



A Publication of Transgenderist's Independence Club, Albany, NY

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie ██████

The big news in the transgender world this year is the growth of political activism, culminating in National Gender Lobbying Day at the beginning of October. In this issue, we have several reports on its success, thanks to Callan who pulls much news material from her computer connections, besides writing many good articles herself. Locally, Jennifer is attempting to develop helping information and action through the Albany Gender Project. I try to maintain a balanced mix of Club news, local and national news, serious articles and "feel good" articles in our newsletter. I would like to get more input and feedback from other members - you write, I'll print..

DINNER PARTIES

The *Transgressing Gender* workshop in Albany on October 14 drew about 15 transgendered participants but only about five gays, plus the presenters. Somewhat disappointing attendance, but at least a start. After the workshop, most people went to Lulu's on Lark St. for dinner and further discourse, and a couple went to Justin's.

Our next dinner party is now scheduled for **November 11** at 8 pm, at a location still to be determined. Please sign up at the club room or call 436-4513 and leave a message for Joan by Thursday, November 9, or call Joan at ██████ 6. Leave your number so we can confirm the location, etc.

Contents

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie ██████	1
RANDOM THOUGHTS (#10) - Jennifer ██████	1
CANDIDATES WANTED - TGIC ELECTIONS	3
NATIONAL GENDER LOBBYING DAY TAKES OFF	4
ICTLEP REPORT: GENDER LOBBY DAYS IN DC	4
WHAT IS A WOMAN? - Callan ██████	6
QUOTE UNQUOTE - Rex ██████	7
REPORT FROM LOBBY DAY - Diana ██████	8
ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE ALBANY GENDER PROJECT - Jennifer ██████	9

XMAS PARTY AT CLUB ROOM DECEMBER 7

Our landlord, Warren, has offered to throw a Xmas Party for the Club, and a show of hands at our last meeting indicated that the first Thursday of the month, **December 7**, would be the best date. So mark it down - if you can't remember that date, you flunked history! We need a committee to get a tree, put up decorations, procure food & drink, plan party games, etc. If you can help, please come forward now. Has anyone got a Miss Santa outfit?

RANDOM THOUGHTS (#10) - Jennifer ██████

ARE WE "REAL" PEOPLE?

and

Do We Deserve Real Rights?

I'm probably going to draw some flack for this column, but here goes. The next time you are shamefully and fearfully enjoying yourself, secretly indulging in your favorite pastime, take a moment to reflect on one of the following dozen things. In the last two months, by the time you read this:

1.) The lesbian and gay community will have requested your participation in identifying our (read gender) community needs and strengths through a questionnaire. This information will later be used as a basis for distributing \$75,000 in funding.. Did you even know about this? Did you reply? Does the lesbian and gay community care more about us than we do about ourselves?

2.) The first ever transgender lobby day will have been held in Washington, D.C. to rally our community support for inclusion in ENDA (if you don't know what this is by now there is not much use in reading farther). Did you even consider helping... or participate? Did you hide away in the security of your world?

3.) IFGE will have solicited you for a contribution to support its broad programs to promote understanding of our community. Did you reply, or did you leave it to others?

4.) "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything - Julie Newmar" will have come to a theater near you and gone the way of "Priscilla - Queen of the Desert". Leaving the only perception of transgender in the minds of many of our country-persons which they may ever be exposed to. Is this how you want to be perceived?

5.) TGIC, XX Club and many other similar groups will have sought your input, contributions, participation, leadership, and/or voice. Did you share your skills and wealth, or do you just want to be left alone?

6.) Callan, Arlene, and Hawk will have presented a workshop on transgender through what is billed as "building bridges" within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community program. Did you go to express your views and help educate others?

7.) The Albany Gender Project will have held an extremely successful preliminary training program for therapists in Schoharie County, which included the preparation of what we hope will evolve into a potentially significant training tool for therapists - the brochure "Clinical Considerations in GID". Will you help with future endeavors - help form a board of directors?

8.) One more terrified but brave woman will have said, "I've put too much effort into this relationship to give it up now. I'm willing to stand by the person I love wherever it leads. They are the person I love regardless of who or what they are." Did you offer your support to this person?

9.) Another Fantasia Fair and Southern Comfort will have come and gone. Did you attend, did you share?

10.) False perceptions of transgender will have been further ingrained in the public consciousness by those seeking a moment of fame as the "idiot of the day" on talk shows as the fall sweeps come and go. This is a public perception which can think no further than "what bathroom do you use"

and "are you gay or straight?". Did you speak out against this mockery? Did you laugh along without thinking?

11.) At least three people in New York State alone will have been deprived of, or had parental rights violated through poverty and lack of reliable legal representation; as well as judicial ignorance and prejudice on the part of our court systems. Do you fear this happening to you? Could you do something to help?

