



In Your FACE!

political activism against gender oppression

The complete listing of all subversive actions against gender oppression around the US, along with occasional instructions on how to roll your own.

Issue 3, Summer 1996

MISSION: Cover all actions related to overthrowing gender oppression, transphobia, genderphobia, homophobia and related oppressive political structures.

PUBLISHERS: Riki Anne Wilchins, with help from JoAnn Roberts, Lynn Walker, and Nancy Nangeroni. You can reach us at: IYF, c/o Riki Anne Wilchins, 274 W.11 St., NYC 10014, or E-Mail: Riki@pipeline.com, nrm@world.std.com (that's Nancy). Editing and Layout by Ninja Design.

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No, We DON'T CARRY ADVERTISING.....but we welcome subscriptions and contributions towards the cost of printing and distribution.

2ND NAT'L GENDER LOBBY DAY SET FOR MAY '97

New York City, May 15, 1996: GenderPAC, the national activism organization dedicated to "gender, affectional and racial equality" has announced the 2nd National Gender Lobbying Day for Monday and Tuesday, May 5-6, in Washington, DC.

Last year's Lobbying Day on October 2-3 drew over 100 activists to Capitol Hill to lobby around issues like the Employment Non-Discrimination Bill (ENDA) and the Hate Crimes Statistic Act (HCSA), as well as trans health care and the treatment of transpeople in the military. In over 2 days of intense lobbying, activists called on the offices of nearly every one of the 503 Senators and Representatives.

Phyllis Frye and ICTLEP have announced their own separate lobby effort for the preceding February.

Dana Priesing, Washington DC lobbyist for GenderPAC, declared "...it's clear that we made an real impression in 1995. Telling our stories humanized us: it made them see us as real people instead of tabloid television subjects. This time we'll be returning with a focused, polished and more professional approach."

Said Alison Laing, acting co-Chair of GenderPAC: "This is a chance for anyone concerned to show up in Washington and have their voices heard. We welcome all people to participate, to let the incoming Congress know that we are not going away, that no American is free until *all* of us have our rights."

1ST NAT'L GENDER ACTIVISM CONFERENCE TO BE HELD

New York City, May 15, 1996: Seizing the announcement of the 2nd National Gender Lobbying Day as a chance to rally the rising tide of transactivism sweeping the country, GenderPAC has announced that on May 4, the Sunday preceding Lobbying Day, the first National Conference for Gender Activists will be held, also in Washington DC. The all-day event will be strictly devoted to gender activism. Topping the agenda are strategy discussions on national issues like transviolence, hate crimes, employment discrimination, child custody rights, and so on. There will also be "how to" sessions on topics such as how to lobby, getting press coverage, and more.

While recent years have seen the rise of out-front gender activism, until now there has been no conference where activists could join together and work on skills, consensus, coordination of effort, and the transfer of knowledge.

The event will be held at the Quality Inn in College Park, Maryland, where rooms are already being reserved for lobbyists attending Lobby Day. GenderPAC's Activists Conference will be a no-or-low cost, non-profit event.

Declared a GenderPAC spoketrans, "As activists, we need a place to plot a national effort and strategy for the coming years' activism. We are very excited about this chance to coordinate on the issues that affect us all."

REGISTER NOW FOR NATIONAL GENDER LOBBY DAY '97 & ACTIVIST CONFERENCE

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Yes, I'll attend the First Activist Conference Sunday May 4th
My senators (2) _____ and _____

My representative (1) _____

Military/Veteran's experience _____

Advice to Riki re: her attitude problem: _____

I can donate \$ _____ to help someone else attend Lobby Day.

I can help out by putting (#) _____ people up in my room.

Activist Conference

▶▶▶ May 4, 1997 ◀◀◀
Lobby Day

▶▶▶ May 5-6, 1997 ◀◀◀
Both in Washington, DC

Conference at same Inn where lobbyists stay.

