

Crafting queer spaces: privacy and posturing

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines several extraordinary spaces crafted by eccentric and famous men. It will be argued that they created novel and innovative 'queer space' for the projection of fluid male identities and fantasies employing intimate private spaces, furnishings, dress and diversions. In most cases the spaces developed in an organic way over time; even the planning process was odd. The cases will be the English patron-designers Horace Walpole (Strawberry Hill), William Beckford (Fonthill), the Swedish King Gustav III (Haga), and the 20th-century collector and connoisseur Henry Francis du Pont (Winterthur, Delaware). The notion of 'queer' that will be deployed is derived from David Halperin's Foucauldian reading of sexuality: where queer 'describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principle be limited in advance'. In reading the meanings of the neo-gothic, neo-classical and historicising spaces created by these men, aspects of the relationships between the crafting of interior decoration, sensibility and sociability will be foregrounded.

INTRODUCTION

Enlightenment Europe witnessed a significant shift in the relationship of men to the crafting of interior spaces and decoration. In courtly societies the spectacular appearance of architecture, furnishings and male dress embodied decorum, dynastic rivalry, familial networks, the stability of the orders and patriarchal power. The Greco-Roman rhetoric of extremes of male luxury and its supposedly enervating effects, however, could also be deployed by detractors in order to render hated courts immoral.¹ Those courts in which men gained special privilege, were frequently presented as the most debased examples, even sodomitical. Fashions, whether in dress or furnishings, also functioned as a potent symbol for the types of social and economic change which modern capitalism enabled, standing in for the values ranging from transformation to deception which were explored within Enlightenment philosophical tracts and popularizing accounts. Protestant values and Rousseauian arguments criticised vain and undeserving gesture, whether on the body or in the boudoir.² Extreme fashionability and artifice were transferred in the social arena and cultural imagination to the realm of femininity.

Historians and theorists of sexuality have published numerous studies of male same sex companionship in Enlightenment Europe, of the development within cities of proto-queer subcultures, even of male dress codes and gestures. Very little attention has been paid to relationships between interior design, spatial planning, privacy, fantasy and same-sex desire. Changing notions of gender and sexuality inflected and regulated men's relationship to spaces of the home and those myriad crafts and objects which created its effects, comforts and novelties. If, as Charles Rice's recent monograph *The Emergence of the Inte-*

rior, contends, a particular type of spatial planning, "an imagination of the interior", and a new conception of "the interior as image", emerged in this period, then how to connect these ideas to the history of sexuality?³ To what degree did such interior spaces make the queer subject visible or possible? In this paper I revisit and re-describe a group of notable exercises within the history of architecture and interior design, including the two most important exemplars of that markedly novel and eccentric taste, the gothic revival. Using notions of withdrawal, play and masquerade, themes which were present in contemporary thought and which also appear in the secondary literature, I will consider four different schemes which have not previously been connected. The like cases will be the English patron-designers Horace Walpole (at Strawberry Hill), William Beckford (at Fonthill), and the Swedish King Gustav III (at Haga). These highly stylized projects were self-conscious designs for interiors directed by wealthy, eccentric and famous men who figure in the history of gay and queer studies, although they do not feature in any standard history of the interior. They were not follies, which were visited but not lived in, but houses, and in the case of Beckford and Walpole, principle houses at that. This axis of extreme wealth, a markedly queer or non-normative identity, and the creation of spaces of fantasy by and for men, was first described in Aaron Betsky's innovative but under-developed text *Queer Space*.⁴ Betsky's work, which ranges from the mid-century locker room to Philip Johnson, includes the late-eighteenth century figures Horace Walpole and William Beckford.

