



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

This is a repository copy of *The perfect man: fatherhood, masculinity and romance in popular culture in mid-twentieth-century Britain*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/82361/>

Book Section:

King, L (2014) *The perfect man: fatherhood, masculinity and romance in popular culture in mid-twentieth-century Britain*. In: Harris, A and Jones, T, (eds.) *Love and Romance in Britain, 1918 - 1970. Genders and Sexualities in History* . Palgrave Macmillan , 41 - 60. ISBN 1137328622

Reuse

Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

Takedown

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.



eprints@whiterose.ac.uk
<https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/>

The Perfect Man: Fatherhood, Masculinity and Romance in Popular Culture in Mid-Twentieth Century Britain

In the 1958 novel *Love This Enemy*, the 'hero', Steve is described as 'a mixture of passionate he-man and paternal overlord'.¹ In this characterisation, Kathryn Blair, a pseudonym of Lilian Warren, Mills & Boon's biggest selling author in the 1950s,² epitomised popular romantic heroes. Yet Steve also demonstrates his capacity for affection, by taking care of an abandoned child. In doing so, he forces Kay, the 'heroine', to realise his softer side: 'The instincts are rooted there – protect the women and children'.³ Indeed, he also shows emotion when Kay is ill; on realising her state, he makes a 'small savage sound' and '[h]is jaw went so taut that it twitched'. He tends to her gently, and barely leaves her until she has recovered, even though their love is certainly not clear by this point.⁴ This represents a large proportion of fictive heroes at this time. The 'perfect man' of mid-twentieth-century Britain could be a contradictory figure, combining traditionally 'manly' attributes and authority with a caring side. This chapter will consider examples from both the press and romance literature to analyse how men's position as (potential) fathers figured within a normative masculinity deemed attractive to women. The affective relationships in romance novels in mid-twentieth-century Britain incorporated a hierarchy between men and women; in this genre at least, there was limited evidence of the equal, companionate marriage ideal which was promoted in other media, and found to be the 'most distinctive feature of domestic life' at this time.⁵

Progressive ideals of gender equality were hinted at,⁶ but were much less important than upholding a more traditional hierarchy. Conceiving romantic heroes as fathers or father-figures within this genre allowed for both the expression of tenderness and the enacting of authority. Such a formulation of masculinity will be contextualised in press debates about

ideal, attractive masculinity, in which fatherhood also figured prominently, notably through a celebration of celebrity fathers.

The involvement of caring traits alongside manly authority within conceptions of manliness and masculinity has a longer history, and links between men's public role and authority and their fatherhood can be found in the eighteenth century and earlier.⁷ As Bailey highlights, men's provision for dependents invested them with independence and authority, even before the spread of the breadwinner ideal from the mid-nineteenth century.⁸ As historians such as Susan Kingsley Kent and Alison Light have suggested, the anti-heroic mood of the interwar period encouraged more private and inward-looking constructions of masculinity.⁹ Others have debated a more domesticated masculinity in this period in social and cultural contexts,¹⁰ though such a conception is controversial, and can blur distinctions between men's roles as husbands, fathers and within the home.¹¹ Yet the specific context of this period is important, and the mid-twentieth century witnessed a more pronounced use of fatherhood to rebalance masculine tenderness, a key part of normative ideals of eighteenth-century manliness particularly, with masculine authority, crucial to dominant understandings of masculine identity in the late-nineteenth century.

This reiteration of the connection between a normative, desirable masculinity and fatherhood can be seen as a reaction to the instability of gender relations during and after World War II, and debates about homosexuality in the 1950s and 1960s.¹² As Jane Mansfield has argued, the importance of the 'brute-hero' increased in popular literature at 'times of national reappraisals when the hegemonic form of masculinity becomes less secure', such as the 1950s.¹³ This is important, yet as this chapter will demonstrate, such overtly manly heroes could also be gentle. The post-Second World War era also saw new ideas about love come to prominence; as Claire Langhamer suggests, social and economic circumstances allowed a new centrality of love within marriage and selfhood.¹⁴ This did not always mean a

subscription to ideals of equality; as this study of romance literature shows, male authority and hierarchical romantic relationships remained important within texts written for female audiences, though love and affection were paramount. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the formulaic nature of romance literature became entrenched, and though different authors modified this to various degrees, there was remarkable consistency in the basic plotline across this period.¹⁵ One notable shift in this sample was that male authority became more strongly reiterated in the latter part of this period.

Finally, this period also witnessed a new significance placed on fathers' involvement in their children's lives.¹⁶ In some contexts, this was seen as a progressive and desirable development, and many press commentators welcomed the more involved fatherhood that they argued could be found across Britain. Yet, the more emotional side and diminished authority of this fatherhood could also be perceived as emasculating. The incorporation of fathering within visions of the 'perfect man' should thus be understood as one of many reactions to changes within fatherhood itself in this period. The interconnection of fatherhood and masculinity is a two-way relationship; a stronger link between the two could serve the purpose of encouraging men to become more involved fathers, but likewise, including fatherhood as part of dominant ideals of masculinity could reinforce men's status when under threat. In order to explore ideas about the 'perfect man' in popular culture, this chapter is based on research into a sample of 50 popular romance novels written by some of the most popular and prolific authors and published between 1930 and 1970, as well as an extensive review of four newspapers and two men's magazines.¹⁷

