The Change
TGSF
TransGender San Francisco
(formerly ETVC)
February 1999
Volume 18, Issue 2

TGSF Exchanges Gifts for the Holidays

The Channel

TGSF, Inc., a 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 1998-99 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

President ..... Leslie Bailey

Vice President ..... Lulu Blau

Secretary ..... Veronica Smith

Treasurer ..... Debbie Cook

Education ..... Nancy Cupps / Juana Smith

Outreach ..... Sandra Brewer

Social ..... Nicole Cook / Evette RoqueLaurie

Secretary's Report

Membership as of January, 1999 267

Total Fiscal Year 1997-98 Membership 327

New Memberships this year 53

Treasurer's Report

Approx. Account Balance as of January, 1999 ..... $8,500.00

(Includes the "Home for TGSF" Fund)

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

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Contributing Photographers ..... Telzey Adams, Debbie Cook

..... Veronica & Juana Smith and Jamie Fey Fenton

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

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From The Editor...

Well whoever said it was certainly right. You can't please all of the people all of the time. But as Editor of *The Channel* my job is to see that everyone has a voice and hopefully there is space enough in each issue for them to be heard. Whether you offer a resource for spiritual fulfillment, disagree with an officer's opinions or are fighting for political change, *The Channel* is open to you all. As for Ms. Erin Brush I must say that the group is diminished by her departure, yet at the same time I can't help think that instead of leaving, now would be the perfect time to get involved. With a little cleanup, her letter on page 9 would make an excellent candidate's statement and would put her in the running for a seat on ExCom. Are there others in our membership who feel the same way? Instead of acting passively, is not now the time for members like Ms. Brush to step forward, be counted, and make a difference?

Elections are virtually right around the corner. Later this month nominations will be put forth at the End of Month Social on the 25th. On the opposite page, Veronica makes an impassioned plea for one (or more) of you to accept the challenge of being TGSF's Secretary as we approach the millennium. Leslie herself makes no bones about the fact that being an ExCom member can be time consuming volunteer *work* (emphasis added). Having been a member of ExCom myself, I know all about the burnout factor and turnover of our officers is a problem. Obviously we need some key positions filled for the next fiscal year, and since this is (the last time I checked anyway) a democratically run organization, no seat on ExCom should run unchallenged. Or is it that you just don't care? Think seriously about giving of your time and expertise. Declare your intention to run for office and file your candidacy statement with us as soon as possible for publication in the March issue. Because of publishing deadlines, don't wait for nominations at the end of February. If you know you want to run for an office, please send me your declaration NOW!

And please do NOT nominate me for ExCom! I know that sounds hypocritical considering what I just said, but I must tell you all now that the reason I ask this of you is that I've decided to leave the Bay Area, probably at the beginning of this summer. It's not a choice made without weighing very heavy consequences and challenging the ensuing inner turmoil this causes. Frankly, any woman in my position would think I'm absolutely insane to give up everything I've achieved here in SF. But there's really only one reason for doing so, and it's love, pure and simple. I choose to follow my heart and it's leading me out of state.

Other than that, see you at the Cotillion dahlinks!

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President's Report

by Leslie Bailey

This president's article will be short because of all the work and time required to pull off the Cotillion. I want you to know that there are quite a number of people who are putting themselves out in extraordinary ways in order for this event to occur. Nicole and Debbie will have a delicious meal for all of us. Carla (from San Jose) has sold a ton of tickets and found many of the prizes that will be given out to the contestants. Sharon Hurtley-Durand as director and her partner Gerald (staging) are putting together a well organized and entertaining show. Cheryl Sheppard has busted her corset to make the judging happen. The list goes on and on. There is of course my inimitable co-producer Lulu without whom I would be lost on this project.

Volunteers??? This club only continues to run because a relatively small group of members dedicate themselves to the good of the club. This brings me to the main thrust of this month's article. Elections for the executive committee are coming up in April and several of the current ExCom members are ready to take a break. We will be specifically looking for a new secretary and treasurer and someone to work with Nancy Cupps doing education seminars. In addition, of course, any office can be contested if there is a willing candidate who wants to propose a platform.

I will say more at the end of our calendar year about what I think we have accomplished this year as a group and about my appreciation for the members of the Excom What I want to communicate to anyone of you who may consider throwing your hat or bra into the ring is that it certainly takes up a chunk of time and it certainly is work. However it is also very gratifying and it is absolutely one of the best ways to get to know the other members of the community. Moreover it is hard to give of yourself without growing personally.

We need people to step forward. Call me at 510.[redacted].

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A Call For Officers (especially for Secretary)

By Veronica Smith

Maybe the noise that has been coming out of Washington has turned you completely off politics. *HOWEVER, now is the time for all good girls to come to the aid of their organization!* Do you feel strongly about this club? Well, do you feel moderately interested in it? Are you at all curious about its mechanics? D'you want help out? Well, if you do, then you should run for office!

At the February social, nominations will be heard for the offices of the Executive Committee. In mid-March, voter packets will be sent to members. And at the Annual Meeting on April 29, you will select the officers for TGSF's next year, May 1999 to April 2000. These will be the officers who will build for this organization *A Bridge To The 21st Century!* The present President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Outreach Chairperson, Social Chairpersons and Education Chairperson will all be running again. However, Juana and I are not seeking another term. So the office of Secretary will definitely need to be filled.

Please consider running for the position of Secretary. It has a lot of perks! Think of how interesting and responsible it is. You get to see the real nuts and bolts of this organization in action. You take part in the smoke-filled back room power brokerages and deals. You get first dibs on the magazines, journals, newsletters, announcements and advertisements (some of which are quite bizarre) that come to our mailbox. You develop an active social life with the other officers of the ExCom — they become your really good pals. You work closely with Ayme, the fascinating editor of *The Channel*. But most of all, you get to bask in the glory of being an officer of one of the premiere transgender organizations in the world!

And being Secretary has become so much easier than before. It's a cinch! Editor Ayme takes care of the newsletter and advertising. She follows up on all that stuff. And now we mail the newsletter first class. It's a little more expensive, but is far more streamlined than following the Post Office's laborious bulk mail regulations. Just label, stuff, seal and stamp. And poof, it's done! You don't even have to maintain the membership base. Presently, I supply Outreach Chair Sandra with all the membership data, she puts it into the database and she produces the labels for mailings. Basically, all you do is document ExCom meetings and take care of a little correspondence. And, of course, by relating the cabalistic goings-on of the ExCom, you control how it is perceived by the rest of the world. Of course, I'll be glad to help you initially.

So check out running for Secretary. You'll be glad you did.

Happy Valentine's Day!

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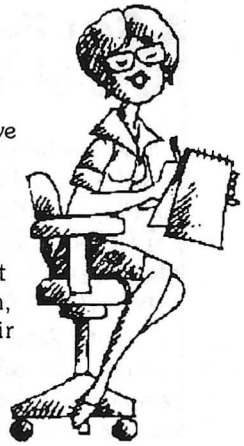
January 1999

ExCom Meeting Minutes



The monthly meeting of TGSF's Executive Committee was in San Francisco on January 3, 1999 at 3:00 p.m. In attendance were President Bailey, Vice President Blau, Secretary Smith, Outreach Chair Brewer, Education Co-Chairs Cupps and Smith, and guests President Diane Tanner of the Gulf Gender Association, Chelsi and Bardi DeTro. Social Co-Chair RoqueLaurie, Social Co-Chair Cook and Treasurer Cook were absent. The Meeting was **called to order** at 3:30 p.m.

Communications and Announcements: Juana dropped off a bouquet of flowers for Nancy Ann Martine at the hospital. She's doing well and should be out in a few weeks. Lulu suggested a memoriam in *The Channel* for the people we've lost this year, including the husband of Janine of Foxy Lady.

Old Business: Leslie had still not taken care of the DBA form needed before the TGSF checks could be deposited. Juana had supplied and was in the process of assembling binders containing Bylaws and Standing Rules, but she still had not received all the needed materials. Veronica had originally envisaged the Standing Rules to be short, concise statements attached to the Bylaws specifying each officer's duties. She pointed out that in the old Bylaws, the Standing Rules were literally a paragraph each. Leslie suggested that the helpful and extensive advice that both Nancy and Nicole had supplied could probably be included in the binders under "Procedures" or "Resources" for their offices.

Minutes: Juana moved for the December's Minutes to be approved, Sandra seconded the motion, and they were unanimously approved.

President: Leslie reported that it looked as if around 200 Cotillion tickets was already out and most likely sold. Juana suggested asking the men of FTM to be ushers since there had been some difficulty with last year's seating plan.

Vice President: Lulu talked about how the rehearsals were going and when they were scheduled. Cheryl was finalizing the judges. Trauma had agreed to emcee. Lulu was putting together a publicity package. *Chronicle* advertisements were deemed prohibitively expensive. Officers were supposed to send photos to Leslie within two weeks so they could be put in the program.

