

Intersex Bibliography

Texts to Consider for Use in Women's/Gender/Queer/Sexualities Studies

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This bibliography consists of the following sections:

Main Texts

- I. Basic Information: History, Biology and Medicine
- II. Voices from the Intersex Movement
- III. Disability Theory
- IV. Scholarly Texts by Intersex People and Allies
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- VI. Critiquing Texts Produced About Intersex: Examples
- VII. Critiquing Texts Produced About Intersex: Praxis
- VIII. Books to Request Libraries to Carry

Main Texts:

Dreger, A. (1999). *Intersex in the Age of Ethics*. Maryland: University Publishing Group.
[The only collection available that includes multiple perspectives on intersex.]

Koyama, E. and Intersex Society of North America (2001). *Introduction to Intersex Activism: A Guide for Allies*. Available from ISNA.
[Booklet designed for activists who want to learn about intersex.]

I. Basic Information: History, Biology and Medicine

Dreger, A. (1999). *A History of Intersex: From the Age of Gonads to the Age of Consent*. In Dreger, p. 5-22.
[History of the medicalization of intersex.]

Donahoe, P. and Schnitzer, J. (1998). *Ambiguous Genitalia in the Newborn*. Rowe, M., Grosfeld, J., et al. (1998). *Pediatric Surgery*. St. Louis: Mosby Yearbook, p. 1797-1817.
[Chapter from the actual medical textbook used in medical schools.]

Hurwitz, R., Applebaum, H. et al. (1990). *Surgical Construction of Ambiguous Genitalia in Female Children*. Available from Ciné-Med, Inc.

[Extremely graphic medical training video used in medical schools. First a doctor describes the birth of intersex child as “social and medical emergency,” then shows the actual surgeries of young girls with intersex conditions. At the end of the film, one of the girls is brought back for a 6-month post-surgery checkup, but she resists having her legs spread apart, kicking and screaming “NO!!!” Eventually doctors manage to pull apart her legs, camera zooms into her genital area, and a doctor says how successful the surgical result is. Think long and hard before using this film—consider both (1) its impact on students, some of whom have survived childhood sexual abuse and rape, and (2) the ethics of using a film that could easily be labeled “true rape video.” I used it in my Intersex Studies course only because I had the whole term to process it, and after I gave my students the option to not view it.]

II. Voices from the Intersex Movement

Morris, E. (2001). *The Missing Vagina Monologue*. Soujourner, March 2001.

Coventry, M. (1999). *Finding the Words*. In Dreger, p. 71-78.

Devore, H. (1999). *Growing Up in the Surgical Mealstorm*. In Dreger, p. 79-82.

Hawbecker, H. (1999). “*Who Did This to You?*” In Dreger, p. 111-116.

Moreno, A. (1999). *In Amerika They Call Us Hermaphrodites*. In Dreger, p.137-141.

Triea, K. (1999). *Power, Orgasm, and the Psychohormonal Research Unit*. In Dreger, p. 141-146.

Kaldera, R. (2000). *Do It On the Dotted Line*. Fireweed: A Feminist Quarterly of Writing, Politics, Art & Culture, v. 69, p.46-50.

Chase, C. (1998). *Affronting reason*. Atkins, D. (ed.) Looking queer: image and identity in lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgendered communities. Binghamton, NY: Haworth.

Hillman, T. (2001). *Contradiction*. Depending on the Light. San Francisco: Manic D Press. [Poetry]

Koyama, E. (2002). *Ordinary*. Poets Against Rape. Available from San Francisco Women Against Rape, <www.sfwar.org> [Poetry]

Chase, C. (1997). *Hermaphrodites Speak!* Available from ISNA. [First and (so far) only documentary made by and about intersex people.]

ISNA Newsletters. Available from <www.isna.org>

Koyama, E. (2001). *Suggested Guidelines for Non-Intersex Individuals Writing about Intersexuality and Intersex People*. Available from ISNA.

III. Disability Theory

Blumberg, L. (1994). *Public Stripping*. Shaw, B. (ed.) *The Rugged Edge: The Disability Experiences from the Pages of the First Fifteen Years of The Disability Rag*. Louisville, Ky: Advocado Press. p. 73-77.

Bulmberg, L. (1996). *Public Stripping Revisited*. *The Disability Rag*, 17.3, p18-21.

Clare, E. (1999). *The Mountain*. *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press. p. 1-13.

IV. Scholarly Texts by Intersex People and Allies

Chase, C. (1999). *Surgical Progress Is Not the Answer*. In Dreger, p. 147-160.

