



In March of 2003 the Joseph Henry Press published J. Michael Bailey's *The Man Who Would Be Queen: The Science of Gender-Bending and Transsexualism*, a work intended to inform general audiences about one scholar's efforts to understand aspects of homosexuality and gender identity within a psychological framework. Some readers have vehemently disagreed with the book, calling it defamatory and offensive to the transgendered community. For example, they contest the implication that most transsexuals fit the categories described by Bailey.

Overall, the book has been greeted with a wide range of responses, from high praise to harsh criticism. *Kirkus Reviews* called the book "a scientific yet superbly compassionate exposition" (January 2003). *Publishers Weekly* said "Bailey writes with assuredness that often makes difficult, abstract material--the relationship between sexual orientation and gender affect, the origins of homosexuality and the theoretical basis of how we discuss sexuality--comprehensible. He also, especially in his portraits of the women and men he writes about, displays a deep empathy that is frequently missing from scientific studies of sexuality" (April 2003). However, the same review in *Publishers Weekly* goes on to say that "Bailey tends towards overreaching, unsupported generalizations." And a reviewer in *Frontiers*, a Southern California gay news magazine, states that the author "doesn't need to inject his biases as often as he does" (March 2003). A sense of the polarity of opinion about the book can also be derived from a scan of the reader responses to the work on Amazon.com, where among the forty-three responses posted on June 13, 2003, twenty-seven gave the book a 1-star (lowest) rating and eleven gave it a 5-star (highest) rating, with only five responses in between.

The Joseph Henry Press (JHP), publisher of Bailey's book, is an imprint of the National Academies Press engaged in publishing books on science, engineering, and medicine for popular audiences. JHP books are individually authored works, each carrying a notice that the opinions expressed are solely the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Academies. JHP follows clear decision rules for selecting books for publication and for scientific review of manuscripts. The work in question was reviewed as a well-crafted and responsible work on a difficult topic, reflecting one approach to a legitimate avenue of scholarship and research.

None of us involved in the publication of *The Man Who Would Be Queen* imagined the extent of the controversy that its publication would trigger. We deeply regret the fact that some have found the book harmful or offensive. Our intention in publishing it was certainly not to offend any individual or group, but rather to offer insight into how one scientist has arrived at his views on certain aspects of sex and human behavior.

The appropriate response to this endeavor, we believe, is not to silence the scientist or to censor the expression of his findings and opinions. Rather we hope that the publication will inspire a productive discussion about future directions and methodologies in research on issues of gender and sexuality, and thereby promote the proper course of future scientific investigation on this important but very sensitive topic.

Sincerely,

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