

AEGIS NEWS

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The Paradigm Shift Is Here!

In the nineteen fifties, science historian Thomas Kuhn realized that the history of science, which had theretofore been thought to progress smoothly, instead moved ahead with a series of fits and starts as old models of looking at the world gave way to new ones. What happens is a revolution of sorts, as the new model brings with it new methods and techniques, and results in a general overhaul of the science. This is called a paradigm change, or shift.

A prime example of paradigm shift is the Copernican revolution, in which the realization that the earth revolves around the sun, rather than vice-versa, caused a general reappraisal of the importance of humankind in the universe.

Something very similar seems to be happening in the field of gender. The idea that there are only two genders is being questioned, both on the medical front by people like Anne Fausto-Sterling, in the anthropological literature by Anne Bolin, Gil Herdt, Will Roscoe, Walter Williams, and others, and in the popular literature by authors like Kate Bornstein, Leslie Feinberg, and Martine Rothblatt.

Certainly, the two-gender system is alive and well, but now there is an alternative which makes a great deal of sense to those who are uncomfortable in the tightly constraining boxes marked "Male" and "Female."

One effect of this revolution is that

it provides a new platform from which to view gender-transgressive people—crossdressers, transgenderists, and transsexual people. Suddenly, it is not they who are aberrant, but a society which is unable to deal with them.

This has tremendous relevance for the interactions between transgendered and transsexual persons and the health care professionals upon whom they depend for medical and psychological care. Previously, this care was provided from within a psychopathological framework. Transsexual people were viewed as having a mental disorder. Surgical and hormonal sex reassignment did not cure this disorder, but could make life more bearable for the individual.

Because of this "man trapped in the body of a woman / woman trapped in the body of a man" view, treatment options tended to be limited to two: sex reassignment, or no sex reassignment. Intermediate solutions were not even considered.

We would like to make it clear that this was not the fault of medical and psychological professionals, or of transsexual and transgendered persons. This was just the way *everyone* in this culture viewed gender. The paradigm shift had not yet occurred.

With the new way of looking at things, suddenly all sorts of options have opened up for transgendered people: living full-time without genital surgery, recreating in one gender role

while working in another, identifying as neither gender, or both, blending characteristics of different genders in new and creative ways, identifying as genders and sexes heretofore undreamed of— even designer genitals do not seem beyond reason.

The literature which was published under the old paradigm suddenly seems quaint, its flaws and biases plainly visible. The research questions seem to a large degree irrelevant, and the attitudes of the researchers plainly show through.

This is not to say that this literature is useless, or that those who did it were foolish— it was because of the hard work and compassion of those who wrote it that we are now able to see its limitations.

This is the very nature of science.

The paradigm shift is a clear sign that not only have the inquiries into the nature of transgendered and transsexual people finally yielded fruit— even if it is unexpected fruit— but that they have helped society, or at least the most forward thinkers in society, come to a more mature understanding of what sex and gender are— an understanding, I might add, that much more accurately mirrors nature than the binary system which it is replacing.

So hooray for the paradigm shift. Let us celebrate that it is occurring, and work together, caregivers and transgendered persons alike, as new vistas and opportunities arise.

AEGIS, the American Educational Gender Information Service, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit clearinghouse for information about transgender and transexual issues. We are a membership organization with general, professional, student, and other membership categories. We publish this newsletter, *Chrysalis: The Journal of Transgressive Gender Identities* and other materials, provide information and referrals via telephone, U.S. mail, FAX, and e-mail, and house the National Transgender Library & Archive and its caretaker organization, the Transgender Historical Society. We maintain an extensive bibliography of articles and books on transgender and transexual topics which was published in 1994 by Garland, and a large database of support groups and caregiving professionals.

Our Board of Directors is chaired by JoAnn Roberts, Ph.D., and consists of Jason Cromwell, Ph.D.(c), Gianna Eveling Israel, Alison Laing, Carol Miller, M.S., Marisa Richmond, Ph.D., and Delia van Maris, M.D. Dallas Denny, M.A. is our Executive Director. We also maintain a 30+ member Advisory Board, which we consult on important issues.

In its five-year history, AEGIS has taken the forefront in advocating transgender and transexual rights and nondiscriminatory treatment, both in and out of medical settings. We periodically release advisories about health-related matters. We have played and will continue to play an important role in health care issues about transexualism and transgenderism. We have also played a major role in starting support groups (including Atlanta Gender Explorations and Aurora, in Jackson, Mississippi), and gender conferences, including Southern Comfort, the International Congress on Cross-Dressing, Gender, and Sex Issues, and the FTM Conference of the Americas.

