

SPRING GET-TOGETHER FOCUSES ON FTMs and AIDS

Four female-to-males formed a caravan and journeyed south over 800 miles from Seattle to San Francisco, as four other FTMs traveled north nearly 400 miles from Los Angeles to attend FTM Get-Together #13 on March 17, 1990. A total of twenty female-to-males and two guests arranged their seats in circular formation to hear Sterling Winterhalter and Lou Sullivan present an informative discussion on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the FTM population.

To begin, Sterling, an FTM, long-time educator and employee of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, conducted a short quiz to determine our basic AIDS knowledge, our understanding of how the virus is transmitted from one person to another, and safe-sex awareness.

Then he focused on ways in which we, as FTMs, might be exposed to the virus. "FTMs run the gamut of sexual orientation. Those of us who are gay men might be exposed through receptive anal or vaginal sex. Lots of us perceive ourselves as heterosexual men, so how is the virus transmitted from a woman to an FTM? Performing oral sex on an infected female is not safe." He explained that the AIDS virus has mainly infiltrated the women's and lesbian communities via intravenous drug use and/or through sexual contact with men in the past ten to twelve years, before AIDS even had a name.

Sterling proceeded to demonstrate the use of a dental dam and the "Dental Dam-It," a harness designed to hold the latex dam over the woman's genitals during oral sex. He advised the use of a fresh dam after each use, as they inevitably become wet on both sides of the latex.

"Oftentimes we engage in digital vaginal penetration (i.e., insertion of fingers). How could that put you at risk? There are large concentrations of the AIDS virus in the vaginal secretions of a person who's infected. If you pulled a hangnail this morning or got a papercut at your desk or the cat scratched your hand, and you place that finger into an infected woman's vagina or anus, you are exposing yourself to the virus." Therefore, Sterling introduced us to the "finger condom," a tiny thin latex rubber (available at Walgreen's) designed to fit over your finger.

It is possible to eroticize safe behavior, and Lou was very excited about these finger condoms, for uses other than finger protection: "I think these little finger condoms are great little condoms for guys with little dicks ... not just for your finger ... just about the right size for those with genitalia," and Lou added, "All this rubber stuff is great for 'playing doctor,' too!"

For those of us who enjoy using strap-on dildos and other sex toys, we got a reminder *not* to share our toys, despite what our parents taught us. Ideally you should have and use ONLY your own objects of insertion. Clean thoroughly with bleach after use.

"I imagine there could be a situation," Sterling continued, "where FTMs would share their needles when they're going to give themselves their hormone injection. That would be entirely unsafe. Never share your needle for any reason!" Though the shot is intramuscular and not intravenous, blood is present at the injection site. If it is absolutely necessary that others use the same needle, learn how to clean the needle with bleach and water before sharing.

Lou explained to the gathering that he was diagnosed with AIDS over 3 years ago. Doctors estimate that patients could have become infected through engaging in any unsafe practices since 1978, and Lou had a pretty wild summer in 1980. "I think the TS community is at very high risk for AIDS

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DR. PAUL WALKER

DR. PAUL WALKER RETURNS TO ADDRESS THE TV/TS COMMUNITY

Following the Spring FTM Get-Together, a large group of our members hurried to a meeting held by ETVC, the Bay Area's male-to-female organization, to hear their guest speaker, Dr. Paul Walker. Dr. Walker, a major figure in the gender profession, is no longer in practice, and so it was a real delight to see and hear him again.

"I closed my practice December a year ago and haven't been very active since," Dr. Walker explained. "However, we are now in the process of rewriting and revamping the Standards of Care, now the law in Germany, Switzerland, France, and soon to be in England. I was very pleased at the Harry Benjamin Gender Dysphoria Association's Symposium last September when I was given their Service Award. It was for two reasons: for writing the Standards of Care, and for founding the Janus Information Facility. And I felt real good about getting that Award."

"I like to tell the story of how I first got started," Dr. Walker began. "I was a grad student at the University of Rochester specializing in social psychology. There was a blind student there and I spent a lot of time tutoring her. Dr. John Money came from Johns Hopkins and gave us a 3-hour lecture with a slide show about TVs, TSs and hermaphrodites, disproving everything I'd ever learned in psychology, and literally blew my mind. To top it off, the blind student I'd been tutoring for over a year tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Can I tell you something? Up until four years ago, my name was George.'

"I asked Dr. Money if he had any summer jobs, and I spent five summers with him. I went to Johns Hopkins full-time from 1969-1976 and the last couple of years pretty much ran the gender clinic there. The University of Texas asked me to start a gender clinic in Galveston, with the personal involvement of Lady Bird Johnson! She was just amazing! In 1980 I left Texas to come to San Francisco and went into private practice."

Dr. Walker asked for questions from the audience, and this review concentrates on his comments on female-to-males. "When male-to-female transsexuals begin estrogens, most do feel and act differently," Dr. Walker said, "but we think it's not so much related to chemicals as it is to their inner self

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE FUTURE ISSUES OF "FTM" ?

