



**WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?**

by James

What's going on here? We're really cooking, that's what. This is an amazing issue because it's full of letters. We've got the usual summary and upcoming meeting stuff, a review and some news items, but mostly it's you this time, and I think that's where it's at. You are the life blood of this group and this newsletter. You are the spirit that collectively informs the body that is us. And you are now speaking to each other. This is what it's all about: making contact, feeding each other with information and support, discussing ideas, sharing experience, growing. I couldn't be more pleased... well, I could, but that would mean that every writer sent along a reproducible photo or illustration, and every reader donated money so we could afford to publish and mail meatier newsletters. Here's a good spot to express my gratitude to each and every reader who has contributed money to make this publication possible, and to urge those of you who haven't donated this year to please help us keep going. And thanks to all of you who have responded to this publication in writing. You get more out of anything in which you participate!

So, the July meeting recap. I wasn't there (I was on a 220 mile hike in the high Sierra) but I heard from P.B., who was the very competent master of ceremonies that day, that the meeting went very well. Twenty-four people showed up at one of our member's private residences, which was an excellent turn-out considering the last minute change in location that became necessary. Four of the attendees were there for their first FTM meeting, and two people came who were not a part of our community, but who were friends of Lou Sullivan's and came to see how the group he started was doing and how it had evolved. They seemed to be pleased.

P.B. showed several video tapes and led the discussion. First was the San Francisco television talk show "People Are Talking" which featured FTM cross-dressers. Next was an edited version of a bilateral mastectomy—the 3-hour surgical procedure, edited down to 30 minutes of highlights. And last was a portion of a new video from Fatale Video on female ejaculation. While this last piece was not produced with an FTM audience in mind, P.B. used it to illustrate the point that we should be informed of our anatomical functions before presenting to a surgeon and allowing them to remove something we may want to retain. That is, because our female anatomy gives us, in effect, an inverted penis, having a vaginectomy may limit our post-surgical sexual response. For more information on this topic, check out the book A New View of A Woman's Body or the Fatale video "How To Female Ejaculate" (available through Blush Entertainment, 526 Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114—\$39.95 + \$4.00 shipping; CA residents add 8.5% sales tax; or charge by phone 1-800-845-4617), or put pressure on P.B. to write an article for the FTM Newsletter!

The August Social was also held at a member's home, complete with swimming pool. About 30 people showed up for the barbecue and fun. And one of the best letters we've ever received was composed as a result of that meeting. It's from the daughter of an FTM and is included in this issue.

September's Support meeting was also very positive. Some new faces and some old ones we haven't seen for a while were present; the atmosphere was warm and the results satisfying.

Here are the standing dates and contacts for some upcoming meetings:

- OCT. 11 Informational 2-5pm  
MCC, Rm 108, 150 Eureka St. San Francisco.
- Contact James [redacted]
- NOV. 8 Social [redacted]
- Contact Sky [redacted]
- DEC. 6 Support [redacted]
- Contact Michael [redacted]
- JAN. 17 Informational [redacted]

Contact James

FEB. 14 Social

Contact Sky

MAR. 14 Support

Contact Michael

APR. 11 Informational

Contact James

Plan to attend, meet your brothers, participate!

Just one more thing before I get off my soapbox—an unpaid political announcement: VOTE! The presidential race this fall is a serious matter. Ignoring it won't make it go away. The fact is, either Bush or Clinton will win, and if you want the reign of reactionary republican oppression to end you need to vote for the democrats. Not voting won't help them win. VOTE November 3rd!!

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**GENDER IN THE MEDIA**

by James

Well, it's finally happened: According to an article in the SF Examiner 23 July 1992, dateline Beijing, "Chinese surgeons have performed what is believed to be the first direct sex swap, exchanging internal sexual organs between a man and a woman, a doctor on the operating team said.

"Xia Zhao Ji told reporters a 22-year-old woman received the testicles of a 30-year-old man who received her ovaries during operations last week.

"Doctors constructed a false penis for the woman from her stomach lining, Xia said. They removed the man's penis and replaced it with a vagina made of leather.

"I believe this could be the first (such operation) in the world, said Xia, whose Beijing Number Three Hospital pioneered China's first sex change operations in 1984.

"Both patients are single and hope to find marriage partners. Neither knows the other's identity and both wish to remain anonymous so they can begin new lives.

"The man thinks that women are clean and men are dirty," the physician said. "The woman thinks that it's better for her career to be a man."

"Both patients are recovering well but the former woman must take immunosuppressive drugs to overcome rejection of the new organs, and further operations will be necessary to have a male erection, Xia said.

"He said he was confident the former man would be able to have a sex life. But neither will be able to procreate."

I can't help but comment on a couple of issues raised in the article quoted above: First, this surgery sounds horrible. It doesn't seem rational to transplant organs that won't be functional, and it doesn't seem as though either of the patients will have satisfactory sexual response, regardless of what the physician says. Second, the stated beliefs of the two patients regarding their rationale for sex reassignment seem to have nothing to do with gender identity. And we think we are guinea pigs in this country...

