DESCRIPTION: Western gender-critical thinkers such as philosophers, sociologists and anthropologists have been studying the ways in which gender ideologies influence the male/female, nature/culture and mind/body dichotomies in scientific and medical knowledge. Their critique was directed at the unaccounted use of the heterosexual viewpoint as a natural fact, overlooking and marginalizing those who cannot meet the male/female dichotomy. For example, people that were born with both male and female sex characteristics.

In medical publications this variety of conditions is known as “disorders of sex development”, “(pseudo)hermaphroditism”, or “intersexuality”. In this course we will close-read the Dutch medical case studies of “patients” with atypical sex anatomies. Subsequently, with the help of international academic critics, we will make a (discourse) analysis of sex and gender ideologies that informed medical practice in the Netherlands from 1940 up until now. We will zoom in on how intersexuality became a medical problem, that was supposed to be cured with surgery, hormone replacement therapy and withholding of medical information.

Looking closely at both the original Dutch medical texts and the international scholarly endeavors that deconstructed medical knowledge as contingent and situated, this course provides students with a toolkit to develop their own ways of challenging gender dichotomies in science and medicine. Dutch biomedical case studies on intersexuality will be studied as well as efforts to deconstruct these assumptions.

To reach an understanding of how the scientific and medical discourses on sex and gender influence lived experiences of people with intersex conditions, we will view and discuss personal stories of this group along with analyzing the medical viewpoints.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 36 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
- Lectures
- Student presentations
- Viewings of documentaries
- Class discussions on the readings

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
- Midterm 1 - 20%
- Midterm 2 - 20%
- Final Paper - 30%
- Presentation and participation - 30%

Midterm 1
Write a 3-page (750 w) discourse analysis of one of the medical or scientific texts in which you point out the “truths” of gender binary and/or heterosexual matrix. (Hand in (printed) during the class meeting 6)

Midterm 2
Write a 3-page (750 w) essay or review on the voices of people with intersex conditions as found in their publications or in documentaries. Elaborate on your doubts and fascinations. (Hand in (print) during the class meeting 9)

Final Paper
4-page (1000 w) research paper or essay employing knowledge learned in the course on an international medical or scientific publication on “intersexuality”. The different requirements for your research paper or essay will be discussed in class. During the last meeting all papers will be shared via oral presentations in an ‘academic conference’ setting. Hand in the final paper (printed) during the class meeting 12.

Presentation and participation
In the very last class we will simulate an academic conference setting in which all students will by turn be chair, speaker and discussant. The presentations in which students place the class readings in context of heterosexual assumptions and gender ideologies will be 5 minutes exactly. The chair will be in charge of time and lead the discussion.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course students will be able to:
- understand the (biological) background of different intersex conditions;
- gain insight into the history of intersexuality in the Netherlands in an international context;
- analyze and deconstruct how scientific and medical regimes impact experiences of people with intersex conditions, as well as societal views on sex/gender;
- describe how medical and social scientific disciplines produce different knowledge on gender in the Netherlands, and how dominant discourses are being affirmed (or not);
- present their findings in an academic way (through group discussions, written documents, and oral presentations).

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Since IES Abroad Amsterdam courses are designed for students to take advantage of the instructor’s unique contribution, and because the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction, regular class attendance is mandatory. In addition, students are expected to be on time for classes and related field/study trips.

Excused absences apply in cases of illness (students must present a doctor’s note), and compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control. Please note that missing a flight on the day of class does not fit in this category. Each unexcused absence will lead to a 0.5 point (of a 1-10 scale) deduction of your final grade.

If a student shows a pattern in (excused and unexcused) absences, students may be subject to an Academic Review, including—but not limited to—a letter sent to their home school, a probationary period, or exclusion from the program entirely.

CONTENT:

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<td>Sex and Science in NL</td>
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<tr>
<td>session 1</td>
<td>Introduction: What is intersexuality?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 12 June</td>
<td>getting to know each other</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30am-12.30pm</td>
<td>practical and academic course details</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>what is intersexuality?</td>
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<td>how to read medical texts?</td>
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### Week 1:
**session 2**  
**Wed 14 June**  
1.30-4.30pm

**Sex and Science in NL**

*How do we gain insight into scientific epistemologies?*

- how to perform discourse analysis? (1)
- what is the history of medicalization of intersex in the Western world? (2)
- viewing and discussing 1st documentary

### Week 2:
**session 3**  
**Mon 19 June**  
09.30am-12.30pm

**Intersex as Legal Issue**

*What does the law have to do with it?*

- position of intersex and transgender under the Dutch law (3)
- a doctor’s view on the ethics (4), (5)
- viewing and discussing 2nd documentary

### Week 2:
**session 4**  
**Wed 21 June**  
1.30-4.30pm

**Intersex as Legal Issue**

*Rethink intersexuality?*

- intersexuality from surgical perspective (6), (7)
- understanding the ideology of gender

### Week 3:
**session 5**  
**Mon 26 June**  
09.30am-12.30pm

**Intersex as Medical Issue**

*Doctor knows best: withholding the truth.*

- discourse of medical case reports (8a), (8b), (8c)
- medical protocols, now and then (9), (10)

### Week 3:
**session 6**  
**Wed 28 June**  
1.30-4.30pm

**Intersex as Medical Issue**

*Psychologists: It is better not to talk about it.*

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<th>Week 3:</th>
<th>Session 6</th>
<th>Wed 28 June</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intersex as Medical Issue</strong></td>
<td><strong>Psychologists: It is better not to talk about it.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hand in Midterm paper 1</strong></td>
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<td>Week 4: session 7</td>
<td>Mon 3 July 09.30am-12.30pm</td>
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<td><strong>How was it Cured?</strong></td>
<td>Surgeons: it is easier to cut a hole than built a pole.</td>
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<td>• surgery: the influence of technical opportunities and the surgeon’s beliefs (14), (15), (16), (17)</td>
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<td>• viewing and discussing 4th documentary</td>
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<td>preparatory readings (14), (15), (16) and (17)</td>
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<th>Week 4: session 8</th>
<th>Wed 5 July 1.30-4.30pm</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How was it Cured?</strong></td>
<td>Patients know better: finding out the truth.</td>
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<td>• women with XY chromosomes: an ethics perspective (18)</td>
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<td>• women with XY chromosomes: a personal perspective (19)</td>
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<td>preparatory readings (18) and (19)</td>
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<th>Week 5: session 9</th>
<th>Mon 10 July 09.30am-12.30pm</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How was this Care Experienced?</strong></td>
<td>Emergence of the Intersex Societies.</td>
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<td>• how was care evaluated by people with an intersex condition themselves? (20), (21), (22)</td>
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<td>• what is the present voice of intersex advocacy groups? (23) + internet search</td>
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<td>• instructions on final paper writings</td>
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<td>preparatory readings (20), (21), (22) and (23), find additional online resources</td>
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<td>hand in Midterm paper 2</td>
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<th>Week 6: session 11</th>
<th>Mon 17 July 09.30am-12.30pm</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How to Study Sex and Science?</strong></td>
<td>What to learn from Sex and Science in the Dutch case?</td>
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<td>• present issues regarding intersexuality (27)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>preparatory readings (27)</td>
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### Week 6:

**session 12**  
**Wed 19 July**  
1.30-4.30pm

| How to Study Sex and Science? |  
|-------------------------------|---|
| Final presentations. |  
| • presentations on final papers, discussion |  
| • closings and feedback |  
| prepare 5-minute presentation in academic format on final paper |  
| hand in Final Paper |  

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


RECOMMENDED READINGS: