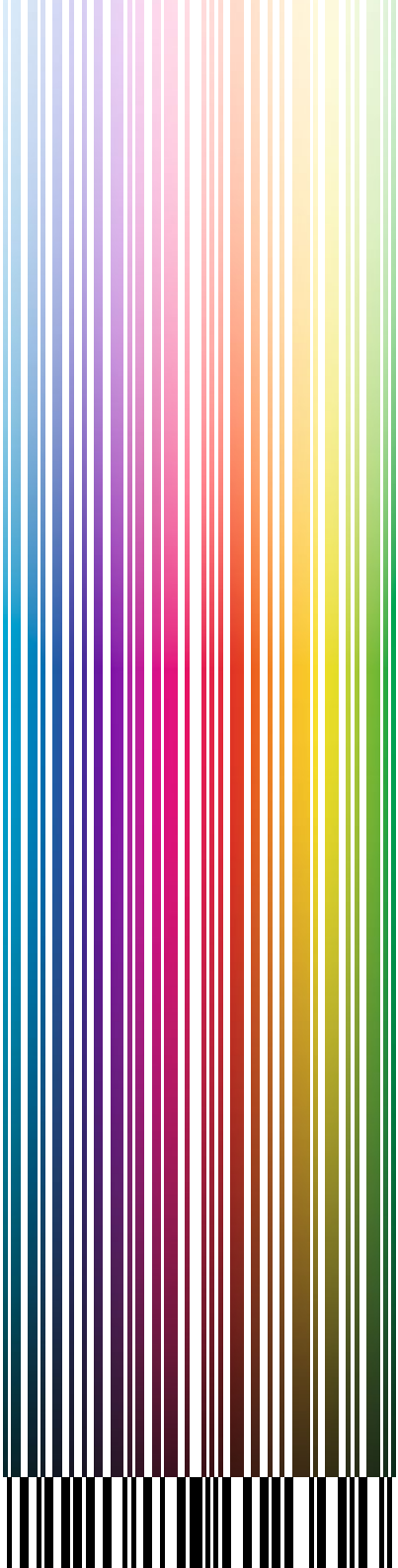

Critical and Applied Approaches in Sexuality, Gender and Identity

—

Series Editor: Christina Richards

GENDERQUEER AND NON-BINARY GENDERS

Edited by
Christina Richards
Walter Pierre Bouman
Meg-John Barker

Critical and Applied Approaches in Sexuality, Gender and Identity

Behavioral Science and Psychology

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Christina Richards
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Christina's Acknowledgements

This one is for all of the kids on their own in the corner of the playground. Scuffed knees, purple bruises, and other pains less visible. The lonely; the 'strange'; and the 'weird'. For those who are 'different' or 'odd' or other, less kind, terms—maybe different in gender, maybe so in other ways.

Stay strong. You are more beautiful than you know. It's hard to understand when the world keeps beating you down, but inside of you is the fire of change that allowed us to rise up over millennia; away from the blood and terror of prehistory and towards the stars.

You see, change absolutely requires the difference which is inside of you—for if we all think the same, all act the same, we will *be* the same. With difference comes the possibility of change, and so hope, and so every last moment of progress. The difference inside of you is every revolution that felled a dictator; every cure for disease found where no one else was looking; every new word that allowed connection between separate souls; and every beautiful, profound, new idea.

As you huddle in the corner with your saviour book, or your sparkling dreams, or your talisman (they come in different forms); And the cold in your stomach twists again from the loneliness or the fear; My arm is around you, my heart is with you—and so are those of a thousand, a million, others who have been there too.

Look up. The world is waiting for us. It is awash with beauty and there is still much to do.

I'd like to take a little of your time to thank a few more people if I may? I've thanked Bornstein and Wilchins before, but it seems apposite to do so here also as it was they who first showed me back in the 90s that gender need not be a cage, but could be a pair of wings. I'd like to thank my co-editors Meg-John Barker and Walter Pierre Bouman for helping bring this project to fruition; for their deep knowledge and compassion; and for being friends I couldn't do without. I'd like to thank the authors for their incredible contributions—when I first decided upon this book it was because I lacked the knowledge contained within. I feel privileged to have played a part in bringing it together and, hopefully, moving things on a bit. Thank you also Sarah—for your keen intellect and kindness every day we work together. Naturally thanks go to my Phil for moving the whole world when needed. I'd also like to thank Margie for showing how it's possible to be smarter than anyone I know and still be gentle; Chris for somehow getting in my head with a wry grin even when he's not there—and so making me think properly, when thinking easily is too tempting. I'd like to thank both of them for being warmer, deeper, and kinder than I have any right to expect; and I'd like to thank Rio for being brighter, in all ways, than she knows; for not being afraid to be herself (an all too rare a combination these days); and not least for the joy in her eyes when I tell her the science behind what she sees on YouTube.

