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Dude Looks Like A Lady: Straight Camp and the Homo-social World of Hard Rock.

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Madison Square Garden. 1973. Robert Plant, the 25 year old singer and frontman of Led Zeppelin, undoubtedly the world's biggest rock band, takes to the stage in front of another sell out crowd. He is dressed in his trademark outfit of blue denim jeans and snakeskin boots. His torso is conspicuously left uncovered beneath a blue shirt several sizes too small. His muscular biceps are hugged by its gathered sleeves, presumably worn with the intention of creating a sense of oriental opulence but actually suggesting nothing more exotic than a woman's blouse. As he flicks aside his lustrous mane of blond curls he delivers the opening lines of *Black Dog* in his trademark high-pitched wail; "Hey, hey, mama. Said the way you move. Gonna make you sweat. Gonna make you groove."

As this short description shows, Plant exhibits the androgynous appeal of the classic rock god in all his glory. That this androgyny came to function as a social marker of absolute masculinity, however, suggests a far more complex interplay of identities within the hard rock genre than the more obviously playful ambiguities explored by gender pioneers like David Bowie or Prince. That Robert Plant continues to be all man, while simultaneously looking and sounding like a woman, suggests that the straight camp of the rock god provides a more complex function than the questioning of gender roles. To discover what this function is, and its central role in the hard rock genre's categorization as a virtual bastion of unreconstructed masculinity, we must begin by sketching a brief history of its musical roots.

Re-touching the roots: Blues music and the concept of authenticity.

The particular brand of hard rock performed by Led Zeppelin found its origin in the American blues of performers like Muddy Waters and Howling Wolf. This traditional blues form, in turn, developed out of a combination of folk music, jazz and a continuation of the African rhythms passed down from the slave trade origins of the predominantly black performer's communities. In this context blues music became quickly associated with a concept of authenticity, an opportunity for an oppressed minority to reassert a sense of cultural identity by creating a hybrid musical form dependent on the folk traditions of their ancestral past. At first, rather unsurprisingly considering the widespread racial segregation of American culture

at the time, the dominant, white-European culture was unable to understand the new musical form. Thus the blues swiftly became ghettoised as a musical form produced by, and for, the black population, resulting in racial segregation of the musical charts, with separate charts for 'Rhythm and Blues' and 'Popular music.' This racially segregated context was a key factor in the development of the identity of the blues. Not only were blues artists able to cover a wider range of controversial subjects not touched on in the "popular songs" of the time, such as sex and violence, but they were also creating a powerful racial identity through a musical style which was knowingly distinct from the more culturally dominant musical styles of white, middle class America.

An examination of the implications of racial segregation on the representations of gender demonstrated in blues music present a picture of a critical moment in the development of rock music as a predominantly homo-social world. It is undeniable that much blues music carries with it a strong element of misogyny. Any vaguely comprehensive compilation of blues songs will include several titles amongst them that demonstrate this. From Bo Diddley's joyous crow of *I'm A Man* to Howling Wolf's tortured cry of "I should have quit you" on *Killing Floor*, blues music is infused with images of a powerful, sometimes violent, masculinity under threat from a potent combination of female sexuality and domesticity. Muddy Waters' *You Shook Me*, later adapted by Led Zeppelin for their debut LP, perfectly demonstrates this tension between sexual desire and the desire for independence. Waters uses a rich, deep vocal style to recount a narrative of infidelity for which, of course, the woman is to blame. Ranging from guttural, suggestive growls to a mournful wail Waters recounts how a woman "messed up his happy home" because she "shook" him "just like a hurricane." While there is a cursory admission of the domestic responsibility that Waters is sacrificing, in his cry of "sometimes I wonder what my poor wife and child gonna do," it is clear throughout who should accept responsibility for the ruptured domestic scene. It is possible to identify an interesting interplay of dominance and passivity in the gender dynamic of blues music. Muddy Waters seems to assume a passive stance in his romantic associations with women, after all the title emphasises that he is the partner who is acted upon ("shook"), powerless before the sexual dominance of the female. By granting female sexuality this level of power, however, Waters also imbues women with complete responsibility for the consequences. The seeming powerlessness of the male voice becomes a justification for the casual misogyny of the song. *You Shook Me* becomes only nominally about the irresistible lure of female sexuality and becomes, instead, an expression of the perceived threat of the feminisation of

black masculinity. Muddy Waters is left to sing the blues precisely because the image of his masculinity as dominant has been compromised.

