



Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World

Anne Fausto-Sterling

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Sex/Gender presents a relatively new way to think about how biological difference can be produced over time in response to different environmental and social experiences.

This book gives a clearly written explanation of the biological and cultural underpinnings of gender. Anne Fausto-Sterling provides an introduction to the biochemistry, neurobiology, and social construction of gender with expertise and humor in a style accessible to a wide variety of readers. In addition to the basics, Sex/Gender ponders the moral, ethical, social and political side to this inescapable subject.

Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World Details

Date : Published April 18th 2012 by Routledge (first published October 1st 2011)

ISBN : 9780415881463

Author : Anne Fausto-Sterling

Format : Paperback 160 pages

Genre : Science, Nonfiction, Feminism, Gender, Lgbt, Gender and Sexuality, Biology, Gender Studies, Psychology, Glbt, Queer

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From Reader Review Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World for online ebook

Magalys says

Don't mind my review, I had to read it for class lol

Jess Grayson says

This book explored the complexities surrounding sex and gender within the medical/scientific sphere. And, while it was an interesting subject matter, it was a bit like reading a textbook due to all the scientific elements (which aren't really my cup of tea to begin with). Plus, the narrator was annoying at times - often switching between an informative and a conversational tone in a manner that came across as odd. Overall, this book basically concludes in saying that we know very little for sure about the way sex and gender manifest in scientific terms. A statement which I could have made with near certainty before picking up this book.

David Lucander says

Pretty good book, but all the X and Y stuff confuses me just as much now that I'm a Ph.D. as it did when I was on the verge of flunking high school. A compact read, would be a nice companion piece for Intro. to Gender Studies or an anthropology class. Fausto-Sterling hammers home the idea: it's not nature or nurture, it's both!

Dino Wong says

A thin book for everyone who is interested in Gender & Science. It attempts to cover most of the controversial topics such as sexual orientation, masculinity & femininity, and biological differences between male & female with sound scientific supports. It is especially suitable for those who have no science background or who just have to have an introduction of sexuality in science. It's a great book in general. No sophisticated jargons were involved I promise. Fausto-Sterling also tried her best to write this fun as funny as she could. And indeed, she made it.

Marcus says

An excellent, thought provoking read covering a variety of issues related to gender, sex, and human anatomy. It identifies and explains a variety of opinions and research on these diverse topics in a way that is graspable by readers of any background. Though short of words, each page is filled with a diversity of

knowledge. A great read to challenge societal preconceptions and learn about the history, psychology, and science of all of us.

Megan Raulerson says

This book is a must read, specifically for those who are trying to gain a greater understanding of the difference between sex and gender, and why these categories are considered socially constructed. I won't lie though, some of this book is genuinely boring but I'd consider it a foundational text and certainly worth the read.

InvincibleGail says

Definitely useful, interesting, and very applicable. Got quite bored in the middle section, but when it got to pink and blue I gained interest again. Lots of the strict science bits lost me and I'm not a huge fan of the tone. However, unraveling the complexity of gender is a hefty task that I can't help but admire.

Paige Ellen Stone says

This is the 3rd book by Ms Fausto-Sterling which I have read. Without question, for me this was the easiest one to read. Ms Fausto-Sterling is by no means a light weight. She is a biologist, feminist and historian of science and is Professor of Biology and Women's Studies at Brown University. Putting it as an understatement, she knows of what she speaks.

And of what she speaks, with great authority, are the multiple factors that go into the formation of what is commonly called, "gender." Most of us have an everyday sense of what gender is. In a sense, it is a throw-away concept, for example, baby boys wear blue, baby girls wear pink. Girls can't throw a baseball nor a football with any kind of authority. It's a "boy" thing. Boys who can't throw or have interests that lay in what is stereotypically the realm of the "female gender" are called sissies. The reverse are called "tom-boys".

As is her wont, Ms Fausto-Sterling brings a multitude of sciences and research to bear on this notion of "gender." She looks at studies done under the auspices of biology, neurology, psychology, anthropology and even history, to bring the reader to question just what s/he actually means when using the word, "gender." This is a phenomenal and thought provoking book. AFS manages to bring into question everything we think we know about gender and so-called gender-based differences.

