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Coming of Age

The field of 'lesbian and gay psychology' - or 'lesbian and gay affirmative psychology' - came into being when lesbian and gay liberation movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s successfully challenged the definition of homosexuality as a mental illness, and the American Psychiatric Association voted to remove homosexuality from its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders* in 1973 (Bayer 1981). Prior to these events, psychologists had largely avoided affirmation of lesbian and gay identities. Since 1973, lesbian and gay psychology has both described those identities as legitimate, mature, adjusted, psychologically healthy ways of being in their own right, and theorised the psychological problems that lesbians and gay men face as consequences of social stigma rather than any inherent pathology. Research has shifted away from questions about the causation and mutability of sexual orientation towards a wider set of research questions which concern lesbians' and gay men's lives within sexual minority communities and larger heterosexist cultures (Morin 1977, Morin and Rothblum 1991).

Currently, this field is globalising and diversifying to a degree that troubles any attempt to definitively name it. 'Lesbian and gay psychology' is represented by professional organisations in such countries as Australia, Brazil, Britain, Colombia, the Netherlands, and the United States. Furthermore, in some national contexts there have been moves beyond the narrow construction 'lesbian and gay.' For example, 'bisexual' was added to the name of Division 44 of the American Psychological Association in 1997 such that this organisation is now actioned to speak to 'lesbian, gay, and bisexual concerns.' The outcome of recent discussions within the Lesbian and Gay Psychology Section of the British Psychological Society about changing the name of this organisation are difficult to predict. The adjectives 'lesbian and gay' have often been read as indicating a psychologists' own sexuality, but many in the field point out that this is an error; 'a "lesbian and gay psychologist" can be heterosexual, just as a "social psychologist" can be anti-social, or a "sports psychologist" a couch potato' (Kitzinger 1997, 203).

However, the error of presuming to know the sexuality of a lesbian and gay psychologist reveals the historically recent, and contingent, possibility of being both a 'psychological expert' and openly lesbian or gay at all. A rhetoric of 'experiential authority,' drawing on direct experience with lesbian or gay life, may characterise some post-1973 'affirmative' social science research (Kitzinger 1987, 29-31). In contrast, prior to 1973, psychological research on homosexuality was characterised by deliberate erasure of collaboration with lesbian and gay researchers; erasure that was required if such research was to appear 'objective' (Minton 2001). 'Dr. Anonymous,' a speaker at the 1973 American Psychiatric Association meetings where lesbian and gay affirmative perspectives were voiced for the first time, sits at the boundary of these two periods of psychology's history. His co-panelists were Barbara Gittings and Frank Kameny (who were openly lesbian and gay, but were not psychiatrists) and Judd Marmor (who was an openly straight psychiatrist).

'Dr. Anonymous' who spoke as a gay psychiatrist, did so from behind a mask and through a machine that disguised his voice (Bayer 1981)¹. One of lesbian, gay, and bisexual psychology's ongoing tasks is to continue to trouble the range of sexual subject positions that can overlap with the category of 'psychologists.'

The Trouble with Coming of Age

These historic shifts can warrant a celebratory mood. In landmark volumes of lesbian and gay psychology this celebration has been figured as a 'coming of age.' "Lesbian and gay affirmative perspectives in psychology have come of age" wrote Gonsierek (1994, viii) in the preface to the American Psychological Association's first edited volume of work in this area. "Publication of this book marks the 'coming of age' of British lesbian and gay psychology" echoed Kitzinger and Coyle (2002, 1) some years later, marking a new national context for lesbian and gay psychology against the unmarked US norm. Here, I want to query my colleagues' 'coming of age' narratives, which tend to imply that the field has arrived at a 'mature' epistemological telos. I'm less sure that coming out of childhood and into adulthood - particularly as psychology's more senior discipline of 'child psychology' configures such transformations - is necessarily either grounds for a celebration, or the narrative needed to keep the impulse to queer psychology going.² According to canonical theories in child psychology, children take some time to get into the habit of labeling people in terms of their genders, often initially disagree as to what makes someone a boy or a girl, and take longer still to alight on the belief that you've got your gender for life, or that gender is determined by your genitals (Kohlberg 1966, Bem 1989). Of course, ethnomethodology, feminist studies of science, and queer theory have all offered related challenges to the factual status of those trans-abjecting 'facts' that child psychologists celebrate as children's developmental milestones (Kessler and McKenna 1978, Fausto-Sterling 1993, Butler 1990). Indeed, the construction of these common changes in children's understandings of gender as normative development, rather than as particular forms of subjectification, contributes to their sedimentation as the 'natural facts' of gender more generally; only a child could believe anything different. Those of us trying to do translation work between psychology and queer theory experience strange kinship with children when we are similarly infantilised for insisting that there are more than two physical sexes, and that genitals do not automatically determine gender ('Surely all of this talk of their being no absolute truth is just postmodernist word play?' 'You're not serious though, are you?')

