



The More Things Change...

by James

...The more they stay the same! Welcome to the 25th issue of the FTM Newsletter. We've experienced another staff rotation, and here are the results:

Kevin Horwitz has chosen to spend more time dealing with his personal life, thus resigning as editor. I want to express my sincere appreciation to Kevin for the fine job he did on the last three issues, engineering the creation of a new look for the Newsletter, and his great cartoons. I hope he will continue to contribute his writing and drawing skills to these pages as he finds time. Best of luck to you, Kevin.

Maximilian Samuel Wolf will be moving to the Boston area this month, so he has resigned his post as assistant editor. He promises to continue to contribute articles, and especially reports from the East coast. Thanks for all the hard work you did on the last three issues, and bon voyage, Max.

Staying here to keep things running, Stafford will continue to design the newsletter layout. Whew! That's a relief. Thanks, Stafford!

And Yours Truly, James Green, will resume editorial responsibilities, effective with this issue. I appreciate the break the above mentioned team gave me over the past year to deal with earning a living and other aspects of my personal life. It really is demanding to give as much time and energy as this publication requires without monetary compensation. And this is in addition to my duties as Director of The FTM Group of Northern California, which means picking up the mail and responding to it, being available for telephone consultations, keeping up with other organizations in the gender community and their publications, writing articles and commentary, keeping the FTM Newsletter finances documented, and countless trips to the bank and the post office, also without compensation. Sometimes I wonder how I get all this done and still have time for the rest of my life. Yes, sometimes I feel imposed upon and burnt out. But mostly I'm glad that I have this opportunity to be helpful to others. It's a difficult issue, this transsexualism, and transition is a difficult time in a man's life. As a professional communicator, it's gratifying to me to be able to use my skills to ease the way. I'm glad to be back.

It's time again, though, to appeal for funds. I'll put out my annual financial report in January, but in the interim I think those of you who have not made any contribution this year to keep this newsletter coming need to consider setting aside a few dollars and mailing them to us. We've experienced a wave

of increased interest as we are getting more widespread publicity, and each time someone writes for information and a sample copy of the newsletter, it costs us over a dollar. Some people do send stamped self-addressed envelopes, but usually without enough postage, and sometimes with envelopes that are too small for our mailing. And some people genuinely can't afford the information they desperately need to make them feel connected. I want to make it possible for brothers in pain and need to get information; I don't want anyone to be excluded from knowledge just because they have no money. But some people can afford a regular contribution. When people don't contribute their share, it means that others have to shoulder more of the burden, or the work just doesn't get done. We have just enough money right now to publish this issue and the January '94 issue. Already I anticipate raising the suggested donation amount to \$15.00 next year, raising the professional subscription rate to \$20.00, and raising the price of the FTM Resource Guide to \$5.00 with the June 1994 edition. I know some of you contribute more than the suggested donation already, and I can't thank you enough.

I'm truly sorry to have to write here that donations lately are not meeting our expenses. I know the economy is not booming. But if we have to suspend publication for lack of funds, I'll try not to let the FTM Newsletter die; I promise to put out as many issues each year as the incoming funding permits. I just won't be able to promise a regular publication schedule. So, please, if this newsletter is important to you, try to hold up your share of the burden. Even a book of postage stamps will help.

Also, we welcome contributions in the form of articles, letters for publication, and cartoons and photos (black and white, please). This publication is a forum for all our readers to share their concerns and ideas. Please use it to your advantage. Like most aspects of life, you'll get more out of those areas where you apply yourself. If your sex change or gender transition is not important to you, what is? If there's something you'd like to see in this newsletter, maybe it isn't here because you didn't send it! Let us hear from you.

Hope you enjoy this issue! We're sorry, but Kevin did not complete the third article in his series on Leslie Feinberg. He plans to have it ready for the January '94 issue.

NOTICE: James will be travelling in Europe from September 16 through November 15, 1993. A trusted friend will be picking up the FTM mail and processing requests for the FTM Resource Guide. However, requests for detailed information or personal communication will likely not be handled until after James returns. Please don't hesitate to send in donations or materials for the newsletter. All communications will be carefully logged and treated with the utmost confidentiality by FTM staff.



An FTM in the ETVC

by Francis

After being the significant other of an ETVC (Educational TransVestite Channel, a San Francisco cross-dresser and TS support group primarily composed of MTVs and MTFs) member for several years, I decided to become a member myself, for consciousness raising among MTFs that FTMs exist and for personal support, as there are few cross-dressers in the FTM group (ETVC consists mainly of cross-dressers, with fewer TSs). It was a good decision, as I am interested in taking part in high profile theatrical events. Since joining six months ago, I have been the groom to a lovely bride in a wig and costume AIDS benefit co-produced by ETVC. Recently I was the first FTM to take part in ETVC's annual "Really Big Shew" talent event. Besides doing two numbers of my own, several performers worked me into their skits; the evening was videotaped. ETVC members are so accustomed to using feminine pronouns with each other, even when not cross-dressed (and looking very much like men) that it was a personal victory to get them all to use the male pronoun consistently with me.

I drove the car for ETVC behind the banner "Transvestites and Transsexuals" in San Francisco's Lesbian and Gay Freedom Day Parade, squiring the current Miss ETVC, Shawna, and the two previous winners, Billie Jean and Terry. I wore my "new" 1900's black top hat with tails, granny sunglasses and goatee, emulating the Count in Coppola's recent Dracula movie. Although a few FTMs marched with other contingents, none marched with ours. It would be nice

to see a few brave guys out there in future years—you don't have to be a member to march along. Next year is the 25th anniversary of Stonewall, the riot that birthed the contemporary Lesbian and Gay freedom movement, which was started by drag queens coming to the aid of a woman arrested at the Stonewall Bar in New York for cross-dressing in men's clothes, a crime in 1969. So far as I know, I am the only FTM who has appeared publicly with an MTV or MTF TS group. Are there others out there?

