Flanders had broached the subject of homosexuality as clearly as he could. He subsequently received letters from American citizens congratulating him for raising the issue “that had to be raised.” The sexually charged dialogue about “pixies and fairies” that arose during the hearings was in many ways a fitting denouement to the sexual undertones of the entire spectacle, the undoing of McCarthy and the waning of the peak red scare years.¹¹⁰

The sexual innuendos about McCarthy, Cohn, and Schine certainly helped to heap disgrace on McCarthy, and his critics will no doubt see some sort of poetic justice at work here, especially in the guilt-by-association logic that

rendered him sexually suspect by virtue of his association with Cohn and Schine. Yet the frequency with which the innuendos against McCarthy were deployed immediately before and during the Army-McCarthy hearings was more a symptom of McCarthy's increasing disrepute than the cause of his downfall. McCarthy undid himself by foolishly attacking the Eisenhower administration and the U.S. Army; no sexual smear was necessary to bring the senator down. He had become a serious liability to the Republican Party and his antics had begun to call into question the legitimacy of anti-Communism itself. Of course, McCarthy's fall did not end the purge of homosexuals from the federal government, but his censure by the Senate did put to an end the worst excesses of anti-Communist partisan politicking. By then the damage had been done. The sexual smears and accusations of homosexuality that were leveled against government officials in the name of national security worked to the advantage of the far right and the Republican Party and did considerable harm to the liberal establishment. They also brought incalculable career injury and personal pain to the victims.

The conviction that homosexuals were security risks and should be removed from the government was generally bipartisan, but it was the Republican right that led the "purge of the perverts" and used it (given the dearth of real Communists in government) to create powerful images of a soft and morally corrupt liberal foreign policy establishment. Ironically, the fierce political brawls of the early fifties belie the fact that a broad ideological consensus had been emerging at least since the late 1940s. Yet if liberals had become "hard" on Communism in the fifties, they were still not demonstrably hard enough to escape the image of the soft liberal that had been established in the fallout from the Hiss case and the McCarthyite hysteria. In 1956, Stevenson would suffer another crushing defeat in the presidential race against Eisenhower.¹¹¹ The lesson of the red scare and two successive Democratic defeats—that an unquestionable manliness was the essential prerequisite for a Democrat—was not lost on the most ambitious of liberals, who would turn the very attributes that had rendered Stevenson soft and suspect in the 1950s—wealth, an Ivy League pedigree, style, cosmopolitanism, intellectuality—into the virtues of a new liberal manhood. The origins of that new image of liberal manhood lay not only in cold war political imperatives but also in the cultural preoccupations and intellectual styles of the 1950s, the subject of the next chapter.

3 CHAPTER 3 Conformity, Sexuality, and the Beleaguered Male Self of the 1950s

To the psychiatrist, both the craving for Utopia and the rebellion against the *status quo* are symptoms of social maladjustment. To the social reformer, both are symptoms of a healthy rational attitude. The psychiatrist is apt to forget that smooth adjustment to a deformed society creates deformed individuals. The reformer is equally apt to forget that hatred, even of the objectively hateful, does not produce that charity and justice on which a utopian society must be based.

—Arthur Koestler, *The God That Failed* (1950)

If one were to judge mid-twentieth century American culture by a selected assortment of popular books, novels, and films, it would appear singularly preoccupied with the self and its fragility. In these works, many of which might seem to share little in common—David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956), Leslie Fiedler's *An End to Innocence* (1955), Paul Tillich's *The Courage to Be* (1952), Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom* (1941) and *Man for Himself* (1947), Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s *The Vital Center* (1949), and Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1955); books by popular psychiatrists and psychoanalysts: Edward Strecker's *Their Mothers' Sons* (1946), Robert Lindner's *Prescription for Rebellion* (1952) and *Must You Conform?* (1956), and Abram Kardiner's *Sex and Morality* (1954); and films such as *12 Angry Men* (1957) and *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955)—variations on a theme reappear: *the surrender of self*. Like many others in the postwar era, these narratives, each in its own

- homosexuality in the late nineteenth century, see *ibid.*, 274–279. Like many scholars, Rotundo emphasizes the shifting focus among medical authorities “from homosexual acts to the people who engaged in them.” He notes that “instead of identifying the event (‘unnatural act,’ crime against nature, sodomy) as the core of same-sex eroticism, the descriptive language turned its emphasis to the individual”; hence the rise of new labels—homosexual, invert, pervers, fairy—that marked a individual’s personal identity as homosexual (*American Manhood*, 275). Since male homosexuality was so deeply equated with womanhood, the accusation of effeminacy could imply that an individual man was a homosexual. Also see John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 224–227.