The racial aspects of this interplay of passivity and dominance cannot be ignored. As this analysis of *You Shook Me* demonstrates, much of blues music is focused on displaying either the dominance of the masculine or the threat that femininity poses to that dominance. There is a clear link between the misogynistic elements of the music and the fact that, traditionally, the blues was a musical form which developed almost exclusively amongst the male population of an oppressed minority. Blues music offered an opportunity for black masculinity to assert itself, in which:

The paradigmatic source was Bo Diddley's 'I'm A Man'. For the black American this assertion had a racial dimension: it was an affirmation of full manhood in the face of a white supremacist society that called him 'boy.' (Reynolds and Press, 22)

Traditional blues, as sung by older folk musicians such as Muddy Waters, tends to express the numerous difficulties faced by black males, struggling to assert a powerful masculinity in the face of racial prejudice. The casual misogyny not only reflects the fear of emasculation presented by the predominantly white community's tendency to refer to black men as 'boys' regardless of age, but also allows the black male to assert authority over a social group possessing even less status, namely black females. In this context it is possible to identify the social function performed by the misogyny of traditional blues music as reflecting the tough, oppressed lives of a minority group and offering a cohesive, powerful masculine identity that had been previously unavailable.

As blues music became popular outside of the social group for whom it was created, it quickly combined with predominantly white country music to create the hybrid form of rock 'n' roll. This new musical form was inextricably tied to the creation of another, newer minority group. Through its association with the increasing importance of the teenager as a social group, specific from their parents' generation, rock 'n' roll provided a similar function of identity formation that blues had provided for disenfranchised black males. While the musical style of rock 'n' roll was heavily influenced by blues and country music the concerns expressed in the lyrics reflected the wildly different social concerns of its target market. Instead of singing melancholy tales of infidelity, rock 'n' roll's lyrical emphasis was on the frustration and promise of adolescent sexuality. While Muddy Waters complained about the woman who had "messed up my happy home," Elvis was inviting his girl to "Baby, let's play

house.” The sexual undercurrent of the blues remained, but the cynicism and melancholy was tempered by the audience’s, and arguably the performers’, lack of life experience. From this point onwards the dominant focus of popular music would become the romantic, and sexual, concerns of adolescence.

In Britain, where as late as the early sixties the blues tradition was still new and exciting, this led to the British Blues Boom. Bands like The Bluebreakers and The Animals adopted blues music as an alternative to the traditional folk and jazz of British popular music. Sensing the cultural power of the blues identity, these bands were attempting to forge new generational identities in the same way that the genre’s originators had attempted to form new racial identities. While the more culturally flexible form of rock ‘n’ roll had morphed, in Britain, into the non-threatening, family friendly Cliff Richard, the blues offered a rawer, more authentic set of cultural tropes with which adolescent men could be seen to rebel against the dominant culture of their parents’ generation. Without the intrinsic irony of American blues, brought about by the very real social oppression faced by many of the performers however, casual misogyny was often in danger of becoming the malicious, adolescent whine of a social group ricocheting between burgeoning sexual desire and the fear of feminisation.

“He’s a good bitch”: Mick, Keith and the rock marriage.

One group came to define not only the unique sound of the British Blues Boom but also the uncomfortable menace and implicit misogyny of the music. Riding high on moral panic and social change The Rolling Stones managed to become one of the most successful groups in the world. While most of the group came from comfortable, middle class upbringings, the ghettoised sounds of traditional blues spoke to them as a powerful resistant force against what they saw as the stifling, mainstream culture of their parents’ generation. Once again the blues became a tool through which new identities could be created. Just as rock ‘n’ roll’s mix of country and blues had created the previously unclassified teenage social group, British bands like The Rolling Stones used the musical forms of traditional blues, rarely heard on this side of the Atlantic, to create their own teenage revolution. That the Stones are both product and reflection of this profound social revolution is undeniable. As the post-war, ‘Baby Boom’ generation matured they found themselves in the midst of a sexual revolution, with the introduction of the female contraceptive pill in 1961 often cited as the catalyst. As we shall see, in an analysis of the image and the music of The Rolling Stones, while their long-hair,

flamboyant styles and casually promiscuous attitudes to sexual experience may have expressed the new found cultural freedom, their music could be considered less progressive.

