

**Exploring how Inexonativity bounds societal biases to a heteronormative context.**

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## Terms

**Heteronormativity** – ‘Is the belief that heterosexuality is the ‘acceptable’ sexual orientation of society’ (BUTLER, 2019).

**Heterosexual** – ‘Sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex’ (heterosexual, 2021).

**Homosexual** – ‘A person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex and not to people of the opposite sex’ (Homosexual, 2021).

**Queer** – ‘Unusual or strange - to change something so that it does not relate only to one gender, either male or female, or so that it no longer fits traditional ideas about gender or sexuality’ (Queer, 2021).

**Gender** – ‘The grammatical arrangement of nouns, pronouns and adjectives into masculine, feminine, and neuter types in some languages’ (Gender, 2021).

**Sexuality** – ‘Attitudes and activities relating to sex’ (Sexuality, 2021).

**Transgender** – ‘Is an umbrella term describing people whose innate gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned with at birth’ (Smiler and Taylor, 2019: 38).

**Gender binary** – ‘The gender binary system classifies gender into two categories: male and female. It takes these categories to be discreet and opposite to one another. This system sometimes conflates the biological and social aspects of gender’ (Smiler and Taylor, 2019: 32).

**Androgyny** – ‘Is a combination of characteristics considered to be masculine or feminine. It is most often used to describe a person or thing with no gender mixed gender or ambiguous gender’ (Smiler and Taylor, 2019: 91).

**Inexonievity** – The complacency and reluctance to disregard old information and to learn, derived from a heteronormative context.

## Introduction

I argue that Inexonaivety bounds societal biases; sexism, racism, queerphobia, social class, money, dress sense, diet and so-on, to the heteronormative climate they are cultivated in and is used to ignore a more inclusive society.

'Inexonaivety' is the name I give to this invisible and taught compliancy of being 'at the top of the food chain' that transcends through all societal biases.

Specifically, the refusal to learn and disregard old information. Cognitive Dissonance, the, 'state of uneasiness that happens when you have inconsistent beliefs or behavior' (SciShow Psych, 2021) could explain some elements of inxonieavity but not why so many biases originate and occur within a hetero-dominated sphere.

The word 'Inexonaivety' is made up from 'inexorable' the 'continuing without any possibility of being stopped' (INEXORABLE | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021) and 'naivety', having 'trust based on not having much experience' (NAIVETY | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary, 2021). A kind of impossible wisdom that is derived from heteronormativity.

'Sexuality is an historically specific organization of power, discourse, bodies, and affectivity' (Butler, 1990: 125).

Inxonieavity as a concept is an expansion of Judith Butler's 'Heterosexual Matrix' but with the distinction that it is taught to be considered 'natural' and is reinforced through heterosexual compliancy, passed on from generation to generation. Inexonaivety does not only affect human sexuality but non-sexual circumstances too. For example, reluctance to see the space rock 'Pluto' as anything other than a 'proper planet' appose to a 'dwarf planet' (NASA, 2021) which it is currently classified as.

Using artwork as a lens I will explore how the construction of binaries uphold the heterosexual singularity, the 'heteronormative gaze' and 'toxic heterolinerity with their effects on human gender/sexuality. Also exploring how artists critique these concepts, both in a positive and negative way.

## Construction of Binaries

I argue that inexperience and binary concepts are inextricably linked, binaries cause inexperience biases which in turn reinforces binary concepts. Within an inexperience heteronormative society we are taught that binaries are important.

Paul B. Preciado explains that:

‘Everything is heads or tails in this system of knowledge. We are human or animal. Man or woman. Living or dead. We are the colonizer or the colonized. Living organism or machine. We have been divided by the norm. Cut in half and forced to remain on one side or the other of the rift’ (Preciado, Desperantes and Mandell, n.d.: 6).

Binary concepts rely on the ‘us and them’ mantra. Anything that goes against a specific element within a perceived binary is recategorised as ‘other’.