41. In 1886, when Senator Ingalls of Kansas denounced the reformers as “the third sex,” he added that they were “effeminate without being either masculine or feminine, unable either to beget or bear; possessing neither fecundity or virility; endowed with the contempt of men and the derision of women, and doomed to sterility, isolation and extinction.” See Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, 188.
 42. Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (1913; New York: Da Capo Press, 1985), 88; Watts, *Rough Rider in the White House*; Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 181–183.
 43. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 21.
 44. *Ibid.*, 35–50. The term “doughface” goes back to the Civil War. According to Schlesinger, doughfaces were the northerners in antebellum America who supported slavery—“northern men with southern principles.” Hence his analogy: Progressives are “democratic men with totalitarian principles” (*The Vital Center*, 37–38).
 45. *Ibid.*, 36–37, 46.
 46. *Ibid.*, 36–42. In an otherwise favorable review of *The Vital Center*, Gerald W. Johnson pointed out that Schlesinger “mops up the earth with Wallace and his third party, oblivious to the fact that he is flogging a horse that has been dead since November 2, 1948” (“In Defense of Liberalism,” *New York Times*, September 11, 1949, 6).
 47. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 41–46, 170.
 48. *Ibid.*, 46; Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America: The Intellectual as a Social Type* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 286–349, exp. 289.
 49. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 41–43, 159–160, 170.
 50. *Ibid.*, 37, 40, 115, 118.
 51. *Ibid.*, 104, 54 (Schlesinger’s italics).
 52. *Ibid.*, 6, 40, 51–54, 65, 83–85, 88, 126, 151, 245–246.
 53. *Ibid.*, 127.
 54. Wherry is quoted in Max Lerner, *The Unfinished Country: A Book of American Symbols* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1959), 313.
 55. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 56.
 56. *Ibid.*, 159–172.
 57. *Ibid.*, 159; Garry Wills, *The Kennedy Imprisonment: A Meditation on Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1981), 183–185.
 58. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 255–256.
 59. *Ibid.*, 160, 156, 147, 171.
 60. *Ibid.*, 54, 247–248; Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1952), 4. See also Niebuhr’s discussion of right and left politics in *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of Its Traditional Defense* (New York: Scribner’s, 1942).
 61. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 256.
 62. Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America*, 289, 306.
 63. Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 190.
 64. For Bertrand Zadiq’s illustration, see Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., “Not Left, Not Right, But a Vital Center,” *New York Times Magazine*, April 4, 1948, 7. On Ernest Hemingway, see Malcolm Cowley, “A Portrait of Mister Papa,” *Life*, January 10, 1949, 93–94.
 65. In Hamby’s *Beyond The New Deal* (277–281), he suggests that the vital center was “a new liberal self-image,” and later stresses that it “was not a new liberal program; it was essentially a new mood” (Hamby’s italics). Reviews of *The Vital Center* mentioned here include Johnson, “In Defense of Liberalism”; Jonathan Daniels, “Ready to Be Radical,” *Saturday*

Review of Literature 32, September 10, 1949, 11; Henry Steele Commager, *The New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review*, September 11, 1949, 1; S. R. Davis, *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 1949, 15; Robert Bendiner, “Politics and People,” *The Nation*, September 17, 1949, 267–269; Donald Derby, *The Springfield Republican*, September 25, 1949, 4. The *Cleveland News* and *Washington Star* are quoted in “Cross-Section,” *The New York Times*, October 23, 1949, 8.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. William G. McLoughlin, *Billy Graham: Revivalist in a Secular Age* (New York: Ronald Press, 1960), 111–112; Marshall Frady, *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (Boston: Little Brown, 1979), 238–239; Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 80.
