Acknowledgements

The work of this thesis took place on the unceded Coast Salish territories of the W’SANEC and Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt nations) peoples; the S wxwú7mesh, Tsleil-Waututh, and Musqueam nations; and Treaty 7 territory of the Nakoda (Stoney) and Tsuut ina nations and the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) Confederacy. I am an uninvited settler on this land. I was raised in a German-Canadian family and am a first generation Canadian citizen on my mother’s side. She moved to Vancouver from Hamburg, Germany in the 1970’s. My father is a first generation Canadian citizen, born in Prince Rupert on the territories of the Tsimshian, Haida, Gitxsan, and Nisga’a territories, and his parents moved from Europe in the 1940’s and 1950’s. I moved to Victoria in 2017 from the unceded Coast Salish territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tseil-Waututh nations. I self-locate to encourage others to do the same and to acknowledge those who came before me. By acknowledging our ancestors and our relationship to the land, we situate ourselves and honour our personal histories.

The land I grew up on and the land on which I reside, work, and study now were gained through a genocide of various nations and peoples. I do not belong to these lands. I am grateful for all the beauty and wonder these territories contain. I acknowledge my place as an uninvited settler as part of going work towards decolonization.

I would like to thank Dr. Cleves for her mentorship and support; Dr. Saunders for teaching me the value of history for life as well as his work; and Consuela Corvig for the important work she does. I would also like to thank my incredible Honours Cohort for their support and friendship for the past two years.

Table of Contents

In the late summer of 1882, a toddler passed away. This child was well loved. A family in rural

found that the toddler had a well-developed uterus with fallopian tubes and ovaries. This, coupled with a penis or enlarged clitoris and a scrotal sack, led Dr. Cummings to conclude the child could be grouped with “the so-called hermaphrodites.”

approaches. As such, this thesis has a narrative hole at its centre.[7] My work is shaped around intersex people, but lacks their words or thoughts. This project is not a history of intersex people but instead it is a history about approaches towards intersex people. That leads to many complications, such as the risk of reproducing harmful discourse and giving people access to

knowledge that can be used for violence against intersex people.[10] "Power produces knowledge" which is why the knowledge of intersex existence has been limited.[11] To challenge the current power structures, historians must betray the hegemony by creating a historiography of intersex existence.

The historiography on intersex people is limited but rich. Alice Dreger's pioneering work on nineteenth and early twentieth-century medical history and hermaphroditism in France and England coined the term "Age of the Gonads" to refer to the practice in 1871-1915 of prioritizing gonads chiefly in the search for the prevailing or "true sex." Elizabeth Reis's book,

built on Dreger's work, looking at intersex history from Early America to the Modern Era. She responded to Dreger's "Age of the Gonads" thesis by writing the history of the two-sex model in America.[12] Geertje Mak entered the conversation with both of these authors in her 2012 work on French and German histories of intersex. She specifically addressed Reis' argument, arguing that Reis misunderstood "Age of the Gonads" and how it related to the two-sex model as Reis suggest that the two-sex model was an example of the "Age of Gonads." Mak argued that the two-sex model is distinct from the "Age of the Gonads" and the two are not synonymous with one another.[13] However, her work chiefly dealt

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[10] Richard Coopey & Alan McKinlay, "Power without knowledge? Foucault and Fordism, c.1900–50," 51, no. 1 (2010), 108-09.

[11] Day Wong, "Foucault Contra Habermas: Knowledge and Power," 51, no. 1 (2007), 3.

[12] The two-sex model was the model of sex which predominated after the Enlightenment in contrast to the prior one-sex model which theorized that genitals were homologous and developed due to the warmth of the womb. It positioned men and women as sociological categories rather than ontological categories. Thomas Lacquer, e-book, Cambridge: Harvard University Press (1992), 6-7. Elizabeth Reis, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 53-4.

