



The Exclusionary Effects of Queer Anti-Normativity on Feminine-Identified Queers

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How is “queer” normative? How does queer anti-normativity participate in its own form of hegemony and exclusion? This article argues that a queer aesthetics of radicalism is levied against and between community members in order to gain cultural capital. The emphasis on non-binary critiques in queer theory can reify binary thinking and hierarchical logic through the ways in which queer femininities—especially transfemininities—are received in queer spaces. The article draws from various bodies of queer and feminist theory and integrates the author’s experiences in queer spaces to outline and then critique the ways in which queer anti-normativity participates in transmisogyny and femmephobia.

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Although experiences of femmephobia and transmisogyny in the DFAB queer community are much discussed in social media conversations, blogs, online magazines, and among community members, there is to-date little academic research that explores these various forms of anti-feminine discrimination. This paper will investigate how androgyny was equated with a lesbian-feminist aesthetic in the 1960s and 1970s, and looks to femme memoirs from that time to explore the exclusionary effects of this investment on feminine lesbians. I suggest that a similar aesthetics exists in specific queer communities today. I hope to ground the theoretical in lived experience and provide anecdotal evidence of various forms of femmephobia by recounting my own experiences and looking at accounts of femmephobia in



blogs. This article considers blogs a contemporary form of memoir and therefore traces not only a historical lineage of femmophobia, but also of femme life writing that recounts the psychological effects of this discrimination.

Femmophobia is a well-known phenomenon that is only recently gaining academic attention. It can be defined as the discrimination directed at someone who is perceived to express themselves in a feminine manner, and operates specifically in LGBTQ communities (Blair and Hoskin 2015, 232; Nicholson 70, 2014). Although femmophobia has in the past been understood to denote the discrimination experienced by feminine cis lesbians at the hands of other lesbians, the general understanding of the term is expanding to encompass prejudice or antagonism towards any queer person who is perceived to embody culturally feminine characteristics (Hoskin 2015, 232). At the same time, the definition of femme is also expanding. Previously understood to refer to cis lesbians who present themselves in a feminine manner, femme is now increasingly understood to denote anyone who situates their femininity in relation to their queerness and is an identity taken up by people of all genders. Additionally, many DFAB femmes articulate their femme-ness as a genderqueer or non-binary gender identity. Accordingly, this article understands femmophobia as a queer-specific form of anti-feminine discrimination that reaches across the LGBTQ spectrum.

I first came to know femmophobia through my own experiences of exclusion within queer communities. I have been actively involved in queer communities and social justice work across cities in Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany. Each of these communities has their own aesthetics, which determine what is considered queer, and what is considered sexy. In London, butch and femme styles are commonplace, with dandy dress being the norm for those on the transmasculine spectrum, and a retro 1950s pin-up look the standard for femmes. In Montréal, I found androgynous looks were common for those DFAB, and strongly masculine or feminine looks were unusual. Berlin appreciates transmasculinities that conform to a punk aesthetic and can be very hostile to those who do not fit this dress code.

Despite the distinct linguistic, cultural, and geographical locations of each of these queer communities, there are clearly shared characteristics common to queer aesthetics. In particular, there is an emphasis on “androgynous” or “masculine” gender presentation within queer communities that are predominantly comprised of people who are DFAB. Many theorists have noted the predominance of an androgynous or masculine aesthetic in DFAB queer culture (Maltry and Tucker 2002, 90; Dahl 2016, 12). Several theorists locate the origin of this trend in lesbian-feminist culture (Maltry and Tucker 2002, 92; Levitt, Gerrish, and Hiestand 2003, 100), and a desire to reject feminine clothes and accessories, which were associated with “submission to patriarchal control over the female body” (Mishali 2014, 55). Lesbian feminists wanted to embrace androgyny as a way of escaping the patriarchal gender system (Stafford 2010, 88). Rejecting femininity in lesbian-feminist culture became a way of proclaiming one’s sexual and political identity, making androgyny a kind of queer uniform for those DFAB. At the same time, the equation of androgyny with lesbian feminism made femme identity illegible as a form of lesbian or queer identity (Mishali 2014, 55). The embrace of a lesbian-feminist androgynous aesthetic had the effect of ostracizing members of the community who did not conform to this dress code.