I also want to commend Billie Jean Jones for her own GenderFlex newsletter, wherein she publishes all points of view from various transgenderists. She is especially interested in sharing information with and about FTMs, who she feels have been underrepresented or left out entirely in many groups' references to transsexuals or cross-dressers. She has often praised the local (San Francisco) FTM community on our Newsletter and group, and she plans to run an indepth interview with me and my significant other, Roxanna. Billie Jean would welcome articles, letters, and thoughts from FTMs for GenderFlex. ETVC, as well, is always eager for any letters, articles, poems, etc., by FTMs who want to contribute to its Newsletter, too, whether or not they are ETVC members. Write to GenderFlex at: B.J. Jones, 3430 Balmoral Drive #10, Sacramento, CA 95821. Write to ETVC at: ETVC Editor, P.O. Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

NEWS NOTE: *Francis was recently elected to the position of Education Co-Chair of ETVC. He is the first FTM ever to be an officer in ETVC. His duties include presenting educational programs to the membership once each month, and he plans to continue raising consciousness within ETVC about FTMs and our issues. Congratulations, Francis!! —James.*

Another Questionnaire...

Are you pleased with your therapist? Inquiring minds want to know. The FTM Newsletter is conducting an informal survey of therapy costs and level of satisfaction. We are not in the business of evaluating therapists, so we won't publish any names (of therapists or clients), but our readership (FTMs and therapists alike) may be interested to know what therapists are charging by US region, and whether clients feel benefitted by therapy. If you would like to participate in this survey, please answer the following questions. Photocopy this and mail your reply to *FTM Survey, 5337 College Ave., #142, Oakland, CA 94618*. Please respond quickly so we can print the results in the next issue.

In what city is your therapist's practice?

What are your therapist's credentials? (*M.A.; M.F.C.C.; L.C.S.W.; Ph.D.; M.D.; other—please specify* .)

How long have you been seeing your present therapist?

How much do you pay per session?

Do you have insurance which pays for all or part of this fee? (*Yes or No*)

How long is each session? (*50 minutes; 60 minutes; 90 minutes; other—please specify*)

Do you feel you are benefitting from therapy? (*Yes or No*)

If not, why do you continue to attend?

Any comments on this topic? (*not for publication—please write on the reverse of your photocopy or use a separate piece of paper*).

Thanks for your participation!

I Took The Heat

A Journey from Boy to Man

by Thurin Schminke

April 20, 1993. Wow! It's been one year to the day since my first shot of Depo-Testosterone. The pain, pretense, and denial of being a male has ended. My dream is coming true. In one year, I have grown from a boy to a man. God has given and taken away many things during that period, and, for all of them, I am grateful.

The difficulties and pains of growing and the heartbreaks most men usually have a lifetime to learn about and understand, I had to accomplish in one year in order for me to come close to achieving a chronological age catch-up. At the same time, I had to be able to stay in the "here and now." I woke up each morning as the same person inside, but with a new person developing on the outside. "What would each day bring?" I would ask myself.

"What new things are going to happen to me and how will I handle them?"

Physically my body has adjusted to two major operations (bilateral mastectomy with free nipple graft and a complete hysterectomy), and the male hormone, testosterone, is changing my body's secondary sex characteristics. I never imagined that I could learn to inject myself, but today I do it with ease. I am no longer the helpless, weak, vulnerable 120 pound, shy person I was a year ago. Today I am an emotionally strong, 150 pound, muscular male, and I am free.

In the past year my body has gone from male puberty through adolescence to young adulthood. As the year has gone by I have grown a small beard, hair on my belly and chest. The latter is important to me because it will cover the scars from the operations. My weight gain is from muscle build-up. It is true that there have been growing pains in every muscle in my entire body, but the results are worth it. My shoulders have expanded along with the rest of my muscles, especially those in my arms and legs. The surface of my skin is becoming coarser. My chest is developing rather nicely as the body fat readjusts itself.

Emotionally I am slowly maturing into a young man. This has been the hardest area to face because I have had to change my behavior to be in line with the social roles that are acceptable. I can't kid with the girls like I did as a woman because I do not want them to think I am coming on to them. Referring to the article, "Are We Having Sex Now Or What?" which was written from the female perspective, I find, being male, I no longer have the feelings and attitudes expressed in this article.

To me, sex will start when I hug a woman with passion. I know having sex with a woman will be only when there is a conscious, consenting, mutually acknowledged pursuit of shared sexual pleasure. I never had these feelings when having intercourse with a man when I was a woman.

In the past year, I have had to accept the responsibilities that a man has in our society. I have to look at just what is appropriate behavior between two or more men. Whether or not to touch or shake hands, and just when it is correct to kid around when in a group, are some of the situations that had to be considered. These social norms have been the roughest to accept.

Mentally, as a male, I am relaxed and at peace with myself.

The war is over! Now the outside male secondary sex characteristics will complete the changeover. I must be patient and thankful. God has been very good to me. I am becoming a whole person. I was able to feel, think, love, care, be considerate and patient with others throughout the misunderstandings that arose during

I've changed my behavior to be in line with social roles that are acceptable.

my change.

