

No matter which effeminacy is involved—nelly, swish, blasé, or camp—it is a set of mannerisms quite like equivalent movements and gestures seen in women. Nelly and blasé movements are similar enough to be virtually identical in femininity and effeminacy. But the gestures of swish and camp are clearly more forceful in effeminacy, probably due to the higher muscularity of males, thus inviting interpretations of their being “caricatures” of femininity. Similar gestures and high-animation movements seen in both women and effeminate men have been shown to come about in the same way, that is, they reflect particular attitudes toward just how, and how directly, to engage the environment. Just as a relatively aggressive, straight-line mode of affronting and engaging the environment is a hallmark of male movement, the rounded, relatively curvaceous movements of femininity pull away from so directly or aggressively engaging the environment.

For instance, when a man walks with a quick step but slightly pulls back from fully extending each stride, the result is a mincing gait—a set of movements that is decidedly softer, faster, and less brusque than is typical of men. Or, in various arm movements seen in swish and camp, a fast-moving outgoing gesture may at the last moment suddenly be pulled back or stopped from completing its path by the twist of a bent wrist, thus producing one of the high-speed, high-animation curves of swish, or one of the exaggerated stack-ups of emphasis seen in camp. The roundness of such moves is typical of femininity, while their energy and sharpness is decidedly male—the very combination that most characterizes the difference between femininity and effeminacy.

Thus it is not that effeminate movements copy or caricature feminine ones, but that both styles arrive at their curves and their relatively high animation from the same source: that is, the mental set of both femininity and effeminacy share the kinds of attitudes and the particular

kinds of aggressive-readiness that cause them to select very similar styles of engaging the environment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Irving Bieber, et al., *Homosexuality: a Psychoanalytic Study of Male Homosexuals*, New York: Basic Books, 1962; Alfred C. Kinsey, et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Philadelphia: Saunders, 1948; Karen Machover, *Personality Projection in the Drawing of the Human Figure*, Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1949; C. A. Tripp, *The Homosexual Matrix*, second ed., New York: New American Library, 1987.

C. A. Tripp

EFFEMINACY, HISTORICAL SEMANTICS OF

Containing as its core the Latin word *femina* (“woman”), the adjective *effeminate* has been used to mean womanish, unmanly—and by extension enervated, self-indulgent, narcissistic, voluptuous, delicate, and over-refined. Applied to sexual orientation it has had two opposed senses: (1) seeking the company of women and participating in their lifeways (heterosexual) and (2) adopting the woman’s role (homosexual). In reading older texts it is important to bear these differences in mind, for the term effeminate can be used slightly of a womanizer as well as of a “womanish” man.

Classical Antiquity. The ancient Greeks and Romans sharply differentiated the active male homosexual, the *paiderastes* (in the New Testament *arsenokoites*, literally “man-layer”), from the passive partner, the *cinaedus* or *pathicus* (New Testament Greek *malakos*; Hebrew, *rakha*). The Greeks also sometimes used the term *androgynos*, “man-woman,” to stigmatize the passive homosexual. Beginning with the Old Attic comedies of Aristophanes, the passive is a stock figure of derision and contempt, the active partner far less so. Because of the military ideals on which ancient societies were founded, passivity and softness in the male were equated with cowardice and want of viril-

ity. A seeming exception is the god **Dionysus**—whose effeminate characteristics are, however, probably an import from the non-Greek East.

In ancient **Rome** the terms *mollis* ("soft") and *effeminatus* acquired special connotations of **decadence** and enervating luxury. By contrast the word *virtus* meant manliness. The Roman satirists took sardonic delight in flagellating the vices of luxury that were rampant among the upper classes of a nation that, once rude and warlike, had succumbed to the temptations that followed its successful conquest and plunder of the entire ancient world. The classical notion of effeminacy as the result of luxury, idleness, and pampered self-indulgence is thus far removed from the claim of some gay liberationists today to kinship with the exploited and downtrodden. **Juvenal's** Second Satire (ca. A.D. 100) ridicules several types of effeminate homosexuals: the judge attired in a filmy gown who hypocritically upbraids a female prostitute, the male transvestites who infiltrate a female secret society, and the degenerate scion of a venerable family who marries a horn-player in a lavish travesty of a wedding.

The Middle Ages. The old Icelandic literature stemming from medieval **Scandinavia** documents the condemnation of the *argr*, the cowardly, unwarlike effeminate (compare Modern German *arg*, "bad"). The Latin term *mollities* ("softness") entered early Christian and medieval writings, but often with reference to masturbation. It may be that the eighteenth-century English term *molly* for an effeminate homosexual is a reminiscence of Latin *mollis*.