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1

Introduction

Christina Richards, Walter Pierre Bouman,
and Meg-John Barker

Introduction

This book has been hard to bring to publication. One of the first problems we came across was that the authors did not know what to write—or rather they did know, but did not know *that* they knew, as it were. "But no one's written on this before", people would say, and, in general, they were correct. There was no jumping-off point—no "Here is the literature and here is how I am adding to it", no body of work to form a firm ground from which to leap. It is notable, however, that things have changed during the time that we have been editing the book, beginning with what we believe to be the first academic conference specifically on non-binary

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gender in the Spring of 2016 (Vincent & Erikainen, 2016; see Bergman & Barker, Chap. 3) and ending with what—as far as we are aware—is the first doctorate focused entirely on non-binary experience, which was awarded at the end of 2016 to Ben Vincent (one of the organisers of the conference and a contributor to this volume). During this time, there was also a call for the first journal special issue on non-binary gender (Nursing Inquiry, 2016). Given this, and the number of postgraduate and early career researchers now studying this area, hopefully the next edition of this book will have a good deal of more specific research to draw upon from disciplines as diverse as history, musicology, media studies, law, psychology, sociology, and medicine (see also Hegarty, Ansara, & Barker, 2017).

However, given the dearth of existing literature, in some senses, the authors in this volume are the giants upon whose shoulders others may stand. But while there have been no direct antecedents to the work here, there are, of course, many whose work has informed and inflected it. The surgical techniques developed for others which have been adapted for this population; the psychological modalities adjusted to suit; and—far more so than in the other fields—the theoretical bases from which academics and theorists may work. There has been work such as Bornstein's (1994) *Gender outlaw*; Queen and Schimel's (1997) *PoMoSexuals*; Wilchins' (1997) *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender*; and Butler's (1999) *Gender Trouble*, to name a few. Note that the first three of these were from the so-called 'grey' literature—not 'properly' academic, but (as always?) beating us to it [by 20 years]. But we can go further back too from the Neolithic 'goddess' Çatalhöyük to the modern day there have been people and practices outside of the gender binary (cf. Richards, 2017), it would be foolish to assume that non-binary gender is a purely modern phenomenon and so it is to this long movement—which circles ever back to the truth from the obscuring hand of self-interested power—that this book seeks to add.

Having decided a book was needed, our main concerns were with language and the structure of the book (cf. Richards & Barker, 2015). Even the book title evolved over the time of writing as the word *genderqueer* became more accepted and utilised as another umbrella term for those outside of the gender binary—and was consequently included in the title.

One of the most difficult decisions we had to make concerned how we should entitle the surgery chapters such that readers could find what they were looking for regarding surgery for different body parts and areas, while at the same time minimising incorrect assumptions and offence. Clearly, *Surgery for Men* would be misleading and inaccurate, whereas *Surgery for Non-Binary People* would not distinguish the chapters from one another. *Surgery for People with a Penis* related gender to a single organ too closely, where we wanted to discuss a range of operative procedures—indeed, it also doesn't allow for the range of meanings people attribute to that body part. The least-worst option seemed to be *Surgery for Bodies Commonly Gendered as Male*; *Surgery for Bodies Commonly Gendered as Female*, and so on, shifting the view to the assignations of wider society, rather than our own.

