

ANOTHER BIG TURNOUT AT OUR FALL '88 GET-TOGETHER

What is FTM?

We are an informal group of female-to-males, in varying stages of the female-to-male continuum, from those who just like to dress up once in a while, to those who have lived as men for over a decade. The FTM mailing list has reached 100 names, with the majority in California, but also reaching FTM's across the country, as well as in England and New Zealand and Canada.

FTM hosts Get-Togethers every three months for female-to-males and their guests only, in order that we might exchange information and socialize with others who understand what we are feeling.

Female-to-Male Get-Together #7, held on October 2, 1988, was well-attended by 15 FTM's and 4 female companions. We have a few special attendees: Jeff, who came up from Los Angeles way specifically for the Get-Together; Daniel, who recently moved to the mainland from Hawaii; David, who just moved here from Europe; and Chris, an old-timer from the Bay Area who escaped to Oregon for a while and is now back in California.

All present at the Get-Together sat in rapt attention to watch our video of Larry King Live, a TV talk show of August 23, 1988 with Steve Roczy, a female-to-male in Washington, D.C. A "medical lawyer" witness-for-hire who argued against transsexual surgery raised considerable ire amongst us, prompting laughter as well as several angry outbursts against his ridiculous rationale.

Innovative sex reassignment surgeon, Dr. David Gilbert, remained calm and professional as he described his technique, and for those of you who missed the video or who wish more information, Dr. Gilbert can be contacted at the Center for Gender Reassignment in Norfolk, Virginia, by phoning 804-622-7500.

Afterwards, several small groups spontaneously formed to discuss the video and other topics, and Jeff commanded a large audience while sharing information with the group. Morgan proudly bared his chest to show us Dr. Brownstein's surgical artistry.

Our next Get-Together is scheduled for Sunday, January 8, 1989, at the Chez Mollet Restaurant in San Francisco. We expect to see Jeff there again, as well as Dennis from Philadelphia. As promised, a panel of wives and girlfriends of FTM's will give us a presentation, with audience participation strongly encouraged. This should be a very interesting one!

Through normally held in March, we are hoping to schedule our Spring Get-Together in conjunction with the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) Convention in San Francisco April 4-9. Although the IFGE is predominantly a male-to-female organization, they expect several FTM's from across the country to attend their Convention, and we're sure they'll welcome the opportunity to attend an FTM Get-Together as well.

For more information on FTM and our Get-Togethers, contact Lou, [redacted] Haight St. [redacted] San Francisco CA 94117.



In the film *Sylvia Scarlett* (1935), Katharine Hepburn plays a boy who teams up with Cary Grant as con artists in Victorian England. See this delightful dark comedy at the Castro Theatre, Castro and Market Streets in San Francisco, on Wednesday, January 25, 1989 at 4:10 and 7:35 p.m. George Cukor directs.

OUR FTM "MALE" BOX

Dear FTM,

Congratulations!!! for developing such an excellent and elegant and newsy and informative newsletter. Someone brought your newsletter to our November Female-to-Male Group meeting. It was well-received by all and I expect everyone will be writing for a subscription.

The purpose of this letter is primarily to let you know that the Institute would be blessed to have FTM available to its members.

Charles Kiley, Director
Institute for Psychosexual Health
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

. . .

Dear FTM,

Many rumors have been circulating about the future of J2CP since I began wearing the habit of the Sisters of St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

J2CP continues as the primary international information/referral service for transsexuals. In addition to maintaining a referral list for most areas of the world, J2CP provides a comprehensive information packet on transsexualism, and an educational outreach to the media and higher education programs.

J2CP will publish the sixth edition of **Legal Aspects of Transsexualism** during the first quarter 1989, and I hope to establish an electronic bulletin board during the second quarter '89.

Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE
J2CP Information Services
P. O. Box 184
San Juan Capistrano CA 92693

. . .

Dear FTM,

I really enjoyed our last Get-Together. I met a lot of new people and I had a great time. I was wondering if you could include the following in the next newsletter?