Late this year, AEGIS' new publishing division, Sullivan Press, will proudly release *Recommended Guidelines for Transgender Care* by Gianna Eveling Israel and Donald Tarver, M.D. This groundbreaking book will redefine medical and psychological treatment for transgendered persons. Our 6000+ item annotated bibliography, *Gender Dysphoria: A Guide to Research* was released last year by Garland Publishers. Next year, Dallas Denny's edited text, *Current Concepts in Transgender Identity: Towards a New Synthesis*, also from Garland, will introduce cutting edge concepts to the professional community.

AEGIS is supported by memberships and donations. We keep our expenses minimal; no money is spent on rent or salaries. Your tax-deductible donation will make a difference in how much we can accomplish, or even whether or not we survive. Please make a donation today.

We're serious. We're AEGIS.

Join us...

AEGIS

American

Educational

Gender

Information

Service

... and experience a splendor of gender!

AEGIS is a 501(c)(3) membership organization which provides a variety of services to helping professionals and to individuals with gender issues. We provide free information & referrals, publish the journal *Chrysalis* and a variety of other materials, maintain the National Transgender Library & Archive, assist in the establishment of support groups, conduct workshops and seminars, publish advisory and position statements, and maintain an extensive bibliography of materials related to crossdressing and transsexualism (published in 1994 by Garland Press).

AEGIS provides a forum in which mental health and medical professionals can work together with transgendered and transsexual persons to discuss issues of mutual interest and importance. We have a variety of membership categories, one of which is right for you. Why not join today? You'll receive two issues of *Chrysalis* (our great magazine), four issues of *AEGIS News* (our newsletter), a membership card, discounts on all of our products, and most importantly, a vote in the future— *your* future.

Please send the form below to AEGIS, P.O. Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 [or call 770-939-2128]

Yes! I'm ready to join AEGIS & experience a Splendor of Gender!
I'm sending a check for a one-year membership which will include two issues of *Chrysalis* and other great stuff!

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Address _____
City _____
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Office () _____ Home () _____

(We will send you a longer membership data form)

- General Membership (\$36/year)*
- Professional Membership (\$60/year)*
- Supporting Membership (\$100/year)
- Sponsoring Membership (\$250/year)
- Benefactor (\$500/year)
- Student/Minor (requires documentation) (\$24/yr)

*[Please add \$10 outside North America]

Please charge my: _____ Mastercard _____ Visa No. _____ Exp. _____

The Paradigm Shifts Changed

Then

Nine FTMs (some just beginning their transition and several old-timers and two friends) came to Get-Together #3, held in September.

—FTM Newsletter, December, 1987

**Number of Pages in Directory of
Organizations and Services in TV-TS
Tapestry, issue #46, 1985:**

8

Ten transvestites with no other major deviant behavior and five transvestites with pronounced transsexualism were treated. Nine of the uncomplicated transvestites were rated much improved at the end of treatment and the tenth was improved. . . . Other deviant patterns of sexual behavior did not replace the deviant behavior eliminated by aversion treatment. (p. 403)

—Gelder, M.G., & Marks, M., (1969). *Aversion Treatment. In Transvestism and Transsexualism. In R. Green & J. Money (Eds.), Transsexualism & Sex Reassignment, pp. 383-403. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.*

(“Can We Play, Too?”)

**New World Body to Set
Standards of Care for
Transsexuals**

by Garrett Oppenheim

Formation of a world association to improve the quality of care for sex-change candidates was announced on Feb. 24 [1979] . . . In addition to setting standards of care, the new association will act as a center for gathering and distributing information of help to sex-change candidates and the professionals who treat them.

The question of laymen was raised as to whether the new association should open its membership to laymen . . . It was decided that laymen will be admitted, and our application for membership has already been filed.

— *Transition*, #9, 1979

In the simplest form transvestism may be said to be a form of compulsion neurosis in which the individual's desire for the genitals of the opposite sex is displaced to the clothing of the opposite sex. In every case of transvestism there is a definite exhibitionistic element. There is good reason to believe that cross-dressing is a desire to be identified with the opposite sex, and to seek love and affection of both sexes. In such a transformation the transvestite feels himself to be bi-sexual.