The celebratory 'coming of age' narrative sometimes gets on the disciplinary bandwagon to make this translation work more difficult still. For example, Gonsierek continues by attributing the proper development of the field to 'critical thinking and arguments based on empirical information' which he contrasts with the 'political correct foolishness' of lesbian and gay studies courses which are 'inward looking and self-absorbed with arcane academic debates' (Gonsierek 1994, viii-ix). In contrast, Kitzinger and Coyle's use of 'coming of age' does flag up the contingent and incomplete nature of British 'lesbian and gay psychology,' particularly with regard to the underdeveloped state of bisexual

¹ For a photo of the panellists, including the masked Dr. Anonymous, see Marcus (1992) 224.

² See Kitzinger (1997) for a longer discussion of the politics of lesbian and gay psychology's complicitness with psychology. For a critique of developmental psychology see Burman (1994) and Morss (1995).

and transgender psychology.³ But LGBT psychology will require more than just a knowledge base about bisexuality and transgender if it is to do justice to the sexual and gender minorities that modern psychology has been complicit in abjecting. The 'development' of both children and academic fields of inquiry will have to be rethought at a more fundamental level.

Consider the current difficulties involved in putting 'bisexual psychology' on an equal status with 'lesbian and gay psychology' *without* rethinking the logic of development. Clare Hemmings argues that much lesbian, gay and queer theory is founded on a logic of repudiation, in which foreclosing the possibility of either homo- or hetero- sexuality is necessary for a sexual identity to be recognised as mature. Within such theories, bisexuality gets positioned as a phase, a middle-ground, or a polymorphously perverse origin point, but adult bisexual identities are rendered unthinkable (Hemmmings 2002). Although her text is not aimed at psychologists, Hemmings' argument applies to such classic theories of coming out processes as counselling psychologist Vivienne Cass' model, which describes bisexuality only as an identity that is taken on temporarily when moving from closeted to openly lesbian or gay identities.⁴ At the end point of the coming out process, as Cass envisaged it, the mature lesbian/gay person shuttles happily between the heterosexual mainstream and affirmative lesbian/gay subcultures at will, but their erotic orientation is maturely solidified around same-sex desire (Cass 1979, 219-221). Of course, this is too limited a scheme to make sense of life narratives, and Cass herself has moved beyond it (Cass 1999).⁵

Psychologists can also occlude the possibility of the conceptual rethinking necessary to put bisexuality on a more equal relationship with lesbian and gay when we celebrate the field's coming of age too. Social psychologist Gregory Herek adopted a celebratory tone about the field's development in the preface to his edited volume *Stigma and Sexual Orientation: Understanding Prejudice against Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexuals*.

The mainstreaming of research on antigay stigma is important not only because it offers the promise of finding better ways to combat prejudice, but also because studying homophobia will enrich the study of attitudes in general (Herek 1998, viii).

While the title of Herek's useful volume mentions bisexuality, none of the book's eleven chapters comparatively analyse homo- and bi-phobia, none are oriented more towards

³ Kitzinger & Coyle 2002, 4. I follow the thread of this exclusion of bisexuality here, but this is not to suggest that inclusion of transgender psychologies would not require an equally fundamental rethinking. See Parlee (1996). Nor are these the only pieces of unfinished business in the field. Kitzinger and Coyle further note that the volume focuses on sexual *identity* to the exclusion of work on sexual *behaviour*. Elsewhere I examine how the construction of British lesbian and gay psychology between the spaces of positivist psychology and social constructionism can contribute to this retreat from sexual practice. See Peter Hegarty 'What comes after discourse analysis for LGBTQ psychology?' in E.A. Peel and V.C. Clarke (eds.), *Out in Psychology: LGBTQ Perspectives*.

⁴ My argument here is indebted to Kitzinger (1987) which similarly called attention to the limited utility of lesbian and gay psychology's identity models for radical lesbians. However, the version of feminism upon which Kitzinger alights is no more accepting of bisexuality than the lesbian and gay psychology in rejected. See Hegarty (2005a).