Authors, such as Amber Hollibaugh, Joan Nestle, and Minnie Bruce Pratt, provide us with first-hand accounts of femme experience in this era, and were often critical of the exclusionary dynamics of the lesbian-feminist movement. Their memoirs recount their experiences as working-class and racialized femmes within lesbian-feminist communities of the 1970s. In her collection of essays *My Dangerous Desires: A Queer Girl Dreaming Her Way*



Home, Amber Hollibaugh notes that femme was seen as a feminine “role” that was inimical to the freedom supposedly represented by androgyny (2000, 257). She recounts the damaging effects of femmephobia on the femme psyche: “Whatever you think is difficult about queer becomes a hundred times more provocative and full of menace when you struggle to understand a way of wanting and a way of being that you know is held in contempt, even by other queers, which balances your selfhood and your erotic identity on the edge of continual humiliation” (260). Hollibaugh describes herself as a “lesbian sex radical, ex-hooker, incest survivor, gypsy child, poor-white-trash, high femme dyke” (2000). In her memoir, she criticizes the failure of the lesbian-feminist movement to provide an intersectional framework that is inclusive of women from diverse racial and class backgrounds: “When we walk down the street, we are both female and lesbian. We are working-class white and working-class Chicana. We are all these things rolled into one, and there is no way to eliminate even one aspect of ourselves” (72). Here, Hollibaugh gestures towards the racial and class exclusions generated by lesbian-feminist political frameworks. She also criticizes the abjection of butch and femme erotic identities, and argues that the lesbian-feminist ideal of “mutually orgasmic, struggle-free, trouble-free sex” is unattainable (72).

Pratt, who was a campaigner for LGBTQ and workers’ rights, recounts the misperception of butch/femme relationships within the lesbian-feminist movement in her memoir *S/he*. Pratt notes that her and her butch partner’s gender differences looked like “icons of pornography” and “narratives of inequality” to the lesbian-feminist community (1995, 133). According to a lesbian-feminist politics that relies on the notion of sameness and the lack of difference to construct a vision of egalitarian sexuality, butch/femme looks too reminiscent of the gender inequality that lesbian feminism is trying to critique. This perception directly contributes to their social ostracism from the academic lesbian community (133). Nestle, a working-class Jewish femme, is also explicitly critical of the association of sexuality with a particular kind of dress and gender presentation. In her collection of essays *A Restricted Country*, Nestle critiques the pressure to adopt an androgynous style she felt in lesbian-feminist communities (1987, 105). Like Hollibaugh, she notes these tendencies to declare one’s political affiliation via physical presentation, laconically describing them as “the dress styles that [...] symbolize feminist fashion” (112).

We see similar attitudes towards femininity in queer communities today, and similar conversations among femmes who criticize the equation of androgynous presentation with queer sexuality. In their 2008 study, Heidi Levitt and Sharon Horne note that androgyny is seen as “the feminist-endorsed gender expression” among self-identified queer women they interviewed in the U.S. Southeast (35). In a separate study conducted in the early 2000s, Heidi Levitt, Elizabeth Gerrish, and Katherine Hiestand report anecdotal evidence from femmes they interviewed who said that they had both felt pressured to adopt an androgynous aesthetic, and found it hard to be accepted in lesbian communities because they did not conform to this aesthetic (2003, 105). Participants cited instances in which femmes were “accused by other lesbians of not being political [...] or lesbian ‘enough,’” presumably owing to their feminine presentation (106). These femmes were concerned that the association of lesbianism with an androgynous aesthetic had the effect of marginalizing femmes from lesbian communities (106). These instances suggest that the existence of a dominant queer aesthetic has exclusionary effects on some members of the community. It also suggests that some femmes experience their femininity as a kind of queer failure (106). In addition to noting the prevalence of a politicized androgynous aesthetic in lesbian-feminist culture, Melanie Maltry and Kristin Tucker also observe the prevalence of a similar androgynous aesthetic in “young dyke culture” of the early



2000s (2002, 90). Reading femme narratives of coming out as lesbian, Maltry and Tucker observe that the emphasis on androgyny prevented femininity from being seen as a “powerful” or “resistant” gender presentation in U.S.-based queer communities at the time (94). Maltry and Tucker’s reading suggests that androgyny is valued in some queer communities because it is seen as resistant to a hegemonic femininity that is forcibly imposed on those who are DFAB in patriarchal culture.