WRITE TO US AT: 1827 Haight Street #164, San Francisco CA 94117

F T M MALE BOX

Dear *FTM*,

I am back to writing/editing again and am very excited about my anthology project. It's awesome to be entrusted with the raw emotions and feelings (some tragic, some comic) of people experiencing gender confusion, conflict and/or resolution, of gender dysphoria and euphoria. I have over 200 submissions, with roughly 50 from F-Ms; however, I would really like to have some more. Perhaps you could put a notice to this effect in your next Newsletter.

All the best,

Rupert Raj-Gauthier
Box 1224, Station A
Toronto Ontario Canada M5W 1G7

Dear *FTM*,

So it's finally out, at long last: the infamous (X-rated) Issue #2 of "Rites of Passage"! You're undoubtedly familiar with our *very* controversial cover-boy, Les Nichols.

Les is a truly unique individual. His identity, his world view, and his personality are mystifyingly complex. He does not fit neatly into a convenient category. He is *a man* ... but he used to be a woman, a lesbian separatist named Linda. She made a conscious decision to become a man.

Les is highly eccentric and could easily be labelled a "kook" or "crazy" by unsympathetic people in the gender community or by the media-exploiters. (He's perfect cannon-fodder for the ratings wars of network T.V.) He is *extremely* exhibitionistic and *totally* irrepressable. But repression is wrong anyway. He has the right to do and say whatever he wants to.

The lesson in all this is that people should open their minds (& their hearts)! We must not judge our brothers (and sisters) so harshly! If we expect acceptance, then we must be accepting of others! Instead of condemning Les (as many have) we must defend his right to be himself.

We cannot just support TSs and TVs who are "politically correct," "well-balanced" or "well-behaved"; or those who conform to our personal definition of what they *should* be. We must accept each individual as they *are*. Those of us who are weakened by years of confusion and frustration, and those who are emotionally disturbed, need support *more* than the "ideal TS."

Granted, it's best if the "ideal TS" can be out there for the world to see; to represent us as mostly healthy and secure (to the public eye). But if some of our less secure (or less "well-behaved") brothers "come out" and tell their story - we shouldn't turn on them and blame them for showing the public that we (TSs) aren't *all* perfect. Instead we should be defending our brothers - as I am defending Les right now.

So many of our peers are so quick to criticize! It seems that everyone bought that issue of *Hustler*, and yet no one has mentioned that the surgical info was up-to-date, clear, concise, and accurately described all current methods of F-M genital surgery, including genitoplasty.

I think *Hustler* did our community a valuable service by showing clear, color photographs of a phalloplasty, to all of America and most foreign countries. And the worldwide exposure that *Hustler* gave our non-profit international support network is proving invaluable.

Well, I'll get down off my soap box now. I just felt compelled to voice my opinion.

With love and brotherhood,
Johnny A., F2M
Tenafly, New Jersey

If you haven't received a copy of the latest "Rites of Passage" magazine, you're missing a real treat. Editor John Armstrong offers female-to-males a publication that can only be described as "performance art," with its 16 pages literally covered with visual delights and informational data, brought to us by the members of F2M. Published "at irregular intervals," the cost of a subscription is \$32 for 8 issues, or \$4.50 per issue. The magazine is sold through the mail on a sliding scale so that it is available to all F-Ms regardless of ability to pay. *Not for sale to minors!* Write to "Rites of Passage," c/o S.G., P O Box 615, Tenafly NJ 07670.

NO RESPECT

by Christian CB David, New York City

Life here in New York City builds good character, self-discipline and the willingness to survive. Of course, the City has its share of bad and ugly, and we all know the phrase, only in New York.

However, something has spilled ugly sludge and it's not only in New York. I'm referring to *Hustler* magazine and the woman with a cock, and videos of "Chicks with Dicks."

Unfortunately, *Hustler* is shelved in nearly every bookstore, newsstand, corner grocer, in every little town, village and rural route across America, as well as overseas visitors who carry it with them on business trips.

I was born and raised in a college town of about 30,000, where talking about homosexuality got you quick attention, and dirty looks. These small towns are not very accepting of differences of any kind. What's so bad is the negative publicity of transsexuals in this magazine. Many transsexuals do live in these areas, and this kind of portrayal could directly or indirectly bring harm to someone who needs help, has "come out" or is known to friends and family. Imagine someone who is striving to understand or is still "growing" through, and someone slaps the magazine at their face and says to them, Is this what you want?!

These magazines like *Hustler* simply exploit women, as well as men. And will always be around for years. People hang onto this "weird" stuff in *Hustler* and pass it on. I can find magazines like *Playboy* and *Penthouse* dated 1978.

How terribly difficult it is to obtain medical and educational information on transsexualism in these tiny little towns and villages. I know that I was in constant fear that someone who knew me would see me at the library and then find out what I was reading. Ironically, it's very normal to jack off while looking at *Hustler* magazine, even at the newsstand.

I have no respect for slutbuckets, those who sell it, those who are exploited by such magazines. These people have little self-esteem and care nonetheless for any one else. It's done for money and self-gratification, and at the expense of the entire transsexual community.