2. McLoughlin, *Billy Graham*, 94–122.
3. On the McCarthyites’ status anxieties, see the essays in Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right* (1955; New York: Anchor Books, 1964); see also Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (1952; New York: Knopf, 1965), 52. These scholars suggested that the irrational politics of the McCarthyite radical right be understood within the context of the fluidity and mobility of American society, in which issues of status take on a special intensity. Fueling McCarthyism were the “status anxieties” of upwardly mobile immigrant groups, especially German and Irish Americans, who desired status and sent the privileges of the eastern establishment, and of old-stock white Americans who were anxious about losing their status.
4. David Riesman and Nathan Glazer, “The Intellectuals and the Discontented Classes,” *The Radical Right*, 118–119.
5. Alistair Cooke, *A Generation on Trial: USA v. Alger Hiss* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982); Allen Weinstein, *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case* (New York: Knopf, 1978).
6. Eds., “The Hards and the Softs,” *The New Leader* 32 (May 20, 1950): 30–31.
7. Sam Tanenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 1997), 344–345; Weinstein, *Perjury*, 399–400.
8. Tanenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers*, 285, 342–345; 360–364; Weinstein, *Perjury*, 182–184, 377–384; 492–493. On Alsop’s role in helping the Hiss defense, see also Tony Hiss, *Laughing Last* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 133–136. Alsop’s double life is discussed in Robert W. Merry, *Taking on the World: Joseph and Stuart Alsop. Guardians of the American Century* (New York: Viking, 1996), 360–362.
9. Tanenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers*, 360–362; Weinstein, *Perjury*, 377–384; 492–493. On the FBI’s role in intimidating Hobson and Hiss, see Kurt Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), 363. Hiss’s refusal to put Hobson on the witness stand was explained by Hiss partisan William Reuben (interview with the author, May 21, 1991).
10. Weinstein, *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case*, 383–384.
11. Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (New York: Random House, 1952); Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., “Whittaker Chambers and His Witness,” *Saturday Review*, May 24, 1952, reprinted in Schlesinger, *The Politics of Hope* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 183–195. See also Sidney Blumenthal, “The Cold War and the Closet: The True Legacy of Whittaker Chambers,” *New Yorker*, March 17, 1997, 112–115.
12. Quoted in William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (1986; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 108. For other surveys of the postwar era, see James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time* (New York: Random House, 1976).
13. For Nixon’s rhetoric, see Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 28–29; for Butler’s, see Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 200–201.
14. Garry Wills, *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man* (1969; New York: Signet, 1971), 88–89; Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 19.
15. Allen Matusow, ed., *Joseph R. McCarthy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970), 19–26; Eric Goldman, *The Crucial Decade—and after: America, 1945–1960* (New York: Vintage, 1960), 142.

16. Quotations taken from Richard H. Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy* (1959; New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 49; Lawrence S. Wittner, *Cold War America: From Hiroshima to Watergate* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 95–99; Thomas C. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography* (New York: Stein & Day, 1982), 299; David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard, 1993), 54.
17. Richard M. Weaver, "The Roots of Liberal Complacency," *The National Review* (June 8, 1957), reprinted in A. G. Heinsohn, *Anthology of Conservative Writing in the United States* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1962), 54–58.
18. *Ibid.* For a conservative interpretation of the liberal "guilt complexes" and dangerously naïve "social service mentality" of do-gooders like Eleanor Roosevelt, see James Burnham, *Suicide of the West: The Meaning and Destiny of American Liberalism* (New York: John Day Company, 1964).
19. Louis Bromfield, "The Triumph of the Egghead," *Freeman*, December 1, 1952, 155–158. The term "egghead" was coined by journalist Stuart Alsop, who applied it not in a pejorative sense but rather to denote the intelligentia, that is, Stevenson's likely basis of popular support in the 1952 presidential race. "Egghead" became an epithet used by conservatives to ridicule Stevenson and his supporters, whose points of view were supposedly "out of touch" with the sentiments of most ordinary Americans. For another caustic view of the egghead, see A. G. Heinsohn, "Eggheads Adrift," in Heinsohn, *Anthology of Conservative Writing*, 28–30.
20. E. Merrill Root, "The Quicksands of the Mind," reprinted in Heinsohn, *Anthology of Conservative Writing*, 283–290.
21. John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 40–53; D'Emilio, "The Homosexual Menace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America," in D'Emilio, ed., *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics and the University* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 57–73. For a more recent discussion, see Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 76–96.