[13] Geertje Mak, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 111.

with the way those with doubtful sex conceived of themselves and the body of biographical literature which can give us insight into nineteenth and twentieth century self-understandings of hermaphroditism and intersexness. Siobhan Somerville similarly critiques other historian's work, though not as pointedly as Mak's critique of Reis. Her work came before Reis or Mak but can be

stressed the importance of medical history and relied on this form of discourse as opposed to others.

As George Chauncey discussed in his introduction to historians must incorporate non-medical and legal sources to ensure that vernacular histories do not disappear. Diverse sources also challenge historical narratives, introducing new information.[16] By employing newspapers I can get an idea of non-medical or "expert" opinion and the knowledge or opinion a lay person may encounter when reading the It is with these sources that I argue that discourses of monstrosity and mythicism were applied throughout the century, up until 1890s. The attitudes and language authors employed were contingent on the details of the case, the race and physicality of the individual, as well as their sexuality. Newspapers contain information that shift the narrative of history of discourses about intersex people.

My first chapter looks at medical attitudes prior to the Civil War, seeking the nuance of who was referred to as a monster. In medical texts at this time, we see the use of "monstrosity" wane with regard to white subjects. However, aggressive dehumanization continues in the case of a slave, Ned of Virginia. My second chapter continues past the Civil War and focuses on medical discourse during and after the postbellum era. I again look at the rendering of intersex people as inhuman and the peculiarities of the cases at hand. Historically contextualized racialization as well as sexualization shaped the case write-ups at this time. The third and final chapter looks at some of the newspaper articles and entries about those thought or discovered to

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[16] George Chauncey, (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 10.

be hermaphrodites. I group the articles by type and look at the way authors dehumanize intersex people to assuage popular anxiety about unstable categories.

My thesis ultimately looks at discursive approaches, developments, and differences throughout nineteenth century. Special attention is paid to the ways in which gender, race, and sexuality inform these discourses. I am employing the scholarship of Julian Gill-Peterson, Siobhan Somerville, and C. Riley Snorton in particular to approach the work with an analytical lens informed by trans studies and critical race theory. The emerging field of trans studies offers new approaches to intersex histories as trans and intersex history are deeply intertwined. I want to understand the ways racialization affected who was considered a hermaphodite or monster. How did scientific racism and antiblack medical attitudes affect the discourse we are reading? How does that, in turn, affect the histories of intersex people we have?[17]

Siobhan Somerville's work is a critical approach to queer theory which presumes stability of race. She moves away from working with parallels and looks at the intersections between blackness, racialization, and sexuality. As the nineteenth century treated the body as a legible text, much of her focus is on the juxtaposition between "white" and "black" bodies.[18] C. Riley Snorton's 2017 book, is a racial history of trans identity which argues black gender was treated as fungible prior to the emergence of white trans identity, and was eclipsed by both whiteness and blackness once white trans individuals gain visibility. Julian Gill-Peterson's work directly builds on Snorton's work in Her

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[17] C. Riley Snorton, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 52;omerville; Julian Gill-Peterson, (Minnepolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 2.

[18] Somerville, 9;ichael Foucault, "Introduction," (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), viii.

imagined gaze of her community kept her from disclosing her sex to others until her death.[23] The lady was able to live relatively undiscovered and undisturbed by medical and legal authorities.

The lady died the next day. Dr. Fife promptly examined her, despite the fact that this was against her wishes. He found a scrotum, a long clitoris, and observed that her "canal or Vigina was very much contracted from the natural size in females." He wanted to dissect "the parts" but the lady's friends objected. He lamented the lack of a "full account" of the case and then proceeded to ask the well-read Dr. James Carmichael for assistance with the case.[24]

Dr. Fife's letter to Dr. Carmichael is the only direct and private communication between two individuals in the scope of this project. Though it falls under the umbrella of expert medical discourse, it is not in the same (relatively) public sphere as the other sources. The letter provides an example of a doctor writing on the subject of an intersex person with relatively little to no knowledge. Dr. Fife does not call the lady a hermaphrodite or a monster.[25] The only descriptive label ("half man half woman") for her comes from her servant. Dr. Fife describes himself as "astonished" by the discovery of the lady's nonbinary genitalia. It is possible that Dr. Fife never knew about the existence of so-called hermaphrodites or the possibility of ambiguous/nonbinary