Chase, C. (2002). "Cultural Practice" or "Reconstructive Surgery?": *U.S. Genital Cutting, the Intersex Movement, and Media Double Standards*. *Shades of Othering: Female Genital Cutting—Representations and Implications for Transnational Sisterhood*, ed. by Robertson, C. and Stanlie, J. Champaign: University of Illinois Press.

Chase, C. (1998). *Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism*. *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, vol. 4 (2), p. 189-211.

Hegarty, P. and Chase, C. (2000). *Intersex Activism, Feminism, and Psychology: Opening a Dialogue on Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice*. *Feminism & Psychology*, vol. 10, p. 117-132.

Holmes, M. (1994). *Re-Membering a Queer Body*. *Undercurrents*, May 1994, p. 11-13.

Koyama, E. and Weasel, L. (2002). *From Social Construction to Social Justice: Transforming How We Teach About Intersexuality*. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, forthcoming.

Dreger, A. (2000). *Jarring Bodies: Thoughts on the Display of Unusual Anatomies*. *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, vol. 43, no. 2, p.161-172.

Dreger, A. (1998). "Ambiguous Sex"—or *Ambivalent Medicine?* *The Hastings Center Report*, vol. 28, iss. 3, p. 24-35.

Dreger, A. (2001). *History's Place in the Intersex Movement*. Available from ISNA. [Video of Dreger's presentation; helpful hints for how academics can help activist work.]

Preves, S. (2002). *Sexing the Intersexed: An Analysis of Sociocultural Responses to Intersexuality*. *Signs*, vol. 27, no. 2. p. 523-556.

V. Reform Movement Within Medicine

Wilson, B. and Reiner, W. (1997). *Management of Intersex: A Shifting Paradigm*. In Dreger, p. 119-136.

Melton, L. (2001). *New Perspectives on the Management of Intersex*. The Lancet, vol. 357, p. 2110.

Creighton, S. (2001). *Surgery for Intersex*. Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine, vol. 94, p. 218-220.

Creighton, S., Minto, C. et al. (2001). *Objective Cosmetic and Anatomical Outcomes at Adolescence of Feminising Surgery for Ambiguous Genitalia Done in Childhood*. The Lancet, vol. 358. p. 124-125.

Creighton, S. and Minto, C. (2001). *Managing Intersex: Most Vaginal Surgery in Childhood Should Be Deferred*. British Medical Journal, vol. 323, p.1264-1265.

Scannell, K. (2001). *Engendering Differences: Ethical Issues about Intersex*. Ethics Rounds, vol. 10, issue 1, p. 1-3.

[Newsletter for the ethics committee of Kaiser Permanente]

Foley, S. and Morley, G. (1992). *Care and Counseling of the Patient with Vaginal Agenesis*. The Female Patient, vol. 17, p. 73-80.

Hendricks, M. (2000). *Into the Hands of Babes*. Johns Hopkins Magazine, September 2000.

VI. Critiquing Texts Produced About Intersex: Examples

TEXT: Fausto-Sterling, A. (1993). *The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough*. The Sciences, March/April 1993, p. 20-24.

CRITIQUE: Chase, C., Kessler, S. et al. (1993). *Intersexual Rights* (in “Letters” section), The Sciences, July/August 1993, p. 3-4.

CRITIQUE: Fausto-Sterling, A. (2000). *The Five Sexes, Revisited*. The Sciences, July/August 2000, p. 19-23.

[Fausto-Sterling proposed in 1993 the creation of three (inter)sex categories in addition to male and female, before she met any intersex person; she withdrew “five sexes” theory in 2000.]

TEXT: Marion, R. (2000). *The Curse of Garcias*. Discover, December 2000, p. 42-44.

CRITIQUE: Groveman, S. (2001). *Lifting the Curse* (in Letters section), Discover, March

2001.

[Dr. Marion chooses not to disclose the diagnosis of androgen insensitivity syndrome to his patient because he felt that the discovery would be too traumatic for her—but nonetheless feels perfectly free to write an article about it in a popular magazine. Would it not be more traumatic if the patient saw this article?]

TEXT: Natarajan, A. (1996). *Medical Ethics and Truth Telling in the Case of Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome*. Canadian Medical Association Journal, vol. 154, p. 568-570.

CRITIQUE: Kemp, D. and Groveman, S. (1996). *Sex, Lies, and Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome*. Canadian Medical Association Journal, vol. 154, p. 1827-1834.

[In this award-winning paper, Natarajan argues why patients should not be told the diagnosis of androgen insensitivity syndrome.]

TEXT: Ensler, E. *The Vagina Monologues* (selections).