In September the Discovery Channel ran a 3-part documentary called "Brain Sex." Based on the book Brain Sex by Anne Moir, the series explores how sex, gender, and sexual orientation are developed in the brain, and postulates that if sexual orientation (and, by extension, transsexualism) is a naturally occurring biological variation "the so-called traditional moralists" will have to change their tune. At the time of this writing, I've only seen parts 1 and 2 (part 3 has not yet been broadcast), and I have mixed feelings about the conclusions offered. Transsexualism was mentioned only in a cursory way, and one MTF represented all of us. FTMs

## FTM MALE BOX

Dear FTM,

Thank you for forwarding the letters that were sent to "Freaked Out Father." The letters were full of positive encouragement and helpful reassurances. They helped me feel better and gave me a renewed hope. All of our praying and visualizing finally worked! We have worked through the problem. Our son is using the toilet all the time now. I've never felt such relief and gratitude in my life. I want to thank everyone who took the time to reach out to me. I appreciate the sharing and caring that was sent my way during my time of need.

-A Thankful Brother (and much less freaked out father)

Dear FTM,

I am a kid of an FTM parent. I would like to share some of my thoughts and feelings about this and the Social I went to. I hope this will be helpful to other FTM parents and their kids.

Thoughts about being an FTM kid:

At first it was strange, scary. I was different. This made me angry-frustrated. I cried a lot because it hurt to know the truth. It was like losing a mom and a good friend. I didn't want to talk, think about, or even accept the truth that this was really happening to me.

Then I started to accept this for what this is, not that it was going to go away-it won't! Some of the things that helped me to realize this were:

- A) Mom didn't back down, but kept with the process.
- B) Mom kept talking to me about it.
- C) I got used to new things in the family.
- D) Mom started getting used to it and accepting it for what it was-this helped me recover.

E) I realized that I wasn't losing "Mom", just the female in mom.

How the Social was for me:

Now this was an interesting experience for me. I got to meet others like my mom--we were not alone! I saw that people there had a lot of courage. It showed through their openness and their doing what they have to do. I saw all different kinds of cultures were participating in the battle of TS.

It took me a little while to realize that these "Kissing Biker Dudes" were TS-FTM. Some people asked me questions just like I was asking all the others. This felt strange--but in a good way. It was nice to be able to collect and relay information at once.

I feel it is important for my mom and people like him to go to these support groups. They really help push you along even when you want to sit or hide--like a mule. I came away feeling like I had more understanding, more relaxed, less freaked out!

Advice to Kids:

- 1) Try to accept this--it will not go away.
- 2) Talk to SUPPORTIVE people.
- 3) Try to understand that you didn't make this happen--it just is that way.
- 4) Try to understand that you are not alone.

Advice to Parents:

- 1) Talk to your kids--be honest. If you lie and they get suspicious things will just be worse.
- 2) Try to realize that your kids need your support, and you need theirs.
- 3) Get with an FTM support group--they help.

-Becky in California, Age 11 yrs.

Dear FTM,

I recently received my copy of the newsletter: the first since the passing of Lou. I was really impressed with the layout, along with the progress the newsletter has made over the years. I remember the first time I received one, I was so happy to find out there were others like me. I wasn't the only one. Then to be able to meet so many people at the IFGE CONFERENCE that have laid the ground work for us. I felt honored to be a part of history. I was welcomed with open arms. I was encouraged to take action and participate with others in the community. I am grateful IFGE was concerned enough to make sure we were represented at the conference. We, as a group, did not offer leadership or monetary support for the representation of FTMs. Yet we demand top billing on the programming. I think not. We are a minority within a minority.

were barely referred to, and it was stated clearly that lesbianism is not well understood (as opposed to male homosexuality...or as opposed to other women's issues?) Some of the findings can give us hope, hope that if our condition is recognized as biological we might someday receive respect from the medical and insurance industries. Conversely, it might be noted that finding a way to biologically separate "us" from "them" could be used to justify our oppression, persecution, or elimination. These are dangerous waters. I prefer to live in hope that education of others will ease our particular burden and win us the recognition and social incorporation we deserve.

Closer to home, journalist Julia Hutton has taken her recent stab at the veil of repression enshrouding the Western world by writing her book Good Sex. Subtitled "real stories from real people," Good Sex contains the statements of 62 "real people" about their sexuality, condensed from long in-person interviews. All types of people are represented here, straight, gay, bi, s/m, TV and TS. "Sex was described as a statement of self, a body language for the hidden faces of the soul, a freedom to communicate," Hutton says in her introduction. "By all accounts, sex is a personally encoded communique, continually reinvented." Also in the intro, "Good Sex is more like a fistful of polaroids than a clipboard survey poking towards a conclusion." But just as we find listening to our brothers' stories helps us unravel our own, Hutton's book gives its readers a glimpse into lives that may be very different, but the needs, emotions, dreams and fears may be strikingly similar. A thought provoking, sometimes voyeuristic read, Good Sex profiles two members of this FTM group. Published by Cleis Press, ISBN: 0939416573, and listing for \$12.95, you'll find the book classified under "Sexuality/Lesbian & Gay Studies" though it is certainly more than this. I hope it won't get lost in the category.