My mental state had been the easiest to slide into because my male insides are no longer being hidden or stuffed. I am free!! Spiritually, my soul has been born again. My life was on hold for nearly thirty-six years. I am coming out of that hard-core shell with which I protected my maleness. I am able to love as I always wanted to love, and be loved as I always wanted to be loved. My sex and gender are now the same. I am no longer in the wrong body faking the right gender role. In just one short year, I find myself in the right body, right gender and right gender role. I took the heat. Thank you God!

Attention Students!

If you're a student who depends on Federal student financial aid, you should be aware that changes in the regulations will require you to have all your ID and social security name and number changes corresponding perfectly. Also, if you were born in 1960 or later, and you are male, you must be registered for the draft or your financial aid application will be rejected. Check with your financial aid office to be sure of all new requirements. If you are between the ages of 18 and 25, and you are living legally as a male, you should register for the draft!

Networking

Hello! I am an anthropology major at Princeton University. I am attempting to compile information about female-to-male transsexuals and transvestites for my senior year independent work. This project, called our senior thesis, will consist of approximately 150 pages and will represent the culmination of my four years of work at Princeton. I am looking at gender, sexuality, queer identity, politics, community, biology, psychology and anthropology in relation to the issues, concerns and lives of transgendered female-to-males. I am very excited to be studying this topic! I am looking for information in ANY format: person-to-person, phone, or computer interviews, personal histories or anecdotes, political theories...ANYTHING!!! I will pay for phone or postage costs, and I guarantee whatever confidentiality is requested. If you are interested, please write to: *Sara Carbone*, ■ *Spelman Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544*

I'm an FTM who's hoping to move West from Florida by the end of this year. I'm looking for a roommate in the San Francisco Bay Area/Northern California. Please contact: *James Roselli*, ■ *W. Boynton Beach Bl. 5*, ■ *Boynton Beach, FL 33426*, ■

MAN to MAN:Lifelong FTM transgenderist, 33, passing without hormones or surgery, seeks another FTM in similar circumstances for romance. I am self-employed, vice-free, with a fine education and many interests. Values and spirit more important than age, ethnicity, or location. Please write to: *Merle*, P.O. Box 1105, *Chino, CA 91708-1105*

"FTM/Lesbian wishes to meet other FTMs for support and sharing of information. I live as a lesbian, but also take hormones and wear men's clothes. Surgery is not the right choice for me, although I respect the choices of others." Contact: *Sister*, P.O. Box 3598, *Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3598*, (313) 930-0646

Dear FTM:I was born in Columbus, Ohio because my English parents were working there at the time. I was under the impression that I'd be able to get my birth certificate changed, but I've discovered recently that Ohio is one of the few states that do not make provision for post-operative transsexuals to have their birth certificates altered. If any individual or group is currently lobbying in Ohio to get the State laws amended, I'd very much like to hear from them and lend my support. Secondly, I'd like to find out whether it would be possible to legally marry in ANY state in the USA without an updated birth certificate (i.e., one that still shows female). Back in Britain, we're busy lobbying our Government for transsexuals to be given full legal rights, including the issue of updated birth certificates. I'm on the Committee of a political action

group called Press For Change, along with Mark Rees and Stephen Whittle. It's an uphill battle, but we've had some encouraging support from individual politicians and from senior church leaders recently. We remain hopeful. All best wishes to everyone in the FTM Group. Please write to: *Richard Bavin*, ■, *Cricklewood Lane, Childs Hill, London NW2 2QJ, ENGLAND*

Hey Guys—You seem to be doing quite a job out there. Noticed in a previous issue of FTM that you had a letter from Tucker, GA, which is about 5 miles from us. For future reference, we have about 25 F-Ms active in our group, which is TS and TG only of both genders. We'd appreciate it if you would refer people in Georgia and surrounding areas to us, since there are no other F-M groups in GA or surrounding states (except Eden in South Florida). We have a very active F-M program. We're also the group that runs the TS program for Southern Comfort. So you can rest assured that we have the resources to help anyone that you refer to us. Thanks much... *Jerry Montgomery, Montgomery Institute, P.O. Box 33311, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 603-9426* P.S. Hope some of your guys can make it to Southern Comfort. Last year we had 35 F-Ms, which I believe is the largest number of guys ever at a convention. We'd like to double that this year.

Write to Jerry for more information about Southern Comfort, September 29 through October 3 in Atlanta GA. Also, the Montgomery Institute has a chapter in Florida. Contact them at P.O. Box 141133, Gainesville, FL, 32614; phone (904) 332-6638.

The Transgender HIV Services Coalition meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center. [There is no affiliation between these two organizations. The Transgender HIV Services Coalition is an independent group.] Contact *Kiki Whitlock* at (415) 441-2649 for further information.

NEWS NOTE: *Kiki Whitlock has been selected to represent the transgendered population of San Francisco on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Committee of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. She reports that the first item on the Committee's agenda is to include Transgender in its name. Congrats, Kiki!*

Dear Friends: I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of my ideas and goals. Along with wanting to get clarification and feedback on how you see my role as representative of our community. One of the first things I would like to share is that I am aware the the FTM community has several different lifestyles and beliefs, these changing from state to state, country to country [and person to person—ed.]. I would like to get feedback from each and everyone to insure that I will be representing you. I have enclosed a questionnaire to help me in this process (see below). I feel that it is important

for me to hear what you are saying first before any direction is started. I am open to any suggestions. Some of the ideas I have, which are not etched in stone, are to compile a worldwide listing of providers for the FTM community. This provider list would be available through IFGE [*The FTM Resource Guide, announced in the FTM Newsletter #24, is just such a guide, and available through FTM or IFGE—ed.*]. To increase communication and cohesiveness throughout all the gender community. To increase education provided to us and our families and the professionals around the world. Develop and coordinate a task force that will represent the different lifestyles in the FTM community. These are just a few ideas. My vision is that we may all come together for each other. To move forward in claiming our rights as individuals and have the freedoms we all deserve. Thank you for your support and feedback. *Sincerely, Taylor Montgomery*

