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Invisible Men?

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From the turn of the century right up until the 1960s, when changes in attitudes towards sexuality and men's fashions began to alter perceptions of homosexuality, the effeminate queen was the dominant public image of male homosexuals. This could mean two things. On the one hand the flamboyant stereotype diverted attention from other more guarded men and made it relatively easy to 'pass' as straight. On the other it threatened to overwhelm any other images people had of anyone they discovered to be homosexual.¹ Just there were men who expressed their homosexuality through the adoption of an effeminate appearance in both the gay and the straight worlds, so there were men who would not or could not express their sexuality in this way. They did not identify with the feminine, and regarded themselves as homosexual but not as 'fairies'. As early as 1881 John Addington Symonds had noted that while 'a certain number of people are undoubtedly feminine, the majority do not differ from "normal" men. They are athletic, masculine in habits, frank in manner. These 'normal' homosexuals are 'passing through society year after year without arousing a suspicion of their inner temperament.

For most homosexuals the 1930s through to the 1950s were characterised by the very real fear of exposure, blackmail and imprisonment. In both Britain and America the police were conducting a virtual witch-hunt of homosexuals.³ In Britain this led to events such as the Montagu trials.⁴ Gay men also had to contend with the threat of vigilante anti-gay violence and strove to remain invisible to the public.⁵ In 1948 the following 'Don'ts' were suggested as 'sane and useful advice for male inverters' in England:

Don't commit to writing any admissions as to your inclinations; don't masquerade – on any occasion whatsoever – in women's clothes, take female parts in theatrical performances or use make-up; don't be too meticulous in the matter of your own clothes, affect any extremes in colour or cut; don't wear conspicuous rings, watches, cuff-links, or other jewellery; don't allow your voice intonation to display feminine inflection – cultivate a masculine tone and method of expression; don't stand with your hand on your hip, or walk mincingly; don't become identified with the group of inverters which form in every city ...'⁶

Dress for these gay men broadly followed conventions of fashion: they wore 'dark suits, three pieces, very quiet shirts'⁷ that would elicit comment or notice from outsiders. Dudley Cave, for example, tended to wear 'grey flannels, a sports coat and an extremely light belt, an ex-army belt, a tie'. He 'wouldn't have dreamt of going into town in those days without wearing a tie and usually a sports jacket. Generally speaking we kept our heads down and tried to avoid being seen as what we were.'⁸ John Hardy echoes the fact that even dress for most gay men followed conventions of fashion: 'when you were out and about in the streets and going about your ordinary to-day business you wouldn't think of wearing anything really outrageous. You tended to dress down and look like everyone else.'⁹ In America gay men were also at pains not to express their sexual orientation through their dress. Bill Miller, owner of *Village Squire* (with a large homosexual clientele in New York) said that covert or closeted homosexuals do not wish to be identified as homosexuals and dress accordingly: 'they will fight fashion completely. They will want to wear a uniform, get lost in the rush. I'm willing to guess that *Bros.* has more homosexual customers than all the *Village* boutiques put together.'¹⁰ In a novel written in 1958 a 'self-confessed effeminate queen' decides to move away from the town he has lived in and start a new life as a 'normal' man. He changes his image from the camp effeminately dressed queen to what he perceives as 'respectable', for which we can read *not* queer.

He thought of dying his hair black, of buying a tweed suit to fill out his figure, and of honouring his fingers with rings, big solid knuckles which were the emblems of athletic trophies. With square, heavy soled, box-toed shoes he would be just another Southerner in search of Manassas ... he snipped his ringlets to the nubbin and looked almost respectable, he thought.¹¹

Adhering to normative dress codes was seen as an important factor in the progression of the early gay rights movements. Frank Kameny, one of the leaders of the Mattachine Society, insisted that a strict dress code was enforced on all participants in gay demonstrations. Men were to wear suits, shirts and ties and women skirts. 'If we want to be employed by the Federal Government Kameny intoned, 'we have to look employable to the federal Government.' Kameny and his allies felt that it was important to look ordinary, to get bystanders to hear the message rather than be prematurely turned off by appearances.¹²

