
KEYNOTE LUNCHEON

Thursday, August 18, 1994

Third Annual International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy

Speakers:

- o Laura Elizabeth Skaer, Attorney, Employment Law and Policy Director, ICTLEP, Inc.
- o Dianna Cicotello, Author, *The Employer's Guide: Gender Transition on the Job and The Co-Worker's Guide*
- o Jane Fee, Equal Rights Activist, State of Minnesota Non-Discrimination Act of 1992

A SUCCESSFUL AND OPEN TRANSITION WITHIN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

by Laura Elizabeth Skaer,
Keynote Luncheon Moderator and
Employment Law and Policy Director,
ICTLEP

Good afternoon. My name is Laura Skaer. I am an attorney and businesswoman from Denver, Colorado, and I am a director of the ICTLEP. I've been doing this for all three years, and I'm really glad to be here. I'm glad all of you are here, and it's my privilege to officially welcome all of you to TRANSGEN '94. A lot of exciting things have happened in the three years that the law conference has been going.

I got involved in ICTLEP when Phyllis Frye, at a Texas 'T' Party, came up to me and told me about this idea and asked if I would help. I said I would.

I'm a lawyer and businesswoman in the oil and gas industry. I transitioned on the job in the oil and gas industry. I was very visible in that industry. I was president of a ten-state trade association known as the Independent Petroleum Association Mountain States at the time that I was



Laura Elizabeth Skaer, Attorney,
Employment Law and Policy Director, ICTLEP, Inc.

going through transition. People started figuring out what was happening. I went through that, and I went through the "barber shop" talk. I went through people telling me one week that I was the best president the organization had had in ten years, and the next week telling me I didn't have the right image. I persevered through all of that.

After I had transitioned and gone full time, I was appointed by the Governor of the State of Colorado for the state's minerals, energy and geology policy commission, a position for which I had applied for as Larry and was appointed as Laura. And they knew. The selection committee had agreed that it was irrelevant. When they told the Governor, the Governor's response was, "Well, we are required to consider racial, ethnic and gender diversity in making these appointments. Looks like we already have gender diversity covered, don't we?"

More than once the Deputy Director of Colorado Department of Natural Resources has told me that he owes me a couple of chits because I have bailed him out of the gender diversity problems on state boards and conventions more than once. His is a board of fine government people within the Department of Natural Resources; four representatives from oil and gas, four representatives from mining, three from coal, one from hard rock, one environmental, a representative of local government records, and a couple of citizen representatives.

I have found in these two years that it's never been an issue. I have been totally accepted the entire time. I want to add to what I told you last year and just now, that in May, I was unanimously elected to chair the State's Mineral, Energy and Geology Advisory Board for the next two years.

I say that because what I have found is that you can be yourself and you can be accepted for who you are. A lot of it is attitude. Most of it is attitude and a willingness to accept that life is a two-way street. If you do your homework and if you prepare the way, and if you're empathetic to other people's feelings and sensitive to their needs, they'll be sensitive to yours. If you're a caring, productive, hard working person before, they'll realize that you still are, and they will accept you and accept what you have to offer life.

And I've never been happier. People who have known me for years notice the stress is gone. The tension is gone, and they see an inner peace that I know I feel. It makes me feel really good that it's on the outside.

Before we get to our speakers, I want to introduce Phyllis Frye who is the Executive-Director, founder, chair, energy behind, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, the law conference—Phyllis Frye. While Phyllis and I don't always agree on all the issues and send faxes to each other about our different points of view, one of the things that I—(Frye kids that they've burned up two fax machines so far)—need to tell you is that Phyllis is a dear friend, and I love her, and I need to tell you that.

I wouldn't be here today. I'm not sure I would have attempted to transition, and I'm not sure I would have the inner peace and the happiness that I feel today if it wasn't for Phyllis and the impact she had on my life. At that Texas 'T' Party when we finished giving our legal presentations, we talked. Phyllis looked at me and said, "You can do it." And I said, "I can do what?" She said, "You can transition. The only one holding you back is yourself." I started thinking about that, and I realized how right she was.

That was kind of a motivation to get my life together, and to accept myself for who I am, and to

realize that I have a special gift from God. My purpose on this earth—like I believe all of our purposes—is to make the world a better place because of our lives than it would be without our lives. This happens to be one of the gifts that our Creator has given me just like He gives all of you different gifts. I decided it was high time I make the best of it.

The other directors I want to introduce are Sharon Ann Stuart from New York. Sharon is the Military Law and Gender Bill of Rights Director. Sharon is another lawyer who Phyllis—quote, unquote—asked to be involved and who jumped in head first. Melinda Whiteway is our newest director. Melinda is a lawyer from California, and is in charge of our documents program. Our non-lawyer director is Dee McKellar. Dee helps make the recordings and records and pictures and makes all of that work for us.