A couple of other FTM's told me about a gynecomastia vest which is for genetic males with enlarged breasts. This vest works reasonably well; however, the bottom tends to roll up a bit at times. It is a full vest fastened by little eyelets and hooks. It is a "Gynecomastia Vest" #MV-110, Small = chest 32-36, Medium = 36-40, Large = 40-44, X-Large = 44+. It can be ordered from Morris Designs, phone 804-481-9313 and costs \$26, plus \$8 COD shipping, second day UPS.

See you at the next Get-Together.

Kris Hollinger

. . .

Dear FTM,

After living full-time as a male for over 3 years, I went back to Singapore to visit my family. It was great! I didn't expect such rousing welcome given to me by family members and relatives and friends. It was good to see my nieces which I have not seen

since living in London for 4 years now. I also met my brother-in-law which I have not met before, my cousin's twin daughters, cousin's husband, etc. It was a successful trip and I am lost with words to describe how happy I was to be accepted, respected and treated so fabulously well. Hooray!

My uncle, aunts, cousins and even granny, whom at first I thought would have difficulties accepting me, on the contrary, gave me so much encouragement and made me feel so good and at home. What more can I say but to thank the Lord for answering my prayers, blessing and guiding me all through my stay and operations in London. Amen!

Dad and mum were, I think, stunned at the sight of me. They didn't expect how 'good looking' I turned out to be. Not that I am boasting but I am reasonably presentable and smart-looking. So on the family side all's well. Phew! I am relieved for all these years I was wondering at their reactions and was skeptical about them accepting my new image and status.

I then went to the islands for a rest and time for reflection over the eventful developments in my entire life which took a point of no turning back. I NEVER regretted what I have done. In fact I actually started living soon after my first operation. And after the second operation, I tasted the sweetest of living despite undergoing much pains and emotional upheavals in my personal life.

As to FTM peer support groups, I am afraid it's not in existence here in London. Many of them after their operations like to get back to normal living as quickly as possible and avoid associating with the transsexual world. But I do get in touch with a few occasionally and am prepared to help anyone in terms of advice and sharing of experience. I have not attended any meetings, nor heard of any such meetings, here in London.

Jamie L.

. . .

Dear FTM,

Glad to get your newsletter. Great you had 18 FTM's and lovers at your last meeting! How many were TV's?

The "Butch/Transvestite Lesbian" support group here in Massachusetts didn't fly. Only two interested others besides me, and also my time and energies are so taken up with work that I couldn't do the organizing and advertising of this new group justice. Hard to accept that I'm not Superman. The message I get in this area from Lesbians is that it's OK to be

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

FTM NETWORKING

Who's out there? Where are they? What's available in general and in my area? Who'll understand? Who can help? Who needs help?" We have all asked ourselves these questions. Time and again, the answer remains the same: each other. Unfortunately it is often the case that distance or circumstances make contact inconvenient, difficult or impossible. We reach out blindly, hoping things will work out, finding assistance and others in the same situation as frequently by accident as by design.

Our new column, **FTM Networking** is an attempt to solve that problem. It is our link with each other. The size and ultimate durability of the column depends upon each one of us. We have all lived through experiences which may be of benefit to someone else, no matter what stage of the female-to-male experience we are in. By returning to others some of the help we at one time received, we are all strengthened.

Feel free to contact those listed. You can reach others by sending your name and address, along with a line or two, to **FTM Networking**, 1827 Haight St. #164, San Francisco CA 94117, so that others can contact you. You can rest assured that **FTM Newsletter** is distributed only to other **FTM's**, and is not available to the general public.

.....

Jeff Hormones since 1982; mastectomy in '84; hysterectomy in '86. Photographer, actor, small business owner.

Female female in Seattle wants to correspond with **FTM's**. For your information, there are women out here who would like to get to know you. Either for romance or just to make friends. Just so happens I'm one of those females. So drop me a note and I will answer all correspondence. Claudia

I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has had phallus construction surgery, especially the urinary connections, how it was done and was it successful. I had construction done May '87 and am having difficulties with leaks that are blamed on fistulars. I wish I had someone to talk to prior to my decision to proceed with the urinary part. Damien

I am a lesbian. late 40's, who wants to meet with **FTM's** or crossdressers to explore my own interests in this lifestyle. I am not a transsexual, am comfortable being a woman, but I am attracted to **FTM's** and need to define my place, my self-discoveries and open a path to a wonderful future in the **FTM** world.



