

LAMBDA LITERARY AWARD WINNER

The Transgender Studies Reader



Edited by
Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle

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Foreword

STEPHEN WHITTLE

Trans identities were one of the most written about subjects of the late twentieth century. New communities of transgender and transsexual people have created new industries, a new academic discipline, new forms of entertainment; they offer new challenges to politics, government, and law, and new opportunities to broaden the horizons of everyone who has a trans person as their neighbor, coworker, friend, partner, parent, or child. Any Internet search, whether of Web sites, news articles, or academic papers, will produce thousands of results. A recent Google search for “transsexual” gave 3 million hits. Using the term “transgender” in an attempt to reduce the number porn sites actually retrieved far more: 7.5 million hits. The sites range from small personal projects to very large ones, such as the U.S. social organization Transgender Forum;¹ the UK’s political lobby group, Press for Change;² the educational site for those in the Far East, Transgender Asia;³ sites for professional service providers such as the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association,⁴ and many health reference sites such as Trans-health.⁵

A trans identity is now accessible almost anywhere, to anyone who does not feel comfortable in the gender role they were attributed with at birth, or who has a gender identity at odds with the labels “man” or “woman” credited to them by formal authorities. The identity can cover a variety of experiences. It can encompass discomfort with role expectations, being queer, occasional or more frequent cross-dressing, permanent cross-dressing and cross-gender living, through to accessing major health interventions such as hormonal therapy and surgical reassignment procedures. It can take up as little of your life as five minutes a week or as much as a life-long commitment to reconfiguring the body to match the inner self. Regardless of the fact that trans identities are now more available, the problems of being trans have by no means been resolved. In many parts of the world, having a trans identity still puts a person at risk of discrimination, violence, and even death.

A trans person might be a butch or a camp, a transgender or a transsexual, an MTF or FTM or a cross-dresser; they might, in some parts of the world, consider themselves a lady boy, *katoey*, or even the reclaimed Maori identities *whakawahine* or *whakatane*. Some communities and their terms are ancient, such as the Hijra from Northern India, but many are more modern. The word “trans,” referring to a “trans woman” or “trans man” (of whatever subtype of trans identity) is a very recent take on the umbrella term “transgender.” Although there had been some previous usage in the 1990s (e.g., in the creation of the online group Trans-Academics), “trans” as a stand-alone term did not come into formal usage until it was coined by a parliamentary discussion group in London in 1998, with the deliberate intention of being as inclusive as possible when negotiating equality legislation. Cultural spaces and historiographies are constantly reframing the community, the identities, the cultures, and the language. We see new language being developed constantly; for example “per” as a pronoun was

developed by UK community members with nonexistent gender identities, and similarly the U.S. term “*hir*” for those who have both.

The growth of home computer use in the 1990s, and the encouragement of many trans women at the forefront of information technology and Internet development, was crucial to the development of a new, geographically dispersed, diverse trans community in the 1990s (Whittle, 1998). Online, this newly formed community was able to discuss its experiences of fear, shame, and discrimination, and, as a result, many community members developed newly politicized personal identities. This new politicization forged a determination to change the world, by every means possible, for the next generation of trans youth. Significant changes have indeed taken place. At the very least, where once there was *pure* ignorance and prejudice of trans issues, we now see *informed* prejudice and discrimination, which is more easily addressed through the courts and legislature.

The work of trans activists and trans academics has always been linked, not least because of close communication within the new community, but also because of our shared experiences. In the 1970s and '80s, many trans people were unable to obtain or retain a job or a home, or to protect themselves from violence or discrimination. Yet the changes brought about in the '90s have enabled many of us to build new lives, families, and careers. As will be seen within this collection, in the 1990s trans became a cultural obsession, exerting a fascination across many scientific and humanities fields, and many communities of interest. It became an increasingly visible part of everyday life in diverse urban contemporary communities, as well as in some rural settings. It is now possible, simply by “telling” or theorizing my own life and the lives of other trans people, for me to build an academic career based on the fascination of the “Other” with people like me. It is their obsession that has given us the opportunity to use the power of the media to tell our stories, to theorize our lives, and to seek equality and justice.

In this collection we have included work from before the 1990s that is representative of the vast majority of work of those times, when the primary concern was the psychology and medicalization of transsexualism. In the 1990s, a new scholarship, informed by community activism, started from the premise that to be trans was not to have a mental or medical disorder. This fundamental shift was built upon within academia, and enabled trans men and women to reclaim the reality of their bodies, to create with them what they would, and to leave the linguistic determination of those bodies open to exploration and invention. To this extent, trans studies is a true linking of feminist and queer theory.

Exploring personal knowledge of trans possibilities in the classroom is far from easy, when few students have ever had to critically address their own gendered self. However, we can surmise some things from this collection, when presenting the history of trans studies. Of central concern is the fact that the taxonomy of sex and gender seemingly has become disordered; sex and gender themselves no longer appear as stable external categories but rather appear embedded in the individuals who experience them. This concern has derived from the postmodern process of deconstruction, in which modernity and its values, including gender, have been stripped away. The question of postmodern analysis is whether any reconstructive process can exist. For the trans person's understanding of the self, the question becomes whether gender, at the heart of self-understanding, can be theoretically recuperated. It is all very well having no theoretical place within the current gendered world, but that is not the daily lived experience. Real life affords trans people constant stigma and oppression based on the apparently unreal concept of gender. This is one of the most significant issues that trans people have brought to feminist and queer theory. Homophobia and sexism are not based on your genitals or with whom you sleep, but on how you perform the self in ways that are contraindicative to the heteronormative framework.

This brings us to another challenge, which is perhaps the most controversial issue in sex and gender theory. Is the basis of gender identity essential and biologically based, or is it socially constructed? Frequently, many non-trans theorists have used trans identities to support constructivist arguments. But increasingly, trans people are questioning whether the deeply held self-understandings they have can be entirely due to nurture and environment. There have been endless reasons given by psychologists for why trans people exist, but these are almost always shown to be based upon poor experimental procedures, using narrowly defined subject groups without relevant control groups, and with emphasis on issues that trans people would argue are not relevant. As such, the formal psycho-medical theories are falling rapidly by the wayside, and nothing has appeared in their place except some very limited evidence of biological differentiation that is so problematic that it cannot yet be said to have any proof value (Zhou et al., 1997).

The work of trans academics and theorists is increasingly moving trans people away from the discredited status of being mentally disordered, towards having expert knowledge of those who struggle to maintain the current strict gender regime, referred to by Kate Bornstein (1997) as “gender defenders.” Finally being able to accept our own sanity, trans people have created gender disorder by becoming “gender outlaws.” Whilst we can determine that trans people have always existed (within understandings contingent on time, space, and culture) this begs the question of whether trans is a natural or unnatural phenomena. Can a trans person be classed as intersex, or should there be any sex classification at all? Having a sex is apparently a prior determinant of being human, but as such it begs the meaning of what “human” is. One of the arguments made in legal trans theory is that etiology is always irrelevant in the claim to rights. Of course it isn’t, because we do not afford rights to vegetable material, and we limit the rights of non-human animals. It is in the claim to human rights that the question of what is “human” becomes over-riding. Increasingly we presume that language, as another predeterminant of humanity, overrides the determinant of biological sex: that is, a person is the gender they claim to be, regardless of sex status. But the language of sex and gender is inherently limited. As trans people challenge their exclusion from language, and therefore from basic human rights, sex itself is increasingly becoming an unsafe foundation for the legal foundation of the order of human life.

Telling the trans story, as part of the academic project, has become a project of narrative repetition in which trans people have told of their anguish. In recent years, the constant clamoring of voices has finally been heard, and sympathetic listeners have worked with formerly excluded trans people to create broader access to social spaces that range from local LGBT support groups to the halls of senior government. The ongoing battle for inclusion, equality, and recognition of our diversity within politics, the courts, the media, and in many other parts of life, has made many of us public figures. Television chat shows and documentaries are still seeking out trans people to appear; films have been made, and, of course, books have been written. Even after my own very visible thirty years in the public arena, I was astonished to discover that after my appearance on a television show in 2003, a month-long discussion had taken place on an e-mail list for gay bears, in which the participants debated whether sleeping with me (or people like me) would call their own sexual orientation into question. (I was rather pleased to discover that overall they concluded I was rather attractive and that sleeping with me would apparently not make them any less gay.) But the questioning that trans people present to others’ identities is a growing challenge to all who place their confidence in the binary rules of sexed lives: man/woman, male/female, masculine/feminine, straight/gay. We who are activists may think that the battle is being won, but perhaps it is not; recently, for example, religious and faith organizations have spent thousands of dollars trying to prevent legal advances for trans people.⁶ Teaching about trans issues in this politicized context allows our students to understand that trans identities challenge the

core beliefs of some of society's most powerful groups, and highlight the extent to which those groups wish to dominate the thinking of us all.

On reflection, if I was not trans, I imagine I would have been an ordinary woman (though that is too difficult for me to imagine), perhaps with a teaching job, cooking the meals, doing the garden, and bringing up the kids. Instead, I am part of the cultural crisis of the new millennium. I can personally vouch for the fact that in the mid-1970s, being trans was extremely dangerous and unpleasant, and yet I know from experience that trans people still pursued their identities. In recent years, embracing the trans community and its culture has led us to an exciting position at the cusp of one of the most significant social and political changes in the postmodern world. The struggles of trans people could have significant impact on all of our freedoms, depending upon who wins the war of ideologies surrounding the meaning of gender and sex.

One of the problems in putting together this collection is the ongoing paucity of empirical analysis of gender diversity. When I started teaching in 1990, my proposal for a class in sex and gender law was laughed at by some colleagues. Five years later there was still little interest. It took another five years for a course that would include the law of sexual orientation and gender identity to be established. This was partly due to the fact that although there is a vast array of medical and cultural comment, there is little in terms of in-depth empirical scientific, sociological, and legal investigation. As a result, gender issues are still viewed as "minority interests" rather than a matter of concern to us all.

For some reason, it has really only been trans men who have published in-depth empirical and sociological analyses. Extensive and in-depth social and legal studies on what it means to be a trans man have come from Aaron Devor (1997), Jason Cromwell (1999), Henry Rubin (2003), Jamison Green (2004), and me (2002). This highlights the serious lack of such a body of work representing trans women's voices. Despite the significant theoretical perspectives from trans women such as Sandy Stone (1991), Vivian K. Namaste (2000), Riki Wilchins (1997), and Susan Stryker (1994) there is a need to analyze why there is the difference in discipline. It may well be that the difficulty in "passing" makes it easier said than done for trans women to access the academy. It might be that the poverty that comes from more often supporting a prior family makes it harder for trans women to put together a research career. Whatever the reason, it highlights what the community already knows: trans women are most frequently the victims of discrimination because of their visibility.

The empirical and sociological analyses undertaken have shown that it is only by understanding and accepting that linguistic barriers still exclude the vast diversities of trans and non-trans identities, that we can possibly begin to accept that gender, like race, simply does not exist other than as an idea that has gained immeasurable power within the economies of social discourse. As we move into a new world, trans academics and theorists are creating new discursive practices which are repositioning the power of gender(s) and allowing more of us to have a say in what gender means, and in what its powers should be.

The *Transgender Studies Reader* is an effort to afford the student and teacher with a passage through the complexities of gender theory. It illustrates how trans people were problematized by science and society, and how trans people have responded by using the same intellectual tools that have oppressed them to place the "Other" in the problematized position. This process has not been easy. Our collection also illustrates the call to arms that has been issued by activist trans academics to make the study of the self and the Objective Other a reputable field.

In trans theory there is an inherent recognition that the trans position is problematic. The labels "man" and "woman" are inadequate to describe the trans experience, as the trans person's history and knowledge of the world is so different from that of "men born men" or "women born women." Yet the responsibility to recognize and articulate that position is no one else's but the self's. Trans theorists,

who have been able to authenticate the actual spheres of pain within trans lives, in conjunction with critiquing existing commentary, have enabled the coherent voices of trans people to be heard throughout the academy. This task was not without risk. The willingness of trans academics and theorists to give up their hard-fought-for privacy in their new gender role has undoubtedly cost the pioneers in the field. However, it has been through this articulation of the imposition of gendering on us by others that the position of suffering of those with trans identities has been heard.

The public articulation of a trans voice and trans consciousness has not only influenced sex and gender studies, but it also impacted on trans people themselves, and has provided a collection of materials that coherently explain their own experiences as genuine. Amongst other things, it has created new ways in which to be an activist, as well as new ways of being trans. It is now possible:

- to acknowledge and fight the injustice of transphobia, and to be trans publicly in order to truly represent transphobia's victims;
- to be in charge of what we do to our own trans bodies, and to take risks in the art of our bodies;
- to become queer, by refusing gender ascription and by claiming the transsexualism of the self;
- to turn away, ultimately, from the relative safety of queerness and go beyond that to claim a unique position of suffering; and finally,
- to welcome the rage afforded by that experience of suffering, a suffering that is part and parcel of being trans.

Teaching transgender theory is itself an activist process as well as an explorative process. The field is expanding exponentially along with the cultural changes that accompany it. It also poses a daunting problem—in order to hear the voices of trans people, as justice demands, one has to acknowledge the limits of sex and gender and move into a new world in which any identity can be imagined, performed, and named.

NOTES

1. Transgender Forum, available at <http://www.tgforum.com/>
2. Press for Change, available at <http://www.pfc.org.uk>
3. Transgender Asia <http://web.hku.hk/~sjwinter/TransgenderASIA/>
4. Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, available at <http://www.hbgda.org>
5. Trans-health, available at <http://www.trans-health.com/>
6. See The Liberator: Staver, M. D: Legal Update, Sept 2004 for an account of the involvement of the Christian fundamentalist group, Liberty Counsel, in the child care case of *Kanteras v. Kanteras* in the Florida courts at <http://www.lc.org/newsletter/lib/2004/09update.htm>, and the Christian Institute's briefing on the UK's Gender Recognition Bill at http://www.christian.org.uk/transsexualism/briefing_16jan04.pdf

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(De)Subjugated Knowledges

An Introduction to Transgender Studies

SUSAN STRYKER

IN 1995, I FOUND MYSELF STANDING IN LINE FOR MY TURN at the microphone in the Proshansky Auditorium of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. I was attending a conference called “Lesbian and Gay History,” organized by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS). I had just attended a panel discussion on “Gender and the Homosexual Role,” moderated by Randolph Trumbach, whose speakers consisted of Will Roscoe, Martha Vicinus, George Chauncey, Ramon Gutierrez, Elizabeth Kennedy, and Martin Manalansan. I had heard a great many interesting things about fairies and *berdaches* (as two-spirit Native Americans were still being called), Corn Mothers and molly-houses, passionate female friendships, butch-femme dyads, and the Southeast Asian gay diaspora, but I was nevertheless standing in line to register a protest. Each of the panelists was an intellectual star in his or her own right, but they were not, I thought, taken collectively, a very gender-diverse lot. From my perspective, with a recently claimed transsexual identity, they all looked pretty much the same: like nontransgender people. A new wave of transgender scholarship, part of a broader queer intellectual movement was, by that point in time, already a few years old. Why were there no transgender speakers on the panel? Why was the entire discussion of “gender diversity” subsumed within a discussion of sexual desire—as if the only reason to express gender was to signal the mode of one’s attractions and availabilities to potential sex partners?

As I stood in line, trying to marshal my thoughts and feelings into what I hoped would come across as an articulate and eloquent critique of gay historiography rather than a petulant complaint that nobody had asked *me* to be on that panel, a middle-aged white man on the other side of the auditorium reached the front of the other queue for the other microphone and began to speak. He had a serious issue he wanted to raise with the panelists, about a disturbing new trend he was beginning to observe. Transsexuals, he said, had started claiming that *they* were part of this new queer politics, which had to be stopped, of course, because everybody knew that transsexuals were profoundly psychopathological individuals who mutilated their bodies and believed in oppressive gender stereotypes and held reactionary political views, and they had been trying for years to infiltrate the gay and lesbian movement to destroy it and this was only the latest sick plot to...

It was an all-too-familiar diatribe—a line of thinking about transsexuality that passed at that time for a progressive point of view among many on the cultural left. At some point, in a fog of righteous anger, I leaned into the microphone on my side of the room and, interrupting, said, “I’m not sick.” The man across the auditorium stopped talking, and looked at me. I said, “I’m transsexual, and I’m not

sick. And I'm not going to listen to you say that about me, or people like me, any more." We locked eyes with each other for a few seconds, from opposite sides of the auditorium filled with a couple of hundred gay and lesbian scholars and activists (and a handful of trans people), until the man suddenly turned and huffed out of the room. I then proceeded to make what I still hoped was an eloquent and articulate critique of gay historiography. The man I interrupted, it turned out, was Jim Fouratt, a veteran of the 1969 gay rights riots at the Stonewall Inn, a founding member of the Gay Liberation Front, and a fixture on the fading New Left fringe of New York progressive politics. I now look back on that exchange as one of the few iconic moments in my public life—a representative of the transgender *arrivistes* stared down a representative of the old gay liberation vanguard, who abandoned the field of queer scholarship to a new interpretation of gender diversity. Sweet.¹

Ten years later, in 2005, I found myself once again in the Proshansky Auditorium, for another CLAGS conference. This one was called "Trans Politics, Social Change, and Justice."² The room was filled with a couple of hundred transgender activists and academics, and a smattering of nontransgender gay, lesbian, bisexual, and straight people. CLAGS itself was no longer being run by its founder, the eminent gay historian Martin Duberman, but by transgender legal studies scholar Paisley Currah. I was there to show *Screaming Queens*, my recently completed public television documentary on the 1966 Compton's Cafeteria riot, a transgender revolt that took place in San Francisco three years before Stonewall.³ Rather than struggling merely to speak and be heard during the closing plenary session, transgender voices engaged in a lively, sometimes acrimonious, debate. In the middle of a heated verbal exchange between radicals and centrists, a middle-aged white man patiently worked his way up the speaker's queue to the microphone. It was Jim Fouratt, of course. He complained that a new transgender hegemony was marginalizing and erasing the experiences of people like himself, that a revisionist history of sexual liberation and civil rights movement was rewriting the past in an Orwellian fashion, and—he would no doubt have continued with a further list of similar grievances had not numerous members of the audience shouted for him to sit down and shut up. He paused for a moment, gave up his struggle to be heard, and left the auditorium in a huff. Sad.

Those two moments in the Proshansky auditorium are, for me personally, bookends for a phase in the development of the field of transgender studies—a phase that Stephen Whittle and I have attempted, in a necessarily partial fashion that will unavoidably invite criticism, to document in *The Transgender Studies Reader*. What began with the efforts of emerging and marginally situated scholars and activists such as ourselves to be taken seriously on our own terms, and not pathologized and dismissed, has helped foster a sea-change in the academic study of gender, sex, sexuality, identity, desire, and embodiment. Histories have in fact been rewritten; the relationships with prior gay, lesbian, and feminist scholarship have been addressed; new modes of gendered subjectivity have emerged, and new discourses and lines of critical inquiry have been launched. Academic attention to transgender issues has shifted over the span of those ten years from the field of abnormal psychology, which imagined transgender phenomena as expressions of mental illness, and from the field of literary criticism, which was fascinated with representations of cross-dressing that it fancied to be merely symbolic, into fields that concern themselves with the day-to-day workings of the material world. "Transgender" moved from the clinics to the streets over the course of that decade, and from representation to reality.⁴

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the whole transgender thing back in the 1990s was the startling rapidity with which the term itself took root, and was applied to (if not always welcomed by) the sociocultural and critical-intellectual formations that were caught up in, or suddenly crystallized by, its wake.⁵ Given the struggles that have attended the advent of "transgender" as a descriptive term for a heterogeneous class of phenomena, merely to use the word is to take up a polemical and politicized position. In the end, we took the easy way out and pragmatically acknowledged that the term

“transgender,” for all its limitations and masked agendas, was the term in most common usage that best fit what we were trying to talk about. What began as a buzzword of the early 1990s has established itself as the term of choice, in both popular parlance and a variety of specialist discourses, for a wide range of phenomena that call attention to the fact that “gender,” as it is lived, embodied, experienced, performed, and encountered, is more complex and varied than can be accounted for by the currently dominant binary sex/gender ideology of Eurocentric modernity.

Transgender studies, as we understand it, is the academic field that claims as its purview transsexuality and cross-dressing, some aspects of intersexuality and homosexuality, cross-cultural and historical investigations of human gender diversity, myriad specific subcultural expressions of “gender atypicality,” theories of sexed embodiment and subjective gender identity development, law and public policy related to the regulation of gender expression, and many other similar issues. It is an interdisciplinary field that draws upon the social sciences and psychology, the physical and life sciences, and the humanities and arts. It is as concerned with material conditions as it is with representational practices, and often pays particularly close attention to the interface between the two. The frameworks for analyzing and interpreting gender, desire, embodiment, and identity now taking shape in the field of transgender studies have radical implications for a wide range of subject areas. Transgender phenomena have become a topical focus in fields ranging from musicology to religious studies to digital media; a theme in the visual, plastic, and performing arts; and a matter of practical concern in such fields as public health, plastic surgery, criminal justice, family law, and immigration.

Most broadly conceived, the field of transgender studies is concerned with anything that disrupts, denaturalizes, rearticulates, and makes visible the normative linkages we generally assume to exist between the biological specificity of the sexually differentiated human body, the social roles and statuses that a particular form of body is expected to occupy, the subjectively experienced relationship between a gendered sense of self and social expectations of gender-role performance, and the cultural mechanisms that work to sustain or thwart specific configurations of gendered personhood. The field of transgender studies seeks not only to understand the contents and mechanisms of those linkages and assumptions about sex and gender, biology and culture; it also asks who “we” are—we who make those assumptions and forge those links—and who “they” are, who seem to “us” to break them. The field asks why it should matter, ethically and morally, that people experience and express their gender in fundamentally different ways. It concerns itself with what we—we who have a passionate stake in such things—are going to do, politically, about the injustices and violence that often attend the perception of gender nonnormativity and atypicality, whether in ourselves or in others.