12.) Many people will have been the victim of "transphobia," experiencing prejudice, or discrimination either on the job or on the street - **with no protection of their civil rights**. Did you speak up to help eliminate the prejudice? Do you try to stay in touch with other people or organizations fighting for the rights of all transgendered people or do you tell yourself that they're not like me -- I pass, and they are a threat to my security... worse yet, do you crawl back into your "male" world and hope to escape the repercussions?

There are so many excuses for not participating, often we just want to slip unnoticed back into the population and continue living our lives. It's easy after all to say "Well, I'm not like them", or "I'm different, I have a family... job... marriage... etc. to protect". Or the classic transsexual reply - "I'm not like all those transvestites". Really? Could you convince me of that? Could you convince the public about that? What's stopping you?

Last month was "coming out month"; if you didn't or couldn't come out, that's OK, but you can and should still participate in some way. Everyone's "output" is important - whether it is writing out your feelings and thoughts for one or more of the community publications or throwing your voice out to government, going out in public, speaking out where needed, being out and approachable to others needing to talk, or supporting those who are out with your skills and funds. There are many ways to help, have the courage to be a real person. Please get involved.

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CANDIDATES WANTED - TGIC ELECTIONS

What the Club really needs is more hands to share the workload necessary to keep the Club running smoothly, and someone with enthusiasm, new ideas and leadership ability to inspire the group to become more socially and politically active (i.e. a real President). For the past three years, I have managed to do most of the basic tasks but not much else, and now want relief. However, I have developed a feel for how the basic tasks may best be divided. We can attach suitable titles to the people who will undertake to perform the following duties on a steady, reliable basis:

President: Lead and inspire the Club.

Secretary: Answer phone and mail, return phone message calls and mail our information packet with personal note to prospective new members.

Treasurer: Collect and deposit cash and checks, write checks. Since our major income is dues payments, the treasurer is in the best position to maintain the membership records and, from them, print mailing labels for the newsletter; a computer is necessary for this.

Den Mother: Maintain Club Room, replenish soda, coffee, TP, and other supplies.

Librarian: Keep our book files neat, stack newsletters, magazines and brochures, throw out old stuff.

Newsletter Editor: Must have the dedication to publish on schedule every month. A computer is necessary, preferably with desk-top publishing software and high-quality printer.

Vice-President: Help with any of the above when needed.

Board Member: Set policy, membership dues, authorize special programs and expenditures, resolve conflicts. Board meetings should be held quarterly.

As you can see, there's plenty of work to be shared. Candidates should be able to attend meetings regularly, at least every other week on average. If you see a job you can do, **we need you!**

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TGIC

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Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

TGIC Officers & Directors

President	Winnie
Vice President	Joan
Secretary	Joyce
Treasurer	Winnie
Director	Tina
Director	Edie
Director	Callan

Newsletter Editor Winnie

The *Transgenderist* is the newsletter of TGIC, published monthly and mailed First Class to members, prospective members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications.

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TGIC General Membership Dues: \$40/yr

TIGHT CORNER



National Gender Lobbying Day Takes Off

WASHINGTON DC - October 4 Over 100 transgender-transsexual activists and friends took to the nation's capital in the first National Gender Lobbying Day, dramatically exceeding organizer's most optimistic predictions. For many this unprecedented and historic event marked the coming-of-age of the transgender movement as the first time activists from across the US have worked openly and in unison for national political change. It also seemed to signal a definitive step past the "conference culture" which has so long been the primary feature of the gender community.

Dividing up the more than 500 Senate and House officeholders, Phyllis Frye of the Transgender Law Conference and Karen Kerin of It's Time America coordinated a largely successful effort to have each and every one of them lobbied by a transgender activist. The primary lobbying issues included employment discrimination, medical care, and bias-related hate crimes. Other issues included discrimination in the military, and prison conditions for transgendered inmates in Federal prisons.

On Monday, October 2nd a brief photo-op of all attendees on the south steps of the Capitol Building was followed by a national news conference attended by ABC, Fox News, Family News, CNN and Reuters. Then, of course, the OJ non-verdict came in, and, although unopened, pushed us right off the tube. (Of course, Family News Service probably *did* carry us, since they were worried about the critical and entirely absent issue of trans-people teaching in the schools; do these folks *ever* get a life?)

Riki Anne adds: On a personal note, it was hard to describe going into the Longworth Building cafeteria at noon and seeing table after table of translobbyists at lunch. It was also fun watching Congressional staffers come in and slowly doing some classic double-takes (Yes. . . you've just entered *GenderHELLLLL*. We control your horizontal. We control your vertical. And we control your hormones.) It was also fun getting off the underground Congressional subway going to the House, only to watch a carload of transgender lobbyists boarding on the other side on their way to the Senate. Hey! Just your average day in Congress, no?