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FOX & CARSKADON  **Better Homes and Gardens**

I would like to meet people in my area, but will correspond with anyone, including partners of **FTM's**, since that is where I believe I belong. Judy

I would like to correspond with other **FTM's** via mail and possibly meet with them, especially if they live in the Sacramento area. If there is enough interest, I would like to set up a monthly get-together for the guys in this area. I would also like to hear input, good or bad, about Dr. Laub's chest surgery and the Palo Alto Gender Program. Kris

European **FTM** would like to challenge American woman for fun, pleasure and possible marriage. Write to J.D.,

I would like to know where they have the best-shaped "weenies." I hear Europe does the best because they have done "so many" - in spite of what others say in the U.S.A. My mother heard so and she wants me to have mine done in Denmark. Also wondering if anyone out there was into writing about the Mexican Smilax, and if any gay/lesbian/bi/straight **FTM's** or partners are interested in asking about the East Coast. E. Ryan

HOW TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR VOICE

HOW TO BREATHE CORRECTLY

To give proper support to the voice, breathing should come from the waist area or midsection, not the upper chest. The stomach should move out as you breathe in and gradually move in as you talk. Dr. Morton Cooper recommends this exercise to see if you are breathing correctly:

1. Lie face up on the floor.
2. Place one hand on your chest, the other on your stomach.
3. Breathe gently and easily with your mouth slightly open. Your stomach should move while your chest remains still.
4. Practice breathing this way in standing and sitting positions.
5. To practice using midsection breath support while talking, breathe in and talk on the outgoing air for a few minutes several times a day until it becomes a habit.

LOWERING YOUR PITCH

If you're dissatisfied with the pitch of your voice, Sandy Linver recommends the following exercise:

1. Sit in a comfortable chair with a tape recorder handy. Put a book on the floor between your feet.
2. Let your body feel heavy -- the head rolls forward on the chest, the body slumps forward. Head, neck and shoulders are completely relaxed.
3. Turn on the tape recorder and read in this position. Pay attention to the resonance in your chest.
4. Sit up and "think" your voice low and relaxed. Read the same thing again.
5. Play back the tape and listen to how much lower your voice comfortably can be.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR PITCH AND TONE FOCUS

According to Dr. Cooper, every person has an optimal pitch level -- at which you get the most sound for the least effort -- and an habitual pitch level -- the one you actually use. Ideally, these two pitch levels should be the same; more often than not, they aren't. To check your pitch level, try this:

1. Say "um-hum" as though you were agreeing with someone.
2. Now say "um-hum one," "um-hum two." If the pitch of the "um-hum" is close to that of the numbers, you're probably using correct pitch.

The voice's tone focus or resonance is closely related to the pitch level and comes from three areas: the upper throat or nose, the middle throat or mouth, and the lower throat around the larynx or voice box. This exercise is intended to check habitual pitch and tone focus:

1. Place one hand on your chest, the other hand on your stomach, and breathe in with the stomach moving out.
2. Make a humming noise with your lips closed and press in on the stomach with quick staccato motions. As the sound escapes through the nose, you should feel a buzz around the face mask area -- the mouth and upper lip.

TELLIN' IT LIKE IT IS: VOICE TIPS FOR THE FTM

In *Speak Easy: How to Talk Your Way to the Top*, Sandy Linver says, "The sound of our voice indicates the kind of person we are, above and beyond our clothing. You can open your mouth and blow it if you are vocally inconsistent with your visual image."

One recent study, comparing the importance of words, tone of voice, and body and facial language, found that 55% of meaning is conveyed through body language, 38% through tone of voice, and only 7% through one's actual words.

