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## THE PARADOX OF “NATURAL” HETEROSEXUALITY WITH “UNNATURAL” WOMEN

ABSTRACT: *This essay examines the debates between advocates of heterosexual and pederastic love in Plutarch's Amatorius, Achilles Tatius 2.33–38, and the Lucianic Erotes. The heterosexual side condemns pederasts for “unnatural” practices, drawing on Platonic and Stoic precedents. I shall demonstrate that the opposition between “natural” heterosexuality and “unnatural” homosexuality predated even Plato, with its roots in the physis vs. nomos opposition of the Sophists. For their part, the pederasts portray the heterosexual obsession with “nature” as bestial, and present their own preference as a mark of advanced cultural evolution, drawing upon a strain of Greek anthropological theory.*

The third volume of Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* calls particular attention to discursive strategies of texts from the Roman Imperial Era. In the last chapter, he focuses especially on the debates between advocates of pederasty and heterosexual love, such as we find in Plutarch's *Dialogue on Love*, Book 2 of Achilles Tatius' novel *Leucippe and Clitophon*, and the *Erotes*, a work whose Lucianic authorship has been unjustly doubted. Foucault argues that these works exhibit a “deproblematization” of pederasty, by which he means that pederastic eros is no longer privileged as the focus of theoretical reflection on love, but heterosexual and especially marital love emerge as equally worthy of serious discussion.<sup>1</sup>

Foucault was clearly wrong to suppose that this development was uniquely Roman in origin or date. Already in the fourth century B.C.E., Xenophon's *Symposium* responded to Plato's with exactly the same ideological move. I would argue that what distinguishes these later texts is not so much a “deproblematization” of pederasty as a polarization of pederasty and heterosexuality into mutually exclusive lifestyles, each of which problematized the other. This we do not see in the time of Plato and Xenophon.

Drawing on a variety of philosophical and literary sources, these texts foreground “nature” as a central concern in their argumentative strategies:

But I count this as a great argument in favor of women: if union contrary to nature (*hê para physin homilia*) with males does not destroy or curtail a lover's tenderness, it stands to reason that the love between men and women, being normal and natural (*erôta têi physei chrômenon*), will be conducive to friendship developing in due course from favor. . . . But to consort with males (whether without consent, in which case it involves violence and brigandage; or if with

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<sup>1</sup> M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Vol. 3, The Care of the Self*, tr., R. Hurley, (New York 1988) 187–232. For some important qualifications of Foucault's perspective, see S. Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge 1995) 102–11, 144–61.

consent, there is still weakness and effeminacy on the part of those who, contrary to nature (*para physin*), allow themselves in Plato's words "to be covered and mounted like cattle"—this is a completely ill-favored favor, indecent, an unlovely affront to Aphrodite.

(Plutarch, *Amatorius* 751c–e)<sup>2</sup>

In the beginning therefore, since human life was still full of heroic thought and honored the virtues that kept men close to gods, it obeyed the laws made by nature (*hê physis*), and men, linking themselves to women according to the proper limits imposed by age, became fathers of sterling children. But gradually the passing years degenerated from such nobility to the lowest depths of hedonism and cut out strange and extraordinary paths to enjoyment. Then luxury, daring all, transgressed the laws of nature (*tên physin autên*) herself. And who ever was the first to look at the male as though at a female after using violence like a tyrant or else shameless persuasion? The same sex (*mia physis*) entered the same bed.

(Ps.-Lucian, *Erotes* 20)

It hardly surprises us to hear heterosexuality declared the way of nature, and same-gender attraction branded *para physin*, which does not mean "against nature" so much as "beyond nature" or "off nature's track," in other words, what we might today call "deviate." This assumption is so deeply ingrained in ancient thought that even the proponents of pederasty in each debate concede the point. The *locus classicus* for the paranatural character of intercourse with boys is in Plato's *Laws* 636c, although it is implied in an earlier passage from the *Phaedrus* (250e) as well. The rather offhand way the phrase is invoked in both passages suggests Plato considered the concept self-evident and not in need of explanation. I suspect that the origins of the distinction between "natural" intercourse with women and "paranatural" intercourse with boys can be traced to the *physis-nomos* antithesis elaborated by the Sophists of the fifth century:<sup>3</sup> by offering wisdom for sale to any buyer, the Sophists provided an alternative pedagogical model to the traditional pederastic education of the Athenian elite, one more consonant with the expanded franchise

<sup>2</sup> This and all other translations are taken from T. K. Hubbard, *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents* (Berkeley 2003), with the exception of the passage from Plutarch's *Bruta animalia ratione uti*, which is my own translation.