Throughout the early 1960s, alongside cover versions of classic blues tracks, The Rolling Stones released self-penned material, often expressing similar lyrical concerns. In 1966 they released perhaps their most openly misogynistic song, *Under My Thumb*. Throughout the song the lyrics express how the male protagonist has gained a level of control over a girlfriend who once exerted control over him; “Under my thumb, the girl who once had me down, under my thumb, the girl who once pushed me around.” This is an obvious reworking of the function of misogyny as revenge of repressed masculinity, familiar from our analysis of the blues of Muddy Waters. Mick Jagger’s lyrics suggest that his masculinity was compromised to such a degree, by the powerful femininity of his girlfriend, that he has been forced to turn the tables to re-exert masculine control. As in *You Shook Me*, the woman is to blame for the negative actions of the man. In Muddy Waters’ song she is to blame for the destruction of the domestic sphere; in The Stones’ number we are shown how her reward for attempting to control her man is nothing less than complete subjugation. As Jagger sings of how he now controls every aspect of her life from “the difference in the clothes she wears” to “the way she talks when she’s spoken to,” it becomes clear that the “natural” superiority of the masculine has been re-exerted over the potentially powerful, post-sexual revolution femininity that threatened it.

The interplay between control and passivity, identified earlier as the central concern of gender relations within blues music, is complicated in the case of The Rolling Stones by Mick Jagger’s star image. The classic Blues singers of the 1940s and 1950s were, for the most part, middle-aged black men; their deep, powerful vocals expressing the life experience behind their songs. Their live shows consisted of little more than a stage, a group of musicians and a sharp suit. The real repression of their life experience and the uncomplicated dignity of their musicianship combined to create an aura of authenticity around traditional blues music. While British blues bands, such as The Stones, may have attempted to recreate the music of traditional bluesmen, it was impossible for them to recreate the aura of authenticity within an entirely different social context. The life experiences of this group of middle class, Dagenham teenagers would, inevitably, have as much influence on their music, and their expressions of gender difference, as the socially and economically deprived life of a Muddy Waters or a Howling Wolf had on theirs.

Mick Jagger’s stage persona, often pastiched in contemporary culture, provided the archetype for most rock frontmen from the late 1960s onwards. The long hair, big lips and

flowing garments of the 1969 concert in Hyde Park demonstrated his willingness to play with traditional masculine roles, an expression of the new found cultural freedoms that the widespread social change of the 1960s had brought about. His trademark dance moves, recently described by one reviewer for *Q Magazine* as “the old flapping-an-imaginary-tea-towel-over-a-tray-of-burnt-fairy-cakes-routine” (Blake, 142), also demonstrate Jagger’s ability to combine stereotypical aspects of both genders to create a new form of masculinity that encompasses powerful masculinity with a feminine sexual allure. That this commercialisation of gender ambiguity takes place at a time of extensive social change is no coincidence. After any revolution comes a period of uncertainty, and the sexual revolution of the 1960s was no exception. With the contraceptive pill not only allowing people to engage in seemingly risk free sexual intercourse, but also, more importantly, allowing women to take control of their own reproductive potential, traditional gender relations were suddenly shown to be problematic. Attitudes regarding the make-up of the family and the workplace were becoming increasingly flexible with the consequence that so called ‘traditional’ institutions, such as marriage and the nuclear family, came to be seen as outdated. While young men and women both enjoyed new found freedoms, it is obvious that there was a corresponding sense of anxiety amongst men about what it meant to be ‘masculine,’ now that the traditional markers of masculinity, in the form of economic and domestic dominance, were finally being challenged. It is no wonder then that some young men relished the strong sense of identity offered by the casual misogyny of the blues. How to recreate this identity in the shifting social climate, however, raised serious problems. Would the cry of “I’m a man” sound as convincing coming from the lips of a middle-class, white teenager, rebelling against the very institutions that previously assured masculine dominance?