⁵ See also Diamond. (2008).

biphobia than homophobia, and several would not need substantive revision if bisexuality simply didn't exist.

The 'mainstreamed' researcher that Herek celebrates here resembles the lesbian or gay subject at the end of Cass's coming out model; shuttling freely between engagement with lesbian and gay psychology and the more 'general' field of attitude science. Does bisexuality need to be undone for this mature professional identity to cohere, as in Cass' model? Sean Massey and I have recently argued that the mainstreaming of work on heterosexist prejudice involved the construction of lesbians and gay men as a distinct minority group, and by so doing occluded one possibility for theorizing biphobia (Hegarty and Massey 2006). Early models of anti-gay prejudice borrowed from sexual liberationist thinking and understood homophobia to result from such factors as 'personal anxiety,' 'sex guilt,' or 'fear and denial of personal homosexual tendencies' (Dunbar, Brown and Amoroso 1973, Millham, San Miguel and Kellogg 1976, Mosher and O'Grady 1979). Assuming a bisexual potential for all, fears of homosexual feelings among the heterosexual-identified were understood as evidence of 'homophobia' and assessed with such questionnaire items as 'I am frightened that I might have homosexual tendencies.'⁶ By so doing, these models allowed the possibility of conceptualising heterosexual-identified people's own *biphobia*, a possibility that was occluded in later minoritising work.

It is not always easy to shuttle between lesbian and gay psychology and mainstream psychology while keeping bisexuality on the table. I was reminded of this in 2005 when I was invited to supply a 50-word comment to the British journal *The Psychologist* on a study which had claimed (in typical bi-negating fashion) to have found new evidence for the biological basis of sexual orientation in men. Within these imposed limits, with the help of my friends, I managed to critique the study for media-baiting, exclusion of lesbian and bisexual people, and general irrelevance to lesbian, gay, and bisexual people's lives.⁷ The journal's editor subsequently allowed a full half page for a personalised response that impugned my credentials as both a psychological scientist and a historian of psychology (Dickens, Hardman, & Sergeant, 2005). My insistence on the need to study bisexual men was described as ill-informed and censorious of scientific writing, particularly as I had not accepted, without criticism, a soon-to-be-controversial unpublished study which denied that men could feel bisexual desire at all (Rieger, Chivers, & Bailey, 2005). Discussion of the limits of *that* work are far beyond the current discussion. However, both the personal public attack, and the published defence of my 50-word commentary by a group of bisexual scholars (Barker, Iantaffi, & Gupta, 2005) were further evidence that a commitment to bisexuality limits the forms of easy movement between margin and centre for lesbian and gay psychologists that models of 'lesbian and gay' development describe.

Leaving Queer Children Behind

These limitations on the theorising of adult bisexualities, and the possibility that children might be better gender theorists than adults, both suggest that 'coming of age' might foreclose critical possibilities in psychology rather than open them up. My argument to

⁶ This questionnaire item was used by Mosher & O'Grady (1979).

⁷ My comment was inserted into the following news item: 'How messages are sent,' *The Psychologist*, 18, 399. The study critiqued was Savic, Berglund, & Lindström (May 17, 2005).

centre children in this queer project seems at odds with the account of criticality in Lee Edelman's *No future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. Here, Edelman rightly points to the problem of 'reproductive futurism' in which the welfare of an abstract figure of a future child is used to limit the rights and freedoms of adults in the here-and-now. For Edelman, queerness 'names the side of those *not* "fighting for the children," and is also that which "chafes against normalization"' (Edelman 2004, 3-6). Within the 'cult of the Child' that Edelman conjures up, the child is both innocent and straight, and 'no shrines to the queerness of boys and girls' are permitted. This last point was also made by Bruhm and Hurley who point out that queer children are up against a contradictory discourse in which they are paradoxically constructed as both innocent of desire and necessarily already heterosexual (Bruhm and Hurley 2004).

