

Notes on Five Sexes: Intersexual or Transgendered Humans from Fausto-Sterling, 2000¹.

1. What we call the female: XX- chromosomes;

2. What we call the male: XY- chromosomes:

3. The True Hermaphrodite: “In some true hermaphrodites, the testis and the ovary grow separately, but bilateral; in others they grow together within the same organ. Forming an ovo-testis. Not infrequently, at least some of the gonads functions quite well, producing either sperm cells or eggs, as well as functional levels of the sex hormones— androgens or estrogens. Although in theory it might be possible for a true hermaphrodite to become both father and mother to a child, in practice the appropriate ducts and tubes are not configured so that egg and sperm can meet.” (Fausto-Sterling, 2000:89)

4. Mermes (Pseudo Hermaphrodite in which XY chromosome dominated): “....have testes and XY chromosomes, yet they also have a vagina and a clitoris, and at puberty...often develop breasts. They don not menstruate, however.” (Fausto-Sterling, 2000:89).

5. Femmes (Pseudo Hermaphrodite in which XX chromosome dominate):...have ovaries, two X chromosomes and sometimes a uterus, but they also have at least partly masculine external genitalia. Without medical interventions they can develop beards, deep voices, and adult size penises. “(Fausto-Sterling, 2000:89).

“John Money of John Hopkins, a specialist in the study of congenital sexual-organ defects suggests that intersexuals may constitute as many as 4 percent of births². As I suggest to my students at Brown University, in a student body of about 6000,.....implies that there could be as many as 240 intersexuals on campus.” (from Fausto-Sterling, 2000:88).

“In reality though, few such students would make it as far as Brown in sexually diverse form. Recent advances in physiology and surgical technology now enable physicians to catch most intersexuals at the moment of birth. Almost at once such infants are entered nto a program of hormonal and surgical management so that they can slip quietly into society, as normal heterosexual males and females.”

¹ .Fausto-Sterling, Anne, (2000)) “ Why Male and Female are Not Enough,” Rosenblum, Karen E. and Toni-Michelle C. Travis (eds.), The Meaning of Difference: American Constructions of Race, Sex and Gender, Social Class, and Sexual Orientation, New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc, 2000: 87-92

² This number is very high, and in the 6th edition of Rosenblum and Travis book, Fausto-Sterling article is not repeated, but R & T provides what I suspect is a more accurate statistic on inter-sexed individuals.