July 2004 | Dedicated to the Memory of Gwen Araujo | Volume 23, Issue 7

The Channel

History Made! Tranny March 2004!

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TGSF TransGender San Francisco is a group for all members of the Transgendered Community. Transgender is used as an umbrella term that includes female and male cross dressers, transvestites, drag queens or kings, female or male impersonators, intersexed individuals, pre-operative, post-operative and non-operative transsexuals, masculine females, feminine males, all persons whose perceived gender or anatomical sex may be incongruent with their gender expression, and all persons exhibiting gender characteristics and identities which are perceived to be androgynous.

The Channel

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco, a California non-profit corporation), is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-gifted people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about TGSF programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to TGSF Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

ExCom 2004 - 2005 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

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Vice President ..... Laura Marlowe
Secretary ..... Siobhán Ellis
Treasurer ..... Pamela Gray
Education ..... Damon Helton
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Social ..... Anne Louise Mortenson
Tommie Watson
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TGSF Outreach Ambassador ..... Kelly Anne Marsh

Fine Print

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco) is a CA non-profit corporation. *Donations to TGSF are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns. Talk to your tax advisor for details.*

The Channel, the TGSF Newsletter, is published monthly. Submissions should arrive at TGSF by the 15th day of the month preceding publication. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and are not necessarily those of TGSF. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided TGSF is acknowledged as the source of the material. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission from TGSF.

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Ad Rates

	Per Issue	Six Months	Per Year
Business Card (3-1/2 x 2)	$ 25	$125	$ 250
4x5	$ 60	$300	$ 600
Full Page	$100	$500	$1000

Personal ads from TGSF members: $10 for up to 40 words per issue. We will not accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 15th of every month. Send ad copy and check or money order to TGSF, Advertising Dept., PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. **Please support our advertisers, and tell them you saw their ad in *The Channel!***

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FROM THE EDITOR...

So much has been eloquently said in the aftermath of the Araujo mistrial, I feel that I have little to contribute this month. Which isn't to say I haven't kept my hand in. I write this after participating in the historic first-ever-official Tranny March 2004 (sponsored, finally, in part by the Pride Parade organizers). I was there with a homemade sign marching in the advance guard leading the impressively sizeable mass of tranny humanity, friends and supporters.

All along the route, passing cars honked horns, people were coming out of shops, restaurants, and businesses to look, many waving hands, clapping, cheering; people gaping out of bus windows with prominently raised thumbs-up. Photographers were snappin' (and big thanks go out to Jaime Faye Fenton for being her usual artistic and efficient self), video cams were rollin', microphones were buzzin'. And I was pleasantly surprised to see so many tranny youth come out and participate. Felt like an old fogey, but it felt good, it felt real, and I felt proud. Proud to be there, and proud of the youngsters. There was a definite powerful vibe goin' on, a force that no one coming in contact with it could ignore.

We gathered around the first-ever SF Pride Trans Altar to lay our symbolic offerings, our photographs and mementos - and I had brought something as well and took my turn, placing a tribute to "my father and mother, Joseph and Charlotte, and my partner Sappho - thanks for all the love and support," and then affixing my sign so it was visible in the back. You might see it there - "Teach Gender Identity Awareness in our Schools!"

Sylvia Guerrero, her entire family, and Gloria Allred were carrying a huge banner for Gwen, marching and shouting with the rest of us. During the dedication ceremony, Marc Leno and Theresa Sparks spoke passionately about how far we've come, highlighting the progress we've made in the last year (inclusion in the State's Fair Housing and Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and the unpublicized fact that major medical HMOs have picked-up the SF City's medical benefit program - which offers coverage for SRS-related procedures and treatments - and is no longer dependent on a private fund. This is absolutely huge and now opens the door for the public and private business sectors to do the same).

But the media still doesn't get it, despite the outcry we've made since Gwen's murder. All the media outlets, with few exceptions, continue to mix the pronouns and refer to Gwen as "Eddie" or "he." Even the prosecutor did it, which really didn't help his case much and only confused the jury. Hopefully in the retrial, he'll have learned from his mistakes and has benefited from the debriefings taking place all over the world.

But I am positively convinced that the solution to preventing a killing like this again is teaching gender identity awareness in public and private schools. It absolutely has to be part of the curriculum, grade school on up. I said this last month, and I'm saying it again (and it's repeated quite nicely by an SF Chronicle reprint on Page 21). In conjunction with that, we have to come out now - no more closets. And I'm not the only one who feels that way. Phyllis Frye, prominent Texas attorney (who's so out she's off the planet!) slipped this in on her distribution list:

"Since I began to practice law again over the past six weeks, I have received five calls from around the country from FTM and MTF folks who have carefully constructed closets and lived "normal" lives (their term for it), only to be outed in some fashion and be totally fucked over — legally, I might add — by the bigots. It is amazing.

But the "stealths" [emphasis added] will remain ashamed of who they are and continue to build closets only to be looking over their shoulders for the next many years, having to remember the lies that they tell to everyone about their past lives and then have the house of cards collapse one day.

I prefer OUT! If these five had been out, they would not have gotten into the pickles that they called me about."

And lest you forget (would I let you do that?), Gwen's death could have been prevented by a combination of the two strategies - Education and Disclosure. In order for this to happen, our trans youth need the support of their families, their educators and their clergy. And we need to contact the Horizons Foundation and contribute to the Gwen Araujo Transgender Education Fund. And we need to lobby our Boards of Education and demand the inclusion of gender expression in their non-discrimination policies.

As a result of the historic Tranny March, we are now a cohesive political force. We have high visibility and the public's attention. In the months ahead following our Pride celebrations, we'll need to bolster the Guerrero family for round two (which is really round four for them). We'll need to support the politicians that support us, turning out in numbers at the polls, burning up the phone lines, licking countless .37 cent stamps, and sending liberal quantities of email. So many little things that you - yeah you the one reading this - can personally do at little cost or inconvenience.

Please - pick up the phone, pick up a pen, brush up on those touch typing skills ("I got blisters on my fingers!"), make the trip to your polling place in November. Make your voice heard, because if the national election in 2000 taught us anything is that one person really will make the difference.

President's Report

By Roxy Carmichael-Hart

Cool Summer (not to be confused with "Cruel Summer" by Bananarama (hints of things to come)

We are about to begin quite a summer of events and good times. San Francisco Pride will happen after this goes to press and I am sure that will be spectacular. I am going to report on San Jose Pride in uno momento.

A leftover from Unity – the perils of trying to do an article at 1 in the morning. I misquoted what I wanted to say. I had wanted to note that the event was about "we" not about "me". Instead, I said "we" twice. I think you all knew what I meant. And I had forgotten the name of this wonderful singer. I called him "Jonah" but it is "Joshua". A thousand apologies. But that voice by any name would have sounded so sweet. I probably left out a lot of thanks in that article but I am so pleased that everyone worked very hard. I wish we hadn't been competing with KFOG's KABOOM but that's San Francisco. You are always competing with something. Also thanks to Two-Spirit for sharing the program with us. There are several ExCom members on the Two-Spirit Board, including Siobhan as President. I guess my ExCom members are multi-talented.

I had hoped to bring you a lot of Cotillion news. As you read in the minutes, the ExCom decided to hold Cotillion 2005 at the Ramada Plaza in San Francisco and asked me to negotiate a contract. We are still working on the details and there are a number of issues to be worked out. We are committed to bringing you a Cotillion that you will love and one that will be done in a fiscally sound manner, as last year's was. These things take time. But, the theme will be "Back to the 80's" and we will hop in our Deloreans and travel to time to celebrate the music of a rockin' good era. You'll hear music by many of the great acts of the 80's, including Bananarama. I have already asked Susan Laird to look into her stash of 80's tunes to pick out some winners.

Today was San Jose Pride. This year's parade seemed more lively than last year's – not the plethora of cell phones that we had last year. Our contingent started off small with me, Kara, Bobby and Tyler. I was concerned that we were not going to have some one to help carry our banner so I asked Jo-An Torres, who was marching with the IRLM court, if she had brought any of her girls and if one of them would mind marching with us. Well, Jo-An came through for me again. She led me to one of my favorite people, the lovely Jennifer Lipps who was more than thrilled to help carry the banner. It was her first parade and she looked great and did a wonderful job. Thank you Jennifer for coming through. A funny thing happened during the parade. People began to join our contingent. There was Faye and Sidney, Jayni Butterfield, Lani Rose, even Avis from San Francisco, direct from the train station, luggage in tow! That's what it was about – people just being themselves. So our little group doubled in size. Kara and Bobby were introduced as Mr. and Miss TGSF 2004 (now Anne Louise, this does not mean that we overthrew the crown while you were gone) and I was pleased to hear the kind words they said about us on the PA (I wrote them!). And as always, I wanted to extend my deepest thanks to Jeff Tucker for letting us use his convertible again. Oh, and most of these pictures that you see in this Channel – thanks again to Jo-An Torres for taking them.

Of course, our Outreach booth was a critical component of the event. Thank you to Kara and Ally for staffing the booth on Saturday, and to Kara, Damon, Bobby and Tyler for helping out on Sunday. One thing that both Kara and Ally mentioned was that there seemed to be a surprisingly large number of FTMs who came to ask for information. I regret that we did not have better information but Damon will be helping to rectify this for San Francisco Pride. I would also like to thank the beautiful Wendy Inman for the lovely pendant she gave to me and I will wear it proudly.

We are going to fire up the bar-be-que on Sunday July 11 at the Red White and Blonde BBQ at Carla's, 124 Race Street in San Jose. It will be held from 3-8 PM. Admission is $10 for TGSF members, $15 for nonmembers. If you become a TGSF member that day, we'll give you $10 off your membership and admit you for $10. Such a deal!

I am very pleased that the Mid-Peninsula group continues to be well received. I hear nothing but thanks and gratitude for starting this up. I heard a very poignant story at one of the meetings and I asked the young lady to share it with you. I am hoping she'll write it because it will touch many of you. It concerns outreach and support, which I have said from Day 1 is the most important thing that we do.

A couple of parting thoughts. A lot of people are fond of throwing around the word "diversity". To many, it is sincere, to others, it is merely lip service. You see, "diversity" includes not just acceptance of those of different races and ethnic backgrounds and genders, but those with different ideas. When those with ideas different from the PC norm express their views, they are belittled with cursing, name calling, and other derogatory statements. I offer this. I met a couple of people at San Jose Pride with some views different than probably 90% of the people in attendance. They had something to say and something to offer. I can only imagine the ridicule that they endured. I applaud them and I admire them for having the courage to state what is on their minds and to stand up for what they believe in, even if it is different than what is politically correct.

I suffered a personal loss recently. I won't get into it but it got me thinking. We never know which day will be our last. It could be tomorrow, it could be in twenty years. But we should treat each other as if the next day will be our last. We should appreciate and cherish one another. We must stop digging up old wounds and living in the past. We are much stronger when we work together. We must look forward.

As Satchel Paige said. "Don't look back, something may be gaining on you".

Tune in next week when we hear Aunt Roxy say.....

PS – how many butterflies does Rachael Janelle have after San Jose Pride. When I saw her in the morning, she was covered. By afternoon, she had a half dozen. Always spreading the love of the butterfly...

Mid-Month Social

Volunteers Needed!

TGSF is looking for some enthusiastic and motivated people to help plan our mid-month socials. TGSF used to hold these events but, due to a lack of staff, has not been able to continue these events. So, since all of our current ExCom members are overwhelmed with other projects, we are asking our members and our community for assistance.

The Mid-Month is a social that is held during the first two weeks of the month at a venue in San Francisco or Berkeley. Previous mid-months were held at the Thirsty Bear, San Francisco Brewing Company, and the Whitehorse Tavern. Unlike the monthly End of Month events, the Mid Months are much more social oriented.

All it takes to plan these events again is for someone to call a venue that is hopefully very TG friendly and see if they would be willing to host our event. Mid-months can expect anywhere from 10-20 people. If you would like to help with these events, please contact [redacted] and she will present it to the Executive Committee for discussion and action. Thank you in advance for your help.

Hey!

$10 Bucks Per Issue Gets You An Ad Like This...!

Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000.

Up to 40 words only $10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

Bagdad *Café*

The Best Café in the Castro

2295 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
PHONE: (415) 621-4434
FAX: (415) 431-7054

June 6, 2004

TGSF ExCom Meeting Minutes

Attending: Roxy Carmichael-Hart, Siobhan Ellis, Kara Flynn, Allison Laureano, Dawnne Woodie, Anne Louise Mortensen. Absent: Laura Marlowe, Damon Helton, Pamela Gray, Tommi Watson. Guests: Ayme Kantz, Jessica Connor. Minutes from May 2 ExCom were approved.

Presidents Report

Roxy described what was happening at San Jose Pride in detail. Registered as TGSF/2-Spirit. 2 Spirit donating its money to TGSF from Unity to defray the cost of the Booth. Ally asked Siobhan for 2-spirit outreach contact. Roxy has sent old flyers to Siobhan, for Siobhan to scan using OCR. Siobhan to scan and send on to Kara and Ally in MS Word format.

The ExCom discussed the location for Cotillion 2005. Roxy presented 2 alternatives, Marriott San Mateo, and Ramada Plaza, San Francisco. She stated that she believed either would work financially and that both have plusses and minuses. After due consideration, The ExCom decided on the Ramada Plaza, San Francisco, at Market & 8th for January 15th 2005 and approved negotiation of a contract. Jessica Connor was present at the meeting as she is helping with security. The Theme for the Cotillion is "Back to the 80's" with a design theme somewhat similar to "Back to the Future". Siobhan was requested to engage a Graphic Artist who has volunteered her time, and who'll get free membership to TGSF for 1 year in return for assistance on various graphical needs.

TGSF is aiming to advertise the Cotillion in the GAPA Runway program. The ExCom approved a half page ad. Roxy proposed, and it was approved, that TGSF will pay for tickets for Mr & Miss TGSF to attend GAPA Runway.

Vice Presidents Report

Laura was absent, so Roxy reported on her behalf. TGSF is float 142 in San Fran Pride. Siobhan raised the size of the float as ordered as was different from what was agreed by previous month's ExCom. It was decided to return to original float size, and Siobhan will pick up the difference in cost if TGSF exceeds budget. Ally and Dawnne will collect the float on the Saturday morning and take it to Pier 27 where float building will happen. TGSF has been designated a Pride Parade partner. TGSF will receive funds, however TGSF has to provide volunteers for such things as gap monitors. Anne Louise needs help on the Friday, at Carla's, to build components for the float. Anne Louise has to redesign the float as the size has changed. Theme has been changed to butterflies and pastels.

Treasurers Report

Pamela absent, so Roxy standing in. No updated balance sheet, but currently have about $4000 in the bank. Proposal to finally pay remaining balance to the Design centre was approved. TGSF now out of debt. Dawnne has managed to gain 4 advertisers for The Channel.

Secretary's Report

Siobhan reported that, with the available information, the membership database is now up to date. She has purchased a professional membership database tool, and donated it to TGSF. Siobhan is now working on on-line access to the existing web site. Chris Edmonds has delivered a framework for the new web site, and Siobhan reminded the ExCom that she is still awaiting their profiles for content. Siobhan told the ExCom that they will all have pages of their own. All they have to do is submit content, Siobhan will format the content.

Dawnne raised the question as to why TGSF continued to comp vendors. The answer was, essentially, because it was considered to be essential to have vendor advertising in The Channel. Some have provided ongoing services to TGSF. Siobhan, Roxy, and Dawnne to raise this with various current vendors.

Channel editor Ayme Kantz presented ideas as to where TGSF could go with The Channel and the Web site. It was decided that the Channel should continue to be published in hardcopy format for those members who do not have access to the Internet. There was discussion of how T^GSF could provide better membership value. Discussion was around reduced prices for attending events. This would require membership cards. Siobhan told the ExCom that the membership package can print Membership cards. No decisions were made, at this time, about making the Channel free on-line. However, the concept of two tiered admission to TGSF events was of great interest, providing membership cards can be printed.

Kara passed on the TGSF e-mail and PayPal account information.

Education Report

"Oui Three Queens", and professional makeup business is holding an event, and will donate 10% of proceeds to TGSF if TGSF is involved. Event is June 14th at 7pm. Dawnne will attend.

It has been decided that a small fee will be charged to non TGSF members for the MAC event on August 21st. Siobhan to follow up with the hairdresser who suggested "Curls for girls", and event to teach girls how to use curlers, and curling irons. Dawnne reported that Nordstrom's San Francisco, wishes to present to TGSF at any EOM. They are willing to provide a discount to members of TGSF. They would like to discuss their personal shopper program. Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco, has been invited to July End of Month. Dawnne is looking to invite Luanna Rodgers with electrologist and surgeon to the September End of Month.

Outreach Report

Kara discussed various phone calls. Sicily Scott from NBC news from NYC called. Tim from KQED called to see if we had received an invite to an event they were sponsoring. Ally will not be able to attend SJ Pride on Sunday, as she will be out of town. Ally & Kara will revamp old fliers. Ally talked to dean of San Francisco University, who wants to run presentations at halls of residence and the university. Ally is also speaking to other local universities.

Kara will attend the Gwen Araujo Community Forum, at the SF LGBT Centre, from 6 to 7:30pm on 16th June. Kara will ask Silvia Guerrero if she wishes to walk with TGSF in SF pride. Kara was interviewed by NBC 11 news about Transsexuals in Olympics. Siobhan reported on GLAAD, and that two TG related documentaries won awards.

Social Report

Anne Louise provided Unity Debrief. Feedback was positive; it served purpose of bringing together communities. Ideas were suggested for improvement. She discussed the August 21st Bridal Party. Details to be communicated. The Red White and Blonde BBQ will be held at Carla's on July 11. Siobhan to ask Idallas Houston if she will BBQ.. Price will be $10 for members, $15 for non-members. TGSF wishes to restart the mid-month social, and is asking regular members to volunteer to organize these.