22. D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 41–42; "Inquiry by Senate on Perverts Asked," *New York Times*, May 20, 1950, 8; "Senators Find Homos a Peril, Ask Full Probe," *New York Daily News*, May 20, 1950, 2. Wherry is quoted in Max Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XI: Sex and Politics," *New York Post*, July 21, 1950, 2. On the dubious mathematical calculations that led Blick to estimate the number of "sex perverts" in Washington, see Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. VIII: Blick of the Vice Squad," *New York Post*, July 18, 1950, 2.
23. Bridges's speech is quoted in John O'Donnell, "Capital Stuff," *New York Daily News*, March 30, 1950, 6. Robert Davies, former ambassador to the Soviet Union, portrayed the USSR in a favorable light and seemed to rationalize Stalin's crimes in *Mission to Moscow* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1941).
24. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy*, 240, 257. Dean (*Imperial Brotherhood*, 104–105) has provided the fullest account of the purge of homosexuals from the federal government to date; he identifies Carmel O'Neil as the CIA official whom McCarthy "outed."
25. See John O'Donnell's columns, "Capitol Stuff," *New York Daily News*, March 27, 1950, 4; March 30, 1950, 5; May 1, 1950, 6; May 5, 1950, 6; May 7, 1950, 4; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XI: Sex and Politics," 2. Lillian M. Oliveros, letter to the editor, *New York Daily News*, March 29, 1950, 4.
26. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government*, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., November 27, 1950 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950) 2–5, 19. *Ibid.*, 2–4.
27. *Ibid.*, 3–5; D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 43.
28. For the full text of Miller's speech, see *Congressional Record* (U.S. Congress, Appendix to the *Congressional Record—House*, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., May 15, 1950, A3660–A3662). Miller is also quoted in Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, *Washington Confidential* (New York: Crown Books, 1951), 91–96.
29. *Ibid.* On Wherry, see Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept., IV: Kinsey in Washington," *New York Post*, July 13, 1950, 2, 26. See also "Senators Find Homos a Peril, Ask Full Probe," 2.
31. On Dewey, see "TRUMAN FARO DEAL' DERIDED BY DEWEY," *New York Times*, May 5, 1950, 1, 15; O'Donnell, "Capitol Stuff," *New York Daily News*, March 27, 1950, 4. The quotation from the *Brooklyn Tablet* (June 10, 1950) is taken from Donald F. Crosby, *God, Church and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 3.
32. On the Welles episode, see Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 308–310; Irwin Gellman, *Secret Affairs: Franklin Roosevelt, Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
33. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 97–145, esp. 121. On the randy atmosphere of the Moscow mission and George Kennan's sexually charged rhetoric describing it, see Frank Costigliola, "Unceasing Pressure for Penetration": Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War," *Journal of American History* 83 (March 1997): 1309–1339. Max Lerner, "The Washington Sex Story I: Panic on the Potomac," *New York Post*, July 10, 1950, 4; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XII: What Can Be Done About It," *New York Post*, July 22, 1950, 4, 20; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. IX: They Never Appeal," *New York Post*, July 19, 1950, 4, 38.
34. Lerner, "The Washington Sex Story I: Panic on the Potomac," 4; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. IV: Kinsey in Washington," 2; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XII: What Can Be Done About It?" 4 (Lerner's italics).
35. Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. VIII: Wherry's Crusade," *New York Post*, July 17, 1950, 2, 20; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. V: The Problem of Blackmail," *New York Post*, July 14, 1950, 2, 24; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. VI: Are Homosexuals Security Risks?" *New York Post*, July 16, 1950, 2, 7.
36. Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. VI: Are Homosexuals Security Risks?" 2, 7.
37. Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. VI: Are Homosexuals Security Risks?" 2, 7.
38. Lerner, "Washington Sex Story I: Panic on the Potomac," 4, 24; Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XII: What Can Be Done About It," 4, 20.
39. Lerner, "Scandal" in the State Dept. XI: Sex and Politics," 2.
40. Joseph and Stuart Alsop, "Why Has Washington Gone Crazy?" *Saturday Evening Post*, July 29, 1950, 20–21; Edwin R. Bayley, *Joe McCarthy and the Press* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1981), 161–162; Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 93.
