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Fear the Queer - How has the Treatment of Feminine Men Changed?

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Summary

During this dissertation, I aim to delve into the world of gender and alternative gender expression by presenting examples of feminine non-traditionally masculine figures in recent history. In doing so, I will be discussing specific examples of non-binary gender identities, dress and different manifestations of masculinity and how they in turn affect how the perception of feminine men in modern day society changes.

Introduction

In researching the subject matter of the three chapters, I will be reading the works of American feminist philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler- which in turn will allow me to break down the difference between biological sex and gender identity. I will also further the research I conducted while writing my proposal on specific examples of gender non conforming men, such as Grayson Perry and Eddie Izzard, by looking at even more prominent figures in pop culture known for their alternative expression of gender and how their presentation relates to the works of Butler, as well as the works of other authors I have researched. After I have broken down what it means to be perceived as feminine or masculine in regards to gender, I will then further my research on dress and the male body and how that relates to the perception of feminine presenting males in modern society. In order to further my research, I will look at the fashion of subcultures such as punk and the explore how their dress relates to their alternative expression of gender and how they are perceived by others. I will also look at the work of specific menswear designers in order to gain more of understanding of what the ideal image of masculinity is in the minds of other creative minded people. In the third and final chapter of the main body of my dissertation, I will be further breaking down the idea of what the image of masculinity itself actually is, and where it stems from. To do so, I will be using the work of cross dressing English artist Grayson Perry to argue that masculinity is simply a learned set of behaviours, deriving from multiple factors- such as environmental and social factors. While arguing that masculinity is a learned set of behaviours, I will also be discussing why and how this in turn affects the perception and treatment of feminine men in modern day society.

When concluding my dissertation, I will then make a prediction of how, if at all, the treatment and perception of feminine men will change in the future, using my collection of research and arguments made in order to make an informed prediction. As mentioned in my dissertation proposal,

any specific figures I use in order to make my arguments will be from the year 1967 onward. This is because this the year the Sexual Offences Act 1967 was passed in Great Britain, decriminalising homosexual acts (Author Unknown; 2017; *Decriminalisation of homosexuality: History of gay rights in the UK*). However, in order to make an informed prediction, I will also be looking at art from previous centuries, allowing me to create parallels between past and present ideological representations of masculinity. As the majority of my personal work and my own practice as an illustrator is focused on fashion design, queer culture and LGBT+ figures, this provides an opportunity to gain further understanding of the basis of my own practice, which is why I specifically chose this topic.

Gender

In order to understand what it means to be masculine and feminine, and in the case of this dissertation, what it means to be masculine and feminine as a man, we must first understand gender, and what it means to be male or female. This also includes breaking down and differentiating between biological sex and gender identity. Living in a time where non-traditionally masculine or non-traditionally feminine men and women and non-binary gender identities are becoming more understood and accepted, this opens up the conversation and begs the question- is biological sex and gender identity separate, or is it simply undifferentiated? Beauvoir writes: 'One is not born a woman, but rather becomes one' (1949). This would suggest possessing qualities seen as traditionally feminine, such as being naturally caring and maternal are a set of learned behaviours- and in turn women that don't possess such qualities have perhaps not yet reached womanhood. As the text in which Beauvoir writes this statement, 'The Second Sex' (1949) is from a period of time where not only women not treated as equals to men, but behaviours would have been socially enforced and women would have been women, and men would have been men, meaning that expressions of anything other than the traditional male and female archetypes were not celebrated as they are today. To reiterate the depth of this, as I have previously mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation; homosexuality and homosexual acts were not legalised in the UK until the Sexual Offences Act 1967 was passed in Britain. (Author Unknown; 2017; *Decriminalisation of homosexuality: History of gay rights in the UK*).

The current attitude and way of thinking in regards to gender and biological is that there is a difference between the two. More specifically, we are born into our biological sex and our gender and gender identity is almost a separate entity, existing independently on a broad spectrum- as well as being dependant on varying factors, such as environmental and social conditions. Beauvoir, again, argues: 'it is not upon physiology that values can be based; rather, the facts of biology take on the values that the existent bestows upon them' (1989). Put simply, Beauvoir is stating that our physical bodies place no value on who we are and how we present, which in turn supports Butler's theory of gender as being performative. Butler writes (1990):

‘...suggests that gender is a kind of persistent impersonation that passes as the real. Her/ his performance destabilises the very distinctions between the natural and artificial, depth and surface, inner and outer through which discourse about genders almost always operates.’