Old Business

None

New Business

ExCom discussed the definition of unexcused absence from the ExCom. It was decided that not showing up, and not calling/communicating as to why was considered an unexplained absence. In 1 year, a 2nd unexplained absence will cause a latter to be sent, and the 3rd absence will cause the ExCom to vote on removing the person from the board.

Susan Laird's assistance to a member in need was discussed and commended. The Next meeting will be help on Saturday 10th July 2005 at noon at the San Mateo Marriott.

June 19, 2004

Special Ex-Com Meeting Minutes

Present: Roxy Carmichael-Hart, Laura Marlowe, Pamela Gray, Allison Laureano, Dawnne Woodie, Kara Flynn. Absent: Siobhan Ellis, Damon Helton, Anne Louise Mortenson, Tommi Watson

Roxy noted that the main item before the Committee was the approval of the contract with the Ramada. She stated that the ExCom had selected the Ramada as the site of Cotillion 2005 and had approved negotiation of a contract. She noted she had been working on this for a couple of weeks. She distributed a revised budget for the Ramada, which reflected two changes since the ExCom vote. First, she noted that the previous budget had not included tax for the rooms, which amounted to $737. Second, she noted that the credit towards the $8,000 food and beverage consumption did not include tax or gratuity. She stated that only $4,700 of the food would count toward that goal and that it was not likely we would consume $3,300 at the bar. Consequently, she adjusted the cost of the room to $1,000 to reflect a $7,000 consumption. With these changes, Cotillion 2005 was projected to operate at a loss.

Roxy also distributed a cash flow projection showing two payment plan options for paying the Ramada rooms and one showing the Marriott. It was noted that with no major revenues projected to be received, TGSF could be operating in the red as early as August.

Concern was expressed over the impact of the Cotillion on TGSF's cash flow. There was general agreement that a hotel in San Francisco was too expensive. Interest was expressed in trying to find a venue in San

Continued on Page 5

Meeting Minutes...

Continued from Page 4

Francisco that would not cost as much and yet we could still do a similar kind of show. It was agreed that the event should be in San Francisco or Berkeley, which is also very accessible by public transit. Ally will look into the Presentation Theatre at USF and will also look at San Francisco State. Dawnne will contact Mission High School and City College. Laura will look into Wheeler Auditorium in UC Berkeley. Other venues will be sought as well. If a venue can be found in San Francisco where the overhead is low, this will accomplish two things. One, the Cotillion would still be accessible for most people. Second, the cost of tickets can be kept down, thus making the Cotillion affordable for more people. Ally noted that we probably could save a lot of money if we did not serve food and used a venue with its own sound system. It was added that whatever venue is chosen should present a professional appearance. Information will be gathered over the next two weeks and will be presented to the ExCom at its next meeting.

Consequently, by a vote of 0-3 with two abstentions (Kara, Dawnne), not to approve the contract with the Ramada. (Roxy did not vote).

Kara discussed the Pride effort. She suggested a "Kiss the Trannie" promotion with either a chocolate kiss or a real kiss depending on size of donation. She noted that it was important to draw people to the booth. Kara and Ally will work on a schedule for staffing the booth. Kara will not be there on Saturday but Ally will work both days. Roxy agreed to help on Saturday and late Sunday. It was added that Roxy, Laura, Pamela and Dawnne had taken gap monitor training and will probably assist with that task and other duties on Pride Sunday as a way to generate some volunteer hours for TGSF and a greater share of the Community Partnership revenues. Roxy will e-mail the TGSF flier to Kara.

The regularly scheduled ExCom meeting will be held Saturday July 10 at noon at the California Grille Restaurant at the San Mateo Marriott.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

Significant Other Support - East Bay

Questions or concerns about your partner's crossdressing? Please call Julie at **(925)** [redacted], e-mai[redacted] or write to: Julie Freeman, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885.

Bay Area American Indian Two-Spirits

Community Potlucks

Tentative Dates For 2004: **July 23**, August 27, September 24, October 29 and December 3. Held from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the San Francisco LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market Street at Octavia. Check board upon entering for room number.

Please bring something to share — food, non?alcoholic drinks, song, poem, raffle item. Traditional food is especially welcome. Contact us to confirm each event.

BAAITS potlucks are clean and sober. Those under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave.

BAAITS has an office at 1800 Market Street #411 in San Francisco, CA 94102. 415-865-5616 / www.baaits.org. BAAITS is a community based volunteer organization creating forums for spiritual, cultural and artistic expression of Two-Spirit people.

Beauty Boost

by Wendy R. Schultz

Product Reviews

One of my favorite things about writingis finding and reviewing new products for you. I love reading labels and learning about the beneficial ingredients in products. Below are some products that I find exceptional, and happily recommend to anyone looking to try something new.

Reading Ingredients

The ingredient listed first is what the product contains the most of. For example, if a product lists water as its first ingredient, it's great for oily skin and is usually gentle. Ingredients are usually listed in the order of concentration in the product.

Does Better Stuff Cost More?

A more expensive product doesn't necessarily make it better. Still, quality ingredients are a must when you want to correct or prevent a problem. Below I've listed products in prices ranging from least to most expensive. All are excellent!

Questions? Feedback? Need help finding products? Send me an email - BeautyBoost@hotmail.com.

Although I'm a licensed Esthetician, I'm not a healthcare professional. As such, please consult with your doctor prior to beginning any new skin care regimen.

Product Name	Benefits	Where Available	Cost
Lubriderm Daily UV Lotion	Daily moisturizer with sunscreen — SPF 15.	Walgreens, Longs, Target, Drugstore.com	$7.49
Nivea® Visage Q10 Plus Wrinkle Control Day Crème or Night Crème	Light non-greasy concentrated facial moisturizer - SPF 4.	Longs, Walgreens, Target, Drugstore.com	$10.4-9
L'Oreal Dermo Expertise Line Eraser Pure Retinol Eye Night Treatment	Use before bed. Reduces the appearance of fine lines.	Longs, Walgreens, Target, Drugstore.com	$11.3-9
Revlon Skinlights® Diffusing Tint™	A light, non-greasy makeup. Perfect for light coverage.	Longs, Walgreens, Target, Drugstore.com	$11.5-9
Murad Acne Spot Treatment	Got pimples? This product heals them in half the time. A tube lasts about a year. It's amazing.	Sephora, Sephora.com, Murad.com, salons.	$15
Neutrogena Visibly Firm Face Lotion	Has Active Copper™ - SPF 20.	Longs, Walgreens, Target, Drugstore.com	$17.9-9
Bare Escentuals Mineral Veil	Mineral makeup is good for the skin. And, minerals are a natural sunscreen.	Bare Escentuals, Bare Escentuals.com	$19
Oil of Olay Eye Lifting Serum	Excellent moisturizer,and for hiding small crow's feet. For use day or night.	Walgreens, Longs, Target, Drugstore.com	$17.9-9
Peter Thomas Roth Glycolic Acid Clarifying Tonic	Glycolic Acid removes dull, dead skin. Use this product after cleansing, and it leaves skin amazingly soft. Removing this undesirable skin layer makes it easy for both treatment products and makeup application.	Sephora, Sephora.com, PeterThomasRoth.com, salons.	$30
Peter Thomas Roth Anti-Aging Cleansing Gel	This product boasts ingredients like glycolic acid, salicylic acid, lemon, lime, and grapefruit. These are terrific for oily or acne problem skin. The label specifically says that it's not for use on sensitive skin.	Sephora, Sephora.com, PeterThomasRoth.com, salons.	$30
Murad Clarifying Body Spray	Great for back acne. Sprays upside down for those hard-to-reach areas.	Sephora, Sephora.com, Murad.com, salons	$30
Philosophy Purity One Step Cleanser	A rich and creamy cleanser, and when mixed with water, didn't lather. However, it takes off makeup like nobody's business, and smells great. Great for dry skin.	Sephora, Sephora.com, Drugstore.com, Nordsrom.com	$32

TGSF
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)

TGSF Events in July

Friday / July 2 / 8:00pm

The Butterfly Carnivale at the Savoy Club

The Viridian Crown Countess to the 34th Reign, Tameva Eshlaina Von Frankenstein will be your enchanted hostess to guide you throughout a magical evening of charmed burlesque, haunted songs, and other flights of fancy! Come be with her and "the Butterfly Empress 34" Rachael Janelle, to celebrate the life and loves and lure of the "butterfly mystique" in an evening to remember in the spirit of art nouveau! See ad elsewhere in this issue for all the details!

Wednesday / July 7 / 7:00pm

TGSF's Mid-Peninsula Support Group

All are welcome. For more information please contact please contact Roxy Carmichael-Hart at (510) [redacted] or email her at [redacted]. Meets 7–9 p.m. in the Nob Hill Room at the San Mateo Marriott, 1770 South Amphlett Blvd. (at Hwys 101 and 92), San Mateo. (Financial support for this group provided in part by TGSF. A $1 donation will be requested, but no one will be turned away.)

Saturday / July 10 / 12:00 Noon

TGSF ExCom Meeting

Note different time and location this month: San Mateo Marriott, California Grille Restaurant, 1770 South Amphlett Blvd., San Mateo, CA. A busy agenda is planned and volunteers and extra hands are always needed! The regular lunch menu will be served. Please join your ExCom for lunch and help us out!

Sunday / July 11

TGSF Red White And Blonde BBQ

To be held at Carla's 124 Race Street in San Jose. See ad elsewhere in this issue, or write [redacted] for more information!

Friday / July 16

RGA Summer Potluck

Start thinking about that scrumptious dish you'll be bringing to the potluck. Dinner begins at 8 p.m. / www.transgender.org/tg/rga/rgapage.html

Sunday / July 18

AIDS Walk San Francisco

Details, maps, times and further information can be obtained by calling 415-615-9255, or visit www.aidswalk.net.

Thursday / July 29 / 7:30pm

TGSF End Of Month Event w/ Guest Speaker!

Joe Caruso of Mayor Gavin Newsom's office will be with us to speak on Transgender issues in our city, and the Mayor's stance on those issues. He has been asked to speak particularly on discrimination issues, and advise us on what we can do to combat these problems that we all face. He is bringing with him one, perhaps two, of the Mayor's transgender appointees to speak to us, as well. The meeting takes place at the Blue Muse, 409 Gough. We start gathering around 7:30 or so, and socialize for about an hour, then we will welcome our special speaker for the evening. Come join us for this unique event the last Thursday evening of July. We'll look forward to seeing you there.

Friday / July 30th

RGA Gals and Guys' Night Out

The next RGA Fifth Friday Dinner will be at MoMo's Grill, at 2nd and King in San Francisco, followed by a baseball game in the Home of the SF Giants (they host the St. Louis Cardinals). Advance payment for the game ticket is required. RSVP to Gelsey or Roxy as soon as possible, or call the Warmline at (408) 984-4044!

Coming in August!

August 19-30, 2004

HIGH SIERRA FEMME FLING XIX!

See notice elsewhere in this issue for all the details!

July's Birthdays

7/00	Laura Davidson	7/17	Ms. Bob
7/00	Mahrie Luuz	7/17	Juliette Holiday
7/03	Rachael Collins	7/18	Carmen Gomez
7/04	Gail Owens	7/19	Michelle Cole
7/08	Jessica Ames	7/19	Katherine Schroeder
7/08	Le Chara Johnson	7/21	Paula Chapman
7/09	Leslie Ann Bailey	7/21	Carla M.
7/09	Teri Pack	7/21	Jennifer Hope
7/09	Ayme Kantz	7/22	Gwen Smith
7/09	Dani Marie Kleist	7/23	Marianne Tai
7/10	Rikki Cohen	7/23	Felicia A. Elizondo
7/10	Lorraine Hall	7/24	Roshelle Cunning
7/11	Jasmine	7/24	Nicole Harris
7/11	Daniella Sea Warrior	7/24	Kelli Wellington
7/13	Nepenthe Kepner	7/25	Michelle Hofmann
7/15	Chamelle Metzger	7/27	Cj Wick
7/16	Marsha Lowry	7/28	Donna Stickley
7/16	Lauren White	7/28	Donna Wilson
7/16	Marie Kochaver	7/29	Roxy Carmichael-Hart
7/17	Joanne Wilson	7/29	Kelly Love
		7/31	Erin Souza

Happy Birthday To All!

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Calendar – July 2004

Other Bay Area Groups

Pacific Ctr for Human Growth (PacCtr)
A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-548-8283.

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)
Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00pm at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Mail: PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170 or call 408-984-4044.

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA)
Blue Rose Chapter meets 8:00pm the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write PO Box 162907, Sacramento, CA 95816 or call 916-364-7212 for meeting locations. Website: www.transgender.org/sga; email: sga@transgender.org

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Club 1220, 1220 Pine Street in Walnut Creek. Write to DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or call 925-937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC)
Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month, 7:00pm at Rainbow Community Center, 2118 Willow Pass Road, Suite 500 in Concord. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM International
A support group for Female-to-Male CDs and TSs; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 160 14th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415-553-5987.

The Mid-Peninsula TG Group (MPTG)
TGSF-sponsored support group for the TG community that meets at 7:00pm, First Wednesday of each month at the San Mateo Marriot Hotel, Nob Hill Room, in San Mateo. For more details please contact Roxy at (510) [redacted] **Debuts May 5th!**

TGIF
A social group for transgenders. Meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4:00pm until early evening. Space is limited - Reservations Recommended! Call Diane or Anne at 707-[redacted]

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)
A new trangender support group meets at the Billy De Frank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. For more information, call 408-293-2429.

Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)
Bi-weekly social/support group for gender-gifted persons serving Santa Cruz and Central Coast. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays every month at The Diversity Center, 177 Walnut Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (831) 425-5422; 7:00pm

SCOUT (SCOUT)
Santa Cruz Organization for Uniting Transmen, meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the Diversity Center (listed above); 7:30pm

I Love It Girl Socials
Every Wednesday night at I Love It Boutique, 45979 Warm Springs Blvd., #7 in Fremont. Call Jo-An at 510 [redacted] for directions and more information.

Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)
288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:00 PM DVG RCC	2 **8:00 PM Butterfly Carnivale!** 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA	3
4	5 5:00 PM CCHH 7:00 PM PISSR General Meeting 8:00 PM DVG	6 7:00 PM SCT	7 7:00 PM I Love It Social **7:30 PM MPTG**	8	9 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	10 **1:00 PM TGSF: ExCom Meeting** 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
11 **3:00 PM TGSF Red, White & Blonde BBQ!**	12 5:00 PM CCHH	13	14 7:00 PM I Love It Social	15 7:00 PM DVG RCC TG Legal Clinic	16 8:00 PM PacCtr 8:00 PM RGA **8:00 PM RGA Summer Potlock**	17
18 **SF AIDS WALK!**	19 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	20 7:00 PM SCT	21 7:00 PM I Love It Social	22	23 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr	24 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
25	26 5:00 PM CCHH	27 7:30 PM SCOUT	28 7:00 PM I Love It Social	29 **7:30 PM TGSF: EOM @ Blue Muse**	30 8:00 PM PacCtr **RGA NIGHT OUT - Play Ball!**	31

TGSF Membership Application

Membership is billed annually upon enrollment: $40 Single / $45 Family

❑ **Special $35 Single Membership w/ Email-Only* Delivery of CHANNEL**

Please Print / Check all that apply:

❑ New Member | ❑ Renewal ❑ Member #:_____ | with ❑ Family Member | What Year did you first join TGSF? _____

Preferred Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Mailing Name: _____

Family Member's Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Optional: ❑ Telephone: (_____) _____ What Name should we ask for if we need to call you? _____

***Email:** _____ Website URL: _____

Would you like a link from the TGSF Website to your URL? ❑ Yes ❑ No

May we use photos of you taken at TGSF events in our newsletter or website? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Send Check or Money Order to: TGSF, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486, or hand to any Board Member at a TGSF Social.

Special Events!

Coming August 19-30, 2004

High Sierra Femme Fling XIX!

A GREAT way to meet other girlz and take a mini vacation at the same time EN FEM! RGA, Rainbow Girls Assoc. is doing their annual Femme Fling - A truly grand gender blending vacation in the High Sierra mountains surrounding majestic Lake Tahoe.

Treat yourself to a few days of fun en femme. Enjoy fabulous homemade food, music and games. Engage in conversations while sipping ice cream sodas. Lounge on the deck in the presence of amazing sunsets. Wonder at the reflection of the moon shimmering on the lake.

Shopping, sightseeing and gambling at Carson City, Reno, Virginia City and Lake Tahoe Villages. Hiking, biking, and ice skating at Squaw Valley. Rafting on the Truckee River. Swim the icy waters of Lake Tahoe at our own beach! Take in the Shakespeare Festival at the amphitheater along the lake.

Bedroom $75.00 per person per day double occupancy; $100.00 per day special rate for married couples. FEMME DEN: $50.00 per person per day (dormitory style); Day Guests: $30.00 per person per day. Extended visit discount: Five or more consecutive days and get 10% off.

All accommodations include meals, snacks and beverages. All accommodations share three ample bathroom facilities. Meal preparation and clean up by cooperative participation. For more information please **contact BECKY VIA E-MAIL at** [redacted]

Upon acceptance of your application you will be sent lodge location and map.

Queen City

You know you're in Vegas when a beauty contest requires proof of natural gender. In the city's grand tradition of pushing the envelope, the Riviera is inviting all divas in drag to enter "The World's Most Beautiful Transsexual Contest" **July 22 to 24.**

"Unlike other beauty pageants, proof of natural gender will be required in the form of birth certificates or doctor's genetic verification," said Riviera publicist John Neeland. Pre-op and post-op transsexuals will be considered, he said.

Competition will include evening gown, swimwear, talent and stage interviews, with $5,000 in prize money going to the winner, plus a round trip for two to the Virgin Islands. The event will be produced by Norbert Aleman and Jimmy Emerson of Starr Pro Productions.

