

interpreters, Ichirazichi, who was also an interpreter to the ruling regent of the Ryukyus and later a minister, asked for “an ointment for the itch”, which cleared his skin, and then complained that the native doctors had treated a malignant boil with moxa to no avail, so Bettelheim provided him with *emplastrum vesicantia* [blistering plaster]. This proved so effective that the patient asked for instruction in western *materia medica*.

In 1849 Bettelheim received a new supply of vaccine matter, and offered to vaccinate the Ryukyans. This was refused, but during an 1851 smallpox epidemic, officials imported smallpox scabs from China to use in variolation, the deliberate inoculation of smallpox matter into healthy children. Bettelheim advised Ichirazichi in how to inoculate into the skin using a lancet—preferably with a drop of human milk!—instead of blowing the smallpox matter into the nose, and reported that the unusually mild course of the disease that year was attributed to the new methods he had taught.

This book gives rare insight into the methods and mindset of early Protestants in East Asia. Bettelheim was haughty and intolerant, but his attitude was far from atypical among missionaries, and he was unusually active in producing translations, dictionaries, and accounts of everything he saw. The book gives rare light on the day-to-day management of remarkably frequent diplomatic encounters in the years before Perry’s 1853–4 mission to Japan, and the next volume—if funded—will contain accounts of Bettelheim’s involvement in that mission. Anthony P Jenkins, as editor, has done a great service to historians in bringing this volume into print, and it is to be hoped that the project will be supported to completion.

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Elizabeth Reis, *Bodies in doubt: an American history of intersex.* Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, pp. xix, 216, £28.50, \$55.00 (hardback 978-0-8018-9155-7).

“To be human is to be physically sexed and culturally gendered” (p. ix), writes Elizabeth Reis in *Bodies in doubt*, a much needed comprehensive history of intersex in the United States from the colonial period to the present. Reis’s long-term perspective allows her to show changing medical, legal and lay interventions around humans who do not fit this description. In colonial America, hermaphrodites were often considered examples of “monstrous births”. By the nineteenth century, physicians had replaced the older conception of hermaphrodites as monsters with a “newer emphasis on personhood” (p. 28) that combined anatomy and moral evaluations of a person’s life. Hermaphrodites were considered suspicious, and closely related to the other newly emerged figure, the “homosexual”—sometimes conceptualized as “mental hermaphrodite”. Nineteenth-century middle-class fears of deceit, fraud, and racial instability also structured the unease in dealing with ambiguously sexed persons. Medical experts claimed the expertise to find a person’s true sex in his or her gonads, though in practice uncertainty persisted. In the twentieth century, concepts of hormonal, chromosomal, and psychological sex were added to the mix. In the 1950s, the Hopkins protocol consolidated the diverse medical approaches under a new treatment regime: they recommended assigning sex early and operating on genitals to make them fit the chosen sex.

Reis’s long-term perspective allows her to make a set of claims regarding the periodization of American intersex. She shows that—contrary to Europe—in the US hermaphroditism was proclaimed to be “impossible” (p. 54) long before the late nineteenth century. But as in Europe, in America gonads ruled as the ultimate

determiners of sex only in theory. In practice, cases of ambiguous sex were settled in the old way: by external anatomy and social and behavioural cues. Reis also shows that societal expectations of gender performance, thought to be an item of mid-twentieth-century intersex treatment protocols, were already part of nineteenth-century treatments. Finally, she argues that a diverse and seemingly random approach was typical for medical interventions on intersexed persons from the seventeenth century onward. Doctors chose a person's sex on a case-to-case basis, weighing ethics, patients' wishes, biological markers and social indicators of sex. When in the early 1950s, John Money, and Joan and John Hampson argued that sex of rearing was the determining factor in the development of a person's gender role, they were building, as Reis shows, on a sense of the importance of psychological sex that had been rising since the 1920s.

With all the idiosyncrasies in the conception and treatment of intersexed persons, there are also constants. Reis argues convincingly that, right up to the present, most medical interventions have been framed by norms of heterosexuality; that is, the desired outcome would be clearly sexed and gendered heterosexual men and women. Treatment success was measured by fulfilment of social goals such as a heterosexual marriage, a desired happy ending that at times led physicians even before the mid-twentieth century to ignore what they perceived as biological evidence of sex. Reis dates interventionist surgery on genitals to the late nineteenth century and reveals how these corrections were already based on heterosexual norms: promote marriage, heterosexual intercourse and avoid homosexual acts.

Reis's long-term approach allows for historical comparison as she excavates consistencies and changes in the conception, perception and medical management of intersex. At times, however, it also makes "intersex" a seemingly stable category, rather than an

umbrella term for a wide array of divergence, variation and disorders that shared one symptom only—sexual ambiguity. One misses—especially in the twentieth-century chapters—a structured and critical engagement with what the physicians' conceptualization of their patients' pathology and physiology beyond their ambiguous sexuality was. Nevertheless, *Bodies in doubt* is a thoughtful contribution to the historical analysis of intersex in the US and provides valuable insights for contemporary debates on the ethics of modern medical management of intersex. This linkage makes it an important read for gender scholars, medical historians and health professionals alike.

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Ivan Crozier (ed.), *Sexual inversion: a critical edition: Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds (1897)*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp. vii, 351, £60.00 (hardback 978-0-230-00803-8).

Ivan Crozier's carefully researched and meticulously produced new critical edition of *Sexual inversion* (1897) will be welcomed not only by researchers in the histories of medicine, psychiatry, sexology and homosexuality, but also by those who teach courses touching on changing attitudes to sexuality in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The original text of *Sexual inversion* (1897) started as a collaboration between the classicist, poet, travel writer and literary critic John Addington Symonds and the medical writer and sexologist Henry Havelock Ellis. When it was published, *Sexual inversion* became not only the first medical textbook in English on the topic of same-sex sexuality, but also one of the first publications (along with works by