<sup>3</sup> For standard treatments of this opposition, see F. Heinimann, *Nomos und Physis: Herkunft und Bedeutung einer Antithese im griechischen Denken des 5. Jahrhunderts* (Basel 1945); M. Pohlenz, "Nomos und Physis," *Hermes* 81 (1953) 418–38; W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge 1969) 55–134; G. B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge 1981) 111–30; M. Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Law* (Berkeley 1986) 247–73.

of the radical democracy.<sup>4</sup> Witness, for example, the juxtaposition in Aristophanes' *Clouds* of the pederastic education offered by the Greater Argument and the non-pederastic, sophistic lessons of the Lesser Argument; the paradigmatic pleasure the Lesser Argument offers his student is not homoerotic, but the preeminently and even excessively heterosexual act of adultery, specifically presented as one of the “necessities of nature” (*Nub.* 1075, *tas tês physeôs anagkas*). Deeply anti-traditionalist and relativistic, the Sophists had an interest in subverting the manifestations of received wisdom, hierarchy, and class solidarity transmitted from one generation to the next through pederastic mentorship.<sup>5</sup>

That the “naturalness” of heterosexual intercourse was not merely a rarefied and abstract philosophical concept is suggested by the Athenian orators' appeal to the dichotomy, in the context of a genre intended to conform with the prejudices and tastes of a popular audience. Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 185, suggests that Timarchus' practices are even worse than adultery on the part of a woman, since she only uses her body in accordance with nature (*kata physin*), but Timarchus defies the gender assigned to him by Nature by assuming a passive position in intercourse. It is important to note here that Timarchus' fault in this particular passage has nothing to do with his supposed prostitution, the nominal pretext for his prosecution, nor is it a matter of taking the passive position while an adult, since the sexual escapades narrated in this speech occurred when Timarchus was a *meirakion*, a youth under 21. Rather, it is the mere participation in a sexually-consummated pederastic liaison that is described as a culpable transgression of the laws of Nature (*para physin*). Similarly, Hyperides, in a fragment from an unknown context preserved in Latin translation (fr. 215C), alludes to male sexual passivity as a form of gender deviance and therefore a refusal of Nature's gifts (*naturae beneficio*). It should not surprise us to see Diogenes the Cynic, the poor man's philosopher, attacking elegant young men in exactly the same terms: “When he saw a young man acting like a woman, he said, ‘Aren't you ashamed of planning something worse for yourself than Nature did?’” (Diog. Laert. 6.65).

Of course, more empirically-minded observers, such as the Hippocratic and Peripatetics, entertained the possibility that gender deviance or a preference for sexual passivity might indeed result

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<sup>4</sup> For the pivotal role of the Sophists in changing attitudes toward pederasty, see A. Lear, *Noble Eros: The Idealization of Pederasty from the Greek Dark Ages to the Athens of Socrates* (Ph.D. diss., UCLA 2004) 212–14.

<sup>5</sup> The corpus of Theognis offers the paradigmatic case of such pederastic mentorship as the medium for education of a youth in received aristocratic values, particularly in the context of oral communication at symposia. See J. M. Lewis, “Eros and the Polis in Theognis Book II,” in T. J. Figueira and G. Nagy, eds., *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis* (Baltimore 1985) 197–222; and my own remarks in T. K. Hubbard, “Theognis' *Sphrêgis*: Aristocratic Speech and the Paradoxes of Writing,” in C. Cooper, ed., *The Politics of Orality* (Leiden 2006) 211–12.

from genetic factors determined by Nature;<sup>6</sup> Aristophanes' myth in Plato's *Symposium* implies the same. But this was a minority position, and certainly by the Roman period, the doctrine became quite firmly entrenched among Stoics that sex with the same gender was an offense against the providence of Nature and as such a moral transgression, as we see in the works of Seneca, Musonius Rufus, Dio Chrysostom, and Epictetus.<sup>7</sup> Who can forget Seneca's tirades against lesbian women who defy Nature by acting like men (*Ep.* 95.21), or masters who castrate and depilate male slaves to arrest their natural development and thus retain them as attractive sexual partners (*Ep.* 122.7)? Or his disgust at the perverted Hostius Quadra, who endeavored to improve upon the natural endowments of his sexual partners with special distorting mirrors that would make their organs appear larger (*Q Nat.* 1.16)? This tradition of Stoic moralizing was surely the background to the most famous and influential declaration concerning homosexual crimes against Nature, St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* 1:26–27.<sup>8</sup>