Transcending Transgender

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries

A support group facilitated by Janetta Johnson and Portia Denard; Where: City of Refuge, United Church of Christ, 1025 Howard Street, San Francisco CA 94103, (415) 861-6130. When: Every Friday, 6 pm to 7:30 pm. Food and snacks will be provided.

trans gender san francisco
tgsf

Mid-Peninsula Support Group

is back! Next Meeting is on
WEDNESDAY, July 7, 2004

and continuing on the
first Wednesday of each month

San Mateo Marriott, 1770 South Amphlett Boulevard
(Highways 101 and 92), San Mateo, CA

7:00 – 9:00 P.M.

Nob Hill Room

All welcome regardless of race, age, gender, gender identification, etc..

$1 donation will be requested but no one will be turned away.

For more details please contact Roxy at (510) [redacted]
or write [redacted]

Please note: This is a support group. The views expressed in this group are reflective of the attendees and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ExCom and members of TGSF.
You are encouraged to speak to your personal physician and/or therapist regarding your specific treatment and care.

Financial assistance provided, in part
by Transgender San Francisco

Friday, July 30, 2004

RGA Girls and Guys Night Out

San Francisco Giants vs. St. Louis Cardinals. It's time once again for RGA's Fifth Friday and, in what is rapidly becoming an RGA tradition, we are going to the ballgame.

Join us at Momo's for dinner at 5:00pm, directly across the street from the ballpark formerly known as Pac Bell, then we will walk across the street to the game.

Last year, we watched Barry Bonds hit his 600th home run. Who knows what will happen this year? (If he gets REALLY hot, maybe #700 will be calling).

Please RSVP by July 1 to Gelsey on the RGA Warmline (408) 984-4044, or to Roxy ([redacted]) or RSVP at any RGA event. You don't HAVE to go to the game after dinner but why would you want to miss out? If we get 25 people, we'll get our names on the scoreboard!!!

Please note that Momo's and the former Pac Bell Park are accessible from Caltrain, BART, and SF Muni. For transit information and schedules, log on to www.511.org PLAY BALL!

More Special Events!

July 2nd!

The Butterfly Carnivale at the Savoy Club!

Come in ~ out of the darkness...
...to rest your wings and mend your soul
Let's retreat for a few hours ~ amongst all the
Flowers of love, lust, and laughter...
As we frolic tonite at the butterfly carnivale~

The Three-Ring Rainbow Court
of
Love, Lust, And, Laughter
In Allegiance To
The Imperial Royal Monarchy Of San Jose, Inc.
Presents
The Butterfly Carnivale

The Viridian Crown Countess To The 34th Reign, Tameva Eshlaina Von Frankenstein, Will be your enchanted hostess to guide you throughout A magical evening of charmed burlesque, haunted songs, and other Flights of fancy!

Come be with her and "the Butterfly Empress 34" Rachael Janelle to Celebrate the life and loves and lure of the "butterfly mystique" in An evening to remember in the spirit of art nouveau!

The garden gates will open for you at 8:00pm - We hit the stage by 9:00pm

The Savoy Club, 3546 Flora Vista Ave. Santa Clara, California 95050, (408) 244-6909. All entertainers are welcome to the stage! $5.00 offering desired at the "garden gate," Free when you arrive with your "butterfly wings" intact

Door Prizes! ~ Raffles! ~ Contests!

For more details: Please Contact The Butterfly Empress 34" Rachael Janelle, (408) [redacted] Email: [redacted] Or: Tameva eshlaina at (650)[redacted] Email: [redacted]

We look forward to seeing you all there!

Hey!

$10 Bucks Per Issue Gets You An Ad Like This...!
Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000.

Up to 40 words only $10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

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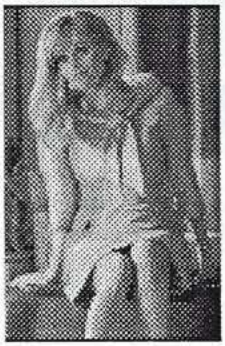
Change The Face Of The Epidemic

Walk with LYRIC!

San Francisco AIDS Walk
Sunday, July 18, 2004

Join a crowd of tens of thousands for California's largest AIDS fundraiser. The ten-kilometer (6.2 miles) AIDS Walk begins and ends in Sharon Meadow in Golden Gate Park. Walk with your friends, family and co-workers to raise urgently needed funds and to send the message that the AIDS crisis is not over and that you are changing the course of the epidemic.

LYRIC is a San Francisco Bay Area community center where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQQ) youth are embraced for who they are and encouraged to be who they want to be. To join our team, please contact Robin Abad 415-703-8510 x 39 or devo@lyric.org. For more information, please visit www.lyric.org.



SUNDAY JULY 11

trans gender san francisco
tgsf

goes

Red, White and Blonde

The Red White and Blonde BBQ

3:00-8:00 P.M.

Carla's - 124 Race Street / San Jose

$10 TGSF members, $15 Non-Members

Get $10 off your membership by joining at the BBQ and pay the $10 admission price!

LEGALLY blonde
RED WHITE & BLONDE

Join the Party!

Announcements!

Check It Out!

T.R.A.N.S.

We offer weekly ongoing workshops & support groups designed for MtFs, FtMs & Gender Queers, and Mulitgender (Co-ed).

T.R.A.N.S. provides a safe space, a welcoming enviornment, a living room with TV/VCR, support groups, referrals to trans-specific services, therapy, workshops, special panel presentations, case management, and other special events to bring an end to isolation for people in the Bay Area. Located at 1145 Bush St. SF, CA 94109. Contact: **Damon Helton;** 415-[redacted] or 415-[redacted].

United Genders of the Universe!

Gender Education Speakers Bureau Project

Does your school, work, or nonprofit organization need more information on transgender and genderqueer identity and issues?

We provide free or low-cost trainings, including information on transgender language, identity, sensitivity, and issues of violence, discrimination, and harassment.

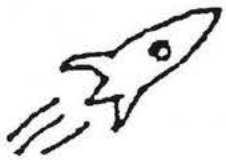
Our speaker's bureau consists of a panel of 3-5 transgender, genderqueer, intersex, and non-binary-gendered people of diverse ages, ethnicities, and class backgrounds, speaking about our individual life experiences and community needs.

Our mission is to provide gender education to social service providers, educators, students, and employers, in order to prevent discrimination and encourage acceptance of transgender and gender-variant people in the San Francisco Bay Area.

We are open to discussing your questions, alleviating sources of confusion, and addressing your organization's individual concerns. There are no stupid questions.

To arrange a Gender Education Speaker's Bureau training for your school or workplace, please contact us at *unitedgenders@yahoo.com!*

United Genders of the Universe



Transgender Day Of Remembrance Announced

6th Annual Event will be held November 20, 2004

SAN FRANCISCO, June 16, 2004 - The 6th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance has been set for November 20th, 2004, with over 100 separate observances expected world-wide. "Since last year's event, nine more people have died due to anti-transgender violence," said Ethan St. Pierre of the Remembering Our Dead project. "So yet again, we will be making it known that such killings are unacceptable.

The most recent reported case of anti-transgender violence leading to death is that of Cedric Thomas of Baton Rogue, Louisiana, who was shot multiple times on May 18th. Thomas died from those wounds on June 5th.

The Day of Remembrance began in 1999 as a way to draw attention to the issue of anti-transgender violence in the wake of unsolved murders such as that of Rita Hester. Hester was killed November 28th, 1995. Her death remains unsolved.

Unlike the murder of Rita Hester, many recent cases — including the rash of Washington, D.C. attacks that left two dead last August — show an increased vigilance on the part of law enforcement and the media to treat these crimes equally. "That we're seeing more stories about these cases, more arrests, and more convictions says that our actions are being taken seriously," said Transgender Day of Remembrance founder Gwen Smith. "yet there is still so much more to do."

Last year's event was honored in over one-hundred locations in eight countries.

The Remembering Our Dead project <www.rememberingourdead.org> exists to honor individuals murdered as a result of anti-transgender hatred and prejudice, and draw attention to the issue of anti-transgendered violence. Remembering Our Dead is a project of Gender Education and Advocacy, Inc.

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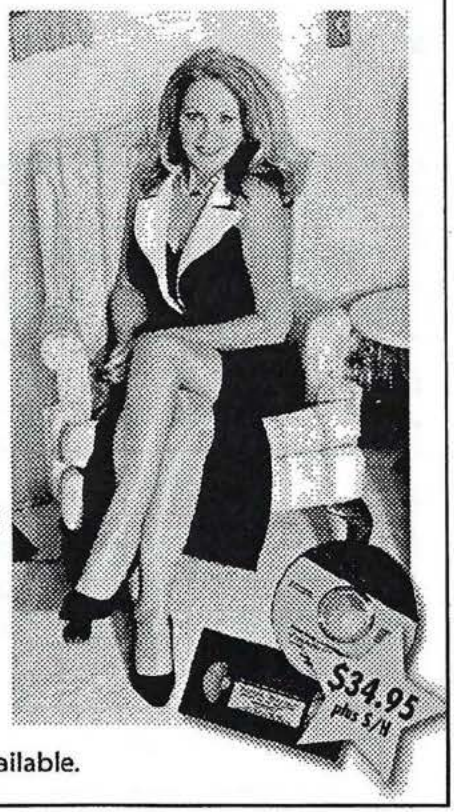

Private Consultations Available.

Readers Respond

Dear TGSF,

My name is Sylviane Schmitt; I am a French journalist. I have just realized a documentary for the French television dedicated to heterosexual crossdressers, married with children, who live in France and in Canada. The documentary is human, informative, moving, funny.

I would like pursuing my work on this subject because I find the subject, taboo, badly known and to enter in connection with heterosexual crossdressers who live in the United States or in English-speaking Canada.

Is it possible for you to communicate my demand for the members of your association? What I would love, it is simply to correspond with them by e-mail.

Thank you,
Sincerely
Sylviane

[Editor's Note: don't hold Sylviane's use of English against her. If you parle Francaise, ce la vie! She can be reached at [redacted]]

I Am Not A Deceptive Liar

Debra J. Saunders is wrong (SF Chronicle "No comedy of errors," June 24).

I vehemently disagree with her conclusion that transsexuals are living deceptively. This is biological determinism Transsexuals mislead others when not acting ma manner consistent with societal norms of sex-typed clothing and behavior. She has in so many words stated that transsexuals must live as their biological sex to not be considered deceptive liars.

Eric Vilain, chief of medical genetics at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, has stated, "Sex should be easily definable, but it's not. Our gender identity — our profound sense of being male or female— is independent from our anatomy."

Saunders should be so enlightened.

The "answer" isn't found in expressing that transgenders engage in deception, but instead in holding accountable those who murder transsexuals and other transgenders as being without excuse. The state Legislature should immediately take steps to outlaw "gay panic" and "trans panic" defenses instead of buying into this "guilty of deception" baloney that Saunders has bought as the truth.

I am a transsexual, but I am not a deceptive liar. I take great offence that Saunders implies I am one.

Autumn Sandeen
Bonita (San Diego County)

ExCom Profile

Secretary, Siobhán Ellis

I've been out for about 15 years now. Very out for about 6 or 7. As time has gone on, I've wanted to do more in the community and have been steadily ramping up my involvement. The catalyst here was entering the Cotillion as a contestant for Miss TGSF. As part of entering the competition, we are asked if we would be willing to serve on the ExCom, even if we don't win. My answer was a wholehearted yes. Roxy's leadership makes that a much easier obligation to live up to. How far she has come in such a short time, and the work she does is inspiring.

I also have the pleasure of working with the board of 2-Spirit (http://www.2-spirit.com), as President. Which means I get to work with some people you will all know, like Damon Helton, Kelly Anne Marsh and Tyler Fong. As well as some people you won't know. And just to make sure that my days are full, I'm also a part of the IRLM court, serving as Crown Princess to the XXXIVth reign. (http://www.irlm.org).

Towards the end of 2005, I will have to leave California and return to Australia. The experiences I am going to enjoy as part of these 3 great organizations will enable me to work more effectively in the community when I return. But for the short term, by the time I leave office, you will have a web site you can be proud of, a membership database professionally run, and all the good, and sometimes lousy, ideas I can muster to help make TGSF a fun, but important, organization to be a member of.

Bisous.

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Diversity's Acid Test: Transgender Employees

By Linda Bean
DiversityInc Media
Photos by Eric Millette

Rachel Hill

Here's a management quiz: A valued employee has privately prepared for a gender transition. Now, the employee wants to talk through the job related implications. A manager's proper response is:

A. 'No problem. We have business plans in place to deal with a wide range of medical issues."

B. 'Huh? What about the bathroom?"

A, of course, is the right answer. But interviews with those who have experienced a gender transition on the job - transsexual executives, employers and advocates - say B is far more common.

"You are always going to get the washroom question," says Brad Salavich, global program manager for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) workforce diversity at IBM. "But you need to focus on business issues."

"I call it the plumbing issue - personal plumbing and public plumbing," says Thomas Whetstone, a former police officer who consults with law enforcement agencies on transgender issues. "The number of employers who are enlightened about this is relatively few. Most people need to have some type of education."

What education would reveal, says Salavich, "is that the employee has been dealing with this much longer than you have - much longer."

"This person has contemplated this for a lifetime," echoes Whetstone. "This isn't something they've gone into on a whim. This isn't something they take lightly. They have been working with a therapist for a number of months, if not years, and this is not a decision they are making in isolation or alone."

For most people, gender identity and physical gender are in sync. But for others, birth gender and gender identity are in painful and perpetual conflict - a struggle defined as "gender identity disorder."

Before making a public transition, people may have engaged in hormone therapy and extensive psychoanalysis. They've likely been through some emotionally harrowing encounters with parents, spouses, children and friends. They may have experienced profound rejection from people they love and hostility - or worse - from strangers.

In his experience, Whetstone says, "the subject is going to lose friends and gain allies in places they didn't think they would. They will gain acceptance where they least expect it and face rejection where they least need it."

The best support for a transgender employee might be in the workplace - if that workplace is prepared. And preparation, says Salavich, should focus squarely on business principles.

At IBM, "we acknowledge that transgender employees are faced with a situation that is complex, that could be disruptive to their careers. We want to minimize the disruption and we want to retain critical skills and talent," he says.

Why haven't corporate leaders given the same reasoned consideration to transgender issues that they routinely apply to other areas of the business? Chances are, says Whetstone, that those leaders either don't know - or don't realize they know - someone considering a gender transition.

Gender identity experts suggest that one in every 12,000 people is transgender, although the deeply private nature of gender identity issues prevents any sort of accurate count.

Both Rachel Hill, a Bank of America vice president, and Stephanie Thomas, an executive at a California electronics company, waged internal battles for years before making the final decision to live as women.

Stephanie Thomas

Thomas, whose employer declined to be identified for this story, describes herself as a "closet workaholic," who had built a strong career as Stephen. 'I would never jeopardize my job," Themes says. "I need to work. I love to work."

But she also had determined she needed to live as a woman, and recognized the risk in sharing that need with her employer.

Despite the ethnic and gender diversity celebrated within the company, Thomas says, she couldn't be confident that an on-the-job transition would be tolerated, let alone accepted.

"It was a role of the dice. It wasn't even 50-50. I thought there was maybe a 30 percent chance of a positive response," Thomas says. "I felt I had to try, but I didn't have a clue how they would react."

Thomas's first human resources contact was polite, professional and non-committal.

'She went away to talk to her management in HR, and she and her manager talked to the CEO. I'm sure there was some open discussion about my past performance, which had been pretty darn good," Thomas says. Two days later, the human resources contact called. "She said Stephanie, I have some great news. Start preparing for your transition. Think about what would be good for you,"' Thomas recalls. Thomas, who also was teaching technical classes part time, offered to step aside. The school refused to let her go.

Hill, who has been with Bank of America in California for 15 years, began a gradual transition two years before her employer learned of her plans - making a series of small changes to her that "accumulated," she says.

Continued on Page 15

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Visible Man

Requiem for David Reimer

Jamison Green offers a man's POV on life in the trans lane. Opinion, advice and information from an internationally respected leader of the FTM community. His new book, Becoming a Visible Man, *has been published by Vanderbilt University Press.*

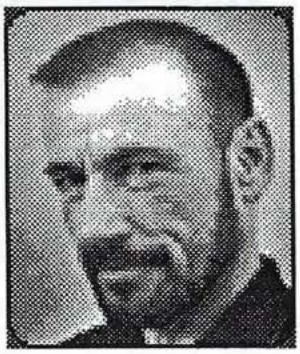
I was terribly sad to hear that David Reimer was pronounced dead, a suicide, in a Winnipeg hospital on May 4, 2004. Known as "the boy who was raised as a girl," and immortalized in John Colapinto's book of that title, David was the focus of many articles, television shows and debates. His 38-year life was a testament to the contradictory influences of self-determination and innocence abused.

First documented as "the John/Joan case," Reimer's story both shocked and intrigued the world as the quintessential gender experiment, complete with a twin "control" against which to compare data. Professor John Money of Johns Hopkins University was the scientist in charge, and he took only what he needed from his time with David to promote his theory (popular in the 1960s) that gender was primarily a social construction that could be manipulated by social mirroring and reinforcement.

In the 1960s a great deal of social experimentation was going on in many institutions, from schools to manufacturing plants. Medicine was not immune to the lure of "futuristic" thinking. Relevant to gender theory, Money, J. G. Hampson and J. L. Hampson published an article in 1957 documenting that, for the 155 intersexed individuals they studied, gender identity was almost always congruent with the assigned sex, regardless of any biological markers (chromosomes, genitals, etc.). Given this data, it did not seem unreasonable to theorize that a boy who had lost his penis could be raised successfully as a girl. I think Money was working with the best knowledge available at the time, and he seemed to be headed toward demonstrating that, even though most people experience their body and gender as the same, there is an inherent disjunction that exists between the physical body and the sense of self that each of us uses that thing called gender to express. The same rationale was used later to support transsexual treatments at Hopkins. Not everything that Money wrote has stood the test of time, but Money published a great deal of work that was instrumental in advancing what we now think of as progressive gender theory.