We see a similar emphasis on resisting gender norms in queer theory. Several queer theorists identify an anti-normative position as a central posture to many queer theories. David Halperin states that the investment in the anti-normative is typical of queer theory, and argues that the act of taking an oppositional stance is central to queer politics. Halperin writes, “if [something is] queer, it’s politically oppositional” (2003, 341). For Halperin, queer “demarcates [...] a positionality vis à vis the normative” (1999, 62). Robyn Wiegman argues similarly that queer “prioritizes the nonidentical, unassimilable, and anti-institutional as the means to rethink not only politics and identity” but also “political subjectivity itself” (2012, 96). Taking an anti-normative position is for Wiegman a defining feature of queer political subjectivity. For Jack Halberstam, queer even becomes a synonym for non-normative practice. In the introduction to his popular book *In a Queer Time and Place*, Halberstam writes that for “the purpose of this book, ‘queer’ refers to nonnormative [sic] logics and organizations of community, sexual identity, embodiment, and activity in time and space” (2005, 6). Alexis Shotwell agrees with the aforementioned authors that the invocation of an anti-normative position is a characteristic of queer theory. She also suggests that anti-normativity in this context usually denotes a position in relation to cultural norms around gender and sexuality. She characterizes queer theory thus: “Open most any piece of writing about resistance to oppression based in sexuality and gender, and you are likely to find at least one reference to normativity in this model: the normative is what we resist, and to be queer and feminist is to resist norms” (2015, 991). For Shotwell, this act of resisting norms around gender and sexuality defines who “we,” as queer subjects, are. All of these theorists identify an anti-normative position as a central characteristic of queer theory. This anti-normative posture is generally understood to be positioned in relation to cultural norms of gender and sexuality. If the anti-normative does define queer subjectivity, as Shotwell suggests, we can start to see how an anti-feminine posture comes to be defined as queer and feminist in DFAB queer communities.

Julia Serano identifies a similar trend to queer theories of anti-normativity in the politics of queer communities that she calls “queer/trans” communities (2007, 345). In her book *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*, Serano invents the term “subversivism” to describe the trend of privileging gender identities and sexual expressions that are seen to be subversive in these communities (2007, 346). According to Serano, queer communities’ investment in subversivism means that we, as queers, tend to overvalue “gender identities and expressions” that we see as “inherently ‘subversive’ or ‘transgressive’” (346). Serano describes subversivism as “the practice of extolling certain gender and sexual expressions and identities simply because they are unconventional or nonconforming” (345). According to this logic, “these atypical genders and sexualities are ‘good’ because they ‘transgress’ or ‘subvert’ oppressive binary gender norms” (346). Serano observes that the consequence of this trend is that some gender expressions and sexualities are culturally coded as non-transgressive, perhaps even “inherently conservative”:

By glorifying identities and expressions that appear to subvert or blur gender binaries, subversivism automatically creates a reciprocal category of people whose gender and sexual



identities and expressions are by default inherently conservative, even “hegemonic,” because they are seen as reinforcing or naturalizing the binary gender system. Not surprisingly, this often-unspoken category of bad, conservative genders is predominantly made up of feminine women and masculine men who are attracted to the “opposite” sex. (347)

Serano shows us how the designation of some gender expressions as non-hegemonic operates in relation to unarticulated but deeply ingrained assumptions about what constitutes the hegemonic in terms of gender and sexuality. This tactic of privileging gender identities and expressions that are seen to be subversive depends on a general understanding that other gender identities and expressions are not subversive. Similar to the emphasis on anti-normativity in the work of Halberstam, Halperin, and Shotwell, an investment in the subversive requires the concomitant creation of the normative.

The emphasis on subversivism or anti-normativity in queer communities contributes to feelings of inadequacy among many queer-identified individuals. As we have already seen in the study conducted by Levitt, Gerrish, and Hiestand, the valorization of an androgynous aesthetic that was coded as politically subversive leads some femmes exposed to accusations of not being political or “lesbian enough” (2003, 106). These femmes felt marginalized from their communities, and even experienced their femininity as a kind of failure (106). Strikingly, similar feelings of inadequacy persist among many femmes and other queer-identified individuals today. These feelings of inadequacy are not specific to femmes, lesbian or otherwise, but are also experienced by other members of DFAB queer communities. By looking at contemporary queer blogs, we can observe the effects this investment in the subversive or anti-normative has on queer subjects who live in these queer communities. Blogging platforms like Tumblr, online forums such as Reddit and social media threads provide a rich source of knowledge about the conversations that are currently happening in queer culture. Similar to femme memoirs recounting the lesbian-feminist movement at the end of the twentieth century, these accounts offer access to voices of those who are not traditionally foregrounded in DFAB queer communities, and who often feel marginalized from those communities.