FTM NEWSLETTER

The only newsletter exclusively for the female-to-male transvestite and transsexual; published quarterly by FTM, 1827 Haight St. #164, San Francisco, California 94117

Editor: Lou Sullivan

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for a number of reasons, particularly because we all know how hard it is to get sex partners. We have special circumstances with our bodies, then go through a tense courtship after finally attracting someone, and you don't want to throw any obstacles in the way. If someone is going to be nice to us, touch us and love us, we don't want to say 'no.' We're so desperate for physical contact that we throw caution to the wind and say to ourselves, 'Well, it's just this one time ... it'll be OK'

"I think we're at a mental disadvantage because we have such problems with our bodies in the first place. Our bodies aren't something we want to care for or nurture. We've struggled with our bodies, they don't function for us correctly, the surgeries are lousy ... we live our lives with a negative body image which prevents us from taking care of ourselves because we're so busy adjusting ourselves. It's a self-esteem problem."

"It is estimated that 9% of the AIDS population nationally is female ... that's a lot! Another issue is that female-to-males may have psychological barriers to using these safe-sex items, such as dental dams. To me, there's no way I'm going to wear a dental dam! That's a female item, like a bra! I won't wear it! And I think male-to-females feel the same way about their using a condom.

"But there are advantages we can use in this era of 'safe sex.' Safe sex and fear of AIDS is a great excuse for not doing anything you don't want to do. If you want to have sex with someone without taking off your clothes, or having them feel you up and not finding what you don't have, safe sex is always a great excuse. Tell them you don't think it's safe to take off your pants."

Lou continued, "Something none of this safe sex information addresses is our individual unique body statuses. Some of us have genitoplasty, some have variations of phalloplasty, some still have a vaginal opening and some of us haven't had bottom surgery. Some of us, after surgery, emit secretions from different areas. If the vaginal opening is still there after genitoplasty, sexual juices may come out underneath the balls, not through the penis. A condom won't help in that situation."

"In a genitoplasty with vagina intact," Sterling added, "you still have vaginal secretions and it is not safe to let someone go down on you. If your partner has acne or a zit on his or her chin, or a split lip or a cold sore, and comes in contact with vaginal secretions, this risk increases. Having a phalloplasty without a vagina and no urinary extension, no body fluid escapes from this organ and oral sex for FTMs with a complete phalloplasty should be safe. We have to use our own judgment, using our general knowledge of AIDS transmission, to assess our own specific and individual risks."

There seems to be a high ratio of alcoholism and drug use in the transsexual community, and these substances can and will cause us to lower our defenses, making it easier to justify unsafe sex "just this once." Don't! It only takes once to become infected for the rest of your life.

How can we negotiate safe practices with our partners? Lou believes in the "just do it" approach. Always have some dental dams (or condoms) with you, and simply bring them out and use them at the appropriate moment. You really needn't "discuss" anything. Just assume their use.

The group briefly discussed the risk of contracting AIDS via tattoos. Sterling said there are no official controls of tattoo parlors and it is imperative to thoroughly research the safety provisions in any establishment you are considering.

Lou related his experience of having been admitted to the hospital and diagnosed with AIDS while between stages of his genitoplasty surgery. "So if you're half listening to all this, think about your surgery, because if you're going to get sick, you're not going to be strong enough to undergo any

..... "ADAM'S WORD"

Monthly newsletter of The Adam Society
Non-profit support group for female-to-males
Subscription: \$10 for 12 issues
Make check out to "Dan Riley" and send to:
Adam's Word, Dan Riley, Editor
6 Cushing Street, 2nd Floor, Waltham MA 02154

surgery, and you'll have a hard time finding a surgeon who'll deal with you. So keep yourself healthy so you can enjoy your change."

ENDOCRINOLOGIST TO SPEAK AT OUR SUMMER GET-TOGETHER

It wasn't easy to find an endocrinologist brave enough to stand before our FTM Get-Together in June, but Dr. George Fulmer agreed to the task. With over 20 years' experience administering hormones to female-to-males, Dr. Fulmer seems uniquely qualified to answer our questions about testosterone, Delatestryl, Depo-Testosterone, generics, side effects, etc. See you there!

CROSSDRESSING BALL IN EAST BAY

The Imperial Star Empire Turnabout Ball -- that's where the contest is to turn oneself from a "convincing" female into a "convincing" male, or vice versa -- is scheduled for Saturday June 16 at 9 p.m. at the Driftwood Lounge, 22170 Mission Blvd., Hayward, Calif., phone (415) 581-2050. Judges will award titles of Turnabout King and Queen for 1990. \$3 door charge with all proceeds going to ISE General Account Fund.

WILL GERMAN REUNIFICATION HURT TRANSSEXUAL RIGHTS?

Now that East and West Germany are being united into one country, the laws concerning transsexuals and sex change operations are being re-evaluated. East Germany scores higher on transsexual rights than West Germany, but East Germany's more humane laws may not prevail in the new reunited country. As it stands now in East Germany, men and women 18 years and older have been able to receive government-sponsored sex reassignment surgery, get married and adopt children. According to Professor Goerlich of East Germany, who spoke at a meeting on the subject in Hamburg, in two cases a transsexual mother gained custody of her adopted children after a divorce. Goerlich plans to fight to retain these more liberal laws in the future Germany.