To Betsky's list I will add today their contemporary Gustav III of Sweden, who commissioned at Haga a neo-classical building program which appears chaste and decorous in illustration, but is notably odd upon viewing. The like cases will be set in a

counterpoint with the introduction of an unlikely example, the 20th-century collector and connoisseur Henry Francis du Pont (Winterthur mansion and collection). And du Pont's Winterthur will be privileged as the space in which my argument became apparent and possible for me as an historian. A visit to Winterthur reminded me how the spaces I detail today developed in a markedly queer manner over very long periods of time; even their planning process was odd. Within these spaces a disparate set of men created novel and innovative 'queer space' employing intimate private spaces, furnishings, dress and diversions.

SINFUL CRAVINGS

David Halperin's much cited notion of 'queer', where queer

describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogenous scope cannot in principle be limited in advance⁵

provides us with ways of avoiding the impasse of needing to ascribe or match acts to individuals.

Aaron Betsky notes that:

the emergence of homosexual networks was coincident with the emergence of ideas about personal freedom and mobile social relations in which each person could make a space for himself.⁶

What were these 'networks' Betsky described and how do they relate to design? Can interior space be seen as an extension of other forms, such as gothic literature or masquerade dressing? My paper, relying as it does on subjects, will have to address the challenge of writing backwards from a post-Freudian position. If, then, we accept that at least some of these figures are a part of both queer and architectural history then did they make queer space?

HORACE WALPOLE: 'A STRANGE BUT SIGNIFICANT SPORT'

The notable scholar of eighteenth-century interior decoration Charles Saumarez Smith calls the taste for Gothic "that strange but significant sport in the development of eighteenth-century taste".⁷ Of Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, he notes,

it was a presage of the way interiors would be used in the future, as a conscious instrument of personal expression: the house was to become a private castle. An escape from time, a place of retreat.⁸

Saumarez Smith, like most writers on this topic with the exception of Timothy Mowl, does not attempt to assess exactly what Walpole's retreat or withdrawal might have involved.

Horace (Horatio) William Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford (1717-1797) was a British writer and antiquarian.⁹ The third son of Robert Walpole, Prime Minister, Walpole was a Member of Parliament (1741-1768) but his main interest was letter-writing and design. A voluminous and bitchy correspondent, he wrote with an eye to posterity, cataloguing the motives, appearances, and manners of the personalities of his day in 4,000 surviving letters. He also published *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), the first Gothic novel, and *Essays on Modern Gardening* (1785). Walpole's most significant contribution to visual heritage was his

development and promotion of 'Strawberry Hill Gothick', a style which led to a new strand of English architecture and internal planning.¹⁰ From 1748 to 1776 Walpole had his residence, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, repeatedly rebuilt in an asymmetrical pseudo-Gothic mode, which contradicted the Palladian pomposity of the architectural establishment of his youth and the Adamesque fantasies popular in the 1770s:

It is a little plaything house... the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with filigree hedges... Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. ¹¹

Rather like du Pont's lifetime venture at Winterthur, Walpole spent forty-four years rebuilding. These additions included a gallery, cloister, Oratory, and the Beauclerc Tower, which contained drawings by Lady Diana Beauclerc for Walpole's play *The Mysterious Mother*. Like du Pont's later exercise, Walpole pursued what Saumarez Smith calls an "exercise in archaeology, recreating different periods of architecture from room to room".¹² The building was, he writes, "a monument to the complexity of Walpole's own imagination", and the collections assembled at Strawberry Hill took twenty-four days to auction upon Walpole's death.¹³ In old age Walpole described his "small capricious house" as "a sketch by a beginner".¹⁴ Walpolean scholar W.S. Lewis described Strawberry Hill in 1934 as "assembled rather than built"; J. Mordaunt Crook felt that it was "design by transcription".¹⁵ The almost crude appearance of Strawberry Hill from the exterior, which in its rambling connections reminds me of the equally lumpen exterior of that of du Pont's Winterthur, makes this architecture which complicates the logic of inside and outside, of public and private, or visible and invisible. Timothy Mowl has interpreted the choice of gothic forms and detailing as a war of style, in which the homosexual outsider Walpole attacked the values and norms of his father's generation, creating an introspective and fantastical retreat.¹⁶ Saumarez Smith interprets this as Walpole's reaction to Robert Adam's "uniformity" and popularity and in a very useful construction, he suggests that Strawberry Hill "allowed visitors to interpret the furnishings of a room as a form of masquerade".¹⁷ As a space of the night, a liminal entertainment, and one of the most popular cultural forms of the period, ideas of the bounded masque ball must have appealed to Walpole, whose letters are viewed as one of the main sources for analysis of this event. It is possible that the taste for masquerade, which manifested itself in forms ranging from portrait painting to nightly diversions, also drove a new conception of interior design. How fitting that one of my subjects, Gustav III of Sweden, an obsessively vain masquer who even developed a national costume for his courtiers based on Van Dyck dress, met his untimely end assassinated by a masked enemy whilst he attended his own Opera.