To return to the debates preserved in the corpora of Plutarch and Lucian, we see the claims of Nature supported by appeal to the universal practice of animal species, as in Lucian, *Erotes* 22:

If each man abided by the ordinances prescribed for us by Providence, we should be satisfied with intercourse with women and life would be uncorrupted by anything shameful. Certainly, among animals incapable of debasing anything through depravity of disposition the laws of nature are preserved undefiled. Lions have no passion for lions, but love in due season evokes in them desire for the females of their kind. The bull, monarch of the herd, mounts cows, and the ram fills the whole flock with seed from the male. Furthermore do not boars seek to lie with sows? Do not wolves mate with she-wolves? And, to speak in

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<sup>6</sup> See especially the Hippocratic *On Regimen* 1.28–29; Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 7.5.3–4; Ps.-Aristotle, *Pr.* 4.26. The late medical writer Caelius Aurelianus, *On Chronic Disorders* 4.9.134–135, attributes such a theory to Parmenides, although the fragment he presumes to translate is more reminiscent of Empedocles' style and doctrines. For other texts suggesting that same-sex attraction was in some sense determined by "nature," see my survey in Hubbard (above, n.2) 2–3.

<sup>7</sup> Musonius Rufus 12; Dio Chrysostom 7.148–152; Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.10.14–20. For Seneca, see below.

<sup>8</sup> As is well-known, Tarsus was, since the time of Athenodorus, a seat of Stoic learning, to which Paul was doubtless exposed during his education. For the general influence of Stoicism on Paul, see T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville 2000). For the philosophical coordinates of Paul's concept of "Nature," see H. Koester, "Physis," in G. Friedrich, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids 1974) 9, 251–77; on Nature in *Romans* 1:26–27 in particular, see R. B. Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural: A Response to J. Boswell's Exegesis of Romans 1," *JRE* 14 (1986) 184–215, who emphasizes the concept's background in Hellenistic Judaism.

general terms, neither the birds whose wings whir on high, nor the creatures whose lot is a wet one beneath the water nor yet any creatures upon land strive for intercourse with fellow males, but the decisions of Providence remain unchanged.

Although we do find some scattered references to female birds mounting each other in the absence of males (Aristotle, *Hist. an.* 6.2 560b30–561a3, of pigeons; Aelian, *VH* 1.15, and Pliny, *NH* 10.166, of domestic fowl),<sup>9</sup> Plutarch treats male-male intercourse as an aberrant prodigy in his amusing dialogue on the rationality of beasts, where one of the men Circe has turned into a pig justifies to Odysseus his preference for remaining an animal (*Bruta animalia ratione uti* 990d–f):

Pleasure is held in such scant and weak honor among us; for us, Nature is everything. As a result, the desires of beasts have never up to the present time brought about the union of male with male or female with female. But there are many such relations among the noble and good of your species . . . [he lists several mythological examples]. But when a rooster mounts a rooster since no hen is around, he is roasted alive because some prophet or soothsayer declares such an occurrence something portentous and terrible. In this way it has been agreed even among men themselves that it befits beasts to be modest and not to do violence to Nature by pursuit of pleasures. But not even Nature (*physis*) allied with Law (*nomon*) can restrain within bounds your incontinence, but just as if swept along by a torrent in your desires, you perform sexual acts which terribly assault, disturb, and confuse Nature.

Zoological observation had not progressed sufficiently in the ancient world to recognize that homosexual coitus was actually widespread among many mammals, and that especially among primate species, this takes the form of intergenerational relations that can appropriately be viewed as pederastic, as is documented at length in the magisterial compendium of Bruce Bagemihl and many earlier studies.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Aelian, *NA* 15.11, also refers to martens (it is unclear whether male or female) as "diseased with extra-normal desire" (*aphroditên paranomon enosei*), a common euphemism for homosexuality. But he attributes their vices to the belief that they used to be human.

