

Androgyny in the Archives: 1970s Trans and Feminist Encounters with the Promise and Politics of Non-Binary

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Abstract: Despite the recurrent appeal to androgynous myths, imagery and research in the US mid-twentieth century transgender archive, the affects and politics motivating these have been subject to little consideration. This paper explores the possibilities and problems contained within the mobilisation of androgynous ideals for gendered liberation. It argues that androgyny offered a basis for affective and subjective investments in non-binary gender to be pursued and articulated and considers how a philosophy of androgyny might complicate current discussions of queer and trans taxonomy.

BEM'S GENDER ROLE INVENTORY

DESCRIBE YOURSELF

1 /	2 /	3 /	4 /	5 /	6 /	7 /
NEVER OR ALMOST TRUE	USUALLY NOT TRUE	SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE	OCCASIONALLY TRUE	OFTEN TRUE	USUALLY TRUE	ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE
1. ___ Self reliant		21. ___ Reliable		41. ___ Warm		
2. ___ Yielding		22. ___ Analytical		42. ___ Solemn		
3. ___ Helpful		23. ___ Sympathetic		43. ___ Willing to take a stand		
4. ___ Defends own beliefs		24. ___ Jealous		44. ___ Tender		
5. ___ Cheerful		25. ___ Has leadership abilities		45. ___ Friendly		
6. ___ Moody		26. ___ Truthful		46. ___ Aggressive		
7. ___ Independant		27. ___ Sensitive to the needs of others		47. ___ Gullible		
8. ___ Shy		28. ___ Understanding		48. ___ Inefficient		
9. ___ Conscientious		29. ___ Willing to take risks		49. ___ Acts like a leader		
10. ___ Athletic		30. ___ Secretive		50. ___ Childlike		
11. ___ Affectionate		31. ___ Makes decisions easily		51. ___ Adaptable		
12. ___ Theatrical		32. ___ Compassionate		52. ___ Individualistic		
13. ___ Assertive		33. ___ Sincere		53. ___ Does not use harsh language		
14. ___ Flatterable		34. ___ Self sufficient		54. ___ Unsystematic		
15. ___ Happy		35. ___ Eager to sooth hurt feelings		55. ___ Competitive		
16. ___ Strong Personality		36. ___ Conceited		56. ___ Love children		
17. ___ Loyal		37. ___ Dominant		57. ___ Tactful		
18. ___ Unpredictable		38. ___ Soft spoken		58. ___ Ambitious		
19. ___ Forceful		39. ___ Likable		59. ___ Gentle		
20. ___ Feminine		40. ___ Masculine		60. ___ Conventional		

Figure 1: Bem's Gender Role Inventory. In the Ari Kane/Joseph DeMaio collection. Acc.No.:2008-006. Box2. 219. In the Rikki Swan Institute Collection at the University of Victoria Transgender Archives.

Introduction

If, like myself, one was unfamiliar with Sandra Bem or her gender inventory, this list resembles a light-hearted, popular magazine-style personality test. Across 60 adjectives the reader marks on a scale from 1 to 7 as to how strongly they identify with each trait. As one begins to answer the questions, it turns out that the document is also fairly amusing. Would I say I am, 2: usually not gullible? And/or 7: always or almost always gullible? How 12: theatrical am I? And if I strongly identify as 48: inefficient, what clues will I be giving about my gender? However, far from an ephemeral or ironic attempt to classify personalities, this inventory, which was also known as the “sex role inventory” and the “androgyny test,” became widely adopted in psychology classrooms and research studies, and it has been used, “persistently since its inception.”¹ So, what is this document doing in the collection of Ariadne (Ari) Kane at the University of Victoria Transgender Archives?

Kane, who is an androgyne and uses he/him pronouns, was an influential driver of the early transgender community in the twentieth-century United States. Kane led Boston-based crossdressing social organizations from 1974,² and in 1975 he

¹ Hilary M. Lips, and Sandra Bem, “Naming the Impact of Gendered Categories and Identities,” *Sex Roles* 76, no. 9-10 (2017): 631.