Edelman's critique pertains to psychology most obviously because it assumes a Lacanian ontology of what it means to be singularly human, to experience desire and to be motivated by a death drive. Given the breadth of application that Edelman claims for this critique, it is worth considering its relevance for hegemonic theories of child psychology which produce truth effects on the lives of queers of all ages (unlike the popular culture texts that Edelman subjects to Lacanian analysis). Consider the now-familiar arguments of lesbian and gay psychologists that children grow up equally 'well-adjusted' with same-sex and opposite-sex parents (Patterson 2006), arguments which have successfully compelled courts to consider lesbian (and less often gay) parents as valid custodians of their children. The politics of securing parenting rights by appeal to a reassuring developmental narrative that lesbians and gay men produce children that come of age quite normally are vexing indeed. Unlike the psychological literature which affirms ethnic or religious minority parents, lesbian and gay parents are rarely deemed successful when they pass on their minority identity to their children. Celia Kitzinger cites parenting research as supporting her argument that psychological knowledge ought to be used to secure lesbian's and gay men's civil rights (Kitzinger 1997). Her former student Victoria Clarke notes that the logic of parenting research is heteronormative for assuming heterosexual parents to be a useful standard of comparison and heterosexuality to be evidence of a 'well-adjusted' upbringing (Clarke 2000). Tellingly, it has been sociologists who have offered the most sustained critique of the psychological literature. Judith Stacey and Thomas Bilbarz conclude that, by some psychological measures, children of lesbian mothers have always been visibly more queer than psychologists dared to admit, being particularly more likely to break the rules of childhood gender conformity than children reared by heterosexuals (Stacey and Bilbarz 2001). 'Such evidence, albeit limited, implies that lesbian parenting may free daughters and sons from a broad but uneven range of traditional gender prescriptions' (Stacey and Bilbarz 2001, 169-170). Children of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents also often report that they value the greater affordance for their own genders of growing up in queer families (Goldberg, 2007; Saffron, 1998).

While the future rights of queer families are being worked out here with reference to fantasies about straight children, this debate troubles the terms of Edelman's critique, because the imagined heterosexual children of queer parents are being used to support the rights of queer adults in the here-and-now, and not to limit them. If Stacey, Bilbarz, and the children of LGB parents who talked to Goldberg and Saffron are right, then research on lesbian and gay parents has shied away from understanding the gender transgressive features of queer families to ensure that lesbians and gay men can

continue to parent. Edelman's understanding of queer draws also on Warner's useful argument that to be queer is to be normalised. For Warner within queer subcultures – at their occasional best – '[t]he rule is: Get over yourself. Put a wig on before you judge. And the corollary is that you stand to learn most from the people you think are beneath you' (Warner 1999, 35). Yet Edelman's derogation of the future as just 'kid stuff' seems to shame, in an infantilizing manner, those who would see children as integral to their queer lives. In addition to Warner's suggested wigs, perhaps we need to draw on the best of kid culture including boys with Barbie dolls, ontologies that permit more than two genders, shitting at the dinner table, and possibilities for bi-friendly theory to challenge adults notions that children are only politically interesting as wards of their rights-bearing parents or future rights-bearing subject. The future is 'kid stuff?' Bring it on! I can't imagine anything more queer.

If psychological research on lesbian and gay parents writes off children's queer possibilities, postmodern queer theory runs the risk of a fascination with *the figure* of the child in cultural texts. As Bruhm and Hurley note, there are long-standing, ongoing, contested translations between children's lives and psychological facts. For Foucault, 'all the sciences, analyses or practices employing the root "psycho-" (Foucault 1977, 193) operate through individualisation by making their subjects visible, and children are more individualised than adults. In *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, Foucault also declared that 'silence . . . is less the absolute limit of discourse . . . than an element that functions alongside the things said' before going on to discuss how schoolchildren were taught to speak about sex (Foucault 1978, 27). The politics of individualising children while enforcing their silence has not gone unchallenged. Organisations such as the *Intersex Society of North America* and *Bastard Nation* have protested the keeping of those records *through* which individualising power operates *from* the subjects *on* which it operates.⁸ Psychologists have long been pruriently interested in intersexed and adopted children as 'natural experiments' because of their rare locations within categories of gender, sexuality, and kinship. Only rarely has psychology been understood as a practice that matches this prurience with concern to make those locations more inhabitable. All of these contested operations of power can be conveniently forgotten by adults in the habit of thinking of 'the figure' of the child as the focus of their politics and textual analysis as the primary strategy of political engagement.

