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TransSex

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\$2 Million Is Added To Sex-Change Suit

By Charles Petit

The sex-change malpractice trial of Dr. John Brown and his former business manager and promoter, ex-convict Andrew James Spence, was postponed yesterday after the amount of damages being asked in a civil suit against Brown was raised from \$1 million to \$3 million.

Superior Court Judge Frank W. Shaw told the 68 prospective jurors called for the case that the delay will take "several months" and excused them from the case.

The delay almost certainly postpones the start of the trial until after a series of hearings set to start May 31 before the state Board of Medical Quality Assurance, in which the 54-year-old surgeon faces possible loss of his license for alleged unethical conduct and medical negligence.

Brown, who since 1973 has performed an estimated 150 conversions of men into women, was not in the courtroom.

The delay enables Brown's attorney, Duncan Barr, to prepare additional defenses against the \$2 million punitive damages that were added yesterday to the original plea for \$1 million general damages.

The suit was filed by San Rafael attorney Salle Soladay in March, 1974, for Julie Phillips, now a 36-year-old Los Angeles waitress, who until her surgery was a man, Charles Beatty. Melvin Belli joined Soladay on the case recently.



JULIE PHILLIPS
Formerly Charles Beatty

The case against Brown alleges that he engaged in "malicious and oppressive conduct" in leaving his patient with malformed breasts and disfigured female genitals.

Brown hired Spence while Spence was on parole from San Quentin prison in 1973 — for an Alameda county grand theft conviction — to be his promoter in building his transsexual surgery practice in San Francisco.

Spence is charged in the suit with practicing medicine without a license, including performing surgery. He admits to less than a grade

school education. His Alameda county grand theft conviction came after he posed as a "Rabbi Emmanuel Goldstein" and defrauded office equipment companies with phony purchase orders.

He is acting as his own attorney in the current case.

Spence and Brown have dissolved their partnership, in which Spence says he was to get 40 per cent of the proceeds from all business referred to Brown.

The lawsuit alleges that Spence arranged breast implant surgery for Phillips from Brown, and immediately after the operation convinced her to undergo genital reconstruction from male to female. The surgery was undertaken, the suit alleges, without adequate psychological counseling or therapy.

Brown's practice, Soladay said, was in sharp contrast to the well-known "gender dysphoria" program at Stanford University, in which prospective patients undergo extensive psychological screening before being approved for surgery.