— *From Podolsky, E., & Wade, C. (1960). Transvestism Today, pp. 17-18. New York: Epic Publishing Co.*

Transgender is here, and it has changed everything. The categories “crossdresser” and “transsexual,” once considered mutually exclusive, are now seen by many as sub-categories within the larger constellation of behaviors. And the pathology which was once visited upon the categories is now seen to lie within a society which cannot accept diversity, rather than within the individual who dares to be or cannot help being different. Not everyone, of course, accepts this sense of things. However, if not universal, it is certainly pervasive, and is affecting the way transgendered and transsexual people see themselves, and they way they are viewed by society. Here are a few examples of how things have changed— *Ed.*

The Paradigm Changing Has Changed

NOW

Major Frank Jordan proclaimed this past weekend, August 18, 19, and 20, 1995 "FTM Conference Weekend in San Francisco" as over 360 female-to-male (FTM) transgendered people, transsexual men, their families and friends, along with medical practitioners and psychologists, convened here for the first international all-FTM gender conference ever held in North America.

-FTM International Press Release, 21 August, 1995

**Number of Pages in Directory of
Organizations and Services in *TV-TS*
Tapestry, issue #72, 1995:**

21

The development of SRS did not, however, empower the client; it simply shifted the power to the team made up of surgeons, psychiatrists and psychologists. This raises the question as to who should make the decision as to whether an individual should have SRS. Is it the highly trained medical and psychological team, or is it the individual? A few years ago, the question would not have been asked, but the consumer movement puts a new light on the question. SRS is plastic surgery, yet in the major centers, the requirements make it seem to be much more. Is it the mystical powers of the sex organs, with all of their magical and religious connotations, that make the decision so fraught with meaning that plastic surgery for a nose does not have?

- Bullough B., & Bullough, V.L.. *Transsexualism: Historical Perspectives, 1952 to Present*. In press, D. Denny (Ed.), *Current concepts in transgender identity: Towards a new synthesis*. New York: Garland Publishers.

Transgendered persons often feel that they're being indulged, and frankly treated like children by some providers and members of the academic community. There has been an us-versus-them climate established that is very patronizing ... The transgendered community has professional people in all walks of life. I think there needs to be an atmosphere formulated with a little less of them in it and a lot more of us in the mixture, and then maybe we'll all be able to breathe a little bit easier. If other professionals want to ride on this carousel with us, that's great- I'm all for it- but I don't think they should be telling us to just watch. Because it's our god damn merry-go-round.

- Excerpt from a talk given by Kim Elizabeth Stuart, *International Congress on Cross-Dressing, Sex, & Gender Issues*, Northridge, CA, February, 1995

I am tired of lying. I was born that way. I have had those feelings, those longings all my life. It is not unnatural. I am not sick because I feel this way. I do not need to be helped. I do not need to be cured.

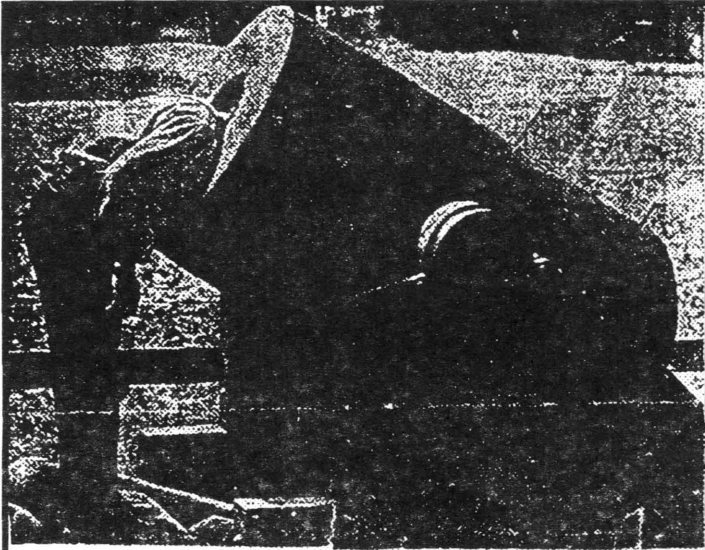
-- Jennai character in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

**HAS NO
CLUE**

The consumers consisted of two subgroups within the gender dysphoria landscape; biological females (of the type who have sexual relations with other biological females)- in the DSM III-R, known as "homosexual transsexuals." Biological females with gender dysphoria of the "nonhomosexual" type are exceedingly rare, although some case reports have been appearing in the literature. . . The most common subgroup of gender dysphorics attending the meeting consisted of biological males and of the type who have a history of transvestic fetishism and sexual attraction to biological females.