I have one other announcement to make. Tonight at 9:30—everybody knows dinner is on your own—but tonight at 9:30 in the Acapulco Room, we're going to have an open forum on the future of ICTLEP. Where are we going with this? This ends Year Three. We're finding that what we have accomplished in three years is, I think, something that none of us would have imagined possible three years ago. Blows me away! The future is ours, and it's ours to take, and it's ours to define. So come to the Acapulco Room tonight at 9:30 and help define our future.

WHAT CAN ONE PERSON DO? WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Introduction by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

Today we have two speakers at this keynote luncheon. The first is my friend, who was a great teacher and someone to bounce things off of when I was transitioning. She and I met at the Gender Identity Center of Colorado. Dianna's transitioned twice. Once, she had to go back to the male role to resolve an issue that could only be resolved in that role, but then she came back and transitioned the second time. Dianna has written two books, both of them have been reviewed and critiqued and approved at this conference past. One is The Employer's Guide: Gender Transition on the Job, and the other is The Coworker's Manual. She's also a prolific writer and researcher. She spent several days at Colorado Christian School's library doing a massive amount of research in order to write an article called, "Ambi-gendered, God's Special Gift."

Anyone whose read any of Phyllis' faxes regarding the March on Washington and the Stonewall 25 event knows that ICTLEP has made a gallant effort to get organizations to include the word "and transgender." Dianna Cicotello, in her own way, has also been working with them, the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities of Colorado, to get them to understand who we are and why it's important that it be inclusive—that "and transgendered" be included. I would like to share with you some results of her work.

Recently there was a conference in Boulder, Colorado, led by the University of Colorado's football coach, Bill McCartney, called "Promise Keepers." It's a Christian and evangelical conference for men. During the conference there was a kind of a peaceful protest to emphasize the diversity of life. The protesters affirmed, and here is a quote, "This is not a protest. This is a celebration of diversity," said organizer Cory Simpson, leader of the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender alliance.

Dianna Cicotello is the reason "and transgender" appears in the name of that student group. In

the same paper there was a letter to the other editor from a person in response to a letter that was critical of the local gay pride parade. And this person said, "I am proud to be part of the gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgender community." Diane Cicotello is the reason transgender is included and references within the greater community.

Without any further ado, and since I lost her introductory bio, let me introduce Dianna Cicotello, who is one of our two luncheon speakers today. Dianna.

by Dianna Cicotello:

Thank you Laura. Several years ago, still working in the male role, I made a trip to England. I flew into London at Heathrow and went into customs. There I was asked a series of questions that I was asked again a little over a year ago in my now female role. Those questions stayed with me from a different perspective than they were intended by the customs people. As the custom official looked at my passport, he said, "Who are you? Where are you going? What do you intend to do when you get there?"

And I ask you this afternoon, "Who are you? Where are you going? What do you intend to do when you get there?" The questions come right behind a question of what can only one person do. "Oh, I'm just one, little, insignificant person, and I've been stuffed in a closet my whole life, and I don't know what kind of difference just one person can make."

Let's talk about some people whose names we are very familiar with, and let's talk about what one person can do. Let's talk about a man named Sigmund Freud, who put together a whole system that maybe finally unraveled minds so that people can have their own life instead of another's life. There's a system of psychology that's existed for the past 100 years, and it's existed because of one man, Sigmund Freud.

Let's talk about a man named Nichol Artessla. Most of you may not know that name, but you really should because he's the most prolific genius inventor in all of humanity. He invented more useful things than Thomas Edison, yet he has been taken from the history books. Nichol Artessla, who's that? He's the man who invented radio. He's the man who invented radio control. He's the man who invented the alternating current electrical distribution system, all electrical motors, transformers, the whole high voltage distribution system that exists all over the world.

He did most of his work in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He demonstrated ways in 1910 to move electricity to houses 30 miles outside of Colorado Springs without wires. His work is documented, but he's been purged from history. What can one person do, whether he is remembered today or not, or whether his memory is only that of a prototype Hollywood mad scientist because he was a loaner. He was different. He wanted things to be his way or no way. He was strange. He was secretive. He didn't keep good notes of what he did, but we owe our whole modern society to the things he did whether he was remembered or not. What can one person do?

What can one person do in the modern era. A real good case can be made for the collapse of communism that lead back to the shoulders of one person working with one person. Lech Walesa in Poland worked with the labor unions, and Pope John Paul worked with Lech Walesa to bring about a peaceful human rights revolution that ultimately lead to the collapse of the communist empire. What can one person do?

Now, I have no intention of putting myself in a category with those men that I just talked about. But what can one person do on a very local, on a very small basis?

Two years ago, almost three years ago, a group in Colorado called Colorado for Family Values put together a proposal for an amendment to the Colorado Constitution. It became known as Amendment 2. What Amendment 2 held was that if you were gay, lesbian or bisexual, you would not be able to file lawsuits for discrimination. The law specifically says there will be no claims of discrimination under any circumstance if you're a gay, lesbian or bisexual. Now we transgenders can secretly smile and giggle and say, "Hey, they left us out. We would still have our rights as transgendered people." But that's not okay. It's not okay to leave people out in the open, exposed. And besides, we're guilty by association for the minds of "normal" society. People assume a man in a dress is gay.