A man's voice is deeper than a woman's because his larynx is larger and vocal cords thicker. Testosterone produced during male puberty enlarges the laryngeal cartilage, which grows thicker and outward forming the male Adam's apple. The vocal cords also thicken and lengthen in response to the hormone. Female-to-male transsexuals are lucky in that taking male hormones will lower the voice as it does for the adolescent boy; however, this is of no help to the pre-hormone FTM or the FTM transvestite or cross-dresser, who must go it alone.

Sounding adult and masculine can be a real problem for the FTM who already looks like a young boy. Many FTM's resort to swear words or abrasiveness in hopes of sounding more butch, but usually this only attracts more intense stares from John Q. Public - just what we don't want!

It is extremely helpful, while you are speaking, to be aware of the male image you wish to project. Have a clear picture in your mind of the man you are, and really **look** at the person to whom you are speaking. Be direct and sure of yourself - don't just let your voice drift. Your self-confidence is very important here, as relaxation is paramount to correct breathing and, since voice is produced on exhalation, there can be no adequate voice without correct breathing. Remember: air comes from the stomach, not the throat. Think lower, from the gut. Tensing the throat and jaw leads to those high nasal tones, as the throat is not allowed to open and produce sounds.

This relaxation will also benefit you in correct articulation, with concentration on an effective use of pauses and downward inflection, particularly at the end of definite statements. (Note how women's voices raise at the end of a statement; for example, in a restaurant a woman will order "the New York steak?" Instead of asking for what you want, **tell** them what you want.)

The only objective way to check your results is by working with a tape recorder. And be patient. As with any change of habit, voice training takes time and thought.



butch or mannish or crossdress, but you don't openly talk about it! I admit I do feel lonely/isolated far too often in New England in aspects of my sexuality. I hope to try organizing the group again at another time when others are more ready to see the need for this type of support and pitch in on the organizing.

About "Fun With A Sausage": It's a video short produced in San Francisco by Blush Productions, a Lesbian video company. It's b&w and silent, and the main character is kind of a cross between Charlie Chaplin and Pauline (as in *The Perils of ...*). I show this video at each S/M Liberation seminar I do because it's fun, humorous, but also a powerful depiction of oppression of sexual differences in our communities. The main character, a slim and handsome Latino Lesbian, wakes up in San Francisco, puts on her mustache, man's shirt and 501's and gets ready to go out and cruise. She tucks a sausage into her jeans for the finishing touch and ventures out into Castro Street. What follows are the reactions of various kinds of people who see her "out": straight men (they call her "fag" and hassle her); Gay men (they cruise her amusingly and one corners her, only to find her tool is a fake and literally throws it to the dogs); a group of Lesbians in a Lesbian Center (they're horrified when she cruises them and throw her out into the street where she meets an S/M dyke who's been similarly expelled). There's a happy, romantic ending when these two outcasts embrace, handcuffs and all. It's really well-done and funny like Chaplin. Really makes some good human/personal and political points in a few minutes.

Bet P.

* * *

Hello!

I'm glad I was able to make it to the September Get-Together. It was really nice being able to meet some of the guys from your neck of the woods. It has made me all the more determined to get my own home, so that I can in turn host a real huge to-do along the lines of what Jude Patton used to do once a year. The opportunity for information exchange and networking is absolutely invaluable. The service you provide by hosting these is truly priceless. I enjoyed being a part of it. I will certainly make a concerted effort to attend your next one.

Best always, Jeff, Los Angeles

* * *

Dear FTM,

As far as how I got my name - my case is simple. I was born knowing who I was supposed to be (that in itself is odd if you really think about it all) and well I could enjoy some of the other stories, especially humorous ones.

E. Ryan Ekstrom

Editor's Note: All you FTM's out there - don't forget to write to FTM and tell us how you chose your male name. An exciting article is in the works.