41. Merry, *Taking on the World*, 215–216; Bayley, *Joe McCarthy and the Press*, 161–162; Edwin M. Yoder, *Joe Alsop's Cold War: A Study of Journalistic Influence and Intrigue* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 156. The full text of McCarthy's letter appears in the *Congressional Record—Senate*, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., August 8, 1950, 1278. Leslie Gelb, "The Ultimate Insider," *New York Times Book Review* (April 2, 1995), 6.
42. O'Donnell ("Capitol Stuff," *New York Daily News*, March 27, 1950, 4) notes that prior to the sex scandal, Washington correspondents had long used "polite euphemisms" ("cookie pushers," "striped-pants boys," "precious dilettantes") to denote homosexuals in the diplomatic corps. On the Alsops' subsequent relationship to the *Saturday Evening Post*, see Merry, *Taking on the World*, 217.
43. On Robert Kennedy, see Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *The Kennedys: An American Drama* (New York: Summit Books, 1984), 248. On Roy Cohn, see Nicholas von Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn: The Life and Times of Roy Cohn* (New York: Doubleday, 1988).
44. Joseph McCarthy, *McCarthyism: The Fight for America* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1952), 14–15, 23–24.
45. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (1949; New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1998), 166; Demaree Bess, "Why Americans Hate the State Department," *Saturday Evening Post*, August 19, 1950, 22; Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, 9–11, 90–97. Alan Dunn's cartoon appeared in *The New Yorker*, June 17, 1950, 21.
46. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 119–145; Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 436; David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York: Free Press, 1983), 287–293.
47. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 63–167, esp. 96. See also Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929–1969* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973).
48. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 97–145.
49. D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 44–46; Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 66.

50. On the tale of the Austrian officer, see Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 86. On the Prince Eulenburg affair, see R. G. Waldeck, "The Homosexual International," *Human Events*, April 16, 1952, 1; Waldeck's article appears in the Appendix to the *Congressional Record—House*, 82nd Cong., 2nd Sess., May 1, 1952, A2652–2654. Waldeck's article is also excerpted, with a brief introduction by Martin B. Duberman, in "The International Homosexual Conspiracy," *The New York Native*, September 21, 1981, 12. See also James D. Steakley, "Iconography of a Scandal: Political Cartoons and the Eulenburg Affair in Wilhelmian Germany," in Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey Jr., eds., *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* (New York: Meridian, 1989), 233–257.
51. Merry, *Taking on the World*, 360–363; Yoder, *Joe Alsop's Cold War*, 153–158.
52. Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Vintage, 1963), 41–42.
53. On the "drift toward sex anarchy," see Pittirim A. Sorokin, *The American Sex Revolution* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1956), 66, 137.
54. Waldeck, "The Homosexual International," Appendix to the *Congressional Record—House*, 82nd Cong., 2nd Sess., May 1, 1952, A2652–2654.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Sorokin, *The American Sex Revolution*, 114–115; see also D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 59. For Koestler's opinion, see Arthur Koestler, et al., *The God that Failed: Six Studies in Communism* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1950), 55–56.
57. On national security and secret "cells" of homosexuals, see Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 97–113. Waldeck, "The Homosexual International," Appendix to *Congressional Record*, A2652–2654.
58. Riesman and Glazer, "The Intellectuals and the Discontented Classes," *Radical Right*, 118–119.
59. Michael Rogin, *Ronald Reagan, the Movie: And Other Episodes in Political Demonology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), xiii, 236–237.
60. This sexual inquisition coincided with what George Chauncey Jr., in "The Postwar Sex Crime Panic," in *True Stories from the American Past*, William Graebner, ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), 160–178, has called the "postwar sex crime panic," which peaked in 1949–1950 and had the effect of heightening homophobia in American life. Though the most serious of sex crimes involving rape, pedophilia, gruesome violence, and murder were no more statistically prevalent in the late forties and fifties than they were in years past, sensational stories proliferated, featuring psychopathic homosexuals as murderous perverts and pedophiles menacing the nation. As the *New York Daily News* ran stories about the "homo scandal" in the State Department in mid-1950, it also ran a special feature headlined "Are Sex Criminals on a Rampage?" (May 14, 1950, 6) that called attention to a seeming national epidemic in sex crimes. Also see "The Abnormal," *Time*, April 17, 1950, 86.