Here, in Butler’s ‘Gender Trouble’, she is specifically writing about drag artists- even more specifically, American drag queen Divine, star of John Waters’ ‘Hairspray’ and ‘Female Trouble’, draw-



Diana Davies (1969) *Gay Liberation Front members marching on Times Square* [Fig 1]

ing comparison between the title of Waters’ film and her own book. Speaking specifically on drag artists, such as Divine, suggesting gender is a performance or ‘impersonation’ seems almost redundant as drag is an impersonation of gender and taking on a hyper-masculine or feminine character, whether it is a drag king or queen in question. Though drag and drag culture could be considered mainstream, as it becomes more celebrated worldwide with the increase in popularity due to shows such as ‘RuPaul’s Drag Race’- however, this hasn’t always been the case.

Below, is an photograph taken during a march by the Gay Liberation Movement [Fig 1]. The Gay Liberation Movement was a movement started in the late 1960s in New York City which urged members of the LGBT+ to take radical action and fight for equal civil rights, during a time where prejudice and violence a after the events of the Stonewall Riots on the 28th of June 1969. The Stonewall Inn is a bar that exists in Greenwich Village, Manhattan, and is believed to be the home

of Gay Liberation due to the events that took place and what transpired because of them. During a time where transgendered and gender nonconforming people were nowhere near as socially accepted as they are today, they were targeted specifically by the New York Police Department (The New York Public Library, *1969 The Year of Gay Liberation*). Something else of note, in reference to Fig 1, is the normality of dress. Technically speaking, the march on Times Square conducted by the Gay Liberation Movement was an early example of an LGBT+ pride event, which in more recent instances have been more celebratory and full of colour and more diverse, in regard to attendees, given the general acceptance and attitude to the LGBT+ community in our society.

During a time where homosexuality was still an offence warranting arrest, the Gay Liberation Movement set in motion the eventual level of liberation and equality that exists in America today, and a general acceptance of the members of the LGBT+, and the celebration of other drag artists in television shows such as 'RuPaul's Drag Race'.

Though drag is an accurate, though rather on-the-nose, example of gender as performance, it does not have to be so literal. Gender as a performance can also be seen in the everyday dress of gender non-conforming people, such as comedian and political activist Eddie Izzard [Fig 2]. Speaking on their own gender identity on the Sport Relief television show 'Eddie Izzard: Marathon Man', while getting his nails done in a nail salon in South Africa, Izzard explains: 'I use it as a badge of identity'. Later on, he further explains 'I identify somewhat boyish and somewhat girlish. I identify both, but I fancy women.' (Izzard, 2016) In this remark, Izzard breaks down the culturally accepted fragile 'norm', that gender expression and presentation are somehow affected by or is dependant on sexuality. For example, the idea of a stereotypical homosexual man being feminine, or a masculine 'butch' woman automatically being a lesbian. This, however is contradicted by Butler (1995), who in this instance is discussing the work and theories of Sigmund Freud, who argues:

'Here Freud articulates a cultural logic whereby gender is achieved and stabilised through the accomplishment of heterosexual positioning, and where the threats to heterosexuality thus becomes threats to gender itself'.

Put simply, Freud, who is being referenced by Butler, interprets that being heterosexual is almost a set of chosen behaviours, part of a child's psychosexual development, that in turn affect the sub-

ject's cisgenderism- and that if this 'heterosexual positioning' is not met, it is not only a threat to the sexuality but also to the gender. In saying this, in the case of Izzard and his nails, or his 'badge of identity', his gender nonconformity is unrelated to his heterosexuality, which partly disproves the idea of stabilising gender, or more specifically cisgenderism, by accomplishing a heterosexual positioning. In a social climate where heterosexuality is still viewed as being average, or the default, and the world is gender obsessed, the gender expression, presentation or behaviour of homosexual men in particular is something that also disproves Freud's theory. However, Butler then argues that these behaviours are not only learned, but may be some sort of internal struggle, and a fear of how they are then perceived. Butler refers to a 'heterosexual matrix' (1995) on numerous occasions, which is name created for the heteronormative society we exist in, wherein members of the LGBT+ community have historically been victims of prejudice and persecution, such as the unlawful arrests made at the Stonewall Inn, and heterosexuality is seen as the default. Living in a culture where this has been viewed upon as the norm, anybody other than cisgender heterosexual is subject to, what Butler refers to as, 'gender anxiety'. Butler explains:

