What Intersex Priest Sally Gross Teaches Us About Embodiment, Justice, and Belonging

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CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
I	BODY PROBLEMS	11
1	Context	15
2	Adulthood	29
II	PROBLEM BODIES	47
3	Religious Bodies	51
4	Medical Bodies	65
5	Bodies of Paperwork	87
6	Bodies of Land	99
III	AGITATING BODIES	115
7	Transnational Activism	119
8	Community Building in South Africa	137
9	Costs of Activism	149
IV	BODILINESS	165
10	Clearings	169
11	Breaks	173
12	Sutures	191
13	Resonance	213

Postscript 233
Acknowledgments 245
Notes 247
Bibliography 299
Index 309

INTRODUCTION

When your body becomes a problem—and trans bodies are nothing if not problems, institutionally speaking—it also becomes the space where possible solutions get worked out, and this process can intensify anxieties around appearance. —HIL MALATINO, *Trans Care*

Many of us have been told our bodies are problems. People of color. Women. Queers. Fats. Crips. Indigenous folks. Our bodies are met with suspicion and violence. Political and religious groups form institutional bodies that shore up power and stability by deflecting attention away from their exploitative and unjust procedures. We discover that the price of belonging to a community is to reject parts of ourselves.

Rather than accept our bodies as problems, we could interrogate these institutional bodies that operate as systems of regulation. W. E. B. Du Bois introduced the notion of *double-consciousness* in his book *The Souls of Black Folk*. He described being both Black and American as a constant struggle against being torn in two. "To the real question, How does it feel to be a problem? I answer seldom a word."[1] Given that the stakes are so high, how might we bravely unmask the lie that our bodies are problems and thereby expose unjust systems within regulating bodies?

There is an ironic twist to identifying injustice within systems: we become problems to them.[2] The process itself is circular. We have been told that our bodies are problems, but the inhospitality of institutions is the real issue. In pointing that out, however, we opt into becoming problems for those governing bodies. When we choose to become this type of problem, one with agency that purposefully unveils injustice and inequity, we introduce breaks. While at times painful and frightful, breaks make space for the pieces of ourselves that we have been told to cut off. They create room for

reassemblage sutured into wholeness. When political and religious bodies transform because of provocation, our bodies are no longer problems, and we are no longer troublesome for pointing out systemic flaws.

What becomes of bodies, individual and regulating, after a break to corrupt systems?[3] What does the subsequent space that fissures open allow for? We get a glimpse of possibilities in Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*. Morrison sets the scene in a tree clearing where Baby Suggs serves as a pastor to other enslaved people. "Baby Suggs, holy, followed by every black man, woman and child who could make it through, took her great heart to the Clearing."[4] In this scene, Suggs invites everyone back into their bodies. To the children who have been reduced to utilitarian value through slave labor she instructs, "'Let your mothers hear you laugh,' . . . and the woods rang."[5] She directs the men to dance and the women to cry. Baby Suggs restores joy and grief. She attends to brutalized bodies. She preaches: "We flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it . . . they do not love your neck unnoosed and straight. . . . She stood up then and danced with her twisted hip."[6] A religious leader, Baby Suggs consecrates her affirmation through dance. It is a religious event in the clearing.[7] Breaks allow space for all bodies to resonate within ongoing relations.

In the clearing, individual bodies are not problems. They are present to aches, affect, and history across relationships. This is not a dualist desire for a life free from the frailties of human flesh. Nor is it a longing for an eschatological future not yet realized. Through writing fiction, Morrison opens our imaginations to the possibility of embracing the fullness of our bodies in the here and now, even if only for a few hours in a clearing of the woods. When a religious body dignifies Black life, it moves against the grain of systemic racism that treats Black people as disposable. Compared to individualistic self-care, collectively embodied worth is more radical. We resonate with one another and our environs.[8]

To Morrison's vision of bodily affirmation, we may also heed calls to resist anthropocentrism and recognize our bodily value as integrated within both biological and social ecologies. When Morrison writes that the woods rang with the children's laughter, we might begin to interpret a multiplicity of meaning by taking a cue from Mari Joerstad.[9] Joerstad recognizes that references to actions of nonanimal nature in the Hebrew Bible are sometimes metaphorical but argues that there are also instances in which we might understand the woods as "persons" with whom humanity can have good or bad relations. Her use of "person" is intentionally provocative. When Indigenous

people respect bodies of land and water, too often it is mischaracterized by colonizers as nature worship. But it is not the case that humans who honor their environment necessarily venerate it, or elements of it, *as* God.

