

Hic Mulier and Haec-Vir (both 1620):
http://www.wwnorton.com/college/English/nael/17century/topic_1/mulier.htm


Sex, gender, and cross-dressing

As You Like it and Twelfth Night

The Convent of Pleasure
Kellett, Katherine R. "Performance, Performativity, and Identity in Margaret Cavendish's The Convent of Pleasure." Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900 (SEL) 2008 Spring; 48 (2): 419-442.

1. Gender confusion? Cross-dressing, sex, gender, and performance
1.1 Sex and gender
1.2 Androgyny, hermaphrodite, transvestism, transsexuality, drag
1.3 Gender as performance: Judith Butler’s Gender Trouble

- "Can we refer to a 'given' sex or a 'given' gender without first inquiring into how sex and/or gender is given, through what means? And what is 'sex' anyway? Is it natural, anatomical, chromosomal, or hormonal, and how is a feminist critic to assess the scientific discourses which purport to establish such 'fact' for us? Does sex have a history? Does each sex have a different history, or histories? Is there a history of how the duality of sex was established, a genealogy that might expose the binary options as a
variable construction? Are the ostensibly natural facts of sex discursively produced by various scientific discourses in the service of the political and social interests? If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called 'sex' is as culturally constructed as gender..." (Butler 6-7)

- "The notion of an original or primary gender identity is often parodied within the cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing..." (Butler 137).
- "gender parody reveals that the original identity after which gender fashions itself is an imitation without an origin. To be more precise, it is a production which, in effect, - that is, in its effect - postures as an imitation" (Butler 138).
- "Gender ought not to be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts" (Butler 140)

2. The Early Modern Age
2.1 Boy actors on the Shakespearean Stage
2.2 Debates about gender, clothing, and identity:
   Hic Mulier and Haec-Vir (both 1620)
2.3 The one-sex model: Thomas Laqueur's Making Sex

3. Shakespeare's cross-dressing plays

3.1 As You Like It (1599)

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Ros. Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far?...
Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold.
Celia. I'll put myself in poor and mean attire,
And with a kind of umber smirch my face;
The like do you. So shall we pass along
And never stir assaultants.

Ros. Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances.
Celia. What shall I call thee when thou art a man?
Ros. I'll have no worse a name than Jove's own page,
And therefore look you call me Ganymede.

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Ros. Come, woo me, woo me; for now I am in a holiday humour and like enough to consent. What would you say to me now, and I were your very Rosalind?
Orl. I would kiss before I spoke.
Ros. Nay, you were better speak first, and when you were gravelled for lack of matter, you might take occasion to kiss. Very good orators when they are out, they will spit, and for lovers lacking—God war'nt us!—matter, the cleanliest shift is to kiss.
Orl. How if the kiss be denied?
Ros. Then she puts you to entreaty, and there begins new matter.
Orl. Who could be out, being before his beloved mistress?
Ros. Marry that should you, if I were your mistress, or I should think my honesty ranker than my wit.
Orl. What, of my suit?
Ros. Not out of your apparel, and yet out of your suit. Am not I your Rosalind?

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Oli. Be of good cheer, youth. You a man! You lack a man's heart.
Ros. I do so, I confess it. Ah, sirrah, a body would think this was well counterfeited. I pray you tell your brother how well I counterfeited. Heigh-ho!
Oli. This was not counterfeit, there is too great testimony in your complexion that it was a passion of earnest.
Ros. Counterfeit, I assure you.
Oli. Well then, take a good heart, and counterfeit to be a man.
Ros. So I do. But i' faith, I should have been a woman by right.
3.2 Twelfth Night (1601)

ORSINO Dear lad, believe it,
For they shall yet belie thy happy years
That thou art a man. Diana’s lip
Is not more smooth and muscular. Thy small pipe
Is as the maiden’s organ, shrill and sound.
And all is semblative a woman’s part.
I know thy constellations is right apt
For this affair.

OLIVIA Of what personage and years is he?
MALVOLIO Not yet old enough for a man, nor young
enough for a boy, as a squashes is before ’tis a peascod,
or a codling when ’tis almost an apple. ’Tis with him in
standing water between boy and man. He is very well
favoured, and he speaks very shrivelly. One would
think his mother’s milk were scarce out of him.

I am the man. If it be so, as ’tis,
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy it is for the proper false
In women’s waxen hearts to set their forms.
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,
For such as we are made of, such we be.
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him,

FESTE Now love in his next commodity of hair send thee
a beard.