'Hence, the fear of homosexual desire in a woman may induce a panic that she is losing her femininity, that she is not a woman, that if she is not quite a man, she is like one, and hence monstrous in some way. Or in a man, the terror over homosexual desire may well lead to a terror over being construed as feminine, feminized, of no longer being properly a man, or being a "failed" man, or of beings in some sense a figure of monstrosity or abjection' (Butler, 1995)

In other words, the mistreatment of homosexual men and women over a long period of time has almost lead to an internalised homophobia of some description, with LGBT+ people being afraid of being perceived as a stereotype, which then in turn provides evidence that the stereotypes do in fact exist- with homosexual men being viewed as naturally feminine, homosexual women as being perceived as naturally masculine. This is not to say that these cliché archetypal visualisations of a typical homosexual are in any way negative or untrue, as it has simply been the mistreatment of them that has lead to this 'gender anxiety'.

Dress



*Eddie Izzard, on 'Alan Carr: Chatty Man', (2016),
Channel 4 [Fig 2]*

As a whole, humans are very visual beings, and we often make initial judgements and have pre-conceived ideas about people we meet based off of their physical appearance- especially the clothing someone wears. Dress can often be an indicator of social and economic class, an indicator of profession and, as this chapter of the dissertation discusses, a person's gender. As explained



Pål Hansen, (2014), *Grayson Perry* [Fig 3]

previously in the first chapter of my dissertation, gender can be seen as a separate entity to our biological sex and is often considered to be performative- and in all performance the attire worn allows you to create your own idea and an image of the ‘performer’ can be assumed. Specifically in context with this dissertation, clothing can be considered a physical manifestation of ones gender expression.

A figure who uses clothing experimentally and plays with the idea of gender and masculinity in their practice as an artist in today’s culture is Turner Prize-winning artist Grayson Perry. Perry, who identifies as a transvestite, which is a person who receives pleasure by dressing in clothing associated with the opposite sex, is an artist who often challenges the idea of masculinity and what it means to be a man in their work, and often uses a female alter ego named ‘Claire’ [Fig 3] in order to present their work [Author Unknown, 2017, *Making Himself Claire: Grayson Perry’s Dresses*].

The currently accepted theory is that biological sex is a characteristic separate from the gender identity of a person, and that in turn the alternative gender expression of one person may lead another person to make preconceived assumptions on that person’s sexuality. Simply put, a biological male that behaves in a way that is socially accepted as ‘feminine’ would be assumed to be homosexual, and a biological female behaving in way that is considered traditionally masculine would

be assumed to be a lesbian. However, the way that we dress could also be considered as an indication of our sexuality. In saying that, Perry, who often speaks of his transvestism, states: 'But I am a transvestite; I am turned on by dressing up in clothes that are heavily associated with being female' (2016). The sexual aspect of his transvestism aside, Perry brings up an interesting instance of self awareness. Perry mentions that his pleasure derives from dressing in 'female' clothing, which indicates he is aware he is going against the socially constructed gender binary by dressing and presenting in a certain way. Made up in pantomime dame-esque makeup, abstractly

patterned dresses and platform shoes when presenting as Claire, Perry cuts a rather abstract, overly feminised figure, resembling that of a doll. In dressing this way, however, the way he is in turn treated begins to change. Perry writes: 'Because I am a transvestite, people often assume that this gives me a special insight into the opposite gender' (2016). In other words, because the way Perry presents when appearing as Claire and his self identifying as a transvestite, he is treated differently in regards to that of a traditionally masculine presenting, cisgender male, and is assumed to have some sort of intuition into the mind of the opposite sex. Though Perry's use of dress while presenting the 'Claire' character could be considered to be a rather literal interpretation of 'gender as performance', and the way he is then perceived is to be that of some sort of two-spirited entity with the insight of both male and female experiences, simply by dressing in clothing that is perceived by mainstream society to be typically 'female', Joanne Entwistle argues that clothing holds no connection to our gender. Firstly specifically mentioning drag and transvestism and how it whittles gender down to a set of 'culturally regulated styles', meaning that clothing does actually have some bearing on our gender expression and may be the actual supporting visual indicator to ones gender identity; Entwistle then theorises: 'However, if this the case, it is not just cross-dressers who perform gender and wear drag; we all do, since all dress has only an arbitrary relationship to 'natural' sex' (Entwistle, 2000) Here, Entwistle argues that the 'arbitrary relationship' dress has to our biological sex is only socially constructed, and therefore should have no bearing in the way in which our gender identity is assumed by others.