² Throughout the 1960s-1980s, many crossdresser organisations formed and they were either short lived due to grassroots organisational pressures around time, money and leadership structure, or they morphed into new organisations. Members of The Tiffany Club (which itself was born out of a split within the Boston Gamma Chapter of Virginia Prince’s Tri Sigma) later led separate, splinter organisations which better reflected their ethos around leadership, as well as their perspectives on gender. The Tiffany Club was an offshoot of the Cherrystone

founded Fantasia Fair which is an annual and ongoing week-long event that initially catered to crossdressers and transsexuals in 1975.³ Through these actions, he played a critical role in the establishment of connections between trans communities. In addition, Kane was a successful and influential sexologist who was committed to educating “helping professionals” on gender-related issues to improve the perceptions and understanding of trans people amongst clinical gatekeepers, psychologists, and the general public. To this end, Kane founded the Human Outreach and Achievement Institute in 1975 (later the Outreach Institute of Gender Studies) which sought to counter ignorance and misinformation in the fields of Education, Counselling, Medicine, Law, Nursing and Human Services. Like Kane’s Fantasia Fair, the organization continues to this day.

Kane was among a significant number of trans individuals in the 1970s and 1980s whose research into their own gendered subjectivities led them to be prominent theorists of sex, gender, and sexuality. Kane and those like him were some of the most well-read authorities on the available clinical, historical, trans, and feminist literature on sex and gender diversity. The presence of this inventory in Kane’s collection can tell many stories if one reads it as continuous with the engagement of trans people with pioneering sex/gender research. It highlights the academic sophistication with which trans-centric theories of sex/gender were constructed in the

Club, and the latter further evolved into the Mayflower Club in 1979 with the ambition of creating a more progressive culture (which typically meant less hostility to non-normative sexualities and trans articulations). crossdressers). See Merissa Sherill Lynn, “The TV-TS Tapestry Newsletter,” no.7 (January 8, 1979).

³ Fantasia Fair is now called Trans Week. After an initial focus on transfeminine people, it is now open to nonbinary and transmasculine people.

second half of the twentieth century, and one where embodied knowledge was put into dialogue with extant scientific research. The inventory contributes to discussions regarding the faith that some trans individuals had in emergent psychosocial and clinical gender research. Finally, it contributes to genealogies which complicate the notion that non-binary gender is a new phenomenon. These are all valuable arguments, and they have been made elsewhere by myself and others.⁴ But, I wish to use the placement of this inventory in Kane's collection to explore the way that "androgyny" was articulated and appealed to within trans and feminist knowledge production during the 1970s, and the affective and political investments contained therein.

Sandra Bem and the Androgyny Test

Sandra Bem, whose research findings appear throughout the Ariadne Kane collection in the University of Victoria Transgender Archives, was a reputable feminist psychologist from the early 1970s. Her work theorized and championed androgyny, and it

⁴ See Aaron Devor, and Nicholas Matte, "Building a Better World for Transpeople: Reed Erickson and the Erickson Educational Foundation," *The International Journal of Transgenderism* 10, no.1 (2007): 47–68; Nicholas Matte, "Historicizing Liberal American Transnormativities: Medicine, Media, Activism, 1960-1990," PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2014. For more on the faith that trans people such as Reed Erickson placed in the role of science to lead to the increased social acceptance and accommodation of trans people. See Greta LaFleur et al., *Trans Historical: Gender Plurality before the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021). For a longer history of non-binary gender identities see Emily Cousens, *Trans Feminist Epistemologies in the US Second Wave* (London: Palgrave, 2023).