Transgender studies, at its best, is like other socially engaged interdisciplinary academic fields such as disability studies or critical race theory that investigate questions of embodied difference, and analyze how such differences are transformed into social hierarchies—without ever losing sight of the fact that “difference” and “hierarchy” are never mere abstractions; they are systems of power that operate on actual bodies, capable of producing pain and pleasure, health and sickness, punishment and reward, life and death. Transgender studies has a deep stake in showing how the seemingly anomalous, minor, exotic, or strange qualities of transgender phenomena are in fact effects of the relationship constructed between those phenomena and sets of norms that are themselves culturally produced and enforced. Transgender studies enables a critique of the conditions that cause transgender phenomena to stand out in the first place, and that allow gender normativity to disappear into the unanalyzed, ambient background. Ultimately, it is not just transgender phenomena per se that are of interest, but rather the manner in which these phenomena reveal the operations of systems and institutions that simultaneously produce various possibilities of viable personhood, and eliminate others. Thus the field of transgender studies, far from being an inconsequentially narrow specialization dealing *only* with a

rarified population of transgender individuals, or with an eclectic collection of esoteric transgender practices, represents a significant and ongoing critical engagement with some of the most trenchant issues in contemporary humanities, social science, and biomedical research.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

The word “transgender” itself, which seems to have been coined in the 1980s, took on its current meaning in 1992 after appearing in the title of a small but influential pamphlet by Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time has Come*.⁶ First usage of the term “transgender” is generally attributed to Virginia Prince, a Southern California advocate for freedom of gender expression.⁷ Prince used the term to refer to individuals like herself whose personal identities she considered to fall somewhere on a spectrum between “transvestite” (a term coined in 1910 by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld) and “transsexual” (a term popularized in the 1950s by Dr. Harry Benjamin).⁸ If a *transvestite* was somebody who episodically changed into the clothes of the so-called “other sex,” and a *transsexual* was somebody who permanently changed genitals in order to claim membership in a gender other than the one assigned at birth, then a *transgender* was somebody who permanently changed social gender through the public presentation of self, without recourse to genital transformation.

In Feinberg’s usage, transgender came to mean something else entirely—an adjective rather than a noun. Feinberg called for a political alliance between all individuals who were marginalized or oppressed due to their difference from social norms of gendered embodiment, and who should therefore band together in a struggle for social, political, and economic justice. Transgender, in this sense, was a “pangender” umbrella term for an imagined community encompassing transsexuals, drag queens, butches, hermaphrodites, cross-dressers, masculine women, effeminate men, sissies, tomboys, and anybody else willing to be interpolated by the term, who felt compelled to answer the call to mobilization. In the wake of Feinberg’s pamphlet, a movement did indeed take shape under that rubric; it has gradually won new civil and human rights for transgender people, and has influenced the tenor of public debate on transgender issues for more than a decade.

Feinberg’s call to arms for a transgender liberation movement followed close on the heels of another watershed publication that laid an important cornerstone for transgender studies, Sandy Stone’s 1991 “posttranssexual manifesto.”⁹ Stone wrote against a line of thought in second-wave feminism, common since the early 1970s and articulated most vehemently by feminist ethicist Janice Raymond, which considered transsexuality to be a form of false consciousness.¹⁰ Transsexuals, in this view, failed to properly analyze the social sources of gender oppression. Rather than working to create equality by overthrowing the gender system itself, they internalized outmoded masculine or feminine stereotypes and did harm to their bodies in order to appear as the men and women they considered themselves to be, but that others did not. In this view, transsexuals were the visible symptoms of a disturbed gender system. By altering the surface appearance of their bodies, such feminists contended, transsexuals alienated themselves from their own lived history, and placed themselves in an inauthentic position that misrepresented their “true selves” to others. Stone called upon transsexuals to critically refigure the notion of authenticity by abandoning the practice of passing as nontranssexual (and therefore “real”) men and women, much as gays and lesbians a generation earlier had been called to come out of their self-protective but ultimately suffocating closets. Stone sought to combat the anti-transsexual moralism embedded in certain strands of feminist thought by soliciting a new corpus of intellectual and creative work capable of analyzing and communicating to others the concrete realities of “changing sex.” To a significant degree, Feinberg’s “transgender” came to name the ensemble of critical practices called for by Stone’s “posttranssexual” manifesto.

The confluence of a few other major events in 1991 conspired to create and circulate new debates and discourses about transgender issues—and to revive some old ones. That year, the Michigan Women's Music Festival, a women-only event with deep roots in the lesbian feminist community, expelled a postoperative transsexual woman, Nancy Jean Burkholder, claiming she was “actually” a man.¹¹ This incident became a flashpoint in the United States and Canada for transgender people and their allies, many of whom had been radicalized by opposition to the Gulf War, the right-wing assault on public arts funding in the United States, and by the Reagan-Bush administrations’ decade-long history of neglect of the AIDS crisis.¹² A provocative and intelligent performance artist named Kate Bornstein was tweaking the consciousness of audiences on both coasts of North America with confessional works that explored her tortured personal history with the word “transsexual.”¹³ Some of the more academically-minded members of these grassroots communities were reading a recent book by Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*, and an older book by Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*.¹⁴ A Routledge anthology published that year, Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub’s *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, which included Sandy Stone’s pivotal essay, offered an early map of the terrain transgender studies would soon claim as its own.¹⁵

By 1992, the tenuous beginnings of the field were taking shape where the margins of the academy overlapped with politicized communities of identity. The activist group Transgender Nation—whose formation in 1992 as a focus group of the San Francisco chapter of Queer Nation marks the emergence of a specifically transgender politics within the broader queer movement of the early 1990s—generated scholarly work as part of its protest against the inclusion of “gender identity disorder” in the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*.¹⁶ New ‘zines like *Gender Trash*, *TransSisters*, *Rites of Passage*, and *TNT: The Transsexual News Telegraph* combined community-based cultural production with academically-informed critical gender theory. In Houston, legal activist Phyllis R. Frye organized the first professional conference on transgender law and employment policies. Building on the solid foundation built by female-to-male transsexual Lou Sullivan, a community-based historian and activist whose untimely death from AIDS-related illnesses tragically cut short an important career, Jamison Green transformed a local San Francisco FTM support group into FTM International, whose newsletter became a vital outlet for discussing myriad forms of female masculinity. Members of such organizations, some of whom were also graduate students and young academic faculty members, began forming informal personal and professional networks during the 1993 March on Washington for Gay, Lesbian and Bi Rights—which explicitly voted *not* to include “transgender” in its title.

A similar ferment was brewing in the United Kingdom. As in the United States, Europe had seen little formal transgender activism between the heyday of the sexual liberation movements and the early 1990s. In 1992, the political activist group Press for Change was founded in response to the defeat of an application at the European Court of Human Rights by Mark Rees, a transsexual man, for recognition of his rights to privacy and to marry. Unlike the political and theoretical developments in the United States, however, which represented something of a generational break between established and emerging communities of gender-diverse people, the Press For Change campaign included as strategic activists trans people who had been working on trans issues since the mid-1970s. These activists all had experience participating in local support groups affiliated in some fashion with the national Beaumont Society, which itself ultimately derived from Virginia Prince’s Hose and Heels Club, founded in Los Angeles in the early 1960s. Although these support groups typically catered to the needs of heterosexual male transvestites, there was a significant history in the UK of mixed groups whose membership included not only part-time cross-dressers, but also postoperative transsexuals, and various others who occupied diverse niches within the gender system.

In 1975, a network of local support group leaders loosely affiliated themselves with the U.S. activist group TAO (Transsexual Action Organization). TAO-UK was a short-lived group devoted to anti-sexism, anti-racism, and peace campaigns that also specifically sought the right of self-determined medical treatment for transsexual people. These early activists became the core of Press for Change in 1992, whose signal victory has been passage of the national Gender Recognition Act in 2004—an accomplishment without parallel in the United States. Partly as a result of Press for Change's efficacy in leveraging the mechanism of institutional power, and partly as a result of profoundly different healthcare delivery systems, transgender academic work in the UK tended from the outset to be more policy-oriented, and more focused on medical and legal issues, than work originating in the United States, which has tended to be more concerned with queer and feminist identity politics. The differences between two such closely related bodies of scholarship highlights the need for careful attention to national contexts, not only when attempting to understand transgender phenomena themselves, but also when trying to understand how transgender phenomena have been interpreted and represented.¹⁷

The 1994 Queer Studies Conference at the University of Iowa fostered the first truly international network of emerging transgender scholars, and resulted in the formation of the still extant trans-academic listserv. The First International Conference on Cross-Dressing, Sex, and Gender, held in 1995 at California State University at Northridge, represented another benchmark in the development of the transgender studies field. For the first time at a professional meeting, an older generation of (primarily nontransgender) academic specialists who studied transgender phenomena was confronted by a significant number of academically trained specialists who also happened to be transgender people themselves. Transgender attendees angrily protested conference policies that marginalized and stigmatized transgender participants, such as asking transgender people to use separate toilet facilities from the other attendees, or scheduling presentations by transgender scholars exclusively in the "community track" rather than the "professional track."

The situation improved dramatically within a few short years. The astonishingly rapid rise of the term "transgender" seems to have increased exponentially around 1995 (fueled in part by the simultaneous, and even more astonishing, expansion of the World Wide Web). By the late 1990s a number of transgender studies special issues of peer-reviewed academic journals had appeared, as well as transgender-themed anthologies from academic publishers. Even the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, the old-guard professional organization for medical and psychotherapeutic service-providers to gender-questioning people, capitulated to the new nomenclature by naming its in-house publication the *International Journal of Transgenderism*. Increasingly, courses in transgender studies were taught at universities across North America and Europe, and transgender scholarship and cultural production were integrated into sexuality and gender studies curricula, as well as within general courses in such disciplines as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law. Graduate students began writing theses and dissertations on transgender topics—more than 300 to date. The new interdisciplinary field gained coverage in the U.S. *Chronicle of Higher Education* and, in the UK, the *Guardian's* Higher Education supplement.¹⁸ By the end of the last century, transgender studies could make a fair claim to being an established discipline, though one with relatively scant institutional support.

This is the body of intellectual work that *The Transgender Studies Reader* seeks to sample and contextualize. It is intended to provide a convenient introduction to the field as it has developed over the past decade, an overview of some of the earlier work that informed this scholarship, and a jumping-off point for more sophisticated analyses in the next generation of inquiry.

BROADER CONTEXTS

The emergence of transgender studies has closely paralleled the rise of queer studies, with which it has enjoyed a close and sometimes vexed relationship. One influential interpretation of queer studies' appearance in the United States in the late 1980s and early 1990s is that the AIDS crisis necessitated a profound rethinking of the relationship between sexuality, identity, and the public sphere. Countering the homophobic characterization of AIDS as a "gay disease" required a postidentity sexual politics that simultaneously acknowledged the specificity of various bodies and sexualities (such as gay men), while also fostering strategic political alliances between other, sometimes overlapping, constituencies similarly affected by the epidemic (initially African refugees in Europe, Haitians in the United States, hemophiliacs, and injection drug users). This new "queer" politics, based on an array of oppositions to "heteronormative" social oppression rather than a set of protections for specific kinds of minorities that were vulnerable to discrimination, radically transformed the homosexual rights movement in Europe and America.¹⁹ The queer movement allowed transgender people to make compelling claims that they, too, had political grievances against an oppressive heteronormative regime. Transgender studies initially took shape in that political and intellectual ferment.

Neither feminism nor queer studies, at whose intersection transgender studies first emerged in the academy, were quite up to the task of making sense of the lived complexity of contemporary gender at the close of the last century. First-wave African-American feminist Sojourner Truth's famous question, "Ain't I a Woman?," should serve as a powerful reminder that fighting for representation within the term "woman" has been as much a part of the feminist tradition as has asserting the value of womanhood and fighting for social equality between women and men.²⁰ "Woman" typically has been mobilized in ways that advance the specific class, racial, national, religious, and ideological agendas of some feminists at the expense of other women; the fight over transgender inclusion within feminism is not significantly different, in many respects, from other fights involving working-class women, women of color, lesbian women, disabled women, women who produce or consume pornography, and women who practice consensual sadomasochism. Just as in these other struggles, grappling with transgender issues requires that some feminists re-examine, or perhaps examine for the first time, some of the exclusionary assumptions they embed within the fundamental conceptual underpinnings of feminism. Transgender phenomena challenge the unifying potential of the category "woman," and call for new analyses, new strategies and practices, for combating discrimination and injustice based on gender inequality.²¹

Like recent feminism and feminist scholarship, queer politics and queer studies also remain invested, to a significant extent, in an underlying conceptual framework that is problematized by transgender phenomena. "Sexual object choice," the very concept used to distinguish "hetero" from "homo" sexuality, loses coherence to the precise extent that the "sex" of the "object" is called into question, particularly in relation to the object's "gender." Queer studies, though putatively antiheteronormative, sometimes fails to acknowledge that same-sex object choice is not the only way to differ from heterosexist cultural norms, that transgender phenomena can also be antiheteronormative, or that transgender phenomena constitute an axis of difference that cannot be subsumed to an object-choice model of antiheteronormativity. As a result, queer studies sometimes perpetuates what might be called "homonormativity," that is, a privileging of homosexual ways of differing from heterosocial norms, and an antipathy (or at least an unthinking blindness) toward other modes of queer difference. Transgender studies is in many ways more attuned to questions of embodiment and identity than to those of desire and sexuality, and is akin to other efforts to insist upon the salience of cross-cutting issues such as race, class, age, disability, and nationality within identity-based movements and communities.

Transgender phenomena invite queer studies, and gay and lesbian communities, to take another look at the many ways bodies, identities, and desires can be interwoven.

Transgender studies emerged in the early 1990s not just in conjunction with certain intellectual trends within feminism and queer theory, but also in response to broader historical circumstances. The disintegration of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold war, the rise of the United States as a unipolar superpower, the development of the European Union as the first multi-national state, and the elaboration of new global forms of capital during these years precipitated a pervasive, deeply motivated, critical reexamination of various conceptual binaries. Sex/gender systems, like other cultural constructs, deformed and reformed in tandem with new material circumstances.²² The popular film and stage production *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*—the story of a male East German who undergoes a (botched) genital conversion surgery in order to become the wife of an American soldier, and later regrets the decision—explores precisely this shift in post-cold war possibilities for gendered embodiment.²³

If a frame as totalizing as “East/West” at least momentarily lost its explanatory purchase in a chaotic pre-9/11 world that seemed increasingly structured by diasporic movements and transnational flows, how likely was it at that time that the equally hegemonic construction “woman/man” would remain uninterrogated? Transgender studies stepped into the breach of that ruptured binary to reconceptualize gender for the New World Order. The new field approached gender not as a system for correlating two supposedly natural, stable, and incommensurable biological sexes (male and female) with two normative, fixed, and equally incommensurable social categories (man and woman). Rather, it called into question that entire epistemological framework, and conceived of gender as yet another global system within which a great many diverse and specific forms of human being were produced, enmeshed, and modified along multiple axes of signification. In a world seemingly bent on becoming one, transgender studies grappled with the imperative of counting past two, when enumerating the significant forms of gendered personhood.

Furthermore, throughout the 1990s, the impending calendrical event of the year 2000 helped link critical attention to the collapse of familiar binaries with a sense of epochal change and the perceived advent of a new historical era. During the most recent *fin-de-siècle*, transgender phenomena were widely considered the bellwethers (for better or worse) of an emergent “postmodern” condition. Rita Felski suggests that the up-tick in attention to transgender issues at the close of the last century was an expression of “premillennial tension;” she contends that ends of centuries serve as privileged cultural moments in which to articulate myths of death and rebirth, decline and renewal, and she argues that in our own historical epoch these concerns have been writ large across proliferating representations of transgender bodies.²⁴ “Transgender” became an overdetermined construct, like “cyborg,” through which contemporary culture imagined a future filled with new possibilities for being human, or becoming posthuman.²⁵ “Transgender studies” emerged at this historic juncture as one practice for collectively thinking our way into the brave new world of the twenty-first century, with all its threats and promises of unimaginable transformation through new forms of biomedical and communicational technologies.

POSTMODERNITY

Transgender phenomena may be “postmodern” to the extent that they are imagined to point beyond contemporary modernity, but transgender critical theory is technically postmodern, in one narrow use of that term, to the extent that it takes aim at the modernist epistemology that treats gender merely as a social, linguistic, or subjective representation of an objectively knowable material sex. Epistemological concerns lie at the heart of transgender critique, and motivate a great deal of the transgender struggle for social justice. Transgender phenomena, in short, point the way to a different understanding of how

bodies mean, how representation works, and what counts as legitimate knowledge. These philosophical issues have material consequences for the quality of transgender lives.

In the modern base-and-superstructure epistemic paradigm, sex is considered the stable referential anchor that supports, and is made known by, the signs of gender that reflect it. This is a specific instance of what cultural critic Frederic Jameson called a “mirror theory of knowledge,” in which representation consists of the reproduction for subjectivity of an objectivity assumed to lay outside it.²⁶ The epistemological assertion that the material world is reflected in the mirror of representation is “modern,” in a long historical sense, to the extent that it gained force along with the rise of scientific materialism in societies of Western European origin since the end of the fifteenth century. “Matter” is what ultimately matters in this modern European worldview; it lies at the root of knowledge, and is the fundamental source of the meaning (re)invested in it through the derivative and secondary practices of human cognition and perception.

In this seemingly commonsensical view, the materiality of anatomical sex is represented socially by a gender role, and subjectively as a gender identity: a (biological) male is a (social) man who (subjectively) identifies himself as such; a woman is similarly, and circularly, a female who considers herself to be one. The relationship between bodily sex, gender role, and subjective gender identity are imagined to be strictly, mechanically, mimetic—a real thing and its reflections. Gender is simply what we call bodily sex when we see it in the mirror of representation—no questions asked, none needed.²⁷ Transgender phenomena call into question both the stability of the material referent “sex” and the relationship of that unstable category to the linguistic, social, and psychical categories of “gender.” As the ambiguous bodies of the physically intersexed demonstrate in the most palpable sense imaginable, “sex,” *any sex*, is a category “which is not one.” Rather, what we typically call the sex of the body, which we imagine to be a uniform quality that uniquely characterizes each and every individual whole body, is shown to consist of numerous parts—chromosomal sex, anatomical sex, reproductive sex, morphological sex—that can, and do, form a variety of viable bodily aggregations that number far more than two. The “wholeness” of the body and “sameness” of its sex are themselves revealed to be socially constructed.²⁸

Likewise, the contrary subjective identities of transsexuals, the sartorial practices of transvestites, and the gender inversion of butches and queens all work to confound simplistic notions of material determinism, and mirror-style representational practices, in relation to questions of gender. Sex, it turns out, is not the foundation of gender in the same way that an apple is the foundation of a reflection of red fruit in the mirror; “sex” is a mash-up, a story we mix about *how* the body means, which parts matter most, and how they register in our consciousness or field of vision. “Sex” is purpose-built to serve *as* a foundation, and occupies a space excavated for it by an epistemological construction project.²⁹

Mirror-style representation encodes a moral drama. It can be true or false, accurate or error-filled. Deliberate misrepresentation of the relationship between representation/gender and referent/sex is fraught with consequence—sometimes with ostensibly comic consequences, as is the case with the innumerable cross-dressing farces that litter the landscape of pop culture, and sometimes with far more tragic results. Transgender people who problematize the assumed correlation of a particular biological sex with a particular social gender are often considered to make false representations of an underlying material truth, through the willful distortion of surface appearance. Their gender presentation is seen as a lie rather than as an expression of a deep, essential truth; they are “bad” by definition.³⁰

For the supposed epistemological sin of perpetrating falsehoods that ensnare innocent and unsuspecting others, the atypically gendered must sometimes to pay with their lives. Hillary Swank won an Academy Award in 1999 for portraying Brandon, a murdered transgender youth whose story, told in the true-crime drama *Boys Don't Cry*, has become emblematic of the chronic undercurrent in

our society of deadly anti-transgender violence.³¹ Those who commit violence against transgender people routinely seek to excuse their own behavior by claiming they have been unjustly deceived by a mismatch between the other's gender and genitals.³² State and society do similar violence to transgender people by using genital status, rather than public gender or subjective gender identity, as the fundamental criterion for determining how they will place individuals in prisons, residential substance abuse treatment program, rape crisis centers, or homeless shelters. One important task of transgender studies is to articulate and disseminate new epistemological frameworks, and new representational practices, within which variations in the sex/gender relationship can be understood as morally neutral and representationally true, and through which anti-transgender violence can be linked to other systemic forms of violence such as poverty and racism. This intellectual work is intimately connected to, and deeply motivated by, sociopolitical efforts to stem the tide of anti-transgender violence, and to save transgender lives.

PERFORMATIVITY

The model of linguistic “performativity,” whose general applicability to the field of gender has been popularized most notably by the work of Judith Butler, has been tremendously influential within transgender studies precisely because it offers a non- or postreferential epistemological framework that can be useful for promoting transgender social justice agendas.³³ The notion of performativity, which is derived from speech act theory and owes an intellectual debt to the philosophical/linguistic work of J. L. Austin in *How to Do Things With Words*, is sometimes confused with the notion of performance, but this is something else entirely.³⁴ Butler in particular, especially in her early work in *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies That Matter*, has been criticized in some transgender scholarship and community discourse for suggesting that gender is a “mere” performance, on the model of drag, and therefore somehow not “real.”³⁵ She is criticized, somewhat misguidedly, for supposedly believing that gender can be changed or rescripted at will, put on or taken off like a costume, according to one's pleasure or whim. At stake in these critical engagements is the self-understanding of many transgender people, who consider their sense of gendered self *not* to be subject to their instrumental will, not divestible, not a form of play. Rather, they see their gendered sense of self as ontologically inescapable and inalienable—and to suggest otherwise to them is to risk a profound misrecognition of their personhood, of their specific mode of being.

Speech act theory holds that language is not *just*, as the structuralists would have it, an abstract system of negative differences; rather, language is always accomplished by and through particular *speech acts*, the intent of which is communicative. Speech is social. It necessarily involves specific speakers and audiences, and can never be entirely divorced from extralinguistic contexts. A performative is one type of speech act. In contrast to a constative speech act—which involves the transmission of information about a condition or state of affairs, with which its correspondence is demonstrably true or false (e.g., “The apple is red.”)—a performative “constates” nothing. It is a form of utterance that does not describe or report, and thus cannot be true or false. It is, or is part of, the doing of the action itself. Examples of performative speech acts would include vowing (“I do.”), marrying (“I now pronounce you man and wife.”), or being bar mitzvahed (“Today I am a man.”). To say that gender is a performative act is to say that it does not need a material referent to be meaningful, is directed at others in an attempt to communicate, is not subject to falsification or verification, and is accomplished by “doing” something rather than “being” something. A woman, performatively speaking, is one who says she is—and who then does what woman means. The biologically sexed body guarantees nothing; it is necessarily there, a ground for the act of speaking, but it has no deterministic relationship to performative gender.

To conceptualize gender as a performative act raises a larger question about social and political struggles. For Jean-Francois Lyotard, writing in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, all acts of communication are inscribed within the field of *agonistics* (from the Greek *agon*, “to joust”). Jousting may be play, or it may be combat, but it necessarily involves taking up positions relative to one another, as well as some form of exchange, and some rules of engagement. Speech acts, in this model, are the smallest agonistic units, and they take place within different types of “language games,” each with its own particular rules of enunciation, each as different from one another as a game of poker is from a game of chess.³⁶ The model of the “language game,” like the model of the performative speech act, is useful for understanding in a formal way what was at stake in the emergence of transgender studies in the 1990s.

Each language game has specific players, or “posts”—for example, a sender, an addressee, and a referent—each assigned a part according to the type of speech act taking place. The constative speech act, “The apple is red,” for example, is uttered by a sender who assumes a position of knowing the information; an addressee receives the utterance and is in a position to give or withhold agreement to the utterance. The referent—that about which the utterance pertains (in this case, the apple)—is not, in this game, in a position to make statements about itself. A performative utterance plays by a different set of rules. It is “not subject to discussion or verification on the part of the addressee, who is immediately placed within the new context created by the utterance.”³⁷ Provided, of course, that the speaker is authorized, through a variety of extralinguistic circumstances, to occupy the position of performative utterer. The “I do” of the marriage vow has no performative force unless the right person addresses it to the proper other. Who gets to say “I do” to whom is completely determined by social and political forces (and as such it is subject to change over time).

The emergence of transgender studies in the 1990s was one such moment of change, when socio-political activism, coupled with broad and seemingly unrelated shifts in material conditions, worked in concert to create the possibility of new performative utterances, unprecedented things to say, unexpected language games, and a heteroglossic outpouring of gender positions from which to speak. Previously, people who occupied transgender positions were compelled to be referents in the language games of other senders and addressees—they were the object of medical knowledge delivered to the asylum keeper, the subject of police reports presented to the judge; they were the dirty little outcasts of feminist and gay liberation discourses whose speakers clamored for the affections of the liberal state. The psychotherapist whispered of them into the surgeon’s ear, while the lawyer nodded in approval. Only rarely did we speak to others on our own behalf—in the pages of infrequently published autobiographies, or from the shadows of the freak show tents. This is not to suggest that transgender people did not carry on lively exchanges among themselves; indeed, there is a vast body of transgender community-based critical and cultural work that is scarcely visible to the broader society. It is rather to acknowledge that few other than transgender people themselves, and their self-appointed minders, took part in these marginalized conversations.

Then something happened in the early 1990s, though it’s hard to say exactly what that something was. Causality is always a fraught concept. A calendar started rolling over; a world order collapsed; a pandemic virus changed the way we thought about sexuality and identity and the public sphere; an existing word was invested with new meaning to mobilize a movement, and it all crashed together on a cultural landscape fractured by an epistemic rift. Amidst the wreckage, transgender people seized the moment to produce knowledge of transgender phenomena in a postmodern fashion. We fought our way into speaking positions, claimed our voice with a vengeance, said who we were, and erupted into discourse. Transgender studies is one record of the conversation that ensued.

(DE)SUBJUGATED KNOWLEDGES

A useful terminological distinction can be made between “the study of transgender phenomena” and “transgender studies” that neatly captures the rupture between modern and postmodern epistemic contexts for understanding transgender phenomena, the different types of language games that pertain to each context, and the different critical practices that characterize each project.³⁸ The “study of transgender phenomena,” as noted below, is a long-standing, on-going project in cultures of European origin. Transgender studies, on the other hand, is the relatively new critical project that has taken shape in the past decade or so. It is intimately related to emergent “postmodern conditions” for the production of knowledge, and is as innovative methodologically as it is epistemologically.

Transgender studies considers the embodied experience of the speaking subject, who claims constative knowledge of the referent topic, to be a proper—indeed essential—component of the analysis of transgender phenomena; experiential knowledge is as legitimate as other, supposedly more “objective” forms of knowledge, and is in fact necessary for understanding the political dynamics of the situation being analyzed. This is not the same as claiming that subjective knowledge of “being transgender” is somehow more valuable than knowledge of transgender phenomena gained from a position of exteriority, but is rather an assertion that no voice in the dialog should have the privilege of masking the particularities and specificities of its own speaking position, through which it may claim a false universality or authority.

This critical attention to questions of embodiment and positionality aligns transgender studies with a growing body of interdisciplinary academic research in the humanities and social sciences. Transgender studies helps demonstrate the extent to which *soma*, the body as a culturally intelligible construct, and *techne*, the techniques in and through which bodies are transformed and positioned, are in fact inextricably interpenetrated. It helps correct an all-too-common critical failure to recognize “the body” not as one (already constituted) object of knowledge among others, but rather as the contingent ground of all our knowledge, and of all our knowing. By addressing how researchers often fail to appreciate the ways in which their own contingent knowledges and practices impact on the formation and transformation of the bodies of others, transgender studies makes a valuable contribution towards analyzing and interpreting the unique situation of embodied human consciousness.³⁹

Methodologically, transgender studies exemplifies what Michel Foucault once called “the insurrection of subjugated knowledges.” By “subjugated knowledges,” Foucault meant two different types of knowledge. First, he meant “historical contents that have been masked or buried in functional coherences or formal systemizations.” He elaborated:

To put this in concrete terms, it was certainly not a semiology of life in the asylum or a sociology of delinquency that made an effective critique of the asylum or the prison possible; it was really the appearance of historical contents. Quite simply because historical contents alone allow us to see the dividing lines and confrontations and struggles that functional arrangements or systematic organizations are designed to mask. Subjugated knowledges are then blocks of historical knowledge that were present in the functional and systematic ensembles, but which were masked, and the critique was able to reveal their existence by using the tools of scholarship.

Transgender studies draws upon just this sort historical content—descriptive materials buried in ethnographies of non-European gender systems, the transcripts of legal proceedings hidden in some obscure publication of case law, or the files of psychiatric patients—which must be excavated from the archives with the traditional tools of scholarship, and recontextualized within current academic debates. Recovering this kind of knowledge, and knowing where to look in the first place, requires,

in Foucault's words, "meticulous, precise, technical expertise." It is the technical ability of its practitioners to make use of these scholarly tools, and to be conversant in academic discourse, that makes "transgender studies" a part of academe, and not just part of a "transgender community"—though the field's relationship to that community is crucial for its intellectual vitality.

Foucault's other kind of "subjugated knowledge," which speaks to the politics of community involvement, is also central to the methodology of transgender studies. What Foucault describes as "a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges, naïve knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity," is precisely the kind of knowledge that transgender people, whether academically trained or not, have of their own embodied experience, and of their relationships to the discourses and institutions that act upon and through them. Such knowledge may be articulated from direct experience, or it may be witnessed and represented by others in an ethical fashion. In either case, Foucault contends, the reappearance "from below" of "these singular local knowledges," like the knowledge of the psychiatrized or the delinquent, which have been "left to lie fallow, or even kept at the margins," is absolutely essential to contemporary critical inquiry.

While it might at first seem paradoxical to yoke together in a single term two such seemingly disparate forms of knowledge—"the specialized domain of scholarship" and "the knowledges that have been disqualified by the hierarchies of erudition and science"—it is precisely this genealogical coupling that, for Foucault, gives discursive critique its essential vigor. Both erudite scholarship and delegitimated "knowing" recapture, for use in the present, a historical knowledge of particular structurations of power. One offers "a meticulous rediscovery of struggles," while the other preserves "the raw memory of fights."⁴⁰ Transgender studies, through desubjugating previously marginalized forms of knowledge about gendered subjectivity and sexed embodiment, promises just such a radical critical intervention.

RENARRATION

Foucault's vast philosophical-historical research project helps support the claim that attending to what we would now call transgender phenomena has been a preoccupation of Western culture since Greek and Roman antiquity. The regulation of homosexuality, hermaphroditism, gender inversion, and other forms of "social monstrosity" have figured prominently in the development of "regimes of normalization" whose latter-day descendents in the modern period remain decidedly active and robust.⁴¹ Transgender studies renarrates this considerable intellectual heritage. It calls attention to "transgender effects," those deconstructive moments when foreground and background seem to flip and reverse, and the spectacle of an unexpected gender phenomena illuminates the production of gender normativity in a startling new way. In doing so, the field begins to tell new stories about things many of us thought we already knew.

Since at least the nineteenth century in Europe and the United States, transgender phenomena have taunted the social order in ways that have spurred the development of sexology, psychiatry, endocrinology, and other medical-scientific fields involved in social regulatory practices. The clinical bibliography specifically related to transgender phenomena runs to many thousands of publications, and continues to grow even now, but it can be traced back to figures like Richard von Krafft-Ebbing, the great Victorian taxonomist of social deviance. Early entries in this bibliography include Karl von Westphal, who wrote of "contrary sexual feelings" as well as Max Marcuse's "drive for sexual transformation," Magnus Hirschfeld's "sexual intermediaries," and Havelock Ellis's "eonists." By the time we get to Freud, his disciples, and his detractors in the early twentieth century, we are on familiar

ground with contemporary concepts in psychology and psychiatry.⁴² By the middle of the last century, a specialized medical literature on “gender dysphoria” coalesced around the work of Harry Benjamin and his colleagues Robert Stoller, Richard Green, and John Money, which culminated in 1980 in the legitimation of a newly-defined clinical entity, “gender identity disorder,” as an official psychopathology recognized by the American Psychiatric Association.⁴³ Transgender studies is now in a position to treat this immense body of clinical work as its archive.

Parallel to the clinical archive is an immense, centuries-old ethnography, equally ripe for empirical research, that documents European perspectives on cultures encountered around the world through exploration, trade, conquest, and colonization. This literature, along with its explication within the social science disciplines, demonstrates a perpetual European fascination—and more than a little Eurocentric unease—with the many ways that relationships between bodily sex, subjective gender identity, social gender roles, sexual behaviors, and kinship status have been configured in different times and places.⁴⁴ The mysterious *mujerados* and *morphodites* who populate the earliest accounts of European exploitation of the America continents are not *simply* (or perhaps even actually) vanished or suppressed members of “third genders” eradicated by genocidal European practices; they are, just as importantly, categories of deviant personhood constructed by a European imaginary and invested with the magical power to condense and contain, and thereby delimit, a more systemic European failure to grasp a radical cultural otherness in its totality.⁴⁵ For half a millennium now, Eurocentric culture has been treated to a parade of gender exotics, culled from native cultures around the world: India *hijra*, Polynesian *mahu*, Thai *kathoe*y, Brazilian *travesti*, Arabian *xanith*, Native American *berdache*—and on and on. “Transgenders,” at home and abroad, are the latest specimens added to the menagerie.

The conflation of many types of gender variance into the single shorthand term “transgender,” particularly when this collapse into a single genre of personhood crosses the boundaries that divide the West from the rest of the world, holds both peril and promise. It is far too easy to assimilate non-Western configurations of personhood into Western constructs of sexuality and gender, in a manner that recapitulates the power structures of colonialism. “Transgender” is, without a doubt, a category of First World origin that is currently being exported for Third World consumption. Recently, however, engagements between a “transgender theory” that circulates globally with Eurocentric privilege, and various non-European, colonized, and diasporic communities whose members configure gender in ways that are marginalized within Eurocentric contexts, have begun to produce entirely new genres of analysis. Such encounters mark the geo-spatial, discursive, and cultural boundaries of transgender studies, as that field has been developed within Anglophone America and Europe, but also point toward the field’s untapped potential.⁴⁶

In developing our criteria for inclusion in this reader, Stephen Whittle and I decided to highlight some important earlier works in scientific sexology and feminism, and then to focus on works in English that explicitly engage with the term “transgender” (whether positively or negatively). We offer key texts drawn from the “queer gender” debates, work that highlights the recent attention to female-bodied masculinity, work that explores the formation of a sense of self as well as the “border wars” of gender identity politics, and work that explores ethics, morality, and embodiment. We resisted attempting an “around the world in eighty genders” global survey of gender-diverse practices and identities. This was done in part because we felt we could not do justice to the global scope of transgender phenomena, and in part because a number of such anthologies attempting precisely this already exist.⁴⁷ One unfortunate consequence of our decision was the exclusion of many important bodies of work done with a regional focus, such as Don Kulick’s and Annick Prieur’s studies of male-bodied gender diversity in Mexico City and Brazil, Mauro Cabral’s intensely poetic interdisciplinary work in Argentina, and a great deal of work on Southeast Asian genders.⁴⁸ We concentrated instead on work that explores

how “transgender” has circulated globally, and on how race, class, and location have complicated the dissemination of that term.

Even given our editorial choices, which admittedly limited the range of cultural and ethnic diversity of work included in this reader, we were struck by the overwhelming (and generally unmarked) whiteness of practitioners in the academic field of transgender studies. This is due, no doubt, to the many forms of discrimination that keep many people of color from working in the relatively privileged environment of academe, but also to the uneven distribution and reception of the term “transgender” across different racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic communities. We both feel, however, that the analytical framework for understanding gender diversity that has emerged from transgender studies—valuable though it is—is impoverished by the relative lack of contributions from people of color, and is therefore ultimately inadequate for representing the complex interplay between race, ethnicity, and transgender phenomena. That discussion is one that we hope to see developed more productively and more extensively in the years ahead.

In conclusion, we simply note that transgender phenomena haunt the entire project of European culture. They are simultaneously everywhere and elsewhere. Their multiple and contradictory statuses of visibility and erasure, of presence and absence, are intimately related to the operations of social power that create norms, impart consequence to difference, and construct the space of a dominant culture. A transgender studies more attuned to differences of race, location and class, as well as to differences within gender, would provide a better view into the making of this world we all inhabit, and enable a powerful critical rereading of contemporary (post)modernity in all its complexity.

NOTES

1. Lesbian and Gay History Conference, Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, Graduate School, City University of New York, October 6–7, 1995; videotape documentation in author's possession.
2. Trans Politics, Social Change, and Justice Conference, Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, Graduate School, City University of New York, May 6–7, 2005.
3. *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria*, Dir. Victor Silverman and Susan Stryker, USA, 2005.
4. On the general shift in attention to transgender sociocultural formations, see Myra J. Hird, “For a Sociology of Transsexualism,” *Sociology* 36(3): 577–595. For a framework for understanding the movement of transgender people from the clinics to the street, see Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,” in Carole S. Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, 267–319 (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).
5. David Valentine, “I know what I am: The Category ‘Transgender’ in the Construction of Contemporary U. S. American Conceptions of Gender and Sexuality.” Ph.D. Dissertation, Anthropology Department, New York University, 2000.
6. Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come* (New York: World View Forum, 1992).
7. Andrew Matzner “Prince, Virginia Charles,” *GLBTQ: An Encyclopedia of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Culture*, http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/prince_vc.html
8. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Transvestites: The Erotic Drive to Cross-Dress* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1991; orig. pub. Berlin, 1910; trans. Michael A. Lombardi-Nash); Harry Benjamin, *The Transsexual Phenomenon* (New York: Julian Press, 1966).
9. Sandy Stone, “The ‘Empire’ Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto,” in *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity*, ed. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub, 280–304 (New York: Routledge, 1991).
10. Janice Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (Boston: Beacon, 1979).
11. Nancy Jean Burkholder, “Michigan Women's Music Festival,” *Transsisters: The Journal of Transsexual Feminism* 2 (Nov/Dec 1993): 4.
12. On the queer political milieu in which transgender activism emerged, see the Queer Nation special issue of *OUT/Look: National Lesbian and Gay Quarterly* 11 (Winter 1991).
13. Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*. (New York: Routledge, 1994).
14. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990; Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, *An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Reprint, 1990; orig. English trans. pub. Random House, 1978).
15. Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub, *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
16. Susan Stryker, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1:3 (1994): 237–254.

17. Thanks to Stephen Whittle for substantive contributions to my understanding of the activist roots of UK-based transgender studies; see Stephen Whittle, *Trans-Links of Friendships, the Bedroom and Politics: 1970's Trans-Atlantic Influences on Current Transgender Politics in the UK*, Future of the Queer Past Conference, University of Chicago, 2000.
18. Susan Stryker, "The Transgender Issue: An Introduction," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4:2 (1998): 145–158; Robin Wilson, "Transgender Scholars Defy Convention, Seeking to Be Seen and Heard in Academe," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 6, 1998: A10–A12.
19. David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Toward a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford, 1996).
20. No definitive text of Truth's 1851 speech is extant; see Carleton Mabey, *Sojourner Truth: Slave, Prophet, Legend* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).
21. See Cressida J. Heyes, "Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory: The Case of Transgender," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28 (2003), 1093–1120; and "Reading Transgender, Rethinking Women's Studies" *NWSA Journal* 12:2 (Summer 2000): 170–180.
22. On third terms and the disruption of binaries, see Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1992.)
23. See, for example, Jordy Jones "Gender Without Genitals: Hedwig's Six Inches" *Other: the magazine for people who defy categories* 1:1 (2003) 44–46; George Mott, "The Vanishing Point Of The Sexual Subject: *The Closet, Hedwig And The Angry Inch*, *L.L.E., The Sixth Sense, The Others, Y Tu Mamá También, The Psychoanalytic Review*, 91:4 (August 2004): 607–614.
24. Felski, Rita. "Fin de siècle, Fin de sexe: Transsexuality, Postmodernism, and the Death of History," *New Literary History* 27:2 (Spring 1996), 337–349.
25. Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston, eds. *Posthuman Bodies*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).
26. Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1992).
27. On the "commonsensical" relationship between gender and body, see the discussion of "the natural attitude" in Harold Garfinkel, "Passing and the Managed Achievement of Sex Status in an 'Intersexed' Person," in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall, 1967), 116–185.
28. On intersex issues, see Alice Domurat Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); and Suzanne J. Kessler, *Lessons From the Intersexed* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).
29. For a range of feminist poststructuralist, antifoundationalist critiques of the sex/gender relationship, with particular reference to the question of postmodernity, see Judith Butler and Joan Scott, eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
30. Raymond, *Transsexual Empire*, offers the classic account of "bad transsexuals," but see also Dwight Billings and Thomas Urban, "The Socio-Medical Construction of Transsexualism: An Interpretation and Critique," *Social Problems* 29 (1981): 266–282.
31. *Boys Don't Cry*, directed by Kimberley Pierce, USA 1999.
32. Tarryn Witten and A. Evan Eyler, "Hate Crimes and Violence Against the Transgendered," *Peace Review*, 11:3 (1999): 461–468.
33. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble; Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* (New York: Routledge, 1993), and "Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 7:4 (2001): 621–636.
34. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, ed. J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).
35. See, for example, Jay Prosser's extended discussion of Butler *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), or Henry Rubin's "Phenomenology as Method in Trans Studies," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4:2 (1998): 263–281.
36. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 89 n25, n34.
37. Lyotard, *Postmodern*, p. 9.
38. A similar distinction is proposed between positivist approaches to "studying transsexuality" and "transgender studies" in Katrina Roen, "Constructing Transsexuality: Discursive Manoeuvres through Psycho-Medical, Transgender, and Queer Texts," Ph.D. thesis, University of Canterbury, New Zealand, 1998, p. 42.
39. The concept was "Somatechnics" was formulated in conversation with Nikki Sullivan, Joseph Pugliese, and other members of the Department of Critical and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University; see <http://www.ccs.mq.edu.au/somatechnics>.
40. Foucault, Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France, 1975–76* (New York: Picador, 2003), 7–8.
41. Michel Foucault, *Abnormal* (New York: Picador, 2003), 1–29.
42. For a useful summary, see Jay Prosser, "Transsexuals and the Transsexologists: Inversion and the Emergence of Transsexual Subjectivity," in *Sexology in Culture: Labeling Bodies and Desires*, ed. Lucy Bland and Laura Doan (Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), 116–132; see also Richard Green and John Money, eds., *Transsexualism and Sex Reassignment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

43. *Diagnostic And Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association III* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Publishers, 1980).
44. On Eurocentric unease with global queerness, see the various articles in Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin Manalansan, IV, eds., *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism* (New York: New York University, 2002).
45. Will Roscoe, "Was We'wha a Homosexual?: Native American Survivance and the Two-Spirit Tradition." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 2:3 (1995): 193–235;
46. Lynn Marie Morgan and Evan B. Towle "Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept" *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8:4 (2002): 469–497; Helen Hok-Sze Leung, "Unsung Heroes: Reading Transgender Subjectivities in Hong Kong Action Cinema," in *Masculinities and Hong Kong Cinema*, eds. Laikwan Pang and Day Wong (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005), 81–98; Susan Stryker, "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10:2 (Spring, 2004), 212–215.
47. Evelyn Blackwood, and Saskia Wieringa, eds., *Female Desires: Same-sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History* (New York: Zone Books, 1994); Sandra P. Ramet, ed., *Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 1996).
48. Don Kulick, *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Mark Johnson, *Beauty and Power: Transgendering and Cultural Transformation in the Southern Philippines* (Oxford: Berg, 1997); Annick Prieur, *Mema's House, Mexico City: On Transvestites, Queens, and Machos* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

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I

SEX, GENDER, AND SCIENCE

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selections from

Psychopathia Sexualis with Special Reference to Contrary Sexual Instinct A Medico-Legal Study

RICHARD VON KRAFFT-EBING

RICHARD VON KRAFFT-EBING (1840–1902), Professor of Psychiatry at Vienna, was one of the first scientific investigators to take a special professional interest in the sexual impulses of individuals. His landmark study, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, has been in print in various revised editions ever since its first publication in 1877. The text undertakes a vast taxonomic project, attempting to distinguish and classify specific features of the various case studies Krafft-Ebing offers for consideration. Underlying this entire project is Krafft-Ebing's assumption that any departure from procreative heterosexual intercourse represents a form of emotional or physical disease.

Over the course of his career, Krafft-Ebing developed an increasingly complex system for categorizing what he considered to be psychosexual disorders—among them homosexuality. Unlike today, when homosexuality is most often considered to be an erotic or romantic attraction between two otherwise typical women, or between two otherwise typical men, Krafft-Ebing considered homosexuality to be a form of gender variance. That is, he considered a man who loved a man to be more like a woman; conversely, he considered a woman who loved a woman to be more like a man. These deviations from standard gender could be relatively minor and inconsequential, or relatively major and significant.

Krafft-Ebing noted two primary categories of homosexuality—acquired and congenital—and considered each to contain transgender elements to which he applied ornate Victorian labels such as “eviration,” “defemination,” “viraginity,” and “metamorphosis sexualis paranoica.” This later term represented the most extreme, and therefore the most pathological, form of gender deviation in Krafft-Ebing's conceptual framework. It described individuals we would today call transsexuals: people who strongly identify themselves as proper members of the “opposite” sex, and who wish to physically alter the sex-signifying aspects of their bodies. Krafft-Ebing thought such individuals were profoundly disturbed, and considered their desire for self-affirming transformation to be psychotic.

The cases Krafft-Ebing presents are doubly interesting, in that they document the extensive discursive and historical interconnections between transgender and homosexual phenomena, but also demonstrate the remarkable persistence of highly specific forms of subjectivity that are readily identifiable in current terminology. Case 131, reprinted below, exemplified what Krafft-Ebing called “gynandry,” and what we would probably call female-to-male transsexualism.

ANDROGYNY AND GYNANDRY

Forming direct transitions from the foregoing groups are those individuals of contrary sexuality in whom not only the character and all the feelings are in accord with the abnormal sexual instinct, but also the skeletal form, the features, voice, etc.; so that the individual approaches the opposite sex anthropologically, and in more than a psychical and psycho-sexual way. This anthropological form of the cerebral anomaly apparently represents a very high degree of degeneration; but that this variation is based on an entirely different ground than the teratological manifestation of hermaphroditism, in an anatomical sense, is clearly shown by the fact that thus far, in the domain of contrary sexuality, no transitions to hermaphroditic malformation of the genitals have been observed. The genitals of these persons always prove to be fully differentiated sexually, though not infrequently there are present anatomical signs of degeneration (epispadiasis, etc.), in the sense of arrests of development in organs that are otherwise well differentiated.

