

TRANSSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note on Terminology: German sexologist and reformer Mangus Hirschfeld coined the term “transsexual” (and also the term “transvestite”) soon after 1900. American Charles “Virginia” Prince, the founder of the cross dressing organization Tri-Ess, popularized the term “transgender” in the 1970s. In general usage, “transgender” refers to individual and group behaviors and attitudes that do not fit the male or female roles usually assigned by society at birth. Transgender people run the gamut of sexual orientations. On the other hand, “transsexual” refers to a physical change over the course of an individual’s life in sexuality, usually mediated by hormone therapy or surgery. Often, transsexual people experiment behaviorally with cross dressing, transvestitism, and related lifestyles before opting for transsexual change. To further complicate matters, “transgender” is increasingly used by people who reject rigid clinical or sociological definitions of gender and sexuality in favor of their own, sometimes fluid self-definitions including “inter-sex.” We should be careful not adopt “disease models” that define trans-genderism and trans-sexuality as pathologies.

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