One of the most significant contributions of queer theory to developmental psychology to date has been Eve Sedgwick's important essay 'How to Bring your Kids up Gay'. Sedgwick's title cleverly disappoints readers looking for self-help, and highlights the degree to which we look to developmental psychology to answer the question of whether a child is normal, or should be taken to the clinic. When published in 1980, the third edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* did not list homosexuality as a categorical reason to go to the clinic, but 'gender identity disorder in childhood' appeared, bringing a new reason to bring your kids there.⁹ This diagnosis was, and remains, based on children's expressed desire to be a member of the opposite sex, and the display of behaviour deemed appropriate for the 'opposite' sex (in such domains as

⁸ See www.isna.org, and www.bastards.org. On the history of adoption see Ellen Herman 'The Adoption History Project' <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~adoption/>

⁹ American Psychiatric Association, (1980). On the diagnosis of gender identity disorder in children see also Burke (1996) and Minter (1999).

clothing, play, and gender of preferred playmates). Sedgwick notes the comparative silence that surrounded this pathologising of children's gender, in comparison to the much-celebrated removal of homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* and pointed out that the repudiated figure of the effeminate boy could come to constitute 'a node of annihilating homophobic, gynophobic, and pedophobic hatred internalised and made central to gay-affirmative analysis' (Sedgwick 1991, 21). As Karl Bryant (2006) argues, the debates that lead to the formation of the GIDC diagnosis show that the imperative to consider effeminate boys mentally ill involve many more motives than simply junior homophobia.

Queer psychology is not just 'junior queer theory' either. Rather, any analysis of how to live with queer children will involve thinking as a psychologist might about what methodologies do. To support her assumption that gay men have effeminate boyhoods, Sedgwick leaned on an empirical psychological study by Bell, Weinberg, and Hammersmith, published in 1981, which she describes as 'the most credible of these studies [linking childhood gender with adult sexual orientation] from a gay-affirmative standpoint' (Sedgwick 1991, 27). Yet, by taking this study at face value, Sedgwick overlooked how the gynophobic impulse - that her essay otherwise exposes - operates within its methods. The data for Bell et al.'s study consists of thousands of interviews about childhood experiences with gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual adults, conducted in the San Francisco area during 1969 and 1970. Bell et al. used these reports of childhood to construct statistical models of the developmental pathways to adult sexual orientation. This particular quantification of 'experience' constructed gender as a unidimensional personality trait anchored at 'masculine' and 'feminine' extremes. Where did this 'gender' come from? Participants answered such questions as 'to what extent did you enjoy specifically girls' activities (e.g., hopscotch, playing housejacks)' and 'did you ever dress in boys clothes and pretend to be a boy other than at Halloween or for school plays?' allowing the researchers to tie diverse childhood experiences to specific points on an M-to-F axis (Bell, Weinberg and Hammersmith 1981, 74). In other words, the 'gender' to which proto-lesbian, gay and bisexual people did not conform was skewed toward children's leisure, defined 'masculinity' and 'femininity' as logical opposites, and left no place for androgynous childhoods. Within these limits 'gender conformity' did indeed predict adult sexual orientation (but more for Whites, more for men, more for monosexuals than bisexuals, and, among women, more for those who had been in psychotherapy). Thus all-too familiar forms of normativity were conceded by Sedgwick's endorsement of the credibility of this study. Sedgwick was right to inquire, in kid-friendly fashion, after the effect of the haunting abject position of the effeminate boy. But, might not a gynophobic impulse have lead White male heterosexual interviewees to repudiate the gender nonconformity of their childhoods more than any others?

The trick of reading this kind of empirical psychological work might lie in learning to live with 'the disjunction between historical subjects and constructed scientific objects.'¹⁰ Raising such double-consciousness that looks both at the networks of natural and social actors that materialise scientific truths, and the promises of science to address where the natural ends and the social begins requires, as Bruno Latour reminds us, a rethinking of modernity itself (Latour 1993). I came to this conclusion since attempting to use the

¹⁰ Here I borrow from Treichler (1991) useful thinking about the politics of deconstructing AIDS science.

modernist method of social psychology experimentation to understand the constructedness of heterosexual people's recall of childhood experience. I hoped to demonstrate the constructedness of such reports, by showing that heterosexual people report more gender-conforming experiences if they were in conversation with an interviewer who believed that they might be lesbian or gay. In my experiments I first briefed individual heterosexual students that they were taking part in a study about 'personality and job choices,' or a study about 'personality, job choices, and sexual orientation.' I then left the room and a research assistant who was the same sex as the study participant interviewed them about childhood experiences. I returned at the end for a debriefing. I had predicted that informing the students that the study was about sexual orientation would render their recall of childhood more gender conforming.¹¹

