

Transsexual fuss

Dear *GCN*:

The fuss about "transsexual women" exists because our society has no role for eunuchs—castrated, feminized men. Many other societies have had such a role, for instance China and Persia. (Other societies, such as those of the American Southwest, had a social role for men who were feminine but not castrated.) I can understand how American eunuchs would think of themselves as women; one has to think of oneself in the terms available. Being a person with no identity is impossible.

Nevertheless, surgery doesn't make a eunuch a woman, anymore than melanin implants and a wish for African ancestors would make me Black. Transgendered people are part of the queer community, and ought to be able to make friends on the same basis as anyone else, as individuals, valued for their individuality. However, women as a group have no obligation to take care of eunuchs as a group. The organizers of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival understand this. I'm glad they do.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Ripley
Menlo Park, Calif.