However, even though the relationship between dress and gender identity has been theorised and it can be argued that dress does not hold bearing on the way we perceived and treated by others, this is unfortunately not the case. During the times of the Stonewall Riots, transgender patrons, drag queens and other gender non-conforming frequenters faced prejudicial-based harassment at the hands of the New York Police Department and faced arrest for wearing, what was deemed, 'non-gender appropriate clothing' (HISTORY, 2018, *How the Stonewall Riots Sparked a Movement / History*). After the time of the riots in 1969, the 1970s quickly rolled in, and along with it came the popularisation of the punk movement. Made famous by bands such as 'The Clash' and 'Sex Pistols', members of the punk subculture could be stereotypically identified by leather and tartan, safety pins and nose rings and hairstyles such as Mohawks in varying vivid colours. However, as well as being a subculture that was founded in efforts to take down the establishment through acts of rebellion; the fashion, or rather 'anti-fashion' also displayed a strong disregard of society's view of gender and gender expression. Or as Barnard describes it; 'an ideological assault on the aesthetic values of dominant classes...' (1996). Simply put, Barnard describes the fashion of the punk subculture as a perceptible representation of their own disregard of society's idea of what is visually acceptable- and more specifically to the subject matter of this dissertation, their disregard of gender norms in regards to their fashion. Barnard also explains this with the following: 'What has been traditional, conventional and dominant ideas and beliefs about prettiness, and feminine prettiness in particular, were abandoned in favour of a completely different set of ideas and beliefs.' (1996)

What is particularly interesting about this statement in itself is the idea that a 'masculine prettiness' exists is indirectly brought up by Barnard when he states 'feminine prettiness in particular'. Feminine prettiness existing in men in the context of this chapter is in regards to the dress worn by male members of the punk subculture, the word 'dress' in this context meaning all clothing, though in relationship with the ideology and disregard of society's gender norms, a male punk in a dress would perhaps be considered very 'punk' at this time, and undoubtedly would have been met with scrutiny. Especially keeping in mind the social climate at the time, and despite the legalisation of homosexual acts only a few years previously, this would not have meant homophobia wasn't as

rampant as it was previously, as evident by the existence of homophobia in today's progressive social climate- it can only be assumed that anything outside the of the traditional, heteronormative and gender confirmative image of a man or woman would not have been met with positive reception. Despite this, punk fashion and values still exist today, and originators of the popularisation of the style have taken it with them into their professional careers.

A pioneer in the world of punk fashion in the UK that aided in the popularisation of the punk subculture is fashion designer and political activist Vivienne Westwood. After opening her flagship boutique 'SEX' in 1974, Westwood went on to expand her name as a brand worldwide, still keeping the punk aesthetic and antiestablishment attitude in her work to this day, though currently focusing on more worldwide issues such as climate change (2014). An aspect of the anti-fashion within the punk subculture is aspects of gender nonconformity, some of which have made their way into the future works of Westwood- more specifically the use of the kilt. Essentially a skirt, typically in some form of tartan in a pleated woollen material, the kilt is a piece of traditional Scottish menswear, it was later adapted into women's fashion and also, as mentioned, punk fashion. Regarding this, designers such as Westwood have also adapted clothing that is typically viewed as 'female' for menswear, such as skirts [Fig 4].

Keeping in mind that Westwood's career in the fashion industry began during the rise of the punk subculture in the 1970, and though it began to emerge more in the media with glam rock artists such as David Bowie and T. Rex gaining significant prominence while presenting more femininely, gender nonconformity in fashion on a smaller scale- more specifically in the context of this dissertation, punk anti fashion- was not as widely accepted as it is today and can only be assumed to have been met with more prejudice due to their clothing not being indicative of specific gender. Entwistle argues:

'Dress codes reproduce gender: the association of women with long evening dresses or, in the case of the professional workplace, skirts, and men with dinner jackets and trousers is an arbitrary one but nonetheless comes to be regarded as 'natural' so that femininity is connoted in a gown, masculinity in the black tie and dinner jacket' (2000).