One more book FTM readers might find useful for their reference libraries is Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud by Thomas Laqueur (professor of History at U. C. Berkeley), published by Harvard University Press, 1990, ISBN: 0-674-54355-6. I haven't read it, but I've scanned it quickly, and it is full of historical and cultural material that helps to explain the contexts in which we relate to sex and gender, both psychically and politically. Because it's an academic treatise, you may be able to borrow this book from the public library.

And just hitting the bookstores is Tama Janowitz's gender experiment, The Male Cross-Dresser Support Group. Published by Crown and listing for \$20.00, this is apparently a mainstream novel about a woman who cross-dresses and passes as a man to prove the standard cliches about how men have higher status than women in American society. Susan Heeger's review of the book in the Los Angeles Times said the "story lurches from satire to slapstick, without asking too much from a reader's emotions but delivering lots of silliness and wit." I can't recommend this one, but I bring it to your attention because gender's happening!

### DOSSIE EASTON

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Change comes slowly. We need to work together to educate the world; not focus on our differences. We must support each other.

I believe consistent involvement with IFGE will assist and educate all participants. Focusing on the similarities will enhance our productivity.

—Taylor

*I agree that consistent involvement and education are important. I also agree with Taylor's last sentence with respect to productivity. However, I stand by my gut feeling expressed in the last issue that we must also acknowledge and understand the differences between FTMs and MTFs; understanding these differences will help us understand ourselves. I don't recall anyone from the group of FTMs who attended the IFGE conference in Houston demanding top billing on the programming; and I want to express my sincere appreciation to Taylor for the work that he did at the conference on our behalf, and his excellent presentations on the panels. It is my intention to inspire greater FTM participation in future conferences. I also want to encourage FTMs to respond to IFGE's call for material in the next letter.—ed.*

Dear James Green:

We would like to include more Female-To-male material in the *Tapestry Journal*. In particular we want to print articles by and about TV, TS or TG FTM's describing the particular parts of their journey they feel should be shared. We would also like photographs to complement the written material. If there were enough material, or a particular constellation of topics, we could focus one issue of the magazine on FTM concerns. We are looking for FTMs willing to appear on the cover, too.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I am

Sincerely Yours,  
Vivian Purves, Editor  
TV-TS *Tapestry*

*Here are the TV/TS *Tapestry* Contributor's Guidelines:*

Contributions should be true-to-life, relevant, constructive to the gender community, and under 5,000 words. Sexually oriented, fantastic, or negative material is unacceptable. We will accept personal letters, personal experiences, germane fiction, contemporary and general history, how-to articles, scientific and professional articles, commentaries, personal opinion editorials, humor, poetry, and cartoons.

We use WordPerfect 5.1 on an IBM PC. Submissions must be on a double density disc or typed, double spaced with one inch margins. We do our own layout, so please avoid in-line commands. Clear B & W or color photos are acceptable.

Questions of style are settled using several current manuals and dictionaries. Anything like the MLA Guide, or the Writer's Guide should agree. It helps to keep Aristotle's admonitions about a beginning, a middle, and an end, as well as about continuity, in mind.

Include a SASE for return of materials. Pay is in copies of the *Tapestry*. Send contributions to: Vivian Purves, Editor; TV/TS *Tapestry Journal*; P.O. Box 367; Wayland, MA 01778.

Dear FTM,

As per the letter of Mr. Quinn (issue #20) in regards to "a voice in congress...", I recommend a local approach to government, such as the City Council of San Francisco. Local Council is more likely to enact laws for gays and transsexuals than National Government. This is in effect due to the numbers game. The loudest and registered voters groups get noticed first. Take for example Omaha; what is the likelihood of bills being enacted to serve and protect transsexuals [there] as compared to San Francisco? It seems the numbers are there.

Empowerment of TSs would be a start. Once a law is enacted, that is voted by Council, signed by the Mayor, enforcement would seem to be a fundamental principle thereafter. But to whom should enforcement for gays and transsexuals be entrusted? At what point does one commit fraud by being "other" than prescribed at birth? Police departments are run as a para-military organization entrusted to protect life and personal property and to do so by priority. Each year millions of bills are signed into law across America at the local level to meet the needs and to serve the communities of each

jurisdiction. For those of you who are interested, proactive versus reactive, I suggest the following: Identify your local council members and volunteer time at their district office. Familiarize yourself with Council proceedings, how things are done, terminology, publications, meetings, and issues at hand. Know and identify heads of departments, the Commissioners, and what are their responsibilities. Libraries can afford you the opportunity to investigate the activities of all Government offices if you're not inclined to visit them (district offices). Also, the League of Women Voters has chapters all over, and there should be one nearby to contact. They can inform you of basic information and direct you appropriately. Here in New York City, the empowerment of registered gay and lesbian persons, the community, sent a message when Tom Duane was elected to serve as Councilmember for their district. He is openly gay and HIV positive. Perhaps San Francisco will send a message should a transsexual be elected to City Council.