Writing in 1965 Douglas Plummer observed that in one smart members only London gay club 'it would be difficult, if not impossible to judge any of these men as being homosexual if they were seen individually in a crowd'.¹³ Stratton Ashley observed a similar clientele at New York bars, where the men were all 'young and well-groomed. On the whole they looked like a bunch of clean-cut college boys. One of them told him, 'most interested in those qualities regarded as masculine in each other. We cultivate those qualities in ourselves and look for them in others. No one is more "out" in our group than the queen who swishes.'¹⁴ Other journalistic accounts of gay life in New York and San Francisco made reference to the smart and inconspicuous style of dress of many of the men in gay bars and clubs, where no one 'looked' homosexual.¹⁵

In the light of society's and the law's attitudes towards gay men, they devised a variety of tactics that allowed them to move about to appropriate for themselves spaces that were not marked as gay, and to construct gay space in the midst of, yet invisible to, the dominant culture. They were aided in this effort, as always, by the disinclination of most people to believe that any 'normal'-looking

could be anything other than 'normal'. In 'The Sexed Self: Strategies of Performance, Sites of Resistance', David Bell and Gill Val discuss the 'managed self' in relation to lesbian identity, noting how lesbians create apparently asexual identities by avoiding refer their personal life but bearing discreet signals that can be read by 'those in the know'. This theory can equally be applied to those men who remained invisible in heterosexually defined public spaces while revealing their hidden identity to those in the know through series of sartorial or behavioural signifiers. Thus in Bell and Valentine's words they were 'putting on or taking off different "masks", sometimes maintaining multiple identities in one space at different times or in different spaces at the same time.'¹⁶ Men who dressed conventionally in public did not necessarily continue this practice once inside their own home or in accepted gay spaces, such as clubs.¹⁷ Grant remembered that in Brighton (which had a large and often visible gay population in the 1950s): 'The only time you gay man was probably at the weekend. During the week, you would have passed him by with his bowler hat, navy suit and black shoes with a paper under his arm and a rolled umbrella.'¹⁸

Involvement in the gay world familiarised men with the styles of clothing and grooming, mannerisms, and conventions of speech that became fashionable in that world, but were not stereotypically associated with effeminate homosexuals. Both gay and straight observers have noted this. Those fashions served as signs 'neither masculine nor feminine, but specifically and peculiarly homosexual', observed the writer and gay activist Donald Webster Cory in the early 1950s: 'these were difficult for [outsiders] to pinpoint', but enabled me to recognise one another even as they concealed their identities from others.¹⁹ Whereas effeminate men used codes that were intelligible to straights as well as to gays, such as flashy dress,²⁰ other gay men developed codes that were intelligible only to other men familiar with the subculture:

Most inverts are practised at spotting others, whether obvious or not, in all countries in general and their own country in particular. It is partly experience, partly intuition. I suppose I was a little quicker than the average, and fairly good at spotting the middle-class 'respectable' homosexual who tries to hide the thing, but who gives himself away by his anxiety to appear normal.²¹

Accessories, such as red ties or suede shoes, were used to allow these gay men to recognise one another without drawing the attention of the uninitiated. They were so effective that researchers repeatedly expressed their astonishment at gay men's ability to identify one another, attributing it to something akin to a sixth sense:

Sexual perverts readily recognize each other, although they may never have met before and there exists a mysterious bond of psychological sympathy between them ... Instances have been authenticated to me where such perverts when meeting another of the same sex, have at once recognized each other, and mutually become acquainted and have left company with each other to practice together their unnatural vices.²²