I got involved in Amendment 2, in the fight to keep Amendment 2 from happening. Amendment 2 happened because the leaders in opposition were too shortsighted about what could happen underground, away from the newspapers. All of the effort opposing Amendment 2 went into Denver, Aspen and Boulder which defeated Amendment 2 soundly. None of the effort opposing Amendment 2 went into the rural plains of Colorado. None of the opposition work, except for that in Aspen, went into the mountains of the western slope of Colorado. Amendment 2 passed.

Now, the struggle is big. Because now, the gay and lesbian community has to prove that Amendment 2 is not good law. Just because the majority of the people approve it, it doesn't mean it's good law. I've been very involved in that fight from the day that that fight began, the day after Amendment 2 passed. To several in the gay and lesbian community—and I guess I should say this up front—I'm not necessarily part of the gay and lesbian community. My spouse and I just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary, and my daughter is here with me today. She's 23, and she just graduated from Hastings College in Hastings, Nebraska.

My work with the gay and lesbian community is not because I consider myself to be part of that community but because I consider the work that they are doing to be incredibly necessary. And out of the groups that were formed in the aftermath of the Amendment 2 was an educational group. It was a group called the Speakers Project to End Discrimination, S.P.E.D. or SPED. It's a 501(c)(3) group. It has been funded by the Human Rights Campaign. Part of my trip cost here this week was as a sponsorship from S.P.E.D.

One of the things that the people in S.P.E.D. have very slowly come to realize, with my presence, is that their fears around someone who is transgendered and their discrimination against me, in the early days that I was part of the organization, were exactly what they were asking me not to do to them. I was not invited to a lot of the things that S.P.E.D. did up front, but I kept being involved—not as an activist but as a presenter—not as an in-your-face person but as someone who had information that they could use.

Over the months, from the time Amendment 2 had passed, what they came to realize, and what the gay and lesbian community in Denver came to realize, is that a lot of the models and a lot of the theories that I put together to help the transgender community in Colorado also applied to the gay and lesbian community. In other words, they found I had something special to offer that they couldn't get anywhere else. As they realized that they were doing to me what they were asking the rest of society not to do to them, they changed.

We have an exercise that the S.P.E.D. group does on stereotypes. Some of you who have been involved in diversity training know the exercise. You put pieces of paper around the room with categories of people—Jewish male, Jewish female, black, Hispanic, Hispanic male, Hispanic female. The people in the audience go around and write their stereotypes on the respective pieces of paper. And then you go back and look at it, all the stereotypes that form every group.

At my insistence we added transvestite and transsexual to this list of stereotypes because I wanted to see what some of the stereotypes were. Within the S.P.E.D. group itself, doing a self training two months ago with that exercise, I was a little bit stunned by the result. The young people from the gay and lesbian community wrote on their stereotype page for transsexual these are the words: teacher, speaker, researcher. I said, "Wait a minute." Don't make me be the stereotype. But what they said was that I was the only transsexual that they had ever met. Yes they met female impersonators, yes they met drag queens, yes, they met those stereotypes and they were afraid of those stereotypes. They were afraid of those stereotypes hurting them. But they had never met a real, non-stereotypical transgendered person before.

Behind that, two weeks ago, a cousin of mine from Pennsylvania came out to visit us in Colorado. She has come out to her family as lesbian in the last few months. My spouse and I took her to dinner, and we went through this story one more time. With her low level of activism in Pennsylvania in the gay and lesbian community there, she reported that they have made a deliberate effort to exclude transgendered people because they are afraid of the stereotype. And as we talked over dinner, she realized that I'm not that stereotype. I'm not who they think we are.

One of the things we discovered around Amendment 2 in Colorado, one of the things the gay and lesbian community has discovered, is that people who know they know somebody who's gay don't vote for things like Amendment 2. So there's a big push in the gay and lesbian community in Colorado to come out. Come out! Come out because the more people who know they know somebody who's gay, the less chance there is that we'll have to do Amendment 2 things over again.

Behind that comes the knowledge that nobody knows who we the transgendered are. We have made such a tremendous struggle to change from male to female or from female to male—without anybody noticing—that nobody knows who we are. Not even the gay and lesbian community who would be and should be our allies. If they don't know who we are, they're going to fear us as much as the rest of society does.

So what my own self imposed job has been is to let the gay and lesbian community know who we are. I'm also active in Colorado in a group called Dignity. Dignity is a gay Catholic—gay and lesbian Catholic organization. They have their own Mass. They have priests from Catholic, various Catholic Diocese come on a rotating basis to celebrate Mass.

I've been work with the Dignity group in Denver for the past two years to help them understand the importance of saying "and transgender." Again, what I bring to them is information that they can use to help in their struggle for civil rights. The more information I can bring to them, the more willing they are to accept me. They haven't used the words yet, but from the articles in the newspaper that Laura talked about, the word is being used. Maybe the greatest victory of all for us came four months ago when Colorado for Family Values, in their monthly newsletter which I'm on surreptitiously, ran two articles about the transgender community. Of course, they blasted us, but isn't it wonderful to know that they know who we are now.