Despite plenty of evidence to the contrary, Walpole's man loving man status was ignored and even rebutted until the 1960s. His chief biographer of the inter-war years, W. S. Lewis, the famous Walpole collector and editor of the 48-volume Yale edition of the Letters, interpreted Walpole's relationships as gentlemanly and platonic. Mowl's recent biography has rejected this position, calling Walpole "one of the most successful deviant infiltrators that the English establishment has ever produced".¹⁸ Mowl indicates that Walpole had a loving teenage relationship with Henry Fiennes-Clinton, 9th Earl of Lincoln and later 2nd Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyme, who subse-

quently married; a group of personal letters survives. The pair were painted in Venice, a notable queer space, in companion portraits, by Rosalba Carriera (1741), the significant woman painter in pastels. Walpole was part of a network of bachelors with same sex inclinations, including the poet Thomas Gray, with whom Walpole took the Grand Tour between 1739 and 1741, and whose work Walpole published on his private press, and the architect John Chute, who designed a part of Walpole's house.

Timothy Mowl argues that Walpole's legacy, in permitting thousands of middle-class tourists to see his villa, was to make the picturesque asymmetrical suburban house an option that was available to Victorian taste. In terms of the history of furnishings, the collections at Strawberry Hill also fuelled an interest in fantastical and incongruous juxtaposition. Betsky notes that in the early nineteenth century, queers "turned palaces into quasi-museums", with designs by Hope, and Percier and Fontaine, looking

as if you had peeked behind the heavy curtains of daily life to find a space of fantasy... the inhabitant could mirror himself or herself in idealized human forms and luxurious stage sets of a royal life.¹⁹

This is a useful corrective to the idea that the Gothic was a stylistic impasse, a quandry, or simply folly.

WILLIAM BECKFORD: 'LOST IN VAPOUR... ALL WAS ESSENCE'

Betsky's monograph *Queer Space* foregrounds William Beckford as the greatest "builder of queer spaces in nineteenth-century England".²⁰ Like Walpole, the son of a powerful and wealthy grandee, Beckford published an eccentric novel, *Vathek*, an Orientalist tale of incest and murder. In 1796 Beckford commenced building the grandest home in England, Fonthill Abbey. Like Walpole's Strawberry Hill, Gustav III's Haga and du Pont's Winterthur, it was outside urban space and scrutiny, Fonthill being on the edge of a wild landscape. Designed by architect James Wyatt, Fonthill included an enormous entrance hall with a corresponding 276 foot tower that collapsed repeatedly during building. As Beckford ecstatically wrote in a letter, to look up in to the tower,

was lost in vapour.. all was essence – the slightest approach to sameness was here untolerated – monotony of every kind was banished.²¹

Beckford, who was the subject of a public and scandalous love affair with a man, created, Betsky writes,

an enclosed world that defined him in opposition and in tenuous relation to the world around him.²²

Of his building at Fonthill, Beckford wrote in a letter of

the line of apartments and apparently endless passages extending from it on either side [that] were all vaulted.²³

To Betsky, Beckford is a bridge between old and new world cultures, Betsky jumping fairly hastily in his analysis on to Ludwig II of Bavaria; the symbolists and decadents Huysmans. Jean des Esseintes, Oscar Wilde; ending up somewhere in the 20th century with the architecture of Bruce Goff. This is an interesting lineage which suggests that the middle class home

had a queer side to it.²⁴ In this sense Betsky reveals that his work owes more to twentieth-century studies of popular culture than a focus on historical research. But in making his risky argument he opened up an important discursive space within the study of interior design.