Please write your responses to the 12 questions below on a separate sheet of paper, and send them to me at: *P.O. Box 3547, Conroe, TX 77305.*

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What differences do you see in our community?
2. What similarities?
3. What way do you feel would be the best forum to discuss these differences and similarities?
4. What actions do you see that could be taken to move toward unification?
5. Do you think it would be helpful to arrange a panel discussion to address the different lifestyles of FTMs?
6. Do you think a panel discussion on sexual orientation, cultural awareness along with family and children issues need to be addressed?
7. How can IFGE and the FTM community work together?
8. What role do you see IFGE playing in the FTM community?
9. What steps do you see need to be taken for the whole gender community to work more closely together?
10. What medium can I use that would best insure accurate and clear communication to you?
11. Are there any FTMs interested in being on the radio, television, or other forms of interview?
12. How can I best be of service to the FTM community. Please give comments or suggestions.

Dear Friends at FIM: As someone deeply committed to the transgendered community, I want to inform you about an **IMPORTANT DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT AND BOOK ABOUT TRANSSEXUALS**, and to ask for your support. The Transformation Project will replace damaging mythology surrounding transsexuals with real-life stories. Both the book and the exhibit will document the lives of transsexuals through photographs from early childhood through the present, and also provide biographical text. Through this non-threatening format people will learn about transsexuals and their life-long struggles, and, thus, develop empathy. The project, which is national in scope, will take two years to complete. It is sponsored by the Gender Identity Center of Colorado and coordinated by Barbara Millman, an accomplished photographer and caring friend to our

community. **THE PROJECT IS ASKING FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.** We know it will be an uphill battle to get funding through traditional sources. While we are pursuing grants, and recently received one from the Chinook Fund, we are also asking agencies and professionals committed to the transsexual community to be as generous as possible with a tax-deductible contribution. Donations of any amount will be greatly appreciated. Those of \$100 or more will be acknowledged in the book and exhibit, which will be displayed nationally. Our project budget is \$34,275.

I am also writing because **WE WANT TO SHOW DIVERSITY WITHIN THE TRANSSEXUAL POPULATION.** We seek more people who have at least two (though not necessarily more) of the following characteristics: post-operative, professional, person of color and female-to-male. The budget will probably limit travel to the Southwest, West and New England regions.

PLEASE HELP US GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT. Fill out and return the enclosed form (reproduced below) to let us know how you can help. We are pleased to be in contact with you and appreciate your participation. *Sincerely, Cynthia Kettl, Chair; Gender Identity Center of Colorado.*

If you want to respond, please photocopy the form below, fill it out, and send it (and all related correspondence) to:

*Barbara Millman/ GIC
3715 West 32nd Ave.
Denver, CO 80211.*

Dear Cynthia: I would like to support The Transformation Project.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of ___ \$125, ___ \$75, ___ \$50, ___ \$25, ___ \$15, \$ ___ Other. (Make checks out to GIC-Transformation Project.)

Please place me on the project mailing list.

I'd like to receive a confidential questionnaire to give to someone who may be interested in participating in the project.

Please mail the questionnaire directly to the potential participant at:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Phone () _____

I am interested in locating a gallery or space to display the exhibit in my city.

Name: _____
 Organization: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Phone() _____

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BIZARRO /By Piraro

SISSY!



The Franco-Spanish border dispute of 1680.

Some of the Basics

Earlier this year we received a letter from a new man in Hawaii who was just starting out and had a number of questions. James responded fairly thoroughly, and (with the recipient's permission) thought he'd share the information with our readers. The initial inquiry concerned hormones, employment issues, Social Security, legal status, lower surgery, and what (in James' opinion) was the hardest part of making the transition. Here are some of the basics.

"With respect to particular drugs that have worked and side effects, your doctor can give you specific information. However, the preparations most commonly given locally are Testosterone Cypionate (or Depo-Testosterone from Upjohn) or Testosterone Enanthate (or Delatestryl from Squibb). The cypionate is suspended in cottonseed oil, is usually faster-acting, causes more acne if you are prone to it. The enanthate is suspended in sesame oil, is more gradual in its effects, and causes less acne (but doesn't eliminate it). Both increase your risk for coronary heart disease (to the level of a normal male), increase your risk of liver cancer, and can increase the incidence of uterine fibroids and cystic ovaries. You should have blood work done every six months to monitor your liver function, have regular gynecological exams, and watch your weight, intake of fats, alcohol and other harmful substances. The "male" side effects you want are: your voice will drop, hairline may recede, you may grow more body hair, muscle density will increase, your clitoris will enlarge, your sex drive will increase, body fat will be redistributed to male pattern (around the stomach rather than the hips), your facial bone structure will change somewhat over a few years (your features will "coarsen"). This takes time, and everybody has different reactions, timetables and responses differ. Nothing will happen overnight, so don't over medicate, and don't take oral testosterone; it's too hard on the liver.