- From a posting on the Sexnet mailing list (a part of the Internet) by Dr. Ken Zucker, talking not about his patients, but about his peers at the Northridge Conference.

Analysis of a Transsexual Menace



Looking down
the road into
VISION2000?

Excerpts From the Menace Quiz Handed Out At the Annual Conference of IFGE, March, 1995

- 1) Two years ago, New York drag queen and longtime transgender activist Marcia Johnson was killed and drowned in the East River. Over the ensuing years, how have IFGE & The Tapestry responded to this outrage?
a) Nothing b) I don't know c) They don't know d) It's not in Vision 2000
- 2) Nebraska female-to-male Brandon Teena was outed, beaten, raped, and murdered last year. Over the ensuing year, how have IFGE & The Tapestry responded to this outrage?
a) Nothing ___ b) I don't know ___ c) They don't know ___ d) It's not in Vision 2000 ___ e) He doesn't live in the suburbs or buy Tapestry ___
- 3) Brandon's family lives in such poverty, his mother has not even been able to pay for his funeral expenses nor even a headstone for his grave. What has IFGE's response or Tapestry's response been?
a) Nothing ___ b) I don't know ___ c) They don't know ___ d) No one knows ___
- 4) Many people in the transgender, transsexual, crossdressing community are sexually active, sometimes in concert with their gender issues or gender play. 10 years into the AIDS epidemic... IFGE'S and the Tapestry's response to the necessities of educating transpeople about safe sex and safe play has been:
a) Transpeople don't have sex ___
b) Transpeople are immune ___
c) AIDS doesn't get to the suburbs ___
d) It's too depressing to discuss ___

Threat or **MENACE** ?

In March, at the Coming-Together/Working Together conference of the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE), members of the activist organization Transsexual Menace handed out leaflets questioning Vision 2000, IFGE's strategic planning document (see above for the flyer). Reactions of IFGE staffers, board members, and conference attendees ranged from amusement to outrage to indifference.

Many at the conference saw only black Menace t-shirts and didn't understand the motivations behind the Menace's action, or the very obvious sense of humor in the flyer (this sense of humor is evident in everything the Menace does). The real purpose of the IFGE leafletting was not to attack that organization, but rather a dramatic way of pointing out that the transgender community, as typified by IFGE, is relatively unresponsive to issues of class and race and does little to productively address the very significant problems its own members have with violence and discrimination.

Incidentally, the Menace's IFGE leafletting had the desired response; many in the community have begun to more actively address the issues raised in The Menace Quiz.

Our community needs "In Your Face" activists like the Menace. While they can sometimes be hard to take (those without the Menace's sense of humor tend to be particularly obnoxious), they force social change by taking extreme positions. When all is said and done, those who were on the periphery find themselves in the mainstream.

To understand the Menace (and we think it's important to do so), one must put one's mind into high gear and start to "get" the joke. To this end, we're printing an open letter to Menace co-founder Riki Anne Wilchins, and a portion of Riki's response. Please read the letter starting on page seven with your sense of humor engaged!

An Open Letter to Riki Anne Wilchins

Dear Ms. Wilchins:

By what incredible stretch of imagination did you conceive to involve any other people in this idiotic plot of yours to distribute leaflets at the Atlanta Convention? Now, granted, three of us did in fact review the text of the "Menace Quiz" with you and in fact we said it was good, but that's just because we always agree with everything you say, and we didn't mean to imply that we thought it was a good idea to actually introduce into the community's discussion such topics as homelessness, substance abuse, AIDS/HIV, depression, hopelessness, child custody, or employment security. We didn't mean that the community as a whole should be encouraged to think about these things or maybe take some kind of action about them. We didn't mean that it would be productive rhetoric in the service of constructive dissent to raise tough questions without providing prepackaged answers, so that we might discuss the issues which afflict and beset us. What we actually meant was that we thought it would be really funny if all the people reading the quiz decided that it was just your megalomaniacal mean-spirited demagoguery and egotistical self-aggrandizement, manifesting in unconscionable terrorist tactics.