<sup>10</sup> B. Bagemihl, *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity* (New York 1999); see C. S. Ford and F. A. Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* (New York 1951) 134–43. See also the impressive survey of Bruce Rind, "Pederasty: An Integration of Empirical, Historical, Sociological, Cross-Cultural, Cross-Species, and Evolutionary Approaches," forthcoming in the *Journal of Homosexuality*. He establishes that pederasty has been widely observed in both bonobo and common chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, white-handed gibbons, siamangs, savanna, hamadryas, and gelada baboons, Hanuman langurs, squirrel, Mona and Patas monkeys, as well as stump-tail, rhesus, Japanese, Tibetan, bonnet, crab-eating, crested black, and pig-tailed macaques.

In antiquity, the intellectual response to heterosexist arguments from biology was not to question their empirical veracity, but to dismiss all such animal analogies as reducing mankind to a state of mere bestiality, as we see in both dialogues:

Good lord, what coarsenes, what insolence! To think that human beings who acknowledge that they are locked like dogs by their sexual parts to the female should dare to transport the god from his home in the gymnasium and the parks with their wholesome fresh-air life in the sun and confine him in brothels with the vanity-cases and unguents and philters of disorderly females!  
(Plutarch, *Amatorius* 752b–c)

For I came very close to laughing just now when Charicles was praising irrational beasts and the lonely life of Scythians. Indeed his excessive enthusiasm for the argument almost made him regret his Greek birth. . . . Is it any wonder that, since animals have been condemned by nature not to receive from the bounty of Providence any of the gifts afforded by intellect, they have with all else also been deprived of desire for males? Lions do not have such a love, because they are not philosophers either. Bears have no such love, because they are ignorant of the beauty that comes from friendship.

(Lucian, *Erotes* 36)

Indeed, Callicratidas of Athens, the enthusiastic pederast who advances this argument in the Lucianic dialogue, goes on to argue that pederasty arose specifically in the context of advanced civilization as one of many cultural elaborations that separate civilized men from barbarians and animals.<sup>11</sup> Like art and fine cuisine, it is a form of cultural surplus that mankind can enjoy once the necessities of natural survival can be taken for granted. So far from being associated with the instinctual and appetitive, boy-love is Uranian and not even grounded in the desire for physical gratification, as followers of the Platonic tradition believe heterosexual desire of necessity must be. See, for instance, the assertion of Plutarch's Protogenes:

But genuine Love has no connection whatsoever with the women's quarters. I deny that it is love that you have felt for women and girls—any more than flies feel love for milk or bees for honey or than caterers

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<sup>11</sup> This doctrine is taken for granted in poetic reflections as well, as in an epigram of Strato, likely of Hadrianic date (*Anth. Pal.* 12.245):

Every dumb animal knows only how to screw. But we reasoning men  
Have this over other animals,  
That we have discovered anal sex. But those who conquer women  
Have nothing over dumb animals.

and cooks have tender emotions for the calves and fowls they fatten in the dark.

(Plutarch, *Amatorius* 750c)

The defenders of pederasty thus also derive their arguments ultimately from the same *physis-nomos* dialectic that animated the heterosexist position. But whereas the heterosexist tradition valorized *physis* or "Nature" as the controlling authority, the pederastic tradition appeals to the superiority of *nomos* or "Culture." In so doing, it takes its cue from what might be called the "anthropological" strain of Greek thought, a tradition presenting the stages of human progress as a continuous ascent from vulnerability to the elements to satisfaction of basic needs to more advanced forms of political organization and technological sophistication. In an important 1967 monograph, Thomas Cole connected the various threads of this tradition as manifested in sources including Lucretius, Vitruvius, Diodorus Siculus, and Posidonius, and argued for Democritus as a seminal figure.<sup>12</sup> The literary evocation of a universal history of cultural development in texts as early as *Prometheus Bound* 442–468 and the Ode to Man in the *Antigone* (332–375) suggests origins even before Democritus. Needless to say, women play little or no role in any of these cultural histories. Cultural advancement was represented as a realm of all-male socialization and achievement.

In a seminal essay with the title "Is Female to Male as Nature to Culture?," the anthropologist Sherry Ortner proposes that the universal subordination of women observable in all human societies is directly related to an equally universal perception that women are more closely related to the processes of Nature than men and thus of a lower transcendental order, inasmuch as Culture by definition asserts itself as not only distinct from, but superior to, Nature, which it transforms and manipulates through the powers of human consciousness.<sup>13</sup> In her view, several factors contribute to the general association of women with Nature, foremost among them women's physiological subjugation to the natural rhythms of menstruation, childbirth, lactation, and other processes more related to the survival of the species than to her personal comfort as an autonomous individual.