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS, AGAIN

The April 10 issue of *Weekly World News* tells the story of Mary Louise Medacco, 17, of Muskegon, Michigan, who disguised herself as a boy named Mario and "had sexual relations with at least two 15-year-old girls." Chief Thomas Kelenske of the Roosevelt Park Police Department said, "She was passing herself off as twins. When she was a boy she had a boy's voice, a boy's mannerisms. She bound her breasts with ace bandages when she dated and used a rubber penis to have sex. She'd put her jeans on over the device and never took her pants off completely so her victims, who were inexperienced anyway, never knew what was going on." Medacco faces five years in prison if convicted of committing or procuring gross indecency between females, the charge pending against her.

FROM FEMALE TO MALE: The Life of Jack Bee Garland

Order copy by sending \$10 (postpaid) to Alyson Publications,
40 Plympton St., Boston MA 02118 (specify ISBN 1055583-
150-8) or through your favorite bookstore.

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Review by Kate Bornstein

These days, the mention of the word "transsexual" elicits from most the image of some sort of male person becoming or having become a female person. There are many factors involved with male-to-female transsexuals, being more prominent than female-to-males, but the fact remains:

Information for the female-to-male transsexual is practically non-existent, and few stories of their lives have been published. Some documentation still survives, despite the diligent efforts of families and society to erase all mention of these embarrassments. Today, in 1988, there are an estimated 10,000 transsexuals in the United States, and even in our comparatively "liberated" society, one in every four persons applying to sex reassignment clinics wishes to change from female to male.

Historian Louis Sullivan has performed a great service for the female-to-male community, and for those who study gender issues. In his latest book, *From Female to Male: The Life of Jack Bee Garland*, Sullivan chronicles the life of one blatantly out female-to-male.

Garland, aka Babe Bean, lived and worked in both Stockton and San Francisco in the late 19th century and into the early 20th century. Bean was a writer for several Bay Area papers, and so we have not heresay, but testimony to the trials and triumphs of this brave man. The book is not an easy read, nor is it a particularly entertaining read. For those expecting lurid accounts of transgenderism, it's not here.

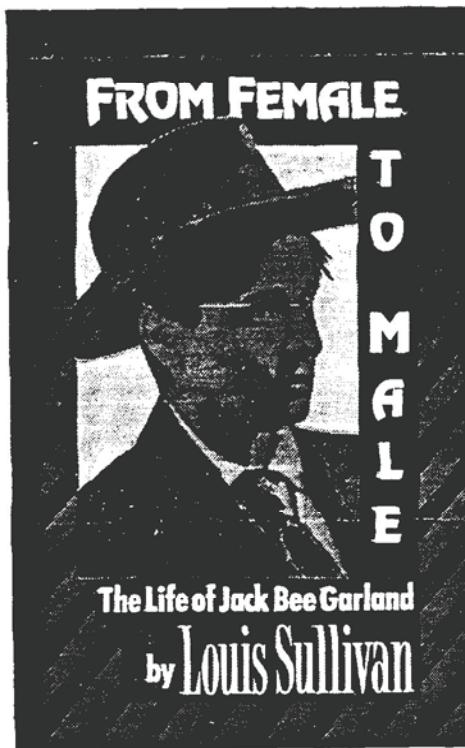
Rather expect to find, in the dry journalistic style of that day, a personal narrative of life at the turn of the century seen through the eyes of the transgendered. Yellow journalism, the retrospectively comic ancestor of *The National Enquirer* and *People* magazine, was just coming into its own.

Even today, the most common arena for the transgendered to air their points of view is the electronic grandchild of the Hearst legacy, the television talk show. Yet Bean was a feisty sort of guy, if accounts are to be believed. He co-opted the forum, scoring his own points -- a veritable Daniel in the lion's den of ravenous reporters. At once object and subject, Bean used his transgendered life as a text to foreground gender issues of the day.

From Female to Male will no doubt find its most avid readers within the academic and FTM communities. Mr. Sullivan has chosen to focus on details normally considered insignificant, but which no doubt will ring true to, and thus empower, the FTM. In this respect, Sullivan has performed a true act of love. *From Female to Male*, however, is first and foremost a text in history.

Sullivan's own remarks are sadly few and far between. (His epilogue is worth reading over several times, and is an excellent summation of transsexuality from the perspective of the female-to-male.) I hope that future editions will include a prologue that would set the emotional and philosophical tone lacking in Bean's own words.

Sullivan alludes to, but never quite delineates, Bean's homosexuality. Over and over we are faced with Bean's own words, and others' articles about Bean, which place him in the company of "punks" (young homosexual men), and "manly men." Bean's own stand on women weaves drunkenly between feminism and mysogyny. Portrait of a confused man.



Perhaps this is because Sullivan shows us solely the public Babe Bean, what the reporters wrote and what Bean wrote for the newspapers. I wanted to see more of the private man behind the writer. Maybe as more female-to-males read this journal and are encouraged to write their own accounts, we'll have the opportunity to meet these now overly quiet men.

And this is the ultimate value of *From Female to Male*. It is blazing the trail for a very brave minority to come out and be counted.