GUSTAV III: 'HE LOVES ALL KINDS OF ORNAMENTS'

An interest in reflection, introspection and play also characterised the reign of Gustav III (1746-92), modernising enlightenment King of Sweden (1771-92). Gustav III's life combined a rather naïve sense of statecraft and attempts to link his reign to the earlier Vasa dynasty, with grandiose projects of architecture and design, his interests ranging from his own amateur architectural sketches to developing distinctive national court and even children's dress.²⁵ Gustav III's vanity and liking for courtier males has been presented by some historians as evidence of sexual transgression. Contemporaries noted his indifference to women and preference for men, including an entourage of male favourites, notably Gustav Mauritz Armfelt. His own sister-in-law claimed that "through his own exalted example" he helped spread in Sweden "this vice of sleeping with men, which hitherto had been almost unknown here".²⁶ Other letters exist in which Gustav is described having alternative tastes, not unusual for a period which believed all men were capable of a sin to which they would hopefully not fall prone.²⁷ His place in queer history is contentious and would be widely disputed by many scholars in Sweden. Various terms are used to describe him, from bisexual to homosexual. The idea presented in a surviving caricature by a detractor, suggesting that he did not father the heir to the throne, is not an uncommon idea in early modern society. Perhaps the emphatic virulence of the presentation is unusually emphatic. Leaving the official record of portraiture aside, there also exists several intriguing character sketches, notably a fine rendering in which Gustav transforms from man to woman and back again. This idea of a floating or third gender is similar to the one which was attached to Walpole and which has been pursued in the important text by Gilbert Herdt, *Third Gender*.²⁸

Approximately 300 drawings of architectural schemes survive by Gustav III, highly unusual for a monarch of that time.²⁹ Gustav III paid attention to public buildings and churches, gardens and palaces, but his particular legacy is a tiny villa at Haga outside Stockholm. Haga was acquired in 1771 as a garden estate and the King's pavilion designed in an unusual collaboration between the King, artist-designer Louis Masreliez and architect Olof Tempelman. The unusual nature of Haga, which appears temporary, has led some historians to argue that it was indeed that, intended as accommodation while a much grander palace was built nearby. The most recent historiography argues that Haga was never intended as a temporary structure, but as "clearly exclusive dwelling for the King".³⁰ Much of the decoration was painted on thin paper; an imitation spruce plinth in one room suggested the Rousseauian joys of the origins of architecture. It was in Gustav's reign that pictorial art was transformed

from something attached to the walls as a separate entity to an integral part of the interior architecture.³¹

This blurring of wall and decoration, which has been part of

both the Baroque and Rococo traditions in French culture, also characterised the schemes of Walpole and Beckford, but through the use of sculptural elements, gothic fluting and damask wallpapers rather than neo-classical painted grotesques. The issue of decoration is always vilified by the separation of architecture and interior decoration; Walpole, Beckford and Gustav III, in drawing it together, in diminishing the architectural presence of their private homes, emphasised this charge.

this queer space of tents containing a feminized classicism that acted as the setting for an archaeological display quickly became subsumed in mainstream middle-class culture. Queers... began to collect so voraciously that the collections took over the architecture. They created stage versions of their lives that replicated their heritage and social station.³²

Decoration was not a problematic category in the eighteenth century; it was requisite for polite urban society. Nineteenth-century bourgeois men still bought furniture, paintings, wall-hangings, but they were to do it through a principle of investigation rather than pleasure. ³³ As the enlightenment man was asked to think about the architecture of nature (Linnaeus) and systems, so he was still in charge of the parts and structures, but not of the way in which elements looked.