61. Riesman and Glazer, "The Intellectuals and the Discontented Classes," *The Radical Right*, 118–119. In the 1950s, many scholars, medical professionals and social critics assumed male homosexuality was on the rise. See for example, Abram Kardiner, *Sex and Morality* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1954), 160–164; Ralph H. Major, "New to Our Youth," *Coronet*, September 1950, 101–108. The phrase "epidemic" was used, for example, by Frank S. Caprio, *The Sexually Adequate Male* (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett, 1952), 173. For an analysis of "experts" perspectives on sexual deviance, see Estelle B. Freedman, "Uncontrolled Desires: The Response to the Sexual Psychopath, 1920–1960," *Journal of American History* 74 (June 1987): 83–106.
62. John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 288–291; D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*; Alan Berube, *Coming Out under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990).
63. D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 76, 124. According to D'Emilio, the Daughters of Bilitis, the lesbian counterpart to the Mattachine Society formed in 1953, was also subject to FBI surveillance and infiltration in the 1950s.
64. Richard Gid Powers, *Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 288–289 and J. Edgar Hoover, *Masters of Deceit: The Story of Communism in America and How to Fight It* (New York: Henry Holt, 1958), 103–105.
65. In addition to Gentry, see Athan Theoharis, *J. Edgar Hoover, Sex and Crime: An Historical Antidote* (New York: Ivan Dee, 1995). For allegations that Hoover was gay, and Hoover's anger at the Mattachine Society (which put all head of federal agencies on its mailing list), see Anthony Summers, *Official and Confidential: The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1993), 84, 93.
66. On the FBI surveillance of Roosevelt and Hoover's perception that she had protected Welles due to his "softness" toward the Communist party, see Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 299–306, 310, 390–391. For Hoover's comment about why he never married, see Summers, *Official and Confidential*, 142–150.
67. Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, 90–98, 144–154.
68. *Ibid.*, 9–11, 90–106. According to one legend, Georgetown had acquired such an unsavory reputation as the home of "effete" left-wing bohemianism (a reputation no doubt encouraged by *Washington Confidential*) that when Republicans came to Washington after Eisenhower's election, they shied away from the disreputable Georgetown neighborhood. The new President himself reportedly "warned his top officials to stay away from the trendy enclave." Merry, *Taking on the World*, 242.
69. Mortimer and Lait, *Washington Confidential*, 92, 100–103.
70. For an interesting look at the scandal magazines of the era that exploited cold war anxieties and presented lurid images of Communists, homosexuals, criminals, perverts and spies, see Barbara Epstein, "Anti-Communism, Homophobia, and the Construction of Masculinity in the Postwar U.S.," *Critical Sociology* 20, no. 3 (1994): 21–44.
71. John McPartland, "Portrait of an American Communist," *Life*, January 5, 1948, 75, 77.
72. John Kosa, *Two Generations of Soviet Man: A Study in the Psychology of Communism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1962), 155. Herbert E. Krugman's "The Interplay of Social and Psychological Factors in Political Deviance" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1952), 99–102, made more direct correlations between Communism, neurosis, and sexual perversity. Krugman, researcher and collaborator with a noted scholar of Communism, Gabriel Almond, compiled "psychoanalytic data" on Communist party members which purported to show that the typical Communist showed signs of passivity, emotionalism, neurosis, and "sexual deviance." The data he compiled included statistics showing the incidence of latent and manifest homosexuality among party members and the corresponding presence of weak fathers and overbearing mothers in the families of Communists. He concluded that "'homosexual' weakness" and the complex of neuroses that underlay it was one source of the party member's "hostility to society" and thus a source of the psychological appeal of Communism. Murray Kempton, in *Part of Our Time: Some Ruins and Monuments of the Thirties* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955), 200, cited Krugman's study to explain the emotional problems of "red spy queen" turned-informant Elizabeth Bentley. On Bentley and the stereotype she came to represent, see Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Red Spy Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth Bentley* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 135.
73. Elizabeth Janeway, "Why They Become Communists," *New York Times Magazine*, June 14, 1953, 13. On the neurosis of Communists, see Robert M. Lindner, *Must You Conform?* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1956), 86–88; Gabriel A. Almond, with Herbert E. Krugman, Elsiebeth Lewin, and Howard Wriggins, *The Appeals of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954). For an example of government-issue archetypes of Communist recruits, see the journal published by the Office of Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense, *Know Your Communist Enemy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, February 23, 1955), 7–8. On the explanation of Communist psychology offered by the fictional Mike Hammer, see Mickey Spillane, *One Lonely Night*, (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1951), 171–172.
