

Intersex and the Health and Medical Humanities
Edited Volume CFP (with interest from Emerald Press)
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In 2000, Anne Fausto-Sterling wrote that “labelling someone a man or a woman is a social decision. We may use scientific knowledge to help us make the decision, but only our beliefs about gender – not science – can define our sex.” Fausto-Sterling made clear that the medicalization of intersex bodies is not (in almost all cases) based on the illness of bodies so diagnosed but on the social emergency medical practitioners imagine they cause. Not much has changed since 2000. We live in a moment when intersex bodies continue to be unnecessarily medicalized, treated as medical emergencies, and surgically and hormonally impinged upon without their consent, despite persistent pressure from human rights activists and organizations on hospitals, doctors, and professional medical bodies to cease these harmful practices.

Given the social and cultural binary sex and gender imperative that compels current medical protocols, we see the potential for literature, film, and fine art, as well as the critical evaluation of these mediums, to challenge the status quo of medical practices. The Medical Humanities has always represented such a challenge to the medical treatment of bodies by applying humanities-based knowledge to medical education, drawing on the perspectives of literary studies, critical theory, fine arts, philosophy, and more to broaden and enrich our understanding of and approaches to medicine. Indeed, the Medical Humanities has become a field of study in its own right and has been the framework for a breadth of academic work within various humanities disciplines that take medicine and medical practice as their object of critical study. Recently, the Health Humanities has sought to resist the Medical Humanities’ focus on illness by asking how the humanities might provide new contexts for thinking about embodied wellness in medicine. We encourage contributors to use either of these tool kits to ask how humanities-based knowledge can increase the visibility, livability, and thriving of intersex people and thereby interrogate the ongoing medicalization of intersex bodies. A specifically medical and/or health humanities-based approach to intersex has yet to be cohered, and we feel that the urgency of the current moment demands it. We welcome papers that explore the following, though other pertinent submissions will also be considered:

- intersex artistic production and its representation of medicine
- critical analysis of medical texts on intersex
- intersectional analyses of the medicalization of intersex bodies (particularly the role of settler colonialism, racism, and classism)
- the representation of intersex in various forms of media
- feminist approaches to intersex medical management
- analyses of nomenclature (Disorders/Differences of Sex Development; Variations of Sex Characteristics, etc.)
- critical disability studies approaches to intersex.
- a comparative reading of Health and Medical Humanities approaches to intersex

- a historical overview of intersex political organizing in relation to medicalization

We welcome abstracts of 500 words by December 15, 2019, with full articles of 5000 words required by mid-May 2020. Submissions and questions can be directed to Drs. Dykstra and Jones Square at k.dykstra@umanitoba.ca.