"With respect to employment, transsexuals have no legal protection except in a few enlightened cities. I haven't heard anyone refer to your city as having any ordinance protecting the transgendered or transsexuals. If you can get hired as a male and do your job well, you shouldn't have any trouble, even if your employer finds out you're TS. If they do fire you for that alone, you can probably sue them, but you'll need a good attorney. On checks of previous employment, if your name is different it's a dead giveaway. If it's the same, it would be more difficult for them to find out you were female. Your best bet is to line up a set of supportive references who will consistently refer to you as male. Everybody wings it on job issues, because everyone has different employment histories and goals. Do your best and be a good employee; make people like and respect you. If somebody spills it then you will (hopefully) have some support.

"Changing your status with Social Security can be done in two ways. The easiest is to get a doctor's letter saying you've been

examined and tested and your true gender has been determined to be male. Because you are engaged in a medically-supervised program of cross-living it is necessary that your identification be changed to reflect your true gender. Take this letter to the SS office and fill out their change form, being completely up front with the clerk. They may not know what to do, but just be friendly and stand your ground that what you're asking for is perfectly normal and acceptable. Don't try to push anybody around. It doesn't work out well for you or for other TSs who follow you. The other way is to wait until you've had enough hormones to pass really well, then go to SS and fill out a form requesting a copy of your record. When they get it, say "There's a mistake here. You've got me in here as a female!" They say "Oh, that's terrible. I'll fix that right now!" Done! I know this has worked for several guys. However, this isn't so easy if your name is changing. The easiest way to change your name on everything is with a court order. It's easier to change your name and gender at the same time if you have a court order for your name, and let your appearance speak for your gender. This takes me into your question about birth certificates. Some states don't permit changes to birth certificates, however I believe Hawaii does. You can check by writing to: *Research and Statistics Office, Hawaii Dept. of Health, P.O. Box 3378, Honolulu, HI 96801*. To change your birth certificate you must usually complete surgical transformation and have this certified by a surgeon. This will allow you to obtain a court order decreeing that a new birth certificate be issued showing the name you want and the gender as male. It's up to the state to recognize you as male or female because that's where birth records are kept. As far as federal recognition goes, the U.S. Passport office will put your sex down as whatever you present (it helps if your driver's license says you're male), but they won't change your name from what's on your birth certificate without a court order, or without proof that you've been legally using that name for 5 years and have public records proving it (like tax return forms).

"Yes, we can marry after our status has been legally changed. U.S. Immigration will recognize you as whatever your legal status is. Other foreign governments may not. You should just be careful when travelling to stay out of situations that might cause anyone to question you. Don't get involved in illegal activities. If you end up in a foreign jail you may never get out. Some guys never get lower surgery or change their birth certificates, change their name through the usage method, marry, adopt or get children through donor insemination, and do just fine. The only time you'll run into trouble that way is if somebody claims you're a fraud (ie: your wife decides she wants your marriage annulled), or if you need some major medical care for a female problem (ie: a medically necessary hysterectomy) and you've been living as a man for a long time,

More Basics...

Continued from page 5

you'll have to come out and it may have serious repercussions in other areas of your life. Just be careful not to get into anything sticky as long as anyone can make a case that you are female. As long as you have medical authorization to be cross-living and don't try to defraud anyone with whom you have intimate physical contact, you should be all right. As far as I know, full legal status can be achieved only after you've had surgical sex reassignment, you are incapable of reproduction in the former sex (which usually means sterile in the new sex, too), and a judge issues a decree.

"Phalloplasty and metaoidioplasty are both technically genitoplasty. Many people call metaoidioplasty genitoplasty, but that's technically a misnomer (I'm guilty of it myself). I think it is unrealistic to expect that we will ever be able to have the penis we should have been born with. I think there'll be some significant improvements in surgery over the next decade or two, but I don't think the results will be what you imagine. Some guys may get lucky with their surgeon, and you may be one of the lucky ones, but I think it's a little like buying a car or a computer: there's always going to be a newer model next year, so it's best to consider carefully what features you want, what you're willing to pay, who the surgeons are and to develop a good working relationship with the one you want, then bite the bullet and get it over with. Right now, your choices are essentially bulk (phallo) vs. natural spontaneous erection and orgasmic potential (metaoidio). Urinary tract extension has been problematic with both. Several surgeons are working on this, but there's nothing definitive yet. We'll update you in the FTM Newsletter. I wouldn't want to wait until I'm 50 or 60 to have this surgery. I wouldn't want to live in a sort of self-imposed underground because my body doesn't fit with either male or female. That's my choice, and I respect anyone else's choice. I opted for metaoidioplasty because I wanted to get it over with, wanted to be legal, wanted to have erections and orgasm, wanted to have genitals that would pass for normal in a locker-room, and that a woman would be able to relate to (even though she would need a period of adjustment). I wanted to experience my genitals outside my body, wanted a procedure that was not terribly invasive, and I wanted the rest of my body to be unscarred (except, of course, for the scar on my chest). For me, it was the best option, I'm very pleased with the result and glad I did it. I'm not saying you should have the same type of surgery I did. You'll know when the time is right, and what type is right for you. You'll have to make your own decisions about your body.

"The last issue you raise is the hardest part of making the transition. Well, I'd have to say relationships are areas of particular difficulty. In many ways, once we make our decisions for ourselves, the hard part is dealing with the consequences our decision has in the lives of those around us

and our families. You may find yourself spending a great deal of energy explaining yourself to others or worrying about explaining yourself. Ultimately, you will have to come to grips with your past, and how it integrates into your present and your future. As you change, old relationships may fall away, old interests may die out, and as people begin to relate to you in new ways you will find new interests and relationships. Transition takes years, and you need years to absorb all the changes, decisions, excitement, fears, new attitudes and behaviors you'll find you almost unconsciously adopt, all the attitudes and behaviors you find are no longer appropriate now that people are relating to you the way you want them to without your having to overcompensate to achieve it. Transition is a challenge and a miracle. Don't wish for it to be over too soon. I'm not sure, but sometimes I think for those of us who begin close to age 40, transition may never end because we may always be aware of how long we endured from within a female body. But I may be too close to it to tell.