74. Morris L. Ernst and David Loth, *Report on the American Communist* (New York: Henry Holt, 1952), 7, 127, 162–163.
75. *Ibid.*, 162–165, 180. On Bentley's view of Raissa Browder and the report on the Rosenbergs, see Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little Brown, 1988), 147. Gentry, noting that the same suspicions of female dominance and malevolence were held about Priscilla Hiss, suggested that Hoover assumed that "behind every bad man . . . was an even worse woman" (*J. Edgar Hoover*, 366).
76. Julie Whitney, "Women: Russia's Second Class Citizens," *Look*, November 30, 1954, 114; Gertrude Samuels, "Why Russian Women Work Like Men," *New York Times Magazine*, November 2, 1958, 23; Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 19.

77. Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, *USA Confidential* (New York: Crown, 1952), 2, 46–53; Rogin, “Kiss Me Deadly,” in *Ronald Reagan, the Movie*, 236–271.
78. Richard Condon, *The Manchurian Candidate* (1959; New York: Jove Books, 1988); *The Manchurian Candidate*, dir. John Frankenheimer, prod. George Axelrod and John Frankenheimer (United Artists, 1962).
79. Rogin, “Kiss Me Deadly,” 252–253. The Kennedy administration’s interest in “psywar” and counterinsurgency is discussed in chapter 4 of this book. While Kennedy wanted to “breathe new life into the cold war,” as Rogin suggests (253), he and his New Frontiersmen were interested in battling Communist expansion *outside* of the U.S., seeking popular support by emphasizing the perils of a world in which nuclear annihilation loomed in our “hour of maximum danger.” Domestic anti-Communist infiltration was no longer an issue.
80. Fredric Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent* (New York: Rinehart, 1954); Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: D. McKay, 1969). On the “brainwashed” Korean War POWs, see Adam J. Zweiback, “The ‘21 Turncoat GIs’: Nonrepatriations and the Political Culture of the Korean War,” *Historian* 60 (Winter 1998): 345–363; “Korea: The Sorriest Bunch,” *Newsweek*, February 8, 1954, 40. Journalist and former OSS officer Edward Hunter coined the term “brainwashing” in *Brain-washing in Red China: The Calculated Destruction of Men’s Minds* (New York: Vanguard, 1951). See also Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 186.
81. McLoughlin, *Billy Graham*, 5, 54, 85, 90, 139–140; Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 78.
82. McLoughlin, *Billy Graham*, 80–86.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Alfred C. Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1948), 550–555, 585, 597, 650–651.
85. For Lionel Trilling’s critique of the Kinsey Report, see Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), 216–235. For the Reader’s Digest symposium involving Norman Vincent Peale, see “Must We Change Our Standards?” *Reader’s Digest*, June 1948, 1–6. For further commentary, see Erdman Palmore, “Kinsey Received,” in *The American Sexual Dilemma*, William L. O’Neill, ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 63–71; Morris L. Ernst and David Loth, *American Sexual Behavior and the Kinsey Report* (New York: Greystone, 1948); Wardell B. Pomeroy, *Dr. Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982). For a summary of responses to Kinsey’s work, including Reinhold Niebuhr’s critique and the *Catholic Mind* editorial, see James H. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey: A Public/Private Life* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 576–578, 632, 720–721.
86. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey*, 712, 720; Alfred C. Kinsey, et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1953; Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1965), 233, 286, 416, 474–475, 499.
87. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey*, 712–713; Halberstam, *The Fifties*, 280.
88. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey*, 723–724; Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 185–186.
89. Billy Graham, “The Sin of Tolerance,” *Concerned Clergy and Laity of the Episcopal Church*, Online Publications, June 2004. <http://www.episcopalian.org/cclcc/publications.htm>.
90. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey*, 701–737.
91. Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 358–360.
92. Bell, “Interpretations of American Politics,” *The Radical Right*, 64.
93. Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 252–255; Halberstam, *The Fifties*, 219–233; Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 44; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 242.
94. *The New York Daily News* is quoted in Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, 227.
