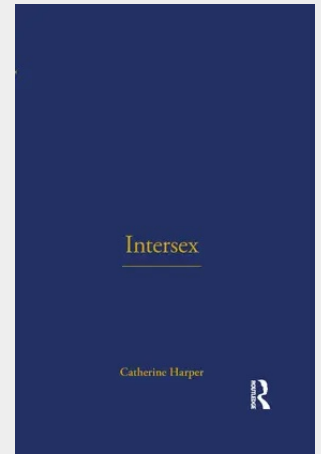


Harper

Intersex

Intersex' is the condition whereby an individual is born with biological features that are simultaneously perceived as male and female. Ranging from the ambiguous genitalia of the true 'hermaphrodite' to the 'mildly or internally intersexed', the condition may be as common as cleft palate. Like cleft palate, it is hidden and surgically altered, but for very different reasons. This important book draws heavily on the personal testimony of intersexed individuals, their loved ones, and medical carers. The impact of early sex-assignment surgery on an individual's later life is examined within the context of ethical and clinical questions. Harper challenges the conventional and radical 'treatment' of intersexuality through non-consensual infant sex-assignment surgery. In doing so she exposes powerful myths, taboos, and constructions of gender - the perfect phallus, a bi-polar model of gender and the infallibility of medical decisions. Handling sensitive material with care, this book deepens our understanding of a condition that has itself only been medically understood in recent years.



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