The "Colorado Christian News"—there's a reprint that's being copied on the machine upstairs, some of you have seen it, and all of you will see it before the weekend is over— is a monthly newspaper that runs about thirty to forty pages. The August issue of the "Colorado Christian News" ran an article on page two that says that Senator Kennedy's Civil Rights Bill won the right to give civil rights protection to gay and lesbian and transgendered people. We have the evangelical press that also covers transgendered people. They included us anyway. And in the Christian radio programs on the Christian radio channels, they're talking about those awful transgendered people. Hey, at least they know we're here. If they can use the words, if the Religious Right can you the words, "and transgender," then we can too. Anything, anything is better than nothing: better than hiding. They can't say "and transgendered" if they don't know who you are.

What can one person do?

Who are you? Where are you going? What will you do when you get there?

You, the people who have come to this conference, have enough care and enough concern and enough leadership potential as individuals to make a difference in the communities where you are. You can help the people to understand what transgender means. That we're not just the drag queens, we are not just the female impersonators, and we're not just the screaming-in-your-face activists. We can be, but help them to understand that there's one more kind of transgender than just that. Help them understand that there's your kind of transgender. The person who is reasonable, the person who is rational, and the person who brings to the table a knowledge of humanity, a knowledge of people that doesn't exist anywhere else on the planet.

Help them to understand that the National Institute of Health last year finally acknowledged that all the wonder drugs that exist in the world were never tested on women. In a 1989 study on the effects of aspirin for preventing heart disease, of the 22,000 participants, not one single one was a woman. A 1991 study on the affects of estrogen on preventing heart disease did not include one single woman. All of the models of psychiatric normality are based on white European heterosexual male models.

I made the statement that the medical community doesn't understand women. There's a good solid basis for that! And if they don't understand women, how in the world are they going to be able to understand their health? Or the health of someone like us who's in between. We are the only ones who can take responsibility for that. When the medical community refused to acknowledge P.M.S. as a medical condition in women, women took it upon themselves—women doctors—to understand what P.M.S. was and how to make P.M.S. go way. We need to do the same thing. We understand who we are. We understand what we are. We have the responsibility to teach who we are and what we are to the rest of the world.

What can one person do?

What can you do?

Go out and show the world that you're a reasonable human being, a rational human being, someone who can make a difference by their very presence in the room. Keep the stereotypes that says you're a teacher, trainer and researcher. Let that be the only stereotype you have, and you won't have anymore problems. Thank you very much.

by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

Thank you Dianna. I think we all have a pretty good understanding of why you have the success you've had in educating the State of Colorado.

MINNESOTA: THE FIRST STATE TO ENACT LEGISLATION THAT EXPLICITLY PROTECTS THE TRANSGENDERED FROM DISCRIMINATION

Introduction by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

In 1993, Minnesota became the first state to enact a nondiscrimination statute that specifically includes transgendered persons within the definition of protective class. Section 363.01 was amended to address sexual orientation as a protective class along with race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, et cetera. Sexual orientation is defined. Sexual orientation means (1) having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that person, or (2) having or being perceived as having and orientation for such attachment, or, now listen carefully, or (3) having or being perceived as having a self image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness. Sexual orientation does not include a physical or a sexual attachment to children by an adult.

That definition clearly includes all of us. No matter where you are on the gender line, you fit within that definition. And not only do you fit because you're actually some place on that gender line, you fit because someone may perceive that you're on that line somewhere. We're really fortunate today to have with us the person who is responsible for that part of the definition—having or being perceived as having a self image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness.

I have known Jane Fee for about five years now, and she's a wonderful, wonderful woman and a dear friend. She is a transgendered woman, born as a genetic male 67 years ago. Like those of who are transgendered can understand, she lived with suppressed feelings much of her life because of the ignorance and attitudes of many people. She has since come to grips and has realized that she has nothing to be ashamed of. She has been an above-average contributor to society. She has completed courses in civilian and military schools of higher learning. She is a veteran of World War II. She served with honors as infantry unit commander, as vice president of an international corporation, and as a member of several national standards organizations—writing standards to enhance safety in the home and workplace. She has lived and work all over the U.S. and in several foreign countries, both in the military and in civilian life. She has two children and four grandchildren. She has been on several television shows dealing with transgendered issues. And she has told many stories of running into people later who said, "I know you. I saw you on something or other." Please join me in welcoming Jane Fee, a beautiful woman, a transgender activist and my friend.

by Jane Fee:

I'm going to give you a little talk about what transpired in Minnesota to allow us to get this law changed. I'm afraid that Laura gives me more credit than I deserve. Actually, I'll take credit for ensuring that those words were in the bill, but I did not generate those words, so I can't take credit for that. I think that with any task of this type, it would be too simplistic to look at what happened

in just this particular case. Without recognizing some of the history, it's impossible to realize how you come to a certain place. So I'm going to give you some facts about the history that led up to this.