At Haga the dining hall and study seem almost modest compared to contemporary palace design, but the principle space at Haga is the Mirror-Room. Described as “one of the most remarkable Swedish room creations of the 18th [sic] Century [sic]”, architectural historians seem to struggle to account for its impact.

We have already mentioned how these environments followed the prevailing fashion of the times but it is worth noting their extra-ordinary quality, both in terms of the individual items and the overall composition of the rooms.³⁴

With windows diving down to floor level and a view across the lake, the space takes some of the chaste experiments conducted at the Petit Trianon or by Cameron in Russia much further. Like Strawberry Hill, the neo-classical exterior of Haga is fairly unremarkable, and is not concerned with a classical notion of decorum. Despite some interior paintings allegorical of the King as a triumphant hero, it contains no portrait of the King; “his personal presence was needed to complete the allegory”.³⁵ The interior, with exquisite wall painting by Masreliez, has the effect of a set or a jewel box and it should be noted here Gustav III’s love of diamonds – “he loves all kinds of ornaments, especially jewels” wrote his sister-in-law. One of the sober historians of Gustav III notes that this comment “has certainly contributed to our picture of the King as a somewhat effeminate man”.³⁶ Within one of his dwellings was placed a piece of furniture by Georg Haupt which is quite famous within Swedish decorative arts studies. Known as the ‘page bed’, the initial G in the centre of the marquetry indicates that this item belonged to Gustav either as King or Crown prince, and “the bed can therefore be assumed to be the sleeping place for a page”.³⁷ It is known that when the Queen did not sleep with him, the page slept at the foot of his bed, and not on the floor like the pages of Louis XVI. The bed, which has a counterpart in Castle Howard, requires more analysis but I’m going to present it here as a queer space in itself, one which seems to defy analysis in the historical record. Introspection and play, in the case of Gustav III, proved fatal. The final queer space of Gustav III’s life was his death. Gustav III delighted in acting, the opera, masquing

and the theatre. He met his end conducting this activity, assassinated by an enemy whilst he watched his own Opera. The leather chair in which he bled to death and the assassin’s mask are grimly retained in the royal collection, a material-culture shrine to decadence. The funeral matched that of Nelson in its theatrical majesty.

WINTERTHUR: MY QUEER SPACE

Winterthur is a famous estate created near Wilmington, Delaware, by Henry Francis du Pont (1880-1969) and his father Henry Algernon du Pont (1838-1926). Renowned for its encyclopedic collection of North American and English seventeenth and eighteenth century decorative arts, I knew something of what to expect upon visiting. Winterthur includes 175 period rooms and more than 85,000 objects, spanning 1640 to 1860. Henry Francis du Pont combined the turn of the century colonial revival with what were then new museological imperatives to re-create period rooms.³⁸ H.F. du Pont lived in the residence until 1951, when it was opened to the public and he moved to an annexe next door. A precursor to the museum period room, such as the famous suite installed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art from 1924, du Pont’s style was frequently presented as either a pioneer of certain museological impulses, as a precocious and insatiable collector, or as a founder and funder of American material culture studies. Du Pont’s rooms were dressed with extraordinary detail to the textiles and trimmings appropriate to what was then understood of their respective date and style, with museum quality flat textiles cut up to re-upholster chairs and lambrequins. Winterthur was not built as a museum, as Calloway suggests, but as a museum within a home.³⁹ Du Pont and his guests lived, ate and moved around the rooms, his obsessional attention to detail extending to the curtains and bed-hangings which were changed every season, some chosen to echo the flowers and plantings in the landscaped grounds beyond. Hothouse flowers, hundreds of sets of dishes, and dozens of matching sets of napery marked his every meal and entertainment. I knew that such behaviour in the interwar years did not mark out a man as gay or queer; that to suggest that fastidious behaviour should be conflated with any notion of a gay or queer temperament was in effect a form of homophobia.

