

In this issue...

Pride vs. Desire For Confidentiality

by James Green

May was a busy month for FTMs in San Francisco! Loren Cameron's photo exhibit, "Our Vision, Our Voices," opened on May 2 to an unprecedented audience of 260 people (see more of his photos inside). On May 5, San Francisco police officer Stephan Thorne held a press conference, with the Chief and Precinct Captain, to announce that he would be transitioning on the job from female to male (see article inside). Actor/playwright David Harrison opened his show, "FTM," on May 6 to very appreciative audiences during his six-night run. On May 12, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission held public hearings to raise the issue of transgender discrimination and to determine the necessity of developing protective legislation for transgendered/transsexual persons.

In June, Thurin Schminke spoke at our Informational meeting about his experience coming out as FTM and teaching the first course in transsexualism ever offered at a public university (as far as I know—please correct me if I'm wrong! I'll have an article about Thurin in the next issue). Also in June, FTM sponsored a series of short films related to FTM gender identity at the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. And, for another historic first, a brave contingent of 10 FTMs marched under our own banner in the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay/Bi/Trans Freedom Day parade.

I thought I'd be taking a break from all this public excitement in July, but the July 18 issue of the *New Yorker Magazine* features an article by writer Amy Bloom that gives FTMs some serious national exposure. There are problems with the article, to be sure, but I feel it is generally effective in portraying us and exposing some of the attitudes that surgeons have. You should still be able to see this at your local library.

In August I'll hit the road again to attend "Camp Trans" across the street from the entrance to the Michigan Women's Music Festival, where, along with Leslie Feinberg, I'll be conducting educational "gender diversity" workshops for any interested women in an attempt to build bridges between the transgender and lesbian worlds. This action is not intended to be confrontational, and I've been told the occupants of Camp Trans (mostly MTFs) do not intend to attempt to enter the women's space (I don't either).

Speaking of Gender Diversity, I have decided to offer my services to the general public as what I call a "Gender Diversity Consultant." I will be available on a consultant basis—\$50.00/hour plus expenses (a bargain!)—to give educational presentations, conduct sensitivity training for organizations (such as businesses and service providers), and to do transgender advocacy, that is, for example, to advocate for transgendered persons in mediation situations. Readers who desire further information should call me (James) at 510-658-0474.

All of the above activity brings me to a topic I've wanted to write about for a long time: Pride, Shame and Confidentiality.

For years, the prevailing theory about trans-



James Green addresses the San Francisco Human Rights Commission at public hearings investigating discrimination against the Transgender Community, May 12, 1994.

sexuals held that we are persons who simply want to transition and then to disappear. Psychiatrists, psychologists, endocrinologists, and surgeons, the professionals who hold the keys to our transitions, have been known to enforce a code of secrecy which held that persons who use their transsexualism to get attention, who parade themselves before the public, are neurotic and do more harm than good for those true transsexuals who simply want to lead "normal" lives. And for the most part, that's just what most FTMs have tried to do: get through their transitions and get on with their lives.

It's only been recently that FTMs (and other transsexuals) have been networking and comparing their experience in the numbers that we are

seeing today. Transsexuals have online forums on the internet; we have journals, magazines and international newsletters; we have regional and local information networks. Many men who went through transition 10 or 20 years ago are coming out of the woodwork to find support and camaraderie among other men who understand the part of their past they've so long kept buried. For many, the chance to be fully themselves, even if only for a few hours each month or year, is a great relief from the burden of secrecy.

There is a difference between shame and the desire for confidentiality. There is a difference between pride and unnecessary exposure. As FTMs have become more visible and vocal, as some of us have made artistic or political statements that have garnered some measure of attention, others of us have discovered conflicting feelings around this new social pressure. Some may feel sad that they can't come out publicly, some may feel jealous that they aren't getting the attention, some may feel grateful that someone else is sticking his neck out. When I speak publicly about transsexualism or transgender rights, one of my recurrent themes is people must learn that they don't have to be afraid of or ashamed about transsexualism. I'm also careful to point out that I am much more than a transsexual—I don't want to be seen as nothing more than TS. It is a legitimate fear that many FTMs have that if their past becomes known they will forever be seen as not-quite-a-man. The fact that I am a transsexual man is not in the forefront of my consciousness most of the time. I am not ashamed of my past, or of the fact that I've been through a major transition, but I don't discuss it unless I determine that it is necessary. I firmly believe we should all be able to be out of the closet without having to suffer repercussions, but I know this is not possible for each of us. The fact that it's not possible is both why it's important for those who can to speak out, and why it's important to let those who can't know that it's okay that they protect themselves if that's what they must do.

The pressure point between pride, shame, and confidentiality is one that will likely be bearing down on more of us in the coming months and years. As each of us comes to realize that we don't ever lead really normal lives, as our networking brings us closer, as our economic, artistic, and political struggles bring us more attention, I hope that each of us can manage this extra pressure with grace.

Coming Out Behind A Badge

by
**James
Green**

Stephan Thorne's story of self-discovery as an FTM is similar to most transsexuals' experiences. If you want that story you can pick up the September issue of Harper's Bazaar. Of course, the journalists who interview Stephan for mainstream publications or TV will ask him why he decided to go public as a transsexual, but whether or not his answer is explored (or even published) depends as much on the editor's whim as on the depth of the writer's curiosity.

If one is going to transition on-the-job, the question about coming out is not "why?," but "when?". With 10 years as a San Francisco Police Officer under his gunbelt, Stephan spent months agonizing over the possibility of having his 14 year career in law enforcement ended. During his first few months of hormone treatment, as his voice began to break and shift lower, Stephan wondered how long he could go on telling co-workers he had a cold: people were starting to be concerned about his "illness," and he didn't like lying to them: he felt deceitful. He was also getting close to the date for his top surgery, and he knew he needed to inform the Chief and his precinct Captain, and his fellow officers, about his transition.

Stephan methodically mapped out a strategy for coming out at work, and even though the circumstances certainly won't match for everyone, there is bound to be something in his plan that you can use if you are planning a transition of your own. But Stephan had something in his corner that very few of us have: San Francisco voters passed Proposition L last year, which included a provision adding "gender identity" to the list of attributes which cannot be discriminated against in the case of San Francisco City and County employees. This means he can't be summarily dismissed or persecuted at work because he is TS. He found out about this protection just three weeks before his scheduled meeting with the Chief. But he was prepared to go forward even without Prop L's protection.

As part of his plan, Stephan had

already stopped using the women's common bathroom at the precinct station, and started using a bathroom that was available for public use. He also had moved out of the women's locker-room into one for women sergeants which he shared with one woman who was on another shift, so

are TS, other people may feel confused, angry, or even victimized. The method you use to express yourself must show that you respect them and you are requesting respect in return. Your ability to empower your listener to respect and assist you is crucial to a successful on-the-job transition:



Police Officer Stephan Thorne on the Job

they rarely saw each other, anyway. Out of courtesy to her, though, he telephoned her before coming out (so she wouldn't be surprised by the public announcement), and offered to move into the hallway if she were uncomfortable with his presence. She was very understanding and supportive, and told him he didn't need to move out, but she truly appreciated his sensitivity to her feelings. Stephan plans to move into the male locker-room next year, when his appearance is more decidedly male (after about a year of hormone treatment).

When Sgt. Thorne told first the Chief and then his Captain, he said: "What I'm here to see you about is something personal. That is that I am a female-to-male transsexual, and I will be transitioning on the job." He then told the Chief that he wanted to make that transition as easy as possible for his fellow officers and himself, and asked for the Chief's help in accomplishing this. This strategy is important: Asking for your manager's help and support empowers them. When you announce that you

if you alienate your manager or highest superior at this initial stage, you can be sure that behind that plastic smile they're trying to figure out how to get rid of you. You must indicate that you are concerned about your co-workers' ability to work effectively, and that you do not want to be disruptive. Keep the discussion focused on work and not on your personal story, beyond the fact that this is something you've been struggling with for years, and you are working with a therapist and/or doctors to support you. Your manager may need basic background in transsexualism, but let him or her ask first and keep your answers direct and to the point. The top-most concern in an employment situation is the welfare of the majority as they strive for efficient job performance. Show that you have thought about the issues that affect your co-workers: bathrooms (and locker-rooms), pronoun usage, and any name change. If you intend to be dressing differently, this could be an issue, too.

Stephan laid all of this out for the Chief. He told him how he planned to

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deal, or had already dealt, with bathrooms and locker-rooms. He told that he would be changing his name from Stephanie to Stephan, and people could continue to call him "Steph" as they had been doing, or they could call him Sgt. Thorne, as they also had been doing. He said he would appreciate attempts to use his correct name and male pronouns, but he would not be offended if people slipped up or had trouble remembering. "Eventually we will all become more comfortable with it," he later told his fellow officers in a meeting, accompanied by his Captain, "and it will be more natural for everyone" as he grows more masculine in appearance. He notes that being uptight or controlling about things can give other people power over you. "And some may try to use it if you give them the opportunity," he cautions. The last bit of Stephan's strategy as he explained it to the Chief was how he wanted to convey the information to others. He wanted first to tell his Captain, then the Chief could tell the Mayor, and then he wanted to address each watch (shift) at his precinct house on a specified day that they would agree upon later. Then, because he is a public servant, and this would surely be of interest to the press, they agreed to schedule a small press conference (for print media only) to avert rumors and present the issue in a positive way so the press couldn't imply that the Department was ashamed of Sgt. Thorne. Stephan felt so good after his meeting with the Chief he could barely contain himself.