According to Colapinto, Money didn't seek David out: David's parents came to him wondering what they could do to help their child who had experienced this horrible tragedy when they learned that he was doing biochemical and surgical work to "help" intersexed children. At the time, the idea of a man without a penis was implausible, and apparently Dr. Money advised that David's best chance at a sexually satisfying life lay in conversion to a female body. Now David's mother, Janet, and many people in the trans community are expressing anger and resentment toward John Money for convincing the parents to go through with the social experiment. No one at that time had the insights we have now with respect to gender identity and body issues, and we still don't have all the answers.

It wasn't the gender study by itself that led to the emotional hardship that David suffered. What about the responsibility that rests with the doctors, nurses and technicians who were present when David's penis was irreparably burned away with a cauterizing tool? I've made the point before, and I'll make it again, that David's story is less parallel to the intersex and MTF transsexual stories to which it is compared than it is to the experience of FTMs who are told they can't be men because they have no penis, and for whom surgical solutions are not sufficiently advanced to permit the kind of social/sexual functioning that most nontrans men (and many nontrans women) believe is necessary for healthy male self-actualization. But nothing that any ordinary transsexual child experiences compares to the damage inflicted on his body and soul brought by that particular original trauma.



What Money should be held accountable for is not recognizing and not making public the failure of his experiment when he discovered that failure years later, and further for not assisting David in reintegrating himself as a man once he reclaimed his identity. He just washed his hands of the whole business, as if nothing had happened to a human being.

I know David's life was hard, and he bore up (very possibly) better than most, given the circumstances of the original disaster and then his subsequent treatment by John Money. But is John Money more responsible for David's emotional turmoil than the children at school who were cruel and tormenting because David (then called Brenda) did not seem like a girl to them, or the administrators at the school who did nothing to prevent the harassment and abuse that David endured?

David was devastated by the death of his twin brother, Brian, two years ago. What's more, he had recently lost his job and his wife left him, perhaps because (and I am blatantly conjecturing here) she was not able to connect with him emotionally due to his depression. Who knows? Whatever the exact details, the barest facts inform us that David's view of his life was exceedingly bleak.

According to a story by Katie Chalmers in the Winnipeg Sun News on May 10, Janet said she'll remember her son as "the most generous, loving soul that ever lived. ... He was so generous. He gave all he had."

David's death cannot be avenged by figuratively crucifying John Money. He alone is not responsible for the extreme difficulties of David's life. A fitting legacy for David would be a commemoration of the love that his family had for him and he for them, acknowledgement that he did not harbor bitterness toward his parents, who did the best they could to help him all his life, and recognition of the gentle soul that was so impaired by tragedy yet so courageously tried to be himself and to give of himself as much as he could.

The profound mourning of those who loved him should be honored with respect for the gift of David's soul. He need not be enshrined as a martyr for the cause of transgender or transsexual or intersex issues or people, but if he is to come to symbolize anything, let it be innocence. He will forever stand as a reminder of the callousness of some medical practitioners and theorists, such as that exhibited by some of those who treated David throughout his foreshortened life. The memory of David Reimer should inspire us to hold accountable those people whose work impacts the lives of all children. May he rest in peace.

New GenderQueer, Trans, & Gender Questioning Youth Group

Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center
www.defrank.org

GenderQueer, Trans, and Gender Questioning Youth Group The Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center is PROUD to announce the start of a new GenderQueer, Trans, and Gender Questioning Youth Group (new name to be announced in the future).

This youth program will provide space for discussion groups, workshops and activities, specifically for genderqueer youth and their allies. We are excited to be offering this new programming, for an underserved population, even in our own community. This new group is for young people 20 and under, who identify somewhere on the gender non-conforming spectrum, who are questioning their gender identity or who are considering transitioning.

This group will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from 5-6pm at the DeFrank Center, which is located at 938 The Alameda, in San Jose. For more information please contact T. Aaron Hans, Program Director at 408.293.3040 ext. 112 or at progdir@defrank.org.

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In Transition: Time-tested Tips from a Corporate Leader

IBM is a leader in gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual (GLBT) workforce issues. The Armonk, N.Y-based computer giant was the first to establish a program to tap GLBT-owned companies as suppliers and it actively recruits GLBT talent.

Since 2002, the company has included "gender identity" and "gender expression" in its statement of diversity principles. Over time, says Brad Salavich, global program manager for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender work-force diversity, "we've learned a lot about what works—and what doesn't."

Here are six IBM-tested steps for handling an employee's on-the-job gender transition:

Plan: IBM has prepared a package of detailed information on transgender issues and transitions, and the company already has in place policies regarding basics, such as bathroom use and the use of proper pronouns. An action plan — including the format for meetings and the mechanics of a name change — kicks in when an employee is preparing for a transition.

"We want people to come forward early so we can plan and prepare and ensure we have the right programs in place to make this a healthy experience," Salavich says.

Focus on Business: An on-the-job transition may generate questions or concerns, but doesn't alter the company's fundamental business mission or goals, Salavich says. "We are not changing the way we go to work or the way we deal with our customers."

Focus on Talent: 'The person in front of you has skills and talent. Ask yourself what you need to do to retain those," he says. "Have empathy. Have compassion. Seek out information, if you need to. Have a dialogue."

Understand the Personal Timeline: Transgender employees may be taking hormone treatments, preparing for surgery and participating in therapy. Find out when the employee hopes to start living full time in the preferred gender and prepare for that date.

Communicate: Work with the employee to identify coworkers who should be told of the transition. "Who you do you work with the most closely, either face to face or over the phone? Who is in the close circle that will have the most direct experience? You are going to want to work with the managers of that core team," Salavich says.

Use Existing Systems: "Our experience has been to try to make this a normal business process," Salavich says. He would advise against holding a special meeting, for example, to communicate the transition to coworkers. Instead, present the information at the work team's regular meeting.

Having the Conversation: Advice for Employees

An employee seeking to transition on the job might want to keep in the mind the same principle that works for his or her employer — business comes first on the job.

Know Yourself: "If you are going to transition on the job, the first thing you should do is make sure you are an excellent employee, someone they do not want to get rid of," says Thomas Whetstone, a former police officer who consults with law-enforcement agencies on transgender issues.

"Here's what doesn't work," says IBM's Brad Salavich. "What doesn't work is coming in with your therapist and lawyers and saying 'This is what I demand.' This is an employee-employer relationship. We don't need to engage a third party."

Be Prepared: Before raising the issue inside the company, be prepared to explain your plans and your personal timeline and what steps you would take to minimize business disruption.

Expect Questions: You may be breaking new ground inside your company. If that's the case, expect questions and be prepared to answer them. You aren't required to lay bare every personal detail, but you need to offer enough information to allay employer's concerns that you are acting in haste or might change your mind.

For example, "I've been working closely with my doctors for several months, and I'm confident I've reached the correct medical decision."

Offer Resources: If they don't have information already, offer to provide your boss or human resources contact with some sources of helpful information.

Be Patient: Give your company contacts some time to assimilate what you've told them. "You've waited years. A few more weeks aren't going to matter," Whetstone says.

Transgender Employees...

Continued from Page 12

Her decision to fully emerge as a woman was, in a sense, made for her. At a company convention, coworkers she hadn't seen for several months met her again with enthusiasm, congratulating her on the transition she had not yet made public.

That night, at a company gala, Hill wore a black cocktail outfit. "People told me I looked wonderful - they were very loving, very accepting." Hill's boss and a company HR professional sought her out a few days later to assure she was being treated with respect. 'They were concerned," she recalls. Hill apologized for failing to discuss her transition in advance. Her boss's reaction? "It seems like you have done very well so far. I see no reason to go back."

Thomas's employer arranged meetings with her co-workers to acquaint them with her news, provide information and answer their questions. Thomas was absent, a strategy designed to allow her coworkers to speak freely.

Hill, who supervised her own staff, convened her own employee meeting and answered questions. It helped, she said, that the refinancing boom was accelerating. "We went from busy to extremely busy, and we were all working very hard."

Since making her transition, Hill has served as a resource for others considering the same option. As **Miss Transgender San Francisco 2003**, she was a visible symbol of diversity. "And it is interesting," she says. "I came from a life of being a middle-income white male. I had never felt prejudice in my life. Now, I can look at different things that might have been said and done in my family ... I've started to realize all the little comments made by people I respect that had a little hint of bias."

Meanwhile, says Thomas, she remains grateful to those who extended friendship and acceptance early on.

There was a time, before hormones and cosmetic measures had fully done their work, "I looked like a man in a dress," she says. Still, her students and most coworkers extended her all the appropriate courtesies.

"People do surprise you," she says.

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T-News!

Taiwan TV Hostess Says She's Transgender

PlanetOut Network

A popular TV personality in Taiwan known as "Queen of Auction" disclosed on Wednesday that she is transgender.

Liching, who was born Wu Chung-ming in Chingshui in 1962, said she had sex reassignment surgery at the age of 22, according to the China Post.

She started her career as a singer and later worked as a model after a traffic accident resulted in the loss of her "sweet voice," the newspaper reported.

According to her agent, Liching became a star and top seller on the Eastern TV Auction Channel because of her husky voice.

Her sales records include 100,000 pairs of underwear in one hour and 700 notebook PCs in 85 minutes.

San Francisco Probes Intersex Issues

Patrick Letellier, PlanetOut Network

PlanetOut EDITOR'S NOTE: An earlier version of this story failed to present Marcus Arana's statements as allegations to be investigated. We regret the error.

The San Francisco Human Rights Commission held a public hearing on the topic of intersexuality, making it the first governmental body in the nation to address the subject. Intersex activists hailed the hearing as a groundbreaking event for human rights, and pointed to homophobia as one of the culprits driving the medical response to intersex people.

Broadly defined, intersexuality refers to anatomies that are in some way not considered "standard" because they have a combination of male and female sex characteristics. Girls born with large clitorises and boys with extremely small penises are considered intersex, as are infants with ambiguous genitals, or variations in their internal sex organs or chromosomes.

Experts estimate that between 1 in 150 and 1 in 2,000 infants are born with intersex anatomies. Many are subject to surgeries and other invasive treatments to alter or "normalize" their anatomies, and their conditions are often shrouded with secrecy. Intersex activists at the hearing characterized the surgeries as unnecessary, and soundly criticized the medical system for perpetuating shame about what they say are naturally occurring variations in human anatomy.

"Behind these surgeries is a fear of homosexuality," said Marcus Arana, an investigator at the Human Rights Commission and one of the hearing's organizers. "There's this notion that girls with big clitorises will become lesbians and boys with small penises will be little, effeminate gay men, so these so-called surgical reconstructions are done," Arana told the PlanetOut Network.

Arana is referring to allegations made by people with intersex anatomies. The San Francisco Human Rights Commission has not reached an opinion on this matter.

David Cameron agrees with the allegations. Cameron, 56, was born with a chromosomal variation known as Klinefelter syndrome. While males typically have XY chromosomes and females have XX, Cameron was born with XXY. Cameron has male genitals and in adolescence began to develop breasts. "I prefer to say that I'm not a man or a woman; I'm a blend, an androgyne," Cameron told the PlanetOut Network.

"I've been told that I'm a mutation" Cameron said. "But I'm a beautiful variation, and thank God I'm here."

Cameron, who is gay, said that homophobia is behind not just the medical response to intersexuality, but also the responses of many parents of intersex children and the support groups set up to help them. "I'm not seen as a real man because I'm queer, and many of these parents only want their kids to be heterosexual. They don't even want to hear the word 'intersex,'" Cameron said.

Others testified about unwanted surgeries and hormone treatments, sexual abuse by doctors and medical students, taunts and assaults by other children, and lives defined by loneliness and isolation.

"Only a few years ago I could never imagine there would be a public hearing on intersex issues," Peter Trinkl testified.

The SFHRC plans to issue a report on the hearings this fall.

Thailand School Gives Transvestites Own Restroom

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) - Snubbed by both men and women, transvestite students at the Chiang Mai Technology School just wanted a restroom to call their own - and were granted their wish.

Dubbed the Pink Lotus Bathroom, the facility is exclusively for the school's 15 transvestite students and features four stalls, but no urinals. On the door hangs a sign with intertwined male and female symbols.

"They would come in the morning and use the women's bathrooms, but the women were annoyed, didn't like it or played pranks on them," said Posaporn Promprakai, registrar of the school in Chiang Mai province, about 360 miles north of Bangkok.

The transvestites - who must wear male attire at school but are allowed to sport girlie hairdos - switched to the men's bathrooms, only to run into more trouble. "The men teased them, chased them, and they came screaming and in tears again," Posaporn told The Associated Press. So Posaporn designated a lavatory just for them, telling the vocational school's 1,500 students to just use their own restrooms.

The transvestite bathroom opened last fall, but this week attracted the notice of local media. Gays, cross-dressers and transsexuals are generally accepted in easygoing Thai society.

"We don't support their decision to be transvestites. We are just trying to solve the problems of one group that is unhappy at school," said Posaporn. "They don't get teased in the bathroom anymore. They're much happier."

Trans Firefighter Wins Day In Court

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Cincinnati, Ohio) In what is viewed as a landmark decision a federal appeals court Tuesday ordered a lower court to reconsider a lawsuit filed by a transsexual firefighter. Jimmie Smith - a pre-operative, pre-transitional transsexual, was working as a firefighter in Salem, Ohio, when she began to transition from male to female.

Smith alleges that after informing supervisors of the transition, her bosses met with city officials to devise a plan to terminate her employment. Shortly after that she was given a one-day suspension for allegedly violating a municipal ordinance that had not yet been enacted.

Smith filed suit claiming the city had violated her civil rights. The lower court threw out her claims under Title VII and another civil rights statute. But the 6th Circuit ruled today that the trial court erred. The Appeals Court ruled that Smith had presented evidence that supported her claims of gender discrimination and civil rights violations and ordered the case back U.S. District Judge Peter Economus.

The ruling asserts that that transsexual employees are protected against workplace discrimination under existing law. "In the 6th Circuit, it is no longer permissible for an employer to discriminate against an employee on the basis of stereotypes about gender nonconformity — even when the sole basis of nonconformity is the mere admission by a person of self-identification as a transsexual," said Randi Barnabee, who represented Smith in court.

The ruling also won praise from trans activists. "This type of victory under Title VII is long overdue, because it is so clear that the sex stereotyping of transgender people is blatant sex discrimination," said Shannon Minter, a board member of the Transgender Law and Policy Institute. "This decision represents basic fairness."

Online SO List!

New online mailing list for wives and SOs of crossdressers and men who consider themselves to be transgendered; no topic off limits. Attitudes range from complete acceptance to really struggling. Open to women only - no crossdressers please! Women need a place where they can feel safe to discuss these issues. Write to Cheryl at **triess_family@yahoo.com** and explain a little about your situation.

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Equity	$3,642.00
Total Liabilities and Equity	$4,042.00

Statement of TGSF Income

Revenue

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Donations	$652.00
Advertising	$0.00
Total	$852.00

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Telephone	$50.00
Debt Retirement	$750.00
Miscellaneous	$400.00
Total	$1,700.00
Net Income (Loss)	($848.00)

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Transmale Nation

Remaking Manhood In The Genderqueer Generation

The Village Voice - 25th Annual Queer Issue
by Elizabeth Cline
Photos: Robin Holland

A digital call to action spread on friendster.com last month, and a crowd of tranny boys descended on the East Village gay dive the Boiler Room. It was the very first Manhunt, a party for transmen and their admirers.

From left: Shey [redacted] Bran [redacted] Jules [redacted]

When several dozen genderqueers crashed the place, a few of the bar's gay patrons threw a tantrum. They tried desperately to sort out who was a dyke and who was a dude by rating the tranny boys—with their flat chests, short hair, and male posturing—according to who still "looked like girls." But eventually, these hecklers were outnumbered by some of New York's au courant gender outlaws, a mix of young masculine-identified dykes, bois, and trans guys clamoring for a space of their own. By the end of the night, the trans folks and the gay guys had made peace, and Riley [redacted], a 22-year-old, gay-identified tranny boy, even stole a kiss from the bartender.

Just a few years ago, the transmale community was still underground, connecting with each other in group therapy and chat rooms. How things have changed. Some of the city's hottest queer parties are fundraisers for chest-reconstruction surgery, tagged with names like "Take My Breasts Away." Ethan [redacted]'s Trans*Am party has gotten so popular it has outgrown its digs at the lesbian watering hole Meow Mix, and Manhunt plans to carry on through the summer.

By now, there are hundreds of personal Web pages, chat groups, and surgery-comparison sites by and for transmen. (Check out ftmi.org, transster.com, t-boyz.com, or the more than 200 Yahoo groups that pop up under a search for FTM, meaning female-to-male transgender.) Brown University, Sarah Lawrence, and Wesleyan have gender-neutral dorms, bathrooms, and sports teams. New York's LGBT Community Center has expanded its Gender Identity Project to include eight groups for the gender questioning.

Five years ago, if you were a transmale, you were FTM (or female-to-male) and you would probably change your name, go on testosterone, move to a new city, and perhaps consider sex reassignment surgery. Most of those FTMs wanted the world to know them and see them as real men. But there's a new trans generation. They're college-educated, raised on gender deconstruction, and not so interested in realness.

Today, most transmales don't plan to have "bottom surgery," which constructs male genitalia out of the labia and clitoris. For some, it's a matter of cost (ranging from $10,000 to $100,000, which still doesn't buy you a fully functioning, realistic penis). But a lot of trans guys say they're doing just fine without one.