The answer, as exhibited by the sexual ambiguity of Mick Jagger, was to simultaneously reassert a powerful masculinity by drawing upon the cultural tropes of the past, in the form of blues music, while also demonstrating a new flexibility of gender roles through dress, performance and persona. In much the same way that the use of drag offered a powerful, alternative identity for gay men, the use of camp had come to the rescue of straight masculinity. Andrew Ross comments on the different meanings of drag to gay and straight culture thusly:

As make-up and dressing-up became a common feature of the flamboyant counterculture, ‘drag’, hitherto the professional conscience of camp, took on the generalized meaning, for straight culture, of all forms of everyday role-playing. (325)

In Mick Jagger's use of camp we see straight masculinity's strong survival instinct at work. While The Rolling Stones music uses the casual misogyny of the blues to reassert a sense of dominant masculinity under threat, the stage persona of Mick Jagger uses camp to suggest a level of gender flexibility that simultaneously undermines this sense of masculinity and inoculates it from criticism. After all, if Jagger's camp theatricality on stage is obvious "role-playing" could that not mean that the misogynistic stance of *Under My Thumb* is mere role-playing also?

The traditional masculinity expressed in the music of The Stones is also exemplified in the band's other celebrated image manipulator, lead guitarist Keith Richards. The dynamic between Keith Richards and Mick Jagger demonstrates the complexity of gender roles in the traditional rock band line up, and provides us with a model which has proved to be incredibly durable over the decades. That the relationship between the lead singer and the lead guitarist of a rock band is often referred to, in the music press, as a 'marriage,' suggests a level of gender complexity beyond the theatrical camp of Mick Jagger's stage persona. In these 'marriages' the guitarist usually assumes the more masculine role, for two reasons. Firstly: the obvious phallic symbolism of the guitar. Usually worn at crotch height, the long, straight neck is wielded like a weapon. Drawing focus away from the musician and onto the instrument the guitar serves as phallic symbol of the performer's potent masculinity. Secondly: the mastery of an instrument is an example of the acquisition of technical skill, again often associated with a traditional masculine posture. These two factors combine to imbue the guitarist with a greater sense of traditional masculinity. Consequently the guitarist is often seen as the more authentic of the two performers, more concerned with the music than the performance.

In contrast the singer has no instrument to draw focus away from their own physicality. That their skill is perceived as physical, rather than technical, often affects the portion of musical authenticity they are allotted. As Helen Davies suggests:

Singing is generally regarded as natural. Anyone can do it and it is wrongly perceived as not requiring practice and work, and therefore undervalued ... I would argue that it is generally assumed that singing is a feminine skill. (306)

Alongside this undervaluing of their musical skill the singer usually places themselves in the position of frontman. They become the visual focus of the group, offering themselves as a subject of the gaze in a way more commonly associated with a feminine mode of performance. These characterisations can be clearly seen in the press' treatment of The

Rolling Stones. In one recent interview in *Q Magazine* the interviewer's second question to Keith Richards was "How's the marriage?" to which Keith answers, "Who's the wife? That's what you want to know ... who's the bitch? He's a good bitch" (Odell, 56). Once again we see how the complex interplay of gender roles in the world of rock serves to both reinforce and to complicate gender roles. In the case of The Rolling Stones, perhaps the earliest archetype of the classic 'rock marriage,' Mick and Keith provide fairly distinct roles. Keith is viewed as the authentic, masculine voice of the music; while Mick's performative physicality figures him as the feminine. For adolescent boys seeking role models for masculinity The Stones, at first glance, seem to offer it all; the harsh, misogynistic, powerful masculinity of their music, the authentic, skilful cool of Keith Richards and the glamorous androgyny of Jagger. What they do not offer, however, is any place for women. While Mick's ambiguous camp may pay lip service to the shifting gender roles of the 1960s, it also serves to make women redundant. By assuming feminine glamour, and combining it with harsh misogyny, The Rolling Stones reassert the dominance of their masculinity by demonstrating that men can provide a feminine function. Thus The Stones helped to shape rock music into a cultural form, and a social world, that benefited from new sexual freedoms, while simultaneously remaining a virtual stronghold of dominant masculinity.

Dazed and Confused: Led Zeppelin and vocal cross-dressing.

Led Zeppelin took the blue print drawn up by traditional blues bands like The Rolling Stones and exaggerated everything to Olympian proportions. The music was louder, brasher and more complex. The gigs were larger; the tours were longer, the backstage antics more debauched. Consequently they needed a frontman who could match the ambiguous sexual presence of Jagger and magnify it accordingly. Robert Plant, with his mane of golden curls, prominent genital display and powerful, high-pitched rock scream, took over from Jagger as the new, improved rock frontman for the sexually ambiguous 1970s. Producing music throughout the 1970s in a social context which included the hippy hangover of peace, love and understanding, Germaine Greer's popular feminism, not to mention the pronounced gender ambiguity of David Bowie and the rest of the Glam Rock movement, Zeppelin provided a marker of uncomplicated masculinity while also reflecting the widespread social change of the period. In this context it is possible to identify how Page and Plant took the features of the rock marriage familiar to us from our analysis of the similar relationship between Mick and Keith, but amplified the ambiguity as much as they amplified the music.