ICTLEP Report: Gender Lobby Days in DC

On Sunday, 01 October 1995, transgendered people began to arrive. Most of the estimates were 30 to 45 maximum: I was predicting 75 to 85. Some had come on Saturday: Many had come directly from *Southern Comfort* which graciously served as a springboard: others simply came. Many flew while some drove and a few came by Amtrak. One brave soul road a bus for 2-1/2 days from Wyoming. Four flew in from Hawaii. One observer flew in from Belgium. People kept coming.

The hotel was glad to have us and gave us very good service and treatment. The prices were also great as ICTLEP negotiated a price in the mid 50 to mid 60 dollar range per night with no limit on occupancy. Riki Wilchins, IFGE and others had several rooms available for those who simply could not afford to come otherwise. In all we had several folks who were willing to share rooms and cost, and we had others who were willing to take someone in without reimbursement. We were a generous group. People kept coming.

Listings are always a problem because someone gets left out. Even so, besides the Menace and ICTLEP, the following organizations were represented - It's Time America (ITA), IFGE, FTM International, AEGIS, Renaissance, The American Boyz, the Outreach Institute and Tri-Ess. (Please do not hit me if I left you out.) People kept coming.

Riki and I met for an extended time on Sunday afternoon to iron out the last minute details and scheduling and agenda for the evening meeting. People keep arriving. We arranged for a larger meeting room. We went to the neighboring Kinko's several times trying to rush our printing orders so we could collate. A generous soul paid for all of the printing as a donation. People kept coming. Menace t-shirts were everywhere along with two new special editions - one that read "Capitol City" and another that sold out at Southern Comfort which read "Texas - Lone Star State."

It was fun to put faces on e-mail addresses. People kept coming. It was nice to see that the men of our community and the people of color in our community were appearing in substantial numbers. People kept coming. The printing finally arrived and twelve volunteers helped to collate. People kept coming. Another volunteer made signs to help us organize by state. Nametags were placed upon folks as they entered the meeting room which read first name and state. Ninety-three handouts were taken that evening, even though not all arrived for that meeting.

Riki began the meeting with the usual necessary remarks and then retraced how we were at peace with HRCF (Human Rights Campaign Fund). She had invited representatives from the NGLTF (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force) and HRCF. These people gave interesting insights as to what was going to happen on Monday and Tuesday and wished us well. Riki made other relevant remarks and passed the meeting to me.

I presented the handouts and went through them. (Some of these are attached below for your use in future situations.) There was a general map with the House and Senate buildings and the nearest Metro stations. There were general comments about setting up and following through with meetings in congressional offices. There were comments about professional attire **ONLY** at and around the Capitol, about acting out and about handling the press.

(I had asked and continued to ask that folks not wear Menace t-shirts around the hotel. This was an open motel and we had to go eat elsewhere within blocks of the University of Maryland. I was simply afraid that by Tuesday night the college toughs would figure us out and mug some of us who remained on Tuesday night. My cautions were never materialized. We had **ABSOLUTELY NO** trouble with the college kids, even after many of us wore Menace t-shirts in their midst for three days. I was incorrect in my assessment, and I will wear my Menace t-shirt next year for sure at and about the motel.)

Next came the handout to be taken to each member of congress - all 435 Representatives and 100 Senators. This handout contained a scorecard which will in the coming months be processed by another volunteer to give us information for the future. Also was information about who we were (by Feinberg, Minnesota statute and San Francisco ordinance); about violence against tg (including the early Boyz survey); about ENDA; about health care for tg; about military service and tg stereotypes in general; about imprisonment with the ICTLEP "Policy for the Imprisoned, Transgendered"; the ICTLEP International Bill of Gender Rights; a handout produced by JoAnn Roberts for distribution at the upcoming *National Association of Social Workers* Convention; and about the various tg community contacts with phone numbers and e-mails.

Then came the magic. We began to divide up the stacks of packets by states and to cover those fifteen (yes, only fifteen) states that were not represented. I explained that we would be in groups of four or two or singles depending upon each person's comfort or experience level and that each person was only responsible for six members of congress. The magic was that this was something they **EACH BELIEVED** they could do (with the packet as a guide and the scorecard for follow-up) and a number that was within each of their abilities. The magic was that they each believed that **THEY COULD DO IT**. With that individual realization by each in the room, the mood became

electrifying. In a short while I had no handouts left – each of the 535 had been assigned.

We had representatives from 35 states. The surprise was that Pennsylvania had the highest number of folks with sixteen (split 1/2 and 1/2 by the west and the east). Many states had only one or two, but that was sufficient. The Iowa person told me that she was sent by a group fundraiser, and that when she discovered that neighboring Nebraska was without someone, another fundraiser was held to send a corn husker.