"The most difficult part of it for me was losing my partner of 14 years. She was aware of my TS identification the entire time, and she was supportive. But once my body started to change she realized that it was compromising her identity as a lesbian. She didn't want to be perceived as a straight woman, and she realized she didn't really trust or like men, and she didn't want to be with one. So she left, taking the 2 children she had conceived through my inseminating her with sperm from a sperm bank where we selected the donor to match me as closely as possible. Losing her, our house, and not being able to see my kids every day was extraordinarily painful for me. I am determined to stay close by my children and to be a responsible parent. I never imagined that this would happen to me. I thought I had everything I had always wanted at last.

"In spite of this horror, everything else in my life has been good with respect to my transition. I have had a tremendous amount of support from my friends and family (except my mother. It's been tough for her, but to her credit she's hung in there with me). And I have a new lover who can't believe I was ever in a female body, loves my small penis, loves being with a man, loves my female communications skills, and loves to struggle with my male psyche. My daughter (she's almost 9 now, and watched my whole transition) loves having a dad. I'm more comfortable in my body than I ever was before. I feel like I get to finally grow up, like my body and my soul are all of a piece now, and I get to be fully alive like I never was before. I feel like I finally did something for myself, and it's great.

"I want to wish you the best of luck. I hope your transition is without trauma, you are pleased with whatever medical choices you make, and you and your partner are able to have a family and a happy life. I can't promise you will have smooth sailing all the way, but I guarantee if this is your path you'll have an adventure one way or another. Sincerely, James."

In His Own Words

by Taylor Montgomery

I'm a "Babe" in the woods! That's how I feel most of the time. I'm telling you, a babe. When I was exposed to myself it was quite a shock to say the least. I thought I was crazy. For years I had been running and hiding. Hiding and running from myself. I did such a good job that I got lost. I guess most of the reason was survival. Every time I would let someone really close to me know who I was, the same thing would happen. The scene went something like this: "I'm going to grow up and be in the Boy Scouts." Every time I'd say something like that, someone would say to me, "You can't do that; you're not a boy." Or, another one: "You can't do that; only boys do that." My mom sat me down to educate me on what the future had in store for me: growing breasts. I let her know real quick she was mistaken. THAT was not ever happening to me. With all this wonderful support around me, no wonder I finally learned to keep quiet. I just knew I was going to grow up to be a boy. I just knew.

Then the puberty from hell set in, and I checked out. My father was killed around that time, and I really checked out. I found the wonder cure for all my pain and discomfort: Alcohol and Drugs. I didn't have to deal with anything, and I didn't. My sexual preference began to emerge, and I was labeled a lesbian. "Okay," I thought after several years, "I have the body of a female and I like females, so that logically equals gay. I will accept that." Between the drugs, alcohol, and all the women for the next 15 years, there wasn't much growing, mentally or financially. Something still did not feel right; something was missing. I didn't know what it was, and I was really scared to

**"I'm going to grow up
and be in the Boy
Scouts."**

find out (maybe I was crazy). I kept running as fast as I could, burning the candle at both ends. As a matter of fact, I ran so fast that when I did stop there wasn't much left. I could not read, or write, or have a conversation with you. I couldn't remember what you had said one second after you said it. Alcohol and drugs had eaten my mind, my feelings and my heart away. I was dying.

I did get sober, or I would not be writing this letter to you. Seven years had passed. Never once did I want to stop and deal with my gender conflict. Then other plans were made. I began to get sick. I lost lots of weight through colds and flu, and accidents, including car accidents began. The thought crossed my mind that maybe, just maybe, if I dealt with my gender issues (or at that time, my sexuality issues) things

would change. As soon as I started seeing a therapist knowledgeable in gender issues, the health problems stopped! That was 3 years ago.

The something that was missing was me. The part I kept running from all those

years. I didn't begin to feel whole until I started to validate me, the real me, the one I had stuffed so far down he was killing me not letting him out. My soul was dying. When I began to accept who I really was and found out, with the help of a trained therapist, I was not crazy! That was when I truly started feeling happiness and some kind of connectedness to other human beings. The worst fear was fear itself.

I am now growing from an adolescent to a young man, finding in this community purpose, focus, and wonderful friendships. You have all taught me about myself, friendship and role models. My life has never been so full and fulfilling. I thank each and every one of you for being who you are and exactly the way you are. Thank you for sharing yourself with me.

Book Review

Dark Hearts

by Loren E. Pedersen, 1991, Shambhala Publications, Inc., Boston and London, 247 pages, \$15.00 U.S.

Review by James Green

Dark Hearts is one of many books in a new genre of psychology: men's studies. This is an area that should be of vital interest to FTMs, because it is charting the changing face of masculinity in our culture. This is a face we are part of, and if we are to avoid being a mere blemish upon it we must understand our environment. Dark Hearts, and other books like it, can help us do that by reflecting our masculine experience to us and confirming that our experience as men

has much in common with men who do not share our unique history. They can also give us insight into the complexities of male-female relationships, a realm fraught with conflict apart from those defined by our special physical conditions.