What I am suggesting here is that we expand our vision of bodies beyond individuals and even collectives to include environments. The significance of a turn to environmentalism ought not to be limited to a single issue. Instead, it is a consequence of advancing social justice in any form. The exploitation of land often parallels racism and patriarchy. Capitalist greed exacerbates these. To be antiracist and egalitarian entails caring for the earth. The deeper we dig into the contributing factors upholding inequity, the more apparent interlocking systems become. Liberation from the lie that our bodies are problems is not an affirmation of the autonomous individual. Deep belonging is nurtured within a broader vision beyond regulating bodies. We are most beloved within diverse ecologies of good relations.

In her analysis of Morrison's *Beloved*, womanist ethicist Emilie Townes writes about the statistical correlation between poverty, people of color, and pollution.[10] Her corpus has aided me in understanding evil as systemic rather than individual, toxic waste sites as a contemporary form of lynching, and the theological imperative to love necks "unnoosed and straight."[11] Townes understands love as "a theo-ethical and political act."[12] Townes demands that society evidence the value of people through policies. She and queer theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid help change our understanding of body problems as actually institutional bodies regulating individuals and the need for agitating bodies to work tirelessly for clearings wherein we might resonate as beloved.[13] This insight provides a framing through which I share intersex scholar-priest activist Sally Gross's story and illuminates my aim: to galvanize justice-oriented action via religiosity for embodied resonance.

Sally Gross

This is the first book-length publication on Sally Gross (1953–2014), an intersex scholar-priest and activist. Despite her many accomplishments that shaped public policy, Sally died impoverished. The Apartheid Museum commemorates her for participating in the African National Congress and for having founded Intersex South Africa (ISSA); however, until now, her devotion to her Jewish heritage, Christian communities, and Buddhist practices remained unanalyzed.

Sally is a helpful companion for shifting our perspective on body problems. Her body was treated as a problem from the moment she was born. It

continued throughout her life, with her premature death confronting loved ones with the question of what to do with her many bodies—her physical body, her body of work, her body of possessions. Sally suffered demands to contort her body into something institutional bodies could tolerate but eventually realized that those institutions might need to change to accommodate individual bodies. Instead of disciplinary instruments, institutional bodies could cherish individuals as invaluable to collectives. Sally's ardent desire was to be known and accepted entirely, in the fullness of her complexity. Her story displays both the pragmatism and limitations of working within versus dismantling corrupt systems.

Conventional categories never quite fit Sally because she embodied multiple identities. She was not squarely female or male; she was intersex—a fact that she learned at age forty while serving as a Catholic priest at Blackfriars, a Dominican order in England.[14] Sally did not claim to be either Jewish or Christian; rather, she integrated her Jewish identity with Buddhist practices and Christian community. Sally held citizenship in three countries and agitated as an activist in each. Religious, civil, and medical institutions struggled to categorize her body because bureaucracies tend to insist upon legible taxonomies in exchange for goods and services. The pain of rejection fueled her efforts to make systemic change. At great personal sacrifice, Sally devoted her life to helping others experience what she never did—unconditional belonging.

Sally's shift to holding unjust political and religious bodies accountable would result in her becoming a "problem," a threat to their power and authority.[15] Despite numerous setbacks and tragedies, Sally's story also offers glimpses into the possibility of initiating breaks and entering clearings where a communal body resonates with individual bodies. Life together need not entail indignation. Her dream—to belong as her complex self—is appealing and worthwhile. What this might mean for us in our present moment is a bittersweet invitation to join others in instigating breaks and rejoicing in clearings, however fleeting. Community flourishing requires diversity. A thriving ecology, material and social, must break from colonial constraints. The aim is not autonomous individualism; it is good relations.