—Christian David, New York, NY

*Thanks for the suggestion, Christian. It applies to all communities, not just San Francisco. A couple of other people are fired up in this direction, too; see below.—ed.*

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## WILLIAM A. HENKIN

### PSYCHOTHERAPY

1801 Bush Street, Suite 111  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
(415) 923-1150

MFCC License No. MU 22960  
Board Certified Sex Therapist

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Dear FTM Colleagues:

We are in the process of starting a California Non-Profit organization targeting the FTM community as a political-advocacy-support group that is open to membership and will hopefully offer membership benefits in the area of financial assistance, insurance group rates, hotline information, and legal definition or reformations. We need a Board of Directors and other committees to explore funding, membership drives, and lobbyists. We know the talent is out there and need your input as to what is needed in a five-year plan. Please submit your name or nominations, as well as any ideas you may have prior to November 1, 1992. Names may be anonymous if you prefer, but all lists will be treated in confidence. WE ALSO NEED AN APPROPRIATE NAME give us your ideas! California residency is not required. This is not a "social" group.

Write to: FTM Alliance  
P.O. Box 52092  
Riverside, CA 92517-3092

Dear FTM Readers,

As I have interacted with the FTM community in the last year on a world level I have become painfully aware of how disconnected we still are as a "people." Yes, there are several excellent organizations and newsletters globally that keep us informed on as many issues and subjects as possible. My concern is that "We" as a people are not united enough to accomplish positive change. A change that provides education, advocacy, health care, support, a surgery photo library, etc. A change that states "We are different, NOT defective!" We are just as normal as any other person. We are the people of the Third Gender, transsexual. The great North American Indians stated that: Man is half a circle, woman is half a circle, but a Transsexual is a whole circle! You see, my brothers, we are not less; as a matter of fact, we are MORE... (I suggest you read the book *The Spirit and The Flesh* by Walter L. Williams.) I was surprised how many FTMs I have spoken to have been driven underground because they are convinced by this society that they are freaks. Well, excuse me, but that's bull!! Different is not BAD, different can also be a gift. I am a gift, all of us are a gift to this society...sadly, they have not yet learned to understand our gift. **3**

Because of this lack of self-esteem among our people, I am creating a unifying organization called the "Third Gender Alliance." This positive, self-empowering FTM alliance will enable us to finally come together. I am aware that MTFs have their organizations that are doing this, but we are not adequately represented there...understandably. So it's time to form our own. Ok MEN, now is the time to come to the aid of YOURSELVES...or continue to suffer the indignities we have allowed for too long! The Power of Change is in the Unity of many...are you happy with the way you are treated in this society?

No, this is not a militant organization in the sense of violence, but we must start with US. We must realize that we are HERE and if we don't begin to create change, then WHO will? Why is it that MTF surgery is cheap, quick, and so successful, while FTM surgery, after all this time, is still a compromise at best, at a cost that is unbelievable, and worst of all, basically NON-FUNCTIONAL?

Start by believing in your RIGHT to be here, your RIGHT to be heard, your RIGHT to live a happy life...whatever that is for you. Then write to me. Tell me of your hopes for the future, your ideas, your ability to assist others in your area. Start a chapter of the Third Gender Alliance, even if you are the only one you know of...others hidden in your area may contact me and I'll be able to assist you in finding each other. Join with me and others in taking a stand...not to overpower, but not to be driven back ever again into the dark ages! This is within our grasp...reach out and take your rightful place in the Human experience, never to be denied again!

Write or call: The Third Gender Alliance  
4480 Treat Blvd. Suite 227  
Concord, CA 94521  
(510) 798-0922  
In the Brotherhood, Peace  
Mr. Rhonnie James Reed  
"A Proud FTM TS"

*So, while you're all fired up with participatory zeal, I have an announcement to make:*

#### NOTICE: GROUP LEADER, EDITOR NEEDED

Yes, it's true, I need to change the way I personally participate with FTM and the Newsletter. It's critical for my own growth that I now concentrate on my own writing and public speaking on gender issues, and I feel that for me to succeed in this I cannot spend so much time working on organizational matters as I have in the past two years. I am officially giving notice now that I will NOT be able to lead any more informational meetings after July 1993, and I will NOT be able to edit this Newsletter for the October 1993 issue, but I WILL be able to do SOME work on it thereafter. If no one steps forward to take over these tasks, they will not get done: There will be no more meetings, there will be no October '93 issue of the Newsletter. I'm asking for volunteers to coordinate local meetings and edit this international newsletter. This is not a farewell address to the community; I will still be around (though out of the country in September and October, '93). Prospective editors should be prepared to help with the July '93 issue as a training period. If you are interested in handling either of these functions, please contact me by phone or at the FTM address. Thanks!!

—James [REDACTED]

*And while we're talking about organizational changes, here's another idea for the membership to consider:*

Dear James,

I would like to share with you an idea that came to me concerning how we interact, coming from different orientations, at the FTM gatherings. Realistically, we need to acknowledge that there are some FTMs who have never come across other FTMs until they attend one of our meetings. These new brothers have no idea of the diversity of our wonderful community. Unfortunately for many, their first visit is their last. They "see" other brothers in their "costumes" of orientation and retreat into the isolation and confusion they are trying to end. The lack of education as to the diversity of our people, like any other population, has led many to fear they don't "fit in," thereby never getting the help and support they so desperately want and need. I think that with the help of

those of us established in the community we can do something to address this.