Kate Bornstein, a male-to-female, wrote, directed and starred in the acclaimed play, *HIDDEN: A GENDER*. Don't miss these upcoming performances:

July 15, 1990: Seattle National Gay & Lesbian Theatre Festival, Alice B. Theatre

September 1990: George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia (call Sociology/Women's Dept. for info)

January 6 - February 16, 1991: Theatre Rhinoceros, San Francisco

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Review by Rupert Raj-Gauthier

Louis Sullivan has done it again! Previously, in his first book, *Information for the Female-to-Male Crossdresser and Transsexual* (third edition soon to be released), he opened our eyes to an obscure slice of history by presenting an overview of 18th, 19th and early 20th century women who dressed, lived, worked and married as men -- and now, in his bio of Jack Bee Garland, he has brought to life a colourful character from the past who might otherwise have pined away in musty newspaper morgues and dusty library archives.

From Female to Male is an intriguing account of Jack Garland (nee Elvira Virginia Mugarietta) -- a writer, newspaper man and social worker born in San Francisco in 1869, the daughter of San Francisco's first Mexican consul and granddaughter to a Louisiana Supreme Court justice. Sullivan

chronicles Garland's life of scandal in Stockton, California, to his voyages to the Philippines during the Spanish-American war.

This in itself would constitute engrossing reading. The reader, however, is in store for a twist as the author presents Garland (also known as "Babe Bean"), not as a lesbian who crossdressed most of her life as a man, but as a transsexual - who lived at a time when there was no medical technology to transform her body into a male anatomy. So, Babe Bean had to settle for the next best thing - wearing men's clothing and adopting male mannerisms.

Sullivan spent five years of painstaking research tracing Garland's past and his findings revealed that Jack was distinct from other female-to-male crossdressers. These transvestic women, according to the author, impersonated men so as to bypass heterosexual life and avoid undesired male attention. Jack Garland, however, was unique in that he adopted male disguise so he could relate to men objectively - without women present - and establish honest bonds with them, man to man. And, while crossdressed, he was able to experience many all-male privileges.

The life story of Jack "Babe Bean" Garland will fascinate readers as the pioneering spirit of this early transsexual man - who was both brave and compassionate - lives on, in the pages of Sullivan's book, and in the hearts and minds of men and women.

PAPERS OF INTEREST TO F-Ms

from Gender Worker, Box 1224, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1G7. Make checks payable (in U.S. \$) to Rupert Raj-Gauthier.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS PRESENTED at the 11th International Symposium on Gender Dysphoria, Cleveland, September 1989 (45 pps) - \$10

REFERRAL LIST FOR F-M TRANSSEXUALS - \$10
PLASTIC SURGEONS' LETTERS, ABSTRACTS & PUBLISHED PAPERS ON MASTECTOMY & PHALLOPLASTY (100+ pps) - \$25

METAMORPHOSIS Newsletter, 24 issues (1982-85), and METAMORPHOSIS MAGAZINE, 7 issues (1986-88) - \$86;
GENDER NETWORKER, 2 issues (1988) - \$6.66 for both

FTMs MEET IN ENGLAND

by Andrew [REDACTED], London

I've taken on the role of surgical advisor for the Gender Dysphoria Trust (GDT) and I've been inundated with letters and phone calls for information and help. I've had a few horror stories of guys who've had bad phalloplasties done and who are in a state of despair. I could quite understand why after I took a look. I feel desperately sorry for them and often feel at a loss as to what to say to them. The void between surgery done here and that abroad seems to widen and not lessen. I feel some of the surgeons here should be sued and struck off the register. I personally would like to castrate them and let them see how it feels.

I meant to write you something regarding our F-M get-together. I can of course only relate the best part from my own experience, but I have had some feedback from others also.

Some people drifted up to Manchester on the Friday evening and spent the evening at Stephen's, the rest of us arrived on the Saturday. I travelled up with two others and we got lost getting there and spent two hours driving round the pennies on a very foggy day attempting to get to Stephen's. We did make it eventually five and one-half hours after leav-

ing London. We all met up on Saturday evening at the Manchester gay centre. The hotel we were originally going to cancel at the last minute. The gay centre laid on a buffet for us and we had a large room to chat in. Later in the evening most of us trooped off to a local mixed gay/straight club. It was interesting how some people and their partners reacted to going to gay places. Some were adamant about not setting foot in there and I have personally reprimanded some since then about their attitudes towards gay people. We are all people in minority groups and shouldn't cast aspersions on others if we don't want to be treated the same by the so-called normal heterosexual non-TS population, besides which a number of TSs are gay as well.

I found meeting the others quite disturbing. I think this was because I had just begun my hormones and was feeling insecure anyway. Part of the problem was that most people there had only just begun the road, the post-op TSs mostly declined to attend. It's a problem we have that once people have got help from the group as a new TS, that later on when we need them to help other new TSs, they don't want anything to do with us. I can understand that they don't want to carry on being TS and would like to lead a "normal" life, however, it's not fair to take and not give back to others who need help, as they weren't turned away when they needed it. It also unnerved me that there were some there who still lived as women or who hadn't changed over and still looked distinctly like women, or more precisely like butch lesbians. It doesn't bother me if people think I'm a gay man but it does if people consider me to be a lesbian because I'm TS. It seemed that those who had left it until later in life to change over looked less good because the hormones had not had such a good effect. Getting feedback from others, it appears that most people enjoyed it and certainly found it a worthwhile experience, however I think it also made them think a lot and distressed them. I think those that left it til later wished they had begun sooner and some people who'd had bad surgery done wished that they had been less impetuous and waited til they knew more about it.