Sally presents a laudable example of bravery and a cautionary display of the hazards of working within unjust systems. Sally was among the first generation of intersex activists.[16] Consequently, LGBTQI+ activists in South Africa express their debt to her for the inroads she made in political policy changes and for boldly bringing intersexuality into popular discourse.[17] Sally assiduously utilized all the resources available to her within institutions

to advocate for herself and others. Despite her accomplishments and the commonality of her biological occurrence, intersexuality remains relatively unknown and misconstrued. She reached the limits of collaborating with institutions aimed at regulating Black, brown, disabled, female, neurodivergent, queer, and poor bodies. At times, Sally acknowledged her culpability for participating in unjust systems.[18]

Sally's experience confronts each of us with the difficulties of social justice work—choosing to become a problem to institutions. Making institutions, policies, and procedures into tools for self-defense is necessary for maintaining life. Some intersex activists oppose any collaboration with medical professionals or religiosity. I advocate for a multipronged approach because, despite drawbacks, initiating breaks and creating clearings, even if temporary, is worthwhile and life-giving. We need not choose between working within systems or destroying them altogether. It is important to transform laws to protect underserved people and also for activists and theorists to interrogate the limitations of collaborating with medical, religious, and political institutions. Sally's pathbreaking efforts to improve standards of health care, her integration of religiosity, and interventions in public policy did not shield her from harassment, poverty, or loneliness. Intersex people continue to need advocacy, but that does not mean her efforts were unremarkable and did not save lives.

Sally's particular story highlights broader social and political injustices that persist today. Though she was thoroughly singular, a significant number of LGBTQI+ religious people and activists share in Sally's painful experiences.[19] I offer my perspective on her story, hoping that it will prompt us to reflect on the harm we inflict on ourselves and others through communities shaped by binary categories. Like Du Bois, we can refuse to respond to the question of what it is like to be a problem. We might follow Baby Suggs's invitation into clearings where the fullness of bodies is honored. Sally's story emboldens us to initiate breaks that make space for clearings where belonging is defined by the resonance of diverse ecologies. These moves—to reject the notion that our bodies are problems, to choose to become a problem to disciplinary bodies by agitating and initiating breaks, to create clearings where diverse bodies resonate—shape the arc of the book. Alongside the numerous activists she mentored, we might also be motivated by Sally to participate in challenging regulating bodies, to make clearings such that all sutured bodies are, as Emilie Townes put it, beloved.

We will journey alongside Sally in this ongoing, cyclical process. You might wonder about her dates and locations, which will be answered later

in the book. Some questions will remain unanswered. As we cycle through her life many times over, examining various aspects of her experiences, an organic type of knowing will emerge—not one organized with timelines or maps, but something closer to how you get to know a person over time.

By increasing our capacity to embrace complex people like Sally, we will better cope with our own unruly excess. On some level, we intuit that we also are more than the limited identity markers offered to us—gender, race, religion, nationality, class, and so on. Embracing dynamic wholeness as opportunities for connection with others amid clearings is a religious and political act. We might even realize that humanity is not the center of collective bodies but rather a member of a broader ecology, spiritual and material.

Theories and Methods

In 2015, I traveled to my place of birth, South Africa, to conduct research on the sexual politics of religion. At the Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action archives (GALA), I first read Sally's personal correspondence. I was simultaneously enamored of and grief-stricken by her letters to and from her confidant, Father Timothy Radcliffe. The two shared an affection for one another strained by the Roman Catholic Church's response to her intersex status. Since then, I returned to the GALA archives twice, in 2016 and again in 2018. In addition, I went to the Douai Abbey in England, which contains the Blackfriars archives. Funding from Augustana College allowed me to interview Sally's friends and comrades in Cape Town and Johannesburg and her former brethren, friends, and comrades throughout England. Because Sally's network spans nearly every continent, I also conducted in-depth interviews via video calls, primarily with intersex activists worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented me from completing a research trip to Brooklyn, New York, in the summer of 2020, where I had hoped to connect with the Orthodox Jewish community that Sally wrote about having visited. At the end of 2021, I went to the synagogue Sally visited while she was secretly a Catholic priest. I have also been in continual communication with Sally's closest living relative, her brother Raymond (Ray) Schmidt-Gross, who shared family artifacts and gave me access to material on Sally's computer hard drive. On multiple occasions, Ray has reviewed drafts of this manuscript to correct errors and confirm boundaries respecting the privacy of the Gross and Schmidt-Gross families. With special permission from the Blackfriars and the GALA archivist, this book includes quotations and citations of restricted material.