This does feel like a bit of a cop-out, however. It would be nice if there were new terms, *Androsome* and *Gynesome*, say, which refer to the two common configurations of body parts developed under common genetic expression—but which do not assume a cisgender norm; and make no inference regarding meaning or gender—either of the configuration or of the individual parts. Thus, a trans man may be Gynesome, but feel his chest is incorrect and have surgery to address it. He may feel his genitals are acceptable and that, as they are his [male] genitals, they should properly be called a manhole. A non-binary person might also be Gynesome and feel that their genitals are acceptable in that they regard them as being feminine and that they fit with the degree of femininity which is suitable for them. This non-binary person may also wish to have chest surgery to effect the correct chest contour for their sense of self. Additionally, a cisgender woman might be Gynesome in that she has a vagina, ovaries, and breasts—and further she may clarify that she is content with these and views them as a signifier of her femininity, or she may seek breast augmentation surgery to effect a better chest contour for her sense of self. Thus, we split the body parts from the meaning; allow multiple meanings and options for change as required; but also have some method of communication about commonly found bodily configurations and parts which make no *a priori* assumptions. Our hope is that by the time of a second edition of this book, society, and the language it uses, will have moved so that the words we use are generally understood in this way.

We also made few allowances for readers unfamiliar with technical terms. With the Internet ready to hand—indeed with some e-readers having inline lookup functions—it feels unnecessary to continually define terms. In part, this was because we wanted the book to be technically specific, rather than being for a very general reader—although general readers should find much to interest them, and hopefully not overmuch they need to search online to define. Further, we wanted different sections of the book to be of interest to specific professions, and it feels unreasonable to ask surgeons to define simple surgical terms for the non-surgical reader when their surgical colleagues will read the chapter; or queer theory academics to do the same. Hopefully, people reading cross-discipline will enjoy the dip into another world.

The next issue concerned how best to split the book such that it has an accessible structure for all readers. We therefore decided to split it into three main sections, which nominally represented the rough areas of endeavour concerning non-binary and genderqueer folk—these being *Societies*, *Minds*, and *Bodies*. This covers the usual biopsychosocial approach to human being, but also highlights our main omission—*Spiritualities*—which will therefore be addressed in future editions as non-[gender]binary aspects of spirituality may be found in most major religions and a vast number of spiritual practices (cf. Richards, 2014). Therefore, the sections of the book are as follows:

In the *Societies* section, S. Bear Bergman and Meg-John Barker wrote on *Activism* and its place in moving the whole field forward; Ben Vincent and Ana Manzano-Santaella wrote about *History and Cultural Diversity*, giving an excellent overview of how gender has been understood across time and space in a way which alerts us to the unusual status of the current high GDP Western understanding of gender as a binary opposite; Rob Clucas and Stephen Whittle detail the current legal position in *Law*; and Jay Stewart eloquently explains *Academic Theory* in this area. In the *Minds* section, we, as editors and colleagues, each took our specialty, with Meg-John Barker and Alex Iantaffi exploring *Psychotherapy* with non-binary people; Christina Richards meditating on the philosophy and practice of *Psychology*; and Sarah Murjan and Walter Pierre Bouman giving a thoughtful overview of *Psychiatry*. In the *Bodies* section, Leighton Seal explains what may and may not be done in *Adult Endocrinology*;

with Gary Butler similarly detailing this for *Child Endocrinology*. James Bellringer explains what genital surgical options are available in *Surgery for Bodies Commonly Gendered as Male*; David Ralph, Nim Christopher, and Giulio Garaffa similarly examine genital surgical options in *Surgery for Bodies Commonly Gendered as Female*; Andrew Yelland then explains surgical possibilities in *Breast Surgery*; and finally, Alex Iantaffi considers where we might go from here in *Future Directions*.

Non-binary People: Who Are We Talking About?

Who then are we talking about when we consider non-binary people? And how many non-binary people are there? Essentially, of course, genderqueer or non-binary people are simply people who are not male or female; but as ever things are more complex than that. In general, non-binary or genderqueer refers to people's identity, rather than physicality at birth; but it does not exclude people who are intersex or have a diversity/disorder of sexual development who also identify in this way. Whatever their birth physicality, there are non-binary people who identify as a single fixed gender position other than male or female. There are those who have a fluid gender. There are those who have no gender. And there are those who disagree with the very idea of gender. You will find out more about all of these groups in the chapters to come.

It follows from this—and from the fact that most research still only offers binary choices for gender—that the proportion of the general population who are non-binary is very difficult to measure. For example, one recent review of the UK literature in this area defined non-binary as "An umbrella term for any gender (or lack of gender) that would not be adequately represented by an either/or choice between 'man' or 'woman'" (Titman, 2014). Under this definition, Titman reported that at least 0.4% of the UK population defines as non-binary when given a three-way choice in terms of female, male, or another description; and indeed around a quarter to a third of trans people identify in some way outside the binary.