The Fictional Hero

There were clearly contradictions in what individual women wanted in a husband; as Kate Fisher found in her interviews with women reaching adulthood after World War I, many

reflected that they had wanted considerate men who shared their lives, but some also stated that they wanted a ‘hard’ man.¹⁸ Furthermore, there were limits to the companionate model of marriage as perceived and enacted in individual families; as Janet Finch and Penny Summerfield highlighted in 1991, and Kate Fisher and Simon Szreter suggest more recently, a gendered division of labour was upheld within marriages even while couples negotiated a new cultural emphasis on intimacy and more equal partnership.¹⁹ As Judy Giles notes, in postwar fiction and films ‘strong, handsome men ruled their worlds with a benign and firm authority’, yet these were ‘men who, nevertheless, could display a tender, affectionate concern when in love with the “right” woman’.²⁰ Indeed, by examining the heroes of Mills & Boon and other romantic fiction of this time we can gain an understanding of ‘the perfect man’ as received, and arguably also perceived, by young women. The heroes of these books give an insight into both the sort of man that authors thought women should desire, but also the ideal man that readers did want. Mills & Boon editors believed very strongly in high reader identification with their fictional ‘heroines’, and consequently thought they had a weighty responsibility in terms of the messages given to readers.²¹ A successful formula for popularity was quickly established, driven by what sold. The readers of this literature were a diverse group, but predominantly working- or lower-middle-class women.²² This romance genre became immensely popular, with sales of fiction titles at over 500,000 per year between 1945 and 1951, numerous serialisations in women's magazines, and a strong library circulation.²³ Its success was due to the novels’ combination of realism and escapism; while the stories were full of fantasy, they bore a strong resemblance to reality.²⁴ It is clear that the ideals and desires of heroines were strongly reflective of and influenced by social reality, particularly during and after the war.²⁵ Yet of course, though such expectations were influential, as Fisher and Szreter suggest, overly romantic expectations were as often

disappointed as fulfilled, and individuals differentiated between romance and enduring love.²⁶ The relationship between fantasy and reality was complex.

In the mid-twentieth century, adopted, orphaned or unloved children were a popular trope and plot device used to demonstrate the hero's potential as a father; this occurred in 20 of the 50 novels. This could be extremely contrived, such as Violet Winspear's *Wife Without Kisses* and Blair's *The Man at Mulera*; in both novels, the hero and heroine are brought together as guardians of orphaned children.²⁷ Indeed, even in Blair's *Love This Enemy*, when hero and heroine are stranded on a remote island, a child is found in the depths of the jungle to meet this narrative need.²⁸ This trope was particularly prevalent during and after the war, when such a situation had particular resemblance to reality, due to conscription, evacuation and the numbers of military personnel and civilians killed.

These children provided a means through which the hero could demonstrate authority over others but also his caring side, in turn ensuring the love and respect of the heroine, as well as cementing the connection between femininity and motherhood. For example, in *Barn Dance* (1941) by Sara Seale, a prolific Mills & Boon author, a small boy is used to demonstrate how the hero would act with his own children. Max, the hero, is affectionate to the son of his girlfriend, Val. Selina, the heroine and an employee of Max's, notices this potential, and thinks he would make 'an understanding stepfather for a lonely child'.²⁹ That Val does not want more children, or indeed care for her son, is portrayed as unnatural, and as Max wants to be a father, he and Selina marry instead, a relationship in which, the reader can be sure, children will become a welcome part. Such prizing of fatherly qualities can also be found in Jean S. MacLeod's 1947 *The House of Oliver*, in which the principal hero and heroine, Helen and Grant, are brought together via the hero's long-lost son for whom the heroine cared during the war.³⁰ The demonstration of a hero's good potential as a father also features in *Wife Without Kisses*, published 1961. The hero and heroine, Burke and Rea, are

surrogate parents to the hero's orphaned nephew. The sexual appeal of potential fatherhood is reinforced through the attractiveness of Burke to another woman (Iris), which becomes especially prominent when he holds the child and 'he and the chuckling, handsome baby made quite a pair'. As such, Iris's eyes 'dilated brilliantly' at the scene.³¹ Yet, of course, he loves Rea, and the novel ends with his desire to 'settle down to be a thoroughly domesticated English gentleman' with her.³²

Despite these heroes frequent portrayal as potential caring fathers, their position as a father-figure for a surrogate child also serves to illustrate their authority. Indeed, the focus on the benign authority of heroes was more pronounced in the novels published towards the end of this period, in the late 1950s and 1960s. In Anne Weale's 1956 *The Lonely Shore*, Clare initially finds David, her employer, to be arrogant and disagreeable. The only exception to this is his attitude towards his niece with whom he temporarily lives; Clare notes that 'whatever he might like with other people, he was unfailingly good-tempered and patient with his tomboy niece'.³³ Yet, his authority over any situation, involving either Clare or his niece, figures strongly in their relationship. When he saves her from slipping down some stairs, Clare notices his 'warm and strong' fingers gripping her arm, and 'the height and breadth of shoulder' emphasised by the confined space, to an extent that 'she reflected that as women became more and more emancipated, man had less need to be stalwart and protective. In consequence, a subtle element in their relationship was in danger of being lost.'³⁴ In acknowledging shifting gender relations, Weale reinstated the importance of men as strong, powerful protectors within a more modern context. This was not uncommon, and in doing so, authors arguably made their visions of ideal relationships more powerful, through recognition of new ideas about the empowerment of women, alongside a reiteration of male dominance despite this.³⁵ In *The House of Oliver*, a principal female character, Margaret, discusses her career as a nurse during the war, and tells her friend and colleague Hamilton 'I've learned to

work, and I love it. Hammy, I'm not going back to being just an ornament!' Hamilton agrees, noting 'Nobody is, my dear. That sort of thing is over and done with.'³⁶ Yet, though shifting ideals about women's occupation are positively acknowledged, Margaret's happiness is guaranteed not by her career but marriage to her cousin. Indeed, this marriage for love restores her to her family home, from which her family has been removed because of the 'harsh rule of male succession'. Although the author seemingly rejects such older patriarchal ideas, they are left ultimately unchallenged in Margaret's marriage and return home through it.³⁷ While Joseph McAleer notes the increased inclusion of apparently modern 'feminist' ideals within these texts,³⁸ they are ultimately co-opted and neutralised within remodelled notions of male authority.

Furthermore, some authors highlighted men's power over traditionally feminine spheres of authority, such as child-rearing. This is the case in Blair's 1959 novel *The Man at Mulera*, set in Malawi. Lou and Ross, the protagonists, have become co-guardians of Keith, an orphan. Ross refuses to cede much control to Lou, to the extent that she reminds him that he is not her guardian.³⁹ His refusal to give up the child despite his bachelor status is noted by neighbours, and he corrects one woman who suggests child-rearing is predominantly women's work: 'Louise takes care of Keith but I make the decisions'.⁴⁰ Furthermore, while Lou is initially independent, with a job in England, Ross resigns on her behalf, and then tells her some time later.⁴¹ Women and children almost always obey this male authority in romance literature, and this assertion of male authority becomes even more prominent by the latter part of this period.