Suede shoes are perhaps one of the better-known historical signifiers of homosexuality, especially in Britain. Observers in America in the late nineteenth century noted that 'fairies' were wearing suede shoes in New York, and Thomas Painter observed that dark brown or grey suede shoes were 'practically a homosexual monopoly'.²³ In Britain in the 1930s suede shoes were a sure sign of deviancy. Stephen 'distinctly remember[s] it was a very bad sign for people if they wore camel hair coats and suede shoes! I remember when I bought myself a camel hair coat and suede shoes I thought I was really coming out.'²⁴ Trevor Thomas was known as 'the man with the suede shoes' and that 'it was known if you wore suede shoes and a Liberty [silk] tie you were [homosexual]'. His 'alibis', to anyone who was not homosexual, were '(a) I was an artist, (b) I worked in a Museum and (c) I acted.'²⁵ By the 1950s, with a relaxing of conventions in men's leisure dress, suede shoes were not automatically a sign of homosexuality. Peter says that 'you were classed as "one of the boys" but it didn't really mean much. There was no seriousness in it because they didn't really know, there were a lot of normal people who wear brown suede shoes and grey flannel trousers and cravat. But that was the fashion, particularly on the Sunday lunchtime.'²⁶ Cave agreed that as Teddy Boy (influenced) fashions became more popular they lost their connotations of homosexuality, but did retain certain rebellious or anti-establishment connotation.

The colour of a man's clothing was also often an indicator that he might be homosexual. At a time when men's clothing was on the sombre certain colours were 'suspect'. In 1949 Mass Observation conducted a survey on sexual attitudes, and found that among its study group 'Pale Blue was a queer's "trade colour" – The group studied favoured pale blue for short socks, ties and pullovers.'²⁷ Barbara Bell noted that in Blackpool the gay men also used traditionally non-masculine-associated colours to reflect their sexuality. 'I remember vividly' she says 'one year it was pink shirts. Nobody ever had pink shirts so if you wore a pink shirt you definitely signified that you were a gay boy.'²⁸ Green was also a colour that had homosexual associations. Writing in the *Urological and Cutaneous* in 1916 in an article entitled 'Classification of Homosexuality' James Kiernan noted that 'inverts are generally said to prefer green'. In his ground-breaking book *Sexual Inversion* Havelock Ellis had written that homosexuals had a preference for the colour green, and Paris green cravats were worn as a badge. Both these passages reflect the green carnation worn by Wilde and the rent boys of Piccadilly in London in the late nineteenth century. Peter Robins remembers the implications that the colour green had, but only because it differed from conventional heterosexual dress of the day:

My first awareness of people actually using dress as a code was in the early fifties in Manchester. By this time I had bought a pair of bottle green trousers, cords, and I was wolf-whistled. In Heaton Park on Sunday afternoon, that's on the north side of Manchester. And I had a perfectly good Harris tweed jacket I was wearing with it and I was going out for tea, quite innocuously but some local lads certainly thought I went too far, as it were, away from the dreariness of their own clothes.³⁰

Dudley Cave illustrates how despite knowing these signifiers it could often take courage to wear them:

I had read, I think in Havelock Ellis or somewhere, gay men's favourite colour was blue or green. So when I had the opportunity after all it was very difficult to buy clothes, I was in Simpson's and they had a rail of green sports jackets, green Harris tweed. That

were so good that I took one. I bought one, but I was very embarrassed about its colour – but it showed me up, I feared. Though how everybody ... how the straight community would know this secret colouring I have no idea.[31](#)