What follows is the synthesis of hundreds of pages of Sally's correspondence, academic lectures, church sermons, photographs, writings, talks, and documents; video, online, and print journalist reports on Sally and her work; and over forty in-depth Institutional Review Board–approved interviews.[20]

The people I interviewed most often described Sally as brilliant, kind, difficult, lonely, and fat. They pointed to the trauma of being pushed out of ministry as the most significant life event upon which Sally dwelt.[21] She was able to forge a new ministry as an activist and, through that, meaningful friendships, but ultimately, she was a severely lonely person after leaving the Dominican order. Sally was difficult to work with because she disrupted harmful regulating bodies, but her principles and stubbornness also needlessly injured friends and colleagues. The five common descriptors listed above tell us something about Sally but perhaps much more about the communities within which she lived.

Upon learning Sally's tragic story, people often want to blame an individual—a particular family member, clergy person, or activist—for her plight. It is tempting to oversimplify Sally's life into good- versus bad-faith actors. I contend that it was not any one person who rendered her impoverished and isolated. How this mother of intersex activism died prematurely is in large part due to institutional structures that were unable to make sense of her body.[22] This position will certainly frustrate readers searching for a simple storyline with one-dimensional actors—friends or foes of Sally.[23] Some of her friends express regret about how they responded to Sally due to their unfamiliarity with intersexuality. They claim that they would conduct themselves quite differently today and, unfortunately, Sally bore the brunt of their ignorance. In what follows, I will try to present the painful reality of what took place while also acknowledging the remorse expressed by the people I interviewed.

Philosopher Albert Memmi describes his failed attempt to write a novel about a romantic couple as an escape from his broader interest in global politics: "I discovered that the couple is not an isolated entity, a forgotten oasis of light in the middle of the world; on the contrary, the whole world is within the couple. For my unfortunate protagonists, the world was that of colonization."[24] Rather than learning about Sally as an individual person *or* for her broader political significance, both of which the reader will see are remarkable, I consider them within a feedback loop. The private world is too often presumed to be the women's sphere of influence, whereas the public is that of men. Perhaps Sally's literal intersexuality configures binaries so that

we understand the spheres and genders as mutually shaping one another and, therefore, inextricable. Anecdotes about Sally are inseparable from her political interventions.

Sally's relationship with gender classification was complex and dynamic. Naming herself might have been a rhetorical act of survival rather than expressing a fixed identity; she leveraged terminology in response to context and audience.[25] Throughout this book, I use Sally's chosen name and pronouns, but before she takes the name Sally, I simply refer to her as "S." (For clarity, I use *Sally* here.) This is to honor her efforts to obtain legal documents in this name and to signal that she was a person who was not definitively male and yet entered male-only spaces to participate in male-only traditions. It also serves as a temporal marker because I organized the four parts thematically rather than chronologically. Flashbacks to the time before Sally took her name are emphasized using *S.*, whereas flash-forwards to after she took her name are flagged with *Sally*.

One Catholic priest reminded me that Sally's "bodiliness," a term she was fond of, was always at the forefront of her interactions. The body matters literally and figuratively. Access to citizenship and the priesthood demanded definitive gender categories of her, but her intersexuality troubled classifications. Sally's intellectual insights are inseparable from her embodied experiences; her logic, politics, and prayers cannot be divorced from her corporeality. Sally herself was fascinated with the question of bodies. For example, her doctoral thesis at Oxford University focused on the topic of resurrected bodies.[26] When she became an intersex activist, Sally held to the conviction that intersex anatomy was not a problem so much as unaccommodating societies were. Her attention to bodies befits the framing of *Body Problems*—that individual bodies are wrongly deemed problematic by regulating social bodies and that in choosing to become a problem to those, we initiate breaks to enjoy complete belonging to diverse ecologies.