* * *

Case 131. *Gynandry*.¹ History: On November 4, 1889, the stepfather of a certain Count Sandor V. complained that the latter had swindled him out of 800f., under the pretense of requiring a bond as secretary of a stock company. It was ascertained that Sandor had entered into matrimonial contracts and escaped from the nuptials in the spring of 1889; and, more than this, that this ostensible Count Sandor was no man at all, but a woman in male attire,—Sarolta (Charlotte), Countess V.

S. was arrested, and, on account of deception and forgery of public documents, brought to examination. At the first hearing S. confessed that she was born on Sept. 6, 1866; that she was a female, Catholic, single, and worked as an authoress under the name of Count Sandor V.

From the autobiography of this man-woman I have gleaned the following remarkable facts that have been independently confirmed:—

S. comes of an ancient, noble, and highly-respected family of Hungary, in which there have been eccentricity and family peculiarities. A sister of the maternal grandmother was hysterical, a somnambulist, and lay seventeen years in bed, on account of fancied paralysis. A second great-aunt spent seven years in bed, on account of a fancied fatal illness, and at the same time gave balls. A third had the whim that a certain table in her *salon* was bewitched. If anything were laid on this table, she would become greatly excited and cry, "Bewitched! bewitched!" and run with the object into a room which she called the "Black Chamber," and the key of which she never let out of her hands. After the death of this lady, there were found in this chamber a number of shawls, ornaments, bank-notes, etc. A fourth great-aunt, during two years, did not leave her room, and neither washed herself nor combed her hair; then she again made her appearance. All these ladies were, nevertheless, intellectual, finely educated, and amiable.

S.'s mother was nervous, and could not bear the light of the moon.

From her father's family it is said she had a trace too much. One line of the family gave itself up almost entirely to spiritualism: Two blood-relations on the father's side shot themselves. The majority of her male relatives are unusually talented; the females are decidedly narrow and domestic. S.'s father had a high position, which, however, on account of his eccentricity and extravagance (he wasted over a million and a half), he lost.

Among many foolish things that her father encouraged in her was the fact that he brought her up as a boy, called her Sandor, allowed her to ride, drive, and hunt, admiring her muscular energy.

On the other hand, this foolish father allowed his second son to go about in female attire, and had him brought up as a girl. This farce ceased in his fifteenth year, when the son was sent to a higher school.

Sarolta-Sandor remained under her father's influence till her twelfth year, and then came under the care of her eccentric maternal grandmother, in Dresden, by whom, when the masculine play became too obvious, she was placed in an Institute, and made to wear female attire.

At thirteen she had a love-relation with an English girl, to whom she represented herself as a boy, and ran away with her.

Sarolta returned to her mother, who, however, could do nothing, and was compelled to allow her daughter to again become Sandor, wear male clothes, and, at least once a year, to fall in love with persons of her own sex.

At the same time, S. received a careful education, and made long journeys with her father,—of course, always as a young gentleman. She early became independent, and visited *cafés*, even those of doubtful character, and, indeed, boasted one day that in a brothel she had had a girl sitting on each knee. S. was often intoxicated, had a passion for masculine sports, and was a very skillful fencer.

She felt herself drawn particularly toward actresses, or others of similar position, and, if possible, toward those who were not very young. She asserts that she never had any inclination for a young man, and that she has felt, from year to year, an increasing dislike for young men.

“I preferred to go into the society of ladies with ugly, ill-favored men, so that none of them could put me in the shade. If I noticed that any of the men awakened the sympathies of the ladies, I felt jealous. I preferred ladies who were bright and pretty; I could not endure them if they were fat or much inclined toward men. It delighted me if the passion of a lady was disclosed under a poetic veil. All immodesty in a woman was disgusting to me. I had an indescribable aversion for female attire,—indeed, for everything feminine,—but only in as far as it concerned me; for, on the other hand, I was all enthusiasm for the beautiful sex.”

During the last ten years S. had lived almost constantly away from her relatives, in the guise of a man. She had had many *liaisons* with ladies, traveled much, spent much, and made debts.

At the same time, she carried on literary work, and was a valued collaborator on two noted journals of the Capital.

Her passion for ladies was very changeable; constancy in love was entirely wanting.

Only once did such a *liaison* last three years. It was years before that S., at Castle G., made the acquaintance of Emma E., who was ten years older than herself. She fell in love with her, made a marriage-contract with her, and they lived together, as man and wife, for three years at the Capital.

A new love, which S. regarded as a fate, caused her to sever her matrimonial relations with E. The latter would not have it so. Only with the greatest sacrifice was S. able to purchase her freedom from E., who, it is reported, still looks upon herself as a divorced wife, and regards herself as the Countess V.! That S. also had the power to excite passion in other women is shown by the fact that when she (before her marriage with E.) had grown tired of a Miss D., after having spent thousands of guldens on her, she was threatened with shooting by D. if she should become untrue.

It was in the summer of 1887, while at a watering-place, that S. made the acquaintance of a distinguished official's family. Immediately she fell in love with the daughter, Marie, and her love was returned.

Her mother and cousin tried in vain to break up this affair. During the winter, the lovers corresponded zealously. In April, 1888, Count S. paid her a visit, and in May, 1889, attained her wish; in that Marie—who, in the meantime, had given up a position as teacher—became her bride in the presence of a friend of her lover, the ceremony being performed in an arbor, by a false priest, in Hungary. S., with her friend, forged the marriage-certificate. The pair lived happily, and, without the interference of the step-father, this false marriage, probably, would have lasted much longer. It is remarkable that, during the comparatively long existence of the relation, S. was able to deceive completely the family of her bride with regard to her true sex.

S. was a passionate smoker, and in all respects her tastes and passions were masculine. Her letters and even legal documents reached her under the address of “Count S.” She often spoke of having to drill. From remarks of the father-in-law, it seems that S. (and she afterward confessed it) knew how to

imitate a scrotum with handkerchiefs or gloves stuffed in the trousers. The father-in-law also, on one occasion, noticed something like an erected member on his future son-in-law (probably a priapus). She also occasionally remarked that she was obliged to wear a suspensory bandage while riding. The fact is, S. wore a bandage around the body, possibly as a means of retaining a priapus.

Though S. often had herself shaved *pro forma*, the servants in the hotel where she lived were convinced that she was a woman, because the chambermaids found traces of menstrual blood on her linen (which S. explained, however, as hæmorrhoidal); and, on the occasion of a bath which S. was accustomed to take, they claimed to have convinced themselves of her real sex by looking through the key-hole.

The family of Marie make it seem probable that she for a long time was deceived with regard to the true sex of her false bridegroom. The following passage in a letter from Marie to S., August 26, 1889, speaks in favor of the incredible simplicity and innocence of this unfortunate girl: "I don't like children any more, but if I had a little Bezerl or Patscherl by my Sandi,—ah, what happiness, Sandi mine!"

A large number of manuscripts allow conclusions to be drawn concerning S.'s mental individuality. The chirography possesses the character of firmness and certainty. The characters are genuinely masculine. The same peculiarities repeat themselves everywhere in their contents,—wild, unbridled passion; hatred and resistance to all that opposes the heart thirsting for love; poetical love, which is not marred by one ignoble blot; enthusiasm for the beautiful and noble; appreciation of science and the arts.

Her writings betray a wonderfully wide range of reading in classics of all languages, in citations from poets and prose writers of all lands. The evidence of those qualified to judge literary work shows that S.'s poetical and literary ability is by no means small. The letters and writings concerning the relation with Marie are psychologically worthy of notice.

S. speaks of the happiness there was for her when by M.'s side, and expresses boundless longing to see her beloved, if only for a moment. After such a happiness, she could have but one wish,—to exchange her cell for the grave. The bitterest thing was the knowledge that now Marie, too, hated her. Hot tears, enough to drown herself in, she had shed over her lost happiness. Whole quires of paper are given up to the apotheosis of this love, and reminiscences of the time of the first love and acquaintance.

S. complained of her heart, that would allow no reason to direct it; she expressed emotions which were such as only could be felt,—not simulated. Then, again, there were outbreaks of most silly passion, with the declaration that she could not live without Marie. "Thy dear, sweet voice; the voice whose tone perchance would raise me from the dead; that has been for me like the warm breath of Paradise! Thy presence alone were enough to alleviate my mental and moral anguish. It was a magnetic stream; it was a peculiar power your being exercised over mine, which I cannot quite define; and, therefore, I cling to that ever-true definition: I love you because I love you. In the night of sorrow I had but one star,—the star of Marie's love. That star has lost its light; now there remains but its shimmer,—the sweet, sad memory which even lights with its soft ray the deepening night of death,—a ray of hope."

This writing ends with the apostrophe: "Gentlemen, you learned in the law, psychologists and pathologists, do me justice! Love led me to take the step I took; all my deeds were conditioned by it. God put it in my heart.

"If He created me so, and not otherwise, am I then guilty; or is it the eternal, incomprehensible way of fate? I relied on God, that one day my emancipation would come; for my thought was only love itself, which is the foundation, the guiding principle, of His teaching and His kingdom.

"O God, Thou All-pitying, Almighty One! Thou seest my distress; Thou knowest how I suffer. Incline Thyself to me; extend Thy helping hand to me, deserted by all the world. Only God is just. How beautifully does Victor Hugo describe this in his 'Legendes du Siècle'! How sad do Mendelssohn's words sound to me: 'Nightly in dreams I see thee!'"

Though S. knew that none of her writings reached her lover, she did not grow tired writing of her pain and delight in love, in page after page of deification of Marie. And to induce one more pure flood of tears, on one still, clear summer evening, when the lake was aglow with the setting sun like molten gold, and the bells of St. Anna and Maria-Wörth, blending in harmonious melancholy, gave tidings of rest and peace, she wrote: "For that poor soul, for this poor heart that beat for thee till the last breath."

Personal Examination: The first meeting which the experts had with S. was, in a measure, a time of embarrassment to both sides; for them, because perhaps S.'s somewhat dazzling and forced masculine carriage impressed them; for her, because she thought she was to be marked with the stigma of moral insanity. She had a pleasant and intelligent face, which, in spite of a certain delicacy of features and diminutiveness of all its parts, gave a decidedly masculine impression, had it not been for the absence of a moustache. It was even difficult for the experts to realize that they were concerned with a woman, despite the fact of female attire and constant association; while, on the other hand, intercourse with the man Sandor was much more free, natural, and apparently correct. The culprit also felt this. She immediately became more open, more communicative, more free, as soon as she was treated like a man.

In spite of her inclination for the female sex, which had been present from her earliest years, she asserts that in her thirteenth year she first felt a trace of sexual feeling, which expressed itself in kisses, embraces, and caresses, with sensual pleasure, and this on the occasion of her elopement with the red-haired English girl from the Dresden Institute. At that time feminine forms exclusively appeared to her in dream-pictures, and ever since, in sensual dreams, she has felt herself in the situation of a man, and occasionally, also, at such times, experienced ejaculation.

She knows nothing of solitary or mutual onanism. Such a thing seemed very disgusting to her, and not conducive to manliness. She had, also, never allowed herself to be touched at genitalia by others, because it would have revealed her great secret. The menses began at seventeen, but were always scanty, and without pain. It was plain to be seen that S. had a horror of speaking of menstruation; that it was a thing repugnant to her masculine consciousness and feeling. She recognized the abnormality of her sexual inclinations, but had no desire to have them changed, since in this perverse feeling she felt both well and happy. The idea of sexual intercourse with men disgusted her, and she also thought it would be impossible.

Her modesty was so great that she would prefer to sleep among men rather than among women. Thus, when it was necessary for her to answer the calls of nature or to change her linen, it was necessary for her to ask her companion in the cell to turn her face to the window, that she might not see her.

When occasionally S. came in contact with this companion,—a woman from the lower walks of life,—she experienced a sexual excitement that made her blush. Indeed, without being asked, S. related that she was overcome with actual fear when, in her cell, she was compelled to force herself into the unusual female attire. Her only comfort was, that she was at least allowed to keep a shirt. Remarkable, and what also speaks for the significance of olfactory sensations in her *vita sexualis*, is her statement that, on the occasions of Marie's absence, she had sought those places on which Marie's head was accustomed to repose, and smelled of them, in order to experience the delight of inhaling the odor of her hair. Among women, those who are beautiful, or voluptuous, or quite young do not particularly interest her. The physical charms of women she makes subordinate. As by magnetic attraction, she feels herself drawn to those between twenty-four and thirty. She found her sexual satisfaction exclusively in corpora feminae (never in her own person), in the form of masturbatory of the beloved woman, or cunnilingus. Occasionally she availed herself of a stocking stuffed with oakum as a *priapus*. These admissions were made only unwillingly by S., and with apparent shame; just as in her writings, immodesty or cynicism are never found.

She is religious, has a lively interest in all that is noble and beautiful,—men excepted,—and is very sensitive to the opinion others may entertain of her morality.

She deeply regrets that in her passion she made Marie unhappy, and regards her sexual feelings as perverse, and such a love of one woman for another, among normal individuals, as morally reprehensible. She has great literary talent and an extraordinary memory. Her only weakness is her great frivolity and her incapability to manage money and property reasonably. But she is conscious of this weakness, and does not care to talk about it.

She is 153 centimetres tall, of delicate skeleton, thin, but remarkably muscular on the breast and thighs. Her gait in female attire is awkward. Her movements are powerful, not unpleasing, though they are somewhat masculine, and lacking in grace. She greets one with a firm pressure of the hand. Her whole carriage is decided, firm, and somewhat self-conscious. Her glance is intelligent; mien somewhat diffident. Feet and hands remarkably small, having remained in an infantile stage of development. Extensor surfaces of the extremities remarkably well covered with hair, while there is not the slightest trace of beard, in spite of all shaving experiments. The hips do not correspond in any way with those of a female. Waist is wanting. The pelvis is so slim, and so little prominent, that a line drawn from the axilla to the corresponding knee is straight,—not curved inward by a waist, or outward by the pelvis. The skull is slightly oxycephalic, and in all its measurements falls below the average of the female skull by at least one centimetre.

The circumference of the head is 52 centimetres; the occipital half-circumference, 24 centimetres; the line from ear to ear, over the vertex, 23 centimetres; the anterior half-circumference, 28.5 centimetres; the line from glabella to occiput, 30 centimetres; the ear-chin line, 26.5 centimetres; long diameter, 17 centimetres; greatest lateral diameter, 13 centimetres; diameter at auditory meati, 12 centimetres; zygomatic diameter, 11.2 centimetres. The upper jaw projects strikingly, its alveolar process projecting beyond the under jaw about 0.5 centimetre. The position of the teeth is not fully normal; the right upper canine has not developed. Mouth remarkably small. Ears prominent; lobes not differentiated, passing over into the skin of the cheek. Hard palate narrow and high; voice rough and deep; *mammæ* fairly developed, soft, and without secretion. Mons *veneris* covered with thick, dark hair. Genitals completely feminine, without trace of hermaphroditic appearance, but at the stage of development of those of a ten-year-old girl. The labia *majora* touch each other almost completely; labia *minora* have a cock's-comb-like form, and project under the labia *majora*. The clitoris is small, and very sensitive. Frenulum delicate; perineum very narrow; introitus *vaginæ* narrow; mucous membrane normal. Hymen wanting (probably congenitally); likewise, the *carunculæ myrtiliformes*. Vagina so narrow that the insertion of a *membrum virile* would be impossible, and it is also very sensitive; certainly coitus had not taken place. Uterus is felt, through the rectum, to be about the size of a walnut, immovable, and retroflected.

The pelvis appears generally narrowed (dwarf-pelvis), and of decidedly masculine type. The distance between anterior superior spines is 22.5 centimetres (instead of 26.3 centimetres). Distance between the crests of the ilia, 26.5 centimetres (instead of 29.3 centimetres); between the trochanters, 27.7 centimetres (31); the external conjugate diameter, 17.2 centimetres (19 to 20); therefore, presumably, the internal conjugate would be 7.7 centimetres (10.8). On account of narrowness of the pelvis, the direction of the thighs is not convergent, as in a woman, but straight.

The opinion given showed that in S. there was a congenitally abnormal inversion of the sexual instinct, which, indeed, expressed itself, anthropologically, in anomalies of development of the body, depending upon great hereditary taint; further, that the criminal acts of S. had their foundation in her abnormal and irresistible sexuality.

S.'s characteristic expressions—"God put love in my heart. If He created me so, and not otherwise, am I, then, guilty; or is it the eternal, incomprehensible way of fate?"—are really justified.

The court granted pardon. The “countess in male attire,” as she was called in the newspapers, returned to her home, and again gave herself out as Count Sandor. Her only distress is her lost happiness with her beloved Marie.

A married woman, in Brandon, Wisconsin, whose case is reported by Dr. Kiernan (*The Medical Standard*, 1888, November and December), was more fortunate. She eloped, in 1883, with a young girl, married her, and lived with her as husband undisturbed.

An interesting “historical” example of androgyny is a case reported by Spitzka (*Chicago Medical Review*, August 20, 1881). It was that of Lord Cornbury, Governor of New York, who lived in the reign of Queen Anne. He was apparently affected with moral insanity; was terribly licentious, and, in spite of his high position, could not keep himself from going about in the streets in female attire, coquetting with all the allurements of a prostitute.

In a picture of him that has been preserved, his narrow brow, asymmetrical face, feminine features, and sensual mouth at once attract attention. It is certain that he never actually regarded himself as a woman.

NOTE

1. Comp. the expert medical opinion of this case, by Dr. Birnbacher, in *Friedreich's Blätter f. ger. Med.*, 1891, H. 1.

2

selections from

The Transvestites

The Erotic Drive to Cross-Dress

MAGNUS HIRSCHFELD

AS A YOUNG MEDICAL DOCTOR IN GERMANY, pioneering sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, founded the world's first gay rights organization, the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, in 1897. In 1919 in Berlin, he opened the world's first Institute for Sexology and wrote the first comprehensive textbook of sexology, *Geschlechtskunde*, (*Sexual Knowledge*, 5 vols., 1926–1930). From 1930 until 1933 he traveled around the world, promoting the new science of sexology in public lectures in New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, China, and the Near East. In his absence, Adolf Hitler labeled Hirschfeld—a gay, Jewish, Socialist—“the most dangerous man in Germany,” and in 1933 the Nazis destroyed Hirschfeld's Institute and publicly burned his research collection. Unable to return to Berlin, Hirschfeld died in exile in France in 1935.

Hirschfeld was an early advocate for transgender people, whom he considered, like homosexuals, to be one of innumerable types of “sexual intermediaries” who existed on a spectrum from a hypothetical “pure male” to “pure female.” Hirschfeld considered the diversity of sex and gender to be part of nature, and thought that society and laws should reflect this biological reality. Transgender individuals worked on the staff of the Institute for Sexology, and doctors associated with the Institute performed the first documented genital transformation surgeries.

The following selection is from Hirschfeld's 1910 book *The Transvestites*, in which he argues that transgenderism is a complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced to homosexuality, fetishism, or some form of psychopathology. The arguments outlined by Hirschfeld were later echoed in the views of his younger colleague Harry Benjamin, the German-born doctor who became the leading advocate for transgender people in the mid-twentieth century.

TRANSVESTISM AND HOMOSEXUALITY

Instead of no law without exception one should rather say no exception without law.

How, in fact, are we to understand this peculiar urge to cross-dress, whose symptomatology we met in the preceding? Is it perhaps only a matter of a form of homosexuality? In front of us, do we have a phenomenon that belongs in the area of what Havelock Ellis calls autoeroticism, that Hermann Rohleder has described as auto-monosexualism, or related to narcissism, as Naecke maintains? Do we have here a special form of masochism? Does the condition fall within the heading clothing fetishism; does it touch upon delusion mania, a “retardation” of the judgment of the personality, which we in psychiatry call paranoia; or, rather, do we have here an independent complex before us, which

cannot be ordered according to recognized models at this time? Examining differential diagnoses will be our task in the following.

Since similar urges to effeminacy and masculinity, as we observe them here, were described only in the case of contrary sexuality, we at first were inclined to assume that we again had homosexuality before us, perhaps unconscious. However, more accurate testing revealed that this was not the case, because the main marker of homosexuality, as its root word—*homos*, or “same”—indicates, is the direction of the sex drive toward persons of the same sex. We saw in most of our cases that there was not a trace of it; that, on the other hand, there was an even stronger antipathy than normally appears in other heterosexuals. To be sure, some of them had homosexual episodes, which is not unusual for heterosexuals, but they were so transient and superficial that truly inborn homosexuality—and only congenital homosexuality can be true—is not a question here.

Even if one could doubt some of the cases (such as 12 and 15), that there was present an urge, vacillating between the two sexes, therefore a bisexual urge, nevertheless, in the majority the direction of the drive toward the opposite sex is so sharply expressed that the reality of effemination and virility in heterosexual persons must be seen as proven.

So now, effemination and masculation step before us as distinct phenomena, which certainly often, but not always, appear related. One has to extend the sentence: “not all homosexuals are effeminate” to include “and not all effeminate men are homosexual.” This conforms with the fifth of our laws, the law of geno-genetics (see Hirschfeld, “Transsexuals: Theses on the Development of the Differences Between the Sexes” [“Geschlechtsuebergaenge”], p. 18): “Each sexual character can divert, but still allows himself to establish a relation in the deviations which prove themselves in the same period of time.” Whether effemination relatively often connects with homosexuality, which I at present still consider more probable than with heterosexuality, cannot be deduced at the present time because of the lack of exact statistics.

According to the experience I have had up until now, I have the impression that in 50 to 60 percent of homosexuals virile characteristics prevail. Bloch, too, has the same opinion (see *Sexualleben* [*Sexual Life*], p. 551). He writes, “According to my observations, it seems to me the ratio between virile and feminine Uranians is approximately equal.”

Among this ca. 50 percent, the homosexuals with feminine tendencies, the feminine admixture is natural, including every kind and every intensity and, in fact hardly 10 percent of them have a more intensified urge to put on women’s clothing. To the contrary, the great majority of homosexuals, and not only the more virile ones, find transvestism thoroughly unpleasant. Still fewer are the number of those homosexual men who live fully as a woman; of Uranian women, fully as a man. If this is the case, then, if observed from the outside, a very nearly equal image is offered by homosexual and heterosexual transvestism. Only there is the one great difference, that the sex drive of the one, namely, the transvestites, better matches the physical characteristics; the homosexuals, more the psychological complex.