There is no limit to how many times this can happen for example, someone who identifies as homosexual could be labeled as ‘other’ by someone heterosexual. That same homosexual person could label someone else as ‘other’ for being transgender, for instance. ‘It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order’ (Kristeva, 1984: 4). Complacency and a lack of wanting to learn gives people power within society to act, treat and label others as an ‘other’. This reoccurring prejudice is a way for discriminated people to gain a place on the heteronormative social hierarchy by ensuring someone is beneath them. This could explain groups like the LGB Alliance who, ‘campaign against the inclusion of the notions of gender identity and multiple genders’ (LGB Alliance, 2021). Their name stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance, like LGBT+ but distinctively without ‘T’ for Transgender.

It could be argued the two main binaries within a heteronormative society is gender and sexuality though not made up by direct opposites with different titles like: male and female. Rather, it is if a label can be assigned to a person, for example: is this person heterosexual? Yes – no. This itself is an example of how inexperience affects culture. It is seen that if someone challenges the gender binary, the sexuality binary (of being heterosexual or not) is also challenged.



Figure 1 Yoon, *Swowoo and Her Pink Things*, 2006 (Yoon, 2006)

The *Pink and blue project* (2005 – ongoing) by JeongMee Yoon brings into light how binaries are introduced from birth. The photographs *Swowoo and Her Pink Things* (Figure 1) and *Kihun and His Blue Things* (Figure 2) depict two children with different assigned genders and all their belongings of a particular colour – Pink for the girl and blue for the boy. If, ‘Work on gender socialization shows that gendered behaviour is learnt, not innate’ (Hines, 2018: 66), the two photographs highlight the great affect heteronormative binaries have on contemporary society.

As, everything from shoes and toys to books and the colour of their bedroom walls abide by the heteronormative rule that pink is feminine, and blue is masculine.



Figure 2 Yoon, *Kihun and His Blue Things*, 2007 (Yoon, 2007)

It is possible that these photographs are staged though there is very little indication to this. The gendered types of objects and their colour look 'natural' to what we are accustomed to, pink pushchairs and blue race cars. Traditionally home and maternal objects for the girl and fast and powerful items for the boy. This is because, 'The weight of history, religion and what is presented as 'natural' pushes us, as a society and as individuals, towards maintaining traditional gender roles' (Hines, 2018: 66).

It is interesting that Kihun, the boy, owns two umbrellas. This could suggest that he needs substantial sheltering from 'pink things' for the need to be masculine is more important than Swowoo, the girl, to be feminine in a heteronormative context. This suggests that masculinity is

brittle compared to femininity. As, there is evidence of the colour blue in Swowoo's room like her dress and some labels on her toys.

The tradition of separating assigned gendered children into separate rooms is shown here. The bedroom becomes a space, 'where adults can observe young people and ensure appropriate behaviour' (Burge, 2017: 655). This removes any temptation to interact with incorrect gendered objects.

There is a severe lack of any cross over in these two pieces, there is no pink in the boy's room and hardly any blue in the girl's room. This could show how gender binaries are often linked with binaries of sexuality. 'In 1909, [homosexuality was] defined as a medical term meaning 'morbid sexual passion for the same sex' (Katz, 2007: 92). This classification allows for the interpretation that homosexuality is an outcome of a sick heterosexuality. If the gender binary reinforces and makes up the ideology of heterosexuality, then anything that challenges it is 'sick' and therefore homosexual, 'other'. Seowoo and Kihun are both presented as one of the gendered objects in their rooms. They have been sculpted by their parents to show they are not 'sick'. This is proof that inexperience is passed from generation to generation and upholds gender and sexual binaries.

This image (Figure 3) was created as a part of a series for Hal Fischer's book *Gay Semiotics* (1977). It shows gay men giving examples of subtle physical indicators which not only present and recognize someone as being gay but also their sexual preferences.

This work is designed to breakdown the heteronormative view by explicitly outlining male homosexual signifiers. This is shown using conventional composition techniques like the 'rule of thirds' and the subjects pose which is juxtaposed against the unconventional labels over the top.

However, this work uses and relies on the binary ideals it attempts to challenge. In this case, aggressive versus passive roles in sexual encounters. As 'those who distinguish have the distinction of not being explicitly distinguished' (Foucault 1981: 44) any attempt to challenge a heteronormative society will have to display itself in a heteronormative light which in turn could reinforce the inexorable bias.