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[23] Geertje Mak wrote that prior to the professionalization of medicine and expanded medical purview, communities monitored intersex individuals/those of doubtful sex. This surveillance contained and isolated these individuals, keeping them from "contaminating" others with their condition. Geertje Mak,

Though the doctor did not identify the 1839 child as a hermaphrodite, the description of the child makes it clear that they had a case of hypospadias. The doctor also details that they had a

ignores the racialized history which appears in medical journals into the mid-nineteenth century. We can assume the babies in these cases were white due to the lack of visibility of their race in the medical documents. Whiteness in the archive is communicated through a lack of race in documents. This is important as the labelling of them as monsters marks them as outliers, rather

be queer, trans, or intersex.[33] When constructing a history of a period during which slavery and the colour line are two prominent issues, one must address how discourses about intersex people varied depending on racialization (or lack thereof). A history which ignores race and which relies on whiteness as a default or "blank slate" on which to construct theses, is an incomplete history.

In the 1847 volume of two cases were published together about two individuals with similar sexual make-up. The first case written by Dr S. H. Harris was about Ned, an eighteen year old slave in Virginia. The report opened with Dr. Harris denying the existence of hermaphrodites, "or those creatures which were at one time supposed to unite in the same individual the distinctive organs of the two sexes."[34] He then went on to discuss how doctors have noticed the existence of "creatures" with "equivocal appearances in their sexual apparatus as to render it exceedingly doubtful as to their sexuality" His use of "creatures" presents as a dehumanizing and hostile term for people with ambiguous or nonbinary bodies. He continues by referring to Ned as a "monster." He described Ned's body, referring to certain parts as more feminine or masculine. The only thing "typical" about Ned is his feet "which resemble very much the males of the African race." He is relatively unconcerned about Ned having a small penis, though he is shocked to discovered that Ned regularly menstruates through the penis. He notes that Ned has a scrotum without testicles. He finishes his report by stating that "the female organs predominate" and that Ned's gonadal make up is likely female. In this we can see the beginnings of the Age of the Gonads. Dr. Harris denies Ned's self-conception as a man and posits that Ned's attraction to women is likely an error of sexual assignment and

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[33] Somerville, 2-3.

[34] S. H. Harris, MD, Case Report (Ann Arbour: HathiTrust, 2008), From University of California, (1847), 121.

dimorphism with racialized bodies. This fed into white supremacist theories. Racial theories of sexual difference created outliers within the white race as it marked white hermaphrodites as random occurrences of “persistence” or “reversion”, rather than a commonplace occurrence.[40] It is vital to understand this with regard to the history of intersex people in America, otherwise we perpetuate archival violence and allow white narratives of intersex experience to eclipse other experiences.[41]

The racialized treatment of Ned is clear through a second case report in the same volume of

comparison between the cases of Ned and Lev. There is clearly a difference between the writing on the two men, the former, Ned, being the subject of dehumanization and mythicization, whereas Lev's case was not reported on in the same manner.

In the nineteenth century, the body was seen as a legible text from which interpretations about the character of a person could be made.[43] Scholars derived theories about race and sex from these practices. To separate the two—to render the two as parallel to each other—limits the

masculine pronouns can be seen as a way to further dehumanize the man he was examining. When he employed the language that the man was used to while also referring to him as a "female", he linked Irish masculinity with femaleness as well as instilled readers, fellow doctors, with the sense that this individual was impossible and his sense of self was contradictory. Dr. Bragg's language was dehumanizing in multiple ways. The juxtaposition of "female" and "he", purposefully disconnected readers from viewing the man as a complete human.