"I do not want a cock," says K.J. [redacted], an 18-year-old tranny boy who hides his breasts by binding them with Ace bandages. "I know a couple of transmen who see their masculinity in their dick. But my masculinity is in my head." K.J. does plan to take testosterone, and he's saving up the outrageous $8,000 for "top surgery," which removes the breasts and constructs a male-appearing chest. Dr. James Reardon, one of the nation's best-known chest reconstruction surgeons, says he performs at least one such procedure a week—up from one a year in 1974, when Reardon saw his first patient.

As visibility grows, more transmales are changing their pronouns and hormones to fit their masculine gender identity, and many are starting the transition at a very early age. (A recent Oprah episode featured transmale guests as young as 11.) Along with this emergence has come an extensive lexicon. In addition to FTMs, there are female-bodied masculine-identified people who don't consider themselves men. They include tranny boys (who feel and look, well, boyish), transfags (who act effeminate), bois (dykes who "play" with masculinity), genderqueers (an umbrella term for folks who challenge their gender)—and the list is still growing.

In this brave new world, you can be a transmale who goes "no-ho" (meaning no hormones) or "low-ho," and "no-op" (no surgery)—or you can be a genderqueer who has top surgery, identifies as a woman, and goes by the pronoun he. The possibilities are endless.

America has always been the land of self-invention, but lately that concept has been applied to the body in unprecedented ways. Thanks to technology, transmales can now invent the body they feel comfortable with. In the new thinking, gender and orientation are a highly personal creation, and while some transmales still strive for "realness," the new generation is heading far beyond the appurtenances of masculinity. This isn't about having a beard or chest hair. These guys look boyish, yet butch.

But in the end, the transmale identity can't be described within the binaries of man/boy, butch/femme, or gay/straight. Says transman and performance artist Imani [redacted], "It's all about self-identity."

As Manhunt and Trans*Am (meaning amorous) imply, transmales are on the prowl for folks who are willing to break the mold of gender and sexual orientation—or at least go out with someone who does. Along with this evolution has come a new breed of queer women who like dating trannies and who gag on the word lesbian. "I don't give a shit if people read me as lesbian or straight," says Alana [redacted], 24, a femme queer woman who has dated both dykes and transmen. "For me, it's about respecting my partner's gender identity."

It remains to be seen whether gay men can respect a tranny boy in the morning. But there are same-sex couples who weren't born that way. Some transmales call themselves transfags because they express femininity in a very gay-male way. And some of them are open to dating women. "I don't define fagginess by who I fuck, because I've dated all over the place," says Bran [redacted], 22. "I define it by how I demonstrate femininity."

Bran has a crew of transfags of color that he met through a Yahoo group he started with a friend. Most of its members, like Bran, would call themselves pansexual. Riley, on the other hand, wants to date biological men (called bioguys), a hopeless prospect, he says, because of "male ignorance" about transmen. But those walls are coming down. The Center has started a new group for LGB trans people, and there's now trannyfag porn featuring trans and bioguys, surprise, getting it on.

From left top: Rowan [redacted], Stephen [redacted], Evan [redacted], Tom [redacted], Riley [redacted], Patric [redacted], Ian [redacted], K.J. [redacted], Eli [redacted], and Ethan [redacted]

Whatever their sexual orientation, most transmales remain in queer women's spaces because they feel safe there. Acceptance is growing in this community, but there still are dykes who gripe that all butch women are turning into boys, and feminists who label transmen misogynists out to gain male privilege. It's true that some transmen ridicule women, but no more than "real" men do—and there are feminists and lesbians who ridicule femininity. So what's the difference?

We live in a time when the attributes of manhood reign supreme, and not just for men. Women are appropriating the power and aesthetic of masculinity to redefine themselves, to the point where even our heroines—Uma Thurman comes to mind—kick ass harder than your average dude. Masculinity is no longer an exclusively male endowment, but it's still a very desirable one. This explains why the stakes are higher for transwomen (MTFs) in the world at large than they are for transmen. It also explains why the new generation of genderqueers accords more status to the male-identified. And perhaps why there are so many queer women, as opposed to queer men, ridding themselves of their female identity.

Yes, the status of transmen is enjoying a boost thanks to our macho obsession. But the way this scene understands itself and the world challenges that hierarchy. Feminism and gay liberation made it OK to feel comfortable with yourself as the world labeled you. But the genderqueer generation proposes a new reality in which the world doesn't label our identities and our bodies; we do. If you spot these transmales at the Pride parade, or in your local bar, you have seen the future—and it's very queer indeed.

Remember Gwen Araujo!

Mistrial In Transgender Case

Deadlock over first-degree murder charges — 3 to face retrial in slaying of Newark teen

Kelly St. John, Henry K. Lee, Chronicle Staff Writers

Three men will be tried again for first-degree murder in the slaying of transgender teen Gwen Araujo, a prosecutor announced Tuesday, after a judge declared a mistrial in a case in which activists had hoped a guilty verdict would send a forceful message about gender-related hate crimes.

Chris Lamiero, an Alameda County deputy district attorney, made his decision shortly after learning that jurors had agreed that the killing in Newark almost two years ago was murder — but were deadlocked over whether it was premeditated.

"This is a case we will take to trial again," said Lamiero, who will retry the men on charges that they beat and strangled Araujo, 17, after finding that she was biologically male. "The sooner the better, as far as I'm concerned."

Araujo's family and friends gasped in the Hayward courtroom when Alameda County Superior Court Judge Harry Sheppard declared the jury of eight men and four women hopelessly deadlocked after 10 days of deliberations in a case that drew national attention.

The panel was stuck 7-5 in favor of convicting Michael Magidson, 24, of Fremont on a first-degree murder charge, the jury foreman told the judge. The jury was deadlocked 10-2 in favor of acquitting Jose Merel and Jason Cazares, both 24 of Newark, on first-degree murder.

The jury had the option of returning a verdict of second-degree murder or manslaughter in the case, but only if it first agreed on guilt or acquittal on the first-degree charge. First-degree murder is punishable by 25 years to life, second-degree by 15 to life, and manslaughter by up to 11 years.

"I believe there was no one on the jury that was going toward acquittal," one male juror, who declined to be identified, told The Chronicle. "It was all first-degree murder or second." A first-degree murder conviction requires a finding that the crime was premeditated.

All three men also were charged with a hate crime in the Oct. 4, 2002, killing of Araujo — who was born Edward Araujo but had been living as a young woman since age 14.

After they were dismissed Tuesday, jurors left the courthouse through a side entrance. Most of them — including the jury foreman — declined comment. But the same juror who spoke to The Chronicle said the deliberations "were very difficult."

"There was one part of the instructions given to the jury, about the difference between murder and manslaughter, that was a key point in the holdup, " said the juror.

"That's where we were stuck, between first- and second-degree murder," said another juror, who declined to give her name. A third juror concurred with the assessment but would not elaborate.

Prosecutors spoke only briefly with jurors Tuesday, but that apparently was enough to persuade them to seek a new murder trial. Lamiero plans to interview jurors at greater length soon, he said.

David Guerrero, Araujo's uncle, said his family was disappointed at the mistrial but is pleased that prosecutors will try the case again. After the jury decision, Araujo's uncle David Guerrero said he more fully realized "the ignorance in society that transgenders have to face." He and the family were angered at having to sit through days of testimony "tearing Gwen down. [But] We're confident that we'll have justice in the end," Guerrero said. "But it's very difficult. I just don't want to see those pictures again. I don't want to hear that testimony again."

Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, dropped her head in her hands and left the courthouse in tears, and her family's attorney, Gloria Allred, described her as feeling "sick, stressed and upset."

"This mistrial has only added to their grief, but they understand the jury did their best," Allred said. "It was not a jury that was going to acquit or a jury that was going to find a basis for a manslaughter conviction. They weren't willing to accept a provocation defense."

Some transgender rights advocates had criticized what they called a biased "trans panic" defense put on by attorneys who called the crime a "classic manslaughter" committed in the heat of passion after a sexual deception by Araujo (Magidson and Merel had oral or anal sex with Araujo in the weeks before the killing, thinking she was biologically female.)

Make Your Money Count!

[redacted] to Gwen's family directly: [redacted]**emorial Fund**, Bank Of [redacted]A branch location, Acct#

To support transgender education work: **Gwen Araujo Transgender Education Fund** do Horizon's Foundation, 870 Market St. Suite, 728 San Francisco, CA 94102 • (415) 398 - 2333 / www.horizonsfoundation.org

Thank you!

Though upset at the mistrial, activists at the courthouse said advocates were buoyed by the district attorney's assertion that jurors were unified on the idea the crime was murder. "Today was justice delayed, not justice denied," said Christopher Daley, co-director of the Transgender Law Center in San Francisco.

During the three-month trial, the prosecution's star witness, 21-year-old Jaron Nabors, described a brutal attack in which Araujo was punched, choked and hit in the face with a can and skillet. Nabors said he didn't see the killing but saw Magidson pull a rope toward Araujo's neck after she had been tied up. He also said Magidson later talked about twisting the rope.

Nabors, who pleaded guilty to manslaughter and will serve 11 years, said the men then buried Araujo's body in El Dorado National Forest.

But defense attorneys hammered Nabors' credibility, accusing him of lying to get a deal and pointing out he told conflicting stories to police. Magidson's and Merel's attorneys argued that if they were guilty of anything it was manslaughter, not murder, because the men were provoked by their rage at learning they were duped into having sex with a man. Cazares' attorney argued his client was outside smoking a cigarette when the killing occurred and only helped bury the body out of loyalty to his friends.

Outside the courtroom, J. Tony Serra, who represented Cazares, said he was disappointed because his client was so close to being acquitted on first- degree murder and predicted his client would be vindicated in a retrial.

"One or two jurors did not deliberate like rational human beings," Serra said. "I think they made their judgment based on emotion," said Serra, expressing his frustration that only one or two jurors held up the process. [He] said he was "chagrined" by the verdict. "One or two jurors independently, probably with an emotional basis, stuck to their guns for first-degree. I don't think that's fair,"

Gwen Smith, founder of Remembering Our Dead, said, "the defense lawyers know how to sell snake oil. I find it sad that the jury found themselves taken in."

Magidson's attorney, Michael Thorman, said he was surprised that seven jurors thought his client was guilty of first-degree murder. [He] said it appeared some jurors agreed sexual provocation led to the killing. "I was hopeful the jury would agree this is a manslaughter," he said.

A new trial is not expected to happen for months because of attorneys' conflicting schedules. The three defendants will continue to be held without bail at Santa Rita Jail in Dublin.

According to his plea agreement, Nabors will also testify at a subsequent trial and is not expected to be formally sentenced until then, said his attorney, Robert Beles.

Remember Gwen Araujo!

Justice for Gwen Delayed, Not Denied

Coalition of Eight Local, State, and National LGBT Groups Frustrated by Mistrial, But Optimistic

San Francisco, CA – Twenty months after the brutal slaying of Gwen Araujo, a transgender teenager from Newark, the jury deadlocked on whether her attackers were guilty of first or second-degree murder. According to Alameda County District Attorney's Office, none of the jurors were willing to settle for the lesser offense of manslaughter – despite efforts by defense attorneys in the case to argue that Gwen's killers were somehow justified because she did not disclose her transgender identity to them. The prosecutor already has stated that he will re-try the three defendants, Michael Magidson, Jose Merel, and Jason Cazares, for murder.

"Because the defense team tried to make this a trial about Gwen's gender identity instead of the defendants' conduct, a lot of us were anxious about this verdict," said Christopher Daley, Co-Director of the Transgender Law Center. "Even though I am disappointed by the delay in achieving justice for Gwen, I am heartened that these jurors refused to let these young men escape responsibility for their horrific choices."

Representatives from Community United Against Violence, Equality California, Gay-Straight Alliance Network, The Horizons Foundation, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, San Francisco LGBT Community Center, and the Transgender Law Center thank the Alameda County District Attorneys office for their diligent efforts in prosecuting Gwen's murderers and their determination not to rest until justice is done.

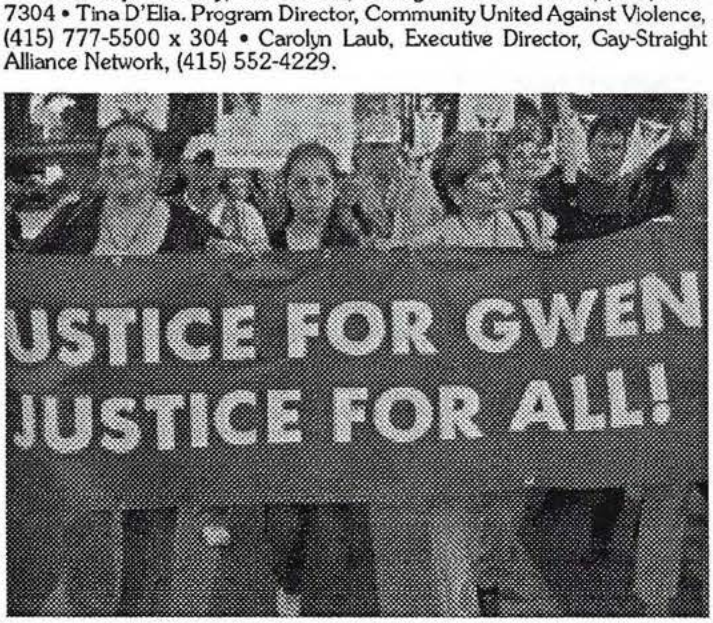
"We are relieved that the prosecutor is committed to retrying these defendants," said Tina D'Elia, Hate Violence Prevention Program Director at Community United Against Violence. "This is the first prosecution of a hate crime against a transgender person under California's hate crime statute," D'Elia added. "This case confirms the need for such a law. I am sure that the jury's refusal to buy into the so-called "transgender panic" defense will offer some comfort to Gwen's family because the jury recognized Gwen's humanity and stayed focused on the facts."

This case also highlights the importance of protecting transgender youth. "One of the most profound messages that must be learned from Gwen's murder is that hate crimes are preventable and education is the key to prevention," said Carolyn Laub, Executive Director of the Gay Straight Alliance Network. "Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and advocates need to continue to push California school districts to implement effective transgender inclusive anti-bias curriculum at all age levels."

People interested in supporting efforts to eliminate anti-transgender bias from Bay Area public schools are encouraged to make financial contribution to the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund by visiting www.horizonsfoundation.org or calling Julie Dorf at (415) 398-2333 ext. 103.

Media Contacts

Christopher Daley, Co-Director, Transgender Law Center, (415) 771-7304 • Tina D'Elia. Program Director, Community United Against Violence, (415) 777-5500 x 304 • Carolyn Laub, Executive Director, Gay-Straight Alliance Network, (415) 552-4229.



Three Things To Do Coming Out Of The Gwen Araujo Mistrial

If you're like me, you're feeling frustrated about yesterday's mistrial. Obviously, I'm thrilled that the jury dismissed the offensive arguments that Gwen was partially responsible for her own murder by rejecting acquittals or manslaughter convictions for any of the three defendants. Their inability to reach a verdict seems to have been based on an honest dispute about the facts needed to support first- or second-degree murder not a misunderstanding about who Gwen was as a person or the value that our state places on the lives of transgender people.

At the same time, I'm concerned for her family and friends and also nervousness about having to wade through all of the same outrageous claims by the defense team during the re-trial. In order to make productive use of that frustration, I've put together a short list of things folks can do in the coming months. I know lots of you have other suggestions as well and encourage you to share them widely. Hopefully, we'll all be able to rely on each other for support as we continue to struggle for justice for Gwen and the elimination of all gender identity-based discrimination and oppression.

Best,
Chris Daley

#1 Keep Pressure on the Alameda County District Attorneys Office to Re-try the Case

The DA's office put an enormous amount of resources into prosecuting Gwen's killers. They need to be congratulated for the job they have already done and encouraged to follow through with a retrial. The office has already made it clear that they want to retry the three defendants. It is important that we help make it possible for them to do it.

It's possible that newspaper editorial rooms will ask questions about the cost or utility of retrying these three men and instead encourage the DA's office to force a plea bargain. Everyone is encouraged to write letters to the editor or guest editorials for newspapers throughout the Bay Area (with a special focus on East and South Bay newspapers) over the next several months expressing how important it is that these three men be retried. Elected officials in the East Bay should also be contacted as they may raise similar concerns. While it is great if folks in SF are the ones writing letters and making phone calls, it's particularly important that editors and elected officials hear from LGBT folks and allies who live in the East Bay.

#2 Keep Educating People About Transgender Issues

One of the clearest lessons that we can learn from Gwen's murder and the media coverage of the case is that education is a key to stopping this kind of crime (and many others) from being committed again. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, activists, and advocates are working every day in most every California school district to make our schools safer for students who are transgender, gender non-conforming, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or questioning. Support this work through joining the California Safe Schools Coalition (www.casafeschools.org), donating to the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund for Transgender Education (www.horizonsfoundation.org), and/or supporting local efforts to improve schools in your area.

At the same time, it is important to make sure that education is happening outside of the classroom as well. Join a speaker's bureau (if you're in the Bay Area, contact Connie Champagne at connie@cuav.org to find out about the next training for speakers for CUAV), write letters to the editor to keep the issue alive in the press, and/or bring in speakers to your organization, business, or association to speak about transgender issues.

#3 Change The Law

The offensive strategy of blaming Gwen for her own murder is currently allowable under California law. But it doesn't have to continue to be. As a state, we can change the Penal and/or Evidence Code to outlaw the "gay panic" and "trans panic" defenses. Over the next several months, activists will surely be talking about how to make sure that criminal defense attorneys can never again use societal bias against LGBT victims in order to reduce the culpability of their clients. As a strategy emerges for new legislation, lots of opportunities will exist for getting involved in this work. Look out for emails and announcements about such legislation as this issue develops.

In the meantime, find out how to be involved in other LGBT legislative efforts through getting involved in Equality California (www.eqca.org). EQCA is California's leading lobbyists working to ensure and promote dignity, safety and equality for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Californians.