* * *

TRANSVESTISM AND FETISHISM

(Explanation of Richard Wagner’s Letters to Milliner)

If the question about the homosexual as well as the monosexual basic character of these cases is to be answered in the negative, then we now have the task of investigating what place inside of the heterosexual direction of the drive we must make available for this peculiar deviation from the norm. Two areas come into question here: fetishism and masochism. Observed purely from the outside, the

intensive tendency to cross-dress strongly reminds one of clothing fetishism. Representatives of both these tendencies, as opposed to the great majority of their contemporaries of the same sex, seek to put themselves in possession of pieces of clothing that belong to that sex to which they physically do not belong. Specialists with whom I have consulted about our cases, therefore, at first always suspected a fetishistic basis to the drive to cross-dress. The transvestites themselves, who understandably carefully think through their rare condition, starting, naturally, with their inner feelings, are surely as dissatisfied with this explanation as with the tracing back of their feminine drive to homosexuality. Those, particularly whose basic education allowed them an unbiased judgment, felt they were incorrectly labeled fetishists. They said that their urge to cross-dress could more easily be understood as a kind of masochism, a form of sexual humiliation. I consider both assumptions to be in error. Neither fetishism nor masochism, in spite of many points of contact, fail to solve the problem, even as little as homosexuality and auto-monosexuality could.

Transvestites are essentially different from fetishists by the following: "The sexual interests of fetishists are concentrated without exception on a specific part of the body of the woman or also on specific pieces of women's clothing," according to Krafft-Ebing (*Psychopathia Sexualis*, p. 108). The strong erotic charm that a part or especially the material covering it exerts, for which I suggested using the expression "part-covering" ("Teilanziehung") in *Essence of Love* (see chap. 6, "On Part-Covering," pp. 134–284), or "partial attraction," is in this case the determining factor. An attraction to a "part," which extends to a woman from "top to toe," is a contradiction in itself, an impossibility. Furthermore, we also see in fetishists, but not in transvestites, that the object of their tendency in the first place is loved in itself in relation to a second person, in more pathological cases also detached from the latter (for example, a tuft of hair cut off, a stolen handkerchief), but in no way mainly loved as a part of them themselves.

The fetishist at times also takes the woman's shoe or slip to bed for the purpose of sexual stimulation. To bring himself as close to "the beloved" as possible, he in fact also wears the woman's underwear under his suit. He prefers to wear the latter's, while transvestites like to wear new underwear. However, in general, during the regular day fetishists in no way make use of the pieces of clothing in their favorite fetishistic form. On the contrary, the lovers of elegant shoes, fine patent-leather boots, often wear clumsy elastic-sided boots or even knee boots; fetishists for women's blonde hair do press it passionately against themselves but do not at all think about putting on a woman's wig, as little as a breast fetishist would stuff his chest. In short, fetishists lack the expressed urge to put on the form of the beloved object, to identify with it, as it were, to change themselves into it.

* * *

Clothing fetishism and transvestism have in common that in both cases, even if on the one hand the pieces of clothing are considered the form of expression of a mental condition in very different ways, they are to be looked upon as "a mirror of the spiritual essence" (Bloch, *Sexual Life*, p. 153), as "a measuring device for the special and the personal in an individual [Lukianos, "Eroticism and Clothing" ("Erotik und Kleidung") in *The Torch (Die Fackel)* by Karl Kraus (Vienna), No. 198, p. 12], as "an ideal nakedness" [Herman Bahr, "On Clothing Reform" ("Zur Reform der Tracht") in *Dokumente der Frauen*, vol. 6, no. 23 (1902), p. 665].

In *Essence of Love (Wesen der Liebe)*, p. 153, I explained that I cannot agree with Krafft-Ebing and Binet that the preference for a certain fetish can be traced back to a casual experience during youth, an accidental event ("choc fortuit"), but rather that I assume that it touches upon a connection of ideas that depend upon the psychosexual characteristic of the fetishists to project their endogenous peculiarity into a concrete symbol. So, too, the existence of the corset fetish just mentioned cannot be laid before just any psyche but rather requires a certain sexual type that first must be heterosexual;

secondly, sadistic; and thirdly, have the tendency to be receptive to the connection of thoughts (the possibilities of which are too great to be dealt with here) that call forth the charm of the narrow waist. These processes of association in the mind, which often are intricately interwoven in the imagination, very often create difficult problems.

That is also valid for the special case I am now treating, especially to show that the differential diagnosis between fetishistic tendencies and transvestism is also not always so simple. I am supported in this by the *Letters of Richard Wagner to a Milliner* (*Briefe Richard Wagners an eine Putzmacherin*) published by Daniel Spitzer [the last unabridged version was published in 1906 in Vienna by Carl Konegan (E. Stuelpnagel) Publishing House], a book that attracted much attention when it was published.

It was unreasonable that Wagner's letters were reprinted by *The Vienna New Free Press* (*Wiener neue freie Presse*) in 1877, six years before his death. (The originals, from the years 1864–68, are now in the possession of the Society of the Friends of Music in Vienna.) It was especially unreasonable for Spitzer to publish them with the intent of "offering the public a farce" to show it a German man "who could not be measured against even the *parisienne* most fond of fashion." But at this time it appears to me, as a specialist, to be very reasonable to submit this noteworthy document to an unbiased psychological evaluation.

It makes a great deal of difference whether an embittered anti-Wagnerian provides these letters with malicious sarcastic comments "to criticize" the writer with having a so-called "more than womanly love of dress," or they serve under close examination as a contribution to psychology and to set right the conclusions that the mockers and ignorant have made. It is not right to infer a homosexual feeling in Wagner from his correspondence with the milliner, which, in our opinion, even Hanns Fuchs did not prove in his interesting book *Richard Wagner und die Homosexualitaet* [with the subtitle *With Especial Emphasis on the Sexual Anomalies of Its Forms* (*unter besonderer Beruecksichtigung der sexuellen Anomalien seiner Gestalten*)], published by H. Barsdorf, Berlin, 1903]. Moreover, in this book there are no details about these letters.

But it is even more incorrect—something that unskilled followers of Wagner still do today—to be willing to explain the content of the letters as psychologically unimportant, because the master was supposed to have suffered from a skin disease. The very detailed manner of ordering, the depth, the value that is placed on the coordination of the colors, the exact description of how the articles are to be made, disprove this assertion, totally without regard to the fact that the satin did not at all touch the skin in most places, and, according to statements by skin specialists, would rather have had an adverse effect on any kind of skin disease.

* * *

What the publisher thought of the letters he put in the motto he placed above them, using the first act of *Die Walkuere*: "He looks like a woman." He repeats it at the end of his statements with the remark:

"I believe readers will find the motto justifiable after they have read these letters, the one that I chose: 'He looks like a woman!' Hunding, Siglinde's husband, calls this out to the Valkyries, after he has gauged the progress of his guest, Siegmund, and continues: 'The glistening worm is even gleaming out of his eyes.' When one reads this letter written to a milliner, when one sees how, in the same, the exclusive subject, the love of dress, is dealt with enthusiastically and with interest, and when one finds out the large sum that is wasted on the glistening satin, one has to believe one is not reading the signature of a man; it must be the letter of a woman."

We, too, are of the opinion that Wagner's particular inclination justifies assuming that there is a feminine characteristic in his psyche, which, however, in no way deserves mockery and scorn. To the contrary, for psychologists not arrested by the superfluous, it gives evidence of the unusually rich

and subtle complexity of his inner life, the continued study of which would be a difficult as well as a rewarding task for any modern psychoanalyst.

This femininity is not identical with homosexuality, as Hans Fuchs seems to assume when he says (place cited, p. 271): "That Nietzsche clearly recognized the mental homosexuality of the aged Wagner shows in the words: 'because Wagner in his older days was thoroughly of the feminine kind.' This appears to be evident in the case we have discussed here monographically. The third letter especially points to Wagner's characteristics that up until now appeared enigmatic but are made understandable here. So, we find this otherwise artistically creative man writing verbatim: 'I have confirmed it a hundred times that my bright morning coat is especially good for the composition of scientific work, that another blue morning coat has a very stark effect on my style, that a street costume with a white ornamental apron, somewhat like a house-robe, immediately drives out oppressive fatigue and dullness and allows me to do my creative work like nothing else I know of.'"

In many cases, people depend very heavily on their clothing for their ability to be mentally creative. One often hears this particularly in the case of artists and of the educated. A short anecdote, which, when it was first published was found very ridiculous, has its comical side along with its psychologically interesting side.

"When one day Nebenius, a statesman of Baden, was called to the court of Grand Duke Leopold to write an urgent dispatch, he said: 'Yes, your Majesty, that will take a while; I have to have my pipe.' 'Well, you can have all the pipes you want,' the grand duke replied. 'Indeed, but I also have to have a pair of Turkish heelless slippers.' These, too, were produced. 'Indeed, but I also have to have a dressing-gown.' But that was the last straw for the grand duke, and he yelled, 'Thunder and lightning, so go home!'" [See Dr. R. Schulze, *Fashion Foolishness (Modenarrheiten)*, Berlin 1868, p. 235.]

Moreover, Beethoven, too, was supposed to be able to compose only in his dressing-gown. And it is reported that Haydn was able to compose only when he was wearing "his finest toilette."

There is not the slightest bit of evidence of any kind of masochistic undercurrent in the allegations that so eloquently depict the intensification of activity effected by clothing. This statement is important for the relationship between transvestism and masochism, to which we will now turn our attention.

TRANSVESTISM AND MASOCHISM

In no way does one find masochistic characteristics in all transvestites, and if so, then only to a stronger or lesser degree. Indeed, in some cases one finds exactly the opposite, thus in Case 6, from whom the young ladies flee because he "tyrannizes them too much." And in the case of Number 8, who could only be gratified by acting out a rape and forcing kisses with his tongue. Especially to be considered is that which Krafft-Ebing convincingly made clear in his splendid "Essay on the Explanation of Masochism" ("Versuch einer Erkl  rung des Masochismus"), that the latter in and of itself depicts a degeneration of a specifically feminine characteristic, while "sadism is to be looked upon as a pathological intensification of the masculine sexual characteristic in its psychical accessories."

In the case of our transvestites, almost all characteristics, which impress us at first as being masochistic, easily lead back to the wish for effemination. Thus the inclination toward being the succubus during the sex act, the desire to possess an energetic woman and to be attacked by her, finally, also the pleasure of the initially uncomfortable and painful attributes of femininity, such as the piercing of the earlobes, wearing tightly laced corsets, shoes into which the feet must be forced and whose heels seem to one "like mountains." Exactly in these cases, the physical discomfort is more than compensated for by the emotional comfort of feeling and performing what is feminine.

If there are only a few algophiles (lovers of pain) among transvestites, then, on the other hand, it appears one does find among the truly extensive community of masochistic men that the drive to clothe oneself as a woman is present only very, very rarely.

Professional Berlin “maitressen”—the word used here in its derivative from “*maitre*” in the sense of mistress—who service a large masochistic clientele, when questioned, told me that among their customers, the ones who want to play the woman’s role are relatively rare. I could find out only about two of them, who, before they go to see their “*domina*” (mistress), send a box of women’s clothing in advance so that they can dress as a woman before their punishment. These may well be cases that, as our policeman (Number 8) who also frequented masseuses, belong to the true transvestites who incidentally have masochistic tendencies.

* * *

More often than not, masochists use pieces of women’s clothing. They tie on a pinafore or put on a petticoat. The piece most in use is the corset and the girdle, which, however, obviously have the task of being tools of torture rather than representing feminine symbols. In the literature on masochism I also find no analogies to our cases. Maerzbach (place cited, p. 116 and following), who devoted a splendid chapter to this phenomenon, alleges that, among the metamorphic forms of masochism, only persons such as servants, pupils, children, slaves, and animals (for example, dogs) wish to be so treated, not, however, as women, not to mention the fact that they really do wish to come forth in womanly form.

According to all of this we can consider masochism as only an incidental and attendant phenomenon, and in no way as the original motive of the drive to cross-dress, just as little as transvestism is a form of masochism. There are also women who possess both masochistic and sadistic tendencies, as well as ones who possess none of these. The necessary changes having been made, all of this is in reference to women who come forth as men. In this case, too, menlike women and sadism in no way coincide.

TRANSVESTISM AND THE ILLUSION OF SEXUAL METAMORPHOSIS

No matter how much transvestite men feel like women when dressed in women’s clothing and women feel like men when dressed in men’s clothing, they still remain aware that in reality it is not so. To be sure, some do imagine—and if so, then the wish is the originator of the thought—that their skin is softer, their forms rounder, and their movements more gracious than are usual for men, but they know full well, and often are depressed by the fact that they do not physically belong to the desired sex they love. If they did consider themselves actually to be women, whether cross-dressed or not, as persons with megalomania think they are the Messiah or millionaires or even the emperor and pope in one person, then it would be an illusory idea, and the condition would have to be addressed as mental illness, as being insane, as paranoia. Such cases of the illusion of sexual metamorphosis—*metamorphosis sexualis paranoica*—also do occur, even if only rarely in relation to other delusions.

* * *

In the case of most of these congenitally most strongly predisposed patients, a genuine drive to cross-dress is rare. Typical is that they feel that their genitals have changed into those of a woman. They imagine that they are growing women’s breasts, that they have long pigtails, that their clothing is women’s when in fact they are men’s. Most of this is confirmed by voices they hear saying, “He’s a whore,” or, when they are on the street, they will hear someone say, “Just look at that old hag.” They also dream that they are a woman during coitus. One reported that that “was natural” for him.

* * *

CLOTHING AS A FORM OF EXPRESSION OF MENTAL CONDITIONS

The external appearance, which we have to follow inward in our cases, is the cross-dressing of a male into a female, of a female into a male. At this point we meet with an important factor that differentiates

this anomaly from many others in the area of sexuality. The divergent drive extends not only to a particular quality of the partner, the sex object, but much more to the sex subject, precisely the appearance of one's own personality that is wished for. And this certainly does not have to be only in the outer clothing, but rather also in the underclothing, as well as in all of the other accessories of the costumes, including headdress, that are like the other sex and, as much as possible, the use of commodities and customs as they are befitting to them.

Already at the beginning of the analytical part of this work I made short references to Thomas Carlyle, Robert Sommer, and Fritz Rumpf that here we are not to consider clothing as something arbitrary and capricious, as lifeless fabric, but rather as conspicuous, intentional indications of an inner striving. This is valid not only in these special cases, but rather in general, and to a much greater extent than is usually believed.

* * *

In our case, with regards to clothing, the most important point in life after birth that indicates we have reached adulthood is the receiving of long trousers in the case of the boys and long dresses in the case of the girls. The clothing that differentiates sex is put on them much earlier, often as early as the third birthday. Some time ago there was a story in the newspaper told by a child, which gives some food for thought about this problem. A country minister on a walk discovered a five-year-old boy bathing in a brook with some small girls. After he was scolded, what did the candid toddler reply? "I did not know, sir, that they were girls. They did not have any clothes on."

* * *

When we—to use an example nearest at hand—heard of children whose naive instinct made them rebel when someone first tried to get them to wear trousers, then there can be no doubt, according to our explanations, that these are already manifestations of femininity that resist the male attire, which is against their psyche, something they feel does not suit them, something strange and to be resisted. We saw how in all of our cases this antipathy against being clothed as a male, and conversely the sympathy for the female cross-dressing of the individual personality, increased much more at the time of sexual maturity and then more and more resolutely struggled to be transformed into action.

If we imagine to ourselves once more the total complex of transvestite tendencies and then ponder to what extent we recognized the essence of the clothing as symbol, as unconscious projection of the soul, then it might become clear that in the psyche of these men there is present a feminine admixture—and in the feminine counterpart a masculine one—which presses on to project itself. This alterosexual quota truly must be considerable since, as we discovered, it wants to withstand and does withstand very great resistance and inhibitions, not the least of which is the contrast between body and soul. To just what degree a dissipation/laxity and division is present in the bisexual personality is expressed best by our Case 3. He speaks about "the flitting about of feminine elements in my ego." He describes "the mania for women's clothing, to look absolutely like a woman on the outside as the desire of his feminine side for corresponding forms." He continues, "Then, when I throw off all that is the man and put on the woman externally, I can almost physically feel how the false, the violence, leaves me and disappears like fog."

In these statements is mirrored, even if not in medical terms, a truly clear and thoroughly correct image of the essence of the symptom as a freeing of the femininity usually bound in the man. We have before us here a special form of the mental double-sexuality (*Doppelgeschlechtlichkeit*), a phenomenon which represents an independent type in the series not only of the etiological but also of the character study-related admixture of male and female characteristics, as we have many times already become acquainted with them under the general name of the sexual intermediate stages in the areas of morphology and psychology. Since this "Theory of Intermediate Stages," whose drawing up and

working through I consider a valuable product of modern biology and psychology, still meets with gross misunderstanding and misinterpretation, please allow me to explain it once more.

THE THEORY OF INTERMEDIARIES

First let us stress that in the case of the precept of sexual intermediaries, it is not a matter of a theory at all but rather only a principle of division.

By sexual intermediaries we understand manly formed women and womanly formed men at every possible stage, or, in other words, men with womanly characteristics and women with manly ones.

Therefore, if a woman has a full beard or a man has milk-producing teats, we register such people, who exhibit such obvious characteristics of the other sex, as mixed sexual formations or intermediaries. But we do not handle only such obvious cases but rather also each and every other one—and their number is not limited—ones who stand, in the physical or mental view, between a complete manly man and, in every respect, a womanly woman.

The hypothesis of this principle of division is, according to this, an exact explanation of what is manly and womanly, and herein lies the main difficulty and controversy, particularly because there are, besides pure manly and womanly characteristics, such that are neither manly nor womanly, or more correctly stated, not only manly, but also womanly. However, that these latter ones do not depend on full equality of the sexes goes without question; the sexes may be equivalent and have equal rights, but they are no doubt not of the same kind. What, then, is womanly, what is manly?

* * *

However, if we turn from the realm of the microscopic back to the macroscopic, from the many similar but in no way complete observations made by the cell researchers back to the considerations, as they must be concluded from facts available to everyone, then we, to make the rest simple, summarize what has preceded by separating the difference of the sexes into four clear groups that can be defined one from the other; they concern, as we see:

1. the sexual organs,
2. the other physical characteristics,
3. the sex drive,
4. the other emotional characteristics.

Accordingly, a complete womanly and “absolute” woman would be such a one who not only produces egg cells but also corresponds to the womanly type in every other respect; an “absolute” man would be such a one who forms semen cells yet also, at the same time, exhibits the manly average type in all other points. These kinds of absolute representatives of their sex are, however, first of all only abstractions, invented extremes; in reality they have not as yet been observed, but rather we have been able to prove that in every man, even if only to a small degree, there is his origin from the woman, in every woman the corresponding remains of manly origins.

However, if we ourselves assume that people existed who, to put a number on it, were 100 percent manly or possessed a likewise high womanly content, it still remains out of the question—and here too we find ourselves still in the area of simple facts of experience—that very many persons exist who, in spite of their carrying egg cells, exhibit characteristics that in general belong to the male sex, and that, on the other hand, there are people who secrete semen cells yet at the same time have observable womanly characteristics. Since in our use of language we usually describe the bearers of semen cells simply as men, the possessors of egg cells flatly as women, there are, therefore, women with manly, men with womanly characteristics, and these mixed forms are the ones that are understood under

the expression “sexual intermediaries.” We can order them most clearly as the sexual differences themselves, according to the four viewpoints we presented.

In the first group of the intermediaries, accordingly, belong such ones who lie in the area of the sexual organs, the hermaphrodites in a narrower sense, the so-called “pseudo-hermaphrodites,” men who because of womanly split formations of the genitalia, women who because of an intensified growth of these organs, often give enough cause to be mistakenly identified regarding their sex at birth.

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The second heading of the sexual intermediaries concerns the physical characteristics outside of the sexual organs. In this case we find men with womanly mammary tissue (*gynecomastia*) and women without such (*andromastia*; also the word *A-mazon* means without breasts); women with manly hair, such as manly beard or manly pubes (*feminae barbatae*, *androtrichia*) and men with womanly hair type, such as womanly pubes, beardlessness, etc. Women with manly larynx and organ (*androglossia*) and men with womanly formed vocal chords and womanly voice production (*gynecoglossia*), men with womanly pelvis (*gynophysia*) and women with manly pelvis (*androphysia*).

* * *

Under the second heading we also find men with womanly bone and muscular structure and women with manly skeleton and manly muscular systems, of manly size and figure, men with womanly, women with manly movements.

* * *

Under the same heading we find men with the soft complexion of women, and women with the coarser skin of men; women who have to wear men's and men who have to wear women's glove and shoe sizes: in short, no matter what part of the body we were to treat, in almost every case we can always perceive manly profiles in women, womanly profiles in men.

Under the third heading of sexual intermediaries, persons divergent with regard to their sexual drive, we classify men who engage in sex with a woman as a woman, for example, having the tendency of being the succubus, who love aggressive women as well as participation in forms of masochism.

Since physical and emotional sexual passivity, which we call masochism according to Krafft-Ebing, as this author has correctly stressed, is a “degeneration of specifically feminine and psychical characteristics,” then its appearance in men is no doubt a strong feminine characteristic that, according to my experience, moreover, is often accompanied by other marks of femininity. Since, on the other hand, sadism—to use Krafft-Ebing's words—“represents a pathological intensification of manly, psychic sexual character,” then sadistically inclined women are manly women. According to this we count masochistic men and sadistic women, who belong in the domain of sexual intermediaries, while, it is our opinion, sadistic men and masochistic women are solely abuses of instincts that are rooted in the sex drive corresponding to the sex of the persons in question.

Under the third heading, the corresponding condition for women, are ones who tend toward being the incubus, being sexually very aggressive (apart from prostitutes, whose actions naturally have other causes) as well as ones who exhibit sadistic impulses. With reference to the direction of the sex drive, in the case of men it indicates femininity when they feel attracted to women of manly appearance and character, to so-called “energetic women,” sometimes even to homosexuals, also to manly clothed as well as to such ones who are considerably more mature, intellectual, and older than they themselves. On the other hand, women betray their manly mixture in a preference for the womanly kind of men, very dependent, very youthful, unusually gentle men, in general for such ones who in their traits of behavior and character correspond more to the feminine type. Juvenal, even (*Satire* 6) and Martial (6, 67) report about women who can only love “shy eunuchs with beardless faces.”

Finally, belonging also to this category of intermediaries are women who not only love womanly kind of men, but also manly kind of women (bisexuals) or also only the latter alone, or even totally

in like manner as “true” men, women of the thoroughly womanly type (homosexuals). The opposite of this subdivision are men who, besides women of the manly kind, also love men of the feminine kind (bisexuals) or only these or even totally like women, more or less men who strongly express the manly type (homosexuals).

In Group Four, in which we understand the emotional particularities in direct relation with the love life, ones to be counted as sexual intermediaries, are men whose feminine emotions and feelings are reflected in their manner of love, their direction of taste, their gestures and manners, their sensitivity, and many times in their particular way of writing, also men who more or less dress themselves as women or live totally as such; on the other side women of manly character, manly ways of thinking and writing, strong tendency toward manly passions, manly dress, naturally so such women who more or less lead the life of a man. Therefore, in this case also are our transvestites to be included.