Monday morning at 7:15 AM was a sight. A steady stream of tg's began the long three block walk to the Metro. It looked like a Sunday School group with all the business suits and conservative dresses and slacks with sport coats and ties streaming down the road. (Some had not gotten the word about comfortable walking shoes, but they changed into same shortly thereafter.) For many the METRO was new and they had a bit of a snarl going through the fare system for the first time. Riki had foreseen that problem and we added 15 minutes for it. We all arrived near the south steps of the Capitol. This was when it became apparent that that our numbers exceeded 100; there were some who were not staying at the hotel and several spouses and teenaged children also showed.

Riki had prearranged for media, but I was worried about the Capitol Police. So I approached them and said we had a church group in town and asked could we gather on the stairs for a group shot. Okay, so we gathered and got all arranged with cameras poised. Then, but not before then to tip our hand, I began to unfurl the large banner that read **TRANSGENDERED AND PROUD – AND WE VOTE!** Needless to say, great pictures which you can get through IFGE.

We then moved over to the press conference that Riki had skillfully negotiated and created. I was pleased that 90% of those tg's there stood for the press conference. Riki then me then Jamison Green then Dawn Wilson then Nancy Nangeroni talked to the general press conference. Mostly we pointed out to them that we fit no one's stereotype and that we were worthy of our time at the Capitol meeting with our Representatives and Senators. We reiterated our needs as were in our packets. The Capitol Police finally had enough and made us move, but no one was hassled or arrested. Everyone then went about the business of completing their group or individual assignments.

Riki had wisely suggested that we have a command post. I took on that duty and set up in the cafeteria of the Longworth House Office Building. What a wonderful experience it was! This was my sixth time to do this sort of grassroots, meeting with elected officials on the HILL. This was the best, because I was allowed to make mental snapshots of people as they came in for a question, a break or lunch. We sat at the tables near the beginning of the food line. Every regular cafeteria patron got an eyefull but no one gaucked because none of us fit the stereotype. One person came by on Tuesday and wished us well. It seems that her nephew was tg and had committed suicide several years ago. She was glad that we were there. For certain, we were the dinner table talk both nights and certainly this weekend. (No doubt we were upstaged in the media by the OJ jury announcement on that Monday afternoon and the actual verdict on Tuesday.)

Over those two days, the less that five bad receptions were not all that bad. There were well over fifty pleasant surprises, mostly from Republicans who have been broad brushed as agents of the religious right. While some R's are, we discovered that privately most R's are not. One story in particular sticks in my mind of a tg who met with a know conservative Republican Senator (not a staffer) from a rural state and the Senator was so intrigued by the failure of the stereotype that a ten minute appointment was stretched into thirty-five minutes, all the while some delegates from the Russian embassy were kept waiting for twenty. While some staffers and offices stuck true to the conservative stereotype of their M.C., far and away most did not.

On Monday evening we regrouped. Several folks had taken on too large an assignment and others were doing better than expected. So I presided over the swapping of packets, and again all 535 were covered. Riki then began to organize the Menace event for Tuesday Morning. She stressed over and over how this was not a violent event or even an angry event. But we all felt that an action was needed (one that would not interfere with the primary task of meeting M.C.'s) at 8 AM the next morning with respect to the death of Tyra Hunter.

I heard the Menace event at DC City Hall over The Tyra Hunter death went well. No arrests, no violence, no meanness. I even heard that Riki gave a leaflet to Mayor Barry. I wanted to be there, but a blind tg Utah resident had gotten an appointment with Orin Hatch for 8AM Tuesday morning and needed me there. JoAnn Roberts, Sharon Stuart and Allison Lang joined us. Although Hatch had left town on something else, we five met with Hatch's senior legislative counsel for 35 minutes. It was productive. I went back to the command post and the other four went on with other appointments.

Some left to go home on Tuesday afternoon. Others stayed until 4:30 PM to finish their Tuesday assignments. Some did a little sightseeing. Many stayed over Tuesday night to leave on Wednesday morning. Only 15 packets remained undone, but these were all in a major lgbt friendly city and the person organizing that state promised that he would visit each personally in the home district.

What did we accomplish?

1. We put twice to three times as many tg people on the HILL as was predicted.
Over 100 from 35 states!
2. We destroyed the stereotypes in a very big way.
3. We met face to face with M.C.'s and staffers and soberly asked for our rights.
520 of the 535 offices were visited!
4. We trained over 80 (some already knew) on the *how to* of this type of work.
5. We handled the press without incident.
6. We destroyed the fears of arrest and police harrassment.
Not one single bathroom incident has been reported. Folks went in, did their business and went right back out.
7. We demonstrated to HRCF and NGLTF that we are indeed a force to be respected.
I think we may have put more on the HILL than HRCF did last February.
8. We demonstrated to them that we knew what we were doing and we could do it.
HRCF praised the organization.
9. We distributed by hand good tg literature that spoke to our needs.
HRCF praised the scorecards and the packets.
10. We now know who our friends are and can deliver floor votes in the future.
Much will be done with future contacts by tg constituents.
11. We worked in a non-partisan fashion.
12. We organized many new chapters of It's Time ____ (America).
13. We alerted many about the federal prison problem.
Many M.C.'s or staffers were shocked and will send letters.
13. Fill in the blank _____ (we did so much).