First of all, the fact remains that every person has the following three aspects: Anatomy, Gender, and Orientation. Anatomy is the sex your body was born with, Gender is the sex your mind was born with, and Orientation is the sexual preference you were born with. In the transsexual community, this fact exists as well. The constant among FTMs is that WE are all born Female in anatomy...WE are all born Male in gender...BUT we differ in our orientations. Some of us are heterosexual, some homosexual, some bisexual, some are S/M in their orientations. Under the attire of our orientation, we are all brothers, struggling to survive, to fit in, to be acceptable in this "Human Population." We need to help others feel accepted into our community regardless of the apparent differences. To address this confusion, I would like to suggest the following:

An Orientation Board of Directors. This board would consist of one brother chosen by the group of brothers of a given orientation. All major orientations would be represented. The director of each orientation would reside on the board to bring forth his orientation's needs and contributions to the FTM community and the leadership. He would be available to assist a new member to feel welcomed into his orientation group, as well as teach acceptance and understanding of other orientations, thereby giving new and nervous members a brother they can relate to on their level.

The board member would run his orientation group based on that group's needs:

Support Example: During the support group meetings, all orientation groups ("O" groups) would come together for a short period for general information. Then each "O" group would separate to address and discuss the issues of that particular orientation. This way, a person of one "O" group would feel comfortable with speaking out and receiving the information that they came to get without being afraid of ridicule from other people in different "O" groups.

During the Socials, each group could participate either together or independently. It's up to each group to decide what works for them. Social Example: Let's say the Leatherworks Convention comes to SF...the S/M brothers really want to attend, yet the Hetero brothers prefer to organize for a day of family river rafting, and the Gay brothers find they can get a block of tickets to the comedy play "A Day in the Life of a Gay Boy." Using this model, each group can decide what works best for them without offending any other group or brother. At the same time, ANY FTM member can attend any other group's function as long as that member respects the orientation that group represents.

At the Informational meetings the board members would be introduced at the start of each meeting so that exploring brothers and family members could have a name and a face to contact for their direct assistance.

Not only would this help new members, but it would organize our needs as an organization as well! I believe that this management system of orientation would assist you, our fearless leader, to be better informed, and place the responsibility of the orientation information with the group that knows it best. Each month the board members would contact or meet with you individually or as a group, depending on what works best, to share with you what's going on in their group. At any time, ANY member can always contact you for assistance, just like it is now. That would not be denied to those who require it, but most of the issues would be addressed by the board member, thereby releasing you from the pressure of having to do it all! The power of the organization is more accessible to the membership, thereby giving more responsibility and interaction on a membership level. **Everybody Wins!**

Personally, I would like to see a group set up for the partners and spouses. I know how that really helped the partners in another group I attended. They have just as many questions as the rest of us, having had to deal with the issues and pain we face daily while having NO one they can turn to since they are trapped in the isolation of partnerdom. Not only is it unfair to ignore their needs to be reached and get help, but even greater is the issue of how can they help us when they are kept locked out by US? Many TS guys don't or can't talk of the issues with their own partner...how can partners support us at home when they are not getting any support?

If anyone thinks it's easy being a partner of a TS, watching this person you love go through hell just to be allowed to exist, then they have not heard the cries of pain in their own hearts! Please consider this Partner group, maybe present it to the membership. Katherine or I would gladly speak on the subject if given the opportunity.

In closing, I would like to state that these suggestions are freely open to discussion and change by the brotherhood. I don't have all the answers, I don't have half the questions, but I think that these suggestions would greatly help our organization to grow into being able to support and reach out with a larger base foundation, drawing less energy from you and more from the brotherhood.

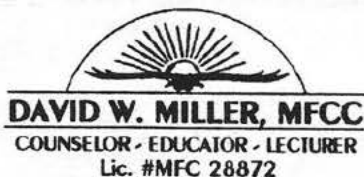
With great love and respect,  
Rhonnie J. Reed

*Looks to me like a significant portion of the January '93 Informational meeting should be devoted to organizational issues. I'd appreciate any feedback readers have; or collect your thoughts and bring them to the meeting. --ed.*

## GENDER ROLES AND IDENTIFICATION

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## NETWORKING COLUMN

### Call for Submissions:

The first Anthology by, for and about the FTM experience is in the works. Make your voice heard! We need of all types of written work; fiction, non-fiction, personal histories, poetry, anecdotes, sexually oriented material, and articles written by FTMs their families, friends and significant others. The editors of this anthology are both FTMs and would like to make this a "fun" project as well as being informative and historical. We will also be conducting personal taped interviews and portrait-type photographs will be included. A FEE WILL BE PAID TO THOSE PERSONS WHOSE WORK IS SELECTED FOR PUBLICATION. All work should be typewritten (typewriter or computer), double spaced and on white paper. Submissions can be as short as you like, however, the maximum length we can accept is 10,000 words. Send all submissions by February 1, 1993 to:

Anthology  
2215-R Market St., #438  
San Francisco, Ca 94114  
(415) 871-0350 or (415) 244-9423

Dear FTM:

I am a 34-year-old gay FTM. I am disabled due to arthritis and have been unable to work for quite a few years. This has, needless to say, kept me in a preop state. I'm now in a statefunded rehabilitation training program to learn a nonphysically demanding profession. I had hormone treatment when I lived in San Francisco and it was covered by MediCal, but California's a unique place in that. Medicaid in Illinois, and now in Louisiana, doesn't cover anything like it.