Photograph courtesy of Vivienne Westwood, (2018), *Fall 2018 Ready-to-Wear* [Fig 4]

Something else of note is that during the 1970s, there became more prominent figures in the media that used drag or performed using gender as a medium, such as comedian and actor Dick Emery, who performed as multiple characters, some of which were women. Another example is revered drag performer Danny La Rue, who appeared in-character on British television during the 1970s. The prominence of these two figures in the media at this time possibly help set a precedent for more acceptance to expressions of gender through dress in the mainstream.

Here, Entwistle explains that, as previously mentioned, clothing dictates the way the way that we are perceived and connotes our own gender expression- however as it is clothing that dictates our gender expression, and clothing is only a materialistic object and holds no power over our biolo-

gical sex, it can be deduced that gender is socially constructed, or performed, and our dress is the key signifier. In regards to the title of this dissertation, and whether the treatment and perception of feminine presenting men has changed, though this question will be fully answered in the conclusion upon collating more research, in regards to dress it can be argued that due to the success of Westwood and her inclusion of punk anti fashion and gender non conformity, feminine-presenting men have become more widely accepted. However this, of course, cannot be definitively proven as ideas of prejudices are thoughts, and cannot be policed- and are a set of learned behaviours which cannot be indefinitely eradicated.

Masculinity

In order to understand if and how the perceptions and treatment of femininely presenting men has changed, we must first understand what it means to be masculine and what it means to be feminine. As previously stated in the first chapter, it has been heavily theorised that our biological sex is a separate entity to our gender identity and expression, and that our gender identity is often dictated by our social and environmental conditions and in turn affects the way in which we are perceived. And, in regards to biological sex, this is something that is assigned at birth and cannot be physically altered in its entirety, whereas gender is argued to be fluid and possibly ever changing as though it is a learned set of behaviours. However, the question that is then raised is whether 'masculine' and 'feminine' presentational acts are a set of learned behaviours in conjunction with gender, biological sex or even sexuality. In this third and final chapter, this is what will be explored. Sedgwick (1995) argues: 'When something is about masculinity, it is not always "about men"'. Possibly inferring that masculinity is not a behaviour exclusively learned and owned by men, and it can therefore exist in women. That being said, it is only natural to assume that the opposite is also the case- that femininity and feminine behaviours are not exclusive to the female sex and therefore have the likelihood to exist in men. However, this does not mean that it is always socially acceptable for this to be the case, which is something that will be explore in this chapter.