Secretary: Veronica reported that there were 267 members of whom 53 were new. She compared this to January 1998 when membership was 305 with 64 new, and to January 1997 when membership was 334 with 49 new. Veronica wanted to know who would be running for another term so she could organize the voting materials. It was determined that the nominations should take place at the February end-month social with the voting packet being mailed in mid-March. That meant Veronica would only have a week to put the packet together. Veronica would need to get an address stamp with the new name on it for the return envelopes. Leslie, Lulu, Nancy, Sandra, Debbie and Nicole would all run for office again. Veronica said she had been trying to find some candidates for Secretary. At this point, Leslie said that she thought that this particular ExCom had been a great team and she had been honored to have been a part of it.

Treasurer: By e-mail, the vacationing Debbie had reported that she would need the Treasurer's materials by January 16 in order to have the reports for the February meeting. Lulu handed over $180 collected from the last social. Donations had been asked of the fifty or so attendees, so that averaged around $3.60 each. Sandra wanted to push membership at the Cotillion. She suggested throwing in February, March and April if people signed up for a full year's membership that night.

Education: Nancy and Juana reported that they had planned laser hair removal on January 20, Wednesday at Kimo's; Photography (with either Kalani or Jim Sturgeon) for February; Elaine Sagant for March; Will Roscoe for April; and Danae Doyle for May.

Outreach: Sandra handed in around $225 in honoraria. And she had enlisted Lola to work the hotline.

Social: By e-mail, the vacationing Nicole had informed the ExCom that she was working on a potential mid-month in San Rafael (The Lunacee Lounge). She would probably try The Coco Club for the February mid-month. Her guess was that the February end-month social would be at the Blue Muse. She asked when discussion should start about The Really Big Shew.

New Business: Bardi DeTro wanted to pay for a separate mailing advertising her line of rhinestones. But the entire ExCom felt that such a commercial use of the membership's mailing list was not correct. Leslie said that the proper thing for Bardi to do was to buy advertising space in the newsletter. Bardi then wondered if she could present her stuff at the January social. This was okay with the ExCom, but Leslie thought that it should be cleared with Nicole and maybe The Blue Muse's management.

Veronica asked the visiting President of the Gulf Gender Association how they handle their socials. Diane said that they hold their socials in a hotel suite. Members bring their own beverages and food and pay $10 at the door (in addition to their $25 yearly dues). The meetings combine education seminars, club business and socializing.

Next ExCom Meetings: February 7 (the day after the Cotillion) tentatively at Kalani's at 6:00. March 6 at Sandra's at 3:00.

At approximately 6:00 p.m., Juana moved to **adjourn the meeting**, Nancy seconded and motion was unanimously passed.

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as of January, 1998

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Jan Francis	$10
Joan Roughgarden	$50

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Sandra Reaches Out

by Sandra Brewer

When this newsletter goes to press, the Cotillion will be only a few days away. In the last issue both Leslie and I discussed the value of the Cotillion as a vehicle for outreach, especially to the outside world. I recently discussed the event with a colleague from outside the community who attended last year. Since he did not attend in drag, I inquired if he felt at all out of place in a crowd where the vast majority of those in attendance were "dressed for the occasion." He confided it was quite the contrary; he felt completely comfortable at the event because he sensed an atmosphere that emphasized everyone is accepted for who they are no matter how diverse, or how mainstream, that may be. It seems the world can learn a valuable lesson from our community if it can just find the time to get to know us.

In the last month of 1998, we collected over $250 in honoraria for outreach presentations we gave earlier in the semester; I didn't keep track, but I expect this finishes a record year for honoraria. In our last issue, I mentioned that at outreach presentations I try to explain variations among members of our community, and how levels of status can be affected by how well one passes and other factors.

An important factor that determines one's status in the community is simply one's ability to pay for the surgery and other expenses of transition. Those struggling the hardest to meet the expenses frequently grow apart from those who can afford them. Some express their discontentment with the professional community that imposes rules on their transition; and some resent insurance provisions that exclude reassignment expenses from coverage. Perhaps the saddest result of this is that for many the most important criteria for selecting a surgeon becomes who is the cheapest, rather than who provides the best services. It is also sad that some who are able to afford the expenses of transition grow apart from the community because they still have enough problems of their own without being further burdened by the troubles of their less fortunate sisters.

I enjoyed reading the final chapter in Jane's Choices series, especially her description of leading two half-lives that don't add up to one. The series should have been written in the first person since it was mostly a report of her own experiences that may not be the same for everyone. It is unfortunate some employers demand a transition have a pre-arranged schedule; in some cases this can sabotage the whole effort. A schedule may help some people, but is should never be allowed to mandate changes before one is ready for them. Ideally one should be able to work on each detail of transition and implement the changes when the time is right. This affords the best opportunity for the results to take place naturally.

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January Education Seminar Review

Laser Hair Removal and Reduction

by Sandra Brewer

A crowd of slightly more than two dozen showed up on January 20th at Kimo's to hear about electrolysis treatments done by the laser technique. The speaker Dawn Marrero worked as a conventional electrologist for five years before joining the Epitique Laser Medical Center. She was joined in the presentation by TGSF member Lee Powell who shared personal results of successful treatments.

Epitique has two bay area facilities. The Greenbrae facility uses the single wavelength ruby EpiLaser developed at Harvard. After a five-year study, this has recently been approved by the FDA as a permanent hair reduction system, but only for dark hairs in light skin areas. The San Francisco facility uses the newer EpiLight laser that emits a broad spectrum of pulsed light that can be effective on all hair colors; it is still being tested by the FDA.

Laser electrolysis is most effective on people with light skin and dark hair on the area to be treated. The laser generates a very intense red light that causes the pigment in hair follicles (and the pigment in surrounding skin) to heat up and cauterize the follicles. EpiLaser treatment is ineffective on blonde, red, and grey hairs, and it is less effective on darker skin areas; but in many cases these can be treated at a lower energy level with the EpiLight system. A small test spot can be exposed to treatment to evaluate its effectiveness.

The laser can be used on unwanted face and body hair; but to preclude injury to the eyes, it cannot be used on eyebrows. Patients usually report no more than minimal pain during treatment; a mild burning sensation may persist for a few hours. Following treatment, some redness and scabbing in the area treated may last a few days. Scabbing is most pronounced on darker skin, and on the first treatment when hair is the thickest. EMLA anesthetic cream can be used to help soothe the soreness.

Laser treatments are most effective on hair with at least three days growth in the anagen phase of growth; this cycles about every six weeks, so repeated treatments are necessary. The epilated hairs are not removed during treatment; if they are not plucked, they usually fall out within three weeks. Some patients have reported little or no regrowth, especially of dark hairs in light skin. Followup treatments with conventional electrolysis is often necessary for lighter and grey hairs.

For most patients a series of at least four treatments is recommended to start, and in many cases this is all that is necessary. Eight or ten treatments may be needed in the most stubborn cases. Epitique nominally charges $2000 with a discount for advance payment for a series of four treatments. This can vary according to the patients needs, and further treatments cost less as they are done on a treatment by treatment basis as needed. A treatment may require only a single one-hour visit, but this too can vary with the patients needs. Smaller test spots and regions can be treated at lower costs.

If you have a fair skin with unwanted dark hairs, the laser electrolysis technique may be just what you need. For the rest of us it may offer a partial solution to our hairy problems. But if you have found an effective electrologist, her services may still be needed, at least for a few more years.

Significant Other Support - East Bay

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

TGSF Events in February

DATE TBD

February ExCom Meeting

Although a meeting was planned for February, I am not sure when or where it will be at the time we went to print. Due to the short time span between the Cotillion and the planned meeting time (less than a day), it looks like the excom for February will be canceled or moved. If you really want to go you can call contact me near the first of the month for more info. Email or call me (Nicole) and I will arrange for you to get directions. [redacted]@tgforum.com or (707)[redacted].

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH, 8:00PM

Mid-Month Social

Once before we had a mid month at the Coco Club and a number of people said they liked it, so that's where we are going to go this month. The Coco Club is at 8th & Mina (The entrance is on Mina), the exact address is 139 8th street. I do not think that the Coco Club has food, however Quetzel's does and the Transbay group should be meeting there at 7:00pm. Quetzel's is at 1234 Polk, between Sutter and Bush, (right down the street from Kimo's). While you are there you might one to pick up one of their really cool Transbay pins.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 8:00PM

TGSF Library / Poker Night

Call Nancy Anne at (415)[redacted] for information and directions. Peruse our extensive archives or join in the game!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH, 1:30 PM

Education Seminar: The Photographer's Eye

In trying to understand your total self, the boy in you, the girl struggling on the surface, you have exercised the Photographer's Eye. You've spent many hours shooting self-portraits trying to get to the real, total you. And yet you seem to miss something, just around the eyes, or is it the shadows, the settings, the moods. Perhaps now is the time to come to TGSF's February Education Seminar.

Jim Sturgeon, a local photographer and friend to TGSF has offered to talk about self-portraiture and technique. Those who attended his last presentation absolutely enjoyed his helpful hints and meaty hand-outs. Please come and hear his approach to searching the self using the photographer's eye. (For those of you who have self-shots, he suggests bringing a couple to share and discuss – don't be shy, now.)