My modernist ideas were, as Sedgwick would have it, more concerned with undoing essentialist narratives linking the coming of age of adult gay men to effeminate boyhoods than with forwarding knowledge of how to care for effeminate boys themselves. Moreover, gender nonconformity became a haunting abject of my modernist methods. This experiment was necessarily social, not least because it required two people to interview each heterosexual participant; one to brief them, and another to interview them while unaware of the effects of that briefing. Lesbian and gay students were keenest to work with me as interviewers, but because the study aimed to manipulate participants' feelings of being perceived as lesbian or gay themselves, I wanted them to believe that the interviewers were straight. I selected students whom I, naively, guessed had 'gender conforming' presentations of self to play the part of the interviewer. I also began to scrutinise my own gender as a piece of unreliable scientific apparatus. Was I out to the participants or not? How could I check? The assumption that lesbian and gay psychologists are necessarily lesbian or gay also manifested itself in the experiment. One male heterosexual assistant was read as gay by some participants. The experiment did not yield publishable results, but did show how scientific cultures are sites where gender is 'in the making.' Indeed, as Latour would have it, the impulse behind the experiment was quintessentially modern for its attempt to purify 'gender nonconformity' into real and constructed parts, while the work of doing the experiment led to new investments in gender that worked against any such purification.

Happily, Sedgwick's argument that there has been no response from within the caring professions around the nurture of effeminate boys has been made somewhat outdated by the work of Edgardo Menvielle, Catherine Tuerk and their colleagues (e.g., Menvielle & Tuerk, 2002). Their support group and self-help materials for the parents of children with gender-variant behaviors refute the homophobic and transphobic assumptions that underlie the pathologisation of children through the category of 'Gender Identity Disorder in Childhood.' By so doing their work shows that the terror of individualised behavior modification aimed at normalising children's gender is not the only response that the helping professions are capable of offering to parents whose children, quite spontaneously reveal that adults' 'mature' way of thinking about gender is, after all, only a set of acculturated beliefs. Alternate forms of psychology can and do emerge, but are far from being commonly practiced yet. Instead of a celebration of 'coming of age,' lesbian and gay psychology's history needs a narrative about its present that recognizes how important its contingent futures might be.

¹¹ For a description of these experiments see Hegarty (2001).

The Past is Kid Stuff

There is a need to live with the disjunction that networks of psychological truths open up, to think of children, gender, sexuality and truth as ‘simultaneously real, like nature, narrated, like discourse, and collective, like society’ (Latour 1993, 6). Indeed, for Latour, ‘the child’ is one of the ‘fuzzy areas’ where moderns find it difficult to locate the boundaries of their cultural condition, and against which we ‘believe it is our duty to extirpate ourselves from those horrible mixtures’ to restore the apparent purity of modernity’ (Latour 1993, 100). Neither modernist narratives of coming of age that forget the past, or postmodern despair which writes of the future entirely are sufficient here. Both forget the normalised children still caught up in psychiatric, pediatric, and social work disciplines. I have a completely unwarranted optimism that I might enroll some allies from queer theory into the project of rethinking psychology’s past along these lines. Because I am not so optimistic as to be non-strategic, I will focus my attention on an activity that is real, narrated, and social, and has become crucial in queer theory’s understandings of its own project; *reading*. When children read they can stimulate their own disciplining and concerns about where their minds might go. What’s queer about the way that children have read, and been read, through the lens of modern psychology?

Lesbian and gay psychologists typically know that lesbians and gay men are stereotyped as having ‘gender inverted’ personalities. Scholars familiar with queer theory are more likely to be familiar with Judith Butler’s argument that the ‘genders’ which lesbians and gay men are said to invert are implicitly already heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is formed as much from its relationship to homosexuality as the reverse (Butler 1993). But almost no-one remembers that the earliest technologies for measuring ‘gender’ as a personality trait were targeted at children not adults, and were anxiously deployed at the haunting abject of the effeminate boy within the literature on high IQ children. Psychologists Terman and Miles’ 1936 book *Sex and Personality*, has been largely understood, since second-wave feminists, to be the foundational measure of masculinity and femininity in modern psychology.¹² The Masculinity-Femininity test developed there was first deployed in studies on the feminine psychologies of ‘passive male homosexuals’ in California prisons. Thus, normal gender has been, as Butler would have it, a regime of truth that results from the abjection of queerness from its putative origin. Yet this origin *is* putative, for years earlier Lewis Terman’s measured the gender of a cohort of high IQ children to negate the possibility that they could be considered psychologically maladjusted.¹³ This move was rightly describes by Andrew Elfenbein as carrying ‘faint hints of the older association between genius and sex/gender deviance’ (Elfenbein 1999, 211). A lofty literary canon is the means by which Terman and Miles materialise gender. A person scores more ‘feminine’ if he enjoys *Little Women* or Helen Keller’s *Story of My Life*, but more ‘masculine’ if he has enjoyed *The Swiss Family Robinson* or *The Call of the Wild*. Indeed, Terman’s utterly androcentric work on genius insisted on the masculinity of genius, rendering effeminate gifted boys anomalous, and gifted tomboys a more interesting curiosity than any genius manifested by adult women. In their 1936 book on the measurement of gender, Terman and Miles explain that their test would be useful for the normalisation of effeminate boys such as