Often it was not so much the actual clothes that the men wore, but the manner in which they wore them. 'If one can only present the visible and non-identifying aspect of one's identity' Martin Hoffman noted, then 'one's physical appearance will be the central aspect that can be displayed to others.'[32](#) Douglas Plummer noted that 'you will observe that the men around you are well dressed. In such a standard and quality of clothes is high. Most "queers" are concerned about their appearance, revealing the feminine side of their nature in a love of colour, carefully made suits, original designs, and a progressive attitude towards dress. Usually they show good taste.' The emphasis here is upon how smartly dressed and well-turned out gay men were. One of the characters in Rodney Garland's 1953 *Heart In Exile* describes the men at 'the Aldebaran', a gay bar in the West End of London. They 'looked queer, well-dressed and neat and no bright colours, and yet they looked queer, the way they talked and moved about ...'.[34](#) In the 1950s British newspapers revealed a paranoia about the seemingly growing existence of invisible homosexuals by producing articles that offered advice on 'how to stay homo'. They often concentrated on an overdeveloped sense of fashion: 'When one, two or three button jackets are in he is the first to wear them. His shirts are detergent bright, his tie has the latest knot and is always just so' and personal appearance: 'His cheeks are smooth, his hair sparkles, his nails are manicured.'[35](#)

Hoffman described what he observed as the typical dress of middle-class American gay men in 1968. It was:

the same style of dress that an average college undergraduate might wear. It would consist of a sport shirt, Levi's and loafers or sneakers. In this 'typical' middle class gay bar which I am attempting to describe, extremely effeminate dress and mannerisms are not well tolerated ... There is a tendency toward effeminacy in the overall impression one gets from observing the bar, although it may not be anything striking or flagrant ... Also in spite of the fact that the modal bar costume is very much like that one would find on a college campus, there is a good deal of special attention paid by the bar patrons to their dress, so that they seem almost extraordinarily well groomed ... the majority of individuals in the bar are not identifiable and would not be thought to be homosexual in another setting.[36](#)

Mannerisms were also vital signifiers at a time when clothing was not an obvious signal. 'The "meanings" of clothes are' John Harwood argues 'constructions placed upon them, and are not readable in a dictionary sense as verbal meanings are. These meanings are on the perception of specific choices (or abdications of choice) as to the material, colour, cut, newness, but there is a high degree of ambiguity as to the purposes of such choices.'[37](#) Consequently, he continues 'Any meaning in the clothes will, moreover, be either corroborated or qualified by posture and movement of the body inside the clothes.'[38](#) If Harvey's argument is correct, then signifiers as suede shoes are only a 'possible' indication of the (homo)sexuality of the wearer: this suspicion is quantified by the mannerism of the wearer, and so certain behaviours were an essential element of the revelation of the identity of these 'invisible queers' to one another. Many gay men who rejected crudely effeminate styles and behaviour would not have seemed 'masculine' in their interests or demeanour.[39](#) In the light of this argument, a mincing walk or the tilt of the head could give a man away and 'invariably you could tell a queer by the way he held his cigarette'.[40](#) Prior to gay liberation, observers frequently commented on seeming inconsistencies of men's behaviour. At times they seemed fully manly, while at other times, among themselves, in the safety of the gay bar or party, they could become outrageously effeminate.[41](#) This was still true into the 1970s. Carol Warren's description of her friend Danny recalls how his gay company he dressed in a overly elegant style in soft colourful fabrics and behaved in a somewhat 'feminine' manner, and how his demeanour changed at a primarily straight company dance.[42](#)

In addressing what I have termed the invisible gay man I have concentrated on a number of signifiers and aspects of behaviour that serve as an indication of homosexuality. There were always and still are many men who regard themselves as homosexual but have no desire to announce this either to other gay men or to straight society through their dress, and continue for all intents and purposes to maintain an invisible appearance. This is not necessarily through fear of exposure as gay, but may be due to their individual perceptions and the relative importance they place upon their sexuality as a defining aspect of their person.[43](#) In the 1950s, in attempting to pass as straight it was possible for men to go to the opposite extreme and to become what Rodney Garland called a Male Impersonator. A male impersonator was 'obvious, because he overdoes things ...'. One such man:

assumed an unnecessarily deep voice and adopted gestures that were too big and too heavy for his five feet ten inches and his thirty-eight chest. Bred in London he became a caricature of a country gentleman, with his tweeds, a concealing moustache and a new vocabulary with the dropped 'g's'. It didn't need a trained psychologist to see that he was a failure ... touchy and nasty and feminine under the disguise.[44](#)

It was exaggerations of masculine behaviour such as that described by Garland, coupled with an adoption of work clothes, that we formulated a new stereotype of the homosexual in both America and Britain in the post-liberation years. By the 1970s this had developed into a new image and subsequently a new stereotype – the clone.