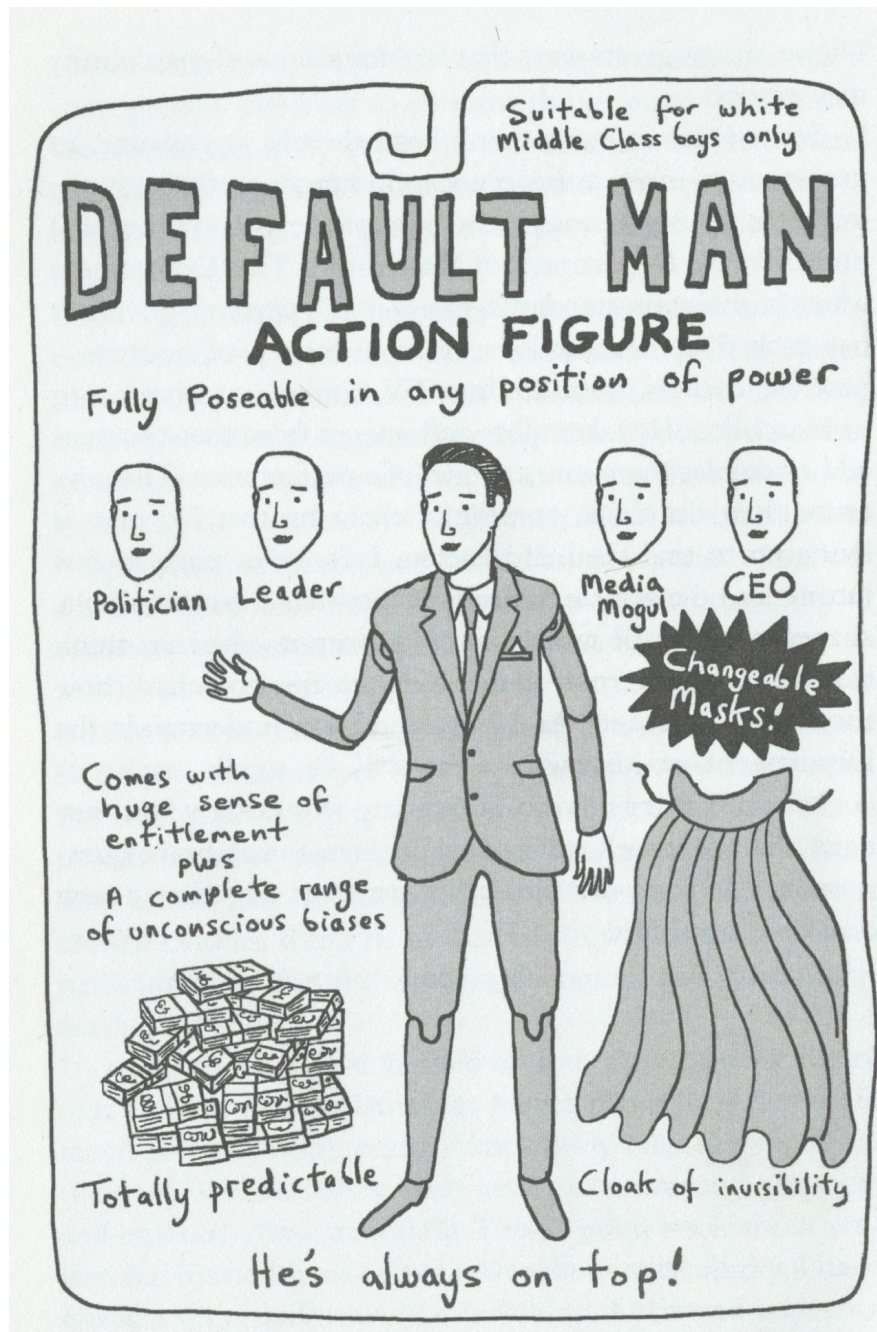
As masculinity can be argued to be a learned set of behaviours which are socially enforced that are found in both men and women, something that must be discussed is what behaviours are considered 'masculine' and which are considered 'feminine'. Berger, Wallis and Watson (1995) suggest the following:

'Men, for instance, may conventionally be socialised to excel in athletics and manual labour but not in, say, cooking. Paradoxically, these skills enhance the power of the subject while further subjugating him, locking him with a stereotypical gender position'. Put simply, the acts that in which a man takes part in reflects the way that he is then in turn perceived, in regards to gender. The example used in this instance explains men being actively encouraged to take part in activities more physically demanding than that usually expected of women, such as sports and construction, and

that in turn they are perceived and treated as masculine. In addition to that, if men are seen to participate in activities traditionally viewed as 'feminine'- in this example the activity is cooking- they are then in turn viewed as more feminine themselves, and perhaps, by extension, more womanly. This is because, despite masculinity and femininity being separate to ones. Therefore, it can be argued that the behaviours and activities that men specifically participate in can affect the way in which they are perceived and treated in regards to gender. In providing more evidence in support of this, Perry (2016) writes:

'For many males, being masculine, acting in a manly way, is unquestionably a biological part of them as their penis and testicles and deep voice. But masculinity is mainly a set of habits, traditions and beliefs historically associated with being a man'. Here, Perry almost reiterates the words of Berger, Wallis and Watson by pointing out that masculinity is not something genetically coded in men, and that it is something that has been historically traditionally encouraged and enforced in men. Similar to the way in which gender has been socially constructed, so has masculinity- and deviation from this is often discouraged, whether it is 'feminine' activities or even behaviours considered 'feminine'- for example, showing outward emotion is often seen as a 'feminine' behaviour and men, and especially young boys, have historically been discouraged to express vulnerability in social situations. In the case of younger boys, phrases such as 'be strong' or 'boys don't cry' are infamously known to be used in order to keep the masculinity that is assumed already to be present in check, and in turn avoid creating space for behaviours perceived as 'feminine'. This is not to say that showing outward emotion is in fact 'feminine', but this has simply been socially enforced over generations. Bernard Capp, while writing about men in England in the 1600s (2014):

'In this new cultural milieu, male tears represented an embarrassing loss of self-control. As William Bell observed in 1657, 'Wee speake as of a strange thing when we tell of a Man weeping like a childe'. The Elizabethan George Puttenham observed that 'to weepe for any sorrow (as one may doe for pitie) is not so decent in a man: and therefore all high minded persons, when they cannot chuse but shed teares, will turn away their face as a countenance undecent for a man to shew'.'