One of the reasons I'm writing is that since the state is paying for my training, it is all in my legal birthname and sex. That's been tolerable in a limited-contact situation at school, but now that graduation draws nearer (at the end of the year) I'm growing more and more nervous about entering the workforce known as a female. You see, for the past 13 years I've passed and lived as male. It's a real unsettling thing to go back to being called Brenda and not Brendan. Doesn't sound like much, but it's a whole identity and way of life. I know it's something I'm going to have to learn to live with if I'm going to have the money and means to resume hormone treatment and have the surgery.

Anyway, I'm writing in hopes that someone will have some pearls of wisdom and experience to share, or perhaps just want to commiserate—a burden shared is half as heavy. I haven't been able to contact any local gender organizations. If anyone knows of something in the New Orleans area, let me know. Please contact me:

Brendan Sean O'Cullane  
P.O. Box 848  
Marrero, LA 70073-0848

Dear FTM,

I am looking for information on a number of topics and I am hoping someone will respond to my inquiries.

- 1) Are there any insurance companies who pay for phalloplasty or genitaloplasty, and how much hassle do they give you?
- 2) I would like to hear from FTMs who live in Northern New England (Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, etc.)
- 3) I'd like to hear from users of the "Herb" prosthesis regarding the pros and cons of the product.

Please write to me in care of the FTM Newsletter, and they will forward the letters to me. Thanks!

—Chris Roberts

Dear FTM,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for continuing the Newsletter. When Lou was alive, I was able to make it to the Bay Area for almost every meeting. Since his passing, my financial/time availability has changed so that I rarely have the opportunity to attend. Receiving the Newsletter helps maintain the connection.

During my transition—August 1992 is 10 years—I have experienced an unexpected transition. From being what I always had considered a straight man (despite anatomy), my sexual orientation has evolved into bisexual, leaning more toward gay. It now seems that I have entered the world of a minority within a minority. (I'm also Jewish, but, please, one oppressed minority at a time!)

I would like to network and correspond with any other gay FTMs. It has so far been my experience that gay men are rather superficial, but I also know there are exceptions. If I ever have a male lover, he will be one of those few exceptional men.

Any gay FTM interested in corresponding, please write to:

Jeff Shevlowitz  
San Fernando, CA 91340-1676

Dear FTM,

I would really appreciate correspondence with anyone who is having poor results with the testosterone injections. I started about 2-1/2 years ago. I am now 39, very small-boned, and 5'6" tall. I originally began with 2cc every 3 weeks. At that time I weighed 105 lbs. Within 6 months, my weight had gone up to 115. At that point I began to have bad "withdrawal" symptoms

during the so-called "trough," the last week before the next injection. My doctor thought the symptoms, night sweats, insomnia, skin rashes and irritations, were menopausal-like. He adjusted my testosterone dosage to 2cc every 2 weeks, but blood work showed the level to be too high. Eventually, after repeated juggling of amounts, and varying periods of time between injections, we arrived at 1.5cc every 16 days.

At that point I didn't get the withdrawal, but within about a year I started to gain serious weight. Beard growth has been reasonable, but to this date I have no real hair growth on my upper lip. The growth is mostly on the chin; the sides of my face have some, but not a lot. Also of great concern is the fact that my voice, which broke within the first 4 months has never gotten any lower, and is still recognizably female—definitely not male enough to pass.

By spring of this year my weight had gone up to 126 lbs. For the first time in my life I was FAT...overweight...and not in the male pattern. I was left with a typical female fat ass, hips, and even the breasts (which had never been an issue) were suddenly bigger than they had ever been in my life.

My last shot was June 8 '92. I basically stopped for a while to lose the weight. Within 3 months I had a blood test, and the levels of both male and female hormones were perfectly normal—for a normal female. Three days later I started a menstrual cycle.

I've now lost all the excess weight, but I am now faced with the dilemma of not knowing whether to continue. I don't want to be left in some indistinguishable state. If anyone has any advice or comments, please write to:

Seddon

100 West Keith Rd.,  
North Vancouver, B.C.  
V7M 1J5, Canada

TELEPHONE (415) 922-9240

MFC 8288

DR. LIN FRASER  
PSYCHOTHERAPY

OFFICE HOURS  
BY APPOINTMENT

2538 CALIFORNIA STREET  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

Dear FTM,

The following information was in "Muscle and Fitness," October, 1991: The natural pineapple enzyme 'bromelain' taken a couple of weeks in advance of surgery reduces swelling and speeds healing of bruises. It thought this could be printed in the Newsletter for anyone who is looking forward to surgery.