95. Wittner, *Cold War America*, 108; Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy*, 49.
96. Wittner, *Cold War America*, 108; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 242; “Ike Charges Treason in Coddling of Reds,” *New York Daily News*, October 4, 1952, 3; “Khaki in White House Better’n Pink,” *New York Daily News*, October 10, 1952, 3.
97. Stevenson is quoted in Goldman, *The Crucial Decade*, 222; Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, 224; Alonzo Hamby, *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 503.
98. Rudolph Field, *Ike: Man of the Hour* (New York: Universal, 1952), 28–29.

99. Quotes are found in Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, 226–227; Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 255.
100. On Alsop’s reaction, see Merry, *Taking on the World*, 234. The speech was derided by the pro-McCarthy *New York Daily News*, which noted that “when a man takes to likening himself to the savior, it is logical to assume that he at least has delusions of grandeur, and may be a religious fanatic who could prove dangerous in high public office.” This excerpt from Stevenson’s speech and the *Daily News* response is quoted in Herbert J. Muller, *Adlai Stevenson: A Study in Values* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 88–89.
101. Marquis Childs, *Witness to Power* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1975), 66–69; Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 402–403. In Gentry’s account, McCarthy was prevented from using “gutter language” against Stevenson on that occasion because the Democrats had ammunition of their own—a copy of a letter written by General George Marshall to Eisenhower, which made reference to Eisenhower’s plans to divorce his wife Mamie and marry his WAC driver—which they threatened to make public.
102. Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 402–403. Gentry also notes that the FBI sought out and investigated Stevenson’s evidently emotionally distraught ex-wife, who was known to tell people that her former husband was a homosexual, had numerous affairs with women, and had once murdered someone.
103. Athan Theoharis, “Operation Adlai/Adeline”: How the FBI Gaybaited Stevenson,” *The Nation*, May 7, 1990, 1; Summers, *Official and Confidential*, 181–182. According to Theoharis and Gentry, Hoover also spread the rumor that Stevenson was a “notorious homosexual” to members of the Kennedy administration, and forwarded Stevenson’s FBI file to the Kennedy White House.
104. Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, 227.
105. *Ibid.*, 4; Bromfield, “The Triumph of the Egghead,” 155–158; Muller, *Adlai Stevenson*, 191–193.
106. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., “The Highbrow in American Politics,” *Partisan Review* 20 (March–April 1953): 162–165, reprinted in Schlesinger, *The Politics of Hope*, 219–229.
107. Oliver Pilat and William V. Shannon, inc.: *The One-Man Mob of Joe McCarthy*, *New York Post*, September 4, 1951, 3; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 310–311.
108. Hank Greenspun, “Where I Stand,” *Las Vegas Sun*, October 25, 1952; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 310–311; Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 432–434. In Gentry’s account, Greenspun’s grudge against McCarthy stemmed from the senator’s comments on a Las Vegas radio show in which the McCarthy called Greenspun an “ex-Communist.” Greenspun took great offense, insisting he was no ex-Communist—only an ex-convict, having been convicted for smuggling arms to Israel. McCarthy later retracted the comment, claiming that he meant to say Greenspun was an “ex-convict.”
109. Joseph and Stewart Alsop, “McCarthy-Cohn-Schine Tale Was Half Told,” *Washington Post*, March 15, 1954. Hellman, herself a victim of HUAC, is quoted in Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn*, 185.
110. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 427, 451. During the hearings, the subject was raised of a doctored photograph, presumably cropped by McCarthy’s staff, showing Schine with a smiling Army Secretary Robert Stevens—at a time when the latter was claiming he had in fact been angry with the McCarthy staff because of its demands for privileged treatment of Schine. Army counsel Joseph Welch asked sarcastically if a “pixie” (which he defined as a “close relative to a fairy”) was responsible for the mysterious change in the original photo; to this sly innuendo about Cohn and Schine, McCarthy responded to Welch, “I think you might be an authority on what a pixie is.”
111. The innuendoes still followed Stevenson in the 1956 election. Walter Winchell announced to his Mutual Radio audience that “a vote for Adlai Stevenson is a vote for Christine Jorgensen,” the first well-known recipient of a sex-change operation. Winchell’s remark left sponsors uneasy, and actually cost him his first television show (Gentry, *J. Edgar Hoover*, 445).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. For the classic analysis American conformity in the age of affluence, see David Riesman with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (1950; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).