Notes:

1. Samuel M. Steward (in his introduction to the 1982 reissue of James Barr's *Quatrefoil* (1950) recalled of this period: 'Those of us who could maintain our secret lived under an extraordinary protective umbrella: the ignorance and naiveté of the American public ... We existed under the shadow and cover of such naiveté': James Barr (1982), *Quatrefoil*, Boston. Nonetheless, many gay men not only refused to endure the indignities suffered by the 'fairies' but resented the men who did, for they believed the flagrant behaviour of the fairies on the streets had given the public its negative impression of all homosexuals. See also Chapter 2 and George Chauncey (*Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940*, Basic Books, New York, p. 103.

2. John Addington Symonds (1881), 'A Problem in Modern Ethics', quoted in [Brian Reade \(ed.\) \(1970\), *Sexual Heretics*, London, pp. 251–2.](#)
3. For Britain see Jeffrey Weeks (1990), *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain*, London and New York. For America see Eric Marcus (1992), *Making History: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Equal Rights, 1945–1990*, New York and John Loughery (1998) *Other Side of Silence*, New York. The war years did see a different atmosphere and gay men felt a certain amount of freedom. For on this period see Alan Bérubé (1990), *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*, New York.
4. This was one of the most famous prosecutions of homosexuals in the 1950s. Lord Montagu was accused in 1953 of indecent on two Boy Scouts. The chief prosecution witnesses were offered immunity in exchange for reporting on other homosexuals, which was a common practice at the time. The jury was unable to decide whether Montagu and his co-defendant Kenneth Hume were guilty. On the retrial Michael Pitt–Rivers and Peter Wildeblood were arrested and accused of indecency and conspiracy with Montagu to commit offences, a charge designed to prejudice Montagu's retrial. After a display of malice and prejudice from the prosecution the defendants were found guilty. This case was typical of those brought against homosexuals in the 1950s.
5. James noted the effects of this on gay men: 'I mustn't let you think that we ran around with false moustaches and beards and dark glasses, dead scared and frightened, thinking are the police going to pick me up at any minute. Some people did, some people were absolutely terrified of someone saying something out of place' (quoted in Brighton Ourstory Project (1992), *Daring Hearts: Lesbian and Gay Lives of 50s and 60s Brighton*, Brighton, p. 37).
6. [Anomaly \(1948\), *The Invert and his Social Adjustment*, London.](#) In 1955 James Douglas Margin offered similar advice to the readers of *One* magazine in what he called 'Margin's Theory of Masculine Deportment': [James Douglas Margin \(1955\), 'The Margin of Masculinity', *One*, vol. III, no. 5.](#)
7. Kevin Porter and Jeffrey Weeks (eds), (1992), *Between the Acts: Lives of Homosexual Men 1885-1967*, London, p. 62.
8. Cole interview with Dudley Cave, 21 May 1997.