Frankly, I think that most of the people in this room have used typewriters or computers and probably have all typed the phrase "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country." What about women? I think they should be included in that statement. It's not just the country that can use some help, but it's also our states, our counties, our cities, and various organizations. In Minnesota, when we finally got around to passing or getting ready to pass this bill for human rights in the state which included transgendered, we rallied behind a battle cry. We condensed that phrase "now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country" into "It's time Minnesota." We don't have a copyright on that phrase. We're not exclusive so we hope that everybody in this room will participate in some of that so that it says "It's time Texas," "It's time California," and "It's time America."

Unfortunately, slogans by themselves don't win the battles. It's the people behind the slogans and the hard work in the execution of well-planned tactics that win battles. When you rally behind a slogan you better have your rubbers on because slogans are like lightning rods, they draw powerful forces and surges.

I wish that I could say that it was a short war, and that the battle to obtain our civil rights was perfectly well organized, planned and executed, and that it succeeded in the early dawn of our first attempt. Unfortunately, this was not the case. It took thirteen attempts over a thirty year period. I'm not sure whether we succeeded so much because we were so smart and well organized. I think it's because there were an awful lot of individual people who were tired and who were angry, and they did something. This wasn't to say that we didn't have organization because that was absolutely essential.

To give you a snapshot of some of the things which happened in the past which led up to this, you have to go back to the original founding of the territory of Minnesota, which was broken out of the territory of Wisconsin in 1849. And when they broke off the Minnesota territory, they kept all of the Wisconsin statutes of law including the laws pertaining to offenses against chastity, the crime against nature. In 1851, the Minnesota legislative assembly published territorial revised statutes retained the bulk of the Wisconsin's laws. And the chapter against chastity, morality and decency stated that every person who shall commit sodomy or the crime against nature, either with mankind or any beast, shall be punished by imprisonment in the territorial prison not more than five years nor less than one year. Also included were the crimes of seduction, fornication, beating an ox and concealing the death of a bastard. I'm certain that many of us would want to shout through the roof tops rather than conceal the death of some bastards we know.

In 1856, there was a gal by the name of Lucy Ann LaBell who arrived in St. Paul: St. Paul in those days was called "Pig's Eye." She was dressed as a man and was using the name of LeRoy LaBell. She was known as hail fellow and well liked. She could chop wood along with any of them and could shoot straight like Anne Oakley. She went to work in 1857 for someone who discovered somehow or the other that she was a woman. The county charged Lucy Ann LaBell of being a woman falsely impersonating a man to the indignation of the community and against the peace and dignity of Minnesota. Fortunately, the court found that the right of women to wear masculine clothes had been recognized in a previous case and vindicated her.

In 1860 Alexander Ramsey was elected second governor of the State of Minnesota. He also served

as secretary of war under President Hayes. Research indicates that he was most likely gay and subject to extortion because of it. There was one check that he wrote to one person for \$5,000, and that was a lot of money in those days.

In 1909, the state legislature increased the penalty for the crime against nature from the existing 5 years to 20 years. They must have had a lot of sodomy and fornication going on as far as that.

In August of 1967, the Minneapolis City Council finally passed a comprehensive civil rights ordinance and established a department of civil rights, the first in the state. In October of 1969, the University of Minnesota officially recognized an organization called FRRE, which was Fight Repression of the Right to Expression. It was a first known gay and lesbian rights group in Minnesota, and the first to sponsor an all gay dance on any U.S. campus. In February of 1970, three people picketed the Minnesota State Services for the Blind for firing a great gay man for belonging to FRRE. The Minnesota Human Rights Commissioner stated that the law does not outlaw discrimination against gays.

In June of 1969, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered joined forces in New York City. They joined forces to say, "No!" to the establishment at the Stonewall Inn.

In June of 1970, three major corporations Date & Hudson, Pillsbury, and General Mills agreed not to discriminate against gays and lesbians. Meanwhile, Honeywell said they wouldn't hire a known gay. In July of 1970, the gays met with the Minnesota Human Rights officials to demand rights for gays and lesbians. And in January of 1971 there was a bill submitted to the legislature to ban the marriage licenses to couples of one man and one woman. That bill died in committee and did not pass.

In April of 1971, the president of FRRE was elected to the post of University of Minnesota student body President by the biggest turnout in the University of Minnesota history. So there was a gay elected as a student president. In May of 1971, Gay House, a woman's caucus, became the first known lesbian organization in Minnesota. In June of 1971, the Methodist church officially endorsed an end to the employment discrimination of gays. In October of 1971, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the University of Minnesota's right to fire a gay librarian. In November of 1971, the Minnesota Supreme Court upheld a ban on gay marriages.