The intertwining of a traditional 'hard' masculinity with a softer side, represented by (potential) fatherhood was crucial to the storylines of numerous novels. However, heroes' fatherly qualities and desire for children was a significant aspect of character development in most novels, even where it was not instrumental to the plot. In all the examples researched,

the hero shows a desire or liking for children in some way. Fernando, the Spanish hero of Lesley's dreams in Rosalind Brett's 1954 *Whispering Palms*, for example, looks forward to bringing children up together in Africa, while in Barbara Cartland's 1945 *Escape from Passion*, the protagonist, Fleur, encounters various potential partners yet falls in love with the most mature, a factory owner named Norman, who seeks a mother for his future children as well as a wife.⁴² In numerous cases, male competitors for female protagonists' affections also explicitly dislike children in contrast to heroes.⁴³ Children thus present the completion of happiness in romantic fiction, yet it is clear from the examples here, a few of many, that men's desire for those children was also necessary. These novels continually reiterated how essential motherhood was to femininity, and underlining the connection between fatherhood and the 'ideal man' further strengthened this link.

Another important trope within this genre is the functioning of heroes and potential husbands as father-figures to the heroines. As Giles notes, men were portrayed as strong protectors while women were infantilised, a formulation potentially attractive to individuals at a time of instability in gender roles.⁴⁴ McAleer identified an older hero as part of the profitable Mills and Boon formula from the 1930s, and notes that postwar heroes were more 'responsible and 'independent'.⁴⁵ It is clear that the age difference between heroes and heroines would have been greater than that of readers and their husbands; in 1951, the average age at first marriage was 26.8 for men and 24.6 years for women. Indeed, age at marriage had decreased since the interwar period.⁴⁶ Yet, arguably such an emphasis on older, powerful men was a reaction to the decreasing age at first marriage, and a prizing of maturity. The representation of the ideal man as mature also taps into older notions of men as sole providers for dependent women and children; the heroes of these books represent financial security as their age usually signified successful careers. Many are wealthy. Most are between 30 and their early 40s; as Doreen, a female character in Anne Vinton's 1957 *Caprice*

in *Hospital Blue*, explains 'Forty's nothing. I rather like them over forty'.⁴⁷ Ages of characters are not always specified, but to give a few examples, in Barbara Stanton's *Gone is the Thrill*, Stella is 17 and her hero, Don, is 25 when they meet; in *The Lonely Shore*, David is 31 while Clare is 26; in *Love This Enemy*, Stephen is nearly 35 and Kay is 22; and in Roberta Leigh's 1968, *And Then Came Love*, Matthew, at 40, is surprised that at his age, he is so strongly attracted to the youthful Stella, aged 27.⁴⁸ A gap of around eight to ten years seems to have formed an approximate ideal, and indeed, this emphasis on age difference only increased as the period progressed, even as the average age of marriage was in reality decreasing following World War II.

To underline the desirability of the man's relative age and woman's relative youth (as well as innocence and child-bearing capacity), competitors for both parties' affections are frequently the opposite, a theme particularly emphasised in Warren's novels. Christine, for example, the supposed fiancée of Stephen in *Love This Enemy* is said to be 28 or 29.⁴⁹ Indeed, Stephen's eventual choice of the 22-year-old Lou over her older rival is foreshadowed by Stephen's initial suggestion that 'no girl is a woman until she's at least twenty-five'; girlhood and innocence is therefore ultimately attractive.⁵⁰ Male rivals are often more overtly boyish and younger than the hero; Charles, Matthew's rival in Leigh's *And Then Came Love* is eight years his junior,⁵¹ while in MacLeod's 1954 *The Man in Authority*, Moira loves Grant, the older, more serious brother of Philip, to whom she is initially and mistakenly engaged. He is the 'man in authority' to which the title refers, underlining the idea of the ideal man as an older authority figure. Indeed, the difference between the brothers, though not specified in years, is such that on first impression, Moira considers Philip, in his mid-20s, to be a 'boy', while Grant is a 'man', and indeed, later in the book, she notes that 'Philip is like a child' to Grant.⁵²

The idea of heroes as father-figures is often explicit. In Winspear's *Wife Without Kisses*, for example, Rea is pleased that her hero, Burke, thinks her 'like a daughter', and when questioned, he agrees that he is old enough to be her father.⁵³ He frequently likens her to Peter, their adopted child, and indeed, when he consoles her when upset, it is suggested that 'This was not Burke, comforting her. This was her father, holding her when she fell and scraped her knees'.⁵⁴ Though even when their love is realised, Burke wonders if he is too old, the author evidently intends his protective, fatherly side to endear him to Rea and the reader. A similar theme is present in Seale's 1953 *Turn to the West*. The heroine, Gina, is a fatherless young woman whose mother is ill, and through the course of the book, Gina and her boss fall in love. He calls her, in jest, an 'exasperating, enchanting, chuckle-pated – child!' and lifts her into his arms. At this very moment they decide to marry, the telephone rings, with the message that Gina's sick mother has died, having learnt about Giles's plans to marry her daughter earlier that evening.⁵⁵ The novel ends with the sentence, 'In the circle of his arms, Gina turned to Giles and was at peace...'⁵⁶ In this sense, Giles replaces Gina's mother, as he proposes as the mother dies, and thus becomes a surrogate parent through marriage. Indeed, in numerous novels, heroines were rhetorically equated to children. In *The Man at Mulera*, for example, Ross asks his friend to escort heroine Lou and their charge Keith home, instructing him 'Take care of these children, won't you?', while in Joyce Dingwell's 1969 *September Street*, Rico likens Clair to his two young nieces, referring to them as the 'three little ones'.⁵⁷

Affectionate language also furthered the notion of heroes as benignly superior father-figures: many authors used the term 'my child', 'my little girl', 'little one' or similar, in conversations between heroes and heroines; this occurs in 31 of the 50 novels sampled.⁵⁸ That many heroes were in senior positions, like Giles as employer, or even the heroine's guardian, reinforced this.⁵⁹ Furthermore, situations in which the heroine is injured often allow

the hero to take care of her in a parental way, and again the hero always takes charge. For example, in *The Man at Mulera*, Ross shields Lou's eyes from the potentially distressing sight of a lion killing a baboon and then orders her inside to take care of her as she has hurt herself, thereby reducing her to a child.⁶⁰