**CATCH THIS EVENT
GAIN EMPOWERMENT -- DO GOOD**

please mail this form to:
GenderPAC, c/o Wilchins, 274 W. 11th #4R,
New York, NY 10014

TWO NAT'L TRANS VIOLENCE STUDIES LAUNCHED

New York City, May 1, 1996: GenderPAC has launched the first major study of violence against transpeople. Designed with the help of the Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, distribution and tabulation are being managed by Emilia Lombardi (Cherred@en.com). Everyone in the community is being asked to fill out a questionnaire, even if they have not personally experienced gender violence. Volunteers are needed to help distribute the study.

The study is vital to lobbying efforts for transinclusion in the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, as the community looks forward to the 2nd National Gender Lobbying Day. Lombardi is aiming for an unprecedented 1,000 responses, noting that most trans-studies are limited to a dozen or so people in someone's rehab program.

An in-depth questionnaire is also being distributed by the Dr. Sandra Cole of the University of Michigan. She explains that a systematic, controlled study is absolutely necessary for the scientific community and institutional funding sources to take transviolence seriously. Look for Sandra's table at your next gender event.

TRANSACTIVISTS PROTEST APA

Call for end to "gender identity disorder"

New York City, May 5, 1996: Over a dozen activists from the Transsexual Menace, Menace Men, TOPS, and Act Up, demonstrated outside the national meeting of American Psychiatric Association, calling for an end to diagnosing transpeople as mentally disordered. The diagnostic category of "Gender Identity Disorder" (GID) is routinely applied to anyone seeking sex reassignment surgery.

Activists handed out over 1,000 leaflets headed "FLASH! APA Discovers New Disorder: GenderPatho-Philia -- an unnatural need to pathologize any gender behavior that feels different, unfamiliar or uncomfortable. Others held signs saying "Keep Your Laws OFF My Body" and "Gender Euphoria NOT Gender Dysphoria." Attendees, many of whom stopped to chat with demonstrators, seemed alternately shocked, amused, intrigued and supportive.

Removing GID as a psychiatric diagnosis has been a source of continuing dispute within the trans community. While the diagnosis has enabled some transsexuals to obtain insurance reimbursement for SRS, others point out it has also pathologized tens of thousands of people, including crossdressers and transgenders. GID has also come under fire from the larger queer community, which has noted its use in inflicting "corrective treatment" on non-complaining gender-variant children as young as 2-4, as well as "butchy" teenage lesbians and "nelly" teenage gayboys.

This has led some activists to push for a compromise which will both remove GID as a mental disorder and retain a medical basis for reimbursement.

TORONTO SERIAL KILLER TARGETS TRANSPeOPLE

Toronto, Canada, May 23, 1996: As rain fell and fireworks boomed in the late hours of Monday's Victoria Day holiday, three young women were found dead, all shot execution-style in the back of the head. Toronto Metro police identified 2 of the 3 as transgender prostitutes. Police speculate that the third was possibly mistaken by the murderer as a transgender, then killed "in error".

Killed were Deanna Wilkinson (31), Brenda Ludgate (25), and Shawn Keegan (19). "They all died of gunshot wounds to the head and they were all killed by the same gun," Detective Sergeant Jim McDermott told a news conference at police headquarters yesterday.

Toronto Police issued a Canada-wide warrant naming Marcello Palma, of New York, on three counts of first-degree murder. Within two weeks of the warrant's issue, Police received a phone call stating that Palma was staying at a waterfront hotel in Halifax. Desk clerks at the Halifax Sheraton said 30-year-old Palma checked into the Sheraton using his own name and an American Express card to book the room. Palma, an air-conditioning and furnace-repair worker, was arrested at the waterfront when he returned to the Hotel at around 7 p.m.

Toronto police say Palma was not previously known to police. Palma lived with his young wife, and an infant daughter.

Valerie Scott, spokesperson for the Canadian Organization for the Rights of Prostitutes, says laws against prostitution are to blame, forcing working girls onto the streets which are even more dangerous for transpeople. She added "They're really outcasts. The gay community doesn't want to help them, the prostitute community doesn't want to help them."