Although formulated within a different ideological framework, Camille Paglia's sweeping history of Western Civilization's basis in sexuality and eroticism invokes the same assumptions:

The historical repugnance to woman has a rational basis: disgust is reason's proper response to the

<sup>12</sup> T. Cole, *Democritus and the Sources of Greek Anthropology* (Chapel Hill 1967).

<sup>13</sup> S. B. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature to Culture?" in M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture, and Society* (Stanford 1974) 67–87, reprinted in S. B. Ortner, *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture* (Boston 1996) 21–42. In a later essay (*Making Gender* 173–80), she modifies her positions on the universality and causation of male dominance, but maintains the basic validity of her original association between nature/culture and female/male, emphasizing the former as a pervasive social structure, not as universal conceptual categories.

grossness of procreative nature. . . . The Apollonian is harsh and phobic, coldly cutting itself off from nature by its superhuman purity. I shall argue that western personality and western achievement are, for better or worse, largely Apollonian. Apollo's great opponent Dionysus is ruler of the chthonian whose law is procreative femaleness.<sup>14</sup>

Within her archetypal scheme, Culture emerges precisely out of the male principle's fear of and struggle against the formlessness of female Nature, either by attempting to objectify female Nature into an ordered artistic recreation ("Beauty") or retreating from the feminine altogether (homosexuality).

Ortner and Paglia both acknowledge that the opposition between male Culture and female Nature is not a simple dichotomy. For Paglia, the feminine can become sublimated into artistic form. Ortner identifies several female functions (cooking food, acculturating the yet-uncultured children by taking a leading role in their earliest education, skill in interpersonal relations) that place women in a less natural and more cultural position, in a sense mediating between Nature and Culture.

Accordingly, the association of male love with Culture and heterosexual inclination with Nature is not the end of the story. A counter-current runs athwart these debates, implicit in Plutarch and developed with full comic irony in the Lucianic dialogue, associating women with Culture, even an excess of Culture, and boys with undeveloped Nature. The pederast Protogenes in Plutarch (*Amatorius* 751a-b) expresses disgust at the effeminacy and idle luxury engendered by the love of women, which renders men soft and etiolated. In contrast, he praises the unspoiled simplicity of boys. He claims that Eros is more at home in the natural fresh air of gymnasia and parks than in the stuffy interiors of the whorehouse, full of artfully mixed perfumes and inebriating potions.

The point is drawn more sharply in the short debate framed within Achilles Tatius' novel, a work of uncertain date but clearly later than Plutarch:

Women are false in every particular, from coquettish remarks to coy posturing. Their lovely looks are the busy contrivance of various ointments: they wear the borrowed beauty of myrrh, of hair dye, even chemical preparations. If you strip them of their many false attractions, they would be like the fabled jackdaw who lost his feathers. A boy's beauty is not carefully nurtured by the odor of myrrh nor enhanced by other scents of insidious intent. Sweeter than all a woman's exotic oils is the honest day's sweat of an active lad.  
(Achilles Tatius 2.38)

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<sup>14</sup> C. Paglia, *Sexual Personae* (New Haven 1990) 12.

Here it is not men's love of women that appears overrefined and decadent, but women themselves, who are maligned as artificial and contrived. In a curious inversion, it is now women who embody advanced Culture and boys who smell of raw Nature in all its glory, as their naked bodies glisten with the sweat and mud of the wrestling arena. The speaker goes on to praise boys' kisses precisely because they are untutored and instinctive, rather than artful and sophisticated like those of women.<sup>15</sup>