The labeling of the key objects and their positioning is much like a scientific diagram. 'Part of the fascination of sexology undoubtedly lies in its ambition to provide a comprehensive classification of sexual behaviour. Inevitably, such an attempt could hardly hope to succeed' (Felski, 1998: 7). This form of presentation is useful; however, I feel it should be stressed it is to be used as a guide only. Otherwise, it could reinforce binary ideals within a male homosexual setting. This could be the reasoning behind the artistic choice of monochrome photographs. The high contrast between black and white hint at the ever-present binary bias. However, the slanted floor and wall contradict this.

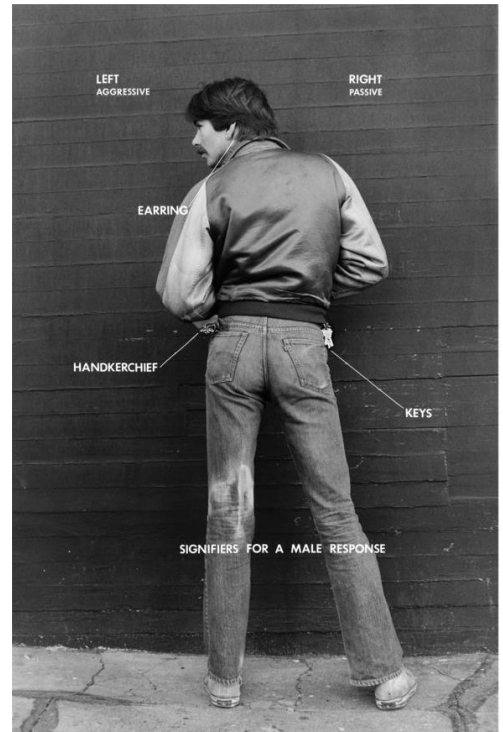


Figure 3 Fischer, *Signifiers for a Male Response*, 1977 (Fischer, n.d.)



Figure 4 Theuerkauff, *L'Origine Du Monde 11/16 (Markus)*, 2010 (Theuerkauff, 2010)

This painting by Lars Theuerkauff titled *L'Origine Du Monde 11/16 (Markus)*, 2010 (Figure 4) is a direct reference to the painting *L'Origine Du Monde* 1866 by Gustave Courbet. The original depicts the reclined female body with their genitals and pubic hair being the focal point. This adaptation uses a similar composition but using a male subject. However, their genitalia is not the focal point as the subject's hand covers them.

The artist challenges the heteronormative gender binary by excluding the presence of explicit nudity. It is said that 'The depiction of male genitalia...[is] to express a sense of unease, to disrupt, convey a social or political message or to provoke



through obscenity' (Anthonissen, 2019: 331). This removes any negative or homo-related assumptions of the work and allows the (heteronormative) viewer to question the gender of the androgynously painted subject. The presence of pubic hair tells the viewer that the body is real and not just a faceless entity as reflected in the original painting. This shows that the gender binary is not distinctive or complete. This is reflected through the grainy and undefined way Theuerkauff has painted the body.

Theuerkauff's use of line could convey how 'labels for categories of sexuality' (Ross, 2011: 226) are problematic. The top of the body is described with harsh geometric lines which gradually become more soft and subtle lower down on the body, in the foreground. Usually in conventional painting the background holds less detail than the foreground. The slanted line of the bedsheet in the corner implies the viewers angle is not parallel to the subject, this also goes against conventional composition rules. The breaking of these rules mirrors the artists attempt to break the stereotypical gender binary.

The positioning of the subject allows for the viewer to challenge their own biases and appreciate the body without seeing gender. If, 'Most gay men are not androgynous; [and] many androgynous men are not gay' (JAMIESON, 2007: 245) then heterosexual men may look upon this male body and not feel contaminated by homosexuality. Hiding genitalia allows for the viewer to impose their own desires onto the body.

Different to the perceived hidden androgynous body which allows for sexual projection, the explicit body, being androgynous, transexual, creates an element of confusion within an inexperience heteronormative society. Which artist Jenny Saville exploits to portray the transexual body in a negative light.