I know that tg's will begin to visit their M.C.'s at their home offices in the future and will begin with a new spirit to meet their state reps and local elected officials.

Phyllis Randolph Frye, Executive Director ICTLEP
aka *the phyllabuster*

What Is A Woman?

Callan [redacted] Copyright © 1995

> Hi all,

> I know this is a really odd question but I have a good reason for asking.

> Here in Australia, and it seems particularly in Sydney, there is a move to prevent 'women born male' from being involved in certain lesbian/dyke groups. The latest of these is Dykes on Bykes. I have been encouraged to write an article addressing this issue.

> One of the questions I want to raise is exactly how do you know that you are female. I mean when I wake up in the morning I don't look between my legs to work out what I am, and I'm sure no-one else does either. Soooo what makes us female and how do we know. I have my own opinions on this but would be really interested to get others as well.

> Kylie. (who is being forced to do a lot of deep thinking just now.)

> kylie@info.anu.edu.au

> ANU, Institute of the Arts

> Canberra School of Art Library

Kylie

As a transgendered woman, let me give you my take.

Sex is between your legs, gender is between your ears. Physical birth sex is a much more complex thing than if you just have an innie or an outie. We all have lots of chromosomes, hormones and so forth that make us who we are. That affects our predisposition, just like all genetics affect what we are predisposed to be.

But gender is a cultural construct, not a physical one. Think about Simone De Beauvoir's note "Women are made, not born," or the feminist cry "Biology is not Destiny." We don't want to be limited because of any physical characteristic, from race, to handicap, to sex.

Transgendered people have a powerful need to transgress gender, to break from the gender role that was imposed on them because of what was between their legs. We grew up in a heterosexist world where the pressure to fit in as "one or the other" was powerful, where you were humiliated and stigmatized about "not being a woman" or "not being a man." This is an outgrowth of the pressure to breed, to make more little citizens, the simple assumption that there are only two genders, based on sex, and the only appropriate relationships are the ones between those two genders.

So transgendered people were "cooked" in the gender system, just like everyone else, but because of our predisposition, it just didn't take. We knew that this was wrong, and after taking as much as we

could, decided that facing the humiliation and stigma that this culture places on those who transgress gender was more important than facing our lives in an painful gender place.

Some transgress gender part time, and others go through a full gender shift, including sometimes, a sex change too. Gender shift means that you change your social status, your minutes, your expectations, your behavior and your life into another gender role, a big change. If you do it, you are a woman for all intents and purposes.

Some people don't believe this. They argue an odd mix of constructionist and essentialist theory. If people are always women, then will they allow female to male transsexuals in the place? If being a woman is about spending years in suffering, then is a transsexual who has lived as a woman for 20 years more a woman than an 18 year old who has been a woman all her life? If being a woman is about culture, then does a woman from PNG have the same experience as a woman from Adelaide? Does being born with a vagina mean you can never exude "damaging energy," while being born with a penis means you always will? Is the definition of women only to be "not male," always only the shadow of masculinity rather than it's own form?

We all want to be evaluated on who we are inside, how we act towards others, not on if we were born with an innie or an outie. If you choose to judge people on their genes, then prepare yourself to be judged on your genes. That simple. As long as you can categorize others on any appearance or genetic issue, they can categorize you. Do you want that?

How do you know who you are? What is the basis for your identity? Are you just being who people expect you to be, or are you being all you can be? Is your future locked in your genes or can you make choices that transform yourself? What are the boundaries to reinventing ourselves? Is gender transgression a sign of maturity, exploring past arbitrary boundaries or a sign of sickness, not acceptable in polite culture?

Women learn to be women from other women. To isolate transsexuals because they challenge our assumptions about who we are is to not let them learn from you -- and not let you learn from their unique experience, from their life on both sides of the tracks. We all have much to share.

Decisions about our identity are not capricious. They may be exploratory, and we may not be exactly what we want to be. But we know who we are, and what we have to do because we ask the same questions you do -- questions like "What is a woman?," or more to the point, "Who am I today?"

Good luck on your article.

Callan

(who used to live in Ainsley, right near the War Memorial)

QUOTE UNQUOTE #48, 49 - Sept. 20, Oct 4, 95
by Rex ██████████

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"I, too, was stunned by that statement by Sen. Jesse Helms. ... The notion of any illness being a punishment from God is not only ignorant but mean-spirited. Let us never descend to that level."