Grayson Perry, (2016), *Default Man* [Fig 5]

Here Capp, while referring to the work of Bell, explains that expressions of emotion in men in today's social climate are often viewed as a breakdown of what it means to be a 'masculine' man. This in turn supports my previous statement- that the behaviours traditionally viewed as 'feminine' are discouraged in men, and young boys in particular. This, by connection would also suggest the way in which men perceived to be 'feminine' by others are then treated. However this, of course, is in no way a representation of a general consensus, in regards to the perception of men perceived as 'feminine' today, but rather a summary of what has been socially accepted for centuries.

In Perry's book 'The Descent of Man' (2016), which is essentially a book about how Perry views masculinity in society, there is mention of a concept Perry envisioned called the 'Default Man'- a figure representative of a typical British businessman, a bearer of political power and privilege. Essentially heterosexual, cisgender and white and to a degree, masculine, the identity of the Default Man is something that is hardly ever analysed or subject to any form of examination, as identity is often only brought into question when it is not something considered to be part of this 'Default Man' archetype [Fig 5].

Essentially, Perry suggests that if you are considered to be a 'Default Man', you '*look like power*' (2016) and are the height of social and economic privilege. Perry writes:

'Of course, the main reason he has those qualities in the first place is because of *what* he is, not what he achieves. John Scalzi, in his blog 'Whatever', thought that being a straight white male was like playing the computer game called *Life* with the difficulty setting on 'easy'. If you are a Default Man, you *look like power*'.

Here, Perry almost answers, in some part, the question first presented at the beginning of this dissertation- 'how has then treatment of feminine men changed?' In the case of the 'Default Man' and what he is representative of, not much has changed in regards to the treatment and perception of feminine men, as they do not meet the 'specifications' required to be considered a 'Default Man', due to their femininity. However, this is only based on the assumption, based on stereotypes- by which stereotypes of homosexuality is assumed, more specifically the assumption that all homosexual men are feminine, and then in turn have less 'power', or privilege. Despite also being white, heterosexual and middle-class, Perry does not identify as part of the 'Default Man' archetype due to his transvestism. On account of the way in which his gender expression is performed through dress and transvestism while presenting his work, his level of perceived and assumed masculinity and femininity almost fluctuates.

Perry also notes that his performative femininity, while only in this 'Claire' character, allows him to gain an insight into masculinity- while it would be assumed that his transvestism would give Perry more of an insight into femininity. Perry writes (2016):

'If anything, it gives me a sharper insight into what it is to be a man, since from the age of twelve I have been intensely questioning my own masculinity. I have had to step slightly outside myself, a doubter at the gates of the crumbling superdome of masculinity. This does not mean that I have stepped into femininity, the lumbering beast within me which I have tried to suppress and negotiate with my entire life'.

From this, we gather that there has been some form of internal struggle within Perry, in regards to his masculinity and femininity, which he refers to as a 'lumbering beast'. This could be in reference to Perry's transvestism, and that the way in which he uses gender and the ideas of masculinity and femininity while presenting his work. This brings up the subject of Perry's self-awareness, as he



Unknown (1st Century) *Marbury Hall Zeus* [Sculpture], From the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles [Fig 6]

recognises the entangling web that is the confusion between gender identity and traditional views of masculinity and femininity.

Another concept that Perry introduces in 'The Descent of Man' (2016) is that of 'cosmetic hyper-masculinity'. Where's the previously mentioned concept of the 'Default Man' refers to white middle-class men who are representative of power, men who possess cosmetic hyper-masculinity are typically working-class men. Perry describes them as 'an overly performer version of working-class manhood. The shiny muscles, tattoos, loud music and loud cars all hope to pump out the message that he's still a real man' (2016) What Perry is suggesting here is that there is some form of uniformity in masculinity, to the extent that it relies almost entirely of tangible materialistic goods, such as the loud cars and tattoos. Perry continues to describe the way in which conformers to this idea of cosmetic hyper-masculinity, suggesting that an abundance of pockets on 'men's clothing' suggests an almost primal instinctive urgency to have as many pieces of equipment on hand at one time- though these pockets are often unused and are there simply to create this Bear Grylls-esque 'ready for anything' picture of manhood, as well as fuel this socially accepted idea of what a man should look like in order to be viewed as 'masculine'.