CRITIQUE: Koyama, E. (2002). *An Open Letter to V-Day Organizers*. Available from <www.isna.org>

V. Critiquing Texts Produced About Intersex: Praxis

Materials listed here contain the discussion of intersex that I feel is very problematic. In my Intersex Studies course, I assigned each students one or two such materials for them to write critical papers. Some of them are completely wrong or disgusting, and some are otherwise good materials that contain significant inaccuracy or misperceptions.

Daaboul, J. and Frader, J. (2001). *Ethics and the Management of the Patient with Intersex: A Middle Way*. *Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology & Metabolism*, vol. 14, p. 1575-1583.

[Daaboul and Frader characterize the goal of the intersex activism as the creation of three or five sexes—a common misperception arising from Fausto-Sterling’s *The Five Sexes* and not from any actual intersex people—and criticize them for it. This article was written before Dr. Daaboul met with us, and he is now one of our biggest allies.]

Greer, G. (1999). *Pantomime Dames*. *The Whole Woman*, p. 70-80.

[Anti-transsexual essay by a radical feminist. Greer argues, among other things, women with androgen insensitivity syndrome—women who are typically raised and lived as a girl/woman all of their lives—should not be considered “women” because they have XY chromosomes.]

Beeman, P. (1999). *Whither United Methodism: Conformity or Diversity?* Pacific Northwest Annual Conference, Moscow, Idaho, June 18, 1999.

[National president of PFLAG uses “five sexes” theory to argue that homosexuality is not a sin.]

Corpron, C. and Lelli, J. (2001). *Evaluation of Pediatric Surgery Information on the Internet*. *Journal of Pediatric Surgery*, vol. 36, no. 8, p. 1187-1189.

[Points out that much of the information about intersex available on the internet (like ISNA’s web site) do not conform to the recommendations of the medical community, and suggests that surgeons should direct parents which web sites to look at.]

Paglia, C. (1998). *Ask Camille*. Salon.com, August 4, 1998.

[“The crusading indignation of adult intersexuals, however justified, must be weighed against the rights of newborns to have as normal and unstressed a childhood as possible.”]

Apzell, P. (2001). *Sex: Unknown*. BBC/WGBH Boston production for PBS NOVA series.

[One-hour documentary about intersex with no actual intersex people on it.]

Butler, J. (2001). *Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality*. *GLQ*, vol. 7 (4), p. 621-636.

[Mischaracterizes the mission of ISNA by suggesting that it opposes assigning genders to intersex children, when in reality ISNA opposes that the idea that surgeries are necessary for gender assignment.]

Burton, G. (2002). *General Discussion of Legal Issues Affecting Sexual Assignment of Intersex Infants Born with Ambiguous Genitalia*.

[Article by the lawyer who specializes in defending doctors from malpractice suits brought by patients. Warns doctors of the liability involved in intersex surgeries, and give concrete suggestions on how to continue performing surgeries while protecting themselves from possible lawsuits.]

DeJarnatt, S. (1998). *Masquerade*. Television series “ER” (WB), season 5, episode 5.

[Sketchy plot involving an intersex girl named Barbie; silly jokes e.g. “turn Barbie into Ken.”]

Halvorson, G. (2001). *The One With The Rumor*. Television series “Friends” (NBC), episode 809.

[High school classmates of Rachael spread the rumor that she was a “hermaphrodite” as a revenge. Ends with “Rachel, even with that rumor, you were one of the most popular girls in school. I mean, everyone wanted to be like you. One girl wanted to be like you so much, she stuffed her pants with a tootsie roll.”]

Intersex Society of North America (2001). Freedom of Choice for Intersex People. A draft resolution for the 2002 National Organization for Women convention. Available from ISNA; National Organization for Women (2001). Freedom of Choice for Intersex Girls: A Girl’s Right to Choose. Resolution passed at the 2002 NOW convention. Available from <www.now.org>; Traditional Values Coalition (2001). NOW Has Found a New Group to Exploit for Political Purposes: Hermaphrodites. Press release on July 17, 2001.

VIII. Books to Request Libraries to Carry

Books on this list are not necessarily recommended as a text (the Dreger anthology is the best because it includes many perspectives, including many intersex people’s) course, but nonetheless good resource for students and teachers.

Kessler, S. (1998). *Lessons from the Intersexed*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Dreger, A. (1998). *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Fausto-Sterling, A. (2000). *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Human Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books.

Colapinto, J. (2000). *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl*. New York: Harper Collins.

[Disregard the author’s essentialist, anti-trans, anti-feminist, and otherwise conservative politics and focus on how this little child felt as he grew up—because his experience is similar to that of many intersex children, although he is technically not intersex.]

For more information about intersex, or list of additional resources, please visit <www.isna.org>.

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