Remember Gwen Araujo!

Advocate For Transgender Tolerance

Mother Of Slain Teen To Address Pride Gathering

Kelly St. John, Janine DeFao, Chronicle Staff Writers

When she learned earlier this week that a jury had deadlocked on whether to convict the men accused of murdering her transgender child, Sylvia Guerrero fled the courtroom in tears, too overcome by emotion to speak. "I felt like I'd faint," she said of that moment. "I just wanted to crawl away and go to sleep."

But she will speak tonight before hundreds of members of the transgender community marching for the first time as part of San Francisco's pride weekend. And she will tell them what she told relatives angered by Tuesday's mistrial of the three men prosecutors say killed Gwen Araujo: Everything happens for a reason, so have faith that the issue is now in God's hands.

That doesn't mean Guerrero wasn't upset that jurors failed to reach a verdict of first-degree murder, which required a showing that the crime was premeditated. Araujo, 17, had been living as a female since age 14. She was beaten and strangled at a party in 2002 after the defendants — two of whom had engaged in sexual relations with Araujo — discovered she was biologically male.

The jury deadlocked 7-5 in favor of convicting Michael Magidson, 24, of Fremont, of first-degree murder and 10-2 in favor of acquitting Jose Merel and Jason Cazares, both 24 of Newark, of the same charge. Because the jury deadlocked, it could not consider the lesser charges of second-degree murder and manslaughter.

Prosecutor Chris Lamiero said he would retry the case after jurors said they believed the men were guilty of murder, not manslaughter committed in the heat of passion, as the defense had argued.

"She was only 17 and was just beginning her life's journey," Guerrero said in one of her first interviews since Alameda County Superior Court Judge Harry Sheppard declared a mistrial. "In just moments, her life was viciously ended by these men who felt they had the right to decide if she should live or die, but neither they nor anyone else had that right."

Guerrero found comfort knowing the men will be tried again but wants Lamiero to do more to educate jurors about transgender issues. "It is now so clear to me the need for educating the world about transgender persons," she said. "There's no doubt that had my daughter, Gwen, not been transgender, she'd be here today."

Education is a goal of those behind tonight's transgender celebration and march, which was planned before the mistrial but will be dedicated to Araujo and feature her mother as a speaker. "What was planned to be a celebratory event will now have a more solemn meaning to it," said organizer Cecelia Chung of the San Francisco pride board. "We are going to show up in unity to support Gwen and her family."

"It's [the Tranny March] an extraordinary moment for the transgender community to be integrated into pride in this way and to have a very important political moment to organize around," said Julie Dorf, organizer of the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund, which has raised $20,000 through the Horizons Foundation to bring transgender education to schools. "It's a very useful mix of anger and upset about the mistrial with optimism and hope for transgender people and their visibility and integration in society."

Dorf said Guerrero is now an important figure in the transgender community.

"It was not something she had planned on being, but through this tragedy she is a symbol to the community of a parent who fully and unconditionally loved and accepted her transgender child and since her death has become a very outspoken and well-spoken activist," Dorf said.

Chung, who is transgender, said "Sylvia is showing the love of a mother oftentimes we don't have in our lives."

Guerrero said the defendants and jurors didn't know the child she loved "the way I did, as her mother."

"She was beautiful, intelligent, creative, loving, sensitive, understanding and very honest," Guerrero said. "I have taught all my children that honesty is the best policy, and Gwen was being honest in being her true self, as she knew herself to be, which is transgender."

Education Is Key In Transgender Cases

Carolyn Laub, Julie Dorf , Chronical Staff Writers

This week, the Gwen Araujo murder trial was declared a mistrial because the jury could not decide whether the three defendants were guilty of first- or second-degree murder. According to the Alameda County district attorney's office, none of the jurors was willing to settle for the lesser offense of manslaughter — despite efforts by defense attorneys in the case to argue that Gwen Araujo's killers were somehow justified because she did not disclose her transgender identity to them.

In rejecting manslaughter, the jury effectively rejected defense attorneys' outdated arguments that were akin to blaming Gwen Araujo for her own murder. But because of the hung jury in this case, we all must wait for justice to be served.

Over the many weeks of testimony that we both attended during the lengthy trial in Hayward, we got to know the faces of regulars in the courtroom. Because of our work with the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund, we know her mother, Sylvia Guerrero, and her large and supportive family and friends. We also began to recognize the family and friends of the three defendants, Jason Cazares, Michael Magidson and Jose Merel. Not surprisingly, the pain and anxiety so clear in the faces of Gwen Araujo's loved ones were reflected in the faces of the defendants' family and friends as well throughout the trial.

This shared and prolonged devastation reminds us that preventing hate crimes such as this from occurring is important not just for the potential victims, but also for the potential perpetrators. Everyone in that courtroom wished that this crime hadn't happened, and no one's life will be the same now that it has.

What is perhaps most frustrating is how preventable this tragedy was. Hate crimes can only flourish where ignorance is deemed acceptable; education is the key to ensuring it never happens again. If these men had grown up learning about the different ways people express gender and sexuality, Gwen Araujo would still be alive. The system failed all of us.

The defense lawyers demonstrated over and over that they were counting on jury members to be ignorant about transgender lives. They hoped that jurors would buy their argument that Gwen Araujo deceived two of their clients when she supposedly had sex with them without telling them that she was transgender. The defense team then used this "deception" in an attempt to make their clients sound reasonable for strangling a young woman and smashing her head with a can of food and a frying pan.

For example, in his closing argument, one defense attorney stated that the men on the jury would naturally understand that the defendants had been provoked by Gwen Araujo. He then asked the women on the jury to put themselves in the shoes of their sons or nephews. In doing so, he asked all of us to agree that it is reasonable for young men in our society to commit such violence. The jury rejected these arguments because that is not what we want for our sons and nephews. We want to give our young people a higher standard, one in which they learn how to deal with differences and discomfort without resorting to violence.

To translate this important statement by the jury into reality, we all have work to do. Despite the fact that California law protects transgender students from discrimination in public schools, few school districts in California have taken the basic steps necessary to provide students with the tools to understand gender identity. Along with concerned students, parents, teachers, administrators and advocates throughout the state, we are working to bring effective education to schools. Through the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund, Horizons Foundation and Gay-Straight Alliance Network are hoping to expand both the reach and the quality of school programs that promote understanding of transgender people. We need to give students more information about transgender issues, as well as alternative models for handling conflict. These include classroom presentations by transgender speakers, peer education and peer mediation or peer counseling programs.

Over the last few years, GSA Network has seen more and more students in our programs identifying as transgender, and doing so at a younger age. According to the California Safe Schools Coalition, about two-thirds of students surveyed reported "sometimes" or "often" hearing students make negative comments based on gender presentation. Schools are going to have to deal with this issue, or deal with the consequences of choosing to remain silent.

Much was said during the trial about choice. The defendants claimed that Gwen Araujo had denied them their "heterosexual choice." The prosecution pointed out that the brother of one of the defendants, who had also had sex with her, made the choice simply to leave the house on the night she was murdered.

We as a society have a choice before us as well. Will we choose to watch more murder trials and accept more devastation in the lives of young people? Or will we choose to foster acceptance and respect in schools, and help our youth find nonviolent solutions to problems?

Remember Gwen Araujo!

Safest Course Sometimes Not Sexiest

Chip Johnson, SF Chronicle

The grisly death of teenager Gwen Araujo shortly after her secret was discovered should convince most people that living as a transgender woman is fraught with danger. But when and how such a woman should disclose her biological gender to a sex partner is a thorny issue, therapists and counselors say.

Araujo's brutal killing — allegedly at the hands of three young heterosexual men, two of whom she had been sexually involved with — shows that it can be a life-or-death decision. The 17-year-old Araujo was beaten and strangled at a house party in the East Bay suburb of Newark in October 2002 after her maleness was revealed, prosecutors say.

The alleged hate crime shocked the Bay Area's transgender community and brought a flood of clients to the Castro Mission Health Center, said Luanna Rodgers, a family and sex therapist at the public clinic for nearly 25 years. "It's distressing that it happened so close to San Francisco, the most accepting city in the nation," Rodgers said last week. "It has made some of my clients nervous about being out and about."

Rodgers and other sex therapists are adamant about disclosure before sexual intimacy. But there are significant obstacles. Most transgender people, especially those who know their sexual identities at an early age, believe there is nothing to disclose. Araujo began living the life of a girl when she was 14 years old. "Young people who've lived their entire life feeling female believe they are telling the truth when they appear as a woman because that's how they have always felt inside," Rodgers said.

But that can bump up against the male ego, which often defines people in biological rather than individual terms, therapists say. For many men, straight or gay, sexual identity comes down to a person's external equipment and nothing else. It is not unusual in the gay male community to reject a female-to-male transgender person because he is not "a real man," said Chris Daley, co- director of the Transgender Law Center in San Francisco.

The problems are only exacerbated because the goal of most transgender women — like the majority of people in the world — is a relationship with someone of the opposite sex, therapists say. Which brings us right back to the question of when, or whether, transgender people should be open about their biological sex.

"It can come as quite a surprise when the attractive person across the table turns out to be transgender, but this comes up for almost every transgender person at some point, so I generally counsel them, after a few meetings, and certainly before becoming sexual, to make disclosure," Rodgers said.

"It's problematic no matter who you're telling, whether it's a co-worker or a romantic interest, but it can save a lot of emotional distress," Rodgers added. "There are people out there who will be interested, understanding and see them as the woman they are."

The heady matter of disclosing biological differences is rarely discussed in the heated passion of a spontaneous sexual union, and the lack of frankness can be found on both sides of the street.

How many times have straight men failed to include facts about their marital status just before carrying out acts of infidelity with a woman they've never met before? Is it so difficult to understand why a transgender woman attracted to a man would not say anything to upset the romantic atmosphere?

"On one-night stands, a man won't say he's married, and a transgender woman won't say she doesn't have the body that he expects, but I still counsel my clients to disclose those facts because of the potential danger," Rodgers said.

The problem with the "don't ask, don't tell" scenario in the case of a transgender woman is that one of the parties is deceived in a manner that seems sure to cause an uproar and, in the worst cases, a physically violent reaction from her partner.

But disclosure for the transgender community is a balancing act between physical desires and the need to exercise caution — even in a moment of passion. Failure to tell a prospective heterosexual partner about one's sexual situation can be a dicey business, and there is the ever-present — and real — concern that a transgender person's disclosure may doom that person to a solitary life.

But as the life and unnecessary death of Gwen Araujo and others like her around the country have shown, sometimes the hardest thing to do is the safest thing to do.

Gwen Amber Rose Araujo (1985 - 2002)

...A transgender teenager from Newark, CA was murdered at a party by a group of men upon discovery of her transgender status. Twenty months after Gwen Araujo's death the jury deadlocked on whether her attackers were guilty of first or second-degree murder. According to Alameda County District Attorney's Office, none of the jurors were willing to settle for the lesser offense of manslaughter — despite efforts by defense attorneys in the case to argue that Gwen's killers were somehow justified because she did not disclose her transgender identity to them. The prosecutor already has stated that he will re-try the three defendants, Michael Magidson, Jose Merel, and Jason Cazares, for murder.

Five Facts Missing from Coverage of the Murder of Gwen Araujo —

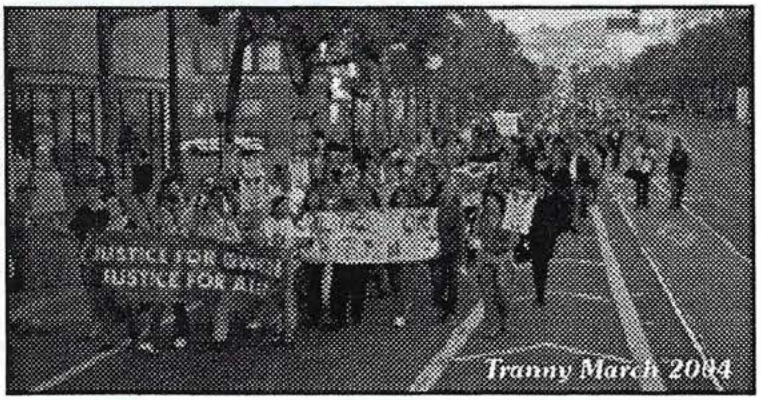
1. **Gwen Araujo was not deceiving people by telling them she was a woman.** Transgender people are not deceiving others by expressing their gender identity. When Gwen began living as a woman, it was not an act of deceit. She was expressing her true self to the world and deserved to be recognized for the bravery of that.

2. **Gwen was in no way responsible for her murder.** Except for self-defense, the actions of a murder victim are never relevant to the motivations of their attacker. Gwen was a victim of a violent murder. Nothing she did justifies what was done to her. As a society, we have moved beyond the point of blaming women for the violence that men commit against them. No justifiable reason exists to treat this crime any differently.

3. **"Transgender Panic" is not a valid defense.** Murdering someone because you discover that they are transgender is never a justifiable or understandable response. The "heat of passion" defense is only valid if the actions of the defendant are ones that the "average" person would have taken. The average person would not murder a young woman simply because she is transgender. The men who killed Gwen had a number of legitimate options open to them (including telling Gwen to leave their house and never speak to them again), Instead, Gwen's attackers chose to beat, strangle, and murder a young woman simply for being her true self.

4. **Gwen did not steal Michael Magidson and Jose Merel's "right" to be heterosexual.** Any sexual conduct in which Magidson or Merel engaged with Gwen was completely consensual. If these young men had sex with Gwen, they did so because they found her attractive. Being attracted to a transgender woman does not mean that a heterosexual man is bisexual or gay. To conclude that it does demonstrates a misunderstanding of Gwen's identity and sexual orientation.

5. **Exposure to school based education about transgender people could have prevented Gwen's murder.** Age-appropriate education about transgender people and gender identity would have introduced Gwen's attackers to information that could have helped them to act more responsibly. Little is known about transgender people, and much of what is known is inaccurate. Correct and accessible information about what it means to be transgender should be made available to all school age youth in California transgender people, and much of what is known is inaccurate.



Olympics' Transgender Quandary

Debate Rages On The Fairness Of New Inclusion Rule

Rona Marech, Chronicle Staff Writer

Alyn Libman's figure-skating coach always used to say she skated like a boy. Over the course of a promising competitive career, Libman received the same message over and over — she should tone down her aggressive style. But Libman didn't want to change her style. Instead, she changed her gender.

Libman, 19, has taken male hormones since 2002 and now identifies as a male — and he still skates. In the fall, the UC Berkeley sophomore plans to join the school's figure-skating club team. He's received permission from U.S. Figure Skating, the sport's governing body, to compete against other men.

As transgender people gradually gain acceptance, the sporting world has had to confront a tricky issue: How to include transgender athletes without creating a playing field that's not level.

Last month, the International Olympic Committee enacted a policy on transsexuals before an elite athlete could force the question. The committee said transgender athletes could compete in the Olympics if they met certain requirements, such as completing genital reconstructive surgery and at least two years of hormonal therapy. The IOC also requires that "legal recognition of their assigned sex has been conferred by the appropriate official authorities," such as by a nation's courts.

The committee's medical director, Patrick Schamasch, said the policy was designed "more to protect the athlete who has not been sex reassigned than to help the person who is." If an athlete follows the new rules, he said, "we are almost sure that the advantage of the previous gender will have completely disappeared."

Helen Carroll, coordinator of the Homophobia in Sports Project at the National Center for Lesbian Rights, praised the decision as "a precedent that really embodies a sincere attempt to be fair to all athletes."

But some athletes, coaches and sports lovers angrily disagree that that policy is fair or a civil rights achievement. Some question whether transgender men can be equally competitive in competition, but the controversy has mostly centered around whether male-to-female athletes will have an unfair edge.

The concern is that transgender women, having gone through male puberty, could have bigger bodies, denser bones and greater lung and heart capacity than their competition.

"It's the biggest insult to women and everything we've gone through," said Pat Connolly, a coach and former runner and pentathlete who participated in the 1960, '64 and '68 Olympics. "Gradually over the years, (the Olympics) started adding events for women. Why? To give women an opportunity to compete. ... Because there's an essential difference between men and women. Any dummy on the street knows the difference."

Dr. Lori Kohler, an assistant clinical professor at UCSF who has treated transgender patients for a decade, brushed aside those worries, saying transsexuals' bodies change sufficiently to justify allowing them to compete. Most changes are the result of hormone therapy, which primarily affects muscle mass, she said.

Part of the TGSF Contingent at San Jose Pride Parade

Men who become women lose much of their muscle mass, while women who become men tend to develop muscles more easily than they used to. In either case, skeletal structure doesn't change much, Kohler said.

Mianne Bagger, a transsexual female golfer from Australia who has played professionally in her home country and Europe, said in an e-mail, "I can understand people's concerns. ... The best that can happen is that people who have the opportunity can come and watch me play to compare my game with the other girls."

Some transsexuals say their athletic prowess is compromised as they adjust to new bodies and possibly new centers of gravity. It's difficult to measure because the changes happen gradually, much like going through puberty, Bagger said. "One day you realize that you maybe can't lift something that you once could," she said. "For me, I know I don't hit the ball as far as I used to."

But medical experts say research on the effects of hormone treatment on transgender people is far from exhaustive. What would happen if someone with basketball superstar Kobe Bryant's build, for example, started taking female hormones?

"I don't know," said Dr. Robin Dea, a psychiatrist at Northern California Kaiser Permanente who has treated transsexuals for 25 years. "We don't have a study available of male-to-female transsexuals who have gone on hormones and maintained a world-class training regimen."

Exactly the point, critics say. "The big part of the story is that there's no research whatsoever," Connolly said. "What little evidence they have is not on athletic performance. "

Opponents of the new Olympic policy on transsexuals also say allowing some athletes to take hormones during a crackdown on performance-enhancing steroids is confusing. But Schamasch, the Olympic committee medical director, said transsexuals won't interfere with efforts to root out illegal drug users because they will be tested like everyone else for normal hormone levels.