Then he approached his Captain. This gave him new apprehension because the Captain was an unknown quantity: he had just been assigned to Stephan's precinct only a three weeks ago, and while Stephan had an excellent working relationship with the Chief, this new Captain didn't know him at all and might not be so understanding. But the Captain surprised Stephan by receiving his announcement in an understanding and supportive way because he had a personal friend who was FTM and so had been through the whole process already and knew it was not necessarily destructive or a mark of insanity. The Captain agreed to stand by Stephan throughout the process. Buoyed by this important support, Stephan prepared for the press conference and to address the watches. What he was not

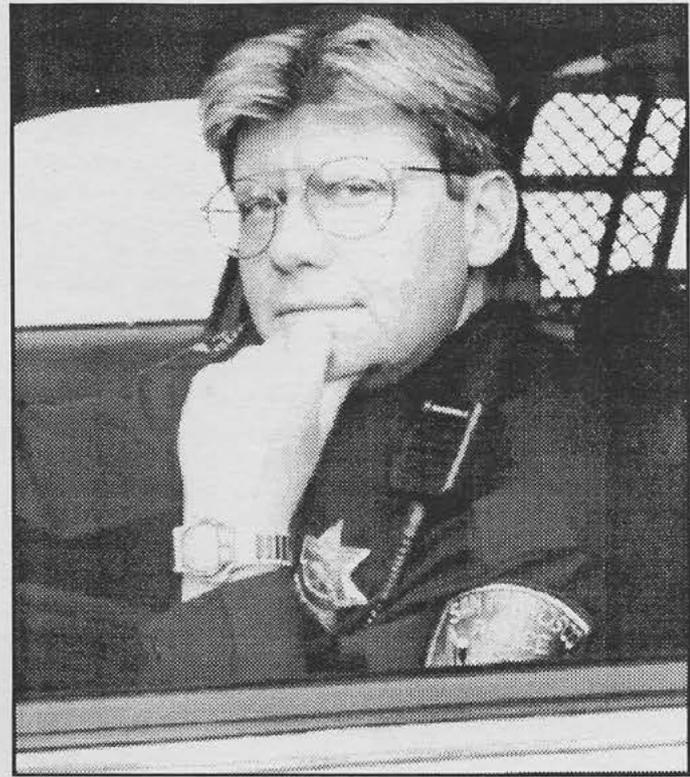
prepared for was someone leaking the story to the television news media. A scheduling conflict on the Chief's part resulted in the local TV news crews swarming the police station and outing Stephan before the Captain could hold his staff meeting (explaining the upcoming announcement to the Lieutenants) and before Stephan could address the watches. There was no choice for Stephan but to talk with them first, then explain to his co-workers what it was all about. It made things a little sticky, but ultimately it all worked out.

Stephan said he had been "afraid of losing (his) job, of being ostracized, of getting no back-up in the field, of people making (him) miserable and having to go out on stress (leave). NONE of those fears were actualized."

Stephan was unprepared for the scope of the media attention that has come his way. From the initial local news coverage, his story was picked up by CNN, Rush Limbaugh, and the Associated Press wire service. He got calls from journalists in Australia, Great Britain, and all over the U.S.A. Because his surgery was scheduled just three weeks after the announcement, he turned down the immediate offers from several national talk shows. And he has had to hire an agent to represent him in media dealings to keep the phone lines at the station house available for police business.

Fifteen hundred miles away in Nebraska, Stephan's family, already struggling to accept the fact that their daughter was an FTM, was outed by the media attention. His mother was so upset that she telephoned and asked Stephan to call the media and make them take the story back. She wanted to keep it private. She had thought perhaps she could disguise him as another family member and pretend Stephanie was still alive out there, that she had not been consumed by this other identity. But now there was no hiding anymore. Stephan says, "But she has survived—the family is still intact. There was hurt, embarrassment, anger and powerlessness that came with being outed, but it's dissipated now, and they are still expressing their love and support for me. I am so lucky."

Stephan has handled the media very well so far. He tries to maintain his privacy while being forthright and



Sgt. Thorne: San Francisco's Finest

honest about who he is and what he is doing. He doesn't want a circus or sensational approach. He has deflected questions about his personal plans for genital reconstruction, but he intends to continue to tell his story in the media because of the need to educate and inform. He was especially motivated by the story of Brandon Teena (see FTM #26). Because Brandon was murdered less than 50 miles from where Stephan grew up, and "because it involved the failure of law enforcement personnel to perform their duties, because of the prejudice that "informed" their decisions in handling the case, three unnecessary deaths resulted," Stephan says. "That affected me, not only as an FTM, but as a cop."

"What enabled people to rape Brandon and murder him and two others who were accepting of him is ignorance and fear," Stephan says. "The way to eradicate ignorance and fear is through education. I think I am uniquely able to speak to this."

Damn right, Stephan. Keep that badge on.

**Photos by
Loren Cameron**

Default Assumptions or The Billy Tipton Phenomenon*

By Jason Cromwell

As an anthropologist I am interested in how FTMs are perceived by society. What I see happening is what Douglas Hofstadter calls "default assumptions." He defines a "default assumption" as something that holds true in the "simplest or most natural or most likely possible model" concerning any particular topic or subject. He goes on to state, "The critical thing about default assumptions is that they are made automatically, not as a result of consideration or elimination." (Hofstadter 1982: 18).

To some degree or another, we all make default assumptions. For example, a recent Seattle newspaper headline read, "Police Officer Files Complaint Against Co-worker. Sex Harassment Case Involves 2 Men." Without thinking about it, most of us assume this case involves a female officer and two male officers. The first paragraph of the article states, "A federal police officer in Keyport has filed a discrimination complaint accusing a fellow officer of sexual harassment. Both are men." (Raley 1993: B3). It is not surprising that we make the assumption that sexual harassment cases involve females being harassed by males, because this is what is most familiar to us.

Now I'd like to provide some examples closer to home. A couple of weeks ago while flipping channels I caught a stand-up comic's act midway through her routine. Unfortunately I did not catch her name, but I did catch something relevant to FTMs. Leading up to her punchline she talked about the differences between men and women. Then she said, "There's one thing men do that women don't. Men change sex. I mean, has anybody here in the audience ever heard of women becoming men?" The audience agreed they had never heard of this. Then she delivered her punchline: "Do you know why women don't become men? Because it would be a demotion."

While there are several things going on here, I want to focus on

two of them. First, although it's supposed to be a joke and humorous, it clearly points out our invisibility. (I'll come back to this point later.) Second, it is a default assumption that females do not become men. Related to this are other default assumptions: (1) Females become men only to take advantage of male privileges; (2) depending on the author's perspective, females quit assuming male identities in the mid-nineteenth or mid-twentieth centuries; and (3) females can't become men.

I'll illustrate these default assumptions via some recent newspaper articles concerning a movie, *The Ballad of Little Jo*. Maggie Greenwald, the movie's director, states, "I stumbled upon some information about the real Little Jo Monihan (sic), about whom almost nothing is known except that she lived as a man and nobody had discovered the truth about her until she died." (Kahler 1993:

17). The default assumption here is that the truth is Monaghan was female and thus really a woman. Greenwald vividly reveals her default assumptions when she concludes in the interview, "Women discover themselves—and this is so much a part of feminism—that they don't have to be fake men; to be strong; to be powerful...Jo becomes a woman not a man. She passes through a phase to survive, ultimately to be a woman." (Kahler 1992: 20). Now let me get this right: Monaghan lived as a man, no one knew otherwise until death, but "ultimately" was a woman.

Another default assumption is, as Greenwald states, "It would only be extreme incidents that would make a woman decide to live her life as a man." (Kahler 1993: 17). These "extreme incidents" always involve socio-economic explanations. In the case of

Monaghan, an out-of-wedlock child was born and Monaghan was disowned by family. According to one male movie reviewer, "With no family to depend on, Josephine {note the use of Josephine instead of Little Jo} had to find either a husband or a pimp. Instead she decided to pass for a man and live on the edge of Western society." (Ulstein 1993: 11). For those of us familiar with television's Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman, who is not married and not a prostitute, the producers obviously forgot that a woman in the Old West had limited choices.

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One article accompanying a review of *Little Jo* is headlined, "Women Posing As Men Pursued Better Opportunities." (Lee 1993: 11). Quoted in this article is Julie Wheelwright, author of *Amazons and Military Maids*, who states, "Very often it was a pattern of women in working-class occupations who would take on male attributes to further their careers." (Lee 1993: 11). Going back to Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman for a moment, I find it interesting that Dr. Quinn is clearly a feminine woman in a male occupation. I don't know if the television show is based on any real persons, but I do know that many females pursued so-called male careers without changing their sex. I call this default assumption "The Billy Tipton Phenomenon." The same article even uses Tipton as an example of career opportunism, stating, "[I]n 1989, when Billy Tipton died in Spokane, it was revealed that the American jazz pianist and saxophonist—who had married and was the father of three adopted children—was in fact a woman. She apparently began appearing as a man to improve her chances of success as a musician." (Lee 1993: 11).

