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EDITORIAL

Is it a he or a she? Probably the two most confusing terms in the English language when applied to human sexuality are the words "he" and "she." It is very likely true that every individual is made up of mixed masculine and feminine elements variously combined. It was thought at one time that a woman was a woman because of her physiological organization alone, but it has since been shown that this is not the case. In fact, intersexuality is a normal condition in humans. There is no perfect male nor perfect female, but all males have certain rudimentary female features and *vice versa*. Since every person contains the physical germs of the opposite sex, it is reasonable to assume that he or she may contain the psychic germ as well.

The predisposing cause and origin of this characteristic of human sexuality is not easy to explain, but the article in ancient Hebrew law that "the woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment," shows that you had to be careful who you called "he" or "she" as much as two thousand years ago. From the early Assyrian cuneiform tablets it is evident that some of their kings affected feminine arts. Later on, in the time of the Roman Empire, we have evidence of the same effeminate spirit among the Caesars. Some of the Emperors found delight in playing the woman.

The term "Eonism" has been applied by Havelock Ellis to the condition of an individual who identifies himself or herself with the opposite sex in general tastes, in ways of acting, and in emotional disposition. Many instances of this condition are to be found. The notorious eighteenth-century adventurer, the Chevalier D'Eon, is a brilliant historical example. He was basically a male. His genital organs, examined after his death by the British surgeon Copeland, were distinctly male. He had love adventures as a male. He was a brave soldier, was decorated on the field of battle, and showed that daring and enterprise in war usually associated with the male sex. However, as intersexual feminine feature he had a great love of feminine clothing and adornment. So successful was he in his transvestism that Louis XV employed him on a secret mission to Russia, where dressed as a woman he managed to become reader to the Empress Elizabeth and one of the most influential court "ladies." So marked were the feminine traits of the Chevalier D'Eon that he was regarded as a female hermaphrodite and his king forced him to dress as a woman and take his place in the female sex.

It is well known that during the reproductive period remarkable changes in the sex-character of women may be brought about. In some cases the voice, previously high-pitched, may become harsher and deeper in tone, and the woman, formerly gentle and amiable, may become aggressive and rough.

The most pronounced age of masculinity is youth, and men become more feminine with age. It is well known that the average normal boy makes every effort to prevent his behavior and appearance from being effeminate, whereas the effeminate personality of some men is apparent in their personal fastidiousness, attention to dress, preference for feminine occupations, etc. On the other hand, masculine women prefer male pursuits and like striding about in men's boots, pants, and jackets; they enjoy leadership, admire physical courage, and are interested in adventure, hardship, and warfare.

Men and women in our society who wish to understand their own maleness and femaleness cannot expect to do it by introspection alone. We are all faced with a too bewildering and confusing array of apparently contradictory evidence about sex differences. What is masculine, and what is feminine? Is it a he or a she? Perhaps we might better ask, is it important?

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