sought to disrupt prevalent and “gratuitous” gender categorizations.⁵ By contrast, Bem’s categorization inventory contains 20 “masculine”, “feminine,” and “androgynous” traits, and then classifies respondents as either “feminine”, “masculine”, “androgynous” (above the median in both masculine and feminine characteristics), or “undifferentiated” (below the median in both masculine and feminine categories). Critically, Bem’s inventory reads as radical *and* conservative in equal measure. On the one hand, through her presentation of masculinity and femininity as independent scales, with “feminine” and “masculine” both listed (no. 20 and no. 40 respectively), the inventory contests what Julia Serano terms, “oppositional sexism,” that is, “the belief that female and male are rigid, mutually exclusive categories, each possessing a unique and nonoverlapping set of attributes, aptitudes, abilities and desires.”⁶ Yet the inventory upholds the Western, colonial gender binary as it reifies as ‘objective science’ culturally specific and stereotypical understandings of what attributes represent each (binary) gender. For example, masculinity is aggressive, analytical, and causes one to, “act like a leader.” By contrast, femininity is gullible, cheerful, and makes one, “sensitive to other’s needs”. But Bem’s intention for the scale was to counter the idea that expressions of “masculinity” in women or “femininity” in men were signs of poor psychological well-being.⁷ To the contrary, she hypothesized that, “a

⁵ Lips, and Bem, “Naming the Impact,” 628.

⁶ Julia Serano, *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity* (Emeryville: Seal Press. 2007), 13.

⁷ It was conceived as the, “Sex Role Inventory,” in 1974 and comprised 200 personality characteristics that seemed positively valued and stereotypically masculine or feminine, as well as 200 gender-neutral characteristics. For more on

non-androgynous sex role can seriously restrict the range of behaviours available to an individual as he or she moves from situation to situation [emphasis mine].”⁸ This argument is quite radical, and it is far from an uncritical endorsement of binary gender. Indeed, Bem’s hypothesis reads that if one is cisgender then they are a *socially maladapted* person. By contrast, psychological androgyny (the possession of masculine *and* feminine attributes), is socially and psychologically advantageous. Bem’s codification of forms of expression *as* masculine, feminine, or androgynous, does bake into the inventory conservative, racialized, and classed gender ideals. But at the same time, one can identify on a 7-point scale with each of the 60 different attributes which means there are an enormous 7^{60} possible subject positions available. This is far from a restrictive catalogue as the inventory contains one of the most manifold taxonomies around.⁹ Although, perhaps rather than an interpretation of Bem’s inventory as a taxonomy, it instead demonstrates the impossibility of categorizing people according to gender. In this instance, androgyny becomes an index of the infinite and often seemingly contradictory gendered possibilities contained within everyone. In what follows, I propose that the presence of Bem’s inventory in Kane’s archive demonstrates the currency androgyny, that was conceived of as “masculinity and “femininity”

Sandra Bem and the Bem Sex Role Inventory see the 2017 special issue of *Sex Roles*.

⁸ This essay, “Sex Role Adaptability: One Consequence of Psychological Androgyny,” is also in the Ari Kane collection at the UVIC archives.

⁹ This makes

508,021,860,739,623,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 possible combinations.

within the same individual, attained within certain subsets of the mid-twentieth-century US trans community.

The Appeal of Androgyny in 1960s-1980s Trans Community Publications

The extent to which androgynous myths, imagery, and ideals circulated within the trans community periodicals of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s makes the absence of scholastic attention to the appeal of androgyny for early trans communities all the more striking. The notion that [cis] gender was something that could be transcended through the incorporation of masculine and feminine elements in a single individual was a *central* theme in trans community philosophies of the 1970s. Many of these attitudes drew from Virginia Prince's transvestite philosophy of, "Full Personality Expression". Prince's first peer-reviewed article about gender appeared in *The American Journal of Psychotherapy* in 1957.¹⁰ The article was titled, "Homosexuality, Transvestism and Transsexuality: Reflections on Their Etiology and Differentiations," and it was accompanied by a preamble from Prince's friend and future medical expert on gender variance, Harry Benjamin.¹¹ In addition to her

¹⁰ Virginia Prince, "Homosexuality, Transvestism and Transsexuality: Reflections on Their Etiology and Differentiation," *The International Journal of Transgenderism* 8, no. 4 (2005): 17–20. Previously published as, "Homosexuality, Transvestism and Transsexuality: Reflections on Their Etiology and Differentiation," in *The American Journal of Psychotherapy* 11 (1957): 80–85.