ANOTHER SUSPICIOUS TRANS-MURDER

Minneapolis, MN, June 1996: Minneapolis police are investigating the beating death of a 38-year-old man they described as a transient and transvestite with a history of prostitution. The body of Rodney Dale Neadeau was discovered on a Friday at about 1 a.m. in a condemned and boarded-up building. Police have no suspects in the case.

Said a Menace spoketrans, "Increasingly, it is those most vulnerable, and marginal among us, the impoverished, homeless, HIV positive, and sex workers, who are the targets for hate crime and violence. Yet, official reports stating only that 'a male transvestite was found...' or 'a man in women's clothing was discovered...' erases our identities."

CIVIL RIGHTS ROUNDTABLE: COMING AROUND?

For the first time, the Civil Rights Roundtable, the national coalition of groups engaged in "queer law," has openly considered representing transgender people.

The Roundtable is composed of groups including the Lambda Legal Defense Fund, the NY Center for Lesbian Rights, the American Civil Liberties Union Gay Rights Project (ACLU), the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), and others. It meets twice a year in different cities around the country.

Through their local chapters many of the Roundtable's member organizations have long resisted representing transpeople, arguing that they were concerned only with "sexual orientation." Although the Roundtable itself does not set policy, this is clearly a dramatic turnaround in their willingness to consider transpeople part of the larger queer community.

TRANSEXUAL MURDERED IN CHICAGO

Chicago, IL, April 11, 1996: In one of the most brutal hate crimes in years, Christian Paige, a 24 year old transsexual woman, was found savagely murdered in her apartment on Friday, March 22. Ms. Paige had been brutally beaten about the head, strangled, and then stabbed deeply in her chest and breast area between 15 and 2 dozen times. Her assailant then set fire to the crime scene.

Ms. Paige, a native of Nashville, TN, had recently moved to Chicago where she was saving money towards sex reassignment surgery. She had a highly successful career in clubs as a former Miss Gay Nashville and Miss Midwestern Continental. Said a close friend, Marisa Richmond of the Tennessee Vals, "It's hard to fathom that somebody who liked to see people laugh and smile so much could bring so many tears, but that is how much we were touched by her."

DEMONSTRATION/VIGIL FOR CHRISTIAN PAIGE

Chicago, IL, May 17, 1996: Dozens of activists from across the queer spectrum held a demonstration/vigil in the heart of Chicago, Daley Center, for Christian Paige. The event was staged to focus public attention on gender violence in general, and the savage murder of Ms. Paige in particular, which was ignored by local straight media.

While some activists carried posters with pictures of Ms. Paige headed "In Memoriam," and "Transpeople are NOT disposable", others distributed more than 1,500 leaflets to passersby. No one has been arrested or charged for the murder, and despite the level of violence, Chicago Police have refused to classify it as a hate crime.

Present at the event was a cross section of the entire genderqueer community, including members of Transsexual Menace, It's Time Illinois, TOPS, Queer Nation, and the Anti-Violence Project (AVP).

Declared Miranda Stevens, vice-chair of It's Time Illinois, "The tragic murder of Christian Paige is the kind which results when a group of people are marginalized to the point of being considered less-than-human. Each and every transperson, is a real, valuable, and precious human being."

QUEER DOCS CLARIFY MISSION BY AXING TRANSPeOPLE

San Francisco, CA, April 5, 1996: In a move that left transsexual members stunned and angry, the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA), one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious organizations for queer physicians, removed all reference to transpeople from its letterhead and mission statement. The move unpublicized and unannounced move occurred during GLMA's February 16 board meeting in Washington, DC. The Board has emphasized that transgendered physicians are still welcome in GLMA.

Members learned of the action only the following month, when a disgruntled Board member leaked word to founding member and transsexual physician Joy Shaffer, MD, a San Jose internist. Echoing "mainstreaming" by other national queer organizations, GLMA President Valerie Ulstad questioned any expansion of GLMA's long-standing advocacy of "sexual preference" to include "gender expression." She explained that GLMA's board sought to "better define its mission".