Another default assumption is that females cannot be men. Concerning Billy Tipton and others, one writer stated, "One look usually convinces viewers that these people were quite clearly women." (Lee 1993: 11). Yet no one in Billy Tipton's life knew him as anything but a man. Always, as in the headline mentioned above, females who live as men are considered to be "posing," or living "a charade," or "masquerading" as a man. In other words, we are not taken seriously. Excuses and rationalizations are made as to the "whys" of our lives. I'd like to share an insight my wife had about society's response to us:

People say they can understand a woman wanting to be a man because of the cultural privileges that males in our society have. But they cannot understand a man wanting to become a woman. Therefore, a male who becomes a woman must have a real need and a condition that is treatable. A man who becomes a woman is a transgender and/or transsexual issue. A female who becomes a man is a socio-economic issue and feminists will rally to "her" cause and, in doing so, deny FTMs their reality.

It is a default assumption when someone concludes that a female lived as a man for economic and social reasons. It is a default assumption when people conclude that Billy Tipton was posing as a man in order to be a musician.

I have many questions about the continuing response to Billy Tipton's life. If Billy was only impersonating a man in order to be a musician, why keep the secret from everyone after his career ended? Why, for that matter, keep it secret from closest friends and family at all? Why did Billy marry a woman? Why did he lie about his ability to have sex with her? Why lie about his genitals being crushed in an accident? Why did Billy "always wear a t-shirt and belt with an {athletic} cup on the outside of his underwear?" (People magazine, Feb. 20, 1989). Why did Billy adopt three children and be their father? Why do his adopted

sons continue to insist that Billy was a man and their father? One of his sons has said, "He did a helluva job with us. He was my dad." (People magazine, Feb. 20, 1989).

I find it ironic that many lesbians would have rejected Billy while he was alive, yet claim him as a part of their history after his death. Does this mean that "anatomy is not destiny" while one is alive, but "anatomy is destiny" after death? It seems this must be the case. Why else would people begin to use female pronouns after Billy died and it was discovered that his body was female?

I know that as an FTM many within our community would like to claim Billy as one of our own. We have so few role models, even though history is filled with females who lived and passed as men. Billy did not have surgery to alter his sex, and he certainly lived during a time when it was available. However, this is true for many FTMS, because the results are not very good and quite costly. Billy left no written explanation for the actions of his life. He left us instead with a life lived for over 50 years as a man. Does his life as a man have no meaning?

Billy Tipton's life speaks for itself. You don't spend 50 years of your life living in fear, not telling folks you love and live with; you don't go to extreme measures to make sure that no one knows what your body is or looks like; you don't die from a treatable medical condition IF you are simply a woman living as a man so you can take advantage of male privileges. It is unfortunate Tipton left no written statement about the "whys" of his life.

Which, finally, brings me back to my earlier point about invisibility. We are invisible. When one of us is taken notice of we are discounted as "not real men" or "unreal men." At the end of a play called TS/Crossing these questions are asked: "What happens when Terry Smith dies? When his soul has left his body? Will you insist that he may have lived his life as a man, but he died a woman?" It seems from Billy Tipton we have the answers. But I insist that as I live I am a man. Because I chose not to have



Billy Tipton at the Piano

surgery, because I do not have a penis, does not mean that I am pretending. I am not posing, I am not masquerading, I am not living a charade. I am a man. Each of us can make the same declaration. It does not have to be a public statement. But somewhere in our private papers we can make a statement about the choices we have made, about the meaning of our lives. Defining who we are matters. If we do not define who we are, we do not exist. If we do not define who we are, others will define us.

Having said this, I have one concluding remark. The writer of

the article headlined "Women Posing As Men Pursued Better Opportunities" asks this question: "Would there be any reason today—with females wearing pants with impunity, serving as police officers and going off to war—for a woman to pretend to be man?" (Lee 1993:11). I have a simple answer: Some females are not women. We are not pretending to be men. We are men.

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Marie Keller, MFCC, a Los Angeles based therapist and executive director for the Los Angeles Gender Center, offers a question-and-answer column covering a wide range of gender related issues. If you have burning questions, send them c/o the FTM Newsletter for the Ask Marie column in the next issue!

Dear Marie,
How on earth can one get the hysterectomy done first—without getting into the hormones? I don't necessarily believe the course of action prescribed by Harry Benjamin is best suited for each individual.

I have a clean bill of health, but no doctor will touch me even though I have a therapist who would recommend it.

Has anyone ever thought that doing hormones later could make life a lot easier and the transition much more effective and quicker—it makes good sense to me. And yes, I do have insurance, but still the implications are complex. Looking forward to your answer. Thanks.

—Signed, Taking Issue
Dear Taking issue,

After consulting with Dr. Gerald Leve, an endocrinologist who sees many of our clients from the Los Angeles Gender Center and who has treated thousands of transsexuals over several decades, I hope I can answer your question satisfactorily.

Most surgeons, unless they have experience in the particular area of transsexuals, are going to be quite hesitant to remove a healthy organ. Your "clean bill of health" is both your good fortune and the reason the doctors are probably not eager to perform surgery. However, even doctors who routinely work with transsexuals may want you to take hormones first, approaching the transition in a step-wise fashion. It makes sense when one is considering something as profound a life change as sex reassignment to take it one step at a time, from the least to the most invasive procedure. The effects of hormones in the early stages are the least radical of any of the medical interventions. Testosterone produces secondary sexual characteristics (facial hair, deepened voice, etc.) which aid the individual in living as male. From the physician's perspective he/she has an opportunity to see some evidence that this is really what the person wants and that he is capable of coping with the effects of physical changes.

With regard to the Harry Benjamin Standards, I agree that they may not always be exactly the optimum way to proceed in every case. Everyone is different. As in all situations involving protocols, standards, courses of action, rules, etc., the general can never fit all specific situations perfectly. There may be sur-

geons who, before you begin hormones, would be comfortable performing your surgery, but my guess is they would need to have experience with transsexuals, know your situation well and consult closely with your therapist. If they do your surgery without this information, to be honest, I don't think they care much about you. I know of physicians who don't abide by any standards. As a psychotherapist, I have been in the position of seeing the results of this kind of treatment (more like lack of treatment) and it is not positive. I have seen people who were not transsexual at all, half way down a road that was clearly the wrong one for them. I am not suggesting that the transition is not right for you. From the point of view of providers who have real concern for their clients, none of us want to participate in a grave, irreversible error, the result being suffering for the very person we sought to help. My suggestion is that you consult physicians experienced in this area: Dr. Gerald Leve in Los Angeles at (310) 208-8855 and/or Dr. Eugene Schrang in Neenah, Wisconsin, (414) 725-6661. Dr. Schrang does chest surgeries for female-to-males and could give you a referral to someone local who performs hysterectomies. Best of luck. Please let me know how things work out for you.

—Marie

Planning Starts for FTM Conference in San Francisco

We have long talked among ourselves about the need for an all-FTM national (or international?) conference, and we think San Francisco is just the place to hold one. We already have several hundred dollars donated expressly for such an event, and pledges of support from other TS groups in California and in Washington State for such a conference here. We'd like to get some feedback from you about whether you'd be interested in attending such a conference, and when you'd prefer it to be held. Please photocopy this page, mark your answers, and send your response back to us no later

than September 30, 1994. Hurry, hurry—this is important for planning.

Would you attend an FTM-only National Conference?

Yes ___ No ___

Would you rather it be an International FTM Conference?

Yes ___ No ___

Is San Francisco an acceptable location for you?

Yes ___ No ___

If not, where would you rather hold the conference?

Do you think a 3-day conference is enough? Yes ___ No ___

If not, what duration would you prefer?

2 Days ___; 1 Day ___; 4 Days ___; 5 Days ___; Other ___

How much would you be willing to pay to attend the conference, in addition to meals and lodging and transportation? \$100 ___; \$125 ___;

\$80 ___; \$75 ___; \$50 ___; other \$ amount (please write in) ___

Would you want the conference to be at a hotel site so we wouldn't have to break up so much at the end of each session (or have other logistical problems)? Yes ___ No ___

Here are some alternate dates for the conference. Please mark your preference in order (use 1 for first preference, 2 for second, etc.): President's Day weekend, 1995 (Feb. 18-20) ___; August 18-20 (Friday-Monday), 1995 ___; President's Day weekend, 1996 (Feb. 17-19) ___; Memorial Day weekend, 1996 (May 25-27) ___; your alternate date of ___

Think about this and respond quickly, please, please, please!!!!