* * *

All of these other sexual characteristics can be present in very different degrees. This basically depends on one's age. Sexual characteristics appear most markedly between the ages of 20 and 50. As is known, after maturity, boys often exhibit feminine features as young men, girls boyish ones as young women. And later too, after the period of the fifth decade, matrons after change of life often assume superficial virile stigmata, while old men frequently take on many kinds of feminine features.

Above all, however, even at the prime of life itself, this mixing appears in varying degrees.

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If we want to represent these numbers of the mixtures of manly and womanly substances in a different way also, we can use the one-hundred-percent sexual type as a point of departure. Therefore, the manly admixture in a woman, who is only a little different from the absolute womanly type, can be numbered from one to ten percent, but it could be significantly more, perhaps twenty-five percent. Finally, there could be an equal amount of womanly and manly features present; indeed, it could even be with a bearer of the female ovary, also, a woman whose numerous manly features had been represented as womanly ones, and little by little we come to the point where, except for the sexual organs, the sexual characters of the three remaining groups, the sexual orientation as well as the physical and psychical phenomena in general, are manly in kind. This type borders close to the absolute “one hundred percent” man, in whose case, then, the fourth group, the sexual organs, are male. And then the same repeats itself. It might be only a trace of femininity mixed in the man, or the feminine qualities might equal the masculine or even surpass them, in spite of the fact that it is a matter of a bearer of male germ cells, meaning a man, and so it continues until we gradually come to a point where Groups Two, Three, and Four are eventually totally feminine; only Group One is still masculine or, where possible, this too can even approximate the feminine type.

All of these sexual varieties form a complete closed circle in whose periphery the above-mentioned types of intermediaries represent only the especially remarkable points, between which, however, there are no empty points present but rather unbroken connecting lines. The number of actual and imaginable sexual varieties is almost unending; in each person there is a different mixture of manly and womanly substances, and as we cannot find two leaves alike on a tree, then it is highly unlikely that we will find two humans whose manly and womanly characteristics exactly match in kind and number.

* * *

Even if there is an internal or external influencing, inhibiting, and encouraging will, access to education, practice, and suggestion—and of course even control has its boundaries—sexual individuality as such with respect to body and mind is inborn, dependent upon the inherited mixture of manly and womanly substances, independent of externals; it is formed in advance by nature and is dormant in the individual long before it is awakened, forces its way into awareness, and develops. It is particularly

subject to temporary, even periodic changes; develops consequently nevertheless, gradually increases; maintains itself at a certain level, then returns again, but maintains the same characteristic impressions in all essentials for the entire lifetime.

After this general observation of the sexual mixed forms, if we return to the main subject of our work, the erotic drive to cross-dress, it will then become clearer to us in many respects and less of a rare phenomenon. The important conclusions put in order not only its place as a natural phenomenon, but also its etiology, prognosis, and therapy. We have indicated that it belongs to Group Four of the intermediaries; with respect to the three first groups of the sexual differences, the sex organs, the remaining physical characteristics, and the sex drive, these men exhibit no or only insignificant deviations from the norm, unessential in any case in comparison to the remaining psychosexual characteristics, the urge to dress as a woman and the desire to live as a woman as much as possible.

As we have seen, since in this case it is a matter of a form of the intermediaries, which clearly brings into relief what has thus far been described, it appears fitting, too, to give the new form a new name, a special scientific stamp. The term I use to characterize the most obvious internal and external images of the persons concerned, their feelings and thoughts, their drive to put on the clothing of the opposite sex, is taken from the Latin “trans” = across and “vestitus” = dressed, used also by the Roman classical writers as “transvestism.” Both men and women are termed “transvestites.” One disadvantage of the term is that it describes only the external side, while the internal is limitless. Some of the transvestites themselves have formed expressions that are quite noteworthy as expressions of their feelings. One of them (Case 2) called his drive “puellism” (from Latin *puella*, girl); another (Case 11), in the paragraph in which he tried to explain to his wife about men who appeared or wanted to appear as women, but on the other hand who were sexually attracted to men, called them “junoren.” Both words for several reasons are not fitting. They would describe the drive in one sex only, namely, the male sex, are not capable of being changed, and could cause misunderstandings.

If one wanted to stress the condition that it is not simply a matter of cross-dressing, but rather more of a sexual drive to change, then the word “metamorphosis” would be better. One could call the persons sexual metamorphotics, the drive sexual-metamorphic, and the phenomenon sexual metamorphism, the preference of cross-dressing as sexual metamorphosis. Apart from the ungainly expression, I would be against it because Krafft-Ebing already has designated the mania of sexual metamorphosis as metamorphosis sexualis paranoica, which, as discussed above, we had to differentiate sharply from the drive of sexual metamorphosis.

Sex researchers repeatedly use the practice, and in my opinion not a very happy one, of naming sexual anomalies after persons who have become famous by them because they had especially strong tendencies toward them. Some such words are sadism, masochism, narcissism, retifism, and onanism, after the biblical Onan. The corresponding “fame” is lacking among heterosexual transvestites. Perhaps the acumen of my readers will produce an expression that would better hit upon the core of the phenomenon than the provisional one, which, I imagine, will not be universally satisfactory.

There is little more to add about the cause of the drive to cross-dress, as can be said about the etiology of the sexual intermediaries in general. Why the womanly admixture is produced in one case that a hermaphrodite arises (example of the first group), in a second gynecomastia (example of the second group), in a third case an Urning (example of the third group), in a fourth a transvestite (example of the fourth group) we can up to the present not tell.

I already have explained in detail the diagnosis and differential diagnosis of transvestism in the discussion of related phenomena; as to the prognosis, I do not think it is probable that the transvestite drive can be made to disappear, according to the total character of this and related mixed forms, but we do not have sufficient experience to render a final opinion; one can definitely get at the drive itself

by means of psychotherapy, by applying Freudian psychoanalysis, and by suggestion. Besides this, one would recommend, as with all analogous anomalies, a general treatment of the central nervous system, which has as its focus a strengthening of the will as well as an exact regulation of the lifestyle, which aims at a possible deviation of mental activity.

With all of this, if one does not come to the desired goal, then the most important thing is the decision whether or to what extent it is advisable to yield to the drive now and then. We saw in several examples how exceptionally comfortable and how advantageous transvestites felt their drive was to them when this at times occurred. In their descriptions, one instinctively recalls the sentence of Eduard von Hartmann in his philosophy of the subconscious, that the nongratification of a drive is a great wrong for the individual in question, rather than a moderate satisfaction. If one gives it more thought, that it basically is a harmless inclination by which no one is injured, then, from a purely medical standpoint, nothing can be said against the actual putting on of the clothing of the opposite sex; another question of a forensic nature is what would cause public disturbance and acting under false pretenses; these questions will be treated in the next chapter, where we discuss the position of transvestism in public.

At this time I would like to touch upon one other point, namely, whether these persons appear fitting to enter into marriage. As we discovered, many are married, most even happily. Only in one case (11) was the marriage a truly unhappy one because of the transvestite drive. Of course, in this case the wife was psychopathic, suffered persecution mania, delusions, and for a long time was institutionalized. It is unconditionally advised that a transvestite disclose everything to the spouse. One cannot assume that the unprepared spouse will be so accepting. I was surprised that many wives found no difficulty even traveling with their husbands dressed in women's clothing, or even sitting evenings at the family table, both spouses in women's clothing.

But even if the wife is accepting of her husband's preference, I still have my doubts as to the suitability of these marriages; it cannot be argued that transvestism belongs to the sexual intermediaries in whose case the outer appearance of the opposite sex is exceptionally considerable. In cases of lesser features, for example, no more than 33 1/3 percent then there can easily be a balance between the married couple, so that the descendants would not be endangered by a hereditary burden. Or the other hand, where the sexual gap of the personality is such a great one, as in our cases, there is such a deviation from the pure sex type that the deviation, even if it should not itself be considered a degeneration can lead to offspring who are psychologically disunified and frivolous who are unstable, degenerated individuals. Of course, I cannot produce any proof of this very theoretical supposition; on the contrary, the children of the transvestites whom I saw gave me the impression of being good and healthy. But the material available at this time is insufficient to dispel expressed fears.

Raising children today demands one to have nerves of steel. Transvestites who want to raise children must be physically healthy and strong as well as mentally well-developed persons. They must be careful with their choice of marriage partners because of the children. Moreover, I would be against transvestite women marrying. They are mostly very restless spirits, inclined toward adventure, and find it difficult to chain themselves to domestic duties. In fact, most suitable would be—which is in accordance with the wishes of these persons—a transvestite man and a somewhat manly kind of woman, who naturally need not be a transvestite, or a transvestite woman to a womanly man, so that, to quote Schopenhauer [in *The World as Will and Idea* in the chapter "Metaphysics of Sexual Love" (*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*: "Metaphysik der Geschlechtsliebe")]: "The degree of his manliness corresponds to the degree of her womanliness"; to be sure, it would be more correct to say in our case the degree of her manliness to the degree of his womanliness.

Psychopathia Transexualis

DAVID O. CAULDWELL

DAVID CAULDWELL WAS A GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER who developed a substantial alternative career as a writer of populist “family” advice columns for the tabloid news media (including the journal *Sexology* from which this article is taken), which catered to the more prurient interests in life. Cauldwell’s columns covered a wide array of health topics, but frequently returned to the themes of transvestic cross-dressing and gender-variant lives, and he clearly had a great wealth of background material from which to make his conclusions.

“Psychopathia Transexualis” is of interest on several levels. First, Cauldwell concludes that transsexualism is a genetically inherited predisposition, which, combined with a dysfunctional childhood, results in mental immaturity. This genetic influence has rarely been noted since in the psycho-scientific literature. The emphasis on dysfunctional nurturing, however, reflects the earlier work of Krafft-Ebing, Hirschfeld, and English sexologist Havelock Ellis, and anticipates the work of transsexualism experts Robert Stoller, Richard Green, John Money, and Leslie Lothstein. Second, the article is often referred to as the piece that first used the term “transsexual” [sic], which became the primary descriptor to this day of those people seeking to access gender reassignment therapies. Hirschfeld, however, had previously used the term *seelischer Transsexualismus*, or “psychic transsexualism.” Finally, the use by Cauldwell of a female-to-male case study calls attention to a historical shift in medical attention to transgender phenomena. Prior to the spectacular publicity given to male-to-female transsexual Christine Jorgensen in 1952, most medical and media attention was focused on female-to-male individuals—the post-Jorgensen pattern of paying greater attention to MTFs did not begin to change until the 1990s.

“Psychopathia Transexualis” is a very problematic article despite its frequent citation. It is an interesting, though excessively pathologizing, anecdotal account of Cauldwell’s experience with one transsexual person. It is riddled with contradictions, such as labeling transsexualism psychopathic, while admitting there are many well-adjusted transsexual people. Interestingly, Cauldwell foresees a time when social education will resolve dysfunctional families, and effective rehabilitation will cure the remainder of those presenting with the problem. He would undoubtedly be disappointed to see that his forecast was completely wrong, and that transsexual people have become a common feature of modern societies.

One of the most unusual sexual deviations is Psychopathia Transexualis—a pathologic-morbid desire to be a full member of the opposite sex. This desire is so powerful that the individual insists on—often impossible—elaborate surgery that would turn him into a complete woman, or her into a biologically perfect male. Our distinguished author gives us a most interesting case review under his personal observation. The condition, incidentally, is not at all rare. Thousands of cases exist.

—Editor [of *Sexology*]

Among both sexes are individuals who wish to be members of the sex to which they do not properly belong. Their condition usually arises from a poor hereditary background and a highly unfavourable

childhood environment. Proportionately there are more individuals in this category among the well-to-do than among the poor. Poverty and its attendant necessities serve, to an extent, as deterrents.

When an individual fails to mature according to his (or her) proper biological and sexological status, such an individual is psychologically (mentally) deficient. The psychological condition is in reality the disease.

When an individual who is unfavorably affected psychologically determines to live and appear as a member of the sex to which he or she does not belong, such an individual is what may be called a *psychopathic transexual*. This means, simply, that one is mentally unhealthy and because of this the person desires to live as a member of the opposite sex.

That which pertains to the psychopathic transexual may be called *psychopathia transexualis*. There are varying degrees of psychopathic transexuality. This article deals with one specific case.

CASE HISTORY—SUBJECT'S BACKGROUND

The subject of this study was born a normal female into a well known and fairly well-to-do family. On the maternal side there was a physician whose son became a lawyer and succeeded in his aspirations to hold political office. The paternal grandfather was prominent in politics and civic affairs. The father was a spoiled son, petted and spoiled by his mother and sisters. He was frequently put in jail for drunkenness and his family were in the habit of sending his wife (the subject's mother) to retrieve him from the clutches of a courtesan in a brothel.

There were two brothers older than the subject. One, the eldest by 13 years, evidently had survived this environment and was on his way up in the world when the subject was born. The other, about 10 years old when the subject was born, was feeble-minded, never learned to talk, and while in his 20's was committed to a state institution.

The subject, as a small girl, was impressed with the adulation with which the men of the family were showered. She herself was not, however, neglected. *Frequently she was dressed as a boy*. One of her fondest memories is a picture of herself in boy's attire and smoking a pipe. The picture was made when she was five years old. She was told often what a cute child she was and emphasis was placed on her cuteness as a "boy."

At no time did the subject desire to be a female. Through taught differently, she grew up thinking of herself as a boy. Early she began playing the role of a male on every occasion possible. When she was 18 she discarded feminine attire entirely. She determined that she would live as a male and that nothing could stop her.

Through having written numerous booklets on sexological and related subjects, I have built a large list of correspondents. I first knew of the subject of this study through a letter. After that there was a considerable correspondence. Eventually the subject wrote that she intended to visit relatives near my home and asked if she might see me. I extended an invitation—my wife acquiescing—to visit my home. In doing so I made it clear that my time was devoted entirely to writing and research in science, and that I was not now engaged in active medical practice.

I shall call the subject Earl. This is not her name but this name, like her own, is frequently borne by members of both sexes.

During Earl's brief stay with us we agreed that we had never had a more inoffensive guest in our home. She wore levis and regular men's shirts while at home but changed to feminine attire without prompting when we went for drives or away from home. She appeared to be more puzzled than determined to live as a male. She admitted one homosexual "crush." The relationship was one of heart rather than one of sexual indulgence, although she claimed to have had sexual satisfaction through various intimate bodily caresses, regular lip-kissing, and similar caresses. She assured me that no

caresses of any kind had been bestowed lower than the breasts. Her friend had professed sexual satisfaction. The relationship was broken up, evidently by the other girl's family and circumstances pertaining to her own family.

Earl's paternal family had contributed to her upkeep and schooling. There was an aged grandmother and there were two aunts—one a maiden, the other a widow. During her first visit Earl expressed the desire to undergo surgery which would, she hoped, bring about sex transmutation, thus making her a full male.

In cases of doubtful sex—usually cases of pseudo-hermaphroditism—surgical sex transmutation has often occurred. Actually, surgical measures have succeeded in establishing a nearer approach to the normal sexual integration of the individuals involved. I explained all of this to Earl and at her request gave her what we call the biological type of examination, which showed that her menses were regular and normal. Her external genitals were of perfect feminine formation, the clitoris normal, although the glans was unusually small. Hair distribution and voice normal.

It should be noted that the average sized clitoris with an unusually small glans *is the opposite of* male pseudo-hermaphroditism.

When Earl left us I believed that she would make an uneventful adjustment. But there were matters of family background with which I was not familiar at that time.

When we learned that Earl had entered a college for women it was felt that she had accomplished a satisfactory adjustment. We heard from her rarely. Once she wrote asking if I could help her to avoid taking physical education. I urged her to take the subject. In one letter there was a statement that a number of members of the faculty were homosexuals and that about 60 per cent of the student body appeared to be homosexuals. There was no hint of individual homosexuality on Earl's part. There were complaints about the house-mother who had been a matron or supervisor at a girl's reformatory and who, apparently, insisted on using reform school disciplinary tactics on these young college women.

Suddenly there was a frantic telegram. "If you are going to be at home and I can come, wire me collect. Important."

That was a puzzling message. I was inclined to think that she had become pregnant and thought that we could teach her how to become a good mother. Hence, I wired a welcome. Days passed and there was no word. Then suddenly, there was a collect telegram asking that we meet her at a certain time. We met her. She was a pitiful sight. She was dressed in a helter-skelter get-up of male attire and was thoroughly unkempt. She was broke. She had been sleeping on park benches and had been in police custody.

EARL DETERMINES TO BE A MALE

Earl was desperate to become a male. I listened as she calmly explained that she wanted me to find a surgeon who would remove her breasts, her ovaries, and close the vagina and then create for her an artificial penis. She would then take male hormones that she thought would, with masculine attire and occupation, solve her problem. I was amazed at such utter simplicity.

I explained that what she desired was impossible. A surgeon can castrate a woman, of course, and can readily remove her breasts. An artificial penis for cosmetic effect only, has been created by successive grafts of bone, skin, etc. But it is of no material use on a female and has no more sexual feeling than a fingernail.¹ BUT—it would be criminal for any surgeon to mutilate a pair of healthy breasts and it would be just as criminal for a surgeon to castrate a woman with no disease of the ovaries or related glands and without any condition wherein castration might be beneficial.

Earl was dissatisfied with my explanation. Why was it criminal if *she* wanted it done? How unreasonable! Earl also wanted to know if I didn't believe what I advocated in my writings: that the individual

has a right to live his or her life as he or she chooses provided that in doing so no innocent party is involved. A surgeon evidently did not appear as an innocent individual in her mind.

Because Earl was of legal age, and the further fact that I felt her confidence should be fully kept, I had not communicated with any members of her family. Indeed, there had been no occasion for me to do so.

Just as I was beginning to learn that in my broad and tolerant consideration of people and of the sexual nature of the human being, I had overlooked the psychopathic traits in Earl, her brother and aunt called. We found them to be well integrated people and of the highest moral and social fiber. Earl's mother, not having heard from her for many days, had phoned that she might possibly be with us. (She had known of Earl's previous visit.)

By now we were beginning to learn something of the real Earl. We knew that her ambitions were to live parasitically. *She would not work*. She believed her grandmother and aunts were fabulously wealthy (which they were not) and that, without earning money herself, she could worm it out of them just as she had long wormed it out of them through deception. She refused to go away with her aunt or her brother. The aunt left her \$10 for incidentals. A little later I realized that that Earl's relatives had been relieved that she had refused to go with them.

A SUMMARY OF FACTS

Earl's relatives began learning of her activities during recent months through various sources. Earl had been asked to withdraw from college on account of suspected homosexual activities. She admitted such activities. A woman who thinks of herself as a physical and psychological male is capable of only pseudo-homosexual activities with either sex. (With males she still would be a sexological female and with females she would be an imagined or fantasied psychological male.)

There had been but one homosexual affair according to Earl's statements. According to other authentic information, there had been a number of them. In some instances Earl had been, no doubt, the seducer and in others there had been mutuality and hence, no seduction.

She believed that she had a perfect right to go out just as any young male and court a female and, just as young males sometimes seduce young females, she thought that it was within her right to do the same thing.

Against her family Earl had death wishes. They did not, she contended, know how to use or to enjoy money. She—Earl, did.

She resented being referred to as "her and she." She had been immensely happy when, in a restaurant (in male attire of terrible taste) she had been referred to, or addressed as "Sir."

If doctors would not do exactly as Earl wanted them to do, or if they could not, then she would continue as she had done and bind her breasts as tightly downwards as possible, dress as a male and live as much the role of a male as possible. She already was pleased that she could use men's rest rooms. Frequently she had been referred to as "Sonny." She shaved in an effort to grow a beard. She kept on her guard in her effort to affect a masculine voice. (It never sounded in the least masculine.) She delighted in ultra-loud (and severely tawdry) socks and ties. The men's shoes she wore were far too large for her and made walking difficult. Her hair was conventional masculine trim. She was narcissistic and reveled in just seeing and feeling herself (as much when alone as otherwise) in the role of a male. She admired herself probably as much as the original Narcissus.

The expression of death-wishes annoyed my wife. We had to do something with our guest. Fortunately we were able to turn her over to her brother and within two or three days he passed her on to grandmother and aunts. They gave her all of the encouragement possible and bought her a complete feminine wardrobe. She would not don or touch a garment.

Unable to cope with a personality such as Earl's her family gave her a ticket to a city where she assured them she would get a job. They gave her enough cash for an intelligent person to get along on until more can be earned. They did not, any more than did I, expect that Earl would get a job or work. They felt as I feel that she would soon run afoul of the law and that the State would find it necessary to make some legal disposition of the case.

That there are better integrated transsexuals we are well aware. There are case histories of outstanding social, civic and other leaders who were transsexuals. In Arkansas a comparatively few years ago a Dr. Brown lived and practiced until in the 60's and was regarded as a male and a highly competent physician. She lived with a sister. In her final illness physicians who treated her discovered her true sex.

In my files I have numerous case histories of males who have lost their genitals through accident and who have become well-integrated transsexuals living useful lives and helping, rather than hindering, society. I have other case histories of females who, usually because of an endocrine disturbance or an adrenal tumor, or ovarian disease, have felt that their masculine characteristics were a hindrance to them in careers as females. They have succeeded as well-integrated individuals, living as transsexuals. These transsexuals are, however, transsexuals by affectation only. Evidently they are all, in their sexual activities, purely autosexual.

DR. HIRSCHFELD'S PRONOUNCEMENT

In "Sexual History of the World War" by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, a case is reported of a young woman who sought to enlist in the German Army of the first world war. She made several unsuccessful attempts. Eventually she was examined by Dr. Hirschfeld who pronounced her "a psychological male." She was thereupon accepted and became an excellent fighter, serving as a male soldier.

The psychopathic characteristic is manifested not, as may be thought, in actual homosexuality or transvestism, nor yet in the adoption of a male role and career, but in such practices as seduction, parasitism, violation of the social codes in numerous ways, frequently kleptomania and actual thievery, pathological lying, and other criminal and unsocial tendencies. (The adoption of a female role and career applies in the case of actual males.)

Although heredity had a part in producing individuals who may have psychopathic tendencies, such pitiful cases as that described herein are products, largely, of unfavorable childhood environment and overindulgent parents and other near relatives.

Some of the individuals involved, as was the subject of this study, are amenable to rehabilitation through a few organizations now in existence. A large enough number of suitable organizations might succeed in rehabilitating the majority of individuals of both sexes falling into the category of psychopathia transsexualis.

Progress is being made. Within a quarter of a century social education may serve as a preventive in all but a few cases and social organizations may be able to rehabilitate the few who fall by the wayside.

NOTE

1. An artificial penis that is biologically effective can be built. *Sexology* has reported a number of such cases. These cases, however, were all male ones. During the war a number of soldiers were mutilated by gun shot, mines, etc., which deprived them, in some cases, completely of their penis. By plastic surgery an artificial organ was then built up on the remaining stump. Such organs, strangely enough, permit the subject to have gratifying marital union and offspring.—Editor [of *Sexology*].