Caleb Luna is a prolific blogger, based in California, who writes the Tumblr blog “queerandpresentdanger.” Luna critiques queer identity through a queer-of-colour lens from their positionality as a working-class, “superfat, queer, light-skinned latinx, femme.” Luna argues that they are excluded from the queer norm of the white, thin, masculine-of-centre, DFAB body. In their blog post “Queerness is Dystopia,” Luna writes that “claiming queer” entails a replication of a “colonialist capitalist white supremacist cisheteropatriarchy, only to then invisibilize [sic]” that replication. Using a nationalized metaphor to interrogate queer identity politics, Luna asks, “When does queerness become yet another State [sic] to which we claim citizenship [...] and when will we realize the necessity to abolish this one too?” Luna draws attention to the fact that queer identity creates and polices its own borders, and argues that queerness is only a welcoming space for people who meet certain criteria. They state that queer spaces are often fraught with classism, racism, transmisogyny, and fatphobia. Luna continues, “It is easy to reject these spaces as not ‘actually’ queer when they do not live up to our ideas or expectations, but I am not willing to do that. Because they are queer. Because this is what queerness is.” Even though queer politics often aspire to be anti-discriminatory, they often end up reproducing the same kinds of prejudices that we see in patriarchal culture at large. Many people experience queer communities as exclusionary spaces owing to these spaces’ unacknowledged replication of patriarchal values.



We can trace these feelings of exclusion or inadequacy across other online platforms. Reddit is a popular website that hosts “subreddits” or discussion forums on numerous topics related to pop culture. Users can create their own subreddits, and there are many subreddits about queer identities and queer culture. One such forum is “Genderqueer Reddit,” a forum for those “who don’t fit the gender binary or are interested in questioning it”. Genderqueer is an increasingly common gender identity, especially among members of the DFAB community. Although each genderqueer individual may understand their identity differently, broadly speaking genderqueer denotes all those whose gender identity is outside of, not included within, or beyond the binary of female and male. Increasingly, many femmes understand their femme identity as genderqueer, arguing that their femininity is not correlated to their biological sex. One of the most common questions on Genderqueer Reddit is: “Am I genderqueer enough?” This question recurs in different formulations across the site. The popularity of this question suggests that, even among those who identify as having an anti- or non-normative gender identity, there is anxiety about having an aesthetics or politics that is radical enough.

Similar expressions of inadequacy or anxiety about queer identity can be found across other online platforms. CN Lester is a U.K.-based writer, musician, and trans activist who runs the blog “A Gentleman and a Scholar.” In July 2013, Lester hosted a public conversation about trans and genderqueer identities, posing a series of questions to invited guest hosts. Lester invited submissions of questions about trans and genderqueer or non-binary identities, which they then posted anonymously on a weekly basis and asked commenters and the guest hosts to answer. Called “Beyond the Binary,” the question series aimed to debunk myths about trans and gender non-conforming identities, and to provide a repository of knowledge about these identities. The guest hosts, each of whom identified as having a non-cisgender identity, answered questions, referencing other blog posts, and telling their own anecdotes. Readers also interacted with the blog via the comments section, sharing their own understanding of their trans and genderqueer identities, and expanding the perspectives offered on the blog. Questions included: “What makes a gender presentation more or less genderqueer?” “How would you define sex and gender from a genderqueer [...] perspective?” as well as a general call to discuss the intersections of femme and genderqueer identities (Lester “Beyond the Binary”).

