

Class #17 – Lecture Outline
Understanding Transgender and Transsexualism; Peer Review of Outlines

1. *Ma Vie en Rose* (1997, Alain Berliner) - In-Class writing/film discussion

2. **Historical Perspectives on Transgender: Sampson, Craft, Tipton**

3. **Student Presentation**

3. **Contemporary Perspectives on Transsexualism:
Social Constructionist, Psychiatric, Biological Perspectives**

Social Constructionism-

transsexualism as a manifestation of:

- (a) performative freedom in gender roles
- (b) logical outcome of rigidly defined categories of gender and sexual orientation
- (c) gender dysphoria—logical outcome of gender stereotyping and homophobia- sense of “being born into the wrong body”

4. **Peer Review: Outlines, Essay #2**

Social Constructionism-

transsexualism as a manifestation of:

- (a) performative freedom in gender roles
- (b) logical outcome of rigidly defined categories of gender and sexual orientation
- (c) gender dysphoria—logical outcome of gender stereotyping and homophobia- sense of “being born into the wrong body”
- (d) Solutions to issue of extreme gender dysphoria— social change, legal advocacy, counseling/therapy/education, not surgery or hormonal treatment

b. Psychiatric Definition of Gender Dysphoria/Transsexualism

- (a) Deeply rooted psychic split between gender identity of the mind and body—clinically distinct from normal curiosity about the bodily differences between the sexes—source may be social/familial or biological
- (b) Part of a spectrum of body dysmorphic disorders
- (c) Not necessarily connected to other mental health issues
- (d) Hormonal treatment and sex reassignment surgery treatment are effective in many cases
- (e) Counseling post-surgery is often necessary to deal with transformations in individual identity and negative reactions/discrimination in various spheres of society.

c. Biological Essentialism

- (a) Asserts idea of a core gender identity
 - Sees transsexualism as caused by hormonal problems in fetal development resulting in a gender split between body/mind
- (b) Optimal treatment: hormonal, surgical

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