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served as the blueprint for continued power struggles in post-war France.

In the final third of the book, Roberts uses rape as a lens for examining power dynamics, both within the U.S. military, and between the American occupiers and French civilians. Roberts explores why African American soldiers were disproportionately charged with rape, and contends that the issue stemmed from both racial prejudice in the segregated U.S. military and the attitudes of French civilians. White GIs often framed their black counterparts for crimes, including rape, since they knew that white officers would not view black soldiers as credible. At the same time, French civilians accused black GIs of sexual violence. In this way, black soldiers “quickly became a projection of civilian fears concerning the chaos of war” and of strains with military occupation (197). The U.S. military proceeded swiftly against soldiers accused of rape, precisely to combat such “civilian fears.” Sexual violence had the power to cause substantial damage to U.S. and French relations. By incriminating black soldiers, the U.S. military could at once preserve the myth of the American GI as a white, masculine hero, and displace the blame for the problems of occupation onto black soldiers.

Roberts scrutinizes issues of *Stars and Stripes* alongside French sources to demonstrate a widespread sense of “gender damage” in postwar France (86). More than a “crisis of masculinity,” she argues that during the German invasion and occupation French men felt they had both failed their duties as men, and been stripped of their masculine privilege. This deep sense of emasculation continued after liberation, as French men felt that American GIs had taken control of French women’s sexuality, just as invading German forces had taken control of French territory. Similarly, the struggle between American and French officials over efforts to regulate sexuality, and particularly venereal disease and prostitution, stood in for the larger struggle to restore French national sovereignty.

Roberts is not the first historian to show that the “good war” may not have been that good, nor is she the first to examine the sexual relations of American soldiers abroad during and after WWII. Nevertheless, *What Soldiers Do* raises new questions in this vein. How did the intertwined struggles over sexuality and national sovereignty in postwar France compare to the experience of other nations? Furthermore, does France’s postwar position as a colonial power complicate Roberts’ argument about a “damaged” French masculinity? In opening up these questions, Roberts challenges her readers to reconsider historical global power relations in terms of gender and sexuality. Diplomatic and military historians as well as scholars of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies will appreciate Roberts’ sophistication. She has written a military history through the lens of gender and sexuality, and in so doing, made an important contribution to both areas of study.

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**Clare Sears, Arresting Dress: Cross-Dressing, Law, and Fascination in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).**

Clare Sears’ latest book, *Arresting Dress*, offers a groundbreaking study of cross-dressing laws in nineteenth-century San Francisco. Sears reveals the prevalence of gender non-normative dress in gold rush California prior to the passage, by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, of an 1863 law that banned cross-dressing. The new statute marked cross-dressers as public
nuiances, similar to drunks, vagrants, and prostitutes. Thus when John Roberts was arrested in 1874 in San Francisco’s Barbary Coast for dressing like a “pretty waiter girl,” in a striped dress and flowery straw hat, he appeared in court next to individuals arrested for begging, vulgarity, drunkenness, and assault and battery (8). By defining cross-dressing as aberrant behavior, the law empowered police to harass gay men, lesbians, and transgender people, along with others who violated norms of gender presentation. Officials continued to enforce public gender and sexual boundaries in this way until the Board of Supervisors repealed the law in 1974. Sears concludes that the cross-dressing law, along with similar statutes in twenty-one states, created “new presumptions of cross-gender criminality and a gender-normative public that continue to haunt us today” (147).

In the book’s introduction, Sears proposes combining elements of transgender and queer studies to create “trans-ing analysis,” a new theoretical approach for examining the history of cross-dressing. This mode of analysis examines a broad range of cross-dressing practices, and allows a deeper examination of the boundaries between normative and non-normative gender identities and representations. Sears also introduces the concept of “problem bodies” to describe the ways that individuals were identified as threats to the existing social structure. Prostitutes; Chinese immigrants; and deformed, diseased, and cross-dressing individuals were frequently identified as problematic because of their gender, race, sex, disability, or citizenship status. By juxtaposing these “problem bodies” in her analysis, Sears “shows that cross-dressing laws were not an isolated or idiosyncratic act of government but one part of a broader legal matrix that was centrally concerned with boundaries of sex, race, citizenship, and city space” (10). Thus, boundary-crossing individuals were labeled as public nuisances; objectified; and reclassified as non-human others subject to relocation, concealment or confinement. The removal of these non-conforming individuals from the public sphere banished divergent forms of gender expression to the private realm.