During the discussion, Lester summarizes the stereotype of what genderqueer looks like. They describe genderqueer as mostly looking like “young, white, FAAB (female assigned at birth) [sic] androgynous types with edgy haircuts and skinny jeans” (“Beyond the Binary”). Lester nods towards the normativities present in queer communities, and in a genderqueer, anti-normative aesthetic. Another blogger called Hel agrees that the “investment in anti-normativity produces a “sense of (sub)cultural normativity, where masculine/genderfucked presentation (usually on female-assigned bodies) somehow [becomes] equivalent to and determinant of genderqueer identity” (“Beyond the Binary”). Both bloggers observe that genderqueer identities tend to be equated with white, thin, DFAB bodies, leaving genderqueer folk with other kinds of bodies out of the picture. The equation of genderqueer identities with one type of body has particularly disastrous effects for femmes who identify as genderqueer. All contributors to the blog post concur that femme is generally not seen as a genderqueer identity. As one submission reads, “I am genderqueer and have a femme presentation, which seems to be a distinct minority among genderqueer people. The “standard” (maybe stereotypical is a better word) genderqueer presentation is more androgynous or genderfuck” (“Beyond the Binary”). Here we see a femme queer claiming a genderqueer identity, while noting that they are excluded from the stereotype of what a genderqueer person generally looks like. Nat, another contributor, agrees, “I have observed a tendency in some circles to conflate androgynous



appearance with nonbinary [sic] identity or to imply that those who are androgynous [...] are 'more successfully' nonbinary than those who express their nonbinary gender in other ways" ("Beyond the Binary"). For our queer communities, a "successful" genderqueer identity involves inhabiting "androgynous," as opposed to feminine traits. Femmes who identify as genderqueer may feel that they embody, or are perceived to embody, a kind of failed genderqueer identity.

So far, I have looked at the ways in which rebellion against constrictive gender norms has created a DFAB queer culture that tends to reject femininity, especially insofar as it is expressed by those who are DFAB. However, this valorization of anti-normativity results in anti-feminine discrimination directed against trans women, as well as femmes and queers who are DFAB. In his blog "Trans Fusion," trans sociology professor Cary Gabriel Costello blogs about the deployment of the term "normative" within genderqueer communities. His blog is one of those linked in the discussion about genderqueer on "A Gentleman and a Scholar." Costello describes his experience of being at an academic conference that was mainly attended by genderqueer students who were DFAB. He observes that the students are using the term "transnormative" in a different sense to its original meaning. Transnormativity originally described the stereotypical, medicalized narratives told about trans people, that they were "born in the wrong body" and that they must proceed through gender confirmation surgery and/or hormone therapy in order to be "cured" of their gender dysphoria. However, Costello writes that these students "used 'transnormative' as a pejorative for any trans* [sic] person whom they read as 'reinforcing the gender binary.' In translation, what that meant was trans* men they saw as "passing," and almost all trans* women" ("The Transsexual Empire"). Transnormativity is equated here with anyone who is seen to be "reinforcing the gender binary" in their gender presentation. Someone who is Designated Male At Birth (DMAB) and feminine is seen to have a presentation that upholds the gender binary, whereas people who are DFAB and present in a masculine way are seen to subvert the gender binary. Costello continues to show the violent effects of this exclusion of trans women from the queer community by relating a personal anecdote:

There was also a woman from the local community attending who sat by herself, ignored by the people around her at all the panels we both attended, often with empty seats on either side of her. Her trans* [sic] status was visible in her wig and the hair on her hands. [...] It's always disheartening [...] to see people like her [...] come to a community event hoping for some recognition and support, only to face more social ostracism at the place they hoped to meet with understanding. (Costello 2012)

Trans women often experience social ostracism from the queer and trans community. Despite the fact that all trans people express non-normative gender expressions by virtue of their trans status, it is usually only trans men who are seen as anti-normative or queer. Similar to all femmes, it is trans women's femininity that is targeted for ridicule or seen as anti-feminist. However, unlike DFAB femmes, trans women also experience specific forms of discrimination. As Serano notes, trans women are singled out for ridicule far more often than trans men (2007, 14). Serano calls this specific form of discrimination transmisogyny (15). It is trans women's "expressions of femininity and [...] desire to be female" that are "sensationalized, sexualized and trivialized" and otherwise targeted by society at large (14). Trans women experience transmisogyny, in addition to transphobia (15). As Serano argues, "when women's or lesbian organizations and events open their doors to trans men but not trans women, that is not transphobia—it is trans misogyny [sic]" (15). In queer communities populated by people who



are DFAB, many believe femininity is inherently oppressive. To transition into femaleness and, for some trans women, femininity, is seen by many queer feminists as “buying into your own oppression.” The treatment of trans women in these communities lies in stark contrast to the treatment of trans men, who are often welcomed and seen as more radical.