QUEER DOCS RE-INSTATE TRANSPeOPLE

San Francisco, CA, May 2, 1996: Following a protest of over 40 people, including Bay area members of the Transsexual Menace, and organized by GLMA doctor Joy Schaffer, the GLMA board voted to reinstate transgender people in their letterhead and mission statement. Demonstrators chanted "Hey doctors / get a clue / some of us / are some of you". Some carried signs saying "Keep all stripes in the rainbow". Ben Shatz, GLMA Executive Director, admitted the Board was naive about how removing transgender would be perceived, stating "Transgender members are an important part of the group..." However he noted GLMA's focus is still gay and lesbian concerns.

RED LION ROARS: BATHROOM BUST FOR TRANSPeOPLE

Denver, CO, March 12, 1996: In a bizarre incident reminiscent of the bathroom busts historically used against gay men, more than half a dozen transpeople were cited by police for using the women's room at the Red Lion Inn, prior to a local drag event. Claiming that an unidentified "hysterical" woman had complained of "men in the Ladies room," the Hotel posted security men outside bathroom doors. They followed the women inside, apprehending and escorting them to the Hotel security office. There, a Denver police officer issued them citations and had them escorted off the premises.

It is unclear why hotel security officials watched the women enter instead of informing them that the bathroom was off limits. Said one activist, "The Red Lion never offered any explanation why men in evening dresses and minis, wearing high heels and hose, were better off standing at urinals in the men's room than using the women's room."

HRC'S TESTIFIES FOR HATE CRIMES TRANSINCLUSION

Washington DC, March 22: Inserting testimony about transviolence into the hearings for the Hate Crimes Statistics Act re-authorization, Human Rights Campaign Executive Director Elizabeth Birch fulfilled promises she made last year to trans community leaders.

Following nationwide protests by transactivists against HRC's general policy of trans-exclusion, Birch had offered to support transinclusion in the Hate Crimes bill. Fulfilling that pledge as part of her 5-page testimony inserted into the Congressional Record, Birch detailed the brutal slaying of Brandon Teena, adding "...there is another group of Americans who are targeted for hate crimes. It is HRC's position that they should also be covered under the Hate Crimes Statistics Act.

HATE CRIMES BILL OMITTS TRANSPeOPLE AGAIN

Washington, DC, July 4, 1996: President Clinton has signed the Church Arson Prevention Act, which re-authorizes the Hate Crimes Statistics Act. HCSA includes "race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity", once again excluding transpeople except when they are suspected of being gay or lesbian.

Said Dana Priesing, GenderPAC's DC lobbyist, "A keystone in GenderPAC's 1997 Congressional agenda will be to get coverage within HCSA for all of us in the queer community."

BOSTON MOURNS AFTER TRANSEXUAL MURDER

Boston, MA, December 22, 1995: Following the November 20 slaying of transsexual woman Channel Pickett, 250 members of Boston's queer community gathered at a local church to remember her and voice their outrage. The service was organized by Sue Hyde of NGLTF, Robb Johnson of Fenway Victim Recovery Program, and Nancy Nangeroni of the Menace. Chanelle's twin sister Gabrielle, also transsexual, recalled her sister's energy and spirit, calling upon all present to use her twin's death as motivation for fighting hate crimes. The service was followed by a candlelight vigil to the State House where a memorial wreath was laid. In a related action, on December 18 activists calling themselves the "Remember Chanelle" committee announced formation of a range of local task forces to fight bias crimes.

BIRDY JO HOAKS RELEASED FROM JAIL...

...FACES HATCHET JOB BY NBC.

Birdie Jo (Chris) Hoaks, a 25-year old transgendered person, has finally been released from jail, after serving only 2 months of an 18 month prison sentence in Salt Lake City, UT. Hoaks, an indigent person, had been convicted for Theft of Services after presenting himself to Social Services as a young boy. S/he has repeatedly claimed s/he only did so in desperation after being refused a bed in the women's shelter for being "too butch."