The painting *Passage*, 2004 (Figure 5) by Jenny Saville depicts the nude body of someone who was assigned male at birth but presumably no longer identifies with that term. They have had top surgery – silicone breast implants. Their passive and exposed pose displays the subject as an object.

Saville's use of colour presents a cold and unwelcoming atmosphere to the viewer. Whereas the dark eyes and the expressionless face gives a dead like representation.

Saville states, 'With the transvestite I was searching for a body that was between genders' (n.d. in Saatchi Gallery n.d.). The artist talks about her subject as an object. 'The word "transvestite" is not used much these days' (A guide to transgender terms, 2015), however referring to anyone only with

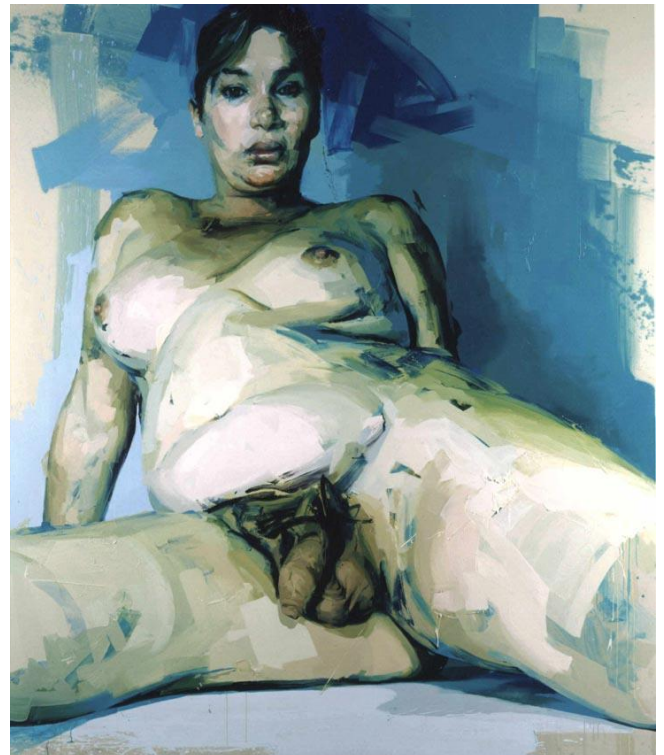


Figure 5 Saville, *Passage*, 2004 (Saatchi Gallery, n.d.)

the use of a label does not show any respect. It shows the artist does not see the subject as a real person but much like a novelty.

The transgendered body can ignite an abject response within a heteronormative society because it is classed as 'other'. 'Saville's painted flesh describes an aesthetic of excess that is in turn abject' (O'Reilly, 2015: 82). The artist exploits the high contrast between the light stomach and breasts against the subject's penis and testicles to force the eye to gaze up along the body from groin to head. The judgmental motion reinforces the inexact 'us' and 'them' concept.

## Heteronormative Gaze

Within a western context, the Female gaze is a highly spoken about topic in the heteronormative art world. Where society constantly upholds the idea that women are to be seen and desired through acting in very specific gendered ways - 'To be born a woman has to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men' (Berger, 1972: 18). The painting *Venus of Urbino* by Titian in 1538 is a well-known example of this, being a manual on how women should always be, 'beautiful, sensual, soft and passive' (Tate, 2014). Men are men and Women are 'other'.

A similar kind of prejudice exists where hetero-dominated society see queer people as the 'other' and not a reputable way to present oneself. 'Sexual acts between two people of the same sex [has] been punishable through legal and religious sanctions' (Somerville, 1998: 61). This 'Heteronormative gaze' (Hetero gaze) is both a manual on how to treat and laugh at queer people and on how not to be queer. Exploiting queerness to uphold a hetero-dominated society. This gaze is a direct byproduct of inexperience - as complacency of being heteronormative provides societal power over those who are not. In other words, be complacent or suffer the consequences.