In March of 1972, the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union asked the U.S. Supreme Court to consider rights of Minnesota gays to marry. In April of 1972, Jack Baker was reelected President of the student body, the first time that anybody had been reelected as president of the student body of the University of Minnesota. In May of 1972, a person who you may know by the name of Steve Andine formed the Minnesota Gay Rights Lobby, which was the first group dedicated to advancing gay rights politically in the state. In June of 1972, the DFLP, which is the Democratic Foreign Labor Party, adopted the first gay rights plank to include gay marriage. In June of 1972, was the first gay pride celebration in Minnesota after Stonewall. October of 1972, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union's gay marriage appeal for want of a substantial federal question. In November of 1972, the University of Minnesota reported a new electroshock and aversion therapy to cure gays and transgendered people.

In March of 1973, the first attempt to add gay rights to an amendment to the existing human rights law was submitted. The amendment passed but homosexuals were stricken from the bill. Transgendered were not included. In July of 1973, successful picketing of Bell Telephone Company

for firing openly gay operators forced the end of discrimination by Bell Telephone Company. In August of 1973, the first booth for and staffed by gays and lesbians was at the Minnesota State Fair: it was largely ignored by the attendees.

In March of 1974, there was a civil rights bill for gays passed in the City of Minneapolis. It prohibited discrimination on the basis of affectional or sexual preference. It was considered that the bill did include transgendered people in the interpretation of the bill. So that was way back in 1974. In April 1974, gays and lesbians were removed from the APA (American Psychiatric Association) list of mental illnesses. In July of 1974, a couple of months after Minneapolis, the City of St. Paul passed a human rights bill which included gays, lesbian, and transgendered people. So now, the two major cities in the state, where you had the majority of the population, had transgendered rights bills in effect in 1974. But this ignored all of the rural communities, and didn't apply to the suburbs of those major metropolitan cities. In December of 1974, Allen Spears, a State Senator, came out publicly as gay after two years in the legislature.

In January of 1975, the St. Paul Department of Human Rights determined that the Childrens' Home Society discriminated against two males applying to adopt a child. In March of 1975, the first gay rights bill was introduced into the U.S. Congress and failed. In May of 1975, there was a second attempt to pass the bill [see March 1973 above]. It was endorsed by subcommittees in the House and Senate. This was the turning point for transgendered individuals: Representative Anne Carlson, who was state representative and is now governor of Minnesota, agreed to introduce a transgender amendment. The amendment helped to kill the bill by a vote of 70 to 40: it probably would have passed without that amendment. An attempt to repeal the sodomy law also failed. And in 1975, the U.S. Civil Service Commission ruled to allow gay and lesbian federal employees.

In 1976, bisexuals formed an organization to seek inclusion in gay rights as a separate entity.

In March of 1977, the "Minneapolis Star Tribune" adopted a policy to use the word homosexuality only in reference to sexual activity and nothing else. In May of '77, the third attempt to pass the bill failed [see March 1973 above]. In June of 1977, there was a Target City Coalition formed by Minneapolis gays to stop Anita Bryant's campaign to overturn the St. Paul gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender rights ordinance. In that fight some of the St. Paul gays got upset because they felt that the fight belonged to them and not to the Minneapolis coalition. This business of having your own turf, it's a killer, because once you start separating yourself into these little cliques, you're doomed to failure. However, they were successful that time.

In 1978, there was a fourth attempt to pass the bill in the state. In 1978, St. Paul overturned, by city referendum, the Gay Bill of Rights Ordinance. In July of 1978, the gay pride celebration, which is normally held in Minneapolis, was held in St. Paul to show support for St. Paul.

In 1979, there was a fifth attempt to pass the bill which didn't even get out of committee. In 1980, there was a sixth attempt. It also failed. In November of 1980, Karen Clark became the first lesbian elected to the state legislature who was openly passing as a lesbian. In 1981, there was a seventh attempt that failed. In 1981, we had the first reports of immune disorder related diseases in the press. In 1982, there was an eighth attempt. In 1982, the Minnesota Council of Churches adopted a pro gay and lesbian rights position paper.

In 1983, the ninth attempt failed. They also failed to repeal the sodomy law and laws against

terrorists. And in 1983, a gal by the name Sharon Koalski had been involved in an automobile accident and her lesbian lover tried to gain guardianship over her. In 1985, the judge gave the parents full guardianship instead. In 1985, there was a tenth attempt which failed.

In June 1986, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the anti-gay sodomy laws in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. [One week later Americans celebrated the centennial of the Statue of Liberty.] In December of 1986, the national body of state insurance regulators changed its anti-gay policies.

In 1987, an eleventh attempt failed. In April of 1987, Joe Stephan who is from Minnesota was forced to resign from U.S. Naval academy because he was gay.

In 1990, St. Paul reinstated their human rights ordinance [see 1978] including the gays and transgendered. In April of 1990, the Governor established a Task Force on Gays and Lesbians of Minnesota. In 1991, the Governor's Task Force reported its findings. In February of 1991, the first two couples registered under Minneapolis' new domestic partners ordinance. In April of 1991, a twelfth attempt to pass the bill failed. Finally in 1992, Karen Thompson gained the right of guardianship over her lover [see 1983].