VIOLA By my troth I’ll tell thee, I am almost sick for one,
though I would not have it grow on my chin. Is thy lady
within?
FAKEFL. Faith, let us resolve to put our selves in Womens apparel, and so by that means get into the Convent
ADVISER. We shall be discover'd.
FAKEFL. Who will discover Us?
ADVISER. We shall discover our Selves.
FAKEFL. We are not such fools as to betray our Selves.
ADVISER. We cannot avoid it, for, our very Garb and Behaviour; besides, our Voices will discover us: for we are as untoward to make Courties in Petticoats, as Women are to make Legs in Breeches; and it will be as great a difficulty to raise our Voices to a Treble-sound, as for Women to press down their Voices to a Base; besides, We shall never frame our Eyes and Mouths to such coy, dissembling looks, and pritty simpering Mopes and Smiles, as they do.
COURT. But we will go as strong lusty Country-Wench's, that desire to serve them in Inferior Places, and Offices, as Cook-maids, Laundry-maids, Dairymaids, and the like.
FAÇOIL. I do verily believe, I could make an indifferent Cook-maid, but not a Laundry, nor a Dairy-maid; for I cannot milk Cows, nor starch Gorgets,* but I think I could make a pretty shift, to wash some of the Ladies Night-Linnen.

PRIN. Why then, I observing in your several Recreations, some of your Ladies do accoutre Themselves in Masculine-Habits, and act Lovers-parts; I desire you will give me leave to be sometimes so accoutred and act the part of your loving Servant.
L. HAPPY. I shall never desire to have any other loving Servant then your Self
PRIN. Nor I any other loving Mistress then Your Self.
L. HAPPY. More innocent Lovers never can there be,
PRIN. Then my most Princely Lover, that's a She.
PRIN. Nor never Convent did such pleasures give,
Where Lovers with their Mistresses may live.

Enter Lady HAPPY drest as a Shepherdess; She walks very Melancholy, then speaks as to her self.

My Name is Happy, and so was my Condition, before I saw this Princess; but now I am like to be the most unhappy Maid alive: But why may not I love a Woman with the same affection I could a Man?
No, no, Nature is Nature, and still will be The same she was from all Eternity.
Enter the PRINCESS in Masculine Shepherd's Clothes:

PRIN. My dearest Mistress, do you shun my Company? is your Servant become an offence to your sight?
L. HAPPY. No, Servant! your Presence is more acceptable to me then the Presence of our Goddess Nature, for which she, I fear will punish me, for loving you more then I ought to love you.
PRIN. Can Lovers love too much?
L. HAPPY. Yes, if they love not well.
PRIN. Can any Love be more vertuous, innocent and harmless then ours?
L. HAPPY. I hope not.
PRIN. Then let us please our selves, as harmless Lovers use to do.
L. HAPPY. How can harmless Lovers please themselves?
PRIN. Why very well, as, to discourse, imbrace and kiss, so mingle souls together.
L. HAPPY. But innocent Lovers do not use to kiss.
PRIN. Not any act more frequent amongst us Women-kind; nay, it were a sin in friendship, should not we kiss: then let us not prove our selves Reprobates. They imbrace and kiss, and hold each other in their Arms.
PRIN. These my Imbraces though of Femal kind, May be as fervent as a Masculine mind.

M. MEDIAT. O Ladies, Ladies! you're all betrayed, undone, undone; for there is a man disguised in the Convent, search and you'll find it. They all skip from each other, as afraid of each other, only the PRINCESS and the Lady HAPPY stand still together.
PRINC. You may make the search, Madam Mediator; but you will quit me, I am sure.
M. MEDIAT. By my faith but I will not, for you are most to be suspected.
PRINC. But you say, the Man is disguised like a Woman, and I am accoustred like a Man.
M. MEDIAT. Fiddle, fadle, that is nothing to the purpose.
Enter an Embassador to the prince: the Embassador kneels, the prince bids him rise.
PRINC. What came you here for?
EMBASS. May it please your Highness, the Lords of your Council sent me to inform your Highness, that your Subjects are so discontented at your Absence, that if your Highness do not return into your Kingdom soon, they'll enter this Kingdom by reason they hear you are here; and some report as if your Highness were restrained as Prisoner.
PRINC. So I am, but not by the State, but by this Fair Lady, who must be your Soveraigness.
The Embassador kneels and kisses her hand.

M. MEDIAT. How, never such a Mistake; why we have taken a Man for a Woman.
ADVIS. Why, a Man is for a Woman.
M. MEDIAT. Fiddle fadle, I know that as well as you can tell me; but there was a young Man drest in Woman's Apparel, and enter'd our Convent, and the Gods know what he hath done: He is mighty handsome, and that's a great Temptation to Virtue; but I hope all is well: But this wicked World will lay aspersion upon any thing or nothing; and therefore I doubt, all my sweet young Birds are undone, the Gods comfort them.
COURTLY. But could you never discover it? nor have no hint he was a Man?
M. MEDIAT. No truly, only once I saw him kiss the Lady Happy; and you know Womens Kisses are unnatural, and me-thought they kissed with more alacrity then Women use, a kind of Titillation, and more Vigorous.
ADVIS. Why, did you not then examine it?