Transsexualism and Transvestism as Psycho-Somatic and Somato-Psychic Syndromes

HARRY BENJAMIN

HARRY BENJAMIN, WHO POPULARIZED (BUT DID NOT COIN) THE TERM “TRANSSEXUAL,” was a compassionate though paternalistic advocate for transgender people throughout his long life. Trained as a medical doctor in his native Germany, Benjamin was initially interested in tuberculosis, prostitution, and other public health issues, but soon became interested in the emerging field of endocrinology. He worked with colleagues Eugen Steinach, the pioneering gland specialist who first isolated the effects of the “sex hormones,” and with sex-reformer Magnus Hirschfeld. Benjamin immigrated to the United States prior to World War I and became a U.S. citizen. Although Benjamin was familiar with Hirschfeld’s support of sex-change procedures in Europe, and had himself prescribed cross-gender hormones as early as the 1920s, it was primarily through his connections with Alfred Kinsey, beginning in 1949, that he developed an on-going association with individuals seeking to change their sex. Benjamin’s subsequent publications, along with his clinical practice, determined much of the modern medical approach to transgender phenomena.

Benjamin’s 1966 book, *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, remains his definitive work on the subject. The 1954 article included here, which contains the seed of his later work, was Benjamin’s earliest published effort to create a systematic way of thinking about the differing interrelationships between the sexed body, gender identity, and sexual desire that can be observed in various transgender phenomena. It was originally presented at the U.S. Association for the Advancement of Psychotherapy, at a symposium organized by Benjamin himself after the publicity surrounding Christine Jorgensen’s 1952 genital surgery called unprecedented attention to transgender issues. Given the context of its initial presentation, Benjamin’s paper is quite polemical. He argues that psychotherapy aimed at curing the transsexual person of the desire to change sex is unproductive, and that transsexualism is likely caused by a combination of constitutional, psychological, and hormonal influences.

DEFINITION

Transvestism has become the accepted term for the desire of a certain group of people to dress in the clothes of the opposite sex. This term, first used by Magnus Hirschfeld (1) has the disadvantage that it names a disturbance of behavior and emotion after only one of its symptoms, although the most conspicuous one. This symptom, which is also known as “cross-dressing,” is the symbolic fulfillment of a deep-seated and more or less intense urge suggesting a disharmony of the total sexual sense, a sexual indecision or a disassociation of the physical and mental sexuality.

Havelock Ellis (2) proposed the term “eonism,” naming it after its prototype, the Chevalier D’Eon and as a parallel to sadism and masochism. Hamburger and his associates (3) in Denmark reserved the term eonism for severe cases of so-called “genuine transvestism.” They also characterize it as “psychic hermaphroditism.” This is the same extreme degree of transvestism for which I have used the term transsexualism (4) because a transformation of sex is the foremost desire. Cauldwell (12) spoke of Psychopathia transsexualis.

Naturally not every act of “cross-dressing” is transvestitic. Only if it occurs in an atmosphere of emotional pressure, sometimes to the point of compulsion and is accompanied by a more or less distinct sexual satisfaction can the term be applied. Otherwise it would be simple masquerading of a non-affective nature.

SYMPTOMATOLOGY

Transvestism can be a form of fetishism. If a man, for instance wears under his suit a female corset, or panties or long stockings, he may just want to be close to his beloved fetish. In other cases, however, such action may be a compromise for the transvestite because it might entail social, sometimes marital, complications or it may involve legal risks to dress completely as a woman and appear as such in public. Another compromise is dressing as a woman only in the privacy of the home. Both ways leave transvestites, and especially transsexualists, greatly frustrated and unhappy.

The transvestite wants to be accepted in society as a member of the opposite sex; he or she wants to play the role as completely and as successfully as possible. The male transvestite admires the female form and manners and tries to imitate both with an intensity that varies greatly from case to case. The female transvestite, being legally immune, has it easier to identify herself with the male sex, acting the part of a man in appearance as well as in conduct. Gutheil published an analyzed case of female transvestism in Stekel’s book on Fetischism (5).

Transsexualism is a different problem and a much greater one. It indicates more than just playing a role. It denotes the intense and often obsessive desire to change the entire sexual status including the anatomical structure. While the male transvestite, *enacts* the role of a woman, the transsexualist wants to *be* one and *function* as one, wishing to assume as many of her characteristics as possible, physical, mental and sexual.

Transsexualism as well as transvestism are decidedly more frequent among men than women, like most other sexual deviations. Due to the more permissive fashions in women, female transvestism is less conspicuous, but naturally can involve for the individual the same frustrations and often tragic situations as in men. Since the social and legal complications are infinitely greater in male transvestism and transsexualism, this present discussion is largely confined to them.

The transsexualist is always a transvestite but not vice-versa. In fact, most transvestites would be horrified at the idea of being operated. The transsexualist, on the other hand, only lives for the day when his hated sex organs can be removed, organs which to him are nothing but a dreadful deformity. Therefore the transsexualist always seeks medical aid while the transvestite as a rule merely asks to be left alone.

To put it differently: In transvestism the sex organs are sources of pleasure; in transsexualism they are sources of disgust. That seems to me a cardinal distinction and perhaps the principal differential diagnostic sign. Otherwise there is no sharp separation between the two, one merging into the other.

It is quite evident that under the influence of sensational publicity a reasonably well adjusted transvestite could become greatly disturbed and fascinated by ideas of surgical conversion so that his emotional balance may be endangered.

RELATION TO HOMOSEXUALITY

Homosexual inclinations always exist in the transsexualist whether they result in actual physical contacts or not. The libido as far as sex activities are concerned is usually low and seems to be completely occupied with the sex conversion idea, indicating the close relationship to narcissism. The interpretation of the libido as homosexual is strongly rejected by the male transsexualists. They consider the fact that they are attracted to men natural because they feel as women and consider themselves of the female sex. For them to be attracted to "other females" appears to be a perversion.

Transvestites on the other hand are in the majority heterosexual, although their principal sexual outlet seems to be auto-erotic. Some are married and raise families, but the marriage rarely endures. Others have understanding girl-friends with whom they sometimes share their wardrobe.

Kinsey and his associates (6) consider transvestism and homosexuality "totally independent phenomena." So they are, as far as overt behavior is concerned. Most homosexuals would not be interested in "cross-dressing" just as most transvestites reject homosexual relations. Furthermore, the transvestitic behavior is chiefly a social problem, non-sexual on the surface, affecting one individual only, while homosexual behavior is an open manifestation of sex involving a second party.

However, I can see a relationship between the transvestitic and homosexual behavior in the fact that both are disturbances of the sexual unity of the individual, both constitute a split of soma and psyche in the field of sex, both are instinctive drives, quite beyond the individual's power to control or to change, no matter what the underlying cause may be.

ETIOLOGY

Speculations as to the causes of transvestism and transsexualism have led to much controversy in the past. There were, and still are, those who believe that all cases have an exclusively organic etiology. They consider transvestism in all its stages (as well as homosexuality) a form of intersexuality, an intermediate sex of genetic or endocrine origin. Hirschfeld spoke of metatropism as an organic state.

On the other hand, there is the strictly psychoanalytic explanation which traces all such deviations to psychological conditioning, infantile traumata, childhood fixations, or an arrested emotional development.

I believe that in the face of clinical facts, logic and objective observations, either approach as an exclusive key to the phenomenon is untenable.

An organic explanation of intersexual phenomena would have to be looked for either in the genetic mechanism or in the endocrine constitution or in a combination of both. Organically, sex is always a mixture of male and female components. The ratio varies with the individual, determining the constitutional makeup, physical and mental. Between the "full-female" and the "full-male," constituting the two extremes on either side (and they are naturally not 100% either), there is every possible intermediate status.

The chromosomal sex (or "genetic sex") normally producing the homogametic female (bearing XX chromosomes), or the heterogametic male (bearing XY chromosomes) is subject to disturbances most strikingly evidenced by hermaphroditic and pseudo-hermaphroditic deformities. Investigations into the chromosomal sex (11) have shown that it is probably contained in the nuclear structure of all body cells. It has been detected and demonstrated in the epidermal nuclei of the skin. It does not always correspond to the respective gonad, that is to say, the endocrine sex. Future research along these lines may thus determine the dominant sex in an individual and may do much to clarify our still incomplete knowledge of the nature of sex. To speak of a male when there are (or were) testicles

and of a female when there are (or were) ovaries may be the most practical way to differentiate the sexes, but it is scientifically incorrect and unsatisfactory to the geneticist.

Similarly the term "transsexualism" answers a practical purpose and is appropriate in our present state of knowledge. If future research should show that male sex organs are compatible with (genetic) female sex or female sex organs with (genetic) male sex the term would be wrong because the male "transsexualist" is actually female and merely requires a transformation of genitals.

The endocrine aspect of the problem is intimately related to the genetic. If we find in a transvestite underdeveloped gonads and other signs of a congenital hypogonadism or if there are undescended testicles or hypospadias, we may be justified to suspect the sexual deviation to be due to a primary genetic disturbance also. But on the other hand all physical abnormalities can secondarily have far-reaching psychological repercussions.

The all-important role of environment and of psychological conditioning need not be stressed before this audience. There are any number of situations in early childhood that can be held responsible for the development of a sexual deviation. From the "smothering mother" to the dominant female in the family and the cross-dressing of the little boy to please a parent, each case of transvestism can have a different inception. Emotional development arrested during an early phase may play the most frequent role.

In some case histories the transvestitic tendency appears to have developed spontaneously at an early age. It may be well, therefore, to recall the fact as Dukor (7) expressed it: "The possibility of a purely psychological cause for a sexual deviation does not prove its correctness." There may be other factors besides. In a recent published monograph Bürger-Prinz, H. Albrecht and H. Giese (8) express the belief that there is no single principal cause for transvestism. Alden of San Francisco includes the realm of all mental and emotional reactions into the individual's constitutional equipment.

The effeminate male may look and behave as he does on a purely psychosomatic or psychological basis (imitating his mother, for instance) but he may also be the product of a somato-psychic mechanism originating in his chromosomes. It is often impossible to distinguish between the two.

Havelock Ellis has this to say in regard to etiology: "Early environmental influences assist but can scarcely originate Eonism. The normal child soon reacts powerfully against them. We must in the end seek a deeper organic foundation for Eonism."

THREE TYPES OF TRANSVESTITES

Let me briefly sketch my impression of the three principal types of transvestites as I have seen them in my practice and as the etiology suggested itself to me.

1. *The principally psychogenic transvestite.* He is anatomically a normal male but may lack masculinity. The feminine component in his make-up is sufficient to allow an early psychological conditioning to form the transvestitic pattern in later life. This psychological conditioning takes place long before the age of 12 or 13 when the principal attitudes are generally well established. His desire for sexual contacts is usually low, more often hetero- than homosexual. He is miserable when dressed as a man and immediately comfortable and relaxed in the clothes of a female. He has become an expert in cosmetic make-up, yet is occasionally in social or legal difficulties. He assumes a female first name and wants to be referred to as "she." He is usually introverted, non-aggressive, and his peculiarity hardly interferes with a smooth functioning of society. His conflict results from social pressure and legal prohibition. In fighting his peculiarity he sometimes over-emphasizes masculinity and becomes known as a "tough guy." In one case the over-compensation took the form of the patient having his entire body tattooed. Here masochism may have entered.

More than anything else the psychogenetic transvestite wants to see a change in the existing restrictive laws, so that he can lead a woman's life. *He* does not want to be changed but wants society's attitude

toward him to change, again revealing narcissistic tendencies. Treatment is therefore rarely attempted. But if so it would be principally psychoanalytic. Endocrine therapy is rarely indicated. Only if there are signs of hypogonadism, masculinization may be attempted with testosterone. Simultaneously, a belated reenforcement of the maturing process with chorionic gonadotropin would be logical.

2. *The intermediate type.* His symptoms and problems are fundamentally the same as in type #1, but decidedly more pronounced. Therefore, he inclines at times toward transsexualism, but is at other times content with merely dressing and acting as a woman. He wavers between homo- and heterosexual desires usually according to chance meetings. He can be a very disturbed person. His masturbation fantasies are narcissistic and he visualizes himself functioning as a woman.

The gonads are usually within normal limits, but may incline toward underdevelopment suggesting a psycho-sexual infantilism. Skeletal measurements sometimes are of eunuchoid character. He rates low in masculinity and rather high in femininity on the respective M.F. scale. There may be more or less feminine markings in his physical make-up, for instance wide hips, breast development, female hair distribution, etc. Adverse childhood influences, often quite evident in his history, were therefore able to make a correspondingly deep impression on the personality structure. Psychosomatic and somato-psychic factors intermingle.

An attempt at therapy may be considered but prognosis—I believe—is poor. Personally, I have never seen a cure, but the patients usually do not persist in treatment long enough or have no real desire to be cured. The constitutional factors are possibly too deep and resist psychotherapeutic endeavors too strongly. Under the powerful suggestive influence of publicity like that of the Jorgensen case such transvestites may, for the first time, turn toward transsexualism.

3. *The somatopsychic transsexualist.* This type is well represented by the case of Christine Jorgensen, who published the facts of her own case frankly and with a well-conceived self-analysis.

Feminine appearance and orientation is often striking in these people but masculine features are compatible with full transsexualism. The conviction of these endocrine males that they are really females with faulty sex organs is profound and passionate. Suggestive childhood influences are often evident in their histories, but may, in other cases, be vague and not sufficiently plausible to help in explaining the phenomenon. Therefore a still greater degree of constitutional femininity, perhaps due to a chromosomal sex disturbance, must be assumed in spite of the fact that the gonadal status may appear within normal limits. Here, psychic hermaphroditism seems to be an apt description.

Sex life is largely cerebral and non-genital, satisfaction being derived more from their paraphilia that is to say their feminization fantasies and endeavors than from auto-erotism or homosexual contacts.

Hamburger and his associates have portrayed such a case in an article in the A.M.A. Journal (3). They analyzed the clinical facts and the surgical treatment with much insight and common sense, reaching the conclusion that "It is highly probable that eonism, (their term for transsexualism), is constitutionally conditioned."

After their report appeared, an interesting attempt was made in a letter to the A.M.A. Journal (9) to interpret the same case of transsexualism from a strictly psychoanalytic angle naturally with rejection of any treatment except psychoanalysis. Unfortunately, a theory that disregards biological factors in such cases—in my opinion—cannot convince and does not ring true.

Freud himself—I believe—would have disagreed with such a one-sided approach. During one of my visits to Vienna about 30 years ago I discussed the psyche-soma relationship with Freud and he agreed fully that a *disharmony* of the emotions may well be due to a *disharmony* of our endocrines.

All therapy, in cases of transsexualism—to the best of my knowledge—has proved useless as far as any cure is concerned. I know of no case where even intensive and prolonged psychoanalysis had any success. If we are dealing with a constitutional deviation, we can hardly expect to influence it.

Testosterone, for instance, would not change the desire for sex transformation either. It would merely increase libido and perhaps masculine appearance aggravating instead of diminishing the conflict. These people seem to me truly the victims of their genetic constitution, step-children of medical science, often crucified by the ignorance and indifference of society and persecuted by antiquated laws and by legal interpretations that completely lack in wisdom and realism.

THE NORMAL BOY

To complete the picture, I would like to mention the normal masculine boy who was exposed to adverse psychological conditioning. In former years it was quite customary that many boys kept their long curls till they went to school and some of them were dressed and treated more in a feminine than masculine fashion. That took place during the formative years. Naturally not all of them became transvestites or homosexuals. When this kind of conditioning went against their nature, nothing happened. They grew into normal manhood. But when it harmonized with a constitution of a high feminine component, then it was a different story.

In this connection I would like to raise a question of cause and effect. Parents who do bring up their boys as girls and give them female names usually do so to please themselves and to compensate for their disappointment in having a boy when they wanted a girl (or vice-versa). But is it not possible also that, in other instances, the boy—for constitutional reasons—looked and behaved so much like a girl that it seemed more natural to the parents to forget about his gonads for a while and bring him up as a female?

In one case that I observed recently a reversed situation actually seemed to exist. The parents wanted the boy that was born to them very much. But at the age of 3 or 4 the child rebelled and wanted to be dressed and treated “like other girls.” The parents and two older sisters fought for a son and brother, but finally gave in. To keep peace they allowed the girl’s dresses but—for a while at least—insisted on regular boy’s haircuts. These constituted the most distressing moments in the boy’s life. He grew up into an extremely feminine-looking transvestite and transsexualist. He was studied by two groups of psychiatrists. One group recommended the conversion-operation as the only way to preserve the patient’s sanity; the other group advised against it as unlikely to solve the underlying psychological problems. In September of this year, however, the patient succeeded in realizing his life’s ambition and did have a conversion-operation performed abroad.

I saw him a couple of weeks ago and can only say; so far, so good. He is happier and seems better balanced emotionally than when I saw him two years ago. However, I would make no prediction for the future; much will depend upon follow-up therapy.

I am fully aware that I am repetitious, but I feel that occasionally there is justification for it. Allow me, therefore, to summarize briefly my opinion: Our genetic and endocrine equipment constitutes either an unresponsive, sterile or a more or less responsive, that is to say, fertile soil on which a psychic trauma can grow and develop into such a basic conflict that subsequently a neurosis or sex deviation results.

Or, differently expressed: Our organic sexual constitution, that is to say the chromosomal sex supported and maintained by the endocrines, form the substance and the material that make up our sexuality. Psychological conditioning determines its final shape and function. The substance is largely inaccessible to treatment (except in its endocrine constituent.) The function is the domain of psychotherapy.

LEGAL ASPECTS

The legal aspects of transvestism, transsexualism and conversion-operations will be discussed by Mr. Robert Sherwin. The fear of arrest when they venture out in female dress and the utter frustration

when they resist the temptation makes life truly miserable for these patients. A comparison to drug addiction readily comes to one's mind. One can only wonder that their neurotic symptoms are often not more pronounced.

FREQUENCY OF TRANSVESTISM

The number of transvestites and transsexualists in the United States is enormously difficult to estimate because too many of them keep their secret well-hidden; some are discovered only after death. An investigation is now in progress in California to procure an approximate idea of how many may be in that state. While there could be several hundred or more, they are hardly enough to constitute a problem for society even if restrictive laws were relaxed with the help of medical certificates.

TREATMENT

As far as the treatment of transvestism is concerned, my previous remarks may suffice on this occasion. The management of transsexualism, however, requires a few supplementary comments, especially as far as the conversion-operation is concerned.

Transsexualism is undoubtedly a rare condition, rare in proportion to the population. Its treatment is even more perplexing than that of etiology because medical considerations are so greatly complicated by social and legal ones.

In my opinion, psychotherapy for the purpose of curing the condition is a waste of time. A basic conflict would be too firmly anchored in the constitution. All that the psychiatrist can possibly do is to relax tension, to develop and reinforce realistic thinking, and to supply guidance. That, of course, is not a cure.

The transsexualist is primarily interested in having a conversion-operation performed and therein lies the dilemma which taxes the physician's conscience to an unusual degree.

The operation itself would consist in castration, the amputation of the penis (peotomy) and the possible plastic formation of an artificial vagina. But, alas, even if the patient had reached this goal, it may not always solve his problem. His feminization cravings may never end. The later realization that a complete change of sex including the ability of child-bearing is impossible and that only a change of secondary sex characteristics has been and can be accomplished, may leave some patients still frustrated even after a more or less extended period of relief. That is the tragedy and the pitfall in consenting to this irreversible procedure. And yet, in some cases, it may be the lesser evil and we may have to accept this chance as a calculated risk.

The patient who is constantly on the verge of a reactive psychosis or is in danger of suicide or self-mutilation cannot be turned down with an unequivocal "no." On the other hand the physician's sympathy should not tempt him to give in too easily to the patient's persuasive arguments and thus obscure his sound clinical judgment.

The psychiatrist must have the last word. He has to evaluate the personality in regard to possible future consequences and also as to the likelihood of somehow making life bearable under the status quo. If it is evident that the psyche cannot be brought into sufficient harmony with the soma, then and only then is it essential to consider the reverse procedure, that is, to attempt fitting the soma into the realm of the psyche.

In weighing the indication for the operation, another factor should be considered, namely the physical and especially facial characteristics of the patient. A feminine habitus, as it existed for instance in Christine Jorgensen, increases the chances of a successful outcome. A masculine appearance mitigates against it. Such patient may meet with serious difficulties later on when he expects to be accepted by society as a female and lead the life of a woman.

A conversion-operation is an infrequent procedure, even allowing for the fact that it may often be kept a deep secret (as a supposedly illegal procedure). Treatment with estrogens would have to follow in order to control castration symptoms, aside from having its feminizing effect. We must remember, of course, that castration produces a eunuch and not a woman.

Whenever the surgical intervention is contraindicated, "chemical castration" can be attempted with large doses of estrogen (naturally in combination with psychotherapy.) The psychological side-effects of such endocrine therapy can be of great value in addition to its hormonal result which is the suppression of the androgenic activity of the testes and the adrenal cortex. Repeated determinations of the 17-ketosteroids could show the degree of suppression. These steroids would be best kept at an average female level. If the estrogens do not suppress the 17-ketosteroid production sufficiently, cortisone may be used in addition. In that case the treatment of male transsexualism parallels that of female virilism (10).

Clinically, the hormonal castration can gradually produce an increase of mammary tissue, a reduction of body hair, and probably a slight atrophy of testes and penis. A decrease of libido and correspondingly diminished sexual tension is likely.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Let me leave you and my highly incomplete presentation with these conclusions:

Transvestism and transsexualism are symptoms that may have a great variety of causes. A constitutional predisposition is essential; then comes adverse psychological conditioning followed by the respective syndromes. The intensity of these two causative factors and their interplay determine the character of the final clinical picture (which may range from mere effeminacy of an otherwise normal man to deep-seated exclusive homosexuality and transsexualism.

Transvestism may be successfully handled by psychotherapy if the patient desires a cure. Otherwise it can only be treated by treating society and our legal statutes with their interpretations.

Transsexualism is inaccessible to any curative methods at present at our disposal. Nevertheless the condition requires psychiatric help, reinforced by hormone treatment and, in some cases, by surgery. In this way a reasonably contented existence may be worked out for these patients.

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selection from

Biological Substrates of Sexual Behavior

ROBERT STOLLER

AMERICAN PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOLOGIST ROBERT STOLLER developed an influential theory of transsexual etiology in the 1960s. He believed that male-to-female transsexuality was a pathology of psychosexual development caused during early childhood by “too much mother made possible by too little father.” He considered female-to-male transsexuality to be an entirely different psychodynamic phenomena.

Building upon the earlier work of John Money and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins University, Stoller developed an influential three-part model of human psychosexual structures that distinguished between biological sex, social gender role, and subjective or “psychological” gender identity. In this article, Stoller discusses how biological sex provides a foundation for the other two components of his model.