Despite being dismissed as “normative” by the lesbian-feminist and contemporary DFAB queer communities at large, many femmes have and continue to understand their gender identity as anti-normative. In an interview with Amber Hollibaugh conducted in the 1990s, brown, disabled, non-binary femme Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha discusses her femme identity. Piepzna-Samarasinha theorizes “high femme” as a form of transgender identity: “Even though we do not cross from our assigned-at-birth gender—the way transgender is often thought of—we still chose to live a different gender. If a high femme goes to a baby shower and *struts* her stuff, she will be read as being as queer as a drag queen would” (Hollibaugh 2001, 249; italics in original). Piepzna-Samarasinha divorces her femininity from any correlation with her body and instead situates it in relation to her queerness. She reconceptualises her femme identity as queer by using the language of transgender identities. She also aligns her femmeness with that of drag queens, thereby implying that her femininity is exaggerated and artificial. Hollibaugh agrees with Piepzna-Samarasinha, adding “if you’re doing high femme, your femininity is profoundly made up” (250). In an earlier essay, Hollibaugh also states that she has been profoundly influenced by drag queens. She writes, “I never ever saw myself as a ‘natural’ woman. [...] I wasn’t femme because I felt like I was a ‘real’ woman” (147). Hollibaugh adds that this kind of femininity is “witty and brittle and bitchy and kick-ass” and emphatically not passive (148). Hollibaugh suggests that being femme has nothing to do with being a “real” woman. She articulates her gender identity as a kind of camp femininity that is a deliberate performance. This kind of outrageous, “unnatural” femininity is typical of a queer femme aesthetic. This understanding of femme as performative, exaggerated and divorced from femaleness or womanhood is very common today, among both DFAB and DMAB femmes. As Lisa Duggan and Kathleen McHugh exemplify in their 2002 “A Femme(inist) Manifesto,” many femmes are “suspicious of any notion of the feminine that takes itself seriously” and question “the dignity and wisdom of anyone who would wear pink without irony” (157). For many femme writers and theorists, femme does have an anti-normative aesthetic. This aesthetic usually entails an exaggerated, camp version of femininity, which is loud, obnoxious and in-your-face.

This camp, femme aesthetics forms a counter-discourse that is committed to queer anti-normativity but that also looks different to the dominant queer aesthetic in dyke- and trans-oriented queer communities. However, this conceptualization of femme also has an “Other.” By vehemently asserting that their femininity is ironic, “unnatural” and divorced from any claim to authenticity, these femme authors implicitly distance themselves from any claim to femininity as an innate, authentic or earnest experience. These authors can only claim femininity when it is ironic; in a sense, queer identity and femininity are very much still at odds with one another.

In conclusion, there are many culturally, geographically, and historically distinct forms of femmephobia. However, despite these differences, the trend of devaluing femmes, trans women, and feminine gender expressions is consistent across lesbian, lesbian-feminist, and “queer/trans” communities. The emphasis on a supposedly feminist androgyny in lesbian-feminist communities excluded anyone with a feminine gender expression. This emphasis persists in contemporary queer communities, coded as anti-normativity. While there is no obvious direct correlation between queer theory and the ways queer identities are formulated, we do see the feminine being coded as the normative, and femmes experiencing instances of



feeling or being told they are not “queer enough” by other queers. A queer aesthetics of radicalism is levied against and between community members in order to uphold gendered conventions of queer (anti-)normativity. By using the language of camp and anti-normativity, femmes can gain access to queer identity. However, this access still produces an “Other” from which they have to distance themselves, and who implicitly remains outside the borders of acceptable queer femininity or acceptable queerness. These articulations of queer femeness both challenge and can unwittingly reinforce sexism in queer community. Any femme who experiences their femininity as authentic or innate is performing the wrong kind of femeness, and by extension is not performing an appropriately “queer” or “anti-normative” femme-ininity. Trans women also experience anti-feminine discrimination and feel unwelcome in the DFAB queer community. Unlike trans men, whose masculinity is seen as anti-normative, trans women are criticized by queer feminists for embracing femaleness and femininity. It is important to consider why transmasculinities are praised, while transfemininities are so often rejected as normative and “binary.” This mismatch between the reception of transmasculinities and transfemininities illustrates the prevalence of transmisogyny and reveals the misogynist logic that queer communities often replicate.

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