Dark Hearts is particularly good at explaining Jungian concepts like anima, animus, shadow, self, and individuation. It has chapters covering "Myths, Initiation Rites, and Masculinity," "The Oedipal Wound," and "Men's Sense of Love." It includes a clear differentiation between Freud's ideas of masculinity and the father-son relationship as distinct from Jung's interpretation of these aspects of male psychology. Subtitled "The Unconscious Forces That Shape Men's Lives," Dark Hearts sheds light on these archetypal and cultural givens that affect all men, whether we like it or not. A foundation of understanding in these givens is critical if we are to be active participants in male evolution in our society.

MALEBOX

Dear FTM Readers:

I have thoroughly enjoyed editing the FTM Newsletter for the last three issues, and look forward to seeing future issues as they progress. Part 3 of the Leslie Feinberg interview will appear in the January '94 issue. Thanks, and please send any further communications for me to the following address:

Kevin Horwitz, P.O. Box 14872, San Francisco, CA 94114

Dear FTM:

I deeply appreciate you have continued sending me your newsletter to me everytime. Now, I'm in New York for visiting my close friend (who is also FTM) and it's easy to send you a donation without any red tapes.

Please keep it straight ahead for every FTM all over the world.

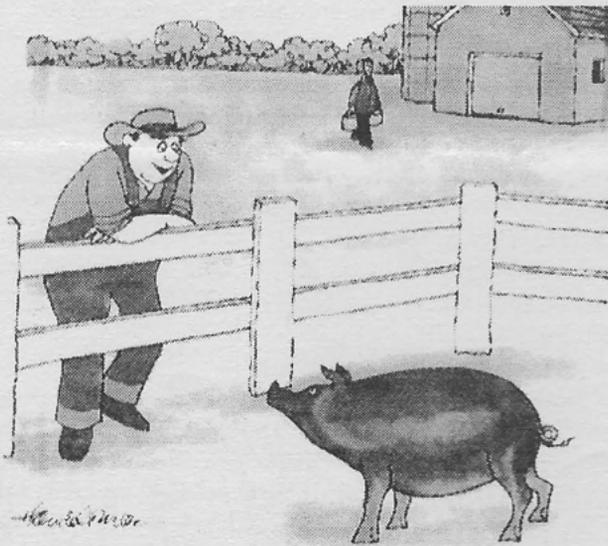
Yours Truly,

Yoshiho, Japan

Dear Yoshiho, Many thanks for your generous support!—James

Dear FTM:

I received Issue #20 (my first issue) of your newsletter and found it to be of great interest. I'm part of a support group run by Johnny Armstrong (F2M). I was relieved to find that other members of our community aren't willing to dash off for reconstructive surgery which has so many drawbacks. My life partner of the past 24 years is supportive of my decision not to seek out genital reconstruction which is both inadequate and unsatisfactory. The listing of potential medical problems on page 10 of Issue #20 took a great deal of weight off my shoulders, so to speak. I was beginning to feel that I was the "odd man out" in that I wouldn't settle for what is available at the present time.



"Saw you on 'Larry King Live' last night. I liked the way you came right out and admitted you were a pig."

Recently I wrote a letter to "Dear Abby" regarding a family "difficulty" as I needed to hear from an uninvolved third party for a fresh point of view. I've enclosed a copy for your files; I feel it is important to share the letter with my brothers and supporters of FTM.

I agree with the feedback in Issue #20 about the necessity of support for our life partners, whether in the form of a support group which meets, or through another form of communication (mail, modem, or?).

Within F2M, my partner and I have caused a bit of a stir. My partner is male-identified but, due to health problems, cannot pursue medical/surgical intervention. We are, however, gay men. This has caused a bit of confusion for the group (many people confuse gender and sexuality, and we have discovered that our brothers also tend to do so. Such is life.)

If I'm part of your mailing list, please keep me there. If not, include me. If you have a set of guidelines for submissions, please send it along. I've been known to write on occasion.

Cory West c/o Stargate, P.O. Box 964, Parkchester, NY 10462

P.S. I will respond to any communications I receive.

[I have excerpted below parts of Cory's letter to "Dear Abby", and included all of Abby's response—James]

Dear Abby:

...Seventeen years ago I entered therapy for gender dysphoria. At the time, I wasn't sure there was a procedure for the female-to-male process. The following year, I began the physical transformation procedure.

I left home due to difficulties with my parents (specifically, with my mother) in 1973. I had a life partner then (we are still together). My mother had a hard time dealing with my apparent Lesbianism. My parents attended our holy union in 1974. I was told, on more than one occasion, that I would "grow out of it" and that my orientation was a "phase".

The following year, my partner and I moved to California, then Colorado. I decided, after a great deal of soul-searching, I would no longer deny my essential self and committed to gender reassignment. When I contacted my parents to tell them, I was greeted with derision and hostility. I expected them to be upset; I didn't, however, expect to be ridiculed and reviled for following my heart—something they had always encouraged me to do.

My parents demanded I give them my therapist's telephone number, that she call them to discuss this procedure, and made it clear that they'd do whatever was necessary to stop my treatment. I offered them my therapist's mailing address as well (which they rejected). They never contacted her. I was 22 years old at the time, and there was nothing they could do.

My father died in 1982; I was told by my partner's older sister. I saw his obituary in the local paper (...). I was very upset by this, and when I called my mother to ask why I wasn't told, she informed me that I "would have shown up with (my) mustache

and would have embarrassed (my) father. "... I understood that my presence would have been disturbing; neither of them had told anyone about my changing. In fact, I was advised not to contact any relatives because I was "an embarrassment"...