¹² Terman & Miles, *Sex and Personality* (1936). For feminist and queer analysis of this study see Hegarty (2007b); Kline (2002); Lewin (1984); and Terry (1999).

¹³ Terman (1925).

one from their gifted cohort that they identify only as X. They describe how he at age fifteen liked 'to dress himself as a stylish young woman, apply cosmetics liberally, and walk down the street to see how many men he could lure into flirtation' (Terman and Miles 1936, 14). As Bryant (2006) would have it, the impulse to normalize the effeminate boy in psychology exceeds the simple urge to inhibit the development of gay men.

Reading is not absent from contemporary regulations of children's leisure pursuits either. Psychiatrist Kenneth Zucker describes how boys with Gender Identity Disorder 'have greater interest in female heroines in children's books and on TV . . . In middle childhood, characters such as Wonder Woman, Bionic Woman and She-Ra become favourites' (Burke 1996, 62). This is not the first time that *Wonder Woman* has found a psychiatrist among her enemies, but she used to be feared for inducing queerness in girls as well as boys. *Wonder Woman* was originally co-authored by psychologist William Marston, who celebrated the rise of feminism, and argued that America's cultural prowess depended on the future leadership of women, who were understood to be morally superior to men (Marston 1928). For Marston, passion and captivation by the female body – itself a state of bondage - forestalls emotional suffering and creates a desirable state of normalcy in men. Unsurprisingly, Marston's theory of the emotions has never had a central place in the canon of Western psychology. Marston knew that his ideas would be more effectively distributed through the popular genre of comic books than any psychological prose. *Wonder Woman*, the comic book heroine that he created in 1941 was a response to both the androcentrism and violence of the superhero genre. Like lie detection technologies, which Marston has dubiously been credited with inventing, *Wonder Woman* tends to vanquish the bad guys and gals by ensnaring them in her lasso of truth without recourse to the SMACK! and POW! of her male counterparts' third degree (Bunn, 1997, 2007).

Marston located *Wonder Woman*'s origins on Paradise Island, a land with no men. She comes into being through the intervention of the goddess Aphrodite and the craft of her mother Hippolyte. Thus, decades before Heather, Diana Prince was a subject of children's literature who already had two Mommies (Robinson 2004, 28-32). As *Wonder Woman*'s focal points being all-female separatist societies removed from civilisation, the responsibilities of recognising female superiority, and an endlessly deferred romance with Steve Trevor, it is worth speculating, as Molly Rhodes does, how *Wonder Woman* opens up the historical category of the lesbian reader for World War II and post-war times (Rhodes 2000). Historian of psychology Ellen Herman argues that second wave feminism borrowed largely from the humanistic discourse of post-war psychology (Herman, 1995), but this may not have been the only form of pop-psychology from which American feminist notions of self were borrowed. Robinson cannot have been the only girl for whom *Wonder Woman* afforded possibilities of tomboy identification. (Nor I, the only proto-homo boy who found Diana Prince's TV adventures more inspiring than the male TV and film superheros of the 1970s). Did William Marston's comic serve as a similar conceptual resource for any radical lesbians who imagined feminism as the theory and lesbianism as the practice? As Rhodes notes, in classically Foucaultian fashion *Wonder Woman* was explicitly named as 'lesbian' by psychoanalysts who opposed the comic and feared its effects on children's minds. *Wonder Woman*'s lesbian connotations were occluded when she was reclaimed as a feminist icon in the 1970s, and are not necessarily flagged up in the here-and-now either (Pereira 2006, 34-39). Nor does the recognition of the BDSM erotics of *Wonder Woman* always lead to clarifying

interpretations. In an argument that conflates SM with nonconsensual violence, Robbins argues that Wonder Woman is *not* at SM text as 'rather than punching them out, she used her magic lasso to capture the bad guys and compel them to obey her. Compared to most male-oriented action comics, *Wonder Woman* was pretty nonviolent' (Robbins 1996, 12). Pereira recognizes these pleasures more accurately when she writes that '[w]hether Wonder Woman is encouraging Marva to be strong and unafraid or trying to stop Marva from helping Dr. Psycho, the sub/dom vibe is surely meant to titillate' (Pereira 2006, 35). No wonder children are banished from the room before these conversations can take place.