9. Cole interview with John Hardy, 12 June 1995.
10. R. J. Lukey (1970) 'Homosexuality in Men's Wear', *Menswear*, February, p. 82.
11. William Talsman (1966), *The Gaudy Image*, London, p. 207.
12. Martin Duberman (1994), *Stonewall*, New York, p. 111. The influence of counter culture attitudes and associated dress codes of a new breed of gay rights activists who countered the 1950s gay rights beliefs that to achieve gay rights it was important to follow the rules and fit in, working within the system. This is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 6.
13. [Douglas Plummer \(1965\), *Queer People: The Truth About Homosexuals in Britain*, New York, pp. 54–6.](#)
14. Stratton Ashley (1964), 'The "Other" Homosexuals', *One*, vol. XII, no. 2, p. 5.
15. See for example William J. Helmer (1963), 'New York's "Middle-class" Homosexuals', *Harpers* vol. 226, pp. 85–92.
16. [David Bell and Gill Valentine \(1995\), 'The Sexed Self: Strategies of Performance, Sites of Resistance', in Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift \(eds\), *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of Cultural Transformation*, London and New York.](#) Will Finch noted that: 'All my life I had worn a rigid mask, a stiff armour of protection, not necessarily to pretend to be what I was not – heterosexual – but not to be identified as homosexual. Not that I was ashamed of so being, but to defend against insults, humiliations and mockery': Finch diary, no date, K. Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, quoted in Chauncey, *Gay New York* p. 273.
17. One man living in Montreal in 1916 went to work in 'tweeds; but at home among friends, at the theatre and concerts, he was delicately made up and elegantly dressed, wearing exotic jewellery and as colorful clothes as he dared. Receiving at home, he donned a bronze green robe of heavy silk: [Elsa Gidlow \(1980\), 'Memoirs', *Feminist Studies*, no. 6, p. 122.](#)
18. Grant in Brighton Ourstory Project, *Daring Hearts*, p. 30. Dress in other gay spaces is looked at in Chapter 3, which deals specifically with drag balls in the USA and the Arts Balls in England.
19. [Donald Webster Cory \(1953\), 'Can Homosexuals Be Recognized?', *One*, 1, September, pp. 7–11.](#)
20. Some gay men who were not fairies and who dressed conventionally on the whole used make-up or tweezed their eyebrows to give a slight feminine touch to their otherwise unremarkable appearance, but only in certain parts of cities, for example the West End of London. 'I did wear paint, make-up', says Daniel, 'I certainly wasn't a slut and I dressed ordinary. We had nice clothes, I mean it didn't mean that we had fancy clothes or feminine clothes. We looked feminine, no way about it, but you dressed *nice*': Cole interview with Daniel, 20 May 1997. Samuel Khan told of a 17-year old Italian boy who adopted 'a conventional persona in his own neighborhood carrying himself as a fairy (by removing his hat to reveal his tweezed eyebrows) only in other parts of town': Samuel Khan (1937), *Mentality of Homosexuality*, Boston, p. 217.

