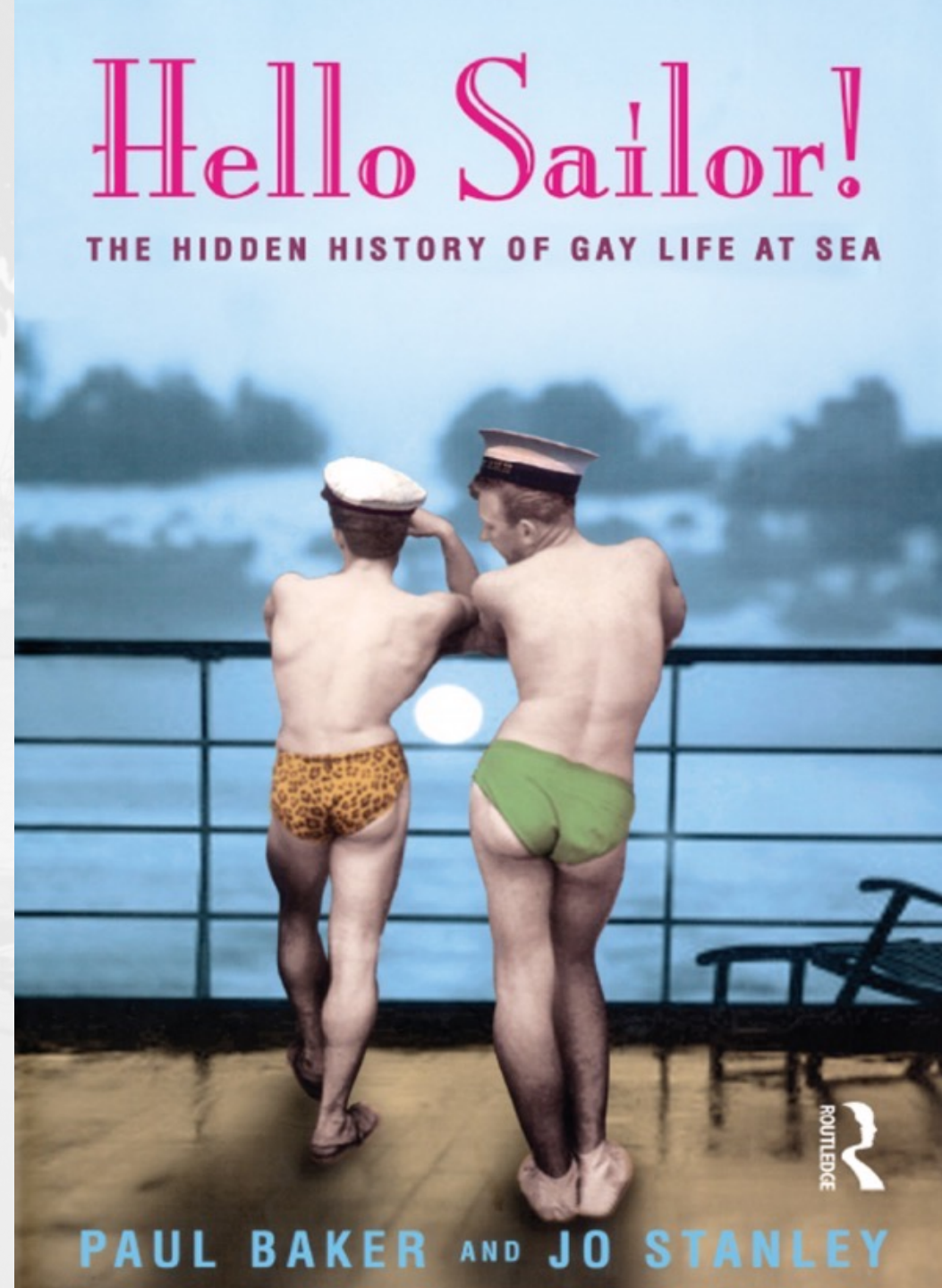


# Queer Spaces at Sea

Queer culture on merchant ships 1950 – '80

## ‘The sailor’

- Stereotype
- Hello Sailor!
  - Baker & Stanley
- Queer
  - Not heteroseksual, -normative



# British queer subculture

- Gay men
  - Stewards department
  - 25 - 50% of total crew
- Characteristics
  - Polari, drag & visibility
- Swedish ships
  - Nilsson



Hello Sailor!

# Taboo

- Western society
- The Netherlands
  - Punishable
  - Curing
- Sexual revolution



Nationaal Archief

# Queer Spaces at Sea

- Dutch maritime history
  - Diversity of voices
- Dutch merchant ships?
  - Characteristics & factors
  - Experimenting
  - Land VS sea



# Oral history

- Interviews
  - Only source
  - Challenging
  - Snowball effect
- 7 respondents
  - Holland-America Line
  - Cargo ship



# Oral history

- Semi-structured
  - Comparability
- Collection
- Humans at Sea Studio
  - Short film
  - Interview fragments
  - Magnet wall



# Queer Spaces at Sea

memories of Charles & Gillis on  
*SS Rotterdam*



Zee van Ruimte



Queer Spaces at Sea. Memories of Charles & Gillis on ss Rotterdam.

# Results

- Holland-America Line
- Stewards department
  - Gays & lesbians
  - Scale



Harry Mosch

# Results

- Visibility
  - Crew messroom
  - Drag
- Activities
  - Parties in cabins
  - Foreign harbors

[FOTO BEMANNING IN DRAG  
AAN BOORD VAN SS ROTTERDAM,  
EIGEN COLLECTIE RESPONDENT]

Zee van Ruimte

# Fragments

- Knowledge of queer culture beforehand?
- Café Sjaak
  - Recruiting
  - Emancipation



# Fragments

- Introduction on board?
- Feminine nicknames



# Fragments

- Community?
- 'A warm bath, in a fairly hostile environment'



# Research

- Transcripts
  - Data
  - Thematic analysis
- Dutch perspective
- Rainbow Seas in Maritime Museums



Zee van Ruimte

# Identity

More free at sea than on land?

- Tolerance
  - Holiday, boredom & alcohol
- Liminal space
  - Between A & B





# Queer Spaces at Sea

Queer culture on merchant ships 1950 – '80