Figure 6 Bodzianowski, *Rainbow*, 1995, (Thames & Hudson, 2009)

The Photograph titled *Rainbow* created by Cezary Bodzianowski in 1995 (Figure 6) depicts the artist's nude body arching out of a bathtub and into a toilet basin. He has colourful stripes painted along the right side of his body which forms a rainbow as he folds over.

This piece acts as a celebration of queerness and a defense against inexperience. The artist projects 'campness' to challenge heteronormative biases through; his use of bright colours, the rainbow-like imagery, the unconventional positioning of the body and unconcern to the subject's buttocks showing. As, 'to be camp is to present oneself as being committed to the marginal with a commitment greater than the marginal merits' (Booth, 1983: 46). This all celebrates queerness by proudly showing indifference to societal norms and etiquette - putting the subject above standard norms and inexperience.

Bodzianowski takes it one step further; 'His attempt to elevate his averagely stocky, not particularly limber body to the ephemeral grace of a rainbow is touching' (O'Reilly, 2015: 52). By attempting to become a

rainbow it could be seen that he removes all sexualised connotations from his physical form and removes any non-physical labels. In consequence, he becomes something 'other' from both inexperienced hetero and queer society, totally evading the hetero gaze and any other inexperienced biases indefinitely.

In a discriminatory heterosexual light however, this piece can be seen to mock queerness. This may be intentional by the artist as mocking discrimination is highly prevalent in queer society. For example, the pink triangle used by the Nazis in World War Two to identify homosexuals, has now been repurposed as a sign of queer solidarity -Turning something negative into something positive (Rorholm and Gambrell, 2019: 64). This acts to strengthen the fight against inexistence and strengthens queerness.

The separation of 'us' and 'them' is signified through the divide of the cold and hard tiles on the wall and the warm carpet. Where, heteronormativity is the warm, yet monotone carpet and queerness is the cold yet bright pink wall tiles. The contrast between the two highlights both taught difficulties of being outside the warm bubble of inexistence and that 'normal' and 'queer' are physically different planes in life.

This can also be read through the room the scene is set in - bathrooms are sacred as it upholds the importance of binaries in a heteronormative setting and reinforces the 'us' and 'them' ideals. Being a rainbow in a bathroom which is usually an intimate and personal space reflects the idea that queerness should be hidden behind closed doors.

The composition of the work places the viewer in the room which invokes the feeling of invading or being a part of the queerness and igniting a feeling of disgust via abjection. 'These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death' (Kristeva, 1984: 4). This is presented by the subjects' hands presumably being submerged in the toilet water. The fact this is an image of a queer rainbow being discarded as waste down the toilet emphasizes that being different makes you an outsider, of the 'us' and 'them' system we have in place.

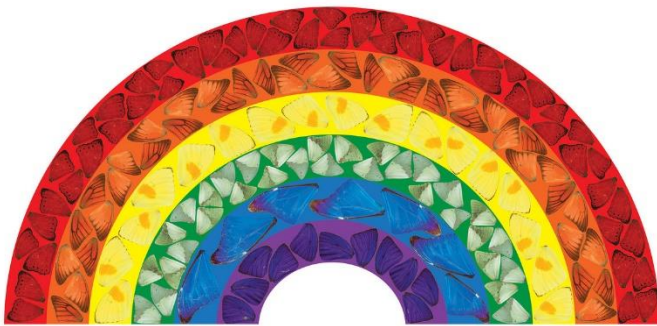


Figure 7 Hirst, *Butterfly Rainbow*, 2020 (Hirst, 2020)

In 2020 Damien Hirst created this print of a rainbow (Figure 7) with a second similar piece of a heart called *Butterfly Rainbow* and *Butterfly Heart*, respectively. They were made and sold for charity and I argue they are a clear example of the heteronormative gaze. 'For the last 42 years, in the particular form of a flag with six distinct colors ... [the rainbow] has been the internationally recognised symbol of the LGBT community' (Wareham, 2021). In recent times however, the rainbow has become

associated with the NHS and as a sign of solidarity throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. 'This [is] an inclusive and safe way for the nation to connect and thank our NHS, key workers and carers through art' (Machray, 2021). I would argue that this is incorrect and does not represent an inclusive or safe space. Queer symbolism and ideals of inclusivity and solidarity has been exploited to aid in the pandemic, at a time where these ideals are not shared by everyone, undermining queerness. I would also argue the artist exploits not only queer symbolism but also the seriousness of the pandemic to gain publicity.