-Jason Cromwell, Seattle

Dear FTM Readers,

I'm excited to bring gender role and transgender counseling services to the Sacramento Area. After years of work in community services and education, I've launched a private practice. I specialize in two major areas: addiction counseling and gender issues. My strength comes from extensive training and personal experience in both areas. If you would like more information on the services that are available, please give me a call. I look forward to talking with you.

David W. Miller, MFCC  
601 University Ave., Suite 213  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
(916) 565-0631

Dear FTM,

I want to share with you the news of the expansion of my therapy practice to include the FTM community. Because I have become aware of the need for knowledgeable Therapists in the North and East Bay, I have decided to increase my practice here in

Concord.

In the greater San Francisco Bay Area there are a few excellent therapists dealing with the initial evaluation and preparation for transition. Unfortunately, they are inconveniently located for people who live and work in the North and East Bay.

In addition, there is a serious shortage of therapists who understand the broader issues of the TS community in the way I do, which enables me to help partners, parents and children to deal with their own issues about the transition process of the person they love.

I think I can offer a needed service to our community, and since I understand the financial pressures so many are under these days, my fee for a 60 minute hour of therapy will be \$60.00.

The appointment times I have available are in the evenings and on weekends. My office number is 510/798-0922. I offer an initial FREE telephone consultation of up to 15 minutes to anyone considering working with me as a therapist.

In addition, in recognition of the FTM Newsletter, I wish to make available special telephone therapy service for readers who have family members living outside the Bay Area who are not able to find any knowledgeable help where they live. Call for more information:

(510) 798-0922

Katherine Gordon

Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Dear FTM,

Please advise your readers that T.R.E.E. (Transsexuals' Rap for Enlightenment and Education) is available to FTMs in the Pomona, CA area. The group is designed for both MTFs and FTMs, any individual experiencing transgender identity crisis (gender dysphoria), who would like information, or has information they would like to pass on concerning hormones, therapy, and/or surgeries. We are also here for individuals who are currently living and/or working in the 'gender of choice' and need or would like to be involved in a support/rap group.

The group meets the first and third Mondays every month from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at 637 N. Park, Pomona, CA. One of the group's facilitators is an FTM. For more information, contact:

Ray Watshe, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Leather Stitches

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FASHION TO FANTASY  
ORDINARY TO OUTRAGEOUS

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PAT YANCEY-JONES  
(415) 546-4075

### Press Release--

The Montgomery Institute is pleased to announce the formation of a new support group and professional referral service in Gainesville, Florida. This new Florida Chapter will be lead by an expert on transsexualism from the medical community, an attorney who has been very active in dealing with transsexual affairs for many years, and a licensed psychologist who is experienced in gender therapy.

Jerry and Lynn Montgomery, founders of the Montgomery Medical and Psychological Institute, Inc., of Decatur, GA are confident that this new group is off to an exceptionally good start and will make a major contribution to members of the gender community in the Florida Area.

This Chapter is following the pattern, which the Institute has found to be so successful in the Atlanta area, of functioning as a full-service gender program. Relationships have already been established with a number of local professionals who are experienced in gender issues, and a full network of doctors will soon be in place.

The first support group meeting was planned for August, 1992. A screening interview will be required for each person who wishes

to attend the meetings. Strict confidentiality will be maintained.  
 Further information about the Florida Chapter of the Montgomery Institute may be obtained by writing to P.O. Box 141133, Gainesville, FL 32614, or by calling (904) 462-4826 in the evening.  
 Those in other areas seeking information may write the main office of the Montgomery Institute at P.O. Box 33311, Decatur, GA 30033, or call (404) 603-9426 between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 Poetry..

FOR ROBERT

WROTE TO A GIRL,  
 BUT LEARNED ABOUT A BOY  
 THOUGHT I WAS GAY

BUT LEARNED HOW TO BE STRAIGHT

I KNEW ABOUT GIRLS  
 WHAT TO SAY,  
 AND WHAT TO DO...

BUT HERE WAS A BOY  
 WRITING EVERY DAY  
 OF HIS PAIN AND ANGUISH  
 POURING OUT HIS HEART AND SOUL  
 TO A GIRL SO FAR AWAY

GOT TO KNOW HIM,  
 AND GREW TO LOVE HIM  
 NOW I'VE LEARNED WHAT A BOY IS  
 WHAT A BEAUTIFUL BOY HE IS

NOT SURE WHAT HE WANTS  
 OR NEEDS  
 IF IT'S ME, OR ANOTHER

BUT FOR NOW,  
 WITH HIS ARMS AROUND ME,  
 I'M HIS LITTLE GIRL  
 AND HE IS MY BOY

AND WHAT A BEAUTIFUL BOY HE IS..  
 LOVE, JANET  
 P.O. Box 4067  
 Great Neck, NY 11023

\*\*\*\*\*  
 PRODUCT NOTES...

*We've received the following product notices. The FTM Newsletter does not necessarily endorse any products or services advertised or reported on within its pages, though in principle we support entrepreneurial FTMs. Consumers are solely responsible for their purchases; any disputes should be resolved directly with the merchant(s), though, again in principle, we at the FTM Newsletter will report on problems experienced by our readership if those problems are widespread and unresolved.--ed.*

Randy Ingersoll sent the accompanying photos along with this note regarding his Transitional Prosthesis which was introduced in the last issue (#20):

Dear James,

Hope these photos will work better. I have had a number of inquiries about the prosthesis and a few sales. Most of the inquiries were about the looks and materials. These pictures should clarify the looks, and the following may help clear up some other questions.