Another visitor from the British Isles came to Boston about sixteen years later. Her name was Sarah Jane B., a thirty-two year English woman and weaver who arrived in America in July 1877. She soon entered the States Almshouse, as an inmate, where she met Dr. Lathrop of Tewksbury, Massachusetts. He published a report on her in the ninety-seventh volume of the .[53] He too, like Dr. Bragg, used juxtaposing language to other Sarah Jane. However, unlike Dr. Bragg, he employed masculine pronouns which Sarah Jane did not use. His medical authority prevailed throughout his article. Though he referred to her as a patient, his language and actions demonstrate how he, like Dr. Bragg, treated her as either suspect or specimen.

Dr. Lathrop introduced Sarah Jane B. in his case-report in the following manner,

> He entered the institution in a women's dress, and gave the name of Sarah Jane B. […]
>
> Suspicion was at once directed to the sex by the voice and general appearance. He also, almost immediately, requested that facilities for shaving the beard might be provided.[54]

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[53] W. H. Lathrop, M.D., , Case Report (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2007), From Boston Medical Journal, (1877), 577.

[54] Lathrop, 577.

functions" which we reproduce when we overemphasize them in our work.[64] What is visible or invisible derived from colonial (il)logic which prioritized the preservation and accessibility of some sources over others. To prevent further unnecessary reproduction of that (il)logic, historians must incorporate newspapers and other marginalized sources. Through this incorporation, historians can also gain further understanding of the depth of various histories. There are worlds to uncover here.

Till Death Do Us Part

In the American midwest, two entries appeared in the (Chicago) and newspapers about couples where one of the partners was, allegedly, intersex. The first article, from 1876, discussed a local woman who wanted to earn money by putting her husband on display. The second, published in 1891, revolved around a Professor from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who the police wanted for bigamy after he left his wife who he implied duped him into marriage at a young age. Both articles either imply or include dehumanizing rhetoric.

An anonymous woman in Chicago attempted to make a living by displaying her husband out of their apartment in the winter of 1876. She sent in an application to make money from the exhibition to the comptroller of the city, a Mr. Hayes, who referred her to the mayor. The Chicago caught wind of this matter during the process of her appeal to the mayor. The writer of the entry in the "City Hall" section of the newspaper referred to her as a "woman who has not a very high idea of decency" and to her husband as a "one of those

[64] Fuentes, 43.

called a hermaphrodite”.

authorities of Kentucky found this out and placed a warrant for his arrest under the charge of bigamy. Though his second wife, Florence, desired his arrest, his third wife, Minnie, of Kentucky, was faithfully devoted to him. It was her father who reported to the authorities that his daughter's lover's first wife was a hermaphrodite. This was in effort to secure Dr. Foster's arrest. The complicated case finished with a note that a judge was hearing arguments from the professor on receiving a writ of habeas corpus so that officers from Kentucky could not take him to the state to be arrested.[69]

The mention of Carrie in the article is brief. The author mentions she "was" a hermaphrodite and that the professor "married it" when he was sixteen years old.[70] The use of "it", is subtle enough to slip by a reader skimming the passage. In the sources I looked at, it was the first time I had seen an adult being referred to as an "it". The use of "it" is one of the most pointed ways to dehumanize a person. Though the author's discussion of Carrie was not exhaustive, the brief statement ensured that readers did not, for a moment, consider her as anything but a creature. This, paired with the mentioning of Professor Foster's age at the time of marriage, presented her as someone who had deceived a naive young man. She was not only a creature, but a trickster as well, one who had to dupe someone to be in a relationship with her. Like others in medical literature, such as Sarah Jane B., authors associated her with deceit. Carrie's body was not only at fault but also her character.