Robert Stoller helped establish the pioneering Gender Identity Center at UCLA in the early 1960s, and later worked closely with the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, and thus played an important role in the history of medical attention to transgender phenomena. Although his work, along with that of John Money, has largely fallen out of favor within recent humanities scholarship, it remains influential to the extent that it is responsible, to a significant degree, for popularizing the sex/gender distinction upon which much subsequent queer and feminist analysis has turned.

While the practice of sex has a venerable past, a more systematic understanding of its biology is still beyond us. Recently, however, and with increasing momentum, the study of biological aspects of this phenomenon is permitting us to see at least the dim outlines of the answers we shall be finding in the next years. This will permit us to take over a subject formerly the prerogative of philosophers, whose freedom from the responsibility of proof permitted them the assurance of certainty.

It is obvious that so many disciplines of biological research are now involved in studying problems of sex (for example, genetics, endocrinology, embryology, comparative anatomy, physiology) that in a short chapter one can only indicate some of the major areas in which significant investigations are taking place, and attempt to suggest the richness and promise of the field.

We know that reproduction is the fundamental purpose behind sexual behavior.* In the most primitive living creatures, reproduction occurs simply by binary fission, with the genetic makeup of the individual organism being identically reproduced. However, when one gets beyond the simplest organisms one finds techniques for combining genetic material in new combinations. Let us skip across the millennia of evolution and pause a moment with *amphibia*. At this level of evolution, we have long since passed the state of development in which sexual intercourse between males and females has first

*Though less and less clearly so the higher the organism, until in humans we find that sexual behavior may also have psychological purposes very distinct from procreation.

been introduced for reproduction. These creatures have both external and internal genital organs. The amphibian larva has an indifferent gonad made up of two parts: a medulla, which, if it develops, can only become a testis, and a cortex, which, if it develops, can only become an ovary. In the normal creature, gonadal differentiation is controlled by the sex chromosomes, which cause the opposite-sex cells in the indifferent gonad to melt away. Yet, though advanced and differentiated, the gonads of many amphibia are easily reversible: regardless of the genetic makeup (and on this level of development sex chromosomes are determining the sex of the creature), the genotypic female can be converted to a phenotypic male by suppressing development of the gonadal cortex and promoting medullary growth. If the experiment is carried out in embryological life, the destined female will become an anatomically normal male, having a completely male, sperm-producing testis, despite the fact that had the individual not been tampered with, it would have developed into a completely normal female. This can be accomplished by even such unrelated experimental modes as temperature extremes, castration, or gonadal grafts.

Let us stay with mammals, upon which and whom within the last five or six years there has occurred an explosion of fine research related to neurohumoral mechanisms influencing sexual behavior. Two areas especially have been investigated. The first has been the effect of prenatal hormones on postnatal sexual behavior. What one does, in essence, is to give male or female hormones in varying doses to pregnant animals or to newborns. If one does this, for example, to female offspring, not only do they become (anatomically) pseudohermaphroditic if one gives male hormones but also there are apparently central nervous system changes as well: These females shift both their normal childhood sexual behavior and their adult sexual behavior in the direction of markedly increased male behavior. Especially interesting has been the discovery of critical periods: If these sex hormones are given only during very limited periods in fetal development, the reversals in childhood and adult sexual behavior occur, but if one gives the hormones before or after the critical period, then the same aberrant behavior will not develop.

The second area of investigation has been the use of implants of hormones directly into those parts of the animals' hypothalamus that directly affect sexual behavior. Sexual behavior and sexual drive can be influenced in direct relationship either to the cells that have the hormone implant in their immediate neighborhood or to the quantity of the implant. From these studies emerges the very provocative thesis that in each animal there are both male and female CNS subsystems for the regulation of sexual behavior.* According to Young and co-workers, in the normal animal genetic control leads to fetal anatomical-biochemical development causing one system to become dominant, so that, in a male animal, for example, that system which controls male behavior becomes dominant while the second system with its potential for female behavior plays a far lesser role. When the normal development of the animal is distorted by the experimental use of sex hormones, the normally secondary system becomes increasingly predominant. As yet there is no *histological* evidence that such subsystems exist, but the experiments to date seem to demand such an explanation. Certainly it has been described for many years, especially by Ford and Beach, that the higher mammals show degrees of both masculine and feminine behavior in any individual, and there is much evidence that there is no such thing as an exclusively masculine or exclusively feminine mammal.

It will be helpful in our future discussions if we have available to us a very short review of embryological developments of the sexual apparatus in the male and female. It is interesting to note—and to note it can open up some rich fields for speculation—that in most mammals, but especially in humans, the resting baseline of the sexual tissues is female. That is to say, if something else is not added to the tissue, whether the embryo be genetically male or genetically female, no masculinization will occur. Masculinization, when it does occur results in a penis of normal size, with the urethra running through it and a urethral meatus opening at its end, with fusion of the scrotal skin, and with testes within the

*This may blunt the effects of Rado's attack on Freud's belief in a biological bisexuality as one root of psychological bisexuality.

scrotal sac. When this masculinization does not occur one has a bifid scrotum, which is in fact external lips, a clitoris with the urethra opening below it and no external gonads. In those individuals who instead of having the normal two sex chromosomes (XX or XY), have only one (XO), the external genitalia are female, and although the internal reproductive system does not finish its development, there is a tendency for the tissues to move in the direction of developing into female organs. It seems that by the third month in the male fetus' existence a masculinizing substance begins to be secreted in a few sexual cells, this process being initiated in some unknown way under the control of the Y sex chromosome. Once this masculinizing substance begins to be produced even in minute amounts, it influences more cells in that area to become masculinized so that they produce more of this substance so that more cells get masculinized so that more of the substance gets produced and so on, thus starting the process of the masculinizing of these and more distant tissues until the final normal male sexual anatomy results that is found at birth.

Now to shift to a whole different discipline, *ethology*, a special aspect of the study of animal learning behavior and a radically different methodology of research. From this treasure house of data, I shall take only one popular example. Lorenz, as is well known, has made himself available to greylag geese at certain critical times in their infancy, times when in the birds' natural state the mother would be with them. Under these unusual conditions, in infancy the birds attach themselves to Lorenz; then throughout their growing period they follow and respond to him as if he were their mother. On reaching sexual maturity, their sexual drives are directed exclusively toward him and other humans and not toward their own species. Many species, it is postulated, are genetically endowed so that certain systems of the brain will respond to certain stimuli in the outside world and not to others, and so that the animal is receptive to being permanently influenced by these stimuli only (or at least especially) at certain circumscribed periods in its development—the critical periods. This process, called *imprinting*, is found in different degrees in many species of birds and mammals and is now being investigated biochemically and neurophysiologically. In grossest form, we might say that we humans are able to respond sexually to humans, rather than to other animals or inanimate objects, in part because of certain not yet discovered central nervous system “states of readiness” that are produced by our having been imprinted by human mothers rather than by, say, monkeys or lizards.

Work has been under way recently to determine to what extent these imprinting mechanisms play a part in human infants, but the impossibilities of controlled experiments and the difficulties of interpreting mother-newborn interrelationships make this still a wide open field. A number of workers feel that some sort of imprinting does take place in human infants. Of interest to us now is the fact that at this level of theorizing one comes upon the impossibility of separating out the biological from the psychological; at this point, one recognizes that the two words *biological* and *psychological* only represent two conceptual schemes for looking at the identical data.*

It will help our discussion of these problems to distinguish two different orders of data: sex and gender.

As mentioned earlier, I prefer to restrict the term *sex* to a biological connotation. Thus, with few exceptions, there are two sexes, male and female. To determine sex, one must assay the following physical conditions: chromosomes, external genitalia, internal genitalia (e.g., uterus, prostate), gonads, hormonal states, and secondary sex characteristics. (It seems likely that in the future another criterion will be added: brain systems.) One's sex, then, is determined by an algebraic sum of all these qualities, and, as is obvious, most people fall under one of two separate bell curves, the one of which is called “male,” the other “female.” It is well known that there is a certain amount of overlapping in all humans, and in some unusual cases the overlapping is considerable, as in certain hermaphrodites. There are also, genetically speaking, other sexes; thus, in addition to the XX female and the XY male,

*I leave out the important writings of learning theorists, and especially the fascinating work of Harlow, because these studies are not as immediately “biological” as those reviewed above.

there are individuals (XO, XXY, XXXY, etc.) who have a mixing of some of their biological attributes of sex. Such people are often anatomically intersexed as well.*

Gender is a term that has psychological or cultural rather than biological connotations. If the proper terms for sex are "male" and "female," the corresponding terms for gender are "masculine" and "feminine"; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex. Gender is the amount of masculinity or femininity found in a person, and, obviously, while there are mixtures of both in many humans, the normal male has a preponderance of masculinity and the normal female a preponderance of femininity. *Gender identity* starts with the knowledge and awareness, whether conscious or unconscious, that one belongs to one sex and not the other, though as one develops, gender identity becomes much more complicated, so that, for example, one may sense himself as not only a male but a masculine man or an effeminate man or even a man who fantasies being a woman. *Gender role* is the overt behavior one displays in society, the role which he plays, especially with other people, to establish his position with them insofar as his and their evaluation of his gender is concerned. While gender, gender identity, and gender role are almost synonymous in the usual person, in certain abnormal cases they are at variance. One problem that arises to complicate our work is that gender behavior, which is for the greatest part learned from birth on, plays an essential part in sexual behavior, which is markedly biological, and at times it is very difficult to separate aspects of gender and sex from a particular piece of behavior.

Let us look now at some of the biological aspects of human sexual and gender behavior. This discussion will not review the physiology of sexual excitement, orgasm, and like subjects. While these have been studied in great detail (by far the most important work being that of Masters and Johnson and the excellent review by Sherfey), I am here more concerned with central than with (anatomically) peripheral mechanisms. Nor will the biology of the anatomic development of one's primary and secondary sexual characteristics be considered further here. As with the material I sketched in on lower animals, it is possible only to sample representative work in humans in order to give an impression of the information presently becoming available.

First, from the work of geneticists: While many of us are still awaiting definitive information about the contributions that chromosomes and genes make to sex and gender behavior, there are geneticists who might consider that our waiting shows undue skepticism. Certainly there have been exciting discoveries in the genetic laboratories in the last decade or so. The discovery by Barr and Bertram of nuclear sex chromatin material in mammalian, including human, cells has given us a simple, rapid, and highly accurate screening test for genetic sex. Also, new techniques for visualizing chromosomes have revealed to us both the normal complement of 46 chromosomes to the human cell and the presence and morphology of the sex chromosomes. This immediately made possible some clarification of the contribution of chromosomes to intersexuality (e.g., the XO Turner's Syndrome of ovarian agenesis or the XXY of the typical Klinefelter's Syndrome). In addition, decades of speculations regarding the alleged role of gross chromosomal anomalies in perversion with gender abnormality were put to rest when it was shown that no such defects were demonstrable—for example, in homosexuality or transvestism.

At this stage in the development of the science of genetics, I can only take the position of a layman, consider the arguments inconclusive, and await more compelling facts.

Now some endocrinological data: As is well known, castration of the male produces changes in sexual behavior. If the testes are removed before puberty, not only are the secondary sex characteristics unable to develop, but also genital sexuality in the adult is almost nonexistent. Castration following puberty results in marked diminution of sexual activity; the speed and completeness with which this destruction of sexual behavior occurs varies the individual. Castration in females does not produce the same effects. Prepubertal girls who are ovariectomized can, as adults, experience normal sexual excitement and orgasm. Likewise, removal of the ovaries in the adult woman will not diminish her

* While the term *intersexed* has occasionally been used in the past to refer to people with gender problems without genetic or anatomical defects, everyone today, I believe, uses it to mean only those with pronounced biological defects.

sexual needs or pleasures per se. Some recent findings strongly suggest that sexual libido is dependent on androgens in both men and women; libido is clearly not dependent on estrogens in women but is probably the result of the minute amounts of androgens normally produced in the adrenals, for adrenalectomy in women severely diminishes if it does not destroy their libido. The administration of estrogens to men, on the other hand, does not affect their libido unless the amounts are large enough to suppress testosterone production. Castrated men can maintain sexual vigor if given testosterone. Women given androgens, with or without their ovaries removed, routinely have an upsurge of libido. However, it is important to remember that when hormones are added or subtracted in these ways, the direction of the libido is not changed. Thus, the addition of testosterone does not make women develop masculine tastes in sex, and giving testosterone to effeminate homosexuals does not make them any less effeminate but just increases their need for more homosexual relations.

While everyone is familiar with Freud's discoveries of the tremendous influence of postnatal effects on personality development and on the development of sexuality, it sometimes comes as a surprise to those not familiar with his works to discover that from the beginning of his career until the very end, Freud incessantly repeated his belief that there were biological substrates to behavior. However, because of the inadequacy of the laboratory sciences of his day, he recognized that he was forced to put aside any hope of proving that such substrates exist, maintaining that the future would bring the proof he needed. Nonetheless, in his study of infant and child libidinal development he felt he could find evidence of a biological undercurrent upon which floated the postnatal, learned behavior. It was his feeling that libidinal development (the progression of erotic and nonerotic charging of oral, anal and urethral, and phallic areas with compelling significance as the personality develops) was controlled by a biological clock, ultimately genetically controlled. He felt (and subsequent observers have demonstrated) that there is a gradual maturation of many complicated neuromuscular systems before a new part of the body comes into focus, that is, becomes highly libidinated.

This reminds us of the work on critical periods being done on lower animals; at any rate it is the case in human development that certain orifices—those with mucous membranes—become highly sensitive and highly charged emotionally only after certain amounts of time and biological development have preceded. Thus, for example, only after the neuromuscular systems related to bowel control have sufficiently developed—when the small child is really biologically prepared for toilet training—can such training proceed without damage, and it follows that premature attempts to force such training may have great psychological significance. Another example of probable biological control over the erotization of various parts of the body is found in the work of Spitz: He has determined that while there is in little boys a casual awareness of and playing with the penis, starting around eight to ten months of age, this organ is not selected any more frequently than are other parts of the body, until after a gradual heightening of erotic sensation over many months, when the time and interest spent in genital manipulation increase. By the time of the phallic phase, occurring in both boys and girls at around three to five, there is a very concentrated interest in one's penis or clitoris—in other words, easily recognized masturbation.

Obviously, we do not have all the pieces, and yet there are good clues. We know these investigators are on the track of important discoveries, of syntheses of as yet unrelated data. We can see now that comparative and human neurophysiology will be coupled with the discoveries of psychologists and psychoanalysts to increase our understanding of these mechanisms.

This sketch, then, suggests the directions that our present search for knowledge has taken in this area of substrates of sexual behavior. But this is only the beginning; our understanding of sexuality is as nothing if this is all we know, for in this most intense of all human communications, we must study the signals that pass between people, and also what memories, fantasies, and wishes are stirred up in the individual. In other words, we must turn to *psychology* as an essential methodology in our understanding of sexuality.

6

Passing and the Managed Achievement of Sex Status in an “Intersexed” Person

HAROLD GARFINKEL

HAROLD GARFINKEL WAS A SOCIAL INTERACTION THEORIST who pioneered the field of ethnomethodology, a phenomenological approach to understanding how people construct a sense of reality through their everyday encounters with the world. His study of “Agnes” illustrates how individuals maintain the social roles of man or woman, as well as how we all produce credible genders for ourselves and attribute gender identities to others. Gender, in Garfinkel’s view, is a “managed achievement” and therefore “real”—as real as any other aspect of our collectively produced and collectively sustained sense of reality. For him, the construction of gender involves an interpretation or “reading” of the body for social cues, but it is not a material property of the body itself.

Agnes presented herself at the Gender Identity Clinic at the University of California, Los Angeles, as a physically and socially feminine woman with male genitals. She claimed to have spontaneously begun to feminize at puberty, and was completely comfortable being a young woman. Through her interviews and assessment with the clinical staff—including such medical experts on transsexualism as Robert Stoller and Richard Green—it was determined that Agnes had a rare intersex condition known as testicular feminization syndrome, which can cause an apparently male body to spontaneously feminize at puberty. Because the doctors felt that an attractive, heterosexual young woman like Agnes should have a vagina, and because this is what Agnes herself desired, a genital transformation surgery was arranged on her behalf. Garfinkel saw this as a powerful example of how the patient and the doctors collaboratively participated in upholding their shared sense of what properly constituted “woman.”

In an appendix written eight years after the initial study was completed, Garfinkel revealed a final twist to the story of Agnes—that several years after her surgery Agnes admitted she was, in fact, a typical biological male, but had begun taking synthetic female hormones when she was a pre-teen. She lied to her medical team, feeling that if she revealed the steps she had taken to “change sex” from male to female, she would have been denied the genital surgery she desired. Garfinkel considered this to further confirm his theories about the “managed achievement” of gender as an interactive social process. Medical specialists in the field of gender identity management have considered the case a prime example of how transsexual patients try to manipulate their doctors to get what they want. Transgender people tend to see in the story of Agnes a savvy young woman who accurately mapped the relations of power within which she negotiated and actualized her sense of self.

Every society exerts close controls over the transfers of persons from one status to another. Where transfers of sexual statuses are concerned, these controls are particularly restrictive and rigorously enforced. Only upon highly ceremonialized occasions are changes permitted and then such transfers

are characteristically regarded as "temporary" and "playful" variations on what the person "after all," and "really" is. Thereby societies exercise close controls over the ways in which the sex composition of their own populations are constituted and changed.

From the standpoint of persons who regard themselves as normally sexed, their environment has a perceivedly normal sex composition. This composition is rigorously dichotomized into the "natural," *i.e.*, *moral*, entities of male and female. The dichotomy provides for persons who are "naturally," "originally," "in the first place," "in the beginning," "all along," and "forever" one or the other. Changes in the frequency of these moral entities can occur only through three legitimate paths: birth, death, and migration. Except for a legal change in birth certificate no legitimate path exists between the statuses of male and female. Even the legal change is regarded with considerable reservation by societal members who take their *bona fide* sex status for granted.

The normative, *i.e.*, legitimate sexual composition of the population as seen from the point of view of members who count themselves part of the perceivedly normally sexed population, can be described with the following table of transition probabilities:

		At time ₂	
		Male	Female
At time ₁	Male	1.0	0.0
	Female	0.0	1.0

This study reports one of a series of cases that fall into the normatively prohibited lower left and upper right cells. These persons are being studied in the Departments of Psychiatry, Urology, and Endocrinology in the Medical Center of the University of California, Los Angeles. These persons have severe anatomical irregularities. In each case the transfer occurred late in the developmental life cycle and was accomplished as a more or less clear matter of personal election. Severe anatomical anomalies—for example, the case to be reported here is that of a nineteen-year-old girl raised as a boy whose female measurements of 38-25-38 were accompanied by a fully developed penis and scrotum—were contradictory of the appearances that were otherwise appropriate to their claimed rights to live in culturally provided sexual statuses. The transfers were accompanied by the subscription, by each of these persons, to the cultural conception of a dichotomized sex composition in which, with vehement insistence, they included themselves. Such insistence was not accompanied by clinically interesting ego defects. These persons contrast in many interesting ways with transvestites, trans-sexualists, and homosexuals.

In each case the persons managed the achievement of their rights to live in the chosen sexual status while operating with the realistic conviction that disclosure of their secrets would bring swift and certain ruin in the form of status degradation, psychological trauma, and loss of material advantages. Each had as an enduring practical task to achieve rights to be treated and to treat others according to the obligated prerogatives of the elected sex status. They had as resources their remarkable awareness and uncommon sense knowledge of the organization and operation of social structures that were for those that are able to take their sexual status for granted routinized, "seen but unnoticed" backgrounds of their everyday affairs. They had, too, great skills in interpersonal manipulations. While their knowledge and interpersonal skills were markedly instrumental in character, by no means were they exclusively so.

The work of achieving and making secure their rights to live in the elected sex status while providing for the possibility of detection and ruin carried out within the socially structured conditions in which this work occurred I shall call "passing."

In the lives of these persons the work and the socially structured occasions of sexual passing were obstinately unyielding to their attempts to routinize the rounds of daily activities. This obstinacy points to the omnirelevance of sexual statuses to affairs of daily life as an invariant but unnoticed background in the texture of relevances that comprise the changing actual scenes of everyday life. The experiences of these intersexed persons permits an appreciation of these background relevances that are otherwise easily overlooked or difficult to grasp because of their routinized character and because they are so embedded in a background of relevances that are simply "there" and taken for granted.

I shall confine my attention in this paper to a discussion of one case. I should like to tell what this person had specifically to hide, the structural relevance of her secrets, the socially structured situations of crisis, the management strategies and justifications that she employed, and the relevance of these considerations for the task of treating practical circumstances as a sociological phenomenon.

AGNES

Agnes appeared at the Department of Psychiatry at U.C.L.A. in October, 1958 where she had been referred to Dr. Robert J. Stoller by a private physician in Los Angeles to whom Agnes had in turn been referred by her physician in her home town, Northwestern City. Agnes was a nineteen-year-old, white, single girl, who was at the time self-supporting and working as a typist for a local insurance company. Her father was a machinist who died when Agnes was a child. Her mother supported a family of four children, of whom Agnes was the youngest, with occasional and semiskilled work in an aircraft plant. Agnes said that she was raised as a Catholic but has not taken Communion for the past three years. She said of herself that she no longer believed in God.

Agnes' appearance was convincingly female. She was tall, slim, with a very female shape. Her measurements were 38-25-38. She had long, fine dark-blonde hair, a young face with pretty features, a peaches-and-cream complexion, no facial hair, subtly plucked eyebrows, and no makeup except for lipstick. At the time of her first appearance she was dressed in a tight sweater which marked off her thin shoulders, ample breasts, and narrow waist. Her feet and hands, though somewhat larger than usual for a woman, were in no way remarkable in this respect. Her usual manner of dress did not distinguish her from a typical girl of her age and class. There was nothing garish or exhibitionistic in her attire, nor was there any hint of poor taste or that she was ill at ease in her clothing, as is seen so frequently in transvestites and in women with disturbances in sexual identification. Her voice, pitched at an alto level, was soft, and her delivery had the occasional lisp similar to that affected by feminine appearing male homosexuals. Her manner was appropriately feminine with a slight awkwardness that is typical of middle adolescence.

Details of her medical, physical, and endocrinological characteristics have been reported elsewhere.¹ To summarize her medical, physical, and endocrinological characteristics, prior to any surgical procedures she appeared as a person with feminine body contours and hair pattern. She had large, well-developed breasts coexisting with the normal external genitalia of a male. An abdominal laparotomy and pelvic and adrenal exploration, performed two years before she was first seen at U.C.L.A., revealed no uterus or ovaries, no evidence of any vestigial female apparatus nor any abnormal tissue mass in the abdomen, retroperitoneal area, or pelvis. Bilateral testicular biopsy showed some atrophy of the testes. A large number of laboratory tests on blood and urine as well as X-ray examinations of the chest and skull were all within normal limits. A buccal smear and skin biopsy revealed a negative (male) chromatin pattern. There was some evidence of a urethral smear showing cellular cornification suggestive of moderately high estrogenic (female hormone) activity.