AFS is usually not all that easy to read. She does her homework and, as in her previous two books, "Myths of Gender," and "Sexing the Body - Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality," her notes, graphs, references and suggested further readings (I immediately bought three of them) tend to take up at least as much space as her text, if not more.

One thing is certain, when you read a book by Anne Fausto-Sterling, you know your are reading the work of a very serious scholar. She looks into details that may not even occur to the average reader. She also points out flaws in previous research which leads her to question some findings.

One aspect of this newest volume that is new to me is that she shows a sense of humor. Maybe I just missed it in her previous works, but it is a welcome addition here. This adds to the readability of the volume. It seems written for the broader, more general audience. My opinion is that she succeeds at that goal.

If you want to begin to explore the issue of gender/sexuality, you can do yourself a service by beginning with this volume. Since it is full of references and notes, you are furnished with many tools as to where to go next

if you want to continue your exploration. I love this book and will likely read it again.

César Galicia says

ENORME libro. En 160 páginas, Fausto-Sterling (bióloga) explica, con evidencia muy dura, todos los sesgos metodológicos que existen detrás de los estudios que intentan establecer relaciones causales entre naturaleza y género. A través de varios debates populares sobre el tema (el origen de la orientación sexual, la preferencia de niños/niñas por determinados juguetes, el misterio de la intersexualidad), Fausto-Sterling hace una revisión crítica sobre la forma en que medios y academia han abordado el problema de la naturaleza-crianza en la construcción del género y sexualidad. Considero que debería ser lectura básica para cualquier persona interesada en estos debates. Lástima que esté tan caro y todavía no esté traducido al español :('

Por otro lado, es sorprendente y triste que existan personas que lo han reseñado mal porque no responde preguntas (al contrario: plantea nuevas y cuestiona las respuestas que creemos tener) y porque por momentos es "muy científico".

Fui fansss.

kapil says

Even after reading about sex and gender in gender classes and news & magazines, this is the book i can say has been an eye opener on just how complex sex n gender are which we otherwise perceive them to be simplistic binary based on genitals.

And biologist writing this book has an authenticity unlike SJWs who meddle with the science for their propaganda.

Jayne says

I had to read this for my Feminist Theory class. Though interesting at times, a good deal of the detailed science went right over my head. I often struggled to fully understand what Fausto-Sterling was explaining (even though she said this was a simplified text.)

It felt like she was just saying, "this is all the research that's been done... and none of it is right. However, we'll know in the future."

In all, it was an okay read. I would give it two and a half stars if I could.

Christopher Roberts says

This book is very short but it covers all the basics of the "nature vs nurture" debate when it comes to sex and gender and reveals it to be a false dicotomy. it amazes me how people seem incapable of understanding this stuff, especially when Fausto-Sterling puts it so well and so easily together.

Olga says

Anne Fausto Sterling explain why it doesn't make sense to separte body from culture. And as she writes: "To understand sex and gender we have to study how sensory, emotional, and motor experience becomes embodied."

Kendra says

I really enjoyed this book, and will be recommending it to folks who want to understand more about what we know and don't know about the biology of gender and sex. I wish the section on trans stuff was longer and more nuanced, but I think that's the drawback of the format.

Tristan Bridges says

I love Anne Fausto-Sterling. *Sexing the Body* is really an amazing book and this book does a great job of breaking down some pretty sophisticated debates about the relative influence of biology and social life on the body for a non-expert. She also has a great explanation of what's so problematic about the nature-vs.-nurture debate, illustrating how that debate is actually flawed. Aside from the fact that either position you take presumes that differences exist (and maybe that they ought to), it's also an inaccurate understanding of the ways in which social life interacts with, is shaped by, and helps shape biological aspects of life. LOVE this. I don't think I'd give it to undergraduates to read in an intro course, but I'd definitely use it to structure some lecture material.