Finally, the depiction of the actual fathers of heroines further reinforces the idea of heroes as father-figures. They are often dead.⁶¹ In other novels, fathers are caring but weak, and bear no comparison to the hero's masculine virility. The father of Rennie in *Mayenga Farm* is portrayed sympathetically but Kent criticises him for letting her work too hard, while in *Brett's Whispering Palms*, Fernando confronts Lesley's father for wrongly sending her away from home.⁶² Likewise, in Eleanor Farnes' *Magic Symphony*, heroine Erica has an affectionate relationship with her father, but it is clear he does not appreciate her hard work. When Charles visits, this is made explicit; Erica watches the two men, noting they made a 'very strong contrast'; while her father was 'thin and grey-haired, a quiet man with a kind face', Charles is 'virile and dark', 'forceful, full of vitality, dynamic'.⁶³ Such romantic fiction, therefore, featured numerous tropes which reconciled normative, heterosexual and powerful masculinity with a softer side through the means of fatherhood.⁶⁴

Ideal Men and Celebrities in the Press

There was a substantial amount of discussion in the press of the qualities women desired in their 'perfect man'. Various features and news articles that discussed marriage and family life portrayed good 'fatherly' qualities as important. A reinforced connection between normative ideals of masculinity and fatherhood can also be found in these newspapers, yet a more companionate ideal of marriage was common, and fathers' authority was questioned and contrasted with the trope of the more domineering Victorian patriarch.⁶⁵ The press created a fictional figure of the ideal man in this period, and increasingly explicitly attempted to

measure and influence the behaviour and attitudes of readers.⁶⁶ The press, like mass romantic literature, was a hugely important cultural medium and influential in terms of ideals of gender; indeed, it reached a peak circulation in the early 1950s, and two newspapers used here, the Daily Mirror and Daily Express, led the field in circulation.⁶⁷ The focus on men and masculinity was a significant development. This was demonstrated by the foundation of the first modern men's magazine, Men Only, in 1935, and although it stated that women had no place within the magazine, how to please and impress them was frequently discussed. In October 1957, for example, a Men Only article highlighted the qualities women wanted, with 'strong and protective' and being desirous of children promoted as worthwhile characteristics.⁶⁸ Likewise, in Lilliput, originally targeted at men, and later bought out by Men Only, a similar article was published in December 1955, stating 'Basically, the girl seeks the man who can be a father as well as a husband: she is voting for her unborn children by proxy.' The claim that a woman's mothering 'function suffuses her entire personality' supported this point; again, the connection between motherhood and femininity further underlined the desirability of a strong link between fatherhood and masculinity.⁶⁹ Such magazines can indeed be seen as the male equivalent of Mills & Boon novels in their escapist narratives; the exciting lives portrayed were quite different to the realities inhabited by many readers. As Justin Bengry has illustrated, these magazines can also be understood with a homosexual readership in mind, and though editors may have courted this audience, the appeal to heterosexual men was fundamental to success.⁷⁰

Popular newspapers realised that discussing women's expectations of a perfect man was an exploitable theme. In the Daily Express in 1946, this was explored through a reader's letter asking for advice. According to the article, 6,539 letters were received in response. The reader's problem was that she did not know whether to marry an older man who was good with her son, or her childhood sweetheart who was unreliable. Though it was stated that

readers were evenly divided on the matter, her son was prioritised in all letters printed, and even those who supported the unreliable man suggested he might make a good father after all. Letters focused on the differing value of love or security within marriage, yet the child's welfare was paramount, and the fatherly qualities of a man were valued as much as his potential as a husband.⁷¹ The focus on the case of one reader was typical of the increasing human-interest content in these newspapers. Yet, this single story also allowed for a more generalised discussion of the ideal man, and the selection of letters printed furthered the endorsement of a family-orientated masculinity that was increasingly common.

Such newspapers printed numerous letters discussing 'the ideal man', although the content of letters demonstrates as much about what editors deemed to be 'ideal' as the readership. Being 'fond of children' was a criterion frequently endorsed from the interwar period onwards, reinforcing the notion of desirable masculinity as family-orientated.⁷² This criterion was also highlighted in other individual cases, such as the discussion of nineteen-year-old actress Pat Kirkwood's search for her ideal man. Her requirements included liking children and being over thirty years old.⁷³ Furthermore, from the late 1940s, newspapers published quizzes and surveys in which readers could assess how they (or their partners) measured up as a husband.⁷⁴ Such quizzes created the figure of an ideal man as concerned first and foremost about the welfare of his wife and children.⁷⁵ Many commentators and journalists sought to embrace a more progressive vision of the family centred on a companionate marriage.⁷⁶ One quiz rejected completely the father who asserted his authority whole-heartedly; doing so in matters relating to childcare was worth fewer points than leaving the children entirely to his wife.⁷⁷ Yet the press remained a patriarchal institution. While romance novelists used men's position as potential fathers to infantilise women, voices in the press frequently reiterated fathers' importance in the private sphere of family life as well as the public world of work, thereby underlining men's authority in a different way.⁷⁸

There were ambiguities and contradictions within newspapers, which represent a collection of different, contradictory parts rather than a coherent whole. This period witnessed a striking trend in the popular press of focusing on male celebrities as fathers. The coupling of attractive famous men with fatherhood further illustrates the re-connection of normative masculinities and paternity. Celebrity culture was becoming an increasingly important within newspapers in the interwar period, as coverage moved from focusing on the goings-on of the upper classes to the new celebrities of the cinema. The focus on film stars, and other celebrities, increased dramatically from the 1930s, as powerful press barons insisted on greater coverage of this new medium.⁷⁹ The family lives and fatherhood of male celebrities became scrutinised from the 1930s, but particularly during and after World War II, encouraging active fatherhood to become normalised as part of desirable masculinity. British and American actors, comedians, politicians, royals and sportsmen were subject to such attention, as were soldiers, seamen and pilots, wartime celebrities.⁸⁰