According to Hoaks, following his release s/he was approached by NBC Dateline to tell the "true story." Instead, the segment, called "The Birdie Who Stole Christmas" featured Hoaks as a scam-artist single-handedly stealing Salt Lake's Christmas. NBC also disclosed details of Hoaks' employment causing his to be fired and leaving him indigent once again.

Said Menace spokesmans Jess Bell, who has worked with Hoaks from the beginning, "Chris is a transperson in a society which punishes gender variance, and a poor person in a society which punishes poverty."

TRANS-TEACHER IMPRISONED FOR SEX MISCONDUCT

Hartford, CT: (From the Hartford Courant, 1/11/96, by Steve Jensen, Staff Writer) 25-year-old teacher Nancy Miscenti was sentenced to 4 months of prison for molesting 6 East Hartford elementary school boys. Miscenti claimed the boys misunderstood her confused behavior during transition, misinterpreted hugs and touches on the arm. She attributed the charges to prejudice against her flamboyant style, heavy makeup, and low-cut dresses.

But her attorney, public defender Todd Edgington, acknowledged Miscenti engaged in "sexually inappropriate conduct," adding, "she desperately needed an affirmation that she was a real woman."

Judge Terence A. Sullivan cited Miscenti's "lack of taking responsibility" in sending her to the State's Maximum Security Prison for women, a harsh move considering Miscenti who was not deemed a further risk. Miscenti, who wept and pleaded while she was led away, said she didn't think jail a possibility when pleading No Contest to 4th degree sexual assault. She has been kept isolated in the psychiatric wing for her own protection.

MENACE AXES NBC PICKET FOR BRANDON TEENA "JOKE"

New York City: Following a week of intensive discussions with NBC officials, the NYC Menace decided to forgo a planned picketing

of Saturday Night Live. The threatened action in followed a February segment of SNL's "Weekend Update" by staff regular Norm MacDonald in which he stated: "In Nebraska a man was sentenced [to die] for killing a female crossdresser who had accused him of rape and two of her friends. Excuse me, but in my mind they all deserved to die."

Following expressions of outrage across the trans and queer communities, Menace spoketrans contacted NBC, vigorously expressing their shock and anger. They received immediate responses from the head of NBC's Standards & Practices, as well as Media Relations. Reviewing the show, NBC agreed the line *was* inappropriate and should not have aired, adding that similar incidents would not re-occur.

SEAN O'NEILL GIVEN 90 DAYS BY COLORADO JUDGE

Colorado Springs, CO, February 16, 1996: Ending months of legal maneuvering and bizarre testimony, 21-year-old transexual man, Sean O'Neill, was sentenced to 90 days in County Jail and 6 years probation. Facing multiple charges which totaled 48 years in prison, O'Neill had no choice but to accept a plea bargain. His sentence was generally regarded as a victory for the defense, after the prosecution had sought at least a year in the State Prison.

O'Neill was originally charged with sexual assault and statutory rape for sexual relationships involving 4 local girls, 2 of whom were under the statewide age-of-consent of 15 (O'Neill was 18). The case was largely the product of a parents outraged to find the boy their daughters were dating was "really a girl." Sex between consenting hetero teenagers usually results in a misdemeanor and a warning. O'Neill lives and identifies as a male but has yet to undergo any surgical or hormonal procedures.

Over 20 members of FTM International, TOPS, the Menace, and Menace-Men, Lesbian Avengers, Bi-Net USA and Ground Zero demonstrated outside the courthouse. During sentencing, activists packed the courtroom in a show of support for O'Neill. Both Jamison Green and Tonye Barreto-Neto testify on Sean's behalf, and withstood vigorous prosecution cross-examination. As a Sheriff's Deputy from Hillsborough County, Florida, Barreto-Neto's testimony was particularly effective. In an unprecedented move, following their testimony the presiding judge declared O'Neill would not have to serve his sentence until a cell was available where he would not have serve with the men, or as a woman.