The delicate butterfly wings on the pieces could represent how fragile perceived equality is – they give the appearance the piece is cracked and poorly put back together. ‘There [are] some homophobic people flying the symbol, which we used and we have fought to be able to use, claiming that it isn't our symbol (McMonagle 2020, cited in Wareham, 2020). At a time where, ‘More than 100 Pride events this year have been cancelled or postponed’ (BBC NEWS, 2020). This shift highlights the hierarchical power that inexperience creates as, in a heteronormative society queer people are not ‘at the top of the pyramid’ and have no control over the migration of the rainbow - the pride flag has been queered into something hetero.

It feels the pandemic has undone many years of queer progress and I feel there will be more of a need to fight heteronormative biases in the future. The encouragement to children to draw rainbows and display them in the window not only brings into light how parental biases are passed to children but introduces the ‘us’ and ‘them’ ideal to young minds. The act of displaying the rainbows in the window teaches children to look out for physical cues.

Like Cezary Bodzianowski, Karol Radziszewski uses irony as a defense against the hetero gaze in their *Fag Fighters* series (2007 – ongoing) (Figure 8) in which they depict fake scenes where ‘angry gays ambush and punish heteros’ (Anthonissen and Straaten, 2019: 267). This flipped depiction of queer people hunting and hazing heteronormative people highlight the inequalities caused by inexperience. As at first glance these images appear to be heterosexual men attacking queer people and not fictitious. The believability of this work emphasises that despite the prevalence of inexperience it widely goes unnoticed and that there is a societal cost and risk to being queer.



Figure 8 Radziszewski, *Fag Fighters in Tallinn*, Photo 15/29, 2007 – ongoing (Radziszewski, n.d.)

Radziszewski’s use of colour is important to talk about because colour is another thing affected with in an inexperienced atmosphere. ‘Colour has been systematically marginalized, reviled, diminished and degraded’ (Batchelor, 2000: 22) The pink balaclavas are the only indication that something may be different as the colour is stereotypically associated with queerness and femininity, something which an anti-queer gang would not usually relate with.

The amount of space between each subject is significant as it stresses their ‘straight-ness’. Physical contact is a sign of solidarity and shows their collective efforts and interests. Not only is their contact minimal, but there is also a lot of stress on that they are distanced, and it contains purely plutonic motives. ‘In the self-conscious act of adopting a ‘butch’

masculine appearance, gay men reveal themselves to be performing a self-conscious mimicry of stereotypical heterosexual masculinity' (Duncan 2010). This overcompensation on small details could highlight homoerotic tendencies and internalized homophobia. As exposure to inexperience has been present from birth, this behaviour forms a vicious cycle with the hetero gaze that they try uphold.

Throughout the series there is a persistent presence of cigarettes – I find this interesting as the physical 'fags' or 'fag butts' are being used and discarded just as inexperience enforces within a social and sexual context. Despite cigarettes being known to be harmful they are used for gratification, mirroring the presumed 'gay bashing' being depicted. The action of smoking a cigarette is also important as it heightens ones 'cool-ness' and shows strength as playing with something so intrinsically harmful is proof of masculinity.

Radziszewski's mother makes the balaclavers for the series – signifying how parents usually pass on their own prejudices to their young. However, this could also signify the mothers trying to help combat discrimination and breaking free from inexperience, though still leaving an impression on their offspring.

The harsh flash of the images in the series give an amateur feel to them and enhances the believability of their narrative. Presumably, the images are produced using a similar camera to the one on the table, the digital images can be reproduced endlessly which would add to the potential humiliation if these images were ever shared publicly. This adds emphasis to how inexperienced heteronormativity exploits the 'us' and 'them' concept to extinguish anything remotely queer.