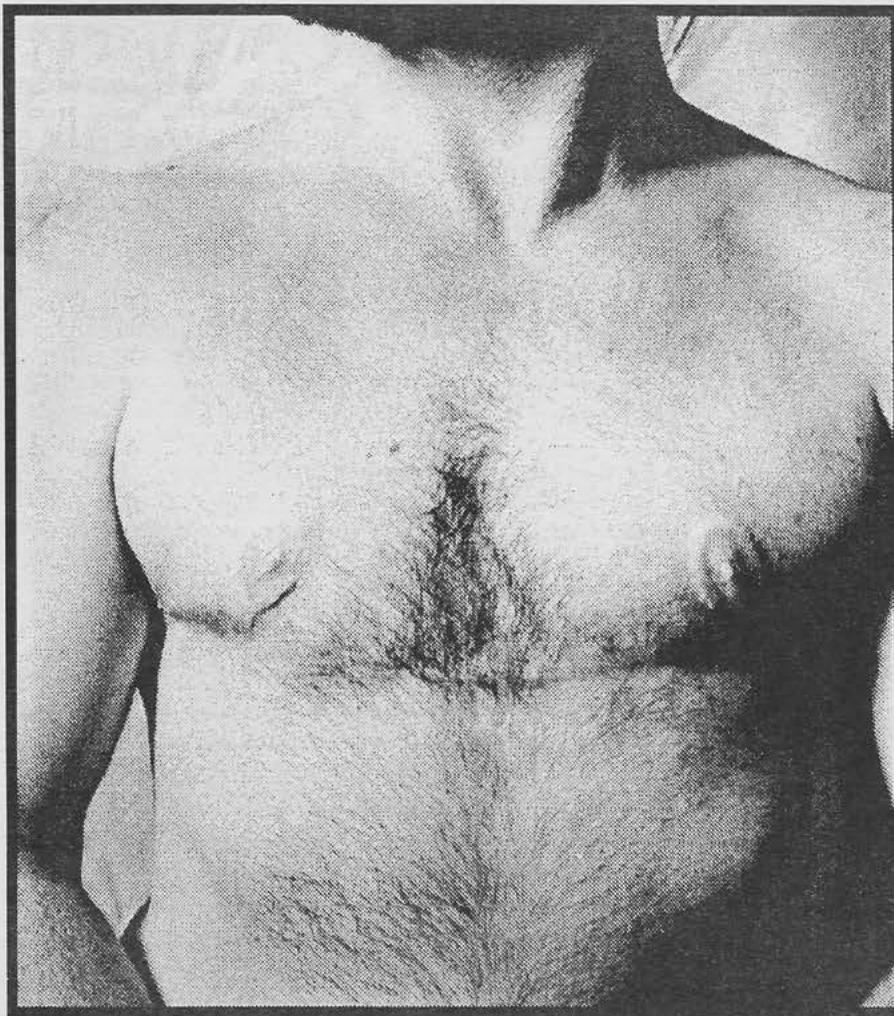
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FTM Conference Survey
5337 College Avenue #142
Oakland, CA 94618

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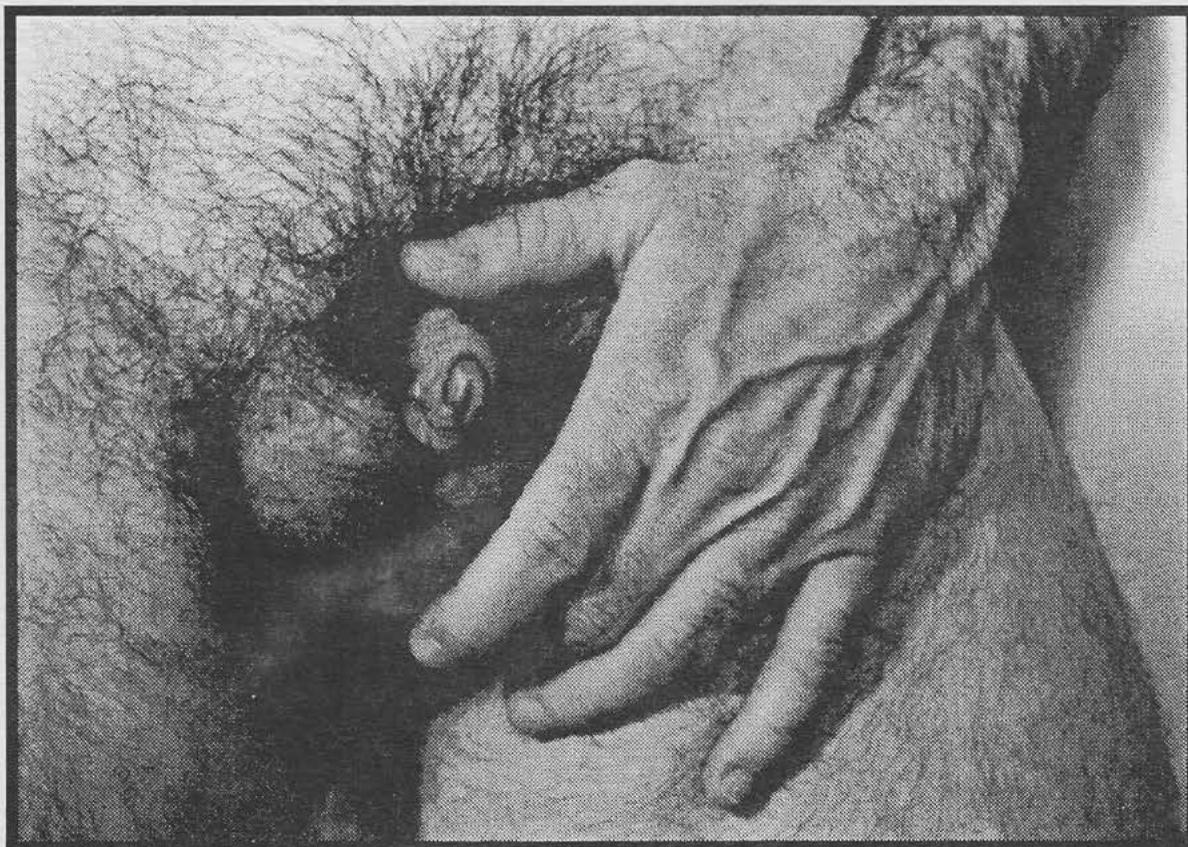
do

we

look?



Photos by
Loren Cameron



*Above: Chest
Reconstruction
by Dr. Donald
Laub, 1989.*

*At left: This and
last issue's
genital
reconstruction
photos both show
metoidioplasty
performed by Dr.
Donald Laub.
This one was
done in 1990.
The one shown
in #27 was done
in 1983.*

*Photos
©1993 by
Loren Cameron.*

Botched Surgery

Dear FTM,

There is a lot of hype about the good results of phalloplasty, but little about the tragic results of a botched one. Here is a brief story of mine.

Late in 1992 I consulted with a plastic surgeon at the Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU). I was trying to decide between the clitoral free-up with urethral lengthening, or the phalloplasty with urethral lengthening. Although he has recanted this now, originally he said a clitoral free-up would give me about 2 and one half inches. Upon measuring 2 and one half inches through my work clothes (underwear, long johns, and jeans) I concluded it wasn't sufficient. So I decided on the phalloplasty.

March 17, 1993, was the vaginectomy with urethral lengthening. I never in my life experienced pain of this magnitude. It was like sitting on a long knife and being severely pinched, constantly, because of all the stitches in my genitals. When the catheters were finally out it was sometimes impossible to urinate during the first three weeks.

July 23, 1993, was the phalloplasty with urethral hook-up. He brought in a urologist from Norfolk, Virginia. For personal reasons I was not happy about having this urologist from Virginia and said so. The results of the phallo and the butchery of my arm shows that my concerns were justified. The results of my phalloplasty suggests a lack of talent and compassion by all the surgeons involved.

The plastic surgeon promised me 5 to 6 inches, probably 6. I wanted at least that to start with as

one half to one inch is lost in the healing process. He says now he never promised that length, but I happened to have recorded the call. The lies this guy has told me over the months is amazing. He didn't know what he was doing, and it looks as though the urologist didn't either. Sure, this type of surgery is not perfect, but if it's not done right to begin with (as this one wasn't) it is negligence.

The graft taken from my arm is the strangest shape I've ever seen. It's no wonder the phallus is deformed. Only half my arm was used. The other half has a deep and long cut up to and under my wrist. My arm was locked in a 90 degree angle and I've had to undergo a lot of physical therapy to get use [of it] back. The nerve in my thumb (of all the stupid things to do) was evidently taken out. The cut on my wrist was sewed so tight, it pinches nerves and bone. I may never be able to work vineyard/farming jobs again.

The phallus is 2 and one quarter inches long in the position one would have it for urination. It would have been vastly cheaper, less painful, and a touch longer perhaps, to have the clitoral free-up. I had insurance to cover this, so I [believe] I was used as a guinea pig for their "learning experience." Although I was lead to believe that they knew what they were doing.

It is now Christmas, and I've had a foley catheter up my so-called phallus most of the time. The few times it's been out I can only urinate for a week or so and I am back in the emergency room having guide wires and dilation rods rammed up my privates (with nothing for pain) to put in another foley. I would almost rather be dead than

go on like this.

The few times I could urinate I would have to drop my pants to the floor and spread my legs and stand over the toilet. I was better off before! At least then I could drop my pants and sit. Now I can't go at all! That's hell.

Six weeks after the surgery I talked to this charming, lying surgeon on the phone. I told him I didn't go through this for 3 inches (that is all they started with). And I hadn't measured it to know it was now only 2 and one quarter inches. I said I had to drop my pants to the floor to use the urinal. He said, "A lot of men do that!" Also, he said that the phallus is short because of my obesity! I'm 235 lbs and 5 foot 3 and one half inches. I said you saw me in March and knew my weight. Then he said it was because the urethra wasn't long enough. But it was supposed to have been made longer in March! Then it was because I lost a lot of the length when it was put in the hole in my groin.

In any case, I may have well castrated myself and saved all the pain and expense. It's too short to use without getting a pants full of urine, and too short and deformed for intercourse. I passed up the clitoral free-up because it was too short, and I have less anyway. Unless one considers 2 and one quarter inches long and 7 inches around one a phallus. What did I suffer all this for? For my pain and their gain.

I went South in November to have surgery for the stricture. It didn't work. I'm still catheterized. I may have to have the urethra put back so I can sit down to [urinate]. Has all the suffering been in vain? Also, now I can't masturbate, so I'm sexually dead.

I spent Christmas Eve in the emergency room having my upper groin area cut open so a tube could be put in so my bladder wouldn't burst.

