

Gender: the state of being male or female (typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones).

Sexuality: In its broadest sense "*sexuality*" describes the whole way a person goes about expressing himself or herself as a sexual being.

Gendered sexuality is the way in which gender and sexuality are often viewed as likened constructs, whereby the role of gender in an individual's life is informed by and impacts others' perceptions of their sexuality. For example, both the male and female genders are subject to assumptions of heterosexuality.

THE MISANTHROPE

First produced in 1666, *The Misanthrope* tells of Alceste, a self-righteous ethicist whose insistence on intellectual rigor and honesty makes him a laughingstock, a loner, and the defendant in a libel suit. The flaw in Alceste's moral fiber is his passion for Celimene, whose superficial grace and beauty barely mask a fickle, shallow, selfish nature. Alceste's alertness for hypocrisy is overcome by his obsession with Celimene's apparent innocence; so while overreacting to the petty compromises and minor vices of his other acquaintances, he debases himself with his commitment to a person everyone else knows is a two-timer and a bit of a bitch to boot.

Around this plot Moliere constructs a satiric portrait of upper-class gossipiness and greed that allows the writer to have his cake and eat it too. Entertaining a group of suitors, Celimene leads a session of stingingly vicious mockery of absent friends. Alceste is enraged by his beloved's obvious two-facedness, yet he can't bring himself to believe it applies to him as well, even when he finds himself in open competition with the despised social butterflies Acaste, Clitandre, and Oronte.

By making Celimene a man, Moliere sacrifices the ingredient of distance between the sexes in the scenes in which Celimene toys with those who compete for his attention. But Moliere has great fun with the flamboyant attitude-mongering of his characters, and the actors' bitchy delivery of the brittle *bons mots* draws plenty of laughs. So do the occasional anachronisms that Moliere drops into the text--a snort of coke here, a "Miss Thing" there--as well as the eye-poppingly outrageous costumes by Faye Fisher-Ward, which evoke the 17th century with their flounces and feathers while toying with the present in their androgynous elegance. The best performances come from supporting actors. Bruce Orendorf is juicily silly as Oronte, the poetic poseur who solicits Alceste's opinion of his verse--and then wishes he hadn't. Paul Winberg's dizzy, dishy Clitandre and Brian Goodman's sultry Acaste make an entertaining pair whose sexual rivalry both divides and unites them. And J.

Scott Ament is all frayed, funny nerves as Arsinoe, the prudish busybody whose lust for Alceste makes him try to expose Celimene's infidelities.

Kevin Theis's athletic, farcical Alceste sets the production's tone of light lampoonery as he grovels before John Braun's painted, bemused Celimene (though Barto misses a good laugh when he lets this Celimene's claims to be 20 pass without challenge). At its best, this Misanthrope cleverly evokes past and present as it uses the formality of Moliere's verse (in Wilbur's translation) to suggest the affectations of a certain breed of gay male; some scenes could just as easily be taking place in the bathroom of the Vortex disco as in the salon of Celimene's Parisian mansion. Still, one wonders why Barto didn't take the concept further and use the different characters to explore clashing notions of identity between the radical, moderate, and reactionary elements of the current gay community.

Art accompanying story in printed newspaper (not available in this archive): photo/Roger Lewin--Jennifer Girard Studio.

TARTUFFE

In Jean Baptiste Poquelin Moliere's "Tartuffe," we are given a list of character names and their association. It supports the idea of a hierarchy established within the house in which all lower members must obey the rules fixed by the head members. Finally, the last scene shows a king's messenger rendering judgement on the conflict. This denotes that 17th century France was under a monarchical government.

The theme of logical vs irrational is prevalent throughout the plot. Orgon and Pernelle are shown to behave irrationally by holding a unjustified yet grandiose view towards Tartuffe. Additionally, Orgon commands his household with harmful and foolish reason that not only brings about the trouble but further exacerbates it. This is most notable when he demands his daughter to marry Tartuffe simply because it is the right thing to do and hands the deed to the family house to Tartuffe. On the other hand, Pernelle holds an undying devotion towards Tartuffe only for it to be distinguished after considerable effort on from other members accompanied by undeniable evidence of Tartuffe's treachery. Hence, it should be noted that the prevalent theme of logic and reason is due to the Enlightenment movement that was taking place in 1660 in which "Tartuffe" was published 1664.

Therefore, we can view early 17th century society that was dominantly ruled with a patriarchal hierarchy in which males are consistently the head figure. Authority was held by members highest within the system and lower members had to obey. Furthermore, "Tartuffe" reveals a religious struggle during the time in which priests misused their authority in order to accumulate wealth which ultimately led to a great disdain towards the

Catholic religion. However, despite the existence of a submissive system, a movement was taking place that fought against unreasonable oppression and celebrated logic and reason. This movement ultimately led to a period in Europe called the Enlightenment Era.