The weekend was good in the sense that it gave people a chance to meet and talk and make friends and people swapped addresses and I know have been visiting each other since as a result, which is very worthwhile. It also meant that we now have people we can ring up in different areas and ask them to look after any new TSs we get in their area.

Some people who felt very alone before I think now feel they are not so alone which is very important. I took my info on phalloplasty with me and showed it to a number of people and explained about the current situation.

Because of difficulties in localities of members, we are going to try and hold such gatherings each year, maybe more often if possible. In the meanwhile I've become involved with a group of TSs in London, unfortunately only one other F-M has come. The others are all M-F. I cope with anything between 15-30 of them at each monthly meeting. I actually enjoy these meetings very much and had made quite a few close friends of the M-Fs. I think it's useful to see the other side of the fence and differences in problems we face as the two halves of the group. I took my mother to the meeting last weekend and she enjoyed meeting them all and would like to help them in any way she can. A lot of them enjoyed meeting her because their own parents have rejected them, so they liked talking to a motherly figure. I guess I'm lucky to have a supportive mother. The only person who causes me any problems is my sister.

FTM Forum - Newsletter

Published four times a year

A discussion by and for fellow female-to-males

To receive the June issue, send a SASE to:

FTM Forum

P O Box 215354

Sacramento, CA 95821-1354

DR. WALKER SPEAKS

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finally being able to 'come out' and things starting to change in their lives. It's quite a different story for biological females taking testosterone ... very, very different. Those events are quite, quite dramatic. My secretary used to say that some of the 'nicest' women would come into our office and then we'd give them testosterone and 'Watch out!' She always wanted to take the day off anytime a FTM TS just starting testosterone was coming back for his next appointment. She really didn't want to be there. I jokingly, irreverently say that when you take a female transsexual and give him testosterone, what you're doing is starting a teenage boy. You're giving him a male puberty. And I don't know about you, but most of us think that every male between 15-22 should be locked in an attic somewhere! They're hyper horny, hyper aggressive, hyper impulsive, hyper obnoxious and hyper pushy, and these are normal male pubertal behaviors. It's the job of a growing-up male to learn to tone that stuff down: unfortunately some FTM TSs don't have buddies or a support system or someone to tell them to 'knock it off,' which is what every teenage boy needs eventually. So those effects are rather dramatic."

Is there any research being done on transsexuals? "All the good research is being done by Dr. Louis Gooren, who is actually a Professor of Transsexology at the Free University in Amsterdam. In the U.S., research is dictated by the availability of research funds, and lots of luck trying to get the federal government to pay for finding out what hormones are best for transsexuals! Try to get that one through Congress! There are no private foundations giving money to this, either. In almost any area of academics, any doctor dealing with transsexualism is doing it with time stolen from other areas of their work ... no department chairman or dean will allow you to spend full-time being a transsexual researcher."

Dr. Walker discussed the dilemma of those living in the gender netherworld: those who wish to identify as androgynous, or neither male nor female, or as both male and female. One MTF commented that a male who wished to keep his genitals and also obtain a vagina is disparagingly called 'a hermaphrodite,' but what about the FTM who undergoes bottom surgery while keeping the vagina? Walker briefly paused before explaining, "Most of them [FTMs], though, don't use that vagina the old way of having male partners insert into it." When she stated, "Female partners insert into it..." Walker elaborated, "But for them it's usually important that it not be a 'lesbian' relationship. It's the perception of the people involved in it, and that's a more private kind of situation.

"When the first MTFs who adopted a lesbian lifestyle after surgery started to let themselves be known, a lot of doctors freaked until it turned out there were plenty of them out there who'd slipped through the system and were quite happy. Most of the doctors then said, 'OK, you could have fooled me ... I don't understand it, but I guess it's OK to be a MTF lesbian.'

"But then it started all over again when FTM TSs said they wanted to be gay men. It was right back to Square One with the bigotry and hostility and 'My God, you can't do that! You're a woman! We're not going to give you hormones and surgery to turn you into a queer!' Until a few of those people did it anyway and came back after surgery, living happily ever after, until the doctors shrugged their shoulders and said, 'I don't understand it, but I guess it works.'"

One FTM noted that MTFs often refer to their crossdressing as "getting away from stress," so how is it that FTMs also feel their change-overs are necessary to reduce stress? "There are many females who grow up in the world who see the female role as being very stressful." Dr. Walker explained, "and escaping into the male role is relieving stress. For them the male role has the freedom of choice and lots of alternatives. They see the female role as one thing and

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one thing only -- a housewife like mommy -- and they don't want to be that. That doesn't fit and that feels like pressure. For some, escaping the feminine is getting rid of tension, while for others, escaping the masculine is."