As an added adventure for the day, following the seminar, there will be an outing to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Currently on exhibition are two shows representing women and their art: Mirror Images: Women, Surrealism, and Self-Representation, the self-representational work of three generations of women artists associated with or influenced by the surrealist movement, and Looking at Ourselves: Works by Women Artists from the Logan Collection, an exhibition featuring over twenty works made by leading women artists in the past decade, including Cady Noland, Cindy Sherman, and Kiki Smith, among others. Both of the exhibitions may enhance your knowledge and understanding of your feminine side.

Tickets for SFMOMA are $8.00 each. The museum is located at 151 3rd Street (between Mission and Howard St.) and will be open until 6:00 pm Saturday. To finish off this artsy day, why not consider dining at a near-by restaurant. For those interested, there are two fun restaurants located near SFMOMA, Boca de Beppo and Chevie's. Let's make plans to eat out and discuss what was seen and heard at both the seminar and at the museum. Seminar will be at upstairs, Kimo's, Polk & Pine Sts, SF. Donations are greatly appreciated.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH, 8:00PM

End of Month Social

Well I am getting short on new ideas for End of Month events. I sort of like the idea of alternating shows with contests. It may be a bit too cold for the bikini contest though, so why don't we try a Winter Casual Wear or Sportswear contest. If you want to compete just put on your favorite snow bunny outfit (or other comparable winter wear) and join us at the Blue Muse. The Blue Muse is located at 409 Gough street. Parking is easy, there is a lot right across from Marlena's (the TG friendly bar around the corner from The Blue Muse on Hayes St.).

PAULA-JO HUSACK, M.A., M.F.C.C.
LIC. #MFC27864

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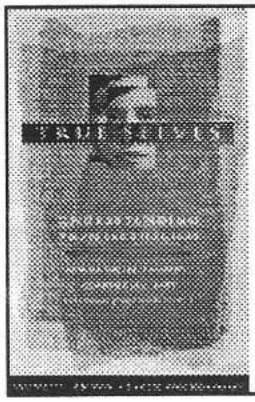

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Calendar of Events – February 1999

Other Groups

Pacific Center for Human Growth
A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-841-6224

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. Write to RGA, 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 215456, Sacramento, CA 95821-1456 or call 916-482-7SGA (7742) for meeting locations.

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Just Rewards Nightclub, 2520 Camino Diablo 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, 2637 Pleasant Hill Road (@ Taylor Blvd.) in Pleasant Hill. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM
A support group for Female-to-Male cross dressers and transsexuals; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415-553-5987.

TGIF (TransGenderism Is Fun)
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.

Far West Women (FWW)
A support group for TGs affiliated with the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance in Humboldt County. Meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month at 8:00pm in the GLBTA Center at Fourth and "D" Streets in Eureka. For information call the Center at 707-445-9760.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 8:00 PM DVG	2	3	4 7:00 PM DVG (RCC)	5 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	6 6:00 PM TGSF COTILLION!
7	8	9	10 8:00 PM TGSF: Mid-Month @ Co Co Club	11	12 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM TGSF: Library / Poker Night	13 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
14	15 8:00 PM DVG	16	17	18 7:00 PM DVG (RCC)	19 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	20 1:30 PM TGSF Education Seminar: Kimo's
21	22	23	24	25 8:00 PM TGSF EOM Social @ Blue Muse	26 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	27 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
28						

TGSF Membership Application

Full Year Membership May 1 – April 30

Please Print / Check all that apply:

❑ New Member ❑ Renewal ❑ Member #_____ with ❑ Family Member

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Our Readers Respond...

Dear Editor,

I am responding to Sandra Brewer's letter to Dateline/NBC about their program featuring Larry Goodwin, a transvestite, on December 1, 1998. Roxanna and I saw the show together, watched it carefully, and had quite a different reaction than Sandra. I was disappointed and slightly upset that Sandra chose to write NBC to "correct some gross inaccuracies," while officially representing the group in doing so. Was the letter discussed at an ExCom meeting before being sent? I read in the minutes that at least two officers did not agree with Sandra. I felt Goodwin did fit the medical/psychological definition of "transvestite," i.e., someone who wears clothing of the opposite sex, and derives pleasure or emotional comfort from doing so. As for "Sissy's" (Goodwin's preferred name) urge to do so being "compulsive or out of control," that urge sometimes evolves into "living full time." Though most men who wear women's clothes all the time usually also wear wigs and makeup, not all do.

There is no codified definition of how the end product looks (many transvestites only wear lingerie in private, and women who wear men's clothes do not always do not always add facial hair or male accessories, as I do). The fact that Sissy is "public," living in a small town where he/she is totally accepted for who they are by wife, family (a teenage boy and girl), neighbors, friends, co-workers and employer, made this a newsworthy story. In her letter Sandra said that "he" had an "uncontrollable urge to wear dresses at work," whereas in fact Sissy wore dresses all the time. It caused a problem at work for safety reasons, not discrimination, and a compromise was reached in order for Sissy to keep the job, the program showing Sissy wearing pants, a woman's blouse (instead of shirt), and a hard hat.

Sandra also suggested the story portrayed Goodwin as "typical," which she disagreed with. However, Sissy is typical of a great number of transvestites, most of whom do not appear in public with wig and makeup, which is more being an "impersonator" than basic transvestite, and so they remain hidden from view. Many have no support or social group such as TGSF to attend. I saw Sissy as happy, well-adjusted and confident in life, not needing help as Sandra suggested. I know TGs of every variety in need of professional help, with a major issue being unacceptance by family or friends (which has caused breakups and loss of jobs for cross-dressers who are very presentable as their femme selves). I also know many TGs who would give a lot to have a wife or S.O. as supportive as Sissy's. The only reason many do not dress in women's clothes at home, or more often than they do is their S.O.'s discomfort.

Wigs and makeup do not make a transvestite less of one, only more "publicly acceptable" according to group agreement. In TGSF, there are many members like Sissy who never attend socials because they do not share that agreement, or feel they would be shunned if they showed up only in a dress, still looking male. There are, however, a few "men in dresses" who have shown up at socials. I had an enjoyable a conversation with one awhile back at Jelly's, and tried to make them feel welcome. There are members of TGSF who look totally feminine and would not "bring ridicule to themselves and others in the community," to repeat Sandra's words about Sissy, yet those same members retain male body language and voices, and some have atrocious taste in clothes (to which Sissy admitted on the program). Should someone that one group member feels is inappropriate be asked to leave a social? If each of us did so, there might not be any group left.

I feel TGSF should be a group open and tolerant to all kinds of transgendered statements. I saw Sissy as an individual who is transgendered in her own way, reconciled and happy doing so. I would personally never write a letter to NBC in the name of the group without some consensus. Otherwise, I would write such a letter as an individual, with no mention of the group. Last year I personally took flak from the TGSF ExCom when I defended Sandra's column in a series of letters published in a local gay paper, although I made it clear that my letters were my opinions alone and not those of the group. Much lip service has been made over the years of how accepting TGSF/ETVC is of all transgendered people, their partners and friends. The truth is more like grudging tolerance of many. I hope that more hearts and minds will continue to be open to everyone who wishes to be part of our group, even if they don't fit our personal criteria, or meet our personal preferences (which is why we all date different people!), and that we all continue to have a larger view of the entire transgendered spectrum.

I also wish to commend Ayme for her efforts in bringing down the Newsletter costs while retaining a good product, something that the former editors, myself included, were not able to do, based on past demographics and politics. Continue the good work! Again, as I stated in this letter on another topic, some things are only so because of group agreement, which in turn forms its own reality. Those realities can change to bring about better conditions and new ideas, as we continue to see in the transgender community, and in the acceptance of us by the greater community in which we all live. That in turn can only come about when we all work towards that acceptance of each other.

Francis Vavra

Are You A Veteran?

Are you aware that there is a gender discussion group every Monday afternoon at the Ft. Miley Veteran's Center in San Francisco? The group is open to all TS, TV, and TG's who are qualified veterans. If you are interested and wish further information, contact Lorraine Hall at: [redacted]@aol.com or call 510-[redacted]

February's Birthdays...

0201	Francis Vavra	0208	Laura Polson	0219	Jill Jansen
0201	Thea Horner	0210	Alexis Haines	0220	Debra Darling
0203	John Breen	0211	Bree Wood	0220	Monica Anderson
0204	Chris York	0212	Sara Warren	0222	Willow Hills
0204	Diahanna Taylor	0212	Vanessa Schaefer	0223	Brenda Altman
0205	Carol Anderson	0216	Gloria Mitchell	0225	Kate Goldman
0205	Jessica Stang	0216	Vicki Gray	0228	Charma Sackett
0205	Millicent Stein	0217	Carla Blair	0228	Gabrielle Marshall
0207	Robin Barrett			0228	Linda Copeland

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

Our Readers Respond...

Dear TGSF, Inc.:

It will soon be time to renew our memberships in TGSF so I thought this would be a good time to explain why I am not renewing my membership in your organization. I am writing this letter to offer my observations of TGSF with the hope that my comments might help improve the organization and make it more meaningful to its members and the general public.