In the first place, this action is primarily just one aspect of your frequent shameless grandstanding. Everyone knows you're looking only for renown, fame, power, and glory. The fact that it was distributed unsigned just proves that you want the readers to assign responsibility for the document to you. So long as the discourse stays centered on personalities, and especially your personality, we can simply discuss who likes whom, and we can effectively and easily avoid discussing real issues. If you were really interested in solutions, you would provide them, instead of merely asking questions, instead of calling for dialogue. You know, it's really better for everyone just to stick with the status quo.

The second is your hypocrisy. Months ago, you co-authored and signed a letter published locally and re-printed in the *Tapestry*, on the subject of horizontal hostility and the politics of dissent, decrying personal attacks and calling for a renewed focus on issues and real problems. Now, with this leaflet, you have the temerity to actually make fun of the apparent lack of focus on issues!

And what exacerbates the matter is that you dare to avoid pointing the finger at any individual or personality, but merely raise the issues as fit subjects for discussion in our community and focus attention on the IFGE as a whole. Now, everyone knows you must have been secretly pointing the finger at specific people. At least, I think you were. How dare you try so grandly to distinguish between simple dissent and horizontal hostility! Shameless, covert personal hostility masquerading as confrontation combined with humor is intolerable!

Finally, there is your absolute disregard for established order, and your crazy assertion that actually doing some things is as useful and perhaps even better than talking about doing things, or talking about each other. If you get the people talking about things, if you encourage dialogue about real issues, rather than about each other, then they might actually take action into their own hands and, heaven forbid, act independently. People with strong opinions and commitment might actually begin to act on their opinions. They might begin to provide input to the leadership. We might actually have leadership from the "grassroots" people instead of from the hierarchy.

Now admittedly, it seemed that this was our ultimate finding during the trans community town meeting on Wednesday, when we determined that the only real action to be taken would be taken by committed individuals. This, however, was no doubt just idle talk. Stir up the people too much and they might drift away from the benevolent protection and guidance of the united, if slightly inert transgender community leadership cartel, in order to take spontaneous actions on their own, or in concert with only a few others.

This is not leadership by example, but irresponsibility and counterproductiveness. Now everyone will think they're empowered and have the right to raise issues, have differences of opinion, and distribute leaflets. Lots more people in our community will be encouraged to think on their own, for heaven's sake! Next year we could have a dozen Tom Paine wannabees distributing leaflets on issues of concern to them and their friends, instead of focusing on process," sticking to the agenda and using parliamentary procedure. It's just exactly like spray painting slogans on buildings. Uncontrolled leafletting? Unthinkable!

We'll have to create some kind of committee to review hostile leaflets for form, content, redundancy, timing, offensive language and political correctness. Are you really so naive? Do you really think it's possible, or good, to turn the world upside down and have leadership from the members instead of leadership from the hierarchy? Do you really think anyone at all (okay, maybe there are some, but not more than two or three) is really interested in confronting these matters?

Get with the program. There's really no room for this kind of confrontation in our community, especially in the face of the emerging power of the so-called "Christian" right. Settle down. Remember, it's like the old statement that you can't fight City Hall, and it's really not worth trying. A small, ineffectual, oppressed group like ours needs to keep quiet and work through established, traditional structures. Like Ghandi. No, that's not right. Like Mandela. Oops, no, not him either. Like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. No, not them. Like, um, like me. Shut, no, that's not right either. Well, anyway, you get the picture. Just sit down and shut up.

— Lynn Walker

Reply by Riki Wilchins' Evil Twin, "Skippy"

Some have claimed that Riki is "too radical." We deal here with half-truth and sleazy innuendo. It is *not* true that her ideas, when discussed at the last CTO board meeting, caused several members to be removed from the room, feet-first. Okay, it is true that several members of the Vision 2000 team did become extremely queasy, but only six requested airsickness bags, and only four of them were forced to deploy them in actual use.

And, yes, it is partly true that she wears that ridiculous black Transsexual Menace NYC t-shirt everywhere she goes. But again, we deal with half-truth, since the cold facts are that she long ago had that made into a full body tattoo, and has actually been walking among us completely naked for the past two years.

Now, no doubt many of your readers are saying to themselves at this very moment: "Who is this person Riki Anne, who is so depraved? What are these disgusting acts? And where can I buy full-color pictures of them. As far as the last question is concerned, personally I would check with Mariette Pathy Allen, who apparently has pictures of EVERYTHING that has ever happened in this community.