Film stars and other celebrities were particularly influential in terms of women's ideas of the 'perfect man'. As Bingham notes, actors were admired for their 'sex appeal' and were 'undoubtedly objects of a female heterosexual gaze'.⁸¹ As such, the association of such men and their masculine identities with proud and active fatherhood was powerful, and again fatherhood allowed a combination of sexually attractive, 'manly' masculinity with a caring side. Newspapers such as the Daily Express directly assessed such film stars' potential as 'ideal husbands' – using Rudolph Valentino as an example in 1931, for instance.⁸² Surveys about actors and the cinema frequently found that individuals stated that such cultural influences were hugely significant: in Mayer's study, numerous respondents suggested that actors and their on-screen characters influenced their choice of partner, with one noting she wanted 'a he-man – no-one else will do'.⁸³ As Giles suggests, despite the patchy evidence, popular cultural norms were no doubt influential on and played out within lived relations of

family life.⁸⁴ Indeed, the idolisation of film stars and the impact it could have on the men women wanted was referenced in romantic literature: in Sophie Cole's *M for Maria*, for example, the hero Tom, is said to look 'awfully like Robert Donat'.⁸⁵

As early as 1932, the *Daily Express* focused on Hollywood stars as parents, noting in its headline, 'Famous Stars Join The New Baby Cult: Paternity "Fans", Too, In Hollywood'. It discussed male and female actors who had recently had children.⁸⁶ In 1936, the *Daily Mirror* featured a photograph of John Halliday holding his son on the entertainment page, as men became the focus of such parenting features more exclusively.⁸⁷ Military men were particularly prominent in press coverage in the war, as the human-interest stories of their family lives provided excellent material for popular newspapers. The soldier, a potent symbol of masculinity, was frequently pictured with an infant or baby. The assured masculinity of such men, partly signified by their uniforms,⁸⁸ allowed them to be associated with the feminine world of the family without their status being compromised. Yet such coverage also reasserted the superiority of masculinity at a time of instability. The family provided an obvious justification for the war, and the idea that men were directly protecting their families was often explicit, thus furthering their masculine status as protectors and counteracting the potential brutalisation of masculine ideals in wartime.

Many photographs of soldiers with their children were published in the limited space available in newspapers throughout paper rationing.⁸⁹ A *Daily Mirror* front page of 1941 featured a photograph of a soldier collecting a medal, with his toddler daughters alongside him [FIGURE 1].⁹⁰ This theme continued after the war, throughout demobilisation. A *Mirror* article of December 1945, for example, focused on 'Men Without Children', stating that those still abroad would be dreaming of home.⁹¹ Further, a photograph of a father and son both smiling broadly was published in 1948, demonstrating the joy of their reunion. The caption gave details of a ship just returned from the Far East, and indeed it is significant that news

about this ship's homecoming was delivered through a personal story.⁹² As such, the fatherhood of soldiers remained an important aspect of this coverage, supporting Sonya Rose's suggestion of a tempered masculinity during the war,⁹³ but also pointing to a reconnection of masculinity with virility and fatherhood at a time of shifting ideas about gender roles,⁹⁴ and increasingly prominent debates about homosexuality.⁹⁵

[image 1]

FIGURE 1, Front page of the Daily Mirror, 3 March 1941, featuring Flight Sergeant C.A. Saunders with his two daughters. Reprinted with permission, ©Mirrorpix.

Following the war, actors, comedians, sportsmen and other celebrities were held up as model fathers, but also scrutinised against the criterion of their fatherhood. Like soldiers, sportsmen were again seen as models of masculinity, and their physical appearance could enhance this ideal. They too were frequently identified as fathers in the press, with

photographs and articles about footballers, boxers, Olympians and their children all published in the late 1940s and 1950s, in the main pages of newspapers and in sports sections. The highlighting of their fatherhood served furthermore to underline the virility of these men. This encouraged the inclusion of active fatherhood into desirable masculinity from the perspective of men too, as principal readers of sports coverage.⁹⁶ A photograph of a Plymouth Argyle footballer, for example, was published in the Mirror in 1953 [FIGURE 2]. He was shown feeding his seven-week-old daughter, apparently in the dressing room of Plymouth's ground.⁹⁷ It is likely this photograph was staged, rather than a spontaneous capturing of events during half-time, as the caption suggested, indicating the desire of editors and journalists to actively promote this 'softer' side of masculinity, and connect this with normative, sexually attractive manhood. The accepted, even endorsed, intrusion of babies into the masculine world of sports, and the most masculine of spaces, a professional football changing room, sent out a clear message that children and families could constitute a desirable part of masculine identity.

[image 2]

FIGURE 2, Photograph of Neil Dougall, printed in the Daily Mirror, 14 November 1953, p.9. The caption, titled 'Half-time refresher' explained that his baby daughter 'calls for refreshment', so 'he takes her to a quiet corner of the dressing-room at Home Park. His elder daughter ... watches the manoeuvre intently'. Reprinted with permission, ©Mirrorpix.

American and British film and television stars were popular subjects for newspapers, and the Daily Mirror and Daily Express published images of and stories about the fatherhood and children of men such as James Mason, Errol Flynn, Kenneth More, David Nixon, Burt Lancaster, Stewart Granger, Robert Mitchum, Dickie Valentine, Lonnie Donegan, Charlton Heston and others.⁹⁸ A lengthy interview with Kenneth More was published in the Mirror in 1955, for example, which discussed More changing nappies and potty-training, alongside his film roles.⁹⁹ Articles about Burt Lancaster and Stewart Granger, in 1955 and 1956 respectively, included images of both men with their children, and also half-naked in films, an extreme example of the rhetorical merging of a harder, sexually attractive masculinity with a softer, tender side through fatherhood.¹⁰⁰ The manly figures of sportsmen and soldiers could be pictured with babies without their masculinity being compromised – but at the same time, this promoted the message that if the most masculine of men could feed their baby and happily discuss their fatherhood, any man could do the same. This tied into the wider encouragement of men to involve themselves in their children's lives, a theme to be found

throughout the press at this time. The ever-increasing coverage of celebrity culture and idealisation of celebrities as ideal-types alongside discussion of the family life of male stars thus reinforced the conception of desirable masculinity as family-orientated, while also underlining men's authority and importance within their families as well as in a more public role. In this case, we see a degree of modernity embodied in the new figures of the sports and film stars, yet a reworking of traditional patriarchal notions of male authority. Unlike in romance literature, this was not an overt expression of traditional male authority, but a reiteration of this within the new confines of modern fatherhood.