A part of the idea of cosmetic hyper-masculinity, as presented by Perry, is the picture of a 'masculine body'. Typically displaying ripped muscles and tribal tattoos, a conformer of this ideological expression

of 'masculinity', possibly trying to eradicate any sense of femininity from their physical being. Perry argues the following: 'An underlying rationale behind the desire for the super-lean muscular body may be that fat equals feminine, sensual and apparently lacking in self-control' (2016). In a society where more body shapes and sizes are being celebrated, as evident in the diversity of public figures such as plus-sized models, it could be a safe assumption that this idea of masculinity and muscle being somehow connected is a dying ideology. However, this correlation between masculinity and muscle, femininity and softness is not a recent trend, as is evident in many examples of Greek art. As evident by viewing different examples of Greek statues in particular, the same sort of body shape is a reoccurring theme- statues of males have chiseled physiques, while statues of females have very little definition in their muscles, which may be supportive of muscle being repre-

sentative of masculinity, as well as any level of softness being indicative of femininity, specifically in men- which in turn supports Perry's concept of cosmetic hyper-masculinity [Fig 6].

Conclusion

During the introduction of this dissertation, the question that is raised is 'how has the treatment of feminine men changed?' And even by conducting research across the three themes of 'gender', 'dress', and 'masculinity', it is still quite difficult to conclude with a definitive answer as there are still many more ways in which the difference in the treatment of feminine men could be gauged.

In regards to gender, it can be argued that the treatment and perception of men that present more femininely has not only improved, but they have begun to have been celebrated. [Fig 7] In relation



Photograph courtesy of Jeffree Star, via Instagram
@jeffreestar, (2018), [Fig 7]

to the content within the second chapter, the subjects discussed under theme of 'dress' and whether the treatment of feminine men has changed in these regards it is again difficult to reach a definite conclusion as the limits of what is socially accepted as 'masculine' and 'feminine' clothing. For example, the use of the kilt as discussed in chapter two, and how it is socially accepted for both men and women to wear them -though they are essentially skirts, so it is quite an uncommon

sight to see men wearing them now. Something interesting to note in regards to the use of the kilt is how it has historic military use, therefore conjures images of violence, a quality that is often associated with men. However, since the kilt has been appropriated and popularised in womenswear, it has become a less common sight to see men wearing kilts in public- perhaps an unconscious, or conscious, way to distance anything that holds any shred of femininity in fear of the perception of the public. However, with the increasing amount of support for gender non-conforming men, and the popularisation of drag culture in mainstream entertainment, in some respects it could be safe to argue that in regards to dress, the treatment and perception of feminine men will improve with time. This argument is further supported when societally enforced rules of clothing are compared side by side to rules set in place during the times of the Stonewall Riots.

Finally, whereas the first two chapters discussed rather tangible themes, such as the visual performative aspects of gender via dress, and the way in which the punk subculture of the 1970s helped form the way we perceive acts of gender-related rebellion through dress, the final chapter discusses a topic less concrete, being the image of masculinity in modern day society and how that in turn affects the feminine man. Based on the research conducted, being the work of Perry and the other thinkers discussed throughout this dissertation, it is considerably easier to make a prediction on how the treatment of feminine men will change in the future. With the image of the 'Default Man' being ever present and consistent and the perceived idea of what a man with cosmetic hyper-masculinity being ever-changing due to evolving trends in fashion, the treatment of feminine men will be dependent on what is considered to be 'masculine' at the time. As previously argued, identity is only questioned when it is not the norm or subjected to the heteronormative ideals of the 'Default Man'.

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[FIG 5]- Perry, G. (2016), *Default Man*

[FIG 6]- Unknown, (1st Century), *Marbury Hall Zeus* [Sculpture], From the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

[FIG 7]- Photograph courtesy of Jeffree Star, (2018), via Instagram @jeffreestar, (Online). Available at: https://www.instagram.com/p/BqygOchhip2/?utm_source=ig_share_sheet&igshid=1n-nh3pnkox1r4 (Accessed 1st November 2018)