This reversal of the Nature/Culture dialectic is exploited with the fullest irony in the Lucian's dialogue, which is in many ways the most polished literary composition of the three, with the heterosexual and pederastic positions articulated into rhetorically coherent set-pieces that respond to each other point by point. After expounding his view that Uranian pederasty is a mark of higher civilization while heterosexuality is little better than a crude variety of animal copulation (33–37), Callicratidas of Athens launches into a satirical diatribe against feminine artifice in cosmetics, hairstyle, dress, and jewelry (39–41), to which he contrasts the purity and unadorned simplicity of boys, described in terms of Spartan austerity and idealized modesty (44–46). Any student of Greek art is familiar with the aesthetic preference for the beauty of the ephebic male nude, in contrast to the focus on clothing and accoutrement in female figures.<sup>16</sup> In this issue, Allison Glazebrook and Kelly Olson explore the various ethical constructions placed on female adornment in Greek and Roman culture respectively; it was a topos of critical comment by misogynistic authors as early as Hesiod and Semonides and continued to serve as a focal concern for later moralists.<sup>17</sup> Masculinity, on the other hand, was defined precisely by its indifference to cultivation of a beautiful personal appearance, as numerous texts suggest.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> As elsewhere, these debates draw from the topos of poetic tradition, as we see, for instance, in another epigram of Strato (*Anth. Pal.* 12.192):

Long hair and fretted curls give me no pleasure,  
Things taught in the school of Art, not Nature.  
I prefer the dusty grime of a boy fresh from the wrestling ring  
And the oil-glistened hue of his limbs' flesh.

Philostratus' *Love Letters* are a rich source of such topos as well, preserving epistles both in praise of an unkempt, artless boy (27K), and encouraging a boy to prolong his youthful beauty by artificial means (58K).

<sup>16</sup> On which, see L. Llewellyn-Jones, "A Woman's View? Dress, Eroticism, and the Ideal Female Body in Athenian Art," in L. Llewellyn-Jones, ed., *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World* (London 2002) 171–202.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to the two present essays, see M. Wyke, "Woman in the Mirror: The Rhetoric of Adornment in the Roman World," in L. J. Archer, S. Fischler, and M. Wyke, eds., *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of the Night* (Basingstoke 1994) 134–51; A. M. Baertschi and T. Fögen, "Schönheitsbilder und Geschlechterrollen im antiken Rom: Zur Bedeutung von Kosmetik, Frisuren, Kleidung und Schmuck," *Forum Classicum* 48 (2005) 213–26; and M. Saiko, *Cura dabit faciem: Kosmetik im Altertum: Literarische, kulturhistorische und medizinische Aspekte* (Trier 2005).

<sup>18</sup> Too much attention to one's hair or appearance would characterize a man as either effeminate or an adulterer: see Aristotle, *Rh.* 1.12.5, 3.15.5; Phylarchus, 81F45 *FGrH*; Cicero, *Pis.* 25; Ovid, *Ars am.* 1.505–524. For further references, see H. Herter,

The Lucian's dialogue successfully juxtaposes and deconstructs the set of contradictions implicit in traditional constructions of the naturalness of heterosexuality and the cultural sophistication of pederasty, as opposed to the equally powerful stereotypes of female artifice and youthful masculine artlessness. How can coitus with an artificial object be considered "natural"? How can advanced culture manifest itself in love of the untutored and naive? Although the Lucianic dialogue presumes to give victory in the debate to the pederast Callicratidas, his position is, in the end, undercut by such paradoxes.<sup>19</sup> This debate, like its models in Plutarch and perhaps Achilles Tatius, crystallizes and brings into confrontation a variety of ingrained and contradictory assumptions about gender and sexual preference that have been transmitted through centuries of earlier literary, philosophical, and artistic discourse.<sup>20</sup>

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"Effeminatus," in T. Klauser, et al., eds., *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (Stuttgart 1959) 4, 629–34; and J. Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (London 1997) 164–66.

<sup>19</sup> Callicratidas' victory is undercut by his own assertions at the end (49) that the form of boy love he advocates is both noncarnal (like Socrates' for Alcibiades) and lifelong ("from boyhood to old age"), which in actual practice pederasty seldom was. In awarding victory to Callicratidas, the judge Lycinus makes the proviso that boy-love is superior only for the philosophical few, but the rest of mankind should indeed be content with heterosexual marriage (51). That these reservations are unrealistic is demonstrated by the dialogue's frame (53–54), in which Lycinus' interlocutor Theomnestus reveals a very unphilosophical interest in boys, for which he takes the narrated dialogue as a license. Like all of the Lucianic corpus, this work must be interpreted as deeply ironic.

<sup>20</sup> Dr. James Jope's forthcoming "Interpretation and Authenticity of the Lucianic *Erotes*" came to my attention after the submission of this article. It demonstrates convincingly that the questioning of Lucian's authorship of this dialogue was based more in late Victorian prudery than sound philology.