In April of 1993, we were finally successful in passing this bill which gave human rights to all of us. The thing that a lot of people who fought the bill don't understand is it protects straights just as well as anybody else. In August of '93, the bill went into affect as law.

In January of 1994, the University of Minnesota established a gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered programs office, which is supervised under the Office of Academic Affairs. They are now going to give some courses at the University concerning gays and transgendered people. In June of 1994, a judge ruled that Minneapolis City Council exceeded its authority when it enacted the domestic partners ordinance and overturned it. And recently in July of 1994, our gay pride celebration in Minneapolis grew to 85,000 people.

Some of the things which I would like to share with you is the effort that went into this last thing of changing the law. The way I am dressed today is the way that I would present myself basically if I was talking to straight organizations, if I was talking in the business community, or if I was talking to legislators. But this wasn't the way that I dressed all the time. It's important that we understand exactly who our audience is so that we can reach down on their level and be sympathetic with their fears and lack of knowledge. There's a great deal of fear and lack of knowledge about the transgendered community.

This is what I wore a lot of times. It [a t-shirt with shorts] says, "Let the sun shine in." Get out of that dark closet. When I was dealing the gay and lesbian community, this is what I wore.

Some of the other things which again go back to the history a little bit. Here is a picture from 1890 of a male dressed as a female camping with a female in Minnesota. This picture is hanging in the Minnesota historical society. In 1975, when there was a bill introduced which did not include the words "public accommodation," one of the gay leaders in Minneapolis held a press conference in the mens' room because he was pointing out the fact that that was a public accommodation and under the law he had no equal rights in the mens' room being gay. And here is an article that appeared in 1991. There was lots of articles in the newspaper. But this says essentially "Don't bash Carlson for backing equal rights." The article goes on to say that everybody is entitled to equal rights.

We established an organization to steer the work of people to plan what we were going to do in our attack. And some of the things which we did in that organization were to establish the kinds of committees that we felt we needed. For instance, there was a legislative committee, a fund raising committee, a mass communications committee, a volunteers committee, an outreach committee, and a steering committee.

We also had what we called The Allies Advisory Group, made up of other organizations, that we used to define what the purpose of these groups would be in assisting, what we expected from them and the criteria that we used for targeting these groups that we would select. Some of the suggested groups were the League of Women Voters; The Joint Religious Legislative Coalition; The Minnesota Alliance for Progressive Action; The Minnesota Peace and Justice Coalition; and The Association of Federal, State, Civil or County and Municipal Employees [AFSCME].

We set up a preliminary budget to run from June of 1992 to May of 1993 which was when we knew that there will be an end to the bill one way or the other. That budget was set up as being \$88,250 that we needed for our own purposes and office supplies, postage, telephones and things of that type. We held various meetings around the state organizing groups. And we further set up a time line of when we expected to achieve certain things between February of 1992 and April of 1993. And the final entry on the time line in March-April 1993 was "our bill passes and we're afforded equal treatment under the law." But we had all of these ideas as to where we needed to be in order to achieve this goal.

We also set up a promotional campaign which was quite expensive. You see me wearing this name tag, and you saw the shirt. We also had stickers made up that were put on all the envelopes. We stuck them up in different places. We gave them to companies to put them on their letterheads to mail out to other people. We developed a manual for the legislators as to how to talk to their constituents about human rights. We set up possible questions and answers that different people might run into in promoting this. We put together a civil rights bill reporting form so that every contact that was made, we found out who was for us, who was against us and why. We had all kinds of flyers made up with our logo on it saying "Discrimination happens everywhere in Minnesota." "What's so special about basic human rights?" "With your help it's time." "Governor's Task Force on gays and lesbians." This one, reciting a condensation of the results of that Task Force—what their specific findings were. There was a great deal of promotional activity that took place. Virtually all of this was donated, volunteer activity.

We sought endorsements. The list of endorsements by different organizations is on these two pages. Some of the endorsements, for instance, were a resolution by the City of Minnesota; the State of Minnesota Council on Asian Pacific Affairs; the University of Minnesota; the Minnesota Association of Realtors; the Public Affairs Department of Hennepin County; the Minnesota Health Care Unit; the Minnesota Educational Association; the Joint Religious Coalition on Human Rights with Regard to Sexual Orientation which was a very important document; the Minnesota State Council on Disability; and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. We got endorsements from everybody that we could possibly think of that would help such as the Steel Workers' Union and the Truckdrivers Union. We got some heavy support in those areas, I'll tell you.

We also, along the way, ran into different legal opinions. So we got a crime prevention report from the Department of Public Safety as to how they viewed it. The State House did research on what they thought about the affects of the bill and the legality of it. We had outside law firms also do

evaluations on it. The City of Lakes reviewed it for correctness. The Senate Council reviewed it. And finally, after the bill was passed, there was an alert bulletin which we sent out to all attorneys that told them basically what the law is and the effects it has on changing things.

The thing which I want to point out to you is the fact that you cannot just make up certain nice words and have them introduced as a bill or as an amendment to a bill and have the thing passed. It takes lots of grassroots efforts.