* * *

Dear FTM,

Here's an idea for small-breasted FTM's (pre-breast reduction) that has been a godsend for me this past summer:

Rather than binding the entire rib cage which squeezes the chest and makes one's upper body look even smaller and narrower, which most of us certainly don't need, simply pull the breasts down and to the side, using two 8-inch strips of adhesive tape. I use 1 - 1/2" wide Scotch transparent tape which is painless to remove, unlike waterproof medical tape which pulls out hair when removed. Another advantage to transparent tape over white medical tape is that it is invisible even through thin shirts. I have even swam at the beach wearing the Scotch tape (taking care to cover chest with my arms when entering and leaving the water - it's not THAT invisible!) and it held on fairly well. Apply by pressing one end of the tape over the nipple (flattening out those pointed female nipples) at the same time pulling at a downward angle to the side and tape to the side of the chest below the armpit.

Kevin R.

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FTM OUTREACH

Beginning with the December 1988 issue, San Francisco's *Coming Up!* magazine will list FTM as a support group in their monthly resource directory. We hope this and other discreet advertising will reach female-to-males who haven't heard of us through the grapevine.

VERA An FTM Movie from Brazil

by Demian V.

"Vera," a Brazilian film about a young female-to-male coming to terms with her transsexuality in an orphanage, is a definite must-see for all FTM's and their friends. This film, part of the Lesbian and Gay Film Festival at the Roxie Cinema in San Francisco, was highly enjoyable as well as emotionally charged in its depiction of Vera's "coming out" as a transsexual.

Vera, who prefers to be called by her last name, Bauer (played by Ana Beatriz Nogueira, who won the Best Actress Award at the 1987 Berlin Film Festival for her role as Bauer), is a poet, and a vivid, passionate one at that. Throughout the movie, her poems are read, punctuating the scenes with an incandescent, torpid music. I liked that. I also liked the depiction of Vera/Bauer as sensitive and graceful with a brooding intensity. Because Vera doesn't look any different from most of the girls in the orphanage and is boyishly attractive, she probably doesn't fit into what a lot of people would normally stereotype as an FTM. This is another good touch to the film and of course (!) throughout the story Vera / Bauer astonishes her confidantes when she announces her conviction that she is actually a male. Sound familiar?

Having matured and left the orphanage, Vera works at a sort of space library. She pursues a heterosexual woman and wins her attention, flabbergasting her by publishing a torrid poem about her in a local newspaper. Her muse is slowly magnetized by Vera's ardent pout and boyish good looks in a man's suit. She gives in to her attraction but is taken aback when her suitor will not undress all the way in bed, preferring to keep on a man's undershirt to conceal her female contours as much as possible. Although this portion of the film may have an exaggerated quality, it illustrates by virtue of hyperbole what a lot of FTM's feel about our bodies while in the female form: the discomfort, embarrassment and pain of feeling as though we are in the wrong body when with a lover. A friend of mine, struggling to understand my situation as a new and slightly overwhelmed FTM, found this segment particularly instructive. She's told me that this part of the film really clued her in as to the very real differences between what a lesbian feels when she is with a woman and what a female-to-male transsexual would feel in the same situation.

On the down side, I occasionally found "Vera" confusing. I think that this can be attributed to an art school overdose on the part of the filmmaker. Sometimes it was hard to tell what was going on where - was she at work or was she still at the orphanage? I like non-narrative films, but the non-narrative feeling that was written into this movie, which is basically a straightforward narrative, weakens the film overall. In any case, I recommend it - a strong, moving film.



A scene from Vera

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GENDER NETWORKER

Introducing a new bimonthly newsletter for helping professionals resource workers and others interested in Gender Dysphoria Syndrome Edited by Rupert Raj. \$20 for six issues. Make payable to: "Gender NetWorker PO Box 1224, Station A, Toronto Ontario, Canada M5W 1G7.

IT'S "F2M" IN NEW JERSEY

The latest issue of **TV-TS Tapestry** lists the following female-to-male group: F2M, c/o S.G., Box 615, Tenafly NJ 07670. The group is listed as a non-profit social and support organization created by and for female-to-male transsexuals and crossdressers. Services include social events in the New York area, confidential contacts, a comprehensive resource directory, and a newsletter. F2M actively solicits correspondence.