¹¹ As a trained pharmacologist, Prince had contributed to the field of Chemistry prior to her focus on gender. For a list of the research Prince published in Chemistry see Zagria Cowan, *Virginia Prince (1912-2009): A Conflicted Life in Trans Activism* (Gender Variance Who's Who, 2013), 54.

academic contributions, she developed her philosophy of sex and gender, which can be briefly summarized as biologically essentialist on sex and socially constructionist on gender, in the 100 “Virgin Views” columns she penned in her bi-monthly journal *Transvestia*. Prince was highly influential and well-connected, yet she was divisive and exclusionary. One of Prince’s more valuable contributions was her popularization of a critique of what Serano has subsequently termed effemimania which is the, “obsession and anxiety over male expressions of femininity,” that leads to the social and individual policing of femininity in subjects assigned male at birth.¹² Transfeminine individuals like Prince resisted the social devaluation of femininity, but they maintained a conservative view of certain attributes as properly feminine. Many trans community organizations or publications that were influenced by, or that followed Prince’s idea of Full Personality Expression adhered to this understanding of androgyny as a combination of gendered traits. This often aesthetically took the form of group logos that combined traditionally masculine and feminine imagery.¹³

This conceptualization of androgyny reflected a transgender philosophy in which liberation from the constraints of assigned gender was not necessarily about *resistance* to gender stereotypes altogether, but instead, it was based on the obtainment of non-stigmatized access to characteristics conventionally restricted to the ‘opposite’ gender. This idea encompassed the non-binary

¹² Serano, *Whipping Girl*, 286.

¹³ For some examples see: Virginia Prince, *Transvestia* vol. 7 no. 40 1966, front cover; Virginia Prince, *Transvestia* vol. 10 no. 55 1969, front cover; Fredericks *Turnabout* no.1 1963, front cover; *Journal of Male Feminism* 1977, front cover.

gendered possibilities of the day.¹⁴ Orientalist adoption of Yin and Yang, and Carl Jung's concepts of anima (the feminine principle, especially as it is present in men) and animus (the masculine principle, especially as it is present in women) often embellished this ontological framework. This androgynous/nonbinary ideal appealed to those who wished to explore diverse gendered possibilities, and often such adherents viewed these gendered subjectivities as less repressive and more adaptable. Much of the 1970s androgynous discourse relied on the notion of 'crossing' gender, thereby the gender binary remained intact. But, for many transfeminine individuals in the 1970s, though especially those with access to whiteness and wealth, overcoming the prohibitions of gender 'crossing' was a socially risky and radical endeavour. As theorists of misogyny, transmisogyny, and the politics of femme remind us; for one to embrace feminine affects and aesthetics requires daring: it is not the default or dominant position.¹⁵

¹⁴ The sex/gender distinction is present through much of the trans community literature. In fact, it is a staple in many of the trans epistemologies at the time which emphasised the normality of gender fluidity and sought to educate those who conflated sex with gender. Elsewhere (Cousens, *Trans Feminist Epistemologies*, 2023) I have argued that trans individuals including Virginia Prince played a key role in shaping the sex/gender distinction as it became embedded within clinical narratives (e.g. Stoller 1968) and then adopted by second wave feminists (e.g. Millett 1970, Rubin 1975). For more on trans adoptions of androgyny in print culture, and the appeal to Yin and Yang, anima and animus, see Lynn & Carter, *The TV-TS Tapestry* no. 43 (1984): 40.