The reason that all the failures occur along the way was the fact that it did not have grass root support. It was just certain, very well qualified, dedicated, hard working people with self interest that tried to get it passed, but without much assistance. It wasn't until everybody really got upset over the thing and said "Enough! It's time Minnesota!" that we got it through. It didn't just merely squeek through: it passed with a significant majority of votes.

But here again, we didn't merely hope that somehow or other we were going to convince the Legislature to vote for this because we knew that there were a lot of people in it that wouldn't. So way back two years before, in a primary elections campaigns that were going on in the state at the time, we dedicated our resources to getting a significant number of people elected in the primary election who had said that they would vote for the bill if they were elected. And we were successful in getting nine out of nine people that we targeted elected.

We didn't try to change the people who were already in such strong positions that would have been dissipating our resources. We concentrated on rural areas because we already had the bill in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and we had a lot support there. So don't waist your time getting somebody who agrees with you to agree with you further. You may get them to disagree before you're through. But instead direct your efforts towards those who aren't committed or those people who might change. The people who are diehards and say "There is no way in hell that I would ever agree to that," don't waist your time on them either.

We got those people through the primaries and then we targeted seventeen people during the elections that we wanted to ensure got elected. We devoted our resources to telephone bank campaigns. I went out and did door knocking in neighborhoods with other people. Go to someplace fifty miles away from were you live with an arm full of pamphlets and knock on doors and hand out leaflets and say, "Gee, I hope you vote for this person because." We got, out of the targeted seventeen of those people, we got thirteen elected.

Our passage of the bill in the Senate was with 37 votes, and we needed 32. We needed 32. If we hadn't got those people elected, we could have lost. In the House, we passed the bill by 78 to 60. It was interesting that, one of the things which also helped to swing it was, the Minority Leader of the House, who is Lutheran minister, who's been in office for something like eleven years or so, stood up when the bill was presented for passage, and changed his vote at that time. He got three other Republicans that weren't going to vote for it to go along with him.

It takes a lot of effort. It can be done, but we can't win these things easily. You've got to start early. You've got to get your ducks in line. You've got to have a concerted effort. I would hope that somehow or the other we could get it passed in the U.S. Congress rather than we would have to go to that effort in all of the states.

by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

Hard work and perseverance—nothing worthy is ever accomplished without hard work and perseverance.

A couple of things since then that Jane didn't tell you is that two or three candidates for office have called Jane and asked for Jane's permission to use her name on their campaign literature.

by Jane Fee:

That's very interesting. A candidate who is running for U.S. Senate as a Democrat asked that my name to be placed on her campaign literature as an endorsement. I said, "What? Me?" She replied, "Sure!" And also the candidate who is running for Governor of this state, who was formally police commissioner in San Francisco and Minneapolis, also asked for my endorsement on that.

And as a result of the efforts that I put into bridge the gaps between the gay and lesbian community and the transgendered community, I was elected to the Democratic Gay and Lesbian Caucus as a woman member of the caucus. They have it equally distributed between women and men, and the entire caucus considered me a woman.

by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

Thank you Jane for giving us the history. Because if we don't understand the history, we can't figure out where we're going and what we have to do to get there. Thanks for being an inspiration. And the lesson is that you may lose the first ten battles, but you can still win the war.

WHAT ONE PERSON CAN DO! WHAT YOU CAN DO!

by Laura Elizabeth Skaer:

And now, let me leave with you this which is taken from the second proceedings. You're not going to obtain basic human and civil rights as a transgendered person as long as you remain in the closet. Remaining in the closet implies that you believe something is wrong with you. Staying in the closet helps perpetuate discrimination. As both Dianna and Jane have told us and taught us, the world needs to know who the transgendered are. The world needs to know that they come from all walks of life and all economic backgrounds. They come in all sizes, shape, and colors. And they might even be your next door neighbor.

How can you the transgendered educate policy makers, legislators, friends, and society, as long as you remain in the closet? Is it not, the best way to educate, is to be honest with yourself and let the world know who you really are and what you are all about and that you are proud of who you are.

Now you can come out of the closet in many ways. The best way is to come out as a transgendered person. However we must be realistic and recognize that not everyone is yet ready or willing to come out this way. Those who aren't, you can come out another way. You can come out by using your talents, your skill, your time, your ability to help achieve basic civil rights and freedom from discrimination for all people. For all people, including the transgendered.

You cannot be all that you were meant to be. You cannot reach your true potential as a human being, you cannot find inner peace and happiness. You cannot be honest with yourself, with your friends, with your employer, with your associates, and with society and you cannot be the best person you're capable of being as long as you're true self is in the closet.

We cannot win this battle for basic human dignity and civil rights as long as you are in the closet. So now is the time. Minnesota has shown us the way. We have an opportunity in Washington, D.C.. Now is the time. It's time to win this battle for basic human dignity and civil rights. It's time to get out of the closet, join the battle and make this a win, win, win, situation for all of human kind.

What can one person do? Do your part. Thank you.