


Vocabulary:

Intersex:

An umbrella term for a wide spectrum of physical variations that cause a person to develop primary or secondary sex characteristics that don't fit with the traditional medical understanding of "male" or "female" bodies. 

Perisex/Dyadic/Endosex:

Not intersex. Dyadic is the most common term, but perisex and endosex were coined because dyadic has a complicated, semi-racialized origin.

Intersexism, Interphobia:

Sexism and oppression on the basis of being intersex.

Cisgender:

Fully identifying as the gender assigned to you at birth. Has nothing to do with anatomy.

Transgender:

Not fully identifying as the gender assigned at birth.

Pericis:

A newly coined word meaning perisex and cis!

IAFAB/IAMAB/CAFAB/CAMAB:

Incorrectly/intersex or coercively assigned female/male at birth. This is an intersex-only term.

Hermaphrodite: a slur against intersex people that is also medically inaccurate.

LGBTQIA2S+ faculty, staff, and graduate students



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Intersex Allyship 101 for Trans People



Intersex and trans people have a lot of things in common, but because so few intersex voices get platformed, the differences go ignored.

Many intersex people's issues are non-intersex people's issues too, but those differences are just as important. So let's talk about it!

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Intersexism

We can broadly categorize intersexism into two groupings: **medical discrimination** and **social discrimination**.

Most of what we call **medical discrimination** is based on communal, anecdotal knowledge. The field is under-researched and many doctors don't stop to consider how their practice might be continuing a centuries-long program of white supremacist violence against variant bodies. Intersex people of all ages can experience genital mutilation, be forced on hormones or harrassed into unnecessary surgery. For example, doctors are still coercively sterilizing intersex people by claiming they have gonadal cancer. The only way to stop this is through legislation and education.

Social discrimination is varied and often violent. Assault, harassment and isolation can happen to visibly intersex people and people who get outed as intersex. Some intersex people may be read as trans and face misdirected transphobia. The best way to combat this is to educate yourself and your community. Shut down intersexism when you see it and encourage everyone to approach the diversity of human sex with curiosity instead of judgment!

Ending Intersex Tokenization

Intersex people are often alienated by a seemingly pro-trans argument that goes something like this: "If there are more than two sexes, there must be more than two genders!" This line of thought, although valid on its face, inappropriately equates the experiences of nonbinary and intersex people.

In and around the trans community, intersex variations are used as a prop, often without any understanding of the intersex community or its struggles. This is tokenization, and it drives a wedge between the trans and intersex communities when we should be working together.

It is essential to understand that intersex people and trans people are different groups. There are many cisgender intersex people!

That said, we have many shared interests, like ending discrimination, getting affirming, competent and accessible healthcare and changing the way our societies view bodies and gender. So let's have each other's backs without diminishing our individualities or objectifying the other group!



Learn More

intersexequality.com

Opinion articles and news

isna.org

Shut down, but still a good place to learn about different intersex variations

bit.ly/the-rift-between-us

Opinion article about the struggles with intersex/trans solidarity by an intersex trans woman

outrightinternational.org/global-intersex-program

International program focused on intersex advocacy

Get Involved

interactadvocates.org

National advocacy for intersex youth

interconnect.support

Supportive community for intersex people and allies