In 1983, I returned to New York. My partner and I met my mother on "neutral ground" to begin mending fences... She insisted on using my old name and female pronouns [in public]. I had a full beard and mustache then, and was made uncomfortable, both by her refusal to adapt and the stares we were getting...Two years later I legally changed my name... and underwent a bilateral mastectomy. Strangely enough, my mother fronted \$500.00 to help pay for the surgery.

To date my mother refuses to use my new name or male pronouns, whether we are in public or private... I am not sure she understands that while I am still her child, I am no longer her daughter, and haven't been for over a decade.

Abby, how can I tell her that something has to give — and it must be her? It's very painful to have my mother deny my identity. The City of New York does this by failing to change gender designation on transsexuals born within the five boroughs. To have a member of my family deny who I am is more than I want to deal with. Thanks for your help. Very Truly Yours, Cory.

Dear Cory — "Divorce" your mother. She does NOT — and will not — accept you. You are an intelligent person. Live your life and don't look for approval from those who cannot — and will not love you as you are. I'm on YOUR side. — Abby.

Dear Cory: Thanks for your letter, and for sharing with us Abby's sage advice. We don't have any guidelines for submission other than write legibly (typing is best), keep it as short and tight as possible, and tell the truth about yourself so our readers can identify with your story and learn about themselves. You've done that for us today, and I hope you'll grace our pages with more of your story in the future. Thanks again. All the Best, James.

Dear FTM Readers:

If we have not yet met, I'd like to introduce myself to you. I'm Taylor Montgomery. I've been elected by the membership in the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) and my peers, to represent the Female-to-Male community on IFGE's Board of Directors. I'm very honored by this privilege, and I will work hard for you and our communities.

I would like to explain to you what IFGE is. The International Foundation for Gender Education is the largest non-profit corporation concerned with gender issues in the U.S., and possibly the

largest in the world. They have asked us, FTMs, to join them in helping to educate the general public, medical and legal professionals, and the transgendered community about gender issues. And the more we work together, the stronger our voice will be for the rest of the world to hear. IFGE has begun this education through its publication TV/TS Tapestry, and followed up with conferences around the country to bring voices together. This way of communicating has been very successful in bringing us together with information on up-to-date surgical techniques, and information on which professionals are helpful and which to avoid. The recent increase in FTM participation at the conferences has been most exciting: up to 17 plus partners!! IFGE has also begun to look into "Standards of Care" for post-op persons, not just for MTFs, but for FTMs as well. We are all in the same boat; let's paddle together. One of the newest projects is to be present at the American Psychiatric Association annual convention in San Francisco in May, 1993, to advocate for the TV/TS community and educate professionals. Another goal is to have transsexualism removed from the DSM IV. As you can see, IFGE is very active and is a strong advocate for us all. James Green and myself will be there to represent our part of the community. [Unfortunately, Taylor had to miss the APA, but James was there. His report was published in the FTM Newsletter (#24), in GenderFlex (Vol. III, #18), and will appear in TV/TS Tapestry.]

You ask how you or your group can become involved? It's very easy. First, you may contact me through the **IFGE Headquarters, P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778**. Merissa Sherrill Lynn is the founder and Executive Director, and you may reach her at the same address, or by telephoning **617-899-2212**. IFGE has several committees that can use your expertise. Or, plan to attend the next annual conference in Portland, Oregon. Contact me, and I will help in finding roommates to help cut expenses and/or carpooling to the conference.

If rights like insurance to pay for surgeries, job security, and the right to become married in all states and countries are important to you, we must stand together. We can do it if we first come together in our own community—the Transgendered community.

In Friendship, Taylor



Announcements

FTM Resource Guide Now Available

The FTM Group has pooled its resource lists and is now pleased to make available a 26 page guide to Gender Self-Help and Rap Groups, Gender Information and Education Groups, Gender Programs, Medical Service Providers, Professional Societies, Public Speakers on Gender Issues, Publications and Newsletters, and Vendors of Prosthetic Devices. The guide also includes a suggested reading list of books about transsexualism, crossdressing, medical and legal aspects of transsexualism, and biographies of FTMs. The Guide is available for \$3.00, postage paid. Any profits from the sale of the Guide support the *FTM Newsletter*. Periodic additions or corrections to the Guide will be published in the *FTM Newsletter*, and the *FTM Resource Guide* will be re-issued each June. To order your copy, send \$3.00 check or money order (payable FTM) to FTM Resource-Guide, 5337 College Ave. #142, Oakland, CA 94618.

Ask Marie...

Marie Keller, a Los Angeles-based therapist and director of the Los Angeles Gender Center, will offer a question and answer column covering a wide range of gender-related issues. If you have some burning questions, send them in for the *Ask Marie Column* in the next issue!

"MALE'IN" IT TO YA, BOY!

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Thanks for your continued support!

FTM Meeting Schedule 1993

InformationalOctober 10th
SupportNovember 14th
InformationalDecember 12th
Special guest Kim Stuart, author of *The Uninvited Dilemma*, will speak
SupportJanuary 12th
InformationalFebruary 9th
SupportMarch 8th

FTM NEWSLETTER

The world's most widely-circulated Newsletter for the Female-to-Male crossdresser and transsexual. Published quarterly since 1987. Send correspondence, address corrections and contributions to: FTM, 5337 College Avenue #142, Oakland, CA 94618

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Special thanks to Jordy Jones for proofreading and to William Huber for computer support.



Max gives Jaime his first shot of Testosterone.