## Toxic Heterolinerity

Inexonievity affects the understanding of being homosexual so that research into it was viewed in a heteronormative way. It was seen that homosexual people were not 'sick or criminal, but feminine souls enclosed in masculine bodies attracted to masculine souls' (Preciado, Despentes and Mandell, 2020: 20). It was as recent as 1990 when the World Health Organisation (WHO) decided 'to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder' (International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, 2016). Even though being homosexual is no longer illegal or seen as an illness, heteronormative prejudices are still apparent. For example, the ability to donate blood has a three month 'no sex' rule for men who have sex with men because they 'are at an increased risk of acquiring certain infections through sex' (Men who have sex with men, 2021) despite the fact that every donation is 'tested and processed before being issued to hospitals' (After your donation, 2021).

Toxic masculinity, the 'concept of manliness that glorifies stoicism, strength, virility, and dominance, and that is socially maladaptive or harmful to mental health' (Definition of toxic masculinity | Dictionary.com, 2021) relies of the destructive competition of power through perceived strength. Similarly, toxic heterolinerity also relies on the 'encouragement to be decisive, take risks and act – rather than think or feel' (Smiler and Taylor, 2019: 54) and is a way to gain societal dominance. Though, instead of having to prove masculinity, toxic heterolinerity is having to prove you are heterosexual despite the possibility of identifying differently, within a heteronormative society.



Figure 9 Fleetwood-Walker, *The Family at Polperro*, 1934-36, (fleetwood-walker, n.d.)

I came across the painting *The Family at Polperro* 1934-36 (Figure 9) on a visit to the Birmingham museum and art gallery (BMAG). The artist, Bernard Fleetwood-Walker depicts himself and his family using the traditional hierarchy pyramid. The farther at the top, the mother beneath him, then their two male children, the oldest slightly above the youngest. The mother's arm is resting on the youngest son signifying they are in a similar position of power and that it would be unlikely they will reach the top of the pyramid in this situation. The mother's yellow and blue clothing reflects the colours of the beach where they are sitting, implying that she is a beautiful entity for others to look upon. Reflecting the inexonaive male gaze. This is opposed to the men in the image which are pale in contrast and fade into the background. This is all very acceptable and common within a heteronormative context.

However, the divide between the painter and his family as he is perpendicular from the rest could present a non-heteronormative narrative. 'If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of

residence, of how we inhabit spaces, and who or what we inhabit spaces with' (Ahmed, 2006: 543). This break of running parallel with his family and the stress put on the traditional heteronormative hierarchy could suggest that he does not necessarily agree or adhere to this heteronormative ideal – could he have a different and secret life?

The family depicted all have indistinguishable faces suggesting they could be the same person. It is possible that this image is a timeline of his life. Showing Fleetwood-walker growing up portraying a stereotypical male appearance but in fact identifying as female. Where his 'wife' in the painting is in fact how he truly identifies. Hence why he painted himself perpendicular to the rest of the subjects. Every member of the family is connected through touch suggesting they are one combined entity. This is further signified through both himself and his wife wearing a hat, suggesting there is a similarity between the two. The painter is also positioned at the back of the painting, behind the other figures, subtly suggesting that he is hiding, perhaps from himself.

'Join the Navy' (Figure 10) is a First world war recruitment poster from 1917 designed by Richard Fayerweather Babcock. It shows a sailor riding a torpedo like a speeding horse with the byline, 'The service for fighting men'.

This poster could be seen to encourage homosexual men to join the navy by exploiting the need to hide one's sexuality. Despite homosexuality being illegal at the time, with it not being decriminalised (in private) till 1967 (Sexuality 20Th century, 2021) the poster relies on homoerotic imagery to suggest a safer space for gay men – a place to escape heteronormative biases and laws.

The perspective of the sailor and the phallic torpedo gives the suggestion of a powerful thrust and that joining the navy proves you have a large penis, a stringent factor of one's masculinity within a heteronormative setting. The reins and whip are there to show control over the manly force of the torpedo suggesting that the sailor is in control of his masculinity and hetero-ness.

