

Roberta De Nardi, *The Management of Intersexuality in Biomedicine Approach: the Incorporation of Sexual Dimorphism*

Intersexuality challenges one of the most solid principles of Western epistemology: sexual dimorphism. This raises interesting questions which involve the nature/culture debate, calling into question dichotomies like man/woman or sex/gender. The ethnographic research conducted at the Regina Margherita Hospital in Turin emphasizes a contradiction: biomedicine intervenes systematically to correct what appears to be a “fact of nature”. From a biomedical perspective, the body that is characterized by “ambiguous” genitals represents an “emergency”, since it would potentially lead to an ambiguous development of all the other levels. Adapting intersex genitals to the norm would limit the spread of their ambiguity and allow for the development of a “stable” gender identity and sexual orientation, conforming to the heterosexual standard. Far from positively affecting the health of the intersex, the clinical management, through sex assignment, hormonal therapy and surgery, is one of the devices through which “normal” men and women are incorporated and the heterosexual matrix reproduced.

Sara Garbagnoli, *Denaturalizing Normality. The Paradoxical Questioning Promoted by Gender and Sexuality Studies*

Are sex or sexuality social structures? Which is their *modus operandi*? Which are the links with other hierarchical categories of social space such as class or race? These are a few questions that *Gender and Sexuality Studies*, in the variety of their approaches and methodologies, have enabled us to express. Starting from an historical and a theoretical analysis of a selection of the texts that since the mid-1970s mainly contributed to the emergence of this intellectual domain (Butler, Chauncey, Delphy, Halperin, Scott, Sedgwick, Wittig), this article aims at reconstructing how these studies question the naturalization of sex and sexuality. The hypothesis that this contribution sketches out is that, in denaturalising sex classes and classifications, *Gender and Sexuality Studies*

go beyond the comprehension of the sexual order's functioning and more generally deal with the process of racialization questioning the grounds of the belief that social order is a natural one.

Beatrice Gusmano, *Homonormativity in Contemporary Italian Workplaces: New Hierarchical Horizons?*

The object of this paper is to present how homosexual male workers in managerial positions manage their non-heterosexual identities in Italian public and private workplaces. The 7 interviews analyzed here are part of a larger set of 34 narrative interviews conducted between 2007 and 2008 to workers that had come out at least with one person in the workplace. The professional dimension is the central theme of these narratives, whose dominant feature is the adherence to hegemonic masculinity. At the same time, it draws a clear distinction with the homosexual male, which is precisely described in stereotypical terms that are the basis of discrimination against homosexuals. This positioning reveals how non-heterosexual identities differ one from the other, creating a hierarchy between privileged homosexualities – usually the ones that differ less from the norm – and stigmatized ones – presented as the more transgressive by the professional workers object of this paper.

Nerina Milletti e Ivana Pintadu, *The Gardener, the Garden and her Roses. Homoeroticism in Rivolta Femminile and in Carla Lonzi's Writings*

Our aim is to contribute to the history of Rivolta Femminile, a very influential feminist group of the Seventies, in order to find connections between some women of Rivolta and the lesbian & gay movement in Rome, Turin and Milan. We shall also take into account the writings of Carla Lonzi, one of the most famous Italian feminist thinkers and charismatic leader of Rivolta Femminile. “Like a gardener with her roses” (as she liked to be described) she trained the women in this movement through the practice of consciousness raising. Our analysis is focused first on her diary, *Taci, anzi parla. Diario di una femminista* (1978) to highlight the primary importance of her love relationships with other women, and in particular with “Sara”, key figure of her autobiography. Finally, we shall look at her well-known essay, *La donna clitoridea e la donna vaginale* (1970), to highlight both the originality of Lonzi's thoughts on female sexuality and the existing proximities of her analysis with lesbian theories and concepts.

Massimo Perinelli, «*Second Bite of the Apple*». *The Sexual Freedom League and Revolutionary Sex in 1960s United States*

The Sexual Freedom League was a sexual liberation group that existed from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. Today, the SFL is largely forgotten,

despite the great popularity and attention it enjoyed. This article emphasizes the earnest and diverse attempts to develop a “revolutionary sexuality” in this period by reexamining the archival materials on the SFL. Countering the tendency of today’s historiography to dismiss facets of the sexual freedom movement of the 1960s as either irrelevant, sexist, or politically misleading, the article emphasizes that both men and women developed autonomous agencies, pursuing their respective desires within the historical momentum labeled as the sexual revolution.

Massimo Prearo, *The Forgotten Roots of the Queer Theory: a Genealogy That Has to Be Reconstructed*

The recent academic success of the sexuality and gay and lesbian studies is crowned by enthusiastic celebrations, nonetheless quite misguided. This article aims to introduce some forms of homosexual knowledge not reducible to an academic will to know. In particular, inspired by authors and writers such as Guy Hocquenghem, Mario Mieli, Monique Wittig and Teresa de Lauretis, it measures the gap between the current approach to “gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender” identities, abstractly GLBT, as an academic theoretical one, and a queer-experience approach. In light of this queer approach, Foucault’s work appears as a point of no return from which the history of sexuality is now entered in its theoretical moment, leaving aside other radically “different” forms of knowledge. Foucault’s contribution is one of a border knowledge beyond which one can think and practice a dissident politics of identity, defined as an ethics and aesthetics of critical queer subjectivities.

Laura Schettini, *A Sex Which is Not a Sex. Medicine, Hermaphroditism and Intersex in Italy between the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Century*

This paper explores in a historical perspective the relationship between hermaphroditism and medicine from the end of the nineteenth to mid twentieth century. Through the analysis of some cases of “sex doubt”, we discuss the way in which the scientific literature and the popular press have addressed this issue. The text shows how hermaphroditism has become the testing ground of cultures and practices that affected the entire society of the period. In particular, the ratio of hermaphroditism/medicine is particularly effective for investigating the social and cultural meaning of gender binarism and the growing importance that surgery has recently gained in the area of sexuality and gender.

Serena Tolino, *Homosexual Identity Before the Court in Contemporary Egypt and Lebanon*

This paper analyzes the judicial practice regarding homosexuality in two countries, Egypt and Lebanon. There is not a law against homosexuality in

Egypt, but male homosexuals are punished according to art. 9.c of law 10/1961, which criminalizes the habitual practice of male prostitution. On the contrary in Lebanon, art. 534 of the Penal Code clearly criminalizes «sexual acts against nature». However, homosexuality is slowly being normalized in this country. It is clear that homosexual acts are still criminalized in both countries, but the approach is quite different: while in Egypt all the actors in the legal field adhere to a dominant discourse which focuses on the assumption that homosexuality is a perversion, in Lebanon competitive discourses are emerging, thanks to Helem and other groups whose members define themselves as homosexuals and have a human-rights approach, contributing to transform the discourse on homosexuality in the Middle East.