Another study found that around 5% of young LGBT people identify as something other than male or female (METRO Youth Chances,

2014), suggesting that identifying in this way may be becoming more common among younger populations. In the United States, the *Injustice at Every Turn* research, which included responses from over 6000 transgender people, found that 13% of respondents chose the option "A gender not listed here" and 860 of those respondents wrote in their own gender identity terms (Harrison, Grant, & Herman, 2012).

It is clear that more and more people are identifying and making sense of their experience in these kinds of ways now that non-binary understandings of gender are more readily available through online resources and communities; through options on social media (Barker, 2014); and through visible articles and celebrities in mainstream media (e.g. Brisbane, 2015; Ford, 2015). Therefore, the proportion of people identifying with non-binary gender is constantly shifting and almost impossible to measure accurately.

Another issue which makes measurement very difficult, and which is important to be mindful of in professional practice—of whatever sort—is that whilst relatively few people may *identify* as non-binary (to the point of using a non-binary gender label or refusing to tick the 'male/female' box on a form), many more people *experience* themselves in non-binary ways. Indeed, Joel, Tarrasch, Berman, Mukamel, and Ziv (2013) found that over a third of people in the general population felt to some extent that they were the 'other' gender, both genders, and/or neither gender. These are not small numbers, and it therefore behoves professionals from all walks of life to educate themselves to a basic extent, and not to assume that the people whom this book concerns are a 'niche' population.

Instead, it is important to recognise that, whatever its numbers, this population has been around for a very long time—if only now coming to the [high GDP global Western] public eye. Consequently, non-binary folk are entitled to full legal protections and such surgical; endocrinological, and psychological assistance as might be required. Communities should be supported and not exploited. And, as ever, when our theories, training, and culture fail; we might raise our gaze a little and look to respect and kindness to guide us as they seldom lead us wrong. Hopefully, this book contains a little of all of these things and will assist in fostering more.

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Part I

Societies

2

History and Cultural Diversity

Ben Vincent and Ana Manzano

Introduction

Only hundreds of years ago, gender was not commonly or instinctively binarised. This chapter explores multiple understandings of gender across time and place. First, we examine identities in European contexts, such as the English mollies, the Italian femminielli, Albanian sworn virgins, and multi-contextual examples of eunuchs. Such individuals were all positioned as 'other' from men and women, without necessarily being marginalised. This historical overview aims to achieve two goals—to bring the aforementioned perception of the gender binary as a 'constant' into question and, secondly, to challenge the idea that non-binary gender identities are an exclusively non-Western phenomenon.

We then consider gender on the Asian subcontinent through the Indian *hijra*, the Thai *kathoey*, and the two Indonesian examples of the *waria*, and gender within Buginese society. Finally, American examples

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are explored with the range of two-spirit identities of First Nation tribes of the United States and Canada, and the *machi* of South America. This discussion demonstrates the heterogeneity of gender variance around the world, and how the modern Western notion of a gender binary is only one of many possible perspectives. Many of these identities are still articulated today. We conclude by briefly considering the value of cross-cultural and historical considerations beyond the gender binary. The examples selected are far from exhaustive, and geographical assumptions should not be inferred as to where gender variance may occur. For example, African (Amadiume, 1987) and Middle Eastern (Murray, 1997) examples too are well recognised.

There has been remarkable progress in the last few years regarding awareness and understanding of transgender people. Recent happenings of note include the education and activism provided by the actress Laverne Cox (Eleftheriou-Smith, 2015), together with the much discussed coming out of Caitlyn Jenner (Lutz, 2015). However, when transgender people are discussed within mainstream media, medicine, or academia, this is most often in terms of the gender binary—that is, the cultural system which positions male and female as the only possible realities. Binary transgender discourses involve the rights, experiences, and identities of people assigned male at birth that identify as women, and vice versa. Such discourses have challenged the rigidity of the gender binary, but not necessarily the possibility of being outside of it. Articulations of gender incorporating aspects of *both* male and female, neither, or alternative possibilities are, in comparison, rarely acknowledged.

The early-twentieth-century anthropological studies of non-Western cultures interpreted gendered cultural beliefs and behaviours in Western terms. The position of the Western observer-researcher was assumed as inherently 'true' and led to limited interpretations of non-Western realities (Malinowski, 1927). However, this work was of great importance in recognising cross-cultural gender variation for the first time, and one can argue that "challenging the preconception of biological sexual dimorphism" (Herdt, 1993, p. 44) was not then possible. Indeed, ethno-centric Western interpretations of gender have dominated the natural and social sciences. This background highlights the importance of discussing gender beyond contemporary Western articulations, without implying variation

as 'abnormal' in relation to a Western norm. With this objective in mind, we provide a range of purposively selected cases (Blaikie, 2009) to illustrate the social construction of gender identities within European and non-Western contexts.

Global Gender Variation

Gender Transgressions, Historical Lessons: Articulations of Gender Within European Contexts

It is widely assumed that Western European societies such as the United Kingdom have always categorised people as only male and female. Genitals are assumed to be the 'essential' factor in dictating gender, and yet historically, other factors could have enough gendered significance to challenge or change an individual's status from man or woman. This relates to the important historical relationship between gender and sexuality. In the late nineteenth century, the early days of sexology, research that attempted to make sense of individuals with same-gender attraction positioned those now understood as gay men as having 'a female soul trapped in a male body' (Krafft-Ebing, 1886); however, this is now more associated with some transgender narratives. Attraction to men was viewed as so 'fundamentally female' that scientific and medical experts believed same-gender attraction challenged an individual's maleness or femaleness.

Whilst the relationship between sexuality and gender identity results in their confusion and conflation even today (Valdes, 1996), the role of sexuality in defining an individual's gender was once much more explicit. For example, Trumbach (1993) articulates how sodomy did not inherently challenge one's status as male, but being penetrated did—or similarly, if a woman penetrated other women. Thus, transgressions positioning men as submissive/penetrated or women as dominant/penetrators impacted upon gender significantly. This historical consideration also reveals how one cannot necessarily draw a clear line between binary and non-binary understandings of gender in the context of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At that time, an individual's

gendered status could be rendered ambiguous by factors now understood as sexual orientation, but then thought to indicate 'hermaphroditism'. 'Hermaphroditism' is an antiquated term to refer primarily to genital ambiguity, with intersex or Diversity of Sexual Development (DSD) now the term used to refer to a wide range of physiological variations.

Mollies

The term 'molly' was an eighteenth-century label associated with men attracted to other men. In addition, mollies engaged in gendered practices, which positioned them as critically separate from men who were 'othered' through their difference into a third category. Sub-cultural practices of mollies included the taking of female names and titles; marriage ceremonies between mollies; and ritualised enactments of giving birth known as 'lying-in' (Norton, 2009). Similar birthing rituals have been recognised cross-culturally—collectively referred to as *couvade* (Klein, 1991).

Eighteenth-century English society was predictably hostile towards mollies. The earlier Buggery Act of 1533 set the precedent that sodomy was punishable by death. Gaining a reputation for cross-dressing and 'sinful perversion' could result in 'social death'—whereby the individual was stigmatised and excluded from social participation. However, Norton explains how mollies' fear of stigma and execution meant "occasional 'lyings-in' could serve to relieve their collective anxiety through outrageous fun, and what today is called 'camp' behaviour" (Norton, 2009, n.p.). The behaviours of mollies served to nucleate sub-cultural associations between men who have sex with men and playfulness with gender and presentation, as contemporarily exhibited by drag queens in particular. For these reasons, one cannot simplify the molly identity or experience to that of homosexual men, or transgender women. As with any group, mollies will have been heterogeneous, with individuals differing from each other in idiosyncratic ways. Aside from this, narratives of pathology came to dominate explanations of perceived deviance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (De Block & Adriaens, 2013).

Recognising how genders were historically dependent upon orientations serves to illustrate the importance of social interaction in positioning the

individual as a gendered subject. Further, the more modern categories of 'homosexual' and 'transsexual' were influenced by the older categorisations of mollies and sodomites. This illustrates the importance of recognising that "cultural context determines whether gender variation is seen as a 'disorder' needing treatment or an understood and tolerated variation" (Newman, 2002, p. 355).