—Advice maven Ann Landers.

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"Miss Manners has come to believe that the basic political division in the society is not between liberals and conservatives, but between those who believe that they should have a say in the love lives of strangers, and those who do not."

—Syndicated newspaper columnist "Miss Manners" (Judith Martin).

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"I always said if I hadn't been a woman, I'd have been a drag queen. I think I would have because I love all the fancy hair. ... I have a lot of male impersonators. In fact, it's great here in California. Every year at Halloween, I can go right down Santa Monica [Boulevard] and nobody even knows it's me. There's about 40 of me walking around — Dollys everywhere."

—Dolly Parton to Jay Leno on NBC's "The Tonight Show."

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"I decided that nobody would ever stop me from what I believed in or cared about as long as I live. I like living my life in a dangerous fashion, emotionally and physically. So this project definitely blew up my skirt!"

—Actor Patrick Swayze on playing a drag queen in the film "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar" to USA Today.

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"Some folks fret about homosexuality with the unnerving vehemence of a parson who can't hear enough about other people's sins. Their lurid and detailed tirades come as close to soft porn as some of the sex-ed courses proposed by anti-family educrats."

—Detroit News columnist Tony Snow.

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"When I tell people [here in France] that one of every three Americans has had a personal conversation with Jesus Christ, they think it's an insane asylum. And they think you must be talking about certain unenlightened farmers or very old people. You tell them, no it's corporation presidents, members of Congress, presidents of universities — they're all born again. Then they're totally shocked. It's what makes America very different from any of the other Western democracies. It's probably closer to the way Russia was in the 19th century, a country that feels like it has an almost holy mission. That kind of large admixture of irrationality into a modern society is a very dangerous combination that doesn't bode well. As far as gay people go, I think it's a disaster."

—Famed gay writer Edmund White to Atlanta's *Etcetera* magazine.

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"The notion that one day people would try to probe into the private world of my thoughts and feelings, into everything I so carefully hid throughout my life is very sad and unpleasant."

—Gay Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, in a letter, according to a Sept. 21 Reuters news service report on tell-all biographies.

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"When I meet some of these guys for the first time, they get this funny little smile on their face that says, 'I know you — you're Zelda!' [It] jams the homophobic radar. They're prepared to feel one way about me because I'm a lesbian, but it's hard for them to be knee-jerk when they have this other image of me from TV."

—California state legislator Sheila Kuehl, to the San Jose Mercury News. Kuehl played "Zelda Gilroy" on TV's "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis."

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"Sheila is one of the most charming ladies I've ever met. She's a winner."

—Calif. legislator Larry Bowler, a pro-gun ex-cop who is notorious as the GOP's most-ferocious attack dog.

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"Sheila is just about my favorite person on [the Democratic] side of the aisle."

—Calif. legislator George House who has called homosexuality an "abnormal, unnatural lifestyle."

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"Jennifer Gerarda Brown of Connecticut's Quinnipac College School of Law ... estimates that the first state to legalize same-sex marriage will collect a \$4.3 billion bonus in tourism. ... Her figures: 3 percent of Americans are gay; gay people would marry at one-third the rate of the general population; and gay couples would spend an average of \$6,000 on their wedding and honeymoon. All numbers are conservative. But Tennessee must hurry to cash in. Hawaii, Vermont and New Mexico are all considering legalizing same-sex marriages."

—Jackson (Tenn.) Sun Editorial Page Editor Alan Bauer.

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"[Gays here in France are] very ageist. I'm 55, and I can't get into most of the gay bars. There's usually a doorman who'll keep people out over 50. Even the baths turn people away. I find there's a heavy concentration on youth. Those things sort themselves out on their own without having to impose rules. I mean, most people over 50 would feel uncomfortable in a bar where everyone was under 30. But having it as a policy is mean-spirited."

—Famed gay author Edmund White, who has lived in France for several years, to Atlanta's *Etcetera* magazine.

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"I didn't come to Washington to be a faceless federal bureaucrat. I came to Washington to be a bureaucrat in your face. If a foreign enemy were killing that many people, we'd be calling out the Marines. ... AIDS is a bottom-line life or death thing for me and hundreds of thousands of Americans. And no one else at the White House is speaking out on this."

—Bob Hattoy, President Clinton's former advisor on gay issues (his title was "associate director of White House personnel"; he called himself "First Fag"), who was demoted to a job at the Department of the Interior after criticizing Clinton one time too many on AIDS and gays in the military, to The Los Angeles Times.

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"People who solicit contributions from gay groups, as the Dole campaign did, are in a poor position to be shocked when a check actually arrives. ... Has the Republican Party forgotten the orgy of dogmatism and fanaticism it put on at its 1992 convention in Houston, a show that helped convince the nation to cast the party out of the White House? To paraphrase Ronald Reagan, there they go again."

