

Abstracts:

Intersex and transgender activism in South Africa

Thamar Klein

South Africa is one of the most progressive countries worldwide regarding the rights of intersexed and transsexual people. Surprisingly the success for formal protection was not achieved through a local 'mass' movement of people with variations of sex development and/or gender identity *against* institutions - which one might consider to be necessary in any struggle of acceptance – but began *within* institutions through the Technical Committee responsible for drafting the Interim Constitution. This paper addresses the distinctive South African situation with its diversity of people to be addressed while having a closer look at the term movement. I point out that even though people with variations of sex development and/or gender identity are often discussed as a single group, the complex intersectionality of e.g. class, religion, ethnicity, skin colour, income, and so on, places individuals at very different positions in life and lets them inhabit this 'single' category in very diverse ways. The objective of this article is to provide an overview on the activism and struggles that have taken place since the end of Apartheid to improve the situation of people with variations of gender identity and/or sex development.

Intersex movements and dichotomous gender norms – between emancipation and restauration. A critical-biological Intervention.

Heinz Voss

Gender shows features of dissolution in Germany – in people's real lives and experiences as well as on an institutionalized level. The intersex movement, which draws attention to the violent medical treatment practices of children of 'ambiguous sex' since the 1990s has a crucial part in this. Since then this medical treatment practice is under discussion and subject to change. However, further radical struggles are necessary. In the current societal debate biological arguments are used to argue against the current treatment. In this debate it is mentioned that one of only two genders/sexes is already formed in the fetal development or very early after birth. Chromosomes and hormones are supposed to determine gender dichotomously. It is stated that in light of these unambiguous 'female' or 'male' sexed/gendered states that manifest themselves so early, operative and hormonal gender assignments are (often) not possible. This argumentation is also used by some people who are active in intersex movements. In this article the problems of such an argumentation is shown. If there has to be a reference to biology – which is not necessary

really – then such biological theories should be favored which doubt dichotomous gender/sex. Such critical biological theories are introduced here. The article understands itself as a future-oriented intervention from a theoretical, critical-biological perspective. The addressee is mainly the ‘intersex movement’ because it combines emancipatory struggles against theories of dichotomous gendering which by contrast does not apply to a number of other societal movements.

DSD Debates: Social Movement Organizations’ Framing Disputes Surrounding the Term ‘Disorders of Sex Development’

Robby Davidson

This article addresses the controversial term ‘Disorders of Sex Development’, or ‘DSD’, through a comparative analysis of the ways in which three intersex social movement groups have framed and debated over the terminology. Theoretical insights from Alberto Melucci are taken as a point of departure to emphasize the production of cultural codes, in this case terminology, as integral actions pursued by contemporary social movement organizations and demonstrate how the particular frames of each organization are related to each organization’s point of engagement with the medical discourse regarding intersex.

Transgendered children in schools

Mark Natacha Hellen

This paper examines the specific position of transgendered children in schools. It presents research which suggests that the age when transgendered children become aware of their gender identity may be much younger than commonly appreciated. It also questions evidence and assumptions that transgendered children tend to stop being transgendered as they get older and as such raises questions regarding how transgendered children, who conceal their gender identities, can be given access to equal opportunities in schools.