The prosthesis is coated with a latex material which provides

maximum waterproofing. The harness and the prosthesis can be made to specifications that the owner desires, such as waist size, and the size of the penis and balls.

I have also received letters from post-ops who are not satisfied with what they received in surgery and are looking for something that will resolve some issues for them. I would be interested in connecting with other individuals that are doing research in this area to see if we can't come up with something to help, a team to network ideas. Not only for the post-op people, but for something better for all of us at a reasonable price. It may also be worth letting the post-op folks know they can write me and provide information about what is needed.

Stay in touch.

Randy Ingersoll  
 315 Running Brook  
 Mesquite, TX 75149  
 (214) 288-5089  
 (ok to leave message/order)



And Rhonnie Reed sent the following letter about his products:

Dear Buck-a-roos!

In the last issue of FTM I began advertising my newest product... "Herb" (Helping Every Reborn Brother... formerly TRAMP) the total artificial genitals. Since then life at the "Herb Ranch" has been quite busy. The orders have come from all over the world, thanks totally to the FTM Newsletter getting the word out! The response has been exciting...the downside has been to hear the stories of so many brothers having to suffer the hardships of NEEDING a "Stand and Pee." I mean really desperately needing to be "male functional" in order to go to work. Those on construction sites where there is only a hole in the ground have been wearing diapers; those driving cross-country trucks getting hassled for "taking the longest shits and never pissing like the rest of us." The stories are too many to tell!! Most of all, the situation is making them feel less "male," always living in fear that they will be discovered. No one can live a happy, productive life with such a constant fear inside.

I read letters from brothers asking for a cheaper model or stating that they would not be using the "sexual aspect" of "Herb" for their needs. In response, the "SP Herb" (Stand and Pee Herb) is now available! This model will offer the brother the following:

A 4-inch, soft, realistic male penis, including balls; the medically-approved urinary device that remains in place, and the harness. The "SP Herb" price...only \$300.00!

For those who would like an original "Herb" which includes the "sexual functions," they will still be available. Don't forget, I have a Lay-Away plan!!

For information, pictures, and an order form, send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to:

Creative Growth Enterprises  
4480 Treat Blvd., Suite 227, Concord, CA 94521  
If you have questions, call (510) 798-0922.

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### FTM NEWSLETTER

The world's widest circulated newsletter for the Female-to-Male cross-dresser and transsexual. Published quarterly since 1987. Send correspondence, address corrections and contributions to:

**FTM**  
5337 College Ave., #142  
Oakland, CA 94618

Editor Jamison "James" Green  
Production/Lay out Sky Renfro

-----CUT HERE AND RETURN-----

**USE THIS RESPONSE FORM TO UPDATE OUR MAILING LIST. LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE FTM NEWSLETTER, OR SEND IN A DONATION TO HELP KEEP US GOING. THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!**

PLEASE PUT ME ON THE MAILING LIST FOR THE FTM NEWSLETTER

PLEASE KEEP ME ON THE MAILING LIST

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**FTM**  
5337 COLLEGE AVE., #142  
OAKLAND, CA 94618

## REVIEW

### Max Valerio (FTM member) Reads Prose and Poetry Review by Jill Enquist

On May 24, 1992, Max Valerio gave a reading of his prose and poetry at "A Different Light" bookstore in San Francisco. Valerio opened with a brief autobiography. He prefaced it by saying this was written only that morning, implying we shouldn't expect much. He needn't have been so modest. It was quite good. He spoke about the effect of hormones on his body and how realizing he was TS focussed him more clearly. Because of the evening deadline he wasn't able to finish it properly and the piece ended too abruptly. I hope Max works on it further.

Next he read selections from his prose and poetry. Sexuality ran through all of it, with metaphors of the sexual tension between men and women drawn in sharp relief. The line "breath stretched to the breaking point" sticks in my mind, but there were many others. Valerio wrote as a heterosexual man, and said that for him heterosexual sex was the kinkiest of all, since it was sex between two unique and mutually antagonistic species. My only criticism is that he wasn't always clear about when he was reading from poetry and when from prose.

Partly due to bad publicity, the reading was sparsely attended. There was no mention of this being an FTM reading. Whether knowing it was a transsexual reading would have brought out more people or kept them away is an unanswered question. Also, the pre-reading publicity was atrocious. Blurbs described Valerio's work as "lumpy" and an example of "post-punk amnesia." I have no idea what that last phrase was supposed to mean, but "lumpy" it was not. His words were sleek with frank and erotic images. Since his work was openly heterosexual in content, it didn't go over too big with the mostly gay audience. In fact, midway through the reading one man got up and left, but perhaps he was remembering a dinner engagement.

One nice note: After the reading, a dyke came over and admitted she was ready to come out as FTM. It's true what they say: So long as you affect one person, it's all worth it.