

XY

Dir. Anna Karín Lárusdóttir, 2019.



Synopsis:

Lisa, a teen girl, is struggling to fit in with her peers and feels isolated. When a friend, Bryndis, reaches out to her, Lisa begins learning more about her medical history. With the support of Bryndis, Lisa gets up the courage to confront her dismissive doctor and her mother.

Language: Icelandic with English subtitles.

Run Time:

15:57

Suggested Grades:

8+

The Takeaway/ Learning Objectives:

- This short film showcases the importance of talking about intersex people.
- Without having language or space to talk about their experience, intersex people can feel really alone and isolated.
- It also highlights the power and validation that comes from language and understanding.
- It also tackles the stigma within the medical system intersex people face.

Content Flags:

Medical trauma, profanity

Keywords:

Intersex, allyship

Pre-viewing Questions:

- What is a binary sex model?
 - The binary sex model refers to the idea there only two sexes - male and female.
 - In this context, 'sex' refers to body parts, hormones, and chromosomes.
- Why do you think Western/English cultures use a binary sex model?
 - It is embedded in our medical system
 - It is connected to Biblical teachings of Adam and Eve as the first two humans
 - It makes it easier to categorize people
 - It supports and reinforces assumptions that everyone is straight and cisgender
- Do you think it's important to maintain a binary sex model? Why or why not?
 - Answers will vary
 - Some 'yes' reasons - it makes paperwork easier, embedded in our medical system, traditional western values
 - Some 'no' reasons - it doesn't accurately reflect the human experience, it increases stigma against intersex people and against trans people, it can lead to medical errors

Post-Viewing Questions:

- How does the binary sex system negatively impact Lisa and her family?
 - Lisa's mom didn't know what else to do when her baby was born intersex and followed the doctor's recommendation to change Lisa's body through surgery
 - Lisa had unnecessary surgery as a baby
 - Lisa was given inaccurate and incomplete information about her body, including that she has to use hormone patches
 - Lisa's doctor is incredibly dismissive of her concerns, including that the patches cause skin irritation
- How does her friend show allyship?
 - Asking probing but respectful questions and not pushing too hard
 - Offering to listen and support her while she researches
- How does her mom show allyship?
 - Advocating for her daughter
 - Trying to get the doctor to listen
 - Supporting her, letting her dress how she wants (at the end)

Common Questions:

- What is intersex?

- According to [interACT](#), “intersex is an umbrella term for differences in sex traits or reproductive anatomy. Intersex people are born with these differences or develop them in childhood. There are many possible differences in genitalia, hormones, internal anatomy, or chromosomes, compared to the usual two ways that human bodies develop.”

Additional Resources:

- This link offers information written by intersex youth about what they wish their parents, doctors, and friends knew: <https://interactadvocates.org/resources/intersex-brochures/>