After a discussion on MTFs who go to extremes in dressing someone asked Dr. Walker if he had ever seen FTMs who dressed outrageously as man in the beginning of their transition. "Maybe not in the clothing so much," Dr. Walker remarked, "but in the exaggerated masculinity. An example was a biological female from Texas who felt male since childhood and, being in Texas, she played the game. Though she was a popular teacher and could look and act feminine, inside she wanted to be a male. As soon as she started hormones and got permission to crossdress, she became the most obnoxious male I ever met in my life. Every other word out of her mouth was a four-letter word. Her idea of being a male was being the worst of the redneck cowboys. She was so horrible we had to ban her from the clinic! She offended every secretary she got near with her language, was pushy, obnoxious, and rude to the other clients. Anything less was keeping her from being the man she was meant to be. Fuck you! -- that was her attitude. That would be the equivalent of the MTFs who wear evening gowns at 10 a.m. Tuesday."

Dr. Walker said his sister-in-law, a nurse, told him about a new male nurse who had just begun working with her, whom she recognized as a former female nurse she had worked with previously. She was tempted to gossip, but decided not to say anything to the other employees. Later she heard the other female nurses talking in the lunchroom about the new male nurse, saying, 'Gee, have you seen the new guy? Wow, I want to date him! Have you seen what he has in his pants? Geez, I want to date that!' She said he must have had four pairs of rolled-up socks stuffed in his pants. "So if you ask about outrageous FTMs ... that's the big one ... stuffing the pants to the point where, if anyone really was that big, he should be rushed to the Emergency Room!"

MEANING TO CHANGE

by Jamie Green

We change from Saturday to to-day.* She said this as easily as if nothing was meant by this but she knew what she meant she meant this exactly. Change is unsettling to some people. Change is unsettling and so is meaning exactly. She meant exactly whenever she meant to.

She sat firmly in any chair. She made the chair an extension of herself and anchored herself firmly to the earth through any chair she sat in. She kept her feet upon the earth at least one most of the time, though not when she reclined. The connection was always important. Connections are always important nothing else is nothing else is nothing else is. I never saw her recline, I only imagine it for you.

Change is a much more frequent thing than many of them ever expected. Certainly none of them imagined how quickly it could happen that life was no longer about living but is now about changing. So many declarative statements are no longer true. So many strong opinions rendered brittle as dried chrysanthemums and aching to turn to dust. It is the form of the old style we love so well. It is the memory that draws us. Even an imagined memory of living in times like hers, in the luxury of a time when they could indulge in pure thought and then shape it with their hands is as compelling. It was. It is. It has to be. We must not be alone. We must have ancestors, a thread through time connecting our thoughts our bodies, something to press our skin against and feel feel feel feel to keep the changing in the background or just outside the door a thing apart to be observed. We think we can choose our connections and our changes from a distance.

Mix now with the language of memory. Is the object to tell what was there? What is there is remembered is different from the different times in motion. They walked together, her step was not hers. Birds were flying over the river they may not remember. She has other ideas. She means to change.

Change has been made before but not in the same way not ever never the same or it couldn't be. Forceful sitting like our ancestors does not carry the same weight today. So many emulate that bold look, that confidence that haircut. Some take wives to entertain the women. Some entertain only women. This is now more fashionable than a long black dress.

They walked together and it was the ancestral difference that did it. Somehow the ancestors never seemed to come from her own family. We select the features we like: a haircut, an attitude, be bold like a man. Like a man, like a man, but never a man, never quite legitimate without muscles like that. There was no comfort, no solace in any embrace unless hers was the greater strength. The difference was that she could be stronger than only women and only some women would respond. She liked men. She did not like what women did to them pretending women did not need muscles because they claimed brains though muscles were so much prettier. Men like their own muscles she liked her own muscles cockles and muscles by the seashore. The cockles worried her. She could get muscles. Some women liked muscles. She did not want a woman who did not want to feel them. But what would she do when the woman wanted to feel cockles? Find a woman who wanted muscles and who could live without cockles by the seashore.

This goes on all the time. A seeks a B to provide for and be provided for by. Must be handsome and strong. Permanent relationship desired. Gravitation works and people find each other sometimes themselves. She was fortunate to find her. Between them they could create worlds of difference. They could press together and feel themselves magnified exalted gloriously reflected confirmation of dreams on their lips. But she had reservations. Reservations resolutions resolutions reservations regarding resolutions regarding remembrances remember the resolutions in spite of the reservations. She was meaning to change.

All she needed was the nod of assent that this one would live by new rules with her. She had asked others and some were horrified some laughed her worst fear in her face. These were ill-considered and dispatched. Now this one confirmed her and said it was fine with her. Elation became her and they talked about marriage and family.

Now it was started she rushed into it no turning back it was everything to her it was life. The doctors confirmed her. They marveled that she could walk just right had all the mannerisms right all the ways of speaking of looking of thinking all manner of things clearly a mistake of nature which they were fortunately able now to correct. Yes yes it had all been a mistake how people looked at her and judged her. It was wrong of them to do it but with help it would not go on. They gave her an injection come back in two weeks and they gave her another come back in two weeks they gave her another and an ace bandage for her breasts come back in two weeks for another injection. Hair on her legs hair on her upper lip she worked out with weights to beef up her shoulders. She got a new job using a new name and got an injection every two weeks.