Part Summaries

The four parts of this book cycle through Sally's story in sequential loops, sometimes micro chronologies that are revisited more than once per part, and are presented in the following thematic pattern: body problems, problem bodies, agitating bodies, and bodiliness. Part I moves through the arc of her life and confronts her tragic end. Subsequent parts return cyclically to the details of her life, in greater depth on the wrongdoing she suffered and the remarkable interventions she made from within institutions. Because Sally

moved across many countries, often within the same year, I call your attention to these themes rather than to a sterile timeline or map. Although these parts cannot contain an embodied life, a rich portrait of Sally will gradually emerge. Note that one chapter deals with suicidal ideation, which I have flagged and bracketed for readers who wish to pass over that content. The book elsewhere contains quotations and discussions that include references to violence, discrimination, abuse, slurs, and harassment. While these are often not described in graphic detail, they might be harmful to sensitive readers.

Part I introduces the concept of "Body Problems" as a framework for attending to Sally's body as a site of harm. It recounts various versions of "What is it like to be a problem?," a question posed to Sally by religious and political disciplinary bodies. This part considers Sally's literal flesh, demonstrating simultaneously that this is inextricable from various social bodies that regulate her. Her body is continually formed, read, and written upon. Often, these forces attempt to slice and compartmentalize her into legible and manageable subsets. Her body is marked as too fat, improperly masculine, and only contingently white as Jewish. This part provides background into Sally's political context and social formation. Sally offers a mirror to us. Perhaps we can relate to the experience of our bodies being treated as problems and empathize with the pain of being reduced to one dimension of ourselves.

Part II, "Problem Bodies," shifts our perspective on the source of the problem—away from ourselves and toward the regulating bodies that manage us. These include but are not limited to religious bodies, medical bodies, bodies of paperwork, and bodies of land. In these chapters, I detail Sally's priesthood in the Catholic Church (1981–93), her misdiagnosis as transgender, the subsequent paperwork she navigated to conceal and then reveal her female role, and her turn to racial justice work in South Africa. To shift away from understanding individual people as problems so as to interrogate the processes of regulation by unjust systems requires courage. Revealing the ugly truth is painful work. Those like Sally, who are willing to confront institutional inequity bravely, endeavor to advocate for themselves and transform harmful systems into more just collectives.

Part III, "Agitating Bodies," explores activism and the purposeful choice to become a problem to governing bodies by exposing injustice and inequality. Sally agitated throughout her life in diverse religious and political contexts. Participation in activism promises neither security nor success. The costs for her courage were social and material: She died lonesome and impoverished.

Unfortunately, Sally's ultimate destitution is not uncommon. To instigate change is to forfeit the privileges that are awarded to docile bodies. Despite her premature death, a more hospitable communal life is worth agitating for, I think.

Last, part IV, "Bodiliness," returns to the cyclical process of initiating breaks to make space for clearings and sutures that restructure regulating bodies. The aim is for all bodies to flourish within religious and political ecologies, which I characterize as *resonance*. The setting for bodiliness is a clearing. The events that take place include breaks and sutures. The aim is resonance. By resonance I mean to signal both the musical sound of vibration and a collective effort to establish responsible relationships. These multidimensional, layered metaphors connect through the clearing scene in Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*. Instead of orienting the reader, part IV generates creativity. Through motif, readers gain a sense that, rather than a biography about Sally or her historical context, we have been learning about our context. Imaginations are stoked by religiosity to envisage sociality otherwise.[27] The form parallels the content.