After the 1950s the ‘period room’ movement went into abeyance, until it was revived in the 1980s.⁴⁰ Winterthur is now the favourite destination of scholars of furniture forms and dowagers seeking decorating ideas. Textile and home-furnishing companies pay licence fees to reproduce parts of the collection to satisfy the demand for conservative decorating styles based on tradition, historicism, regionalism and nationalism. But as I stood that winter day in du Pont’s principle dining room, one of dozens strewn throughout a two hundred room house, I realized that I was not standing in a private museum but rather a queer space. The room, although furnished with ‘correct’ furniture and objects, was emphatically theatrical and hyperbolic. More Cecil Beaton than Mayflower, I realized that its spatial characteristics, its chinoiserie textile treatments, its apertures, strange scale and lack of relationship to other connecting rooms, corridors and suites, created queer space.⁴¹ Mr du Pont almost seemed to sculpt with his furniture.⁴² It was more movie lot than residence. As I toured the house with the Curator of Textiles, moved from one set-like space to another, I enquired about an article in *American House and Garden* which had seemed to

'out' Mr du Pont in its discussion of his dinner parties. Mr du Pont, I learned, frequently entertained privately in this set-like vista of rooms. The curators also knew that much archival material concerning this American baron of industry, whose fortune derived from the Du Pont cellulose – gunpowder and later synthetics from nylon to corian – industries, had been burned upon his death. There was enough in the archive, it was hinted, for someone to write some alternative narratives, which the curators, constrained by a genuine respect and courtesy for du Pont's legacy, were not in a position to consider.

As I considered this house, which is not presented to audiences as an oddity, but rather as an example of extreme wealth and period choices, it began to connect in my mind with the earlier exercises of Walpole and Beckford. Their schemes had connected collecting with eccentric planning and a complete focus on interiority. Vast sums of money were spent on the interior of Winterthur, Mr du Pont becoming famous in the 1920s for the prices he would pay for well provenanced pieces. (Walpole, too had been obsessed with provenance). The exterior of his house, which is generally not foregrounded in the picture books of Winterthur, resembles a not very well detailed and rambling up-market holiday inn. Up to nine stories high in parts, its wings, projections and dormers were designed to hold the growing collection of period-room panelling, hallways and foyers within, and unlike other North American mansions of that period, it lacks a focus on external presentation. I would suggest here that an avid passion for the interior can lead to the disfiguring of the exterior, that the relationship between the transient and the permanent seems to be inverted. Du Pont, it seemed, had preferred an internal life. As I considered this approach to planning, which is generally not remarked upon in the Winterthur literature, I was reminded of other eccentric but influential episodes in the history of architecture and design which I have described in my paper today. Winterthur, despite its size, is less a mansion than a villa. Du Pont's tendency towards reclusiveness amongst his extraordinary set pieces, his obsessive rearranging of the *mise en scene*, and his ultimate success in appealing to establishment taste, indicates a link from Enlightenment to modern cultures of interior design. As Halperin argues, queer gives us a horizon to think through the past and the present. To Halperin queer is a positionality,

at odds with the normal, the legitimate the dominant. There is nothing particular to which it necessarily refers.⁴³

To practice a stylistics of the self ultimately means to cultivate that part of oneself.⁴⁴

I'm going to refuse to show you an image of Winterthur's interior. Its brightly lit official photograph conceals. Winterthur was queer space for me, my space of arguing. I was seeing queer.

¹ For an excellent account of 'sexual rumours' that undermine power, see Robert Shephard, 'Sexual Rumours in English Politics: The Cases of Elizabeth I and James I', in Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler, *Desire and Discipline. Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996, pp.101-122.

² Historian David Kuchta has argued that post-1688 English aristocrats pre-empted the middle-class and puritanical challenge that their rule was tainted by luxury by promoting a more moderate appearance than their continental and Catholic counterparts. David Kuchta, *The three-piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550-1850*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2002, pp. 54-78.

³ See Introduction, Charles Rice, *The emergence of the interior: architecture, modernity, domesticity*, London: Routledge, 2007.

⁴ Aaron Betsky, *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire*, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1997.

⁵ David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 65.