Conclusion

In romantic literature and throughout the press, there existed an ideal of the 'perfect man', and throughout this period, this ideal increasingly included the potential of caring and involved fatherhood. The coupling of normative, sexually attractive masculinity with fatherhood served to reassert masculine authority at a time of instability, by encompassing the changing nature of fatherhood within a longer tradition of manliness. Moreover, romance writers capitalised on fatherhood as a means to reiterate the trope of a strong male figure who ruled over women and children with benign, reassuring authority. Here, romance literature departed from other media at this time, which more actively negotiated and welcomed newer models of shared authority between men and women.¹⁰¹ Romance literature subscribed to the postwar cultural emphasis on the importance of love between soulmates as crucial,¹⁰² yet this romantic mutuality was contained within an older context of gendered hierarchy and an emphasis on love between men and women as positively defined by a hierarchical power relationship. Romance writers, though mostly female and writing for a female audience, were paradoxically most extreme in their reiteration of male authority over women, while many articles in the press used fatherhood to assert men's significance in a different, private sphere,

through a combination of sexual attraction with the potential for caring and tender parenthood. As such, both media invested in gendered hierarchies using different rhetorics. While mutuality in romantic relationships was acknowledged in these discourses, more modern ideals of gender equality were co-opted and reworked within older patriarchal traditions. In this way, in different contexts, fatherhood provided a way of combining male authority with a gentler side in various romantic visions of the 'perfect man'.

Laura King

University of Leeds

Select Bibliography

Bingham, A. (2009) *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press 1918-1978* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press).

Bingham, A. (2004) *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

Brooke, S. (2001) 'Gender and Working Class Identity in Britain during the 1950s', *Journal of Social History* 34(4), 773-95.

Bruzzi, S. (2009) *Bringing Up Daddy: Fatherhood and Masculinity in Post-War Hollywood* (London: BFI).

Finch, J. and Summerfield, P. (1991) 'Social Reconstruction and the Emergence of Companionate Marriage, 1945-59', in D. Clark (ed.), *Marriage, Domestic Life and Social Change* (London: Routledge), 7-32.

Francis, M. (2002) 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal* 45(3), 637-52.

Giles, J. (2009) *Women, Identity and Private Life in Britain, 1900-50* (Basingstoke:

Macmillan).

King, L. (2012) 'Hidden Fathers: The Significance of Fatherhood in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', *Contemporary British History* 26(1), 25-46.

McAlear, J. (1999) *Passion's Fortune: The Story of Mills & Boon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

McAlear, J (1992) *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain, 1914-50* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

Rose, S.O. (2004) 'Temperate Heroes: Concepts of Masculinity in Second World War Britain', in S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 177-97.

Szreter, S and Fisher, K. (2010) *Sex before the Sexual Revolution: Intimate Life in England 1918-1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

¹ Kathryn Blair (1958, repr. 1979), *Love This Enemy* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 141. Kathryn Blair and Rosalind Brett were pseudonyms of Lilian Warren. Original pseudonyms are used throughout this chapter.

² J. McAleer (1999) *Passion's Fortune: The Story of Mills & Boon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 210.

³ Blair, *Love*, p. 74

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 90-2.

⁵ For example, A. Bingham (2004) *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 237; M. Collins (2003) *Modern Love: An Intimate History of Men and Women in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London: Atlantic, 2003), pp. 90-3; J. Finch and P. Summerfield (1991) 'Social Reconstruction and the Emergence of Companionate Marriage, 1945-59', in D. Clark (ed.), *Marriage, Domestic Life and Social Change* (London: Routledge), p. 7.

⁶ McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, p. 6; J. McAleer (1990) 'Scenes from Love and Marriage: Mills and Boon and the Popular Publishing Industry in Britain, 1908-1950', *Twentieth Century British History* 3(1), p. 288.

⁷ J. Bailey (2012) *Parenting in England 1760-1830: Emotion, Identity, and Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 109; H. French and M. Rothery (2012) *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, c.1600-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 197, 213, 222. As Connell suggests, masculinity 'is the social elaboration of the biological function of fatherhood'. R.W. Connell (1995, repr. 2005) *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 52.

⁸ Bailey, *Parenting*, p. 70.

⁹ S. Kingsley Kent (1999) *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640-1990* (London: Routledge), p. 279; A. Light (1991) *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* (London: Routledge), p. 8.

¹⁰ For example, Bingham, *Gender*, p. 242; J. Bourke (1994) *Working Class Cultures in Britain 1890-1960: Gender, class and ethnicity* (London: Routledge), pp. 81-9; S. Brooke (2001) 'Gender and Working Class Identity in Britain during the 1950s', *Journal of Social History* 34(4), 783-9; T. Fisher (2004) 'Fatherhood and the Experience of Working-Class Fathers in Britain, 1900-1939', PhD Thesis (University of Edinburgh), pp. 3-5; M. Francis (2007) 'A Flight from Commitment? Domesticity, Adventure and the Masculine Imaginary in Britain after the Second World War', *Gender and History* 19(1), pp. 163-85; M. Francis (2002) 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent research on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal* 45(3), pp. 637-52; Segal, in contrast, finds little evidence of change in masculinity in the 1950s. L. Segal (2007) *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* 3rd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), ch.1.

¹¹ As suggested elsewhere, focusing on a 'family-orientated' masculinity may be more helpful. L. King (2012) 'Hidden Fathers: The Significance of Fatherhood in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', *Contemporary British History* 26(1), p. 27.

¹² On the instability of gender relations in the 1950s, see: Brooke, 'Gender', pp. 773-95; on links between (homo)sexuality and masculinity, see M. Houlbrook (2005) *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 167-94 and H. Smith, 'Love, Sex, Work and Friendship: Northern, Working-Class Men and Sexuality in the First Half of the Twentieth-Century', ch.3 of this book.

¹³ J. Mansfield (2010) 'The Brute-Hero: The 1950s and Echoes of the North', *Literature and History* 19(1), p. 46.

¹⁴ C. Langhamer (2012) 'Love, Selfhood and Authenticity in Post-War Britain', *Cultural and Social History* 9(2), pp. 292-3.