Sally was fond of the neologism *bodiliness*, making it a fitting term to describe the aims of agitating. It is a bittersweet invitation to join in intersex activism while also acknowledging the limitations of Sally's approach. While she fought tirelessly for systemic justice, Sally did so within the law. Be it religious or secular polity, she worked within established parameters that proved incompatible with her complexity. Some more radical activists and theorists might conclude that her story exposes the futility of working within inherently unjust systems and the need to tear these down entirely before constructing new alternatives. Part IV celebrates her work within religious institutions to advance diverse ecologies and includes some of her accomplishments in changing laws and policies. In the postscript, I examine Sally's limitations, describe the ongoing challenges that intersex activists face, and encourage readers to increase religious literacy and participate in agitating for justice.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Malatino, *Trans Care*, 26.

1. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*, 1.

2. See Ahmed, "Sexism," *Willful Subjects*, *On Being Included*, and *Complaint!*

3. See Moten, *In the Break*.

4. Morrison, *Beloved*, 87.

5. Morrison, *Beloved*, 44.

6. Morrison, *Beloved*, 44.

7. For an excellent analysis of play as a subversive divine activity, see Douglas, "Black and Blues."

8. N. Fadeke Castor describes ancestral time/space as an interface with the cosmic realm: "With repetition, the gestures of greeting, prostration, and blessing become ingrained in the body and attached to feelings of connection with both Spirit and community. Thus, they hold resonance with prior moments of ritual fellowship that are accessed anew in new ritual moments." "Spiritual Ethnicity," 83.

9. Joerstad, *Hebrew Bible*.

10. See Townes, "To Be Called Beloved"; Townes, *Womanist Ethics*; and Cannon et al., *Womanist Theological Ethics*.

11. Townes, "To Be Called Beloved," 183–202.

12. Townes, "To Be Called Beloved," 183–202.

13. Emilie Townes and Marcella Althaus-Reid make use of political theorists for concrete Christian theology and ethics, namely by underscoring the economic features of sexuality. Townes integrates Native American and African American histories of exploitation, and Althaus-Reid interrogates the profane by examining religious devotion among Latin American sex workers. See Althaus-Reid, *Queer God*.

14. Terms for intersexuality among medical practitioners and activists have included *hermaphrodite* and *Disordered Sex Development*. While those terms can be reclaimed, as *bitch* and *queer* have been among other marginalized groups, I use the term *intersex* throughout because I understand it to be more accurately descriptive and less pathologizing. Gross read publications such as "Hermaphrodites with Attitude," but spoke of herself as intersex. To my knowledge, she exclusively used the term *intersex*.

15. See Ahmed, *On Being Included*.

16. Among the first generation of intersex activists are Cheryl Chase (founder of the Intersex Society of North America), Max Beck, Mani Mitchell, and others. A video of an initial gathering can be viewed at @etreenquestion's 1997 *Hermaphrodites Speak!*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IkJU00L2gU. Some of the well-known present-day activists are Pidgeon Pagonis, Hilda Viloria, and Sean Saifa Wall. See Wolff et al., "Creating Intersex Justice."

17. It is noteworthy that a short biography of her work is included on the South African History Online website—"Sally Gross," South African History Online, https://sahistory.org.za/people/sally-gross, accessed June 21, 2019—and that she is recognized in South Africa's Apartheid Museum. In addition to founding Intersex South Africa, Sally drafted amendments to the Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Bill (2003) and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) in South African law. She persuaded the South African Human Rights Commission to recognize intersexuality as a human rights issue.

18. Gross, sermon transcript, "Bartimaeus," Sunday, October 23, 1988, 8:00 a.m. mass, (Mark 10:46–52), Sermons, GAL 0121, F4.

19. Alice Dreger discusses the value of "narrative ethics" in intersex biographies, meaning that medical ethics should be informed by the substance and nature of patients' stories. See *Hermaphrodites*, 68. Arlene Baratz and Katrina Karkazis similarly argue, "More than anecdotes, these narratives provide a first-person reflection on care and thus represent a type of long-term follow-up that is largely absent in clinical literature." "Cris de Coeur," 129, https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=aed74055-6fd3-4363-b00a-aa160173fcc7%40redis.