I have been a member for two years and have admittedly remained on the fringes of the organization during that time. Since I do not particularly enjoy Cotillions or such things as "Cleavage Contests," I found myself only attending major events (California Dreamin') and the Education seminars. However, the main reason I did not attend the more "social" events was that I never felt very welcome at the events I did attend.

When I first joined, I don't imagine I looked very feminine. At that time I was afraid to dress "en femme" and go out in public during the day, especially since I had to take public transportation to get around. When I arrived at an event I found that no one seemed interested in talking to me because I didn't look feminine enough.

Over the next year and a half, I developed a more androgynous look since that was the transitional path I was most comfortable with. Still, I found it difficult to engage anyone in conversation and no one approached me to welcome me or offer support.

Now, after 9 hours of surgery with Dr. Ousterhout and 6 months of living "full time" I suddenly find people at TGSF want to talk with me. I guess I look feminine enough now to be accepted by the TGSF membership. One individual, who had made snide remarks about my appearance to their friend two years ago, started talking to me as if we were old friends. Obviously she had either forgotten the old incident or didn't recognize me from before.

The unfortunate irony of the situation is that I finally got the offers of support I needed two years ago when I first joined ETVC. Even more unfortunate is the fact that I have heard similar stories from other people about their experience with TGSF/ETVC. It is a shame that the organization does a better job of outreach to the general public than it does to it's own membership.

What finally moved me to terminate my association with your organization at this time however was the latest issue of The Channel I just received. My review of the issue started out with the tackiness of "Cleavage Contest" photos on the cover and ended with Sandra Brewer's irresponsible and vituperative comments about Barbara Anderson. Since when does a difference of personal opinion call for personal attack? I personally know Dr. Anderson to be a reasonable, reasoning advocate for TG/FS rights who has done far more to aid our community than has Ms. Brewer. It seems poor judgment to risk alienating our strong non-ts/tg supporters by giving members such as Ms. Brewer a published forum to vent their personal feelings in a sarcastic and hurtful way. This is especially upsetting when I think that Ms. Brewer oversees the TGSF outreach program! It is clear that, contrary to Ms. Brewer's statement in her article, she has not yet "moved on to other pressing issues."

As I said in the beginning of this letter, my main reason for writing is to share my observations regarding areas I feel could be improved in order to strengthen TGSF and make it more meaningful and helpful to its members and the community. It is my sincerest hope that the organization will grow and develop into its full potential in the future.

Erin Brush

Emergence Support Group/Fresno

Held every second Saturday beginning February 13 at 6:00 p.m, at Evangel Tabernacle Assembly of God Church between Olive and McKinley on Chestnut. This group is for Christian Transsexuals (or those who think they might be transsexuals and have an interest in Christianity). The group is sponsored by an Assembly of God Church but it is basically nondenominational with an Evangelical perspective. This is really a miracle of God since my pastor approached me with the idea.

For more information people can e-mail me at terrim@evangeltab.org or they can call me at (559[redacted] Please have them leave a message because I live alone and sometimes it takes awhile for me to get to the phone. And if I'm not home I will return their call. I am also available for spiritual support. Our Web Page for the Emergence Group is at http://members.tripod.com/~terrim/TSCHRIST.HTM . We also have a BBS and an e-mailing list.

Terri

Email Your Officers:

President, Leslie Bailey ..... [redacted]@slip.net
Secretary, Veronica Smith ..... [redacted]@aol.com
Social Chair, Nicole Cook ..... [redacted]@tgforum.com
Editor, Ayme Kantz ..... [redacted]@aol.com

New Members Fiscal Year 98-99

May 98
Sylvia Hakansson
Jaimee Bodeen
Michelle Ayres
Frances Frinak
Sylvia Frinak
Douglas Hocking
Billie Jane Bender

June 98
Jeannette Heulin
Val Shoaps
Tammi Meehan
Alicia Kenwood
Gayle Kiddy
Consuelo Valdes
Denice Gee
Ti Connelly
Georgina Castleberry
Jeri Smith
Tom Martens
Teri Lee
Joesanne Powell

July 98
Dan Venolia
Veronica Styles
Lee Powell
Dick Fogel
Ricki Ballen
Lisa Lynn Ferguson
Bobbie Williams

August 98
Valerie Cross
Michael Maddox
Esmarelda Alvarez
Jean Darien
Marcie Lovell
Laura Ross

September 98
Mary K Knox
Toni Martinez
Charma Sackett
Barbara Sackett
Debra Bolle
Michelle Hofmann

October 98
Gloria Mitchell
Anna McQuinn
Dahlia Ellis
Cassandra Wiecek
Bobbi Marotz
Joan Goodnight
Kelly Love

November 98
Charlie Reiman
Suzanne Reed

December 98
Angela Paige
Sheri R
Becky Benton
Gail Howard
Stephanie Blythe
Gracia Thoreson
Julia Debeque

December - January Socials In Review

By Nicole Cook

It may seem like we were at less places again this month, well actually we were. Due to a sudden sickness I missed the Mid Month :-(. But Debbie, Misty and I had a great vacation which I will write about called "Three girls on the beach".

The December End of Month gift Exchange turned up a number of gifts ranging from "Interesting" to "Sexy". There was candy, lingerie, bath products, cosmetics, video tapes, shoes, and a number of other items hidden behind the Christmas wrappings. But how did we choose a gift ? Well everyone drew a number, whoever had the lowest number started first. As your number was called you came up and selected a gift, unwrapped it, showed everyone what it was, and then brought it back to your seat to display it. The next person could either select a new gift or take one of the already unwrapped gifts. If you had a gift taken from you, you got to select again. I must say however, that many of the ladies were being too ladylike ! The fun of this process comes in the taking of the best gifts (like the frog) which changed hands 2 or 3 times. If we do this next year we need to have more gift takers :-) .

The story I got from the people who were able to make it to the January mid month was, "It was great". Those of you that were there know that I did not make it. I did get as far as San Francisco, but I ended up spending over an hour laying down in Tianna and Sandra's apartment while I sent Debbie on to make an appearance at the Thirsty Bear. Of all the venues to miss, I had to miss this one, well you know what that means, we have to go again.

So I have to make this review through the eyes of Debbie and Tianna. I had made arrangements to stay late for this event so I could see some of the night owl participants who I normally miss. And I heard that several of them came early. Some of the people reported to be there were: Tianna, Darcy, Nikky, Nina, Suzie, the Outrageous Miss Didi Mau, Serena, Leslie, Q, Lulu, Rachael and Sandra. There were also several more in fact I heard there were 30+ members there. From what I hear the other patrons of the Thirsty Bear were quite friendly, I was even told one story about two gentlemen who commented about several of the girls at the bar saying "all these are guys", this triggered a response from a GG who was at the bar among our girls, she indicated that the 2 gentleman might do better at dressing if they were to follow our lead (or some words to that effect, you know how hard it is to relate a story secondhand). I even heard that Darcy was giving them information about the group, perhaps we need recruiter posters for places like the Thirsty Bear :-)

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Three Girls on The Beach

By Nicole Cook

Each year Debbie and I venture Northward to one of our favorite spots in the Humboldt Redwoods. We have found a place with a cabin that has all the essentials, a fire place, a kitchen and a indoor hot-tub. This wonderful little get away is located right under the giant redwoods. We have been going there for years now, and each time Nicole gained more ground in the suitcase. On our last visit over the New Year's holiday there was space in the suitcase for Debbie, Misty (our Chow), and Nicole. In other words, there was no space for any former selves.

While I had been out and about en femme in this area before, I had not been quite as open about it. I am aware that this area might not be as accommodating should some of them read me. Nevertheless, I was Nicole for the entire vacation, and we had a great time. While we did a number of things I consider to be fun, like hiking on the Eel river and through the redwoods, the best event came when we visited one of the beaches we like to go to up there. This particular beach is the furthest point West on the continental United States and most of the times we are there the conditions are either rainy, windy or very cold. But not this time. When we got there it was gorgeous. We let Misty off the leash and she took off after some nearby birds. I was wearing a sweater dress and Lycra tights with leg warmers, just perfect for the cool temperature. Debbie had brought the camera so we have several pictures from our beach excursion. We probably spent 3 hours or so there first at the open part of the beach and then down near the tide pools looking for Star Fish (except Misty, she was just looking for birds and cows). Near sundown we took pictures of each other either holding up the sun or pushing it into the water. We passed people a few times, however none of them paid much attention to us. We were just three girls on the beach, having a good time.

Now if this does not seem fun to you, think of when we get back each night. We would just fire up the fire place and the hot tub and relax until we were tired of relaxing. If it got to hot we just stepped out on the private redwood deck behind the cabin in the 30 degree air and allowed the steam to escape. If some of you are interested in this getaway let me know and I will tell you where it is at. Just remember the cabin with the indoor hot-tub is ours over New Years.

New 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 Jenni at **www.aluckywife@aol.com** and explain a little about your situation.

KIM HRACA, M.A. MFCC

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New Lecture Series: Queer Spirit Quest 2

by Juana Smith

Will Roscoe, anthropologist, historian and author of **The Zuni Man Woman** and several other books, is beginning a new series of slide-lectures on *third gender spirituality*. He explores queer history and spirituality not only to search for answers about personal and spiritual growth but to show those of the third gender, their place in time and culture.