I am considering having the so-called phallus taken off and leave the clitoris. But the clitoris has been mutilated and degloved. So I'm not sure what's left. Also, my leg muscle was used for testicular implants. He says I have them, I know I don't. It's the same female labia that was always there.

I've been on strong medicine for pain and bladder spasms, and also antibiotics for almost six months now. I'm going out of my mind with pain, worry, and depression. I cannot live the rest of my life like this! I have fantasized suicide so many times. I am not there yet, but it's hard to be optimistic.

Because of all the extreme pain, and because of all the surgeries that will need to come, I want to sue him (or them) for medical malpractice. Several lawyers in New York State say I have a good case, but I need a lawyer from Oregon. So far, no one from Oregon is interested. It would have to be on a contingency basis. (Also, I have evidence that I am not printing in any newsletter or telling of at this point.)

As a transsexual who was butchered (for profit) I am finding out what isolation and prejudice is all about. This guy will keep on operating and ruining lives because no one gives a damn about us. Not the medical community or the legal community. There is no liberty and justice for all when you're a transsexual. It's no wonder the suicide rate is high for the TS community.

In January, I taped a Geraldo show in hopes of finding a competent

A brother in England wrote to me recently asking, among other things, "What is Transgender?" It seems some people think the term is uniquely American, though it seems widely used in Australia. And since it is an evolving term, being used more and more frequently in political circles, I think it's about time to supply some definition and some history.

Transgender is the term that is currently being applied by some activists as an alternative term to transsexual. But it is more than that, too. As we are trying to achieve civil rights, we realize there are not very many of us compared to the non-transsexual population, and that gives us a very small voice, if any. By broadening the issues, we enroll the support of many other people, including some cross-dressers, bisexuals, gays, and lesbians. The term transgender takes the word "sexual" out of the picture for a moment, and allows people to open their minds to be educated about freedom of gender expression. The term transgender can be applied to all persons who

cross traditional gender boundaries in one way or another. Thus laws protecting transsexuals and cross-dressers can also protect women who appear masculine or men who appear feminine. Transsexuals are still people who have had (or are seeking) sex reassignment surgery. And transsexuals are transgendered in that they know what it is like to identify as one gender yet be perceived as the other. Whether or not one has (or wants to have) surgery does not exempt a person from either the need for legal protection, or from the vulnerability of being mis-perceived and threatened or discriminated against. The term was originally coined in the early- or mid-70's by Virginia Prince to describe persons like herself who present as one gender but who have no intention of altering their genitals. I suppose she meant it to distinguish herself from both transsexuals and occasional cross-dressers. But language is a living, breathing thing, imbued

What is Transgender?

by James Green

as it is with human spirit, and now it is less a distinguishing term than an enveloping one.

The brother from the U.K. also asked about whether it was true that we in the U.S. can have our birth certificates changed and get legally married. In the U.K. this is not possible. To clarify and/or confuse matters: Yes, it is true that in some U.S. states transsexuals can have their birth certificates changed. They are then legally the newly-designated sex and have all the rights and privileges (and responsibilities) of that sex. They can get married. If they are men under age 25 they must register for service in the armed forces. Having one's birth certificate changed is dependent upon the state you were born in. For example, I was born in California, and under California law I can go before a Superior Court Judge with an affidavit from my surgeon saying that I am male gendered and my body has

been surgically changed to male and I cannot reproduce as a female. The

Judge asks me if I am doing this in an attempt to evade creditors or to defraud anyone, I say "No, Your Honor." He says fine and accepts my petition. I send a certified copy of the Judge's decree to the Secretary of State and to the Department of Vital Statistics (where they keep the birth and death records for California), along with the correct fee, and they send me a new birth certificate, sealing the record on the old one. No problem. But if I had been born in the state of Kentucky, say, or New York City (not New York State), for example, I could not do this. No matter where I live now (even if it's California), if I were born in one of those places where transsexualism is not a recognized condition I would be out of luck.

Speaking of laws and political action, the state of Washington currently has laws that allow transsexuals to change their birth certificates, but a Christian

organization in that state is sponsoring initiatives to have the laws repealed. If they win their battle, I would not be legally recognized as a man in the state of Washington, even though California does recognize me as such. If I were married, Washington state would not recognize my marriage, either. Their initiatives would also legalize discrimination against gays and lesbians. Fortunately, the initiatives did not receive enough signatures, so they won't be on the ballot—this year. Our efforts to educate on sex and gender topics, and our fight for civil rights is in direct opposition to this "religious war" (and this brings me back around to the topic of "Transgender"). Because, as we all know, the hideous discrimination that is practiced against people who do not conform to the expectations of others, or who do not subscribe to their dogma, is precisely the type of prejudice we must be fighting if we are to gain and retain our human/civil rights. And this is what adopting the term "Transgender" is all about.

More Malebox

lawyer. The show was broadcast in April. All the while I was getting sicker through the last months. In February, I went out of state for surgery to put a hole below the phallus so I could urinate through [that]. My bladder was full of blood and puss. I was in bad shape. They thought they got it out before permanent damage would occur. I'm not sure. It's been 8 months now, and I still have a catheter in! It's a super-pubic [sic] one

now. I have to push a catheter up the urethra every day to try to keep that open. (The urethra is near where the vagina was.) But urination at night is not good, and I can't empty my bladder completely. I'm afraid there is damage.

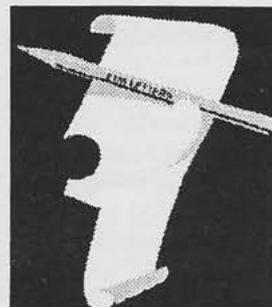
If any of you know any good medical malpractice lawyers [who can try cases in Oregon], please write to me.

Dan, Box 516, Rushville, NY 14544

Dan's story is an awful one that raises a number of issues that all FTMs should be aware of: urethral extensions are highly problematic; many surgeons won't operate on overweight patients; often when TS patients experience problems they are reluctant to complain for fear of creating a situation in which no one will be able to obtain surgery. The surgeon Dan used has had successful results, too; not all his patients have expe-

rienced Dan's problems. Nonetheless, I think Dan is entitled to complain, and I appreciate his willingness to share his story. By networking to share our experiences—good and bad—we educate ourselves as to the risks and the realities of the TS process. We must make educated decisions about our bodies, and we must keep an open mind as we gather as much information as we can. I encourage others to share their surgery experiences. I

hope Dan will keep us informed as to his progress. And anyone who thinks he can help Dan, please write to him. — James



Push for Anti-Gay & Anti-Transgender Legislation

Here is a message that was posted on CIS that should be of concern to all gays and transgendered individuals.

Conservative Christian leaders are collecting signatures in at least seven states for ballot referenda that would repeal or block laws to prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians. Some of the measures go beyond general references to homosexuals, citing bisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals and pedophiles.

A measure in Washington state would ensure that no public school student is taught that homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexuality or transvestism are "presented, promoted or approved as positive, healthy or appropriate behavior."

An initiative in Idaho would force libraries to permit only adults to see books or other materials on homosexuality.

Proponents of the measures say they are seeking to stop gays from obtaining "special rights." Asked to define "special rights," one supporter said, "That a wrong behavior, such as homosexuality or cross-dressing, would be (put) in the minority classification. To me, that's the epitome of being special."

Gays say they aren't seeking anything special, merely protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation—which is not included in the federal Civil Rights Act.

The seven states where ballot language has been filed for the November elections are: Arizona, Idaho, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. Other states considered by gay leaders to be potential targets are: California, Ohio, Oklahoma, Montana, and Wyoming.

PENDING MEASURES: ARIZONA

- Type of initiative: Amendment to state constitution

- Language: The state could not "enact, adopt or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance or policy whereby pedophile, homosexual, lesbian or

bisexual orientation are the basis of or entitle any person or class of persons to status or claim of discrimination."

- Signatures needed: 158,311 by July 7th.

IDAHO

- Type of initiative: Statute
- Language: No state agency or political subdivision could enact any law or ordinance that had "the purpose or effect of granting minority status to persons who engage in homosexual behavior, solely on the basis of such behavior."

MICHIGAN

- Type of initiative: Constitutional amendment

- Language: The state and its localities could not enact or adopt any laws or ordinances providing minority status or protected status to homosexuals.

- Signatures needed: 256,457 by July 11th.

MISSOURI

- Type of initiative: Constitutional amendment

- Language: Virtually identical to Michigan's.

- Signatures needed: about 120,689 by July 8th.

NEVADA

- Type of initiative: Constitutional amendment

- Language: "The people of the State of Nevada find that inappropriate sexual behavior does not form an appropriate basis on which to construct a minority or class status in relation to civil rights."

- Signatures needed: 51,229 by June 21st.

OREGON

- Type of initiative: Constitutional amendment

- Language: "In the state of Oregon, including all political subdivisions and government units, minority status shall not apply to homosexuality."

- Signatures needed: 89,028 by July 8th.

WASHINGTON

- Type of initiative: Two statutes

- Language: Both would repeal and block laws and policies that prohibit discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals and transvestites, and prohibit teachers from presenting homosexuality as acceptable.

- Signatures needed: Each would need 181,667 by July 8th.

News Flash: Both Washington State initiatives failed to get enough signatures, but proponents say "we'll be back."

CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

The Mayor of St. Paul refused to sign the 1994 gay pride celebration proclamation because it included bisexuals and transgender in the text. According to Minneapolis Public Radio, Mayor Coleman stated that he doesn't believe in bisexual and transgender rights. Many in Minneapolis and St. Paul worked hard for inclusive language in the gay pride celebration. Please take a moment to call Norm Coleman and encourage him to sign the proclamation with the existing language at (612) 266-8510. Hope everyone has a great gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender pride celebration! *[Of course, it's too late to call about this now, but you might want to call for some other reason someday—ed.]*

Stonewall 25 Coverage or lack of same...

While riding in my car on the day of the Stonewall 25 celebration, I tuned in to Pacifica Radio to hear the speeches and commentary. First I heard Marga Gomez tell outraged jokes about discrimination against gays, lesbians and bisexuals. Then I heard Harvey Fierstein's gravelly voice telling America that they should be scared of queers, by God! Then a transgender activist was introduced—and just as he or she began speaking into the microphone, the radio commentators decided to cut in with an interview of some stray man in the crowd who'd come all the way from Mexico. "What is it like for gays in Mexico?" they wanted to know.

Well, I wanted to know what it's like for transgendered people right here in the U.S.A.—but, of course, I never got to find out. I don't think Pacifica was purposely blacking out the transgender issue; more likely they were eagerly waiting for an opportunity to go on air with some "real" reporting, and when they heard that the next speech was about transgenderism, they considered it insignificant enough to ignore.

Wake up, Pacifica! Marga Gomez and Harvey Fierstein have had their day. What's happening in the great never-ending movement for social justice now is the transgendered movement—that's who's moving human consciousness forward. Put them on the air!

—Marcy Sheiner

FTM International Growth Strains Funds

The FTM Newsletter is running dangerously close to ceasing publication if we cannot get the necessary funds, which we receive exclusively through donors like yourself.

It's true that donations roll in fairly steadily, but in very small sums, usually totalling about \$50.00 per week. This amount would sustain the newsletter if we were still only 8 pages each issue, and if we cut our subscription list back to 1991 levels. But we've grown phenomenally in the last three years. We have a lot to be proud of: over 500 subscribers across the U.S.A. and Canada and in 9 other foreign countries; we've inspired the growth of numerous smaller newsletters; one of our members in Japan has recently started his own FTM organization and newsletter called FTM Nippon (or, FTM Japan). And our designer, Stafford,

inadvertently gave us a new name, FTM International, when he needed a logo for business cards that we could pass out at all the recent local events. I liked it, so I'm officially naming us FTM International to reflect our international influence.

There is only enough money in the FTM account to pay for this issue of the Newsletter, and that's it!

All this growth means added expenses. The added exposure means that more people write or phone in for a free sample copy of the Newsletter, and that costs money. International postage is as much as \$2.12 per copy. We don't want to deny anyone the important connection and information he (or she) needs, so

we have a policy of "contributions requested" as opposed to "fees required" for the Newsletter. Three years ago, I could publish an issue of the Newsletter for \$300.00 to \$450.00. Now it costs about \$1000.00 to produce each issue, and that's just production and printing. Stafford, Jordy, and I all donate our time and effort. Plus, we have the expense of the voicemail line and the mailbox. Again, the time I spend responding to mail and messages is donated, and it is at least 20 hours per week. And that's in addition to earning a living and maintaining a relationship and raising a child and working on projects for IFGE and speaking at public and/or educational events and working on the anti-discrimination project with the San Francisco Human Rights Commission and on and on and on. In fact, this issue is late because I have been so busy working on all these projects.

So I'm shamelessly begging for money. If you haven't sent in a donation this year, PLEASE send as much as you can. There is only enough money in the FTM account to pay for this issue of the Newsletter, and that's it! I could cut expenses considerably by only sending the Newsletter to paying subscribers, and if donations don't increase I may have to do it. Or, I could publish fewer than four times each year—I could wait to publish each issue until there is enough money to do it. I'm going to have to make a decision eventually. This is your Newsletter: Let me know what you think.

—James

Leslie Feinberg's Transgender Pride Project

I need your help on a project I've begun since I finished Stone Butch Blues and the historical pamphlet Transgender Liberation. I'm working on the book I needed to read so badly when I was a scared, ashamed transgendered teenager.

I have assembled my historical and cross-cultural research on transgender. In addition, I have or have located 150 photos, graphics, etchings and paintings of transgendered individuals from many nationalities and time periods. Together they will make up a book tentatively titled Transgender: A History of Change.

I am fashioning this body of work as a weapon to defend the rights of each person today to shape their bodies, identities and self-expression. I want to show that although gender has been expressed differently in diverse historical periods, regions, cultures, classes and nationalities, there has always been gender diversity in the human population. And people have always determined, defined and changed their sex.

This is a work of pride. It is a work of dignity. It is in draft form and ready to go to a publisher. It is only the costs that are an insurmountable barrier blocking my way. I have discovered that no matter who publishes the work, it is the author who must shoulder the financial weight of research and the steep costs of purchasing photo and graphic reproduction rights.

The good news is that I have submitted a

\$12,500 budget to the Column Foundation in New York City, which has an IRS 501.3c non-profit tax-exempt status. The Column Foundation will award me a grant in the amount of all the donations it receives that are earmarked for the Transgender Pride Project. The budget includes \$15-25 for 50 photo prints from museums and collectors, \$50 for 50 prints and \$100 for 50 prints for valuable images. It would pay the costs of travel to archives and private collections in Los Angeles, Atlanta and Boston, and cover xeroxing, print-making, long distance calls, faxing and postage to international collections and museums.

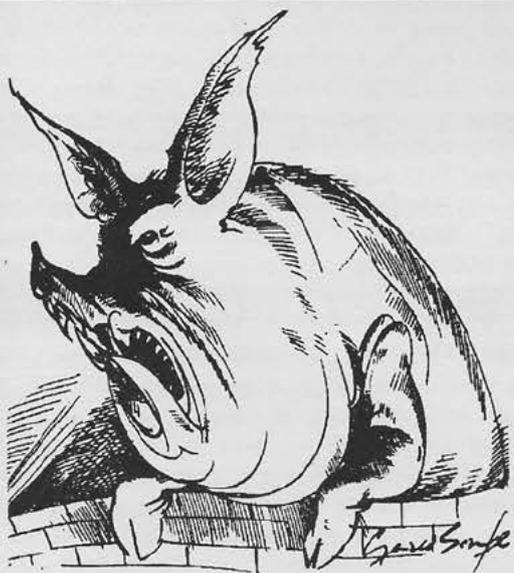
I need your help in this giant unearthing of history.

1. Please make a tax-deductible donation to this educational project. Make checks payable to the Column Foundation, c/o William Sachs, Esq., 7 Penn Plaza, Suite 830, New York, NY 10001. Please note that this contribution is for the Transgender Pride Project.

2. Please xerox and circulate this request or include it in mailings to people you think are sensitive to this issue and would be willing to help.

I hope to make this book the one so many of us needed when we were growing up—and still need now. It will be a powerful defense of the rights of all transgendered people to live and work in dignity and respect.

Thank you for your help.



Who said I have mood swings!!!!

Original Cartoon by Jamie Boughen

MTF LIKES FTMS

Dear FTM, I was not prepared to send this letter until now, nearly one-and-a-half years since my surgery from male to female. I would like to say that during the years of my transition, post-operative recovery, and now, I have come to appreciate the friendship and affection from my FTM brothers. I am a nice Jewish MTF, originally from New York, still a bit confused about my role in life, returning to college after a 20-year lapse. I am currently living in Huntington Beach, California and still very undecided about where I would like to settle down and make a home. I am 38, a Cancer for those into such things, and have had very happy times with the FTMs that I've had relationships with in the past. I think you guys are the greatest and strongly believe that once you go FTM, you never go genetic. I would like to hear from any guy who would like to know more about me and perhaps begin a pen (or word processor) pal relationship. Please write to me at: *Rachel Lee, PO Box 1072, Huntington Beach, CA 92647-1072*. If you are in the area or wish to call, ring me at [REDACTED]. Best to all, Rachel.

ANCIENT HYSTERECTOMIES?

Dear FTM, I am interested in hearing from any FTM on testosterone who has had a hysterectomy—especially if it was done some time ago. Please tell me if it was a complete hysterectomy (uterus, tubes and ovaries) or partial (please explain), when you went on testosterone, when you had the hysterectomy, what changes, if any, you experienced as a result of the surgery and whether they were temporary (how long did they last?) or permanent. Possible changes resulting from a hysterectomy could be: general lack of health; accelerated aging; poor orgasm, or lack of orgasm; incontinence or increased urination; bowel problems; bone or joint pain (arthritis); eye problems or vision changes; weight gain; water retention; memory loss or Alzheimer's; headaches; backaches; depression; dizziness; dry skin; lack of energy; lack of emotion; hot flashes; sleep difficulties; fatigue. Please send replies to: Sidney, c/o *FTM Newsletter, 5337 College Avenue #142, Oakland, CA 94618*. I will share my findings with FTM.

HALBERSTAM ANTHOLOGIZED

Dear FTM, Thanks for all the hard work. For any readers who may be interested, I have an essay on representations of transgending in a new volume called *The Lesbian Postmodern* edited by Laura Doan (NY, Columbia University Press, 1994). The essay is called "F2M: The Making of Female Masculinity" and it discusses transgender debates in lesbian circles and transgender issues addressed in the video *Linda, Les & Annie* and the 1985 film *Vera* by Sergio Toledo. Check it out. Keep up the good work. Judith Halberstam.