—Conservative columnist John Leo in U.S. News & World Report.

Report From Lobby Day

Diana [REDACTED], The Pittsburgh Transsexual Menace

Well, National Gender Lobby Day is over and it was a HUGE success. Phyllis Frye, Riki Anne Wilchins and the other organizers of this event are to be congratulated and thanked for their long hours of hard work in making this a success. It was a great and very positive experience for us all.

I don't know the exact count but it seemed that approximately 100 transgender activists from all over America descended upon the Senate and House of Representatives on Oct. 2 and 3. Most of the offices of all 535 members of congress were visited by transgender rights activists.

As an indication of how far we have come in solving our differences with the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), a representative from HRCF helped with the brief lobby training that was provided on Sunday evening. When she looked at the large group of transgender activists in the room, she remarked that she was glad we would not be picketing HRCF.

In my own experience, I and others from Pennsylvania were able to meet with MANY staff members in the offices of Senators and Representatives from all parts of America. We were always treated with respect and most often we were given a friendly reception. Almost everyone was surprised to learn about transgender issues and many were quite supportive. Even most of those who could not support the ENDA bill, with or without the transgender inclusive amendment, indicated a willingness to do SOMETHING about hate crimes legislation in regards to the transgender community.

We began the process of educating our elected officials about transgender issues and I look forward to continuing that process.

At the moment the O.J. Simpson verdict was being announced, Wendi Miller and I watched the verdict being delivered in the office of a conservative Mississippi congressman, along with the congressman himself and several of his staff members. It was a strange but nice moment that I will never forget.

I found this to be a tremendously empowering experience and, as a result, although I am tired and my legs and back ache, I am revved up and roaring to go on working for transgender rights. I am now planning on going to the Creating Change conference in Detroit in November.

I also participated in the Transsexual Menace demonstration at the Washington DC district office to protest the Tyra Hunter incident. We handed out leaflets, called out for justice and informed many people passing by about the injustice of the Tyra Hunter incident. The people who talked to me indicated shock and disapproval of the actions of the EMS people that ridiculed Tyra as she died and of the DC Fire Dept. that is covering up the incident. It was a very successful and needed demonstration. I am proud to have been part of it.



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"[There are four political camps when it comes to homosexuality.] 'Prohibitionists,' in my view, essentially belong primarily in the more authoritarian parts of the Catholic Church, among the religious right, in Islam and in traditional societies; essentially, prohibitionists believe that the state and the government have a task, a role, a duty, to restrict, control and if possible eradicate homosexual activities. Much of their philosophical underpinning is from [Catholic Medieval theologian] Thomas Aquinas and [the Bible's] St. Paul.

"'Liberationists' see society as inherently oppressive; they see the very definition of homosexuality as itself oppressive; they think that the job of people is to subvert, revolutionize, transform society, and that homosexuality, by subverting heterosexuality, is just one part of the strategy for social revolution. The philosopher Michel Foucault is the central thinker of this argument, but it comes from a deeper philosophical model, based originally I think on Rousseau, and going through Marx and Nietzsche.

"The 'Conservative' perspective is probably the most common in America today. These people are not intolerant toward homosexuals - they think there should be a realm of private toleration - but they think there should be public discouragement of homosexuality. They have this rather civilized, pragmatic balance between public disapproval and private toleration. This resonates with a lot of people; they don't want to make a big thing about this subject, but they don't want to hurt people. They want to find some way in which this whole thing will go away, without engaging in intolerant behavior.

"The 'Liberals' are people of the civil-rights generation, really, who think homosexuality should be dealt with along the same lines as race or gender or any other minority issue, by constructing legal protections against discrimination publicly and privately. They add homosexuals to the litany of groups that require either special or particular treatment in the laws of the land. The problem with this view, I think, is that the society that we now live in is so complex. There are so many different groupings - every race, two genders, people who are disabled, people of different religious and cultural beliefs. Many different people suffer all sorts of different social burdens for all sorts of different reasons. What we're finding in the culture right now is, if we try to extend the civil-rights paradigm to every single possible group in the society that can claim prejudice or oppression, we are getting tangled up in the most incredibly messy and irresolvable knot of contradiction and grievance."

-Andrew Sullivan, the gay editor of the influential journal *The New Republic*.

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"It was like being in a black-and-white movie that suddenly converted to color."

-Sullivan on his first affair with a man.

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"I'm alive in part now because I'm 47 years old, I'm a lawyer, I have a lover and a supportive family, I have good health insurance, I have access to wonderful doctors, I have a place in the world. Having a place in the world may be the central question. An 18 year old who is uncertain of himself or the world will have much greater difficulty surviving. I worry about what we do for those who are not so fortunate."