His new series begins with "Woman Warrior/Woman Chief: Two-Spirit Women and Their Sisters." This lecture discloses that the Euro-centric stereotype of Native American women as dominated by men were actually independent and powerful and that they served their societies as chiefs, warriors and shamans. Dr. Roscoe will share over 100 slides while discussing the lives and times of prominent women within Native American culture.

The second presentation, "Changing Ones: The Third Gender Tradition in Native North America," focuses on the male two-spirit (berdache) tradition. The final two lectures are "Johann Winckelmann and his Beautiful Young Men of Marble and Flesh" and "Gay Spirit Past and Future: An Open Forum with Will Roscoe and Mark Thompson," author of **Gay Soul** and **Gay Body** will conclude this series.

The series dates are:

Woman Warrior/Woman Chief: Two-Spirit Women and Their Sisters – **February 14th;** Changing Ones: The Third Gender Tradition in Native North America – **February 21st;** Johann Winckelmann and his Beautiful Young Men of Marble and Flesh – **February 28th;** Gay Spirit Past and Future: An Open Forum with Will Roscoe and Mark Thompson – **March 7th.**

The lectures will be held at the Jon Sims Center for the Performing Arts, 1519 Mission Street (near South Van Ness) starting at 7:00pm. Cost is $7.00 per lecture or $20.00 for the series.

Please note Dr. Roscoe will be a guest lecturer for TGSF in April.

20th Century Transgender History and Experience

A Course on Trans History at Harvey Milk Institute

(reprinted from AOL posting by Gwendolyn Ann Smith; [redacted]@transbay.org)

The Transgender movement has become highly visible in the past decade, but it is only a continuation of a century of experience and activism. From the beginning it has been an international effort to gain both medical / legal recognition and self-determination. There were heros and villains, triumphs and defeats, in every decade. The Transgender experience and identity of transsexuals, transgenderists, cross-dressers, and intersexuals interweave as the medical and legal definitions of sex, gender, perversion, and disorder have evolved from Victorian to Post-Modern.

This class will explore the people, and the issues they faced, as the transgender community formed out of Victorian denial and isolation to today's celebration of diversity. The medical, scientific, cultural, and legal changes brought about by determined transgender people will be covered. We will chronicle the shift from criminal pervert, through medical oddity, medical minority, to civil rights minority. This class is for transgendered people and others who wish to understand where we have been... and where we might be going. It can be used as a backgrounder for serious community activists, learning issues, strategy, and tactics from the past to the present, learning what worked... and more importantly, what didn't. We will collectively analyze strategy and tactics that might be used in the future.

Come prepared for surprises, as we explode myths commonly held by even well versed TransActivists today. Candice Hellen Brown, the instructor, is completing her Master's Thesis on 20th Century Transgender History. She is a proud transsexual activist with 24 years experience in the community, a veteran of private battles, street protests, legislative lobbying, and community organizing. She was a founding member of the ACLU Transsexual Rights Committee in 1980, a support group facilitator in Los Angeles and Portland, and an active member of It's Time Oregon. She is a lecturer and author, publishing in Straight, Queer, and Transgender journals. She has an extensive website on transgender history at: www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/6735/TS_History.html

Course offered through the Harvey Milk Institute (www.gayglobalsf.com/harveymilk) Cost: $75 - Course # 99A-055 (Call 415-552-7200 to register) 5 Tuesdays, March 2 - 30, 1999; 7-9pm 4235 19th Street @ Collingwood, San Francisco.

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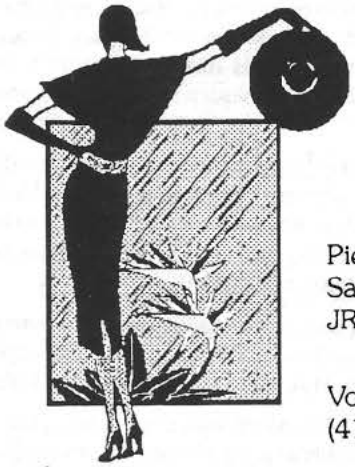

Mark the date on your calendar and build the excitement with your friends as TGSF sails to the South Pacific and the Galleria is transformed into a tropical paradise! Tickets priced at:

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For Ticket Outlet information, Contestants and Volunteers, please contact Leslie (510/[redacted]) or Lulu (415/[redacted]

Landmark Resolution Is Hailed By Community Leaders

New Portland Ordinance in which Mayor Vera Katz and the Portland City Council Mandate Anti-Discrimination Measures; Portland Resolves to Respect Rights of Transgendered and Transsexual Employees

Portland's City Council today unanimously approved a resolution to take specific steps to prohibit discrimination based on "gender identity" within its workforce, in session at Portland City Hall. The resolution will start a process of expanded involvement by the City in creating protections in the public and private sectors. It states that "the City is in a position to demonstrate, through its own internal policies and procedures, the viability of a workplace which respects the rights of transgendered and transsexual people..."

Specific items of resolution include:

1) Directions to city agencies to include gender identity in non-discrimination guidelines for "employees as well as appropriate guidelines for use of City facilities";
2) A request to expand employment "mediation services to resolve discrimination claims based on gender identity";
3) Exploring employee health insurance options "which could cover necessary medical treatment for transgendered and transsexual people";
4) Exploring "whether city EEO certification program can be expanded to include non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity".

For the purposes of this resolution, the definition of gender identity refers to "a person's actual or perceived sex, and includes a person's identity, appearance, or behavior, whether or not that identify, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's sex at birth."

Gender identity is thus a universal human right, of great importance to individuals who may be considered "variant" from traditional gender stereotypes, including transsexual and transgendered people, who are particularly vulnerable to employment discrimination.

Other cities have made general statements of support for non-discrimination, but significantly, the City of Portland has made specific proposals to create a practical model workplace. Community leaders who testified expressed hope that this example of leadership on the part of the City will encourage expanded education and protections in private industry.

The resolution was endorsed by representatives of groups such as the Human Rights Campaign, Basic Rights Oregon, It's Time, America!, the Metropolitan Community Church, the Lesbian Community Project, Equity Foundation, Northwest Gender Alliance, TransPort, Phoenix Rising, and others.

Lori Buckwalter, Director of It's Time, Oregon!, an organization that promotes civil rights initiatives concerning gender identity, was involved in the work leading to this resolution. She states, in response to the City Council vote: "We are deeply grateful for the leadership role which the City has taken, and for the individual courage and compassion of the Mayor and Commissioners. The concern for the dignity of all the people of Portland, which we've come to expect from this City, is reaffirmed by this historic action. This initiative is supported by a wide range of sexual minority community leaders as well, and this is a sign of growing mutual respect within these communities."

Buckwalter continues, "There is still much to be done, to develop constructive trust relationships between those who have experienced gender identity discrimination, and public and private officials. Issues of employment and healthcare are primary, and this resolution creates a tangible prospect that we can cooperate to dispel decades of misunderstanding, and make a real difference in people's lives. Portland is now a place of unique opportunity to start this important work."

Contact: Lori Buckwalter, Director, It's Time, Oregon!, [redacted]@yahoo.com, (503-[redacted])

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HBIGDA Conference

Provided by Stephen Whittle ([redacted]@mmu.ac.uk)

The 16th Harry Benjamin Gender Dysphoria Association Meeting is to take place in London from the 17th to the 21st August 1999, at Imperial College, University of London.

For those of you who don't know, the HBIGDA is the world's major organizing body of medics and therapists who work with those who are gender dysphoric. The biennial meetings are always very well attended by those involved in the care and treatment of GD patients. The members of the HBIGDA are probably the most influential group of physicians in advising courts, throughout the world, as regards legal questions surrounding this patient group. They are also the principal advisors in matters of social policy, medical practice etc.

I have personally found the conference to be a stimulating experience, with an audience who are very willing to learn. Unfortunately (as is always the case) participants would have to pay registration and accommodation fees, however these are quite reasonable for an event of this status and quality.

If you would like to find out more, there are further details available about the conference at the conference web site: http://www.tc.umn.edu/nlhome/m201/colem001/hbigda/hconf.htm

The conference is Interdisciplinary, with papers accepted on all aspects of GD. Further details can be obtained through Bean Robinson at [redacted]@gold.tc.umn.edu

Project To Study Voice

Provided by [redacted]@aol.com via Dallas Denny [redacted]@mindspring.com)

The James H. Quillen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Johnson City, Tennessee has launched a research project designed to examine the voice characteristics of women with low register voices and men with high register voices which can result in a misidentification of gender by the listener. Male-to-female (M2F) transgendered persons are included as research subjects. Many in this group can successfully alter their voice to make it compatible with their preferred gender presentation resulting in a "desired" misidentification of biological gender. M2F individuals with voices which are not or are marginally passable are seen in order to identify the acoustic elements or markers in those voices which result in the perception of a male voice in spite of their best attempts to produce a feminine vocal and speech pattern. The data from this study are being used to improve treatment methods for M2F transgendered persons who desire to feminize the voice. Currently, the vocal or acoustic cues which influence the perception of maleness or femaleness of the voice are not fully understood. This pilot study is expected to collect additional data in regard to how specific voice and speech markers function and interact in gender differentiation.