¹⁵ See for example Nat Raha, "Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no.3 (2017): 632–646; Lola Olufemi, "Transmisogyny: Who wins?" in *Feminism, Interrupted* (London: Pluto Press, 2020), 49–66.

Kane was one of the pioneers of androgyny theory from a trans perspective. In an undated late-1970s essay in his collection, "Toward Realization of an Androgynous Lifestyle," Kane defines androgyny as:

a comfortable blending of manners, clothing choices, styles, values and attitudes- typically assigned to only one of the other sex- but is more and more becoming a realizable alternative to polarization effects of gender differentiation. It replaces the stereotypic roles that polarize the sexes. Furthermore, it offers the individual an opportunity to express the totalness of one's self. When discussing the concept of androgyny, there is a transcendence from the prison of gender roles from which many negative judgements are made about one's lifestyle choice.¹⁶

For Kane androgyny, as the combination of masculinity and femininity, was both a potential site of transgendered subjectivity and, given the socially credible scientific research he was able to draw on, it offered a politically viable grammar for trans normative inclusion.¹⁷ It appears his engagement with Bem's research represented a shared sense that androgyny was an overlooked and potentially liberatory set of ideals. For Bem, "It may well be- as the women's liberation movement has urged- that the androgynous

¹⁶ See Ariadne Kane, "Toward Realization of an Androgynous Lifestyle," in Ari Kane records, 1943-2003, the Rikki Swin Institute collection at the University of Victoria Transgender Archives. (n.d.), 4.

¹⁷ See Matte, "Historicizing," for a discussion of the dynamics of liberal transnormativity that subtended a white, middle-class pursuit of inclusion.

individual will someday come to design a new and more human standard of psychological health".¹⁸ Likewise for Kane, the realization of the androgynous aspects of one's personality results, "in allowing full flowering of one's full self-expression and directing it in positive ways".¹⁹ These utopian investments in the possibilities that androgyny contained for the liberation of gender from its cisnormative constraints also made their way into second-wave feminist books. For example, Andrea Dworkin wrote that androgyny might be the, "one road to freedom open to women, men and that emerging majority, the rest of us".²⁰ However, whilst these arguments are publicly available, if perhaps unacknowledged and under-theorised, most openly trans people constructed and circulated their meticulously researched theories of gender outside of the elitist system of academia and the patriarchal, profit-driven, and exclusionary, mainstream publishing industry. Community literature like newsletters, journals, and zines, are a rich source of sex/gender knowledge production in the second half of the twentieth century, and they are a key site of trans community consciousness. Many trans individuals in the 1960s and 1970s also amassed highly impressive collections of available gender-related literature, and in scrapbooks and private collections they amassed stories of androgynous individuals or emergent scientific and psychological theories of androgyny which encompassed a vast trans knowledge base that challenged prevailing sex/gender dualisms. Yet contemporary queer, trans, and feminist discussions make scant reference to this late twentieth-century androgynous moment

¹⁸ Sandra L. Bem, "Sex Role Adaptability: One Consequence of Psychological Androgyny," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 31, no. 4 (1975): 643.

¹⁹ Kane, "Toward Realization", 4.

²⁰ Andrea Dworkin, *Woman Hating* (New York: Dutton, 1974), 154.

despite its potential to historicize and inform discussions of gender.

