Intersex Children and Surgery

Discipline and/or subject:
Medicine, health studies, psychology, gender studies, counseling

Pedagogy:
Case study, in-class discussion, role play

Implementation:
Intersex children are born with bodies that do not match the category of “female” or “male.” In these cases, sometimes called disorders of sex development or differences of sex development, surgery often is done to make the infant's body match a male or female gender assignment. Follow-up studies are rare, so there is little evidence as to whether
these surgeries are either necessary or successful. To facilitate an in-class discussion, have students read Dreger’s article and examine the two websites:

- Website for the (no longer active) Intersex Society of North America: http://isna.org/
- Website for Accord Alliance: http://www.accordalliance.org/

Class activities could involve a discussion of the topic, examining the case study in Alice Dreger’s article, or a role play in which a student might take on the role of a doctor/medical practitioner/counselor talking to the family of an intersex infant.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Participants will be able to describe variations in sex development.
- Participants will be able to summarize ethical considerations in surgical interventions.

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