-Former Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund head Tom Stoddard, who has had full-blown AIDS for six years, to *POZ* magazine.

BROCHURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Albany Gender Project is in the final stages of developing a brochure to be used as a tool to give therapists a brief introduction to clinical issues of transgender. Tentatively titled "Clinical Considerations in GID", this brochure is a condensation of current clinical thinking, what we feel is honest personal observation as well as an introductory guide to tools for the therapist. Input of responsible therapists is requested. If you would like a complimentary copy of this publication to be sent to a particular therapist, or if you are a therapist and would like a copy to review, please contact us at the address below.

This brochure is only the first in a proposed series of similar publications which we hope to make available in the near future with the purpose of briefly educating focused audiences about transgender and transgender issues of concern to that focused audience. Some of these focused audiences include:

- 1) Legal Considerations - for members of the bar and judiciary.
 - 2) Religious Considerations - for clergy and laity.
 - 3) Family Considerations - for friends, family and significant others.
- Other issues may be developed as the need is identified.

It is the intent of AGP to be able to use these brochures as stand alone handouts, or as the cornerstone for services or seminars presented to educate the focus audiences and, hopefully, further understanding of our community. It is not the intent to try to "sell" transgender to anyone - merely inform, and present a balanced, honest picture.

If you would like to submit material for consideration, know of material that should be covered, or would like to be on our editorial board for any or all of these publications, please contact us. The the next publication we will be focusing on is the Legal Considerations brochure.

STUDY TO REVIEW FAMILY COURT AND TRANSGENDER

The Albany Gender Project is planning a review of how transgendered people are treated in family court proceedings in New York State. Since outside witnesses or testimony is not generally allowed into family court, and proceedings are closed, factual information is hard to obtain. Many persons have had complaints about how they are treated, and some report having been victims of blatant discrimination. AGP is seeking to document cases of this nature, as well as obtain information on:

- 1) What has worked for transgendered people in family court.
- 2) Names of any lawyers (statewide) who have been helpful, understanding, and supportive (as well as effective) in family court proceedings.
- 3) Which judges are biased against transgendered people.
- 4) Which (if any) judges/courts try to understand transgender.
- 5) What have been your experiences in family court? - if you can document or provide transcripts, this is even better.
- 6) Have you ever had a court put a child at risk rather than grant custody to a transgendered person? Please explain.
- 7) Do you think (or have proof) that the court feels you are some sort of threat to your children due to your transgender? Are you? Please explain.
- 8) What impact do you feel the court's decisions have had on your children?
- 9) It has been suggested that a class action suit be brought in NY State Supreme Court against the New York State Family Court System and/or Social Services System seeking mandated sensitivity training, retroactive judicial review, and financial redress for civil discrimination, prejudice, and potentially institutionalized child abuse in cases where children have one or more transgendered parents.

Do you feel such a suit is needed and a good idea?

Would you join such a suit?

Would you be willing to testify?

Do you have **legal** proof of your allegations?
Would you be willing to help foot the bill
for such an action?

Because of the seriousness of this issue,
we are asking your help. Please let us
know your input. Thank you for taking the
time to respond. Write to:

Albany Gender Project
PO Box 6307
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 432-7092 (messages only)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TRI-ESS MEETINGS IN SCHENECTADY

The Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter of Tri-Ess
is planning to continue monthly Saturday
meetings in Schenectady. For the rest of
1995, the tentative schedule is: Nov. 18,
Dec. 9

BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER

The International Foundation for Gender
Education is now a membership 501(c)3
non-profit organization. Basic membership
is \$25. Subscriptions to *Tapestry* are \$40.
Brochures and forms are available in the
Club Room. Please contact TGIC, or write
to: IFGE, PO Box 229, Waltham, MA
02154-0229, (617) 899-2212

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CALENDAR

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the
TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 -
10 pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is
wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is
your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and
talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at
one of the Central Ave. night spots after the meetings.

NOVEMBER 1995

Nov 2 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Nov 9 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Nov 11 **Dinner Party**, 8:00 pm
Location to be announced
Nov 16 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Nov 23 **Thanksgiving - NO MEETING**
Nov 30 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

DECEMBER 1995

Dec 7 **XMAS PARTY, 7pm Club Room**
Dec 14 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Dec 16 **Dinner Party**, 8:00 pm
Location to be announced
Dec 21 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
Dec 28 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

- Contact TGIC for more information.

Nov 10-12 *Riverside Gala*, Erie, PA
Nov 15-19 *Tri-Ess Holiday En Femme*,
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Jan 24-28 *TCNE First Event*, Woburn, MA
2/27-3/3 *Texas T-Party*, Dallas, TX
Mar 24-31 *IFGE Convention*, Minneapolis-
St. Paul, MN
Apr 20-23 *California Dreamin'*, Burbank

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