¹⁵ On continuity in editorial policy at Mills & Boon, see: McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, pp. 197-8.

¹⁶ King, 'Hidden Fathers'.

¹⁷ The 50 romance novels by no means represent romantic literature as a whole, but the formulaic nature of the genre would indicate that the conclusions drawn are likely to apply more generally. Four newspapers have been explored, using keyword searches in digital archives: *Daily Express*, *Daily Mirror*, *Manchester Guardian* and *The Times*, though little was found in the latter two publications. Two popular men's magazines, *Men Only* and *Lilliput*, supplement this selection.

¹⁸ K. Fisher (2006) *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage in Britain 1918-1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 205-7.

¹⁹ Finch and Summerfield, 'Social Reconstruction', p. 10; S. Szreter and K. Fisher (2010) *Sex before the Sexual Revolution: Intimate Life in England 1918-1963* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 201-11, 225.

²⁰ J. Giles (1995) *Women, Identity and Private Life in Britain, 1900-50* (Basingstoke: Macmillan), p. 53.

²¹ J. McAleer (1992) *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain, 1914-50* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 114.

²² McAleer, 'Scenes', pp. 271-2.

²³ McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, pp. 86, 92-3, 97. Also see R. McKibbin (1998) *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 490-1.

²⁴ McAleer, *Popular Reading*, pp. 112-3.

-
- ²⁵ Giles, *Women*, p. 53; McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, pp. 195-6.
- ²⁶ Szreter and Fisher, *Sex*, pp. 178-9, 198-9.
- ²⁷ K. Blair (1959, repr. 1976) *The Man at Mulera* (London: Mills & Boon), pp. 15-16; V. Winspear (1961, repr. 1967) *Wife Without Kisses* (London: Mills & Boon), pp. 22-3.
- ²⁸ Blair, *Love*, p. 74.
- ²⁹ S. Seale (1941, repr. 1971) *Barn Dance* (London: Mills & Boon, 1971), p. 44.
- ³⁰ J. S. MacLeod (1947, repr. 1985) *The House of Oliver* (London: Mills & Boon). Jean S. MacLeod was a pseudonym of Jean Walton.
- ³¹ Winspear, *Wife*, p. 114.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 187.
- ³³ A. Weale (1956, repr. 1970) *The Lonely Shore* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 94. Anne Weale was a pseudonym of Jay Blakeney.
- ³⁴ Weale, *The Lonely Shore*, p. 39.
- ³⁵ For discussion on heroine's greater independence, see: McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, pp. 199-200.
- ³⁶ MacLeod, *The House*, p. 87.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 240, 242-4, 251-3.
- ³⁸ McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, p. 6.
- ³⁹ Blair, *The Man*, p. 19.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- ⁴² B. Cartland (1945, repr. 1978) *Escape from Passion* (London: Arrow Books), pp. 153, 157-8, 200.

⁴³ For example, H. Wilde, *The Doctor's Choice* (London: Mills & Boon, 1964), p. 58; A. Vinton (1965, repr. 1985) *Lady in Harley Street* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 77; J. Dingwell (1969 repr. 1984) *September Street* (Ontario: Harlequin), p. 269.

⁴⁴ Giles, *Women*, p. 53.

⁴⁵ McAleer, *Popular Reading*, pp. 113-15, 249; McAleer, *Passion's Fortune*, p. 173. Also see J. Dixon (1999) *The Romance Fiction of Mills & Boon, 1909-1990s* (London: UCL Press), p. 63.

⁴⁶ Bourke, *Working Class Cultures*, p. 50.

⁴⁷ A. Vinton (1957, repr. 1969) *Caprice in Hospital Blue* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 137.

⁴⁸ B. Stanton (1951) *Gone is the Thrill* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 93; Weale, *The Lonely Shore*, pp. 12, 14; Blair, *Love*, pp. 11, 33; R. Leigh (1968, repr. 1976) *And Then Came Love* (London: Mills & Boon), pp. 13, 16. Barbara Stanton was a pseudonym for John P. Hunt and a female partner, and was one of the few men who wrote under a female alter ego.

⁴⁹ Blair, *Love*, p. 25.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁵¹ Leigh, *And Then*, pp. 13, 16

⁵² J. S. MacLeod (1954, repr. 1970) *The Man in Authority* (London: Mills & Boon), pp. 8, 38.

⁵³ Winspear, *Wife*, p. 68.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁵⁵ S. Seale (1953, repr. 1985) *Turn to the West* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 189.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁵⁷ Blair, *The Man*, p. 161; Dingwell, *September Street*, p. 278, also see: pp. 267, 304, 345. Also see: Winspear, *Wife*, pp. 88, 156.

⁵⁸ For example, R. Brett (1954, repr. 1979) *Whispering Palms* (London: Mills & Boon) pp. 52, 62, 91, 92, 142, 172, 185; M. Burchell (1941, repr. 1972) *Always Yours* (London: Mills & Boon), pp. 44, 45, 96, 131, 186, 187; E. Farnes (1952, repr. 1976), *Magic Symphony* (Toronto: Harlequin), pp. 6, 31, 32, 174; Dingwell, *September Street*, pp. 219, 220, 224, 235, 249, 253, 264, 265, 266, 273, 275, 279, 311; Seale, *Turn*, pp. 93, 130, 189. Mary Burchell was a pseudonym of Ida Cook and Eleanor Farnes was a pseudonym for Grace Rutherford.

⁵⁹ For example, Cartland, *Escape*; J. Dingwell (1959, repr. 1975) *The House in the Timberwoods* (London: Mills & Boon); E. Farnes (1952, repr. 1965), *The House by the Lake* (London: Woman's Weekly Library); P. Matthewman (1950) *The Veil Between* (London: Mills & Boon); Seale, *Barn Dance*. This occurred in 22 of the 50 novels examined, with at least six more presenting a similar but more ambiguous situation.

⁶⁰ Blair, *The Man*, pp. 99-100. Also see R. Brett (1955, repr. 1972) *Sweet Waters* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 49.