20. Sally tended to be verbose and used overly technical language, so I have condensed and simplified her concepts. Whenever I have reconstructed an event based on her narration or that of a witness, I have used colons and italics to signal that they are not direct quotations. When information only came from one source, I write "according to" to indicate that it is an individual's perspective. Quotation marks flag when I am directly citing a document, interview, or video.

21. Gross stated, "It was the biggest trauma of my life, one that was surely life-threatening and dragged on for a long time." Coan, three-part series.

22. I say *mother* here because Sally was among the first generation of intersex activists and mentored activists across an array of LGBTQI+ issues, which I describe later. The legacy section explains that Sally lobbied for amendments to the Alteration of Sex Description and Sex Status Bill and PEPUDA. She collaborated with the South African Human Rights Commission and the South African NGO Engender. For her work, she has been praised by the National Dialogue and Promotion of the Human Rights of Intersex People (2018) https://hal.science/hal-02897876v1/file/2019-07-22%20-%201.%20The%20emergence%20of%20intersex%20as%20a%20protected%20category%20in%20international%20law.pdf, https://www.fhr.org.za/2020/09/20/national-dialogue-on-the-protection-and-promotion-of-the-human-rights-of-intersex-people/; the UN Office of the High Commissioner in *Human Rights Violations Against Intersex People: A Background Note*, https://www.ohchr.org

/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Discrimination/LGBT/BackgroundNoteHumanRightsViolationsagainstIntersexPeople.pdf; and in the University of Pretoria Centre for Human Rights' *Study on The Human Rights Situation of Intersex Person in Africa* (September 2002), https://www.chr.up.ac.za/images/researchunits/sogie/documents/Intersex_Report/Intersex_report_Oct_Sept_2022.pdf. She drafted amendments to the Gender Equality Bill, National Health Insurance white paper documents, and the Health Act (2003) and Constitution (2006).

23. This approach aligns with Gross's account, "Not in God's Image," in which she writes: "Is my Prior Provincial evil? I think not. He is, as I have noted, someone I liked and could still like. It was my hope that, given time, he would gain some pastoral insight into the issues raised by my situation. In the event, I think that he found himself confronted by a situation completely outside his experience with which he was simply not able to cope, and with which he floundered. . . . The Prior Provincial acted in the way the institution required, and I do not doubt that he did so in the belief that it was in the best interests of the people in his care—the members of the English Province, of the Order at large and of the Church at large." Gross, sermon transcript, "Bartimaeus," Sunday, October 23, 1988, 8:00 a.m. mass, (Mark 10:46–52), Sermons, GAL0121, F4.

24. Memmi, *Colonizer*, vii.

25. Special thanks to Kent Brintnall for thinking through how to articulate this distinction.

26. Gross, "Draft, Part 1: Theology, Part 2: Philosophy, and Part 4: Identity," GAL0121, A5.5.1 Academic Papers. When read alongside her paper presentations to the Women's Theology Group at Oxford, "Towards a Theology of Humankind," Part I and II (March 1982 and January 1983) Personal Documents, Spirituality and Religion, Miscellaneous, it appears that her interest in theological matters might be related to her personal embodied experience. See also A6 for "Gross's essay on philosophy as part of coursework at Oxford University," Philosophy.

27. See Carter, *Anarchy*; and An, *Coloniality*.

PART I. BODY PROBLEMS

Epigraph: Griffiths, "Queer Theory," 41, 44, respectively.

1. Raymond (Ray) Schmidt-Gross requested that I refer to their father as Jack. Ray Schmidt-Gross, interviews, phone, September 20, 2018; phone, October 16, 2018; Boston, June 23, 2019. All the photographs that Gross had in her computer files also list him as Jack, (GAL0121, F4). Mildred's birth certificate states that she was born in Cape Town, South Africa, and that both of her parents were born in Russia (GAL0121, A5, Personal documents: official personal documents). Jack's birth certificate indicates that he was born in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, and that his father was born in Russia, his mother in England (GAL0121, A5, Personal documents: official personal documents).

2. Gross does not directly claim to have congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH), the name for a group of disorders that can affect sex characteristics. However,