

Bet Power
East Coast Female-to-Male Group
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Daphne Reed
305 Middle Street
Amherst, MA 01002

Dear Daphne,

Thank you for your recent letter. I agree entirely with your perspective on the situation regarding the Boston FTM Conference upcoming in August. In fact, that is the spirit with which ECFTMG was founded and in which I continue to lead the group: validation of diversity among FTMs in our individual choices and unity of the entire spectrum of the community as brothers. This is the original spirit of the founding father of the FTM movement, Lou Sullivan, who was my dear friend for four years before his death from AIDS in 1991. I have stressed this in every single meeting I have ever lead, and every talk I have ever given on transgender, and every letter I have ever answered from an FTM or partner.

It breaks my heart because the factionalism of the conference is being aimed at me personally (Jeannette had mentioned that the conference leaders did not like me as an individual – yet, I have had no conflict with them and have not even seen any of them in many years). And to experience this behavior coming from near-strangers through my best friend (I have currently separated from Jeannette and Mykael over this situation and I will not stand for any further mistreatment of me or my group). Yet I know others are feeling excluded and unwelcome, like Leslie Feinberg, who has told me he has given up on this conference being inclusive. So, I know it is not a personal matter, but a political one; still it hurts not to be allowed to participate and be refused space to do my proposed workshops at the conference.

Perhaps it would help if you related your position about PFLAG involvement or decision not to be involved directly to the organizers of the conference. Perhaps if they heard it from a source outside the non-operative segment they would listen. Of course, perhaps not. But I think the dialog must begin; this factionalism, I understand from Leslie Feinberg, began at last year's FTM Conference in Seattle (which I did not attend, so I was not immediately aware of the sense of a split community until more recently – and now I seem to try to be avoiding being victimized by it).

The matter has not been resolved. No member of the organizing committee has called to discuss this with me. I and ECFTMG have been excluded and now are being ignored. I have one more conference organizer to talk with, Henry Rubin, who is out of the country at present; I have left a message. If he will not grant me permission to participate with my workshops and to represent ECFTMG and its 5-year presence and leadership on the East Coast at the conference, then I will have no recourse but to open this matter up for the general trans-community's information and resolution. If that be the case (which I expect it will), I will be sending out a special mailing in the next few weeks, which you will receive for PFLAG. I will also be asking James Green to address inclusion and unity in his keynote speech at the conference.

If you wish to contact the conference organizers, they are: Mike Kirk, Henry Rubin, and Jeannette and Mykael Hawley. They can be reached at the conference mailing address in Bellingham, MA or through the IFGE in Waltham., MA. Let me know if you need mailing addresses.

I am confident you will do the wise and right thing, Daphne. Perhaps that will be with the help of your power animal, the owl.

Warm Regards,

Bet

Bet Power
Director, ECFTMG