⁶¹ Rachel Lindsay (1961, repr. 1973) *Song in my Heart* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 6; Kathryn Blair (1962, repr. 1968) *The Affair in Tangier* (London: Mills & Boon), p. 6; Leigh, *And Then*, p. 28. Rachel Lindsay was a pseudonym of Roberta Leigh.

⁶² Brett, *Whispering Palms*, pp. 170-3.

⁶³ Kathryn Blair [1951], *Mayenga Farm* (London: Mills & Boon, 1975), p.115; Farnes, *Magic Symphony*, pp. 23, 54.

⁶⁴ Further evidence of this is to be found in films; as Bruzzi suggests, in Hollywood, at least, the traditional patriarchal father figure was not challenged until the 1960s/1970s. S. Bruzzi (2005) *Bringing Up Daddy: Fatherhood and Masculinity in Post-War Hollywood* (London: BFI), p. xviii.

⁶⁵ L. King (2011) 'Fatherhood and Masculinity in Britain, c.1918-1960', PhD thesis

(University of Sheffield), pp. 165-92.

⁶⁶ King, 'Hidden Fathers', p. 26.

⁶⁷ C. Seymour-Ure (1996) *The British Press and Broadcasting since 1945*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Blackwell), pp. 28-9.

⁶⁸ *Men Only*, October 1957, pp. 11-14.

⁶⁹ *Lilliput*, 222, December 1955, pp. 37-9.

⁷⁰ J. Bengry (2009), 'Courting the Pink Pound: Men Only and the Queer Consumer, 1935-39' *History Workshop Journal* 68(1), pp. 122-48.

⁷¹ *Daily Express*, 13 May 1946, p. 2.

⁷² See, for example: *Daily Mirror*, 18 December 1937, p. 17; *Daily Mirror*, 16 June 1939, p. 14; *Daily Mirror*, 29 June 1939, p. 9. Also see: Bingham, *Gender*, p. 241.

⁷³ *Daily Mirror*, 23 February 1940, p. 5.

⁷⁴ King, 'Hidden Fathers', pp. 28-31.

⁷⁵ *Daily Mirror*, 11 January 1945, p. 7; *Daily Mirror*, 23 April 1949, p. 2; *Daily Mirror*, 4 October 1949, p. 4; *Daily Express*, 25 January 1954, p. 4.

⁷⁶ Bingham, *Gender*, pp. 217-18.

⁷⁷ *Daily Mirror*, 4 October 1949, p. 4.

⁷⁸ On the increased emphasis on fathers' importance, see King 'Hidden Fathers'.

⁷⁹ A. Bingham (2009) *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press 1918-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 239.

⁸⁰ Bingham, *Gender*, pp. 218-29; Bingham, *Family Newspapers?*, pp. 229-61.

⁸¹ Bingham, *Gender*, p. 227.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁸³ J.P. Mayer (1948) *British Cinema and their Audiences* (London: Denis Dobson), pp. 26-29.

⁸⁴ Giles, *Women*, p. 53.

⁸⁵ S. Cole (1944) *M for Maria* (London: Ward, Lock & Co), p. 10.

⁸⁶ *Daily Express*, 23 February 1932, p. 3.

⁸⁷ *Daily Mirror*, 4 August 1936, p. 20.

⁸⁸ J. Bourke (1996) *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion), p. 128.

⁸⁹ On this connection in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, see Bailey, *Parenting*, pp. 110, 114.

⁹⁰ *Daily Mirror*, 3 March 1941, p. 1. For further examples, see *Daily Mirror*, 8 February 1940, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 1 March 1940, p. 3; *Daily Mirror*, 15 April 1940, p. 11; *Daily Mirror*, 17 February 1942, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 9 January 1945, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 23 April 1945, pp. 4-5.

⁹¹ *Daily Mirror*, 15 December 1945, p. 2.

⁹² *Daily Mirror*, 8 January 1948. Numerous examples can be found in the *Daily Mirror* throughout the 1950s, often on the front page. For example, see *Daily Mirror*, 20 February 1954, p. 8; *Daily Mirror*, 2 March 1954, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 26 May 1956, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 11 August 1956, p. 9; *Daily Mirror*, 27 June 1957, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 30 November 1957, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 27 June 1958, p. 7; *Daily Mirror*, 19 July 1958, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 13 April 1959, p. 7.

⁹³ S.O. Rose (2004) 'Temperate Heroes: Concepts of Masculinity in Second World War Britain', in S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), pp. 177-97.

⁹⁴ M.R. Higonnet, J. Jenson, S. Michel and M. Collins (1987) 'Introduction', in M.R. Higonnet, J. Jenson, S. Michel and M. Collins (eds), *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two*

World Wars (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), p. 1-17; S.O. Rose (2003) *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 107-50.

⁹⁵ Houlbrook, *Queer London*, p. 238.

⁹⁶ For example, see: *Daily Mirror*, 29 October 1947, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 13 August 1956, p. 13; *Daily Mirror*, 13 February 1957, p. 16; *Daily Mirror*, 5 November 1959, p. 31.

⁹⁷ *Daily Mirror*, 14 November 1953, p. 9.

⁹⁸ *Daily Mirror*, 21 August 1952, p. 2; *Daily Mirror*, 8 January 1954, p. 1; *Daily Mirror*, 17 February 1954, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 1 August 1955, p. 7; *Daily Mirror*, 9 September 1955, p. 8; *Daily Mirror*, 10 September 1955, p. 9; *Daily Mirror*, 2 July 1956, p. 8; *Daily Mirror*, 28 July 1956, p. 5; *Daily Mirror*, 17 January 1957, p. 10; *Daily Mirror*, 4 September 1957, p. 5; *Daily Express*, 17 March 1958, p. 10.

⁹⁹ *Daily Mirror*, 1 August 1955, p.7; *Daily Mirror*, 2 July 1956, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Daily Mirror*, 10 September 1955, p. 9.

¹⁰¹ As Finch and Summerfield highlight, a 'contradictory picture' of companionate marriage emerges in this period, and as Langhamer has noted, models of mutuality in love were one expression of many. Finch and Summerfield, 'Social Reconstruction', p. 17; C. Langhamer (2007) 'Love and Courtship in mid-twentieth-century England', *The Historical Journal* 50 (1), pp. 174-5.

¹⁰² Langhamer, 'Love, Selfhood', esp. pp. 283-84.