According to Dr. George Brown, Chief of Psychiatry at the James H. Quillen DVA Medical Center and member of the HBIGDA, the number of transgendered veterans is much larger than the medical community is aware of. Dr. Brown, who is serving as co-investigator on this project, is known by many in and outside the transgender community as being a distinguished researcher and health care provider. All transgendered veterans, including those who are female-to-male, are invited to participate. Only a copy of a DD-214 (Report of Transfer or Discharge) is required. Eligibility for participation is not restricted to those who are receiving compensation for a disability obtained during military service. Each transgendered subject will see Dr. Brown in addition to receiving a comprehensive voice assessment at the Speech Pathology Clinic. Treatment, which is optional, can be provided for up to three days to veterans who are not currently receiving services at the James H. Quillen DVA medical center. Most choose to receive treatment immediately following the assessment. There is no charge for these services. However, participants will be responsible for their travel expenses unless a DVA hospital in the participant's district agrees to have the travel funded under 'fee basis'. Research participants can stay at a "Hoptel" on the VA grounds at no charge. Free meal tickets are included.

For additional information regarding this "cutting edge" project write to Robert King, M.A., CCC; Audiology and Speech Pathology Service; James H. Wuillen DVA Medical Center; Mountain Home, TN 37684. You may also contact Mr. King by email at KING.ROBERT@MTN-HOME.VA.GOV.

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Trans-Murder In Austin

[QUILL GenderPac Media Advisory, Austin, TX: 14 Jan 99] The body of Donald Fuller, 18, also known as Lauryn Paige, was found murdered...in a wooded area of southeast Austin. Two men in a white van were seen earlier that morning near the spot where the victim's body was found. A description of the two men led to composite sketches that were shown on television.

The Austin American-Statesman reports that one of those men, Frank Santos, called police when he saw his picture. He told them he had last seen his brother- in-law, Gamaliel Mireles Coria, and Fuller drive off together Friday morning. Coria's girlfriend subsequently told police that he had confessed the murder to her. Coria, 28, was arrested Wednesday and remains in jail under $1,000,000 bail.

The victim was dressed as a woman. Said his father of Donald's cross-dressing, "He's been that way all his life. We always knew he was a little different, and we pretty much accepted it, but we didn't allow it around the house. We just knew he wasn't happy unless he dressed up."

As Lauryn, the victim had often been seen walking along South Congress Avenue, an area where police regularly conduct prostitution raids. Before Coria's arrest, Police Commander Gary Olfers had said, "We are dealing with sadistic killers. There was more than one [stab] wound, and they were brutal in the application of those wounds." The autopsy revealed a cut across Lauryn's throat 9 inches long and 3 inches wide.

"The police description of this murder is heartbreakingly familiar," said Riki Anne Wilchins, of GenderPAC. "Sadistic killers, multiple stab wounds, bludgeoned and/or shot repeatedly... it's a familiar litany of brutally violent acts done to gender- different people: Chanelle Pickett, Brandon Teena, Christian Paige, Deborah Forte, Vianna Faye Williams, Jamaica Green, Jessy and Peggy Santiago, Tasha Dunn... and the list goes on."

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The Future Is Ours

Sheila Kirk, MD

The title of this article was inspired by a statement from a person kind enough to express their support of the opening of my new Trans surgical center. It is one of hundreds of positive remarks and encouragement I have received from community members, Trans and non-Trans healthcare professionals and others since forming the Transgender Surgical & Medical Care Center (TSMC) in May. These encouraging remarks have been most gratifying and it reinforces my reasons for building the center. "Thank you, Dr. Kirk, your courageous step has helped to insure that the future of our medical & surgical care can at last, be ours." This statement so struck me because it succinctly expresses what my intentions were when I began pulling all the many complex pieces together to formulate TSMC. It was my intention then, as is now, as it will always be, to provide the highest standards of care, concern and management throughout all stages of your surgical and medical needs. But equally as important to all of us in our community, TSMC was founded with another purpose in mind. It is my firm belief that in order to achieve complete healthcare empowerment then we must not only be surgical/medical consumers but we must also be afforded the right to be our own surgical/medical providers. This is not to say that we should not recognize or support many of those non-T professionals who have worked so hard to educate themselves on healthcare circumstances unique to us and who provide us with sound, compassionate care and management. But what it does mean, is that we should have an opportunity to select Trans professionals to manage and care for our entire healthcare needs through all stages of our gender journey.

Unfortunately, we all know that at present that is not the case. Although some important headway has been made by our sisters and brothers in the psychologic fields, many of us are aware of the difficulties encountered by medical physicians who have been forced or asked to leave their hospitals, their residencies or their medical partnerships when they come out or when they transition. Some have been able to continue caring for us in solo office settings, some have opened clinics that offer out-patient cosmetic surgical services but very few have been able to maintain their hospital privileges and work within the system in the discipline in which they were trained. And until the start of TSMC no Trans surgeon has performed GRS and related surgical procedures for members of our community.

While it is rewarding to me to be the first surgeon who has been able to break the barrier that permeates the medical profession that accomplishment bittersweet. Trans-medical professionals treating our community at all levels should be the norm not the exception.

How can this be accomplished? It won't be an easy task. But if we want empowerment and the ability to make important decisions in our healthcare needs, it has to be done. We must all unite together, support each other and work together to help those who wish to work within the healthcare system. And we must continue to support them when they do.

Statistics show that when given the choice genetic women (GW) prefer to have GW physicians and psychologists treat them. We can go a long way to empowering ourselves just as GW's have empowered themselves by enlisting Trans-professionals to administer our care. This is not to suggest that we should go to T professionals simply because they are members of our community. That would be foolhardy and, potentially, a health hazard. Select your Trans professional with the same concern and guidelines you would any other healthcare provider.

Another way we can help one another is by mentoring one another. Those of us who are physicians and mental healthcare providers can help those who are considering working in the medical field or who wish to enter it by sharing their expertise and life experience. Many of my colleagues as well as myself do this already in an informal manner but a more united effort could prove to be much more helpful and effective.

TSMC is committed to going a step further. We are dedicated to improving upon the informal mentoring that surgeons performing GRS surgeries worldwide now provide one another. It may come as a surprise to learn that GRS surgeons learn from one another through observation and assisting in each other's surgeries, by sharing their techniques with each other and by reporting to the medical literature and at meetings. Currently there is no formal training program in Trans-surgery; informal mentoring and exchange with other surgeons is the method that is used by all who work in this surgical discipline. We, at TSMC, feel that our community would be better served by instituting a formalized program. Therefore, as we grow, we will formally teach the intricate techniques of trans-surgeries, our pioneered techniques and our methods to improve sensation and functionality to talented and dedicated residents wanting to make this important discipline their career choice in the future. We intend to do our part in empowering our community not only by providing the best and most innovative care and surgical technique but also by training Trans (and non-T) individuals interested in making Trans surgery and medicine their professional future.

This step is a first step for our community...a small step...when compared to the others steps that should and will follow in this relatively new discipline I like to refer to as Trans Care. So much needs to be done and it will take the commitment and support of all of us. Yet, it is a much-needed step towards our empowerment and one that is far overdue. Where are we to go from here? It's up to us to decide.

Empowerment on the medical and surgical level isn't the only task at hand toward our independence and self-reliance. Take a moment to think about how you might be able to help our community help itself. Each of us has a special gift, a unique ability, a much-needed skill that can go a long way in helping us strengthen ourselves and to insure that there truly is a "unity within our community."

Yes...the future is ours. And it can be a bright, promising one if we all work together to make it happen.

Sheila Kirk, MD recently made Trans-history by forming the first Transgender Surgical & Medical Center (TSMC Center) developed and directed by a Trans surgeon. In addition, Dr. Kirk is the first Trans-surgeon performing MTF GRS surgeries, breast augmentation and related surgeries. Together with her partners she also performs rib removals, male pattern baldness correction, craino-facial feminization, body and facial contouring and corrective procedures. You can receive more information about the TSMC Center or ask Dr. Kirk questions on your treatment and care, by contacting her at TSMC@aol.com, by phone (412) 781-1092, fax (412) 781-1096 or snail mail: TSMC P.O. Box 38366, Blawnox, PA 15238.

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Barney Frank Responds To TG Inclusion in ENDA

by Phyllis Randolph Frye

Last week a friend forwarded to me the response that she got from Barney Frank concerning transgender inclusion in the next ENDA (Employment Non Discrimination Act) Bill. The ENDA Bill with its non-TG-inclusive language can be reintroduced by Barney Frank and Ted Kennedy at ANY time, yes at ANY time, even very soon if they choose. Time is short and of the essence. If introduced without TG-inclusive language, it will stay that way, unless amended, until the 2001 Session of Congress. Can you picture in your mind the same Barney Frank, who does not want a TG-inclusive ENDA, working very hard to pass a TG-inclusive amendment? Any such offers to later amend is a trap, is a trap, is a trap!