However, the delicate depiction of reins and a whip contradict this by showing a lack of control and suggests sexual pleasure in being passive and riding the phallic shaped object, hinting towards anal sex. This gives the impression that being gay would be more acceptable in the navy as being surrounded by more people with homosexual tendencies. With the hope 'Tomorrow sex will be good again' (Foucault, 1998: 207). This is further shown with the translucent splash of water that looks like semen ejaculating through the air and across the sailor's face with suggesting a reward of sexual pleasure for joining an all-male organisation. This exploitation of people's fear of heteronormativity also highlights how



Figure 10 Babcock, Join the Navy, 1917 (justposters, n.d.)



inexonievity is persistently reluctant to disregard old information and learn - There is acknowledgment to something more than the hetero singularity, but it is left behind and ignored due to complacency.



Figure 11 Eijkelboom, Paris – New York- Shanghai, 2007 (Thames & Hudson, 2009)



PARIS - NEW YORK - SHANGHAI

*Paris – New York- Shanghai* (2007) by Hans Eijkelboom (Figure 11) is a collection of anonymous people wearing very similar clothes – plain trousers with a striped polo t-shirt. It could be said that this piece documents how inexonievity affects personal expression. '[Eijkelboom] seems to suggest that we are deluding ourselves if we think we can shop for the trappings of our own distinctness,' (O'Reilly, 2015: 93) - we are unable to shop for clothing as individuals, to express one's self, because we are influenced by inexonaive biases.

People within a heteronormative society do not necessarily want to challenge gender or sexual binaries. The clothing worn by the men in these photographs are not stereotypically 'manly' however, they do not allude to being at all feminine. 'Whether men identify and are perceived as masculine may be contingent on the extent to which they embody a masculinity that is sanctioned as the ideal way of being a man' (Ravenhill and de Visser, 2019: 324). Being seen with feminine traits may lead to accusations of being homosexual.

This is echoed in the horizontal lines – the lines guide the eye from left to right. If the lines on the shirts were vertical it would force onlookers to gaze from the wearers face towards their crotch. If this behavior were to occur from another man it would not only question the onlooker's sexuality, but for the wearer too.

This piece highlights that inexperience is passed down from generation to generation as the age range of the subjects vary greatly. There may be slight discrepancies like the use of a belt or the addition of a hat, but the horizontal stripe and plain trousers are the same – across the world. It is also significant that all the striped shirts have a collar as with a belt and a cap, they are all stereotypically male forms of attire, the only illusion to individual personalization is still confined to stereotypical masculine and heterosexual traits. Collectively they are proof to each other that they are heterosexual, if they were the only one to dress in such a way they become ‘other’ and therefore queer and an outcast.



The series *Selvspejlinger II* or *self-reflections II* exhibited by Nicolai Howalt in 2018 show a collection of paired portraits of teenage boys documenting their looks before and after a boxing match. (Figure 12) This work explicitly shows how youth are manipulated by inexperience.

The difference between the before and after shots shows how toxic heterosexuality, backed up by toxic masculinity, affects them. After their

Figure 12 Howalt, *Selvspejlinger II*, 2018 (Howalt, 2018)

fight ‘their vulnerability is evident in their faces’ (Smiler and Taylor, 2019: 83) – they put so much energy into proving their masculinity and their hetero-ness that they do not have the energy to uphold their box like stance.

This piece shows the physical and reflects the mental pain that young people experience whilst restricted to a heteronormative context. From a young age they are led to believe that projecting a clear masculine and heterosexual persona is vital. Therefore, the pain and resentment they show in the after picture could be transferred to anyone who breaks this vital projection. Are they training so they can fight queer people?

## Conclusion

To conclude, inexperience being the invisible and taught hierarchical complacency with a reluctance to learn, derived from a heteronormative society binds social biases to a heteronormative context. The male gaze and toxic masculinity exist and uphold a heteronormative society by contributing to the heteronormative gaze and toxic heterolinerity which are abject of but originate from heteronormative values. The gender binary and its link to sexuality only exists within an inexperienced heteronormative context.

Artists respond to and challenge laws and social constructs which categorise queer people as 'other' using irony, celebration, and exploitation of disgust within their work, they question the heteronormative singularity to try to break free of inexperience. Despite, the possibility of being harmful.

We are starting to see changes within western heteronormative society, becoming more inclusive. However, there is a long way to go till we reach the ideal, where there is no prejudice.

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