⁶ Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 62.

⁷ Charles Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England*, New York: H.N. Abrams, 1993, p. 237.

⁸ Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England*, p. 237.

⁹ This summary is based on my entry 'Horace Walpole', in Robert Aldrich & Garry Wotherspoon (eds), *Who's Who in Gay and Lesbian History: From Antiquity to World War II*, London & New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. 472-3.

¹⁰ The Gothic was long held to be the antithesis of Classical ideals and harmony.

¹¹ Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England*, p. 237.

¹² Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England*, p. 237.

¹³ Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and the domestic interior in England*, p. 237. Walpole's own collecting was mirrored in the early-twentieth century by William Sheldon Lewis and his wife Annie Burr Auchincloss, who created at Farmington, Connecticut, a type of research shrine to Walpole and the 18th century.

¹⁴ J.Mordaunt Crook, 'Strawberry Hill Revisited – II', *Country Life*, (14 June 1973): 1730.

¹⁵ Mordaunt Crook, 'Strawberry Hill Revisited – II', p. 1726.

¹⁶ Of the family estate Houghton, Walpole wrote to Chute: "I literally seem to have murdered a man whose name was ennui, for his ghost is ever before me". Lewis 1973 cited in Gervase Jackson-Stops (ed), *The Treasure Houses of Britain: Five Hundred Years of Private Patronage and Art Collecting*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985, p. 414.

Strawberry Hill was purchased in 1747, a house dating from 1698.

¹⁷ Saumarez Smith, *Eighteenth-century decoration: design and*

the domestic interior in England, p. 240.

¹⁸ Timothy Mowl, *Horace Walpole: The Great Outsider*, London: John Murray, 1996, p. 7.

¹⁹ Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 66.

²⁰ Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 67. Betsky is correct to note that the crimson and gold interiors were based on both orientalist and gothic sources, but he is incorrect to claim that Beckford was the first great English collector and antiquary. This was undoubtedly Walpole.

²¹ Letter by Beckford, Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 70.

²² Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 70

²³ Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 70.

²⁴ Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 92.

²⁵ Encouraged by the Empress of Russia, Gustav III formulated and actively encouraged the adoption of a national dress for his courtiers from 1778. For men this suit of black trimmed with red or blue with white combined French knee breeches with a Spanish cloak and archaic doublet with shoulder slashing, the features indicating Gustav III's personal interest in masquerade and fancy dress, attempts to link his reign to an earlier tradition, and perhaps a personal vanity, in that the tight fitting sleeves of French coats did not suit his shoulder deformity.

²⁶ Johan Rosell, 'Gustav III', in *Who's Who in Gay and Lesbian History. From Antiquity to World War II*, eds Robert Aldrich & Garry Wotherspoon, London & New York, Routledge, 2001, p. 194.

²⁷ Magnus Olausson, 'Gustav III – The Monarch and the Man', in Magnus Olausson (ed) *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 53. On a pre-modern notion of sodomy, as well as non-carnal Platonic understandings of same-sex desire derived from Bray's argument concerning Renaissance sexuality, see Robert Shephard, 'Sexual Rumours in English Politics: The Cases of Elizabeth I and James I', in Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler, *Desire and Discipline. Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996, p. 114.

²⁸ Herdt, Gilbert (ed), *Third Sex Third Gender. Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, New York: Zone Books, 1994. Horace Walpole, quoting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and referring to John, Lord Hervey (courtier and politician, 1696-1743), noted that "there were *three sexes*: men, women and Herveys". Patrick Higgins (ed.), *A Queer Reader*, London, Fourth Estate, 1993, p. 93.

²⁹ Stig Fogelmarck and Magnus Olausson, 'Gustav III – Builder, architect, Landscape Designer', in Magnus Olausson (ed), *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 287.

³⁰ Goran Alm, 'Revealing and Protecting a New-Born Athens: Louis Masreliez and late-Gustavian interior design', in Magnus Olausson (ed), *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 483.

³¹ Magnus Olausson, 'Visual Art in the Service of Royal Power', in Magnus Olausson (ed), *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 375.