The strutting stage persona of Robert Plant suggests a level of theatricality in the hyper-masculinity he presents, which was appropriate for the large scale venues in which Led Zeppelin performed. Frith and McRobbie identify this focus on excessive masculinity in their analysis of the 'cock rock' genre, with which Led Zeppelin are often associated:

Cock rock performers are aggressive, dominating, and boastful, and they constantly seek to remind the audience of their prowess, their control. Their stance is obvious in live shows; male bodies on display, plunging shirts and tight trousers, a visual emphasis on chest hair and genitals ... Cock rock shows are explicitly about male sexual performance. (374)

While the "tight trousers" and "visual emphasis on chest hair and genitals" is undeniably masculine, what Frith and McRobbie fail to take into account is the gender ambiguity inherent in placing the masculine body on display. While rock frontmen like Robert Plant are undeniably marked as masculine, at the same time they are presented as objects of visual desire in a way more commonly associated with the feminine.¹ Plant's physicality on stage deliberately emphasises this almost feminine sexual allure. He is described by one male reviewer as "breathtakingly beautiful, rather like a choirboy possessed by the spirit of Gene Vincent," while his movements are coded in feminine terms as moving "in curves with the emphasis on his hips" (Kent, 19). While Frith and McRobbie may be correct in stating that "cock rock shows are explicitly about male sexual performance," the parameters of the term "sexual performance" need to be expanded to include ambiguities of gender. That Jimmy Page, unlike Keith Richards, also demonstrates an acute awareness of gender performance demonstrates just how inauthentic the masculine nature of the blues became in the hands of rock musicians. While Page's gender ambiguity is mediated by his mastery of the phallic instrument of the guitar, his stage persona moves away from an uncomplicated, dominating masculinity to include a similar alluring camp to Robert Plant, all slight framed matador outfits, prominent jewellery and sequinned glamour.

Led Zeppelin's music, in its raucous updating of traditional blues also demonstrates just how much the masculinity of the blues had become a performance rather than an

1 See Laura Mulvey's seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in which she suggests that Classical Hollywood cinema makes use of a "male gaze" to automatically place the viewer in a masculine subject position. Viewers are encouraged to identify with the, often male, protagonist of Classical Hollywood cinema while, according to Mulvey, female characters are coded with "to-be-looked-at-ness." In short they become objects of desire, displayed for the inescapably masculine visual pleasure of the film audience. While this theory can become problematic when not applied to Classical Hollywood cinema it did offer the tools for an essential analysis of the different ways in which the masculine and feminine are represented visually.

authentic expression of identity. Many of the classic Zeppelin tracks follow the basic blues structure of a call and response between guitar and voice. Once again it is possible to identify a binary between the masculine and the feminine in the relationship between guitar and voice. *Whole Lotta Love*, one of Led Zeppelin's trademark anthems expresses this binary perfectly. The guitar plays a simple, insistently repetitive riff, which is then mirrored by the bass guitar. In response to this riff Plant utilises the higher end of his vocal register with a series of sexualised, bluesy lyrics interspersed with wails and moans. The sexual implications of the lyrics are further expressed in the musicality and structure of the song. The insistent, thrusting masculinity of the guitar riff is broken only by the experimental middle section, in which the call and response between guitar and voice creates an abstract soundscape, with Page and Plant both coaxing orgasmic howls from their respective instruments. Like the blues songs it emulates *Whole Lotta Love* is concerned with masculine dominance. Unlike the Muddy Waters song, however, lyrically this dominance is assured and this is reinforced by the music's powerful masculine sexuality.