1970s Androgynous Ideals and Today's Taxonomical Renaissance

Kadji Amin has discussed the apparent explosion of sex and gender identity categories, which he terms the “taxonomical renaissance,” within contemporary queer culture in the Global North. “Vernacular discourses,” Amin writes, “have subdivided the ‘tiny number of inconceivably coarse axes’ of gender and sexual orientation to which Sedgwick refers into a series of more precise distinctions.”²¹ However, taxonomy is far from new, and the trans archive is full of constantly evolving attempts at divisions and subdivisions of gendered subjectivities and identities. There are endless lists, that are often handwritten, of the subculture’s vernacular at that point in time and countless visual illustrations of these distinctions. For one example, Kane’s drawing of the, “plant-growth-continuum spectrum.” It represents cross-dressing as the seed on the ground which gives rise to major developmental points on the continuum that is represented as a branching tree. The first branch is, “TV [transvestite]”, then “TG [transgender]”, and finally “TS [transsexual]”.²² Amin rightly cautions that the contemporary queer taxonomies borrow from the racist universalizing history of scientific taxonomy, and the trans archive

²¹ Kadji Amin, “Taxonomically Queer?: Sexology and New Queer, Trans, and Asexual Identities,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 29, no. 1 (2023): 91.

²² Kane, A., “Descriptive model,” in *The Phenomenon of Cross-dressing*. P7. Handwritten document. The University of Victoria Transgender Archives, Rikki Swin Collection. Box 3. Folder 3.3.

is not exempt from these associations. However, what stood out to me about my encounter with this inventory in Kane's collection, is the affective currency of the inventory, and the creative combinations of gender feelings that it gave voice to. This formulation of androgyny offers a historically specific and valuable articulation of non-binary subjectivities that is animated by a resistance to the coercive, compulsory, and restrictive gender binary. I highlight Bem's inventory to push back against Amin's interpretation of the recent increase in non-binary identifications as a reinforcement of its corollary which is the possibility of a 'binary' uncontaminated gender identity.²³ Bem's inventory and the androgynous discourse it participated in foregrounds categorical contamination and complexity as an inevitable dimension of gendered life. For example, if one can be equally 6: happy and 15: moody, or neither happy nor moody, then conventional notions of gender role essentialism and mutual exclusivity, as well as a metaphysics where categories are made possible by their constitutive outside, become undone. This inventory is ontologically animated by an understanding that multiplicity and self-authorship are inseparable from the realization of a non-binary and androgynous subjectivity.

For both the women's liberation movement of the 1970s and the trans community groups that formed in the same decade, myths and theories of androgyny were appealed to as a means to imagine or comprehend non-binary and trans-gendered embodiments and possibilities. Perhaps one value of returning to these androgynous investments in the archive is that they give historically grounded

²³ See Kadji Amin, "We are All Nonbinary: A Brief History of Accidents," *Representations* 158, no. 1 (2022): 106–119.

resistance to the external imposition of identity. Rather than multiply identities and corresponding descriptors, à la Magnus Hirschfield's 1910 postulation of eighty-one possible sexual variations, or the purported contemporary explosion of queer taxonomies identified by Amin, the promise of androgyny as it appears in collections such as Kane's was the promise of one's liberation from their assigned gender role through the adoption and embrace of a 'bi-gendered' set of possibilities. Within this framework aspects of subjectivity and relationality are not discrete, for the possession of various gendered attributes was obtained via self-authorized subjectivity, and not through the coercive, external 'expertise' of the professional.

Politically Correct Gender and the Policing of Androgyny

Androgyny, as it became mobilized in the 1970s and 80s, is far from an altogether rosy story. Not only do the frameworks discussed rely on traditional gender stereotypes to conceptualize 'masculinity' and 'femininity,' but as with many of the political aspirations of the 1970s when the personal became political it was a slippery slope from the contestation of the patriarchal domain of 'proper' politics to the policing of the personal. As Gayatri Spivak explains, "The good insistence that 'the personal is political,'" often transformed itself into something like, "only the personal is political,"²⁴ and suddenly new prescriptions of politically correct behaviour flourished. This trajectory is well known in the context of the sex wars where a politicization of previously 'private' issues:

²⁴ See Gayatri Spivak, and Ellen Rooney, "'In a Word' Interview," in *The Second Wave Feminism Reader: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (London. Routledge, 1997), 358.