CHICAGO GENDER SOCIETY

FTM's in the middle part of the U.S. can find peer support from David Maxwell of the Chicago Gender Society, P. O. Box 578005, Chicago IL 60657; phone 312-544-7717.

RECOMMENDED READING ON TRANSSEXUALISM

Looking for some reading material for your parents, friends or partner on the transsexual experience? Kim Stuart's book, **Uninvited Dilemma**, published in 1985, gives fair time to the female-to-male and is one of the best we've found. Order from Metamorphous Press, P. O. Box 10616, Portland OR 97210-0616; phone 503-228-4972.

FTM PRAWNS TASTE BETTER!

The September 1988 issue of **Penthouse Forum** tells us that Israeli breeders, through a secret process, are altering baby female prawns into baby male prawns. The result is a bigger, better-tasting shrimp, according to Dani Cohen, a biology professor at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

DR. PAUL WALKER RETIRES

Psychologist Paul A. Walker has informed **FTM** that he will retire from practice as of December 1988.

Dr. Walker's expertise will be sorely missed by the female-to-male community, both professionally and personally.

Dr. Walker was a previous president of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association, and chairman of the committee that developed the Standards of Care in 1979.

DR. IRA PAULY SPEAKS

"Sexual Preferences of Transsexuals" will be the topic of Dr. Ira Pauly's presentation in May 1989 at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in San Francisco. His videotaped interview with a female-to-gay-male will be shown. Dr. Pauly is acknowledged as an authority on the female-to-male transsexual. Look for a report on Dr. Pauly's presentation in the June issue of **FTM**.

ENDOCRINOLOGIST AT KAISER

One of our members asked us to pass along the word that Dr. Caplan, an endocrinologist at Kaiser Hospital in Walnut Creek, Calif. is knowledgeable and helpful to transsexuals.

WHO NEEDS 'EM?

We're wondering why the State of California recently ordered 25 cases (\$468 worth) of sanitary napkins for the California Men's Colony in Chino, a men's prison.....

MICHAEL L. BROWNSTEIN, M.D., F.A.C.S.

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The Sun (a National Enquirer-type tabloid) reigns as the leading source for our "If Only It Were That Simple" department. FTM #1 reported the Sun's article about a woman who was struck by lightning "causing an almost instantaneous sex change to a man." Now the December 27, 1988 issue tells us:



• VANIA DEMIREVA: Victim of a demented doctor's scalpel

Mom goes in for a hysterectomy and comes out a man

A ROUTINE SURGERY was turned inside-out by a medical mixup when a tired surgeon performed a sex change operation on an unsuspecting and unconscious mother of three!

Gynecologist Petar Frenceva, 53, was filling in for the regular surgeon who was scheduled to perform a hysterectomy.

by NOREEN MILLER

But tired from an already full morning of surgery, the dazed doc mistakenly grabbed the wrong chart and began the operation that would transform the patient from a woman to a man!

"I can't believe he did such a thing to me," cries a stunned and heartbroken Vania Demireva, 45.

"Something just didn't feel quite right when I awoke following the operation. And when I took a peek under the covers — I almost died!"

Hospital officials explain the horrible foul-up as the product of an overworked and understaffed medical facility.

Frenceva's brain may have been a bit dull, but the scalpel certainly wasn't as he cut in and began the lengthy sex-change operation while his poor victim lay unconscious on the table.

Shocked

Operating room assistants were unaware what type operation Frenceva was to perform. They were shocked when told of the horrendous screw-up they had helped pull off!

"I should have known something wasn't right,"

says operating room nurse Antoaneta Guecheva.

"Dr. Frenceva had this strange look on his face. He had the attitude: 'Let's get this over with so we can all get home.'"

The surgeon was put under suspension by the hospital administration.

But Vania feels like a freak and is demanding the hospital rectify the damage.

"From the waist up, I'm normal. But from the waist down I'm a circus freak," she moans from her home in Varna, Bulgaria.

"My husband won't even sleep next to me anymore. And all the town's people stare at me."

DOC GIVES WOMAN



SEX CHANGE BY MISTAKE

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

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

FARLEY/Phil Frank

