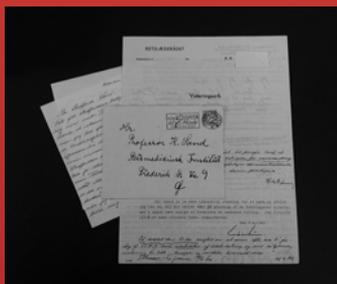
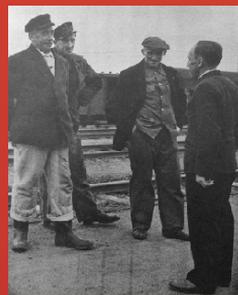
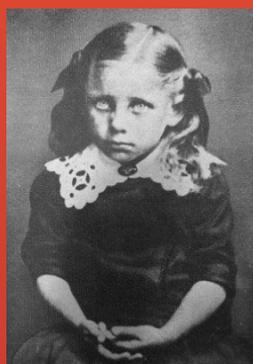


Fleshing out the self

Reimagining intersexed and trans embodied lives
through (auto)biographical accounts of the past

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This thesis explores how current ways of imagining possibilities for intersexed and trans embodied lives within medical contexts might be informed by and reimagined through the historical lived experiences of intersexed and trans individuals as they have been articulated in autobiographical accounts.

Postmodern, queer, intersex, and trans researchers and activists have criticised existing standards of intersex and trans healthcare for limiting the possibilities for diverse embodied lives by articulating certain forms of embodiment and selfhood as more likely to enable a liveable life than others. This has often been done in a medico-legal context by referring to experiences in the past of the unliveability of corporealities and gendersexed situations that differ from privileged positions. With a point of departure in these critiques, this thesis reopens questions about how intersexed and trans people may be embodied and have relations with others by reflecting upon the period of the first three-quarters of the 20th century, when the present standards of care and diagnostic categories were emerging, but had not yet become established.

Drawing upon a unique set of historical source material from the archives of the Danish Ministry of Justice and the Medico-Legal Council, intersexed and trans persons' life stories are rearticulated from their own and medico-legal experts' accounts written in relation to applications for change of legal gendersex status and medical transition. In this way, the process is traced through which these life stories have been repeatedly rearticulated in order to become a usable basis for diagnosis and decision-making. At the same time, the stories are unfolded once more in a rearticulation focusing on their complexity and diversity.