

**Transsexual Bodies at the Olympics:
The International Olympic Committee's Policy on Transsexual Athletes
at the 2004 Athens Summer Games**

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The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has always been plagued by what queer theorist Judith Butler calls gender trouble. In 2000, the IOC dis-continued their practice of sex-testing because medical experts could not agree on what defined a genetic female and so an adequate medical testing measure could not be found. In response to outside pressure, the IOC adopted a policy enabling transsexual athletes to compete in the 2004 Olympic Games. This paper argues that the IOC policy on sex reassignment does not operate to guard against discrimination and harassment against transgender and transsexual athletes but that it operates to maintain the popular illusion that there are two, binary gender designations. While both transsexual and Olympic bodies have unique histories and vastly different experiences in the social and political realms, using psychoanalysis we contend that the need to test gendered bodies is incited by an anxiety about bodily deterioration, aging, and, ultimately, mortality.