[Judith, I did check it out, and I hope more readers of the FTM Newsletter will do so as well. I feel strongly that you are interpreting us through a limited lens. You say that gender is a fiction and our lives are fictions while you claim to be trying to open up the possibilities for a wider variety of gender expression. I think that in this essay you may do us more harm than good. Our gender and our lives are not fiction: we struggle every day with the realities of legal and medical identities that we cannot take off like strap-on dildos. I appreciate your skill with language, and

I will defend your right to express your opinion about your own experience, but please do not try to interpret my experience before you have gotten to know me. I know you are a supporter of FTM, but you are participating from a distance. I look forward to a continuing dialog, and the expansion of both our perceptions.—James]

INTERSEX SOCIETY

FTM Readers: In Issue #26 we published a letter from a man who was intersexed. he was seeking a support group for intersexed persons. Another reader contacted us to tell us about the *Intersex Society of North America, PO Box 31791, San Francisco, CA 94131*. There was also a very interesting article on this topic published in West, the San Jose Mercury News Sunday Magazine, on July 10, 1994. Check it out. James.

WANTS INFO IN AUSTRALIA

I am a 20-year-old FTM transsexual from Australia. I have not yet had any operations, and am eager to find out more about other FTMs and FTM products. I am desperate for someone to talk to and to ask questions. Hope to hear from you soon. *Jamie Mullen, Bulkington Rd., Davoren Park 5113, South Australia.*

THURIN SAYS THANKS

Dear FTM, I am totally overwhelmed and happy—thank you all for the warm welcome and sincere friendship I received on June 12th during our FTM meeting and afterwards. My life has changed since my time in San Francisco. I am going to finish up my job in Flagstaff and arrange my life so I can assist in our work for all transsexuals. I am ready and able to do this now. Thank you all for helping me reach a final decision. I am sending \$10 towards the first FTM convention and \$10 to support the newsletter. We must all financially support our cause, so I am putting out a challenge to all to meet my \$20 pledge. *Thank you, Thurin Schminke, Flagstaff, AZ.*

It was great having Thurin tell us about his transition and coming out. He's selling xeroxed copies of his autobiography for \$10.00. Write to him c/o FTM--James.

GOOD TOP SURGEON IN LA?

Dear FTM, I would like information on chest surgery in the Los Angeles or San Diego area. Good or bad, please send responses to *H. McClain, PO Box 330356, Pacoima, CA 91331-0356*

BUFFALO PEN-PAL

Dear FTM, I am a 32-year-old FTM who has been on hormone therapy for two years. I live in Buffalo, New York, and while there is a support group, they are all male-to-female and have not had the same experiences. I would like to write to someone both to share information on surgical reassignment and strategies and experiences living as an FTM, and also to become a friend/pen pal. Thank you, *Jason Karacella, Albermarle St., Buffalo, NY 14207.*

GOOD TOP

Bisexual SM FTM seeks correspondence with other FTMS, any and all stages of the process, with similar interests. I'm a top and would especially like to hear from FTMs who, like me, find FTMs as erotically exciting as

genetic males and females. Sense of humor also required; other FTMs and TGs in general welcome to write. *Thaniel, PO Box 7621, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.*

GWM SEEKS FTMS

GWM in South Orange County wants to meet FTMs in Southern California for friendship, possibly more. I know a few FTMs but I'm always looking to meet new people and make new friends. I would also consider corresponding with FTMs out of the Southern California area. Please write to *Paul, PO Box 701, Lake Forest, CA 92630-0701.* Hope to hear from you soon.

MOUSE COMMUNIQUE

Dear FTM, I've been on hormones now for six months. I've made quite a change in this small amount of time. I'd like to share some of my experiences with the community. The hair is unbelievable—I shave once a week because of my job. I am physically capable of keeping up with the men in my very strenuous, male-oriented job. I've been on this job for four years and am just now being accepted by the guys (either as a very masculine female or a new guy, for those who don't know me). I even met a guy who didn't like me as a female and didn't recognize me as the same female, but as another guy. We were talking, and as the conversation went on I finally told him who I was. Needless to say, he was shocked, but we get along fine now. I'm also realizing just how bad guys treat women, not only on the job, but on the street as well. Also, how women on the street act towards men in uniforms, or should I say, what appears to be men in uniforms. The treatment in restaurants and gas stations is so remarkably different, it just amazes me. Please feel free to write me; I enjoy the communications. *Mouse, [redacted] S. Oglesby, Chicago, IL 60617.*

TURNING JAPANESE!

Dear FTM, Hi! How are you? I always enjoy your newsletters. Thank you very much. Also, I always envy you have the newsletter like this. As you may know, Japan is really a developing country to any sexual matters. I have been thinking for several years if we could have the newsletter or magazine like yours. And now, at last, I started to act for running FTM-Nippon. I'm going to do all by myself. Though I have a lot of wonderful FTM friends, all of them are living far, far away from me. They'll help me as the contributors. I quit my job for doing it. To tell the truth, I would like to ask two favors of you.

1. Could you send your greetings for FTM? It must make the reader feel, "Oh, we are not

alone in this world!"

2. Could you permit me to translate any part of your article and run it in FTM? You're real advanced people and your opinions mean a lot to us. Of course I do add the proviso like, "This article is the translation from 'FTM Newsletter,' Oakland, CA, USA." Or may I introduce (at least) your existence to my readers?

I do hope you permit these. Please write me about them until June 10th. FTM will be published on July. I send you the free copy every time. Yours Truly, Y. Kumagai.

Dear Mr. Kumagai,

Congratulations on your decision to start FTM-Nippon! I admire your determination. I hope you don't suffer too much economically. You must take care of yourself. But if you can afford to spend full time working for FTMs in Japan, I say more power to you. I wish I could afford to spend full time working for FTM here, but there is not enough money. We barely make enough to publish the newsletter each time. But I wish you all the best, and much success. I am delighted to grant you permission to translate anything from the FTM Newsletter for your readers in Japan. Please do give credit to any author cited, and to the FTM Newsletter. Also, please do make people in Japan aware of us here in San Francisco/Oakland. Our annual subscription rate for overseas subscribers is \$20.00 in U.S. dollars.

Here are my greetings for FTM-Nippon:

Welcome to the international community of Female-To-Male transsexuals and cross-dressers. All over the world there are people who are struggling with their gender identities, struggling to discover whether they are more comfortable in the world as women or as men, struggling to maintain their dignity in the face of ignorance, fear, and shame. You are not alone. Together we can learn about ourselves, and we can help others to understand us. Here in the San Francisco Bay Area we have a large group, nearly 150 men who have grown up with female bodies. Our FTM Newsletter goes to 500 people across the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, France, Greece, The Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Russia, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan. We are very honored that Mr. Kumagai is dedicating himself to the important work of helping his brothers and sisters in Japan to understand themselves and to evolve into the successful people they want to be. With warmest greetings to you, I remain Yours Truly, James Green, Director, FTM International; Editor, FTM Newsletter.

ONE MANS JOURNEY

Dear James, Thank you very very much for your wonderful statement! Your warm support is really helpful to us.

Let me tell you about myself. I was a kid who was thinking "I must be becoming a male as years go by." But it never happened. When my body got started to change as a female, I was so depressed as all of you were. I was nine years old. But I was lucky! Because the same year, one actress became so popular in Japan since she announced she is a male-to-female transsexual. When I saw her on TV at first time, I was shocked like I was struck by lightning: "Sex change is possible! I can become a man!" Or, "I can have male's body!" Since then, all my life spent to save money for the surgery. I saved every penny for it. Except going to school and part-time job, I never went out since I didn't want to use any money. I never played around, never had a girlfriend. I couldn't see anything but the last goal. I was a cart horse. In 1987, when I was 23, four days after my graduation from a university I came to America with all my money, and my long awaited treatments were started! All my youth sacrificed for TS treatments. But I never regret. I can say now I'm the happiest one on this world. Do you believe I used to stay at the house of Mr. Mario Martino, the author of Emergence for two months? He helped me a lot and introduced a lot of FTM friends to me. So many American friends helped me a lot in New York, in California. My youth is really special, right? That's why I love the States and never regret. Coming back to Japan, I started to work as a writer and a transgender activist with pen name and some disguise. My novel was once published and I attended some TV and radio programs, wrote a lot of articles for newspapers, magazines, and so on. As you know, however, Japan is so strange country that people understand we are here but never understand what we say. They think we are something like E.T. and never take notice of us seriously. That's why we never be able to change our sex on any legal papers. My action hasn't worked at all. Hasn't worked at all to get the right understanding from the society, but it was useful to find a lot of TS in Japan. Now I have about 100 TV/TG/TS friends, both MTF and FTM. I'd like to do something for them—that's the reason I'm going to run FTM-Nippon. For the near future, the excellent phalloplasty will be started in Japan legally. I'm sure time is going to the right way for us. Now is the time we should act in this far east country. Thank you again for your magnanimous support. I don't think you read Japanese, but I will send a copy every time. You might enjoy the pictures and the atmosphere. Yours truly, Y. Kumagai.

Know Thyself... Again

Identity Management in Transsexualism: A Practical Guide to Managing Identity on Paper
By Dallas Denny, M.A.

Creative Design Services, PO Box 61263

King of Prussia, PA 19406

Reviewed by William A. Henkin, Ph.D.