Lettercol

The editorial "Vaginal Politics" in the last issue of AEGIS News has so far resulted in a much-needed \$500 donation, on the condition that we distribute the article as widely as possible, and two negative letters. We are printing one, but not the second, which comes from one of the "genetic women friends" to which Cynthia showed the article, and is primarily a personal attack on the author.

I would like to note at this time that the author of the unattributed quotations in "Vaginal Politics" was Linda Phillips, Cynthia's partner. I had hoped to avoid naming her, but that is no longer possible. For those who might not know, Cynthia and Linda Phillips are the driving force behind the Texas "T" Party and San Antonio's Bolton & Park Society.

Dear Dallas:

I read your article "Vaginal Politics" in the AEGIS News. I want you to know that I was deeply offended by this. The first part of your article is nothing a woman would write. I consider this pure fantasy, which feeds the fires of the wannabees. I have shown this article to a number of my genetic women friends, and they also were deeply offended.

If you want to attack Linda for trying to keep fantasy about of this wonderful operation (it takes a lot of intestinal fortitude to tell people what they don't want to hear), so be it. But please cut out the disrespect for womanhood.

If you want to attack someone, go after some of the professional care givers. I could give you first-hand accounts that would make your hair curl.

Women such as myself and Linda have spent many hours, days, months, and years LISTENING to these people. We DO CARE.

— Cynthia Phillips

First, there is nothing whatsoever of fantasy in the opening paragraphs of "Vaginal Politics." It is my personal

experience with having a vagina, a part of my body that gives me great delight.

In the interest of accuracy, "genetic" women like Anais Nin have certainly celebrated their own body parts in writings similar to my opening paragraphs. I don't find it disrespectful of womanhood to write in praise of sensations from one's own body.

Second, I cannot be insulted, shamed, or silenced by comparing me to "real" women. I am proud of my transexual origins and do not aspire to "genetic" status. Addressing ideological differences by implying that I should pattern myself by what "real" women say and think is a cheap trick, and one which will not work on a woman who is unashamed of her transsexualism.

What is at stake here, however, is not whether transexual women and men are "real" or not. The issue at hand is whether we as a community wish to educate people so they can make up their own minds about changing their bodies, or whether we wish to promote our own particular solutions to dealing with gender issues. I wrote "Vaginal Politics" because some in the community have taken it as their mission to "save" as many people as possible from genital surgery, and have been very vocal about it. This proselytizing is almost invariably accompanied by insulting depictions of transexual people as being stubborn, selfish, and less than rational, and a skewed picture of what life is like after surgery. It's a defamation of an entire class of people, and it is entirely unwarranted. And it was to point out that this is being done that I wrote "Vaginal Politics." The first couple of paragraphs were meant to get everyone's attention— which they certainly seem to have succeeded in doing. But perhaps you and your "genetic" friends should re-read the article, this time concentrating on the message,

and not the messenger.

When you accuse me of "attacking Linda for trying to keep fantasy out of this 'wonderful' operation," you are not only revealing your true feelings about SRS by your use of quotation marks around the word wonderful, but accusing me of something I did not do and would not wish to do— attack either you or Linda. Like both of you, and alongside you, I have long labored to make sure that those considering sex reassignment know the risks and have a realistic expectation of what they can and cannot expect from surgery. However, I am not interested in concentrating entirely on the negatives, or of dissuading anyone from having surgery, and I do not intend to sit idly by when others do it.

Genital surgery can be a life-affirming and life-enabling procedure, or a serious mistake. But the decision lies with the individual. I do not wish to talk anyone into having the surgery any more than I wish to talk them out of having it. I wish to present them with positive and negative information so that they can make their own decision. I do try to help them separate fantasy from reality— but that does not mean I'm willing to deny the sensuality that can result from the operation.

I certainly don't wish to discredit you and Linda for worrying about people who are unrealistic in their beliefs and approaches to SRS. I share your concerns, as you well know. However, when Linda consistently writes that one cannot be well-adjusted or happy if one has surgery, or in full possession of one's faculties if one even wants it, it is bound to cause commentary.

And finally, while there have certainly been instances of caregivers being less than helpful, or even harmful, to those in our community, it has rarely been because of bad intentions. Once again, the answer is education, and not slamming people — Ed.

Editorial

Paradigm Shift

This issue of *AEGIS News* acknowledges the very significant changes in the way gender is coming to be viewed in our society, and the ways in which we view ourselves.