O'Neill's public defenders, Bill Martinez and Ilene Bonnet called Green's and Barreto-Neto's testimony, plus the presence of so many activists, "crucial." Declared an elated Martinez, spotted afterwards at a popular local bistro wearing a Transexual Menace-Men T-shirt: "I am just so glad the transgender community showed up. Without their participation, we just would have floundered. It's so rare to have that kind of support in cases like this one. I walked around all day about 6 inches off the ground."

MENACE PICKETS ABC 20/20'S JOHN STOSSEL

New York City, January 23, 1996: Responding to transphobic comments about decorated 24 year Police veteran Lt. Janet Aiello's appearance in a groundbreaking 20/20 segment on transgender cops, Menace members leafleted ABC's NYC Headquarters. The action was deliberately kept low key in keeping with a perception that the segment was basically positive. ABC staffers, including several executives, stopped to chat and express support, enjoying the leaflet headlined "ABC's Stossel Bites Transexual Cop: Film at 11!"

Declared Menace spoketrans Riki Wilchins: "Stossel's comments about Lt. Aiello's looks were completely unconscionable. The media tends to target those of us who are most vulnerable, implying our appearance is somehow an embarrassment and therefore we are at fault for the hostility and prejudice we encounter."

TYRA HUNTER CASE REOPENED BY DC FIRE DEPT.

Washington, DC, December 4, 1995: Following meetings with

queer leaders, the DC Fire Dept. have reopened the investigation into the death of Tyra Hunter. An EMS technician had stopped treating Tyra as she lay dying in the street after he discovered she had a penis. The announcement caps months of escalating pressure by queer activists, including the October demonstration outside Mayor Marion Barry's office by 45 transpeople and Menace-ites who were in WDC attending the 1st National Gender Lobbying Day. Tracy Conaty of NGLTF credited that demonstration, which proved the case had secured national attention, with playing an important role in getting it reopened.

TRIAL DATE SET FOR MURDER OF DEBORAH FORTE

Haverhill, MA, July 1996: A preliminary date has been set for the trial of the confessed murderer of Deborah Forte. The murder took place more than one year ago, even as activists were demonstrating at the Brandon Teena murder trial.

Although the District Attorney says that he expects that the date will probably be postponed, a trial date has been set for September 9. Menace activists have committed to staging a demonstration on the opening day of the trial. Local press coverage and police action has been notably lacking in transphobia, and the action will focus not on media or authorities but rather on expressing sisterhood and community with the victim, and support and compassion for her family and friends.

TRANSGENDER ANTI-DISCRIMINATION SPREADS

Add Berkeley, CA to the list of cities with anti-discrimination ordinances that protect transsexuals. Berkeley joins Santa Cruz and San Francisco in addressing the issue of discrimination faced by the wider queer community. The Silicon Valley Gender Association is busily pushing to have other cities and or counties in the Bay Area pass similar legislation.

Meanwhile TG and queer activists and friends, working with Cambridge City Council members, have begun a drive to amend to the city's human rights ordinance to protect transgenders from discrimination in employment, housing, & public accommodation.

Iowa City has amended its human rights ordinance to include "gender identity". The amendment was especially notable for passing unanimously, and on Iowa City's Election Day.

Finally, on Wednesday, January 10 five members of the Portland, Oregon transexual community appeared before the Portland City Council and made a formal request that a hearing be held seeking inclusion of the city's transexual and transvestite community in the city's human rights ordinance. Activist Margaret Diedre O'Hartigan read a statement before the city council. One channel conducted and informal viewers' poll which recorded 45% for inclusion, and 55% against.

Amazingly, the Willamette Week also carried a response by a transexual group lead by Andrea Abernathy which opposes the city providing protection. Denying transsexuals in Portland are the subject of discrimination, Ms. Abernathy reportedly stated, "There are people that look at us kind of funny, but to be discriminated against in any business, conveyance or employment? No." [*We don't make 'em up. We don't have to. - ed.*]