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69 "They're After Him," Apr. 11, 1891, From Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers.

clothes] clothed a women."[76] The author did not report any specific actions of Titie's that might have caused suspicion or painted her as nefarious, rather, they extrapolated to call her character into question. After the physicians involved discussed the details of her death at an inquest, they examined her body. A physician involved then pronounced that she was an "imperfectly developed man."[77] This diagnosis as a black male, similar to Taylor, evoked the white fear of cross-dressing black men. The author's questioning of Titie's character validated that fear. Titie Young moved from recently deceased in the article to a potential, and now neutralized, threat. The author, like many, also thought that Titie was of a "singular" nature, and others like her would not appear.[78]

Mythical Language

A small city, Central, in Colorado reported on a case of a rather notable nature in winter of 1890. One of their past residents, Annie Gibbons, who had left Central for the city of Leadville in the mountains, was the victim of attempted murder. Annie had lived in Leadville for the past few years and occupied her time as a "female detective." After a fight, "her solid man" attacked Annie with an axe. A nearby woman and her daughter who happened upon her bloody body thought she was dead. However, this attempted murder was not the chief concern of the article in the Colorado paper. Rather the murder gave visibility to the fact that Annie was "reported to be one of those mythical creatures—hermaphrodites." The author validated that accusation by mentioning her "coarse" voice" and "heavy" features. They referred to her as a

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[76] "A Queer Case."

[77] Ibid. This language draws on the concept of women as "imperfectly development men" from the one-sex model. Laquer, 28.

[78] Ibid.

"terrifying" and "confusing" creature. This is also in part due to her sexuality, as Annie was with a woman romantically before she partnered with her "solid man", who she was living with at the time. In this article, the conjoining of discourses of mythicism and monstrosity appear.[79]

Like the author of the article on Titie Young, this author seeded doubt in readers by referring to Annie, before any details of the case or her person were mentioned, as "she, or he, or it." They also similarly presented Annie as a singular and improbable individual. They referred to Annie as a "mythical creature", referring to the origins of the term hermaphrodite, from Greek myth. As if this was not perplexing enough for readers, the author also mentioned how Annie had previously been with a woman with whom she "would fight like a tiger" if her "mistress" was seen talking to any men. Her transition from being with a woman to being with a man, supposedly terrified and confused Leadville neighbours.[80] According to Christina Matta, hermaphrodites with ambiguous sexualities were especially troubling. Some authorities prioritized ensuring heterosexuality over gonads when pronouncing one's "true sex." When an individual had an ambiguous or "deviant" sexuality, the sexuality problematized reassignment.[81] Ambiguity was antithetical to the bordered and divided nature of the nineteenth century, for people like Annie Gibbons, further ambiguity prevented authorities from asserting their power and retrofitting them into the societal norms. Annie Gibbons was doubly ambiguous, not only was she a "hermaphrodite", but a "psychic hermaphrodite" as well. This also rendered her doubly impossible and ever more troubling. Despite Gibbons being a victim of domestic

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79 "Annie Gibbons," Dec. 01, 1880, From Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers.

80 "Annie Gibbons."

violence, the author finishes the discussion of her case by saying that no one “cares” to find out the details of the case or “who she is now.”[82] Her being a so-called mythical creature, ensured that others wanted her existence would be minimized. A crime like attempted murder was, allegedly, dismissed because of her ambiguity. One can see the parallels between this case and modern ones, where violence against queer, trans, and intersex people is minimized, under-reported, and wilfully ignored. However, the author and townspeople of Leadville were not the only ones complicit in violence against intersex people in 19th century America.

Conclusion

The people in the above articles and reports were victims of a variety of violence. From the violence of medical experimentation, to the violence of the archive, to police violence, and interpartner violence. Authorities and authors dehumanized and othered them. Discourse as discontinuous production of language created variations in the ways people were discussed, but this discourse was also shaped by racialization, scientific beliefs, and a century of structures and borders. Violence was a current throughout the discourse.

Discourse can be understood as the violence we do to things.[83] The violence done onto intersex (or suspected intersex) individuals in nineteenth century America appears through the language used by doctors and reporters. There are discursive differences based on time and race. These differences render characterizing one period as chiefly an example of one form of linguistic dehumanization over another incorrect. The variations that appear with regard to racialization reveal a greater (il)logic behind authors’ discursive decisions.

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[82] “Annie Gibbons.”

[83] Koch, 18.

My first chapter looked at the waning use of monstrosity in medical reports with regard to white people in nineteenth century America. Where white people like the late Lady Dr. Fife

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