Forty years ago, Dr. Virginia Prince was working to popularize the message that there walked on this planet men who liked to dress in womens' clothing, and yet were sexually attracted only to women. She called these individuals heterosexual crossdressers.

At about the same time, Dr. Harry Benjamin was realizing that there were men who were much more suited to go through life as women, and women more suited for life as men; he named these people transsexuals.

Also about thirty years ago, at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. John Money separated sex and gender. Virginia Prince was an early bearer of the message that sex and gender are not the same thing, that sex is between one's legs, and gender, between one's ears.

Over a thirty year period, these various ideas took hold, slowly gaining strength. The categories of heterosexual crossdresser and transsexual, if still confusing to the general public and even to some helping professionals, became firmly established.

But if these categories created spaces in which people with gender issues could feel comfortable to explore their feelings and identities, they eventually proved to be too confining for many. If one were transsexual, a man in a woman's body or a woman in a man's body, then those without that identity were by default crossdressers (it was, after all, the only other available box). If one didn't fit comfortably in the cross-

dresser box, then one must be transsexual. Those who didn't fit in either of those two boxes were confused and uncomfortable, often feeling that there was something wrong with them.

Virginia created the term "transgenderist" to describe those "in-between" people like her, who crosslived full-time without genital surgery. But in the last analysis, transgenderist was but another box with a narrow definition.

As the eighties wore on and the nineties began, people began to color outside the lines, experimenting with physical presentations and gender identities for which there were no terms, or for which new terms had to be created: genderfuck, gender transient, stone butch, she-male, drag king, Supermodel. Eventually, over Virginia's objection, transgender, a term derived from the word she had invented to describe herself, came to stand for the entire community of persons with transgressive gender identity and behaviors—crossdressers (gay straight and bisexual), transgenderists, and transsexuals (gay, straight, and bisexual). There has been some opposition to this usage, primarily because of the threat it poses to established categories—Davina Anne Gabriel, for instance, has written about the "incredible shrinking transsexual identity" — but transgender has entered the common parlance and is the term most widely used to describe the transgender community.

With this term has come a new way of looking at gender and sex, and the realization by many that the categories we most commonly accept—male and female—are rooted more in the particular way in which our culture views sex and gender than in any objective reality. "Man" and "woman" are labels which we affix to ourselves, but other cultures may affix other or additional labels, which are just as "real" to

them, and which may reflect "reality" no less accurately than our terms.

This is a difficult concept for some people to accept, or even to understand—but look at it this way: until there was a Presbyterian Church, it was impossible to identify as Presbyterian. Presbyterianism is not a Universal Truth, but an identity that human beings in this culture and at this time can take for themselves. Similarly, homosexual and heterosexual, as Stephen Whittle demonstrated in Volume 1, No. 5 of *Chrysalis*, (our journal), are identities that are only about a century old. Before then, there were other sexual identities, and there was certainly behavior which we would, by today's standards, call homosexual, but it did not carry that label and the stigma associated with it.

Our beloved (if only decades-old) categories of crossdresser and transsexual are not immutable, are not fixed by nature, are not realities, except as we make them so. As people reject them in favor of newer (but no less "real") identities, they lose their consensual power.

This is what is happening in the mid-nineties. While some portion of the community embraces the old terms, more and more people reject them, and the community evolves.

This necessarily creates tension between those whose identities are built upon the "traditional" terms, and those whose identities are not. Since some of our communities' organizations are built upon the "old" model, they seem increasingly old-fashioned and rigid to that portion of the community which rejects the model upon which they are built.

In the next *Chrysalis*, which we call the "Transgender Gothic" issue, we will be looking in some detail at this paradigm shift, and what it means and will mean to the transgender community and its various organizations.

ANTIDEFAMATION RAG

The following is a (8 18 95) press release from Transgender Nation— Washington, D.C.

Transgendered Accident Victim Denied Treatment by D.C. Fire Department Personnel; Later Dies from Injuries

Washington, D.C. — A male-to-female transgendered person was fatally injured in a traffic accident in Southeast Washington on Monday, August 7. *The Washington Post* identified the person as Tyrone Michael Hunter, 24 years old and a "transvestite." Her friends have stated she liked to be called Tyra, and had lived full-time as a woman since she was 14. She worked as a hairdresser and was well-liked by her neighbors.