The first official surgically assisted sex change recorded in Western history took place in Germany in 1882, when Sophia Hedwig had her external genitals altered and formally became Herman Karl. Early in the 20th century a well-known Danish painter, Einar Wegener, convinced he was really female, went to Berlin to have his genitals removed and took the name Lili Elbe; Elbe died soon after a second surgery, intended to construct a vagina for her. The first sex change operation that gender specialists sometimes say concerned full transsexualism took place in England in 1949, when Laura Maud Dillon became Laurence Michael Dillon. And the first sex change operation that most Westerners ever heard about was Christine Jorgensen's, whose 1952 surgery took place in Denmark, and whose transformation from male to female was reported in newspapers and magazines throughout the world.

Some of the problems shared by Karl, Elbe, Dillon, Jorgensen, and the thousands of transsexual men and women who have pursued their dreams for wholeness in the final third of this century will be immediately apparent, even to people who've never thought about the differences between sex and gender: breasts as well as internal and external genitalia to be built up or removed; body hair to be grown or dispersed; voices to be altered; body contours, posture, gait, carriage, manners, and attitude to be reformed; family, career, relationships, and social conditioning to be utterly reconstructed.

But wholly apart from these obvious difficulties of reconfiguring a life—apart, even, from the obvious psychological strain involved in resolving transsexualism—there is a very practical set of problems few people consider who aren't confronted with the need to do so. These problems concern the paper trail we all leave behind us that defines us, to a very large degree, for our fellow humans.

From the day we were welcomed to the world with a birth certificate until the day we're welcomed out of it with a death certificate, our name and designated gender follow us everywhere. When we attend school, enroll for military service, or visit a doctor or dentist; when we apply for a driver's license, a passport, or a library card; when we go to work, get a social security number, and pay taxes; when we buy insurance, or seek credit with banks, stores and utility companies; when we register to vote; when we join unions and other professional organizations; when we are called for jury duty or otherwise become involved with lawsuits; when we marry or divorce; when we seek government services; when we calculate our estates; when our children need records of their own—from birth to death, who we are is defined for others repeatedly by these simple facts: My name is John, I'm a man or a boy; my name is Jane, I'm a woman or girl.

Managing our own identity in the world is rarely a

problem for most people, though the tasks impinge on everyone all the time; but for transsexuals it is critical, because identity management determines so completely how we are seen and known by others. A few authors have addressed the subject in the past, but since 1990 only *Legal Aspects of Transsexualism*, by Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE, has been indispensable.

Now Dallas Denny has written what amounts to a companion volume to Sr. Mary Elizabeth's book that is also indispensable. Though less complete than *Legal Aspects* regarding specifics of the law, *Identity Management* is far more thorough in its consideration of the social implications that attend changing one's identity. *Identity Management* is also more prescriptive than descriptive, telling people how to achieve their goals as well as what goals need to be achieved; to further that end the book contains appendices with names, addresses, and model forms that are eminently useful. In addition, *Identity Management* is a delightfully personal book, both because Denny illustrates her points with anecdotes from her own gender journey in some unembarrassed detail, and because she is a rather charming writer.

"When I moved to Georgia...I was armed with a Tennessee driver's license identifying me as Dallas Denny. My photo was very androgynous. But the license said I was a male. I filled in the Georgia application and wrote "F" in the box which asked about my sex. The examiner took my old license and began entering information into the computer. I held my breath, hoping she would not notice the "M" on my license, and she must not have, for she said nothing, and when my license came back, it had an "F" on it.

Of course, I might have been okay even if she had noticed. She might have thought it simply an error. If you pass successfully, and if nothing otherwise points out your transsexualism, the wrong sex designation on a document may be looked at as mistake. It rocks the world of the clerk less to believe a mistake has been made in the paperwork than it does to believe you started out as a member of the other sex."

The world of American transsexualism is changing in profound ways. The first tribal elders remain important figures in fact as well as in myth, but for the most part they have made their impact. The next generation of leaders, now really the gender old guard, is composed of the people who founded important organizations and wrote or edited publications that effected change and defined a movement; many of them are, appropriately, consolidating their gains for themselves and for their community. A new group of movers and shakers is coming to power in a radically altered world, where gender concerns are part of mainstream dialogue.

In this world Dallas Denny is a figure of value, and of growing importance—not only because she is founder and director of the American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), publisher of *Chrysalis*, one of the most important contemporary

magazines devoted to gender concerns, and was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Outreach Institute. No, Denny is important because she has something important to say, the willingness to say it openly, and the ability to say it in ways other people can hear. Identity Management in Transsexualism makes all these facets of her value clear.

This review originally appeared in the Spectator, and also appeared in the ETVC Newsletter.

William A. Henkin is a board certified sex therapist and a licensed marriage and family therapist who specializes in alternate sex and gender concerns. He conducts his private psychotherapy practice in San Francisco.



Billie Jean Jones, Editrix of GenderFlex gets a little support from her FTM friends at the IFGE convention last March in Portland, OR.

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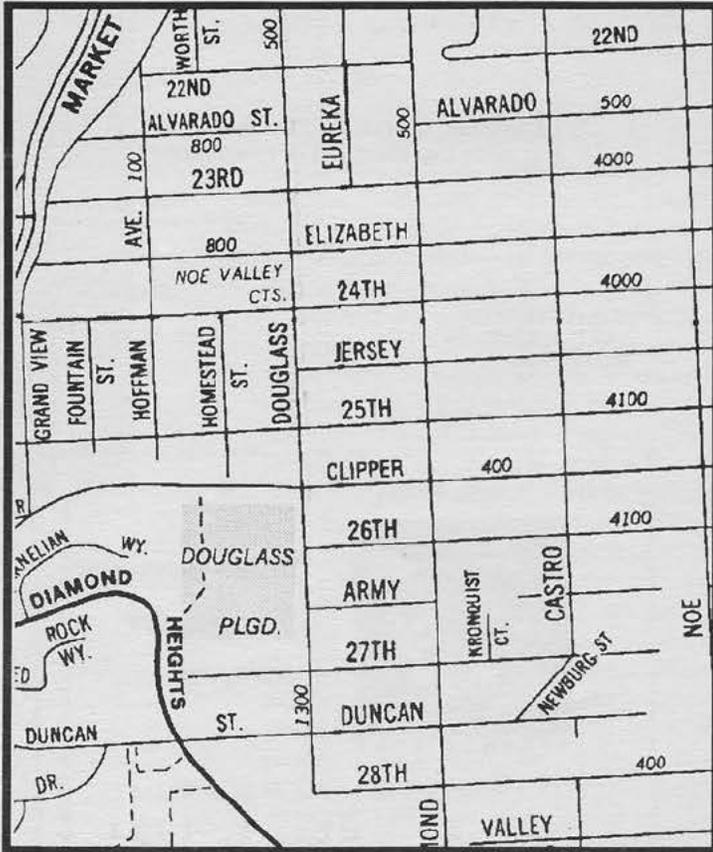
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New FTM Resource Guide Out Now

The Second Edition of the FTM Resource Guide is out now, containing updated listings of attorneys, physicians, therapists, gender groups, publications, and prosthetic device vendors who are friendly toward, if not geared exclusively for, FTMs. The new edition costs \$5.00, including postage. Order yours now! There should be no further price increases until 1996 (or so, depending on how large the guide grows).

FTM Phone line

Now you can reach the FTM group and FTM Newsletter by phone. Leave your confidential message in our new voicemail message box. Let us know about a change of address, or find out about the next meeting. If you need information, we'll have to return your call; sorry, but we can only return long distance calls collect. *The new voicemail number for FTM is 510-287-2646.*



It's a Picnic!

The August 14th FTM Meeting is going to be a picnic! We'll be meeting at Douglas Park at 26th and Douglas at 2:00pm, and the picnic will last until 5:00pm. Bring your friends, family, loved ones, frisbees and fried chicken. It'll be a blast! See map above for location.

It's a Boy!!!

Reflections, the Boston gender support group, is happy to announce the arrival of ENTERPRISE, our new FtoM contingent. ENTERPRISE is a support group exclusively for Female to Male transsexuals, and as such is the only one of it's kind in New England. On the first saturday of every month we meet with Reflections, from 3-5pm. Meetings open exclusively to F to M TSs are also held on a weekly basis. Any other members of the gender community, as well as friends, lovers, spouses, and family, are welcome to join us at our our first-saturday-of-the-month gatherings and "socials". Welcome aboard the ENTERPRISE! We have gone truly "where no man has gone before"! won't you join us in our adventure? For information or travel directions, please call 617-983-3264 or write: *Harris Brown, POB 629, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130-0006*

FTM Meeting Schedule 1994

FTM meetings are on the 2nd Sunday of each month, from 2 to 5 p.m., in San Francisco. Call James(510-658-0474) for Details. Mark your calendars in advance!

Support

September 11, 1994
November 13, 1994

Informational

Picnic: See Map: August 14, 1994

October 9, 1994
December 11, 1994

FTM INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

The world's most widely-circulated Newsletter for the Female-to-Male crossdresser and transsexual. Published quarterly since 1987. Send correspondence, address corrections and contributions to: FTM, 5337 College Avenue #142, Oakland, CA 94618

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Call for Submissions

Essays, photography, critical work, etc. sought for thematic anthology on the FTM transgendered. Historical, medical, literary, political analyses encouraged. Continuum of perspectives sought from cross-dressing to "true" transsexuality. Applicants with selected work may be compensated. All unselected works will be returned to applicants, provided a self-addressed envelope with sufficient postage is included with the submission. Send a short (500 word) biography along with samples, project outline or finished submissions to:

Editor
FTM Anthology
1261 Howard St., 2nd floor
San Francisco, CA
94103-2711

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