Sears begins by considering how the laissez-faire years of the California gold rush opened a space for the development of femininities and masculinities that included cross-dressing practices. These included men who dressed as women at gold rush balls, cross-dressing sex workers, and women who donned men’s clothing and pursued exclusively male careers. Sears explains that some of these practices carried non-transgressive meanings and actually reinforced existing gender norms. Still, the lawless atmosphere of the gold rush years permitted diverse cross-dressing practices.

By the early 1850s, concern about regulating public decency gave rise to laws designed to enforce the social and moral order as defined by an elite class of landowning European-American men. Laws against cross-dressing were passed alongside those regulating the visibility of prostitution, since female prostitutes sometimes dressed in male attire to attract customers. The 1863 law against cross-dressing empowered law enforcement to mark those who violated gender boundaries as “problem bodies.” Officials used the laws to prosecute a wide range of gender transgressions by sex workers, female impersonators, feminist dress-reformers, and individuals whose gender identity deviated from their legal sex. This coincided with similar local efforts to regulate, remove, and conceal other “problem bodies,” such as Chinese immigrants, prostitutes, and maimed or diseased persons.
In one of the book’s most interesting chapters, Sears examines how vaudeville theaters, freak shows, dime museums, and slumming tours took advantage of the public’s fascination with cross-dressing individuals and people with physical deformities. While cross-dressing laws regulated “problem bodies” and prohibited their visibility, these spectacles put such bodies on public display. Here audiences could safely satisfy their curiosity, glimpsing these peculiar bodies while maintaining a strict separation between themselves and the performers. By containing the public appearance of “problem bodies,” such spectacles rendered inert any transgressive potential of the cross-gender practices, and instead reinforced gender norms.

Sears also argues that the 1863 cross-dressing law rendered some cross-dressing practices more visible by encouraging law enforcement and the public to look for and look at white cross-dressing individuals as public nuisances and freaks. Humiliating public displays and investigations of offenders’ bodies in jails, police records, courtrooms, and newspaper reports reinforced this view of cross-dressing whites’ otherness. Sears notes that newspaper reporters ironically looked past Chinese and Mexican cross-dressing individuals as they focused on policing gender boundaries among whites. This was partly due to limited enforcement of the law, the omission of race as a category in arrest statistics, and selective reporting by the white press. In this way, white journalists writing for a white audience and reporting on cases involving white cross-dressers marked normative gender as the “exclusive property of whites” (94). Whereas whites arrested for cross-dressing were represented as outsiders and isolated deviants, anti-Chinese exclusionists depicted Chinese immigrants in general as innately deceitful, immoral, and deviant. Chinese gender practices were represented as “foreign and pathological,” clearly falling outside the bounds of acceptable behavior. This logic helped to fuel the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which limited Chinese immigration to the United States in part on the grounds that Chinese immigrants represented a moral threat. In turn, subsequent exclusion laws permitted immigration officials to exclude or deport any immigrant perceived as a threat to the moral order. For example, when Geraldine Portica, a male immigrant from Mexico, was arrested in 1917 for living and dressing as a woman, immigration authorities were legally justified in deporting her for violating San Francisco’s cross-dressing law. Cross-dressing laws, combined with immigration restrictions, thus established gender normativity as a requirement for citizenship.

Sears brings nuanced analysis to bear on an impressive range of sources, including newspaper reports, police records, government reports and freak-show ephemera. She highlights contradictory figures, such as Police Chief Jesse Brown Cook, who was fascinated by theatrical drag shows while also rigorously enforcing cross-dressing laws. Through trans-ing analysis and the concept of “problem bodies,” Sears advises scholars to consider the diversity of cross-dressing practices and their varied meanings in historical context. Arresting Dress is most interesting when Sears details the stories of the individuals who were impacted by the cross-dressing laws. Through accounts of people like John Roberts and Geraldine Portica, Sears gives voice to those who defied gender norms in gold rush California. In the process, Sears frees them from their confinement to the private sphere, liberating them from their marginal status in historical scholarship.

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