Ordericus Vitalis, a historian chronicling the England of **William Rufus** (1087–1100), denounced "foul catamites" who "grew long and luxuriant locks like women, and loved to deck themselves in long, over-tight shirts and tunics." Writing about 1120, **William of Malmesbury** recalled these courtiers with their "flowing hair and extravagant dress. . . [T]hen

the model for young men was to rival women in delicacy of person, to mince their gate, to walk with loose gestures and half-naked. Enervated and effeminate, they remained unwillingly what nature had made them; the assailers of others' chastity, prodigal of their own."

Modern Times. In the sixteenth century the French monarch **Henri III** assembled an entourage of favorites whose name *mignon* connotes effeminacy and delicacy. In French also the original meaning of *bardache* was the passive partner of the active *bougre*. English writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth century frequently denounced foppery, sometimes homosexual but more often heterosexual. Particular objects of scorn were the "Macaronis" of the 1770s, with their bright coats decked out with big bunches of ribbon, huge wigs, and betasseled walking sticks. In the view of **Susan Shapiro** such elegants attracted scorn because they were believed to threaten the very foundations of civilization. "They negate[d] the assumption that sex and gender identity are immutable, for their androgynous dress [was] constantly blurring, overlapping, and tampering with the supposedly fixed poles of masculinity and femininity."

Restoration times also witnessed the popularity of the self-referencing habit of male homosexuals adopting **women's names**: **Mary**, **Mary-Anne**, **Molly**, **Nance** or **Nancy**, and **Nelly**. The habit occurs in other languages as well—**Janet** in Flemish; **Checca** (from **Francesca**) in Italian; **Maricón** (from **María**) in Spanish; and **Adelaida** in Portuguese.

Nineteenth-century English witnessed a semantic shift of a number of terms originally applied to women to provide opprobrious designations of male homosexuals. Thus **gay** had the meaning of a loose woman, prostitute; **faggot**, a slatternly woman; and **queen** (or *quean*), a trollop. Even today the popular mind tends to the view that gay men seek to imitate women, or even become women; the considerable number of unsterotypical,

masculine homosexuals are not taken into account.

The term "mannish woman" had some currency for lesbians in the 1920s. In general, however, such terms redolent of sex-role reversal do not have the same significance for men as for women. *Terrogant* and *virago*, though pejorative, do not suggest variance of sexual orientation. The girl who is a tomboy has always been treated more indulgently than the boy who is a sissy. This difference between "womanly men" and "manly women" probably reflects the fact that our society clings to the notion that it is degrading for a man to be reduced to the status of a woman, while it is a step up for a woman to be credited with the qualities of a man. In fact some studies of the "androgynous personality" suggest that even in today's changing social situation there is more practical advantage (in the business world and in politics) for a woman who "gets in touch with the other side of her personality" than a man who does so. Nonetheless, the men's movement has helped to break down some taboos, and men now feel less reluctance to cry or show strong affection.

Men who cross-dress as women are of two kinds. Some go to great lengths to make the simulation credible, an effort that may be a prelude to transsexualism. In other instances the simulation is imperfect, a kind of send-up. Although some feminists have interpreted such cross-dressing exercises as mockery of women, it is more likely that they signify a questioning of gender categories. In any event, **transvestism** is not normally held to lie within the province of effeminacy, which is thought to be the adjunction of feminine traits in a person otherwise fully recognizable as masculine.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Hans Herter, "Effeminatus," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, 4 (1959), cols. 620-50; Susan Shapiro, "'Yon Plumed Dandeprat': Male 'Effeminacy' in English Satire and Criticism," *Review of English Studies*, new series, 39 (1988), 400-12.

Wayne R. Dynes

EGO-DYSTONIC HOMOSEXUALITY

This neologism for a purported disorder was officially adopted by the American Psychiatric Association in the third edition of its widely respected *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (Washington, D.C., 1980). "The essential features are a desire to acquire or increase heterosexual arousal, so that heterosexual relationships can be initiated or maintained, and a sustained pattern of overt homosexual arousal that the individual explicitly states has been unwanted and a persistent source of stress." The *Manual* assures that the disorder does not refer to all homosexuals and lesbians: "This category is reserved for those homosexuals for whom changing sexual orientation is a persistent concern. . . ." [302.00]. Even though it has some history of previous use in psychiatry, the term "dystonic" seems inappropriate to denote a psychic state, as it can only meaningfully refer to the impaired tonicity of tissues or muscle. Following a custom that goes back to Freud himself, **psychiatry** has borrowed medical-physical terminology in order to simulate a precision that is not warranted. Another point that is made in the definition is that the condition must be self-certified to warrant treatment. In true mental illness one could scarcely say that the need for treatment does not exist simply because the patient denies it.

As these observations suggest, the quoted definition was the outcome of a compromise. It brought to a temporary end a struggle that had begun several years before, when homosexuals had invaded psychiatric meetings charging the practitioners with making the situation of homosexuals worse, rather than better, because their pronouncements gave a spurious rationalization to official and popular **homophobia**. These confrontations triggered a period of professional self-examination, leading to a 1973 Association vote against defining homosexuality as an illness, which seemed to clear the way for