In effect Barney Frank is continuing, although in a more polite and direct manner, to tell the transgender community to go to the back of the bus in our shared ride towards freedom. Barney Frank's people will go first. Transgender (and don't forget the gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual) folks will go later. When will Barney Frank even bother to come to the legislative rescue of transgender and gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks after his ENDA is passed, and his clean-cut type of lesbians, gays and bisexuals are legislatively protected?

The below letter is from the same Barney Frank who last October 1998 (just three months ago) in Boston at the Lavender Law Conference gave a keynote address where he never said transgender — not even once! He followed five speakers — I watched as he sat in the meeting room listening to each and every one of them — each of whom was totally and completely transgender inclusive. Yet during his keynote, Barney Frank did not say transgender even once. Not one time from the podium did he utter the word transgender. (He did manage to remember to say bisexual twice, as afterthoughts, at the end of his remarks.) I do not live in Massachusetts, but if I did, I would eagerly participate in a legal but loud and reoccurring protest of his home district office.

Barney Frank ignores the fact that the modern lesbian, gay, bisexual and — and, and, and — transgender movement was begun at the Stonewall Riots in 1969 by transgenders and those gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks who will NOT BE COVERED BY BARNEY FRANK'S CURRENT ENDA WORDING! That is correct. The folks who threw-the-first-stones-at-Stonewall are the same transgenders and gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks who will be INTENTIONALLY EXCLUDED from the next Barney Frank ENDA Bill. They are NOT covered.

Barney Frank does not want to change his current wording of ENDA because if that wording becomes TG inclusive, then Barney Frank fears the delay to his type of lesbians, gays and bisexuals getting an ENDA passed. (Oh sure, like the current Republican majority in both houses is going to pass ENDA in BOTH houses during the next two years.) I say that this is best time to get transgender and gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks into the wording — now — so that when we have a chance at a real vote, in possibly 2001, the TG inclusive wording will be "old hat."

Barney Frank's DOJ argument is soothing to read, but so what. Why should the mere possibility of DOJ's' help keep TG folks from being included in ENDA? If TG's remain out of the ENDA wording and the DOJ later loses its TG cases in appellate courts, where does that leave the transgender and gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks who were INTENTIONALLY EXCLUDED from Barney Frank's ENDA Bill?... at the back of the freedom bus! And out of luck getting Barney Frank to push for a newer version ENDA to protect transgender and gender variant types of lesbian, gay and bisexual folks. That is correct: out of luck for the "gender trash."

I suggest that you follow-up with letters and phone calls to both Barney Frank and Ted Kennedy, also — don't forget Ted Kennedy. I suggest that you get your local chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), which are both TG inclusive, to write and call their offices as well.

Barney Frank's reply to my friend follows.

GET BUSY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Time is very short.

Barney's Letter:

Dear Ms. Vermette,

I appreciate your letter, and I agree absolutely that transgendered people should be protected from discrimination. But I do not think at this point we would have any success whatsoever if we sought to go beyond the current wording of ENDA.

The history of anti-discrimination in this country is that we make progress one step at a time. I have myself in the past been strongly supportive of legislation that banned discrimination based on race, even though it did not do anything to prevent gender or sexual orientation discrimination. And I have similarly supported strong versions of the equal rights amendment to protect people against discrimination based on gender without there being any inclusion for sexual orientation. We have of course at the federal level been unsuccessful even in getting a sexual orientation law passed, but I believe that we are now at a point where that may happen. I believe that we should make it clear under ENDA that to

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Defining Transsexualism

Written by Roberta Angela Dee (Dianic007@aol.com) / (c) Roberta Angela Dee, 1998

Introduction:

Most often, when we discuss beauty, we discuss it according to feminine sensibilities — whether transgendered or biological. And most often, we discuss it from a cosmetic or superficial perspective.

This article is different in that it attempts to focus more on behavior and the ideology of gender removed from the myths. In doing so, I support the idea that gender identity is a function of both genetics and environment, and that surgery (sex-reassignment) is the least important mechanism for enabling an individual to transition.

How Do We Define 'Transgendered'?:

Through most of the literature concerned with gender, a transgendered individual is defined as a member of one sex — either male or female — who possesses an overwhelming desire to belong to the opposite sex. And a transsexual individual is define in the same way, with the additional requirement being that the transsexual individual pursues or is the process of pursuing gender reassignment surgery, more commonly referred to as a sex change operation.

The question I pose to the medical community and to anyone concerned with gender issue is: Are the currently accepted definitions for transgendered and transsexual individuals accurate?

At this point, I believe these definitions are inaccurate and that they do more harm to those facing gender issues that they do anything to resolve the issues that plague such individuals. Furthermore, it is evident that the gender community, as represented through psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers, are guilty of ascribing more to public hysteria about gender than doing anything to complete a genuine and earnest attempt to pursue objective scientific evidence.

Not unlike Christine Jorgensen — America's first acknowledged male-to-female transsexual, many of today's female-to-male transsexuals describe themselves as "men born with a woman's body." In defining themselves in this manner, female-to-male transsexuals raise two issues: one of gender (a psychological reality) and one of sex (a physiological or anatomical reality).

Much confusion exists because the term transgendered is used interchangeably with transsexual. The terms, however, are not interchangeable. Transsexual refers to an anatomical change. Transgendered refers to a psychological change and is not, in most instances, an appropriate reference to one who seeks to change his or her sex.

When a female-to-male transsexual says, "I am a man with a woman's body," he is already asserting that his gender is male. We cannot intelligently refer to this individual as being transgendered because he already accepts his gender. Consequently, there is no change or transitioning of gender. The issue for this individual is not gender. The issue is sex, and whether this man can accept his female body. If he cannot accept his female body and sets out to pursue a sex change operation, then he is transsexual. However, another question is: How do we define an individual who is 1) gender-identifiable as male, 2) anatomically female, and 3) is not seeking a sex change?

Thus far, the medical community — and even those supposedly well-versed in gender literature — have preferred to ignore the existence of an individual who accepts the conflict between their psychology and their anatomy. Again, the focus is on the body — with many asserting that a genuine transsexual would rather commit suicide that to continue living within the wrong body.

It is true, of course, that there have been instances when a transsexual has attempted suicide. There have also been instances when a transsexual has completed the sex change operation. However, there is absolutely no scientific reason to conclude that suicide and surgery are the only options for every transsexual individual. In fact, there is no legitimate scientific argument that can support the idea that the desperate passions of a minority of the transsexual population can be ascribed to the entire population.

Several years ago, I wrote a novella titled "Roberta Angela Dee: a Transsexual Lesbian." The premise of the story was that of a post-operative male-to-female transsexual who developed an intimate relationship with a genetic female who was also a lesbian. Since it's publication, the phrase "lesbian transsexual" has become somewhat popular, although there is disagreement as to what it means or what it should mean.

In addition to the idea of a lesbian transsexual, there is another scenario that continues to be ignored: the possibility of an individual who is psychologically female, anatomically male, and who has a sexual preference for women. Such an individual would certainly have a much larger population of possible female partners than most lesbians. Such a woman might also realize that there would be an advantage in maintaining or preserving her male anatomy.

Given the current literature on gender, would we call such an individual a lesbian transsexual, or a heterosexual male?

The answer depends on how one defines gender. If one's definition focuses on anatomy, then the individual is a heterosexual male. Although a psychologist might argue that, in this instance, the individual suffered some form of gender dysphoria. Nonetheless, such an evaluation would, in my opinion, be little more that a very subjective analyses based on biases all too common within the medical community. If one defines gender on the basis of this individual's perception of herself, then it is plausible that she is a lesbian even though she is anatomically male.

This idea perplexes most people, particularly lesbians, who quickly argue that a woman cannot have a penis, and that only an anatomically "correct" woman can be a lesbian. And on the surface, this argument appears to be totally logical. However, it only

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Defining Transsexualism...

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seems logical if we adhere to a physiologically-based definition of gender. But to do so, we must ignore that gender is essentially psychological. This is where the flaw in the current thinking begins.

If a normal heterosexual women of any sexual orientation were to wake up and find herself with a penis, she would without a doubt be one horrified woman — but she would be a woman nonetheless. The change in her anatomy would not change her identity as a woman. It would not change her gender. The same would be true of a heterosexual man waking to find himself with a vagina. In spite of their sudden "sex change," the man would continue being a man, and the woman would continue being a woman. Why? — Because gender is not a function of anatomy.

Anatomy can certainly work to enhance or compliment gender; it is not, however, the sole attribute that defines gender. And this is the component of gender that makes it possible for a man to possess a vagina, and a woman to possess a penis. It is the component that makes us wholly men or wholly women, regardless of our physicality.

I first presented this argument in 1961. I was only 12 years old, and presented my idea in an article titled, "How Do We Measure a Woman?" The article was published in a newsletter distributed by the Women's Alternative Community Center (W.A.C.C.) of West Hempstead, on Long Island, New York.

Surprisingly, its subscribers of lesbian women were more receptive to the idea 37 years ago , than 10 years ago. And possibly more receptive to the idea 10 years ago than they would be today. Why? — Because 40 years of pseudo-science presented through television talk shows has convinced the majority that the only way for someone anatomically male to become a woman is through a sex change operation. And, unfortunately, the lack of objectivity within the medical community has caused a majority of physicians, psychologists, and surgeons to move with the tide of public opinion rather than scientific evidence.