Psychoanalytic fears about *Wonder Woman's* ability to induce a wide range of desires in young girls are, of course, part of the history of post war psychoanalysis which repeatedly promised to address fears about the impure development of children who might lapse into homosexuality. Not all forms of psychiatry were so uniformly negative about the power of children's same-sex affiliations. In contrast to the reassuring narratives of Freudian ego psychology, the interpersonal theories of American psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan understood personality development to be incomplete until children had experienced social dynamics located *outside* the heterosexual nuclear family. In pre-adolescence, every child needs a *chum* – a close intimate age mate of the same sex - who represents 'the quiet miracle of adolescence' (Sullivan 1947, 41). Sullivan's notion of chumship was homosocial, dependent on feelings of similarity, and could include, but did not require, genital sexuality. Chumships were often a route of entry into adult heterosexuality, but were also vital in their own right, representing 'the best grasp on the problems of life that some people ever manifest' (Sullivan 1954, 137).

Sullivan's notion of chumship was formed through clinical work conducted in the 1920s with men institutionalised for schizophrenia. Naoko Wake's recent work on Sullivan has gone much further than that of previous scholars who have tended to balk at the erotics of Sullivan's clinical practices, through which these theories took shape (Wake, 2006). Bruhm and Hurley (2004) have recently suggested that narratives which afford queerness in children on condition that it be 'just a phase' may be a resource for the development of queer cultures. This insight seemed to have shaped Sullivan's psychiatric practice also As Wake's work shows, many of Sullivan's patients were troubled by homosexual yearnings, some saw these yearnings in Sullivan himself, and others found room in conferences with him to explore and problematise the sense of dread that those feelings engendered. Sullivan often appealed to the notion that homosexuality was 'only a phase' to encourage these men to engage in same-sex eroticism for the good of their mental health. Long before contemporary queer reading strategies, forms of therapeutic practice that defined themselves *against* psychoanalysis have deployed the affordances of considering that homosexuality might be 'just a phase.'

The *reading* of those chumships also became disciplined after Sullivan's death. Sullivan's lectures and writings were selectively published by the William Alanson White institute in the 1950s and 1960s. Biographical accounts of Sullivan appeared in the 1970s and 1980s, which tended to read the chums in his writings as coded references to his own childhood friendship with Clarence Bellinger. Without doubting the relevance of this friendship to Sullivan's understanding of personhood, the explanation of the presence of the chums in the theory as autobiography, rehabilitates Sullivan's unique theory by moving it closer to Freud's. By writing the chums off as relevant to Sullivan,

and Sullivan only, the narrative of development is rehabilitated as more similar to the Oedipally organised psychoanalytic one.¹⁴ It is at least an interesting question why queer theory still prefers to traffic within the terms of those Oedipal narratives rather than the wider world of childhood affiliation that Sullivan's theory opens up.

Conclusions

According to Latour, we can only maintain the illusion that we are modern subjects by appealing to a break with our pre-modern past. In this paper, I have argued that the possibility of creating a critically queer developmental psychology (both in theory and in practice) requires such a rethinking, and an ability to live with the uncomfortable impure disjunctures between ahistoricist psychology, and genealogical histories of truth. In lesbian and gay psychology, modernism has taken the form of a break with the pathologising narratives of the past in coming of age narratives. Postmodern readings of the figuration of the future as 'the future of *the* child' have some accuracy, but critical children are needed, and not just adults' critique of childhood. Sedgwick is right that gay theory has seen the effeminate boy as a construction, while psychiatry has seen him as a too real figure who must be normalised away. Doing psychological science in this domain proves how unlikely we might be to contain this fuzzy creature within the modernist discourses of what is real and what is constructed. Rather, the existence of children with gender variant behaviours remind us that we are less modern - and less grown up - than we think, and that 'lesbian and gay psychology' is not qualified to celebrate its maturity. Latour calls for an expansion of democracy to include those quasi-objects that are positioned as devoid of agency by the modernist split between the political representation of people and the scientific representation of things. Perhaps queer theory and lesbian and gay psychology can usefully pollute each other by affording the movement of queer children across this boundary.

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