"They're completely different issues," said Shannon Minter, legal director at National Center for Lesbian Rights.

Minter and other advocates point out that athletic competition is inherently unfair, given that people are not endowed with equal physiques, drive or economic status. "To say that a genetic man or woman is different than a transgender man or woman is impossible, because then you're saying that taller women are at an advantage so they shouldn't compete," said Kohler of UCSF.

If the policy is inequitable, it's only because it doesn't go far enough, several transgender activists said. "Why would genital surgery make (a female-to-male athlete) a more fair contender?" Loren Cameron, a transgender activist and bodybuilder, asked in an e-mail. Hormone therapy is what affects athletic competition, not genital surgery, he said.

Many transgender men opt not to have the surgery because it's complicated, imperfect and expensive. "This policy is unjustly prohibitive to any (transgender male) competitor," Cameron said.

Nonetheless, he praised the Olympic committee's new policy as an important step that will have a ripple effect in the world of sports. Most experts agree, though few expect transsexual athletes to flood the Olympic Games or other sporting events. "As much as I like to think I'll be able to just go and play golf, the added focus of the media attention adds extra pressure," said Bagger, the Australian golfer.

Libman, who cut his hair into a Mohawk after completing his freshman year finals, once had Olympic figure-skating aspirations. That was back when he skated at 5 a.m. five days a week, and the sport offered him a retreat from the harassment he faced in high school.

Reaching an elite level is out of the question now, although he's unsure how much his competitive slippage has to do with his gender transition and how much has to do with injuries he suffered in a mountain biking accident.

Since starting hormone therapy, Libman said, he's grown much stronger. His jumps are higher and more "explosive," he has more endurance, and he puts on muscle almost effortlessly.

The International Olympic Committee's new policy "validates the fact that I exist, that transgender athletes exist, and we're people," he said. "And we should have the right to compete in the Olympics if we're good enough as athletes."

The Rainbow Connection

Gays, Transpeople And The Future

By Emily DePrang
Texas Triangle Online

On July 29, 2001 in Nashville, Tennessee, a 38-year-old bus driver named Willie Houston was celebrating his engagement. He and his fiancée, Nedra Jones, took a cruise together on a midnight showboat. After they docked, Jones asked Houston to hold her purse as she went into the restroom. While she was gone, a stranger appeared, taunted Houston with gay slurs, and shot Houston twice in the chest. He died later that day in surgery.

Willie Houston wasn't gay, but his murderer didn't know that. He also didn't know that being gay and cross-dressing, or transvestitism, aren't the same. He probably couldn't tell you the differences between transvestitism, transgenderism, and transsexualism. To his hate, everyone—even a straight man holding his fiancé's purse—looked the same.

But to the GLBT world, they shouldn't. After thousands of years of association, gays and transpeople were separated during the political mobilization of the '70s and '80s. Now that trans activism has gotten the T re-attached to many GLBs, some transpeople are asking what it means to merge these distinct communities, and what it costs. What everyone agrees, though, is that GLBT fates are linked, if by nothing else, then by a common foe.

A Brief History of Trans

Transpeople and gays share more than bars and a troubled relationship with organized religion. They also have a common history, since transpeople have historically been taken for homosexuals. The early sexologists of the 1920s treated transgenders for "homosexuality" by reassigning their sex, thereby making them straight. And while some dispute the legend of Stonewall, in which transwoman Sylvia Rivera tipped off the riots by resisting arrest, there is no debating that in the days of police raids on gay bars, transpeople were the most visible and vulnerable targets of queer bashing.

In the '70s, transsexual members of the feminist movement were denounced and ejected as female impersonators, while the nascent gay political movement distanced itself from transpeople in the hopes of becoming more politically viable.

Not until the mid-to-late '90s were trans activists able to rejoin the GLB community in their mutual pursuit of equality and legal protection. Of course, achieving integration of two distinct groups without disregarding their differences is no small feat, but it is one that GLBT groups, to their credit, are attempting.

Being Reborn

Transpeople share some of the more famous aspects of being gay: dealing with discrimination, negotiating with whom to be out, having everyone they date know everyone else they date. But they also deal with differences that gays may have no reason to know about.

Transpeople have their own vocabulary. Transgender means that one's gender doesn't match one's birth sex, while transsexual means a person has obtained surgery and/or hormones to correct their sex, so that it matches the sex with which they identify. The terms transman (FTM) and transwoman (MTF) refer to a transperson's sex of choice (not their birth sex.) Every transperson likes to be called by a self-chosen pronoun, and most don't mind being asked what they prefer.

Unlike gays and lesbians, who fought to have homosexuality removed from the list of psychological disorders, transpeople must encourage the medical community to recognize their condition, called Gender Dysphoria, so that they can obtain the medical help that they need.

Also, unlike closeted gays, many transsexuals feel that passing, or being received as their chosen sex rather than as a transsexual, is "being who they are." They feel this so strongly that they subject themselves to expensive surgery, undertake the years-long limbo of transition, join a tinier and more discriminated-against minority than the gay community, jeopardize their chances of employment, complicate finding a life-mate, and run the risk that they will be treated badly (or not at all) by a medical community still ignorant about and prejudiced against transpeople—all to correct their sex.

But there's a good reason they do it. Lance, a 44 year-old transsexual man, says of his first year of transition, "I feel great. I feel better than I've ever felt. It's like being reborn."

Something More Extravagant

When Kara walks into Sidekicks at 7 o' clock on a Friday night, the ponytailed lesbians playing pool nearby scope her unabashedly. She looks like a girl I flirted with in high school, only prettier. She's 6'1", has a pale baby face with freckles, a soft nubbin nose, and deep brown eyes with subtly smoky lids. She orders a Zima, but settles for a Smirnoff Twist.

Kara has spent $6000 on her body so far, including laser hair removal and hormones. She started cross-dressing in gay clubs when she was 18. "I was living in Edinburg, Texas. There was a gay club in McAllen called 10th Avenue." She smiles. "I was Miss 10th Avenue, 1998-99."

After graduation, she moved to Austin. "I started [cross-dressing] more after I moved, because I had the liberty. One day, I dressed up in the afternoon for the first time, because it was Halloween, and they let us dress up [at work.] So I dressed up as a woman in a French maid costume. Most of the customers thought I was a female, just a very tall one.... And I thought, I can do this."

Kara changed her name legally in 2001. Now that she is living full-time as a female, she feels more like an ally of the gay community than a part of it.

"I got introduced to the gay community first, and that's how I became aware of the transgender lifestyle, or what I call the trashy and glamorous lifestyle, which is something else, more extravagant."

She toys with one hoop earring. "There's a lot of people in the gay community who want to label me. They want to say, 'You're a drag queen, you're a man. They think that because men are with me, they're homosexual—even some of my best friends. And I don't think that way. I think a homosexual is someone who wants to be with a man, not a used-to-be man... who looks like a woman."

"There's a problem with recognizing that it's not a matter of sexuality," she says. "It's a matter of personal identity. I think a lot of people don't understand that, even within the gay community. But whether they've accepted me under the 'correct terms' or not, they're still accepting."

Identity Politics

Kara's feeling of being in but not part of the gay community is echoed by many transpeople. Some transpeople feel that because homosexuality is about sex and transsexualism is about gender identity, the two groups have nothing in common.

Lance abruptly left the lesbian community upon beginning his transition, after 27 years in it. "When I look back on it now," he says, "I never really felt all that comfortable, but it was the only place I could be involved with women." After beginning transition, he said, "I just got to the point where I didn't feel comfortable with it anymore."

"I think [transsexualism and homosexuality] are just totally different issues," he says. "I'm not saying there's anything wrong with being gay; I just think it's a completely different issue."

Lance is not alone. Dr. Henry Rubin, an assistant professor at Tufts University and author of 2003's Self-Made Men: Identity and Embodiment Among Transsexual Men, has oriented his research in part to call attention to the differences between gays and transpeople.

"[Transsexuals] are coming to visibility in the gay and lesbian community, but at what expense?" Rubin asks. "I think there's a large cost."

"There is a growing requirement to come out, and I think that is the biggest change in the discourse."

Rubin says transpeople who don't want to come out "are being seen as retrogressive old-timers, dinosaurs." He adds that the GLB culture is not supportive of people who want to contribute to the struggle for equal rights without being visible. "I just want room for my strategy as well. Why is there such a negative attitude toward people who [choose] to remain closeted?"

The term "closeted" itself irks Rubin, because it implies that transpeople are living a secret, rather than living their personal truth. "I hate that word, because I think, again, it's the gay and lesbian discourse...being imposed on us."

Another difference Rubin wants acknowledged is that gay people simply don't have the same medical problems that transpeople do. He cites a friend who, having moved to a new place, is running out of testosterone. "He has no place to turn to get the kind of medication he needs. That is something that people in the gay and lesbian community don't have to face. And I think that is only one reason why we don't necessarily have the same experience or the same basis for identity politics."

The questions Rubin asks are not often publicized in GLBT circles for fear of weakening a bond that both sides consider important. "People have come to me and said, 'You are being really divisive. You gotta back off, because this is an important alliance to build.' And I will say to them, you are right. It is an important alliance to build. So, sure. Bridges can be built... But I want to be that minority voice who says, 'You have to watch out how you're building this bridge.'"

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Gays, Transpeople And The Future...

Continued from Page 24

Unification Theory

But there are reasons, beyond historical ones, that the two groups continue to overlap. Many transpeople who spent decades in the gay community before transitioning remain queer-identified afterwards. Also, a surprising proportion of transsexuals identify as gay or bisexual after transition.

And, to get technical, being gay isn't just about who you want; it's about who you are as you want who you want. So questions of gender identity necessarily come up alongside homosexuality. For example, Tiffany, a 21 year-old waitress, fell in love with J., a transgendered man, and entered into her first non-straight relationship. While J. is still technically female, having not started his transition, he doesn't identify as a woman. So is Tiffany a lesbian?

"Sure I am," she says. "And I will be, even after J. transitions. J. doesn't identify as a lesbian, but I've been with men, and I can tell you that it's not the same. Some people call it being trans-femme, but I just say I'm a femme. Either way, I'm queer, and I love being queer."

Bois on the Side

Paisley Currah, transactivist and executive director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in New York, sees people like Tiffany bringing the two groups together. "If you actually look at the kids in their twenties, these distinctions are....so meaningless to them," says Currah. "Especially in the lesbian community; you've got the genderqueer people and the bois." Younger people, he says, won't discriminate against transpeople, "because they understand that the boundaries of gender and sexuality are so much more fluid than they were for older generations."

Currah also sees concrete reasons why the groups should associate. He recently met with a gay rights group to discuss a bill that would protect students from harassment based on sexual orientation. But Currah says, "When talking about youth, our little adult divisions between sexual orientation and gender nonconformity really don't hold up.... If you want to protect 'gay' kids in the school, you need to include a really robust definition of gender, because a lot of the time, they're going to be picked on because of their gender expression, and not just because of some idea they might have about their sexual orientation."

Everybody Must Get Stoned

Sandy Stone, Associate Professor of Radio-TV-Film at the University of Texas at Austin, knows all about the complications of the intersecting gay and trans communities. In the '70s, she worked as a recording engineer for the fledgling all-female Olivia Records until word got out that she was a transsexual woman who identified as a lesbian. Lesbian separatists threatened to boycott Olivia unless she resigned, and Stone did resign, but that didn't stop Janice Raymond from writing in The Transsexual Empire that Stone was an agent of the patriarchy infiltrating women-only space. Stone countered in 1991 with The Post-transsexual Manifesto: The Empire Strikes Back, in which she calls for, among other things, the visibility of transpeople, and the natural bond between transpeople and gays.

"I don't think that it's in a transy's long term interest to pass," she says. "But I can't speak for transies who are doing their transitioning in Montgomery, Alabama. I can only speak for the populations that I'm the most familiar with. And I still see that there's more to be gained by not trying to pass than there is to pass."

Part of what is to be gained, Stone says, is community. Without being "out," transpeople cannot create community, either with or without gays. "If you're a writer or a sculptor you develop perforce a unique voice, something which identifies you and your work.... But then there are things that you share with other writers that only other writers are going to understand. You may not even expect it, but...there are things that you can say to each other that you can't say to anybody else. And that's good and helpful. I think that that's the same for transies. It's not all of who you are, but it's some of who you are. And that you can nurture yourself by being part of a community of transies."

As for language like "closeted" and "outing," Stone agrees that transpeople need a distinct language, but she's not worried. "For better or worse, I think a powerful transsexual language for things like that has yet to appear. And it will have its own words that more clearly define something that can in some ways resemble what LGBs call coming out, but which is not that."

The Real World

While Stone and Rubin differ on the finer points of the gay-trans relationship, a more concrete conflict is taking place on Capitol Hill, and its one that many queers unwittingly play a part in.

Says Paisley Currah, "If you send $35 a year to become a member of the Human Rights Campaign, do you know what they're doing with gender identity in the Federal Nondiscrimination Bill? They're not yet including it as part of the main gay rights bill. They're allowing it to be considered as part of a second bill."

He urges both gay and transpeople to say, "'transpeople are part of our community. They need to be included in the bills and not cut out at the last minute.'" Currah asks that gays research the organizations they support, to ensure that those organizations are treating all parts of the community in ways that they, as individuals, want to endorse.

The Same Difference

Ultimately, transactivists agree that while education is important, it is more important to realize that the differences between gays and transpeople don't matter to their enemies. Queers of all stripes continue to be the victims of hate crimes. Jamison Green, a foremost trans activist, puts it this way: "Whether that violence is homophobic or transphobic, the people who perpetuate [it] don't know the difference. And that's why we have to stick together to end that violence, and to reinforce our own right to self-define, whether that self-definition is based on our sexuality or our gender identity. It doesn't matter to me."

To some individuals, it does matter. There are still many gays and lesbians who aren't comfortable with transpeople, and who feel that associating with them jeopardizes gays' chances for full integration and respect. They can hardly be blamed; trans integration is no more than a decade old, and transpeople themselves acknowledge that their condition is almost impossible to understand unless it is experienced. There are also transpeople who, themselves feeling straight, harbor suspicion of or even prejudice against gays and lesbians. But transactivists are right when they say that to the enemies of equality, the distinctions between the groups are meaningless. Transpeople and gays are siblings in difference, and the sooner both sides accept what they may not fully understand and defend one another with equal vigor, the sooner both sides will win.

New HRC Guide Helps Employers Create Fair Policies for Transgender Staff

"This tool will help managers ensure that transgender employees are valued for the job they do, not devalued by discrimination," said HRC President Cheryl Jacques.

WASHINGTON - Responding to the need for resources to help employers create fair policies for their transgender staff, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's WorkNet project today released a new guide, Transgender Issues in the Workplace: A Tool for Managers.

"This tool will help managers ensure that transgender employees are valued for the job they do, not devalued by discrimination," said Human Rights Campaign President Cheryl Jacques. "We hope employers will use this guide to create work environments where all employees are able to devote their skills and energy to the work at hand, rather than worrying about being harassed or fired because of who they are."

The guide covers basic terminology, how to manage as an employee transitions from one sex to another, and laws and court cases regarding workplace protections based on gender identity. In addition, the guide presents a sound business case for implementing policies aimed at ending discrimination against transgender employees. The 32-page document is based on interviews with 20 representatives of corporations that have implemented policies to address transgender issues in their workplaces, as well as employer and legislative data that HRC WorkNet has collected for years.

Transgender Issues in the Workplace also covers answers to frequently asked questions, and contains a directory of publications, consultants and organizations that address transgender issues in the workplace.

"Human resources professionals will welcome the information this new tool provides," said HRC Education Director Kim I. Mills, who oversees HRC WorkNet. "Employers spend significant amounts of their annual budgets to attract and retain talented people. These programs are important, but sometimes employers overlook the simplest step they can take to enhance their ability to recruit and retain the best employees — that is, ensuring equality in the workplace."

Transgender Issues in the Workplace: A Tool for Managers may be downloaded from HRC WorkNet at http://www.hrc.org/worknet.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender political organization with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that LGBT Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

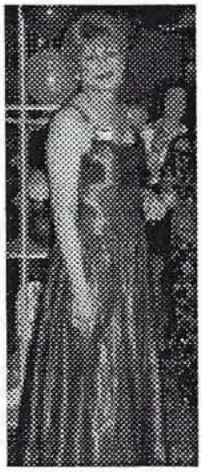
Boys Will Be Girls – The Spirit of ESPRIT

By Rebecca Redshaw

[Only transgendered men in various stages of living their feminine side were interviewed for this article. For purpose of clarification, they will be referred to using feminine pronouns.]

It may be raining men in many parts of the Pacific Northwest but in the small, working class town of Port Angeles, Washington the sun is shining on the "women" of ESPRIT. Celebrating its fifteenth year, this annual transgender conference attracts people from as far away as New Zealand and England.

Participants have booked the waterside Red Lion Inn to capacity during the seven-day event. Activities range in scope from typical tourist fare (a shopping trip to Victoria, Canada – a scenic drive to the snowcapped mountains of Hurricane Ridge) to medical seminars chaired by experts in the field (Genital Reassignment Surgery – Legal Issues – A Practical Approach to Personal Safety for the TG Community) to practical, but fun, lectures (Crossdressing 101 – The Amazing World of Airbrush Makeup).



Suzanne at the Southern Dysfunctional Family Reunion

Night time activities scream for formal finery at the mid-week Dysfunctional Southern Family Reunion and letting your hair down (or up, depending on your sense of style) at the Friday night Talent Show and Dance.

Camaraderie and friendship are important at any gathering as well as the ability to share unique information. ESPRIT is no different. But what is essential to newcomers and returnees alike is the freedom to feel. Laura is attending ESPRIT for the second year in a row. Formerly married with children, she was a sheriff prior to being outed. She described the conference.