Interestingly, it is possible to produce a counter-argument which suggests that this dominance is questioned by the potentially feminine nature of the vocals, coupled with the ambiguity of Robert Plant's image. Ruth Padel comments on Plant's willingness to express a feminine sexuality in this track, terming *Whole Lotta Love*:

a cock-proud slam. "I'm gonna give you every inch of MAH LURVE," howls Robert Plant, and roars out the woman's orgasm for her They are his achievement. (296)

Here Padel identifies the main purpose of Robert Plant's vocal cross dressing; to express the complete exclusion of women from the world of hard rock. Unlike the casual misogyny of the blues, born out of a desire to bolster an oppressed black masculinity through the subjugation of women coupled with a real sense of romantic experience; predominantly white, blues-based hard rock music is mired in the adolescent sexuality of teenage boys. As with traditional blues, self identification is the key function of this music. The problem that hard rock faced was that, due to social change, cultural notions of masculinity were experiencing a degree of flux previously unthinkable. Therefore the only way in which the genre could provide a coherent model of powerful masculinity was not to oppress women, with the intention of raising their own status, but to exclude women altogether. In his distinctive vocal style and ambiguous star image Robert Plant becomes a kind of drag king, expressing dominant masculinity and feminine desirability in one. Hard rock, as a genre, provided a musical reaction to the increased flexibility of gender roles in society, nullifying the threat of

female involvement by creating a homo-social world in which men not only made the manliest men, but also the most feminine women. The massive, and enduring, success of Led Zeppelin is no surprise when you consider the dual functions that they perform. At the same time as providing a model of masculinity more rampantly sexual than ever before, their music contains this sense of sexuality within the safe fantasy of a homo-social world, an all boys club where even the voice of women is produced and controlled by men. That this successfully reflects the delicate balance of attraction and fear brought about by the burgeoning sexuality of their predominantly adolescent fanbase accounts for their success during the 1970s. That these same adolescents should continue to look to Zeppelin as a model of fully formed masculinity well into middle age not only reflects the undeniable quality of their music but also the continuing uncertainties surrounding contemporary masculine identities, and the constant struggle for reassurance.

Dude Looks Like A Lady: The enduring legacy of Led Zeppelin

As the notions of masculinity expressed in the music and image of rock bands like The Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin become gender formations with identifiable histories, their intrinsic campness becomes even more apparent. Andrew Ross identifies this sense of historical specificity by suggesting that a “camp effect” is produced:

when the products (stars, in this case) of a much earlier mode of production, which has lost its power to produce and dominate cultural meanings, become available, in the present, for redefinition according to contemporary codes of taste. (312)

In the case of our drag-king-rock-gods it is possible to pinpoint a timeline of this redefinition ranging from the lycra clad, banshee wail of Steven Tyler, via the permed hair and heavy make-up of ‘Hair Metal’ acts like Motley Crue, and extending into the present day with the self conscious camp of The Darkness, who borrow the music and image of hard rock and subvert it by singing about male pattern baldness, genital warts and masturbation. In a postmodern, post-Butlerian world of constructed gender identity, the increased emphasis on gender performance serves to question the powerful masculinity commonly associated with hard rock. This is part of the reason that the genre survives into the 21st century, despite its association with a reactionary sexual politics and the familiarity of its musical styles.

However, as anyone who has witnessed the revival of interest in Led Zeppelin during the past few years will know, consumers are not purely interested in hard rock for its camp value.

The double function of the straight camp exhibited by hard rock performers like Jagger and Plant continues to provide the same social function today as it did on its inception in the late 1960s. That rock music remains a predominantly homo-social world is testament not only to the misogyny that pervaded traditional blues, undeniably the source material for much of contemporary popular music, but is also testament to rock music's double-edged use of camp. While the camp pastiche of The Darkness may invite us to laugh at the exaggerated masculinity of rock music they also exhibit the enduring nature of an uncomplicated, masculine sexual dominance, with song titles such as *Get Your Hands Off Of My Woman*. As the gender ambiguity of Jagger and Plant demonstrated, while masculine roles in the world of rock music exhibit flexibility on the surface, the undercurrent of the desire to dominate women remains. The double function of hard rock's brand of straight camp inoculates the performers from the charge of excessive masculinity, (after all, doesn't the ease with which they inhabit both masculine and feminine roles prove the constructed performance of all gender roles?) while simultaneously allowing them to perform a feminine function, thus excluding women from any active participation in the world of rock. This closed, homo-social world continues to appeal not only to the sexual adolescence of its key demographic, but also, in a social context in which opportunities for identity formation are more fluid than ever before, provides a rare opportunity to create a coherent masculine identity. That it becomes necessary to grow your hair, shake your hips and raise your voice a couple of octaves to ensure the survival of this masculine model is an irony that does not seem to trouble most rock fans.

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