21. Rodney Garland (1995), *The Heart in Exile*, London, pp. 159–60.
22. [T. Griswold Comstock \(1892\), 'Alice Mitchell of Memphis', *New York Medical Times*, 20, p. 172.](#)
23. Thomas Painter (1941), 'The Prostitute', Kinsey Institute Library, pp. 168–9, quoted in Chauncey, *Gay New York*, p. 52.
24. Porter and Weeks, *Between the Acts*, p. 111. In his 1930 book *Degenerate Oxford?*, Terrence Greenidge warned of 'the mass-production of the effeminate men' whose 'feet will be shod with gay suede shoes [who] speak with artificial voices of a somewhat I timbre, [and] walk with a mincing gait': [Terrence Greenidge \(1930\), *Degenerate Oxford?*, London, p. 133.](#)
25. Porter and Weeks, *Between the Acts*, p. 62 and 1981 television programme 'Sexual Identity' quoted in [Keith Howes \(1994\), *Broadcasting It*, London](#). Dudley Cave also remembered that suede shoes were 'certainly very dubious. I did in fact buy a pair of s shoes just before I went in to the army. They cost a guinea. A lot of money. And when I went into the army I sold them to my [a frie And people were very suspicious about him on that, but since he was very heterosexual and consequently in bed with different "W was all right. That was distinctly suspicious, and how I came to buy them I shall never know, because I would avoid anything remc like that, and certainly I think it was Noel Coward who said that suede shoes should only be worn by consenting adults in private. ' they were certainly suspicious.' (Cole interview with Dudley Cave, 21 May 1997).
26. Brighton Ourstory Project, *Daring Hearts*, p. 50. Peter Robins's father was very aware of the connotations of suede shoes – so so that when the teenage Peter innocently suggested he buy a pair in the 1950s he angrily retorted 'Suede, do you think your fath wants to look like a pansy actor?': Cole interview with Peter Robins, 4 August 1997. Roy told me (in an interview, 20 June 1994) o circular that was sent around by the civil service, warning members of staff to be on the look out for men in suede shoes, as they v almost certain to be homosexuals and therefore a security risk.
27. Mass-Observation Sex Survey, Sexual Behaviour, Box 4, File E, Appendix 1, Abnormality. 6.7.49.
28. Quoted in Alkarim Jivani (1997), *It's Not Unusual: A History of Lesbian and Gay Britain in the Twentieth Century*, London, p. 51. George, who lived in Brighton, confirmed that in the 1950s a 'Pink shirt was definitely queer, colourful clothes were definitely quee Brighton Ourstory Project, *Daring Hearts*, p. 52.
29. James Kiernan (1916), 'Classification of Homosexuality', *Urological and Cutaneous Review*, 20.
30. Cole interview with Peter Robins, 4 August 1997.
31. Cole interview with Dudley Cave, 21 May 1997.
32. Martin Hoffman (1968), *The Gay World: Male Homosexuality and the Social Creation of Evil*, New York, p. 59.
33. Plummer, *Queer People*, p. 56.
34. Garland, *The Heart in Exile*, p. 54.
35. [Lionel Crane \(1963\), 'How to Spot a Possible Homo', *Daily Mirror*, 28 April 1963, p. 7.](#)
36. Hoffman, *The Gay World*, pp. 54–5.
37. John Harvey (1995), *Men in Black*, London, p. 12.
38. Ibid.
39. The boundaries between the visible/effeminate and the invisible/masculine were permeable, partly because gay culture encou a style of dress and demeanour and an interest in the arts and fashion that were regarded as effeminate. Many 'invisible' gay men to behave in similar ways to those of the visible effeminate men when in secure private settings by adopting feminine names, using feminine pronouns and parodying gender conventions with a camp wit. While 'invisible' gay men may have derided or despised ov effeminate men, they were also capable of seeing effeminacy as merely a style to be turned on or off at will. 'Camp' behaviour als represented some gay men's recognition of the artificiality of the social roles they regularly played in social settings in which they i to 'pass' as straight.
40. Brighton Ourstory Project, *Daring Hearts*, p. 51. Peter Robins was living in Manchester in the mid-1950s. He remembers that t Union pub gay men were smoking particular brands of Cigarettes. Once he had noted this he used cigarette branding as an indic man's homosexuality: 'I began to notice that people were all smoking either State Express 555, in a characteristic purple and egg- yellow packet and this was "Like a cigarette?" ... So, State Express 555; and another one was Passing Cloud. They were pink, I tl something, in a pink packet, pink and pale green, and they were slightly oval as opposed to round.'
41. In the 1950s in discreet bars like The Blue Parrot in New York, 'men impeccably Brooks Brothers and as apparently Wasp as c banker could in a flicker slide into limpness. They had available a persona that mixed ironic distance, close observation, and wit, a of sanity': Seymour Kleinberg (1978), 'Where Have All The Sissies Gone?', *Christopher Street*, March.

42. Carol A. B. Warren (1974), *Identity and Community in the Gay World*, New York, p. 95.

43. Discussions and arguments around this issue, have become particularly visible in the 1990s. For more details see [Mark Simpson \(ed.\) \(1996\), *Anti-Gay, London*](#), [Alan Sinfield \(1998\), *Gay and After, London*](#) and [Daniel Harris \(1997\), *The Rise and Fall of Gay C New York*](#).

44. Garland, *The Heart in Exile*, pp. 206–7.

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