"The wonderful thing about ESPRIT that really hits you is that feeling of sisterhood. Women have that. They're connected to each other. A lot of trans people don't have that until they come here. Then it's like a pilot light – once that's lit, it's like the gas burners are opened. You're connected to people."

Rotary Speakers - Suzanne Adams & Karen Williams with Natalie Spiegel, Rotary Secretary

The transgendered community, which is an umbrella term covering anyone in conflict with his/her gender, is represented at ESPRIT by crossdressers, transvestites, and transsexuals in various stages of transition – hormonally and surgically.

"Sexuality is more who you like to go to bed with and gender is who you are inside – your core. [They are] ...two different things," Laura said. "Because they both have to do with the crotch, people get them mixed up, but there's definitely a distinction that needs to be made."

Many of the participants have established themselves professionally and financially. A large percentage of those in attendance have advanced degrees. There are doctors, police officers, and lawyers here. After twenty years of marriage, two children, and five grandchildren, Victoria decided it was time to be true to her self. Coming from a small town, she relies on the Internet for information and as a way to meet people. ESPRIT opens other avenues.

"I've been studying it online and reading books, so I thought I'd come here and attend classes and seminars and learn more," Victoria said. "I live in a small town and have gone out a few times at home but most of the time I get odd looks. A couple of times guys came up to me and gave me a hard time. I thought there was gonna be a fight, but I talked my way out of it."

Victoria spent six years in the Navy in Viet Nam, a lifetime ago. "I'm totally non-violent. I gave that up after Viet Nam. The war changed my mind about a lot of things. I don't even go hunting anymore."

Forty year old Julia is catching a few rays on the steps outside of registration. She first attended ESPRIT in 2002 and this year, along with two friends from home, plans to vacation in the states after the conference. A native New Zealander, she has a different perspective on acceptance.

"New Zealand doesn't have any issues with transgendered folks. You still get the odd person, but you can educate them. I feel comfortable going out."

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Passing Fancy - Pt. II

PlanetOut

ChristineAJ

I believe that all trans people everywhere wonder and maybe worry about "passing" at some point.

All trans-identified people (M2F, F2M, pre-op, post-op) have the desire to fit best into the gender they feel they should have been all along. Is the voice high enough? Is it low enough? Do my hips show too much or do they not show at all? Is my beard showing, or why isn't my beard growing?

I work as a nurse. At this point in time it is a female-dominated career. I feel that I pass pretty well: no heavy beard to deal with anymore, and being post-op has given me more curves than a mountain road.

Do I worry about passing? Not really anymore. I think that at this point it is more about being comfortable with myself. I know how my life started, and I lived through the "transition." Trans invisibility, or "stealth mode" as some call it, is a concept that is given way too much attention and priority.

Everyone will have an opinion about you. Your opinion of who you are as a person is really the one that matters.

ruadhan

I pass fairly confidently now. Though currently only 15 months on hormones, I still have much change to look forward to. Passing to the general public is important to me, though I do not live my life in the closet. While passing provides an avenue toward invisibility if one chooses, there are many ways to stay visible as a transperson, for instance being out and active within the larger queer community.

rikisarahdennis

All people need to be true to their own paths. I know people who pass perfectly and choose to live their lives without sharing their past with others. I know people who pass perfectly and choose to be out activists, fighting for trans rights. Either way, it seems that it is a personal choice for those who are fortunate enough to pass. I only pass intermittently myself, so the choice is easier for me — I am out by default.

jackgalvin

I pass somewhat, especially around older people who were brought up on the idea that boys and girls *always* wear different things. Since I live on a college campus, though, I usually get "read" as a lesbian, even though I am a transguy who dates men.

If I could pass, I would. Lately this has become more important. I "came out" to my parents and have the freedom to, so I oftentimes spend hours trying to find ways to change my hairstyle, mannerisms and clothing to look more male. When you don't pass, you are constantly being treated differently. Oftentimes you're not treated like either sex, you are treated like an imposter or a fake.

Is passing "trans-invisibility?" I guess so. If you pass, nobody knows you are transgendered — they don't know how close to home the issue is, and they cannot learn from it. I know some people (who read me as female, coincidentally) who have no clue this even exists outside of films. But, like I stated above, if they know you are trans, their reactions will almost never be quite "right."

The Cutting Edge

Why some doctors are moving away from performing surgery on babies of indeterminate gender

By Claudia Kolker

Approximately 10 times a year in Houston, at the birth of a certain type of baby, a special crisis team at Texas Children's Hospital springs into action. Assembled in 2001, the unusual team includes a psychologist, urologist, geneticist, endocrinologist, and ethicist. Its mission: to counsel parents of infants sometimes referred to as "intersex" babies-that is, babies of indeterminate physical gender.

That such a team exists-and that it often counsels deferring surgery for infants who are otherwise healthy-reflects a radical new thinking among doctors about gender identity and outside efforts to shape it. Instead of surgically "fixing" such children to make them (visually, at least) either male or female, a handful of U.S. specialists now argue that such infants should be left alone and eventually be allowed to choose their gender identity. The approach challenges decades of conventional wisdom about what to do with infants whose genitalia don't conform to the "norm." Until very recently, such children were automatically altered with surgery, often with tragic consequences.

Each year, about one in 2,000 children is born with ambiguous-looking genitalia. A wide range of disorders may be responsible-genetic defects, hormonal abnormalities, or unexplained developmental disruptions that occurred in utero. Sometimes the gender anomalies don't appear until puberty or later when children's bodies begin to mature, or fail to do so: A child with, say, an androgen disorder who formed male-looking genitals might genetically be a girl; another child might have the male hormones of a boy but, because of an interruption in the process that forms male genitalia, may look externally just like a girl. Many anomalies, however, present themselves with bewildering immediacy: tiny penises, enlarged or "virilized" clitorises, or what appear to be a hybrid of male and female genitalia.

For 50 years, the medical response to such external abnormalities has been the same: operate quickly to make the genitals as "normal" as possible, then hide the child's medical history even from parents, in the hope of reinforcing the new gender. Convinced they were doing the best for their patients, doctors in the past labeled ambiguous children boys or girls according to the alteration that seemed most feasible and performed highly invasive, irreversible surgeries accordingly. Thus a boy with a tiny penis might be castrated, given a rudimentary vagina, and designated a girl. Even more commonly, in cases in which a girl's clitoris looked larger than the norm, her clitoris would be cut away entirely.

Parents never heard that the interventions were essentially experimental, nor that they could wound the child emotionally as well as physically. Until a couple of decades ago, parents might simply be told, "Your child's genitals didn't fully form; we'll do a procedure to fix them." Today parents are more fully informed of the details of their child's condition and the consequences of any operation. Still, the great majority of hospitals continue to recommend and perform "normalizing" surgery in the first year of a child's life.

But new evidence, including a recently published study in the New England Journal of Medicine, is showing that the way we acquire a gender identity is enormously complex-and that imposing gender-physical or social-on a child can have catastrophic results. (Click here to read about the study.) Of thousands of adults who were subjected to physical assignments and who have reported their experiences in recent years, the aftershocks have ranged from rage at the destruction of sexual function, to conflicts in school and relationships, to depression and attempts at suicide. Until recently, though, there's been little science to either support or refute these anecdotal accounts. And because the surgical "treatment" of children born with ambiguous genitalia has, for the last 50 years, been shrouded in secrecy, there has been little if any medical follow-up.

So, what is it that determines gender identity? It's a difficult question. Scientists simply do not know what creates the internal sense of being male or female. What's increasingly clear is that gender identity does not necessarily follow from genes, upbringing, or anatomy, even in people with ordinary genitals. That growing recognition, some doctors say, has prompted a new humility about making those decisions on a child's behalf. "The hardest thing to consider is what gender the child will feel like," explains geneticist Chester Brown of Baylor College of Medicine. "And really, at such a young age, it's impossible to assess."

The mechanics of gender identity seemed simpler a half-century ago. Doctors confidently altered the physiques of children of indeterminate sex by applying new advances in hormone synthesis and plastic surgery. Female genitalia are easier to craft than male, so female was, and still remains, the default assignment. By 1967, a Johns Hopkins psychologist named John Money was arguing that, in the first 18 months of life, gender identity was just as malleable as physical gender. Consulted in the case of David Reimer, a baby boy who'd lost his penis in a botched circumcision, Money persuaded the child's parents to raise him as a girl. The 22-month-old was castrated, surgically given a vagina, and kept ignorant of his original gender.

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The Spirit of ESPRIT

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Julia and Suzanne Adams

Julia's parents are unhappy with the idea of her crossdressing, so she hasn't broached her future medical plans with them. She has used the Internet as well, for medical research and she's contemplating surgery someday, probably in Thailand.

"It's not an easy road by any means – one thing at a time and then move on," Julia said. "Over the years everything comes into place. Back home you think you're the only person in the world because there's so few of us."

Not everyone at ESPRIT is single. A number of the attendees are heterosexual with families. Some travel without their wives but others bring spouses. It's one thing to have an epiphany concerning your own gender identity, it's quite another for a partner to evolve with the revelation. A number of sessions at ESPRIT are designed to help the significant other in a trans relationship understand and accept what is transpiring.

Betty and Faith have been married for eighteen years. Faith had buried her feelings her whole life but now considers herself a transsexual.

Faith & Betty

"I'll probably go into transgender. I don't know if I'm going to have surgery. I started hormones about a month ago and I've transitioned at work from male to female. I'm a bill collector for the power company, but I haven't had any problems. They [customers] look at me and take a couple of takes but then realize I'm there on business."

An attractive couple that looks somewhat alike, Betty and Faith rely a great deal on the support group that meets weekly in their hometown. Membership in the group is near forty compared to the ten or fifteen people ten years ago. But small town living can be difficult and they've have experienced mixed reactions where they live.

Betty said, "They're kind of quiet in the town but it's better than running us out on a train bed or something. You keep some friends and lose some."

"Our family is in various phases of acceptance," Faith adds. "They all know how serious I am and how Betty and I are committed to each other. They know if they want to see us, they need to come along."

The restaurants and shop owners of Port Angeles have welcomed the ESPRIT convention for years for obvious reasons – they spend a lot of money dining and shopping. But that hardly defines the feelings of the community. ESPRIT representatives are anxious to speak to various service organizations and this year were well received by the Rotary at their weekly luncheon. A panel of transgendered folks enjoyed a lively return engagement to Peninsula College answering questions from students curious about a world far different than English Literature or Computer Science.

Reflecting on the community atmosphere in Port Angeles to ESPRIT, Faith stated the general consensus of those in attendance. "We would like to take this city and run it through a XEROX machine and just plant it all across the country. They have been so wonderful."

For more information on ESPIRIT, visit www.espritconf.com.

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Important Website Update!

If you want an ID/Password to access the new **Member's area** on the TGSF website, send an email request to **Siobhan Ellis @** [redacted]

Sex Reassignment Surgery: Quick Fix Or Bane?

Philippine Daily Inquirer News Service

TORONTO, Canada — They are jeered at and given all sorts of labels from freak to pervert. They are called liars and cheats, and get beaten up for allegedly deceiving people about their biologic gender. A few of them even get killed.

They are the transsexuals who have undergone invasive procedures to have their genitalia changed, grow breasts by hormones or additional surgery, remove their Adam's apples, and literally reconfigure themselves by radical sex reassignment surgery or SRS to look like a woman.

This week, many transgender issues are being tackled in a conference here called "Sexual Realities" and even the experts could not agree on many of the issues, particularly on fundamental issues of gender identity.

Some basic questions are being asked. What is a man? And what is a woman? Is SRS a boon or bane to gays trapped in a male's body?

Still Not Accepted

True enough, one can't help but wonder if medical experts are not aggravating a gay person's identity crisis by offering to fix it with a scalpel rather than thorough psychotherapy. With all good intentions, a surgeon may aim to resolve the physical conflict in a gay person, but in the process he may be propagating a deception that may only promote more conflicts later on in the transsexual's life and relationships.

Transsexualism is still not accepted in mainstream society. One may be amused at seeing transsexuals in stage shows, but not a few unfairly regard them as perverts who deserve the stigma social outcasts are given.

Gays may be acceptable to many societies, but undergoing SRS may be going a step too far, and many regard it as abusing the generous tolerance afforded homosexuals.

A big hurdle for transsexuals is cruel transphobia, which is actually not fear, but more an undue, violent expression of unacceptance of transsexuals.

Available in RP

SRS is now done in many countries. In Asia, it's done in Thailand, Korea and Singapore.

There are reports that it's being done also in a few surgical clinics in the Philippines, under clandestine circumstances, with the operative procedure identified as something else other than SRS.

The surgery plus the subsequent hormonal therapy may cost anywhere from a few hundred pesos to more than a million pesos.

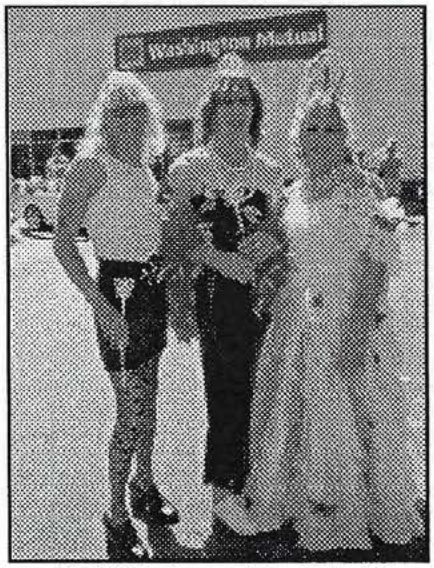
Most of the surgeries are male to female procedures, but occasionally female to male surgeries are also being done. The latter is usually more complicated and would cost more.

Although the technique for SRS has been refined during the last 10 years, postoperative complications have been reported. This includes perforation of the intestines during the creation of a vaginal canal. Fecal matter may leak through this canal.

After spending his life savings, the transsexual may feel good about his (or rather her) SRS, and the new body that it creates, but the actual benefits may be difficult to come by.

Close to half of identified transsexuals are unemployed and the minority who get employed are being discriminated upon and are forced to drift from one job to another. A quarter end up in the sex trade, and get afflicted with sexually transmitted infections, including AIDS.

SRS medical experts should perhaps rethink their aggressiveness in doing the procedure. Although tendencies for being gay may be innate or inborn, I still believe that environmental factors, particularly upbringing, play a major role. A patient long-term psychological approach rather than a quick, radical short-term treatment such as SRS should be the preferred intervention. SRS, for me, is more a bane for our usually gifted gay brethren.



TGSF Members with the Butterfly Empress, Rachael Janelle at SJ Pride

The Cutting Edge...

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Money's work helped codify the treatment model. If socialization could shape the gender identity of a biological boy, Money proposed, assigning gender surgically was even more likely to succeed in cases where the child's external sex was less defined. The theory seemed progressive, almost utopian. Heartbreaking physical anomalies could be fixed and then forgotten. Gender roles, meanwhile, appeared to have been freed from the dictates of nature.

The problem was that Money's findings were wrong. Brenda, as she was called, grew up troubled, alienated, and suicidal. It's easy to wonder how much Reimer's childhood traumas bled into his adult life. Money, meanwhile, no longer comments publicly on the Reimer case, but his theory and practices remain influential.

The sort of interventionist strategy encouraged by Money creates its own deformities, says Cheryl Chase, founder of the Intersex Society of North America. (For Chase's story, click here.) It might seem that designating gender for ambiguous-looking infants is a mistake altogether. Yet even the most vociferous antisurgery activists say gender labels are necessary to exist in our culture. They argue, however, that doctors should simply refrain from medically unnecessary surgeries that make those labels permanent. The important thing, Chase says, is to allow children with ambiguous genitalia to come to terms with their identities and to provide them with counseling as they do so.

But many physicians find this thinking unethical. Urologists argue that genital surgeries have the best outcomes if performed early in life. Other doctors insist that most reassigned children go about life quietly and they presume-contentedly. Between neighborhood gossip and the casual body exposure typical among small children, these doctors point out, a child who looks unidentifiably male or female will quickly become known to his peers. Leaving such children unaltered, writes Columbia urologist Kenneth Glassberg in the Journal of Urology, cruelly exposes them to "be considered freaks by their classmates."

Meanwhile, even those who advocate avoiding early surgery concede it's not always clear how to answer a small child demanding change to his or her external gender. (As with all aspects of the issue, no statistics exist to show how often these requests take place. The state-of-the-art team at Texas Children's, for example, has only been in operation for three years-so its patients are barely old enough to talk.) But there are some clues: At age 3, almost all children identify themselves as a particular gender, announcing, if asked, "I'm a boy" or, "I'm a girl." They may also have wishes about their external genitalia-a 3-year-old, say, might want a penis, even if she doesn't fully understand what that is-but a child of 3 or 4 can't really understand the implications of surgery. At age 13 or 14, according to conventional child-development theory, children are mature enough to start making serious decisions-such as choosing surgery with a full understanding of the consequences.

With these guidelines in mind, the Texas team tracks its patients carefully, offering families psychological counseling, peer support, and medical monitoring. The goal is to help the children themselves to decide finally how they want their bodies to look. This team is one example that, across the country, the reflexive use of gender reassignment surgery is waning. But not quickly enough. Unless they're born in Texas, the great majority of ambiguous-looking babies will still be "normalized" with radical, irrevocable surgery in their first year of life.

But the anecdotal and scientific evidence is making it increasingly clear that this approach, which once seemed obvious, is not in every child's best interest. Doctors acknowledge that it is often medically unnecessary; many former patients argue compellingly that early surgery can be physically and psychically destructive. In the chaotic first months after a physically anomalous birth, then, it's the parents who must guess how to best ensure a happy future for a healthy but different-looking child. That child will later have more options if his or her parents decide, first, to do no potential harm.

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