³² Betsky, *Queer Space*, p. 66.

³³ This idea was formed in discussion with Dr Giorgio Riello, University of Warwick.

³⁴ Goran Alm, 'Revealing and Protecting a New-Born Athens: Louis Masreliez and late-Gustavian interior design', p. 483.

³⁵ Kristina Kvastad and Per Falck, 'Royal Gustavian-veneered furniture in Swedish neoclassicism', in Magnus Olausson (ed), *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 525.

³⁶ Magnus Olausson, 'Gustav III – A Bejewelled Monarch' in Magnus Olausson (ed), *Catherine the Great & Gustav III*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1998, p. 557.

³⁷ Kvastad and Falck, 'Royal Gustavian-veneered furniture in Swedish neoclassicism', p. 519.

³⁸ The American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art was opened in 1924-5 and all major United States' museums began to collect American-colonial decorative arts in this period.

³⁹ Stephen Calloway, *Twentieth-Century Decoration*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1988, p. 311.

⁴⁰ Philippe de Montebello, 'Introduction', in *Period Rooms in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996, p. 10. American preservationist activity has been described as 'almost exclusively concerned in the late twenties and the thirties with the colonial image'. In 1923 Henry Ford purchased and restored the Wayside Inn, Concord; in 1925 J. Pierpont Morgan purchased the Wallace Nutting collection of pilgrim century furniture for the Wadsworth Atheneum (Nutting's *Furniture of the Pilgrim Century, 1620-1720* was published in Boston, 1921); in 1926 John D. Rockefeller, Jr. began the purchase and restoration of buildings in Williamsburg. This yearning for a pre-industrial past bears a close relation to the aims and ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement, the circles of which included the first earnest collectors of antiques.

⁴¹ I do not wish to suggest that Winterthur embodies any sense of camp, although much of the scheme is hyperbolic despite its attempts at historical accuracy. It is inadequate as a concept to describe what I sensed and felt at Winterthur. 'Camp' is well understood as a style of politics for dress, posing, navigating the city, decorating in 1930s Hollywood (See Moe Meyer (ed), *The Politics and Poetics of Camp*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994). But it is less well understood or analysed as a strategy for creating interiors, which also has a base in regional practices – what may be 'normal' in Manhattan is not 'normal' in Paris or Sydney. Mowl's anachronistic use of the term 'camp' to describe the strategies of Horace Walpole has been very thoroughly condemned in Haggerty's subtle reading of male-male relationships, in which he argues that Enlightenment 'men of feeling' from the upper classes were capable of a "sensitivity ... so utterly eroticised as to make distinctions between

what is and what is not sexual almost beside the point". (George E. Haggerty, *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century*, Columbia University Press, p. 154). Haggerty argues that men of class and privilege such as Walpole and Beckford were able to "articulate his desire in terms that reconfigured male-male affection as romantic love". Haggerty focuses on a textual and literary reading of the traces of these lives, to which I would add the aspect of their built environment and collecting practices. Haggerty, *Men in Love*, p. 159.

⁴² Photography tends to flatten out the contents of a room and contradict du Pont's lighting intentions, which included the use of special electrified candles. Some of the rooms now appear rather *gemütlich*, but others are stupendous exercises in the painterly juxtaposition of Chinese screens and wallpapers, huge scale matching floral arrangements and symmetrical volumes filled with sculptural groupings of furniture.

⁴³ Halperin's far-reaching argument in which he argues that oppositional practice extends beyond any simplistic notion of political action occurs in his *Saint Foucault*: "it is from the eccentric positionality occupied by the queer subject that it may be possible to envision a variety of possibilities of reordering the relations among sexual behaviours, erotic identities, constructions of gender, forms of knowledge, regimes of enunciation, logics of representation modes of construction, and practices of community, for restructuring, that is, the relations among power, truth and desire." Halperin, *Saint Foucault*, p. 67.

⁴⁴ Halperin, *Saint Foucault*, p. 76