Femminielli

Femminielli are specifically associated with Neapolitan culture. Zito claims that the city of Naples was historically positioned as feminine, and that connections to gendered religious rituals allowed for "Men to experience the feminine side of their nature even in a context that has always suffered the patriarchal order dating back to Greek colonisation" (Zito, 2013, p. 207). Assigned male at birth, femminielli share some gendered articulations with archetypal expectations of transgender women, such as taking a female name, and—in recent decades—accessing hormones and gender-affirming surgeries. It is only through the details of identity politics (femminielli who specifically disidentify with the notion of being transgender women) and specific cultural practices that differentiation can be seen. For example, Atlas describes how femminielli could articulate themselves in specific ways, which would be frowned upon if done by women or men in Naples:

> Normally men are not allowed at the *tombola* because trousers worn at the game (i.e. the presence of men) would bring bad luck. Lella [a femminielli] disagreed, arguing that transvestites like her, who wore trousers, were allowed in. (Atlas, 2005, p. 55)

Whilst women would not wear trousers, and men would not be allowed to attend the *tombola* (a bingo-like game), the specific way in which femminielli are culturally integrated and involved allows for femminielli to occupy a third gender position. In a similar way to Lella herself in the above quotation, some scholars argue that the femminielli no longer truly exist today, but may be understood as transvestites (D'Amora, 2013). However, this risks erasing the specific context within which the category

of femminielli was negotiated over time, as well as those femminielli who do not identify with the labels of transvestite or transgender. This demonstrates the fluidity of gender, as individuals may have overlapping or seemingly contradictory identifications—some femminielli identifying themselves as men who dress as women, whilst others identify as neither men nor women.

Another important difference from binary transgender narratives is the complex relationship with stigma. Whilst traditional Neapolitan culture polices gender roles, femminielli are not disciplined for breach of these cultural rules due to their specific social position. Indeed, whilst many contemporary transgender and non-binary narratives indicate experiences of discrimination, abuse, and rejection, femminielli are often accepted within communities, sometimes living with their immediate or extended family. Femminielli are also believed to bring luck, due to historical association with the deity Hermaphroditus (Piraino & Zambelli, 2015). Therefore, specific details of the Neapolitan context directly influenced the development of the femminielli as an expression of gender variance.

Sworn Virgins

In Albanian tribes, having a son to continue the family line was of great cultural, social, and financial importance, not least because only males were eligible to inherit property. Families lacking a son would lose their property as their family name became extinct. However, they could resist and avoid this through the social construction of a son, from a child assigned female at birth. This occurred either at birth (in the case of single-child families) or in cases where an older son was lost: "the biological female who, later in life, after having been socialized as a woman for many years, reconstructs herself as a 'social man'" (Grémaux, 1993, p. 244). Today, the practice of sworn virginity is near extinction. Whilst limited research makes estimation difficult, as few as some dozen sworn virgins may still live after Albanian communism prevented the continuation of many traditional practices (Becatoros, 2008). Cultural shifts over the twentieth century and the relaxation of patriarchal limitations on

women's rights have also diminished the social relevance of sworn virginity. Whilst the legitimacy of sworn virgins as male was seen through their inclusion in male-only social spaces and practices, communities did perceive a difference from other men. Grémaux's ethnographic research involved talking to Albanian elders who knew the sworn virgin Mikas, who died in 1934. In discussing Mikas, "informants alternately used 'he' and 'she', as was observed by Gusic [an earlier ethnographer] when Mikas was still alive" (Grémaux, 1993, p. 251).

The issue of virginity itself was surprisingly flexible, depending upon ethno-social group membership. Marriage was the consistent taboo, due to creating an unacceptable male/male partnership. That Albanian sworn virgins could discuss attraction to women in male social circles emphasises the social validity/reality of the assumed third gender category, whilst simultaneously reifying culturally dominant heteronormativity and patriarchy. Thus, the nuances of social acceptability and gendered difference as a legitimised expression of gender variation were highly dependent on idiosyncratic considerations of gender and sexuality in that context.

Eunuchs

Commonly referring to castrated men, eunuchs were found in a range of different cultures serving different specific functions. In the Ottoman Empire, for example, many male slaves were eunuchs; however, within Chinese and Roman contexts, eunuchs could act as powerful civil servants (Tsai, 1996). Eunuchs were seen as less likely to attempt to overthrow reigning leadership due to their inability to have children and continue a lineage.

Ringrose explains how within Byzantine society the definition of eunuch changed over time, originally referring to "anyone who did not, as well as could not, produce children, including men who were born sterile, men who became sterile through illness, accident or birth defect, men who were lacking in sexual desire and men and women who embraced the celibate life for religious reasons" (Ringrose, 1993). Thus, 'eunuch' within this historical context had a much broader meaning than is now generally appreciated. In some circumstances, castration was chosen and