Sloppy science has resulted in a public that believes homosexuals choose to be homosexual, that cross-dressers are mostly comprised of gay men, and that transsexualism is a dysfunction that can only be "cured" through surgery. Ironically, it is this same community of sloppy scientists who decides whether or not individuals "qualify" for sex reassignment surgery.

To make matters worse, an influx of so-called feminist psychologists, behaviorists, and sociologists — attempting to infuse science with a feminist agenda — have been no more objective than the talk show hosts. They contribute, not to science but rather, to the circus of individuals who are no more concerned with truth that the Christian Coalition is concerned with accepting the right of each individual to pursue their own moral conscience.

Many transsexuals have voiced the opinion that the only genuine transsexual — whether male-to-female or female-to-male — is one who is committed to having a sex change operation. This opinion, quite obviously, is based on their acceptance of gender as a predominately anatomical construct. Their opinion ignores transsexuals who elect never to have surgery. More importantly, their opinion ignores the right of other transsexuals to select different options.

Instead of embracing the diversity of gender, some transsexuals choose to create superficial class distinctions. For example, in the case of male-to-female transsexuals, those with big breasts regard themselves as superior to those with smaller, though equally beautiful breasts, or those with no breasts. Or,

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Barney Frank's Response on ENDA

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the extent that people who are transgendered are being discriminated against because they are perceived to be homosexual, that should be outlawed. But I am convinced there is no chance at this point that we could broaden that to the different, albeit related, set of issues that are involved in protecting people who are transgendered other than because they are perceived to be homosexual.

I will therefore continue to press for adoption of ENDA as written, and continue also to work with people in the transgendered community about approaches that may be helpful in dealing with some of the problems that they face. In that regard, as you may know, the Department of Justice recently announced that it is using existing Supreme Court caselaw to sue on behalf of gays, lesbians and transgendered people who can show that they experienced discrimination as a result of their gender non-conformity, which DOJ will argue constitutes sex discrimination. I think that the example you provide of the person who is fired because "she looks too much like a guy" is precisely the sort of case that DOJ is contemplating. I believe the DOJ's approach is right as a matter of law, and I am optimistic that it will be successful.

So I think if we are successful in passing a law that protects people against discrimination based on sexual orientation, and we also continue to stress the relevance to the transgendered situation in some circumstances of the anti-sex discrimination laws, we will have covered most — although concededly not all — of the discrimination to which you and others are subjected.

Barney Frank

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Defining Transsexualism...

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in the case of female-to-male transsexuals, those who have had a full mastectomy often regard themselves as being more manly than those who still retain their breasts.

And some post-operative transsexuals regard themselves as being somehow more "transsexual" or more womanly than pre-operative transsexuals. Yet many of us can cite examples of post-operative male-to-female transsexuals who are neither feminine, nor womanly.

The main point is that when the emphasis is on anatomy, we often ignore the spirit and essence of the individual. And this neither displays compassion, nor good science.

It is probable that there are thousands of male-to-female and female-to-male transsexuals who have never so much as cross-dressed. And contrary to the DSM-IV, there are probably many who have never displayed the kind of speech or mannerisms that some might find inappropriate — either because it is deemed too feminine for a boy, or too masculine for a girl. In fact, if you read the DSM-IV, carefully, you find it filled with the same kinds of generalizations and stereotypes youd expect from a television talk show host — not from medical professionals.

The fact is that there are many transsexuals who, for a variety of reasons, live their lives according to their anatomical sex, and never share their secret desires with anyone — not even their spouses, and in some cases, especially not their spouses. They carry the secret to their graves.

Obviously, you would not find such individuals as guests on Rickki Lake, Rosie, Oprah, nor on any other talk show. This does not mean they are non-existent, nor that they are any less transsexual than those who decide on a sex change operation.

By creating pretentious class structures or hierarchies for transsexuals, the medical community ignores transsexuals who do not expose themselves. "They do not exist," some say. Or, as others might say, "The only true transsexual is one who accepts societys mandate that he or she subject his or her body to surgery." It is akin to the mentality of the Puritans: the only way to heal a witch is to burn a witch, but having no way to define a witch,

For any progressive modern psychologist, it must be important to understand the psychology of all transsexuals — whether or not they choose to have surgery. It is important because each transsexual must inevitably learn to live a productive, happy and meaningful life regardless of their reluctance to have, or their preoccupation with surgical solutions to what some perceive as a gender identity crisis. The beauty of manhood and womanhood is far deeper than their exterior shells.

Ignoring those who elect not to have surgery creates an enormous gap in our study of gender. Psychology, if it is to be a science, must explore the full scope of transsexuality — not merely those transsexuals who are readily available for study, and those willing to race to a clinic for permission to surgically alter their bodies.

Transsexualism Redefined:

Speaking solely from the perspective of an individual born anatomically male and psychologically female, I have not felt comfortable being defined as transgendered, nor as transsexual. And, in spite of the fact, that I have used both these terms to refer to myself throughout my life and throughout my career as a writer, both terms seem less appropriate as I grow older. Why? - Because mentally, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually, Ive always been a woman. I am not one gender wishing to be the opposite gender. I am a woman. Therefore, I cannot be transgendered. Nor can I be transsexual, if the word continues to be used to denote a phase of physical change that concludes with surgery.

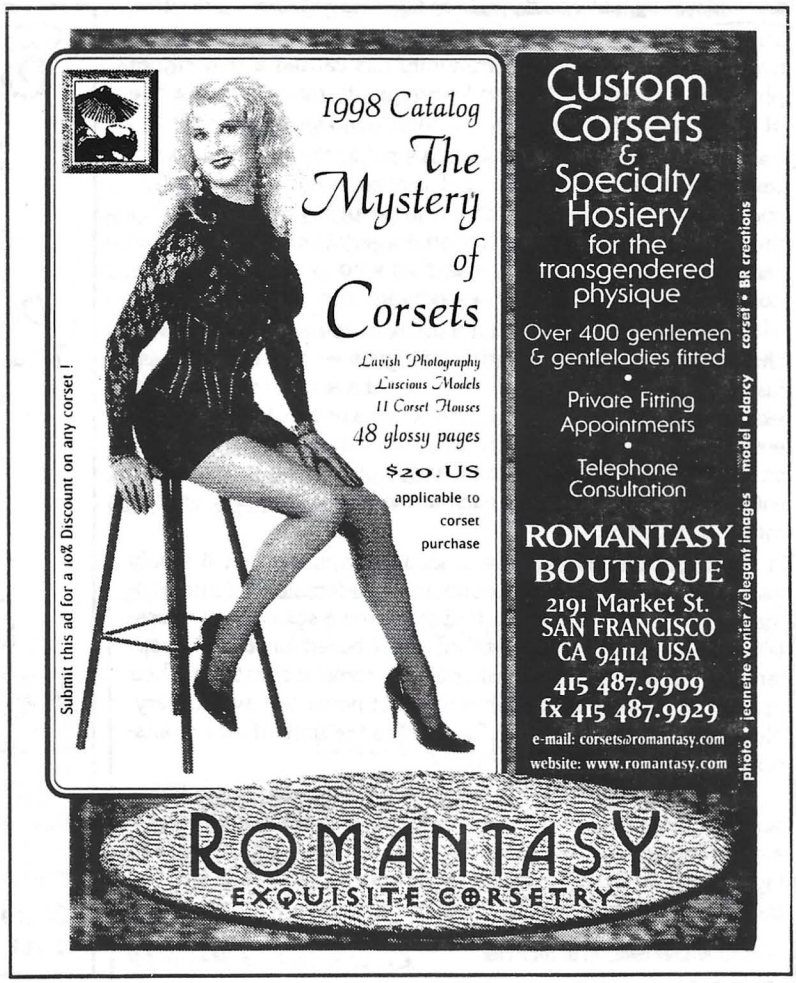
As I grow older, I am more inclined to simply define myself as woman, regardless of how misleading or deceptive it might seem to those with a narrower perspective and understanding of gender.

Conclusion:

Transsexualism and the nature of being transgendered has been defined more often from a surgical perspective than one based on psychology or behavior. As a result, the associations we often ascribe to transsexuals and to transgendered men and women are essentially anatomy-based, not behavior based as should be the case.

The common thread that runs through most of humanity is our desire to be accepted, and to be acceptable to our peers and fellow human beings. This leads some of us to the tattoo and body piercing salons, others to the plastic surgeon, and others to having their genitalia reconstructed.

However, we must not forget those who seek beauty and acceptance through meditation, work, devotion or prayer. Beauty acquires many forms within any given culture, as does the behavior of its individuals pursuing an abstract idea of what is beautiful and what would make them beautiful.

Behavior, like beauty, is not always apparent. Its true that behavior can be as obvious as Chili Pepper — a drag queen who appeared on Oprah Winfrey, but it can also be as subtle as the transsexual man or woman living out their lives as one gender while secretly knowing they are the opposite gender.

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