A new strength is pouring into him. A new self-confidence is manifest. Purpose and direction all fall into place. Now this is change this is life no other. He buys his first suit and takes her to dinner in a fine restaurant they say yes sir she is so proud of him he says my wife will have bringing confirmation to desires and dreams of change now no one will ever again have to live a lie. Now everyone who can be who they must be must have the respect they deserve can do what they want it to do. No one needs to be mistaken. No one needs. No mistake.

Memory makes no mistakes always true to itself and easily revised if necessary. He has saved her from disgrace. Soaring. Dipping diving spinning ace pilot hero in the sky. No one sees you and your glory is all yours. Air rushing. Barriers breaking. Earth below you mundane quiet without glamour. He does not fly but he flies in the face of old convictions. He flies in the face of them even as he confirms them brave and resolute heroic. He remembers his boyhood there were so many things he missed because of the funny thing that was wrong with his body then. If he could have a son she could give him a son and he could give him a boyhood and life would go on and on and on oh what a lovely change this living is now that his body is right. He gave himself the injections every two weeks. The scars on his chest were from the war he said.

We think of the ancestors like photographs timeless unchanging. So many strong opinions now vulnerable left quivering dandelions by the path he makes. He will become someone's ancestor still and quiet in the distance of a photograph but here and now his sound his image scream past us sweeping change with it the cycle of time expanding and contracting around us no linear flow no decisions no illusions life knowing change and connections and meaning exactly to be exactly is to be only to be connected to changing meaning exactly connected to being alive alive-O.

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FTM artist. I am interested to hear from sincere artistic intelligent woman for friendship. Vincent T

★

Thanks to all who have answered my recent ads. I'm sorry if my ad was a bit confusing ... let me explain. I am a 30-year-old genetic female whose dream is to have surgery to become a male. However, emotional and financial problems will prevent this from ever happening. I consider myself gender dysphoric in that I want to be a gay male but am trapped in the body of a woman ... sort of. I have a condition many of you wish for ... hirsuitism. I have excess body hair on my stomach, chest, arms, profuse hair on my back, as well as my face, which I have to shave daily (fortunately there is no tell-tale signs of this). So how can I consider myself female with all this hair and how can I consider myself male with female organs? And, how can I ever hope for love with such an embarrassing problem, as well as being very overweight? Doctors admit there is no cure. Is there anyone out there who can comprehend what I go through daily? If so, please write to me. I feel as though I am totally alone in the world with no one to turn to. It is getting more and more difficult for me to go through a day-by-day routine. Lauren,

★

FTM mid-30's interested in corresponding with women who enjoy being themselves, as well as other FTMs who would like a buddy. I travel between Los Angeles and Sacramento often. Jamie,

★

MTF TS, 23, seeks correspondence, conversation, meetings with intelligent, interesting, charming FTM TVs/TSs for supportive friendship. Also seeking a copy of the infamous \$6 "FTM" video and/or any other videos featuring FTM TV/TSs. Angela,

BUTCH FEMME SOIREE

Review by Francis

March 31 at the Gift Center Pavilion, San Francisco, marked the return of a lesbian/gay event, open to *all* crossdressers and transgenderists wishing to role play with costume. There were elegant evening gowns, tacky drag, leather, tuxedos and leisure suits. The evening was basically a disco dance; photos were available for \$3.50 to memorialize your fashion statement. Contests were held throughout the evening for entertainment with contestants chosen from the crowd, five each for various Butch & Femme variations. Best combination in one person was won by a muscular FTM who fooled everyone! I was pleased to be picked for the [Classist] Butch contest, wearing a dark gypsy/mafia suit with bright color accents, and my date for Nagahyde Femme. Neither of us won, but it was exciting to be on stage. Winners received wrenches or roses encased in plastic. I recommend this event in future for anyone wanting to dress up as either gender in a fun, low-key atmosphere. If you don't want to be recognized, guys, wear a mustache or mask (anything goes). The only minus for the price (\$25 advance, \$30 at door) was no food, and drinks were high. This year was a fundraiser for the National Center for Lesbian Rights; next year, a different group will host.

Chicago FTM wishes to contact/meet other FTM/MTFs (and their mates) in the Chicago area for support/socializing. Please write: Max & Karen A

★

Bay Area Massage for FTMs
State certified. Portable table. I practice shiatsu (acupressure) and energy balancing. I am sensitive to FTM issues, as an FTM TV. You may leave any or all clothes on if you prefer (but remove bindings for full benefit). Emphasis on stress reduction, body/mind balance, pre- and post-op healing. House calls, Bay Area, or my place (Berkeley). Reasonable; discounts for series. Eves and weekends only. Call Francis for appointment, (415) 540-7352.

★

F-M finishing graduate studies for MSW is currently doing a research study on F-M sexuality. If interested in participating write to Steve Antonetti, P O Box 59271, Philadelphia PA 19102. (Participation involves filling out a questionnaire, which you may return anonymously - if you already participated, write too.)

★

Is it possible that the person I am hoping for even exists? I would be much more than happy to find an attractive, feminine transsexual who has become an FTM below the waist yet remains a woman above it. I am a sincere, honest, intelligent 42-year-old white male. I am loving, very affectionate and nurturing, healthy, athletic, handsome, love laughing, and probably have the usual share of pain-in-the-ass personality traits we all seem to be blessed with. If you are out there, or know someone who is, please write. John,