rape, sexual harassment, battery (now domestic violence), so led to a regulatory impulse among a faction of the movement who blamed porn and S/M practitioners for the normalization of violent sexual behaviours.²⁵ The aesthetics of androgyny also took on a similar trajectory. Leslie Feinberg, who traversed the feminist, gay and lesbian, and trans liberation movements, recalls that, “As the women’s movement in the seventies examined the negative values attached to masculinity and femininity in this society, some thought that liberation might lie in creating a genderless form of self-expression and dress. But of course, androgyny was itself just another point on the spectrum of gender expression”.²⁶ Likewise within some transfeminine communities, Virginia Prince’s concept of Full Personality Expression was conceptualized to both make feminine-coded attributes, expressions, and embodiments (such as heels and emotional openness) available for those assigned male at birth, and it acted as an ideological justification for the vicious distinguishment between politically correct forms of gender variance (transvestism) and more deviant transfeminine embodiments (transsexualism).²⁷ Prince argued against surgery on the grounds that subjects assigned male at birth could live full-time

²⁵ For more on the feminist sex wars, see C.S. Vance (ed.), *Pleasure and Danger : Exploring Female Sexuality* (Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1984); Lisa Duggan, “Introduction,” in *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture*, eds. by Lisa Duggan, and Nan D. Hunter (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 1-14.

²⁶ Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Warriors Making History from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 114.

²⁷ See Pihlak, “A Moveable Closet,” which provides a detailed discussion of the gender normativity that infused many of the US transfeminine magazines that existed between 1960 and 1995.

as women without surgery.²⁸ In Prince's view if the woman is already within, why the need to change what's on the outside? For Prince then, androgyny, which she defined as, "the absence of a role to live up to," influenced a transphobic political climate which sought to deny surgery to trans individuals, and it eventually led to the closure of the majority of gender identity clinics in the United States.²⁹ These arguments against trans healthcare are also distressingly close to many of those made by Janice Raymond. Her infamous 1979 polemic *The Transsexual Phenomenon* put in motion the contours of trans-exclusionarity in the name of feminism.³⁰

Androgyny in some parts of the trans and feminist movements of the 1970s became a regulatory ideal, and at this point, the concept's potential as a means for exploding and multiplying gendered subjectivities and expressions was resignified into a narrative for politically correct forms of gender conceptualizations and embodiments. Yet there is a rich philosophy of androgyny particularly in the collective imaginaries of early trans communities. In these subcultures androgyny was not just a collective aspiration, but a means to negotiate complexly gendered subjectivities, and act as an aspirational horizon for a utopian, non-binary,

²⁸ See Denny, Dallas. "First Contact." *Chrysalis Quarterly*. 2013.

<http://dallasdenny.com/Chrysalis/2013/08/21/first-contact/>.

²⁹ Virginia Prince, "Virgin Views by Virginia: Androgyny-Gyandry; The Integrated Self," *Transvestia* 16, no. 92 (1977):90.

³⁰ Raymond argued that trans subjectivities were the product of a patriarchal medical conspiracy, an entirely ahistorical, unresearched argument which overlooks the well-documented fact that it was trans people who informed medical professionals about trans subjectivity in the first place, and that resistance to recognising and accommodating transness are longstanding in clinical settings. On this point see Denny, Dallas. "The Politics of Diagnosis and a Diagnosis of Politics". *Chrysalis Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (1992): 9-20.

polymorphously gendered future. Bem's gender inventory and its placement within Ari Kane's collection points to the complex grappling with gender that took place in the 1970s, and its presence offers an insight into the creative entanglement of embodied and embedded trans knowledges with emergent academic research. Beyond taxonomy, beyond mutually exclusive binaries, and beyond gender as subjects situated in the English-speaking Global North know it, the androgynous moment in the archive offers a rich insight into the plurality of gendered feelings and possibilities that 1970s trans epistemologies contained.

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