Hunter was a passenger in a car when it was broadsided in the middle of an intersection in Southeast Washington by another car at a four-way stop. Hunter and the car's driver were both pulled from the demolished car by neighborhood residents. Ten minutes later, D.C. Fire Department personnel arrived on the scene. As a crowd of people gathered around the accident scene, a male D.C. firefighter began treating Hunter for her injuries, until he cut open her pant leg and detected her male genitalia.

At that point, according to eyewitnesses quoted in both *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Blade*, the firefighter stood up and backed away from the victim. One witness quoted him as saying "this ain't no bitch" as he began joking with the other fire department personnel at the scene. Another witness at the scene heard one of the firefighters say, "Look, it's got a cock and balls." Other witnesses also reported that as Hunter lay injured, bleeding and gasping for breath, her treatment

was temporarily discontinued while the firefighters made jokes about her.

After people at the scene began complaining about the cessation of her treatment, the other firefighters resumed treatment of Hunter. She was later transported to D.C. General Hospital, where she was pronounced dead.

In response to questions raised by eyewitnesses in the press, Hunter's family and friends and the Washington, D.C. activist group GLOV (Gay Men and Lesbians Opposing Violence), Chief Otis Latin of the D.C. Fire Department held a meeting in his office on Friday, August 11, which resulted in no immediate action being taken. GLOV issued a press release demanding an independent investigation, suspension of the D.C. Fire Department personnel involved, and diversity and sensitivity training for the D.C. Fire Department. The D.C. Fire Department has announced it is continuing its investigation while refusing further comment. Due to the lack of investigation by the D.C. Fire Department, a gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender task force named Together In Tyra's Memory formed to take appropriate action. The group is composed of GLOV; the D.C. Coalition of Black Gay Men, Lesbians, and Bisexuals; The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation of the National Capital Area (GLAAD-NCA); Capital City National Organization for Women (CapCity NOW); Log Cabin Club Republicans, D.C. Chapter; the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance (GLAA); Queer Nation; and Transgender Nation of Washington, D.C.; with the assistance of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, National NOW, Todd Moseley of ANC-1C(06), and GLAAD's National Field Director, Donna Red Wing.

Additional transgender groups endorsing the Together in Tyra's Memory coalition include the Washington - Baltimore Alliance, Tranquility, the Transgender Support Group of Baltimore, and It's Time, Maryland!

Fire Department Stonewalls!

Representatives of the Together in Tyra's Memory coalition met with D.C. Fire Chief Otis Latin on the afternoon of Friday, August 18. In a statement to the Press, Latin denied that emergency care had been withheld or stopped at any point during the D.C.F.D.'s response to the August 8 accident which resulted in Tyra Hunter's death. He did admit there were inappropriate remarks made by some D.C.F.D. personnel at the scene, and he apologized to Hunter's family for those remarks. He announced that the D.C.F.D. had concluded its investigation of the incident, and that no D.C.F.D. personnel would be punished for their roles in the affair.

The Together in Tyra's Memory coalition held a press conference on Tuesday morning, 22 August, on the front steps of the D.C.F.D. headquarters and produced eyewitnesses who contradicted the D.C. Fire Chief's account. Hunter's mother also spoke about her child's death. The coalition also produced a list of unresolved issues and remaining questions surrounding the death of Hunter and presented them to Chief Latin.

To express your outrage, write Mayor Marion Barry, Washington, DC 20001 and send a copy to Chief Otis Latin, D.C. Fire Dept., 1923 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001.

ANTIDEFAMATION RAG

Trans Community Protests Human Rights Campaign Fund

The transgender community is up in arms following the re-introduction in Congress of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) without transgender-inclusive language.

If adopted by Congress, ENDA will protect gay, lesbian, bisexual (but not, currently, transgendered) people from being discriminated against in the workplace. Last year, transgender lobbyists Phyllis Frye, Riki Anne Wilchins, and Jane Fee visited Capitol Hill for purposes of lobbying for transgendered people. After visiting with staff of Senator Jeffords, the sponsor of ENDA, they succeeded in having the language of the bill modified to include transgender and transexual people. After they left Capitol Hill, however, lobbyists from the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), an organization which has pledged to fight for the rights of everybody, succeeded in having the transgender language removed from ENDA. The transgender lobbyists then went into educational mode with HRCF, explaining the importance of transgender-inclusive language for all feminine males and masculine women, whether or not they are transgendered.

When ENDA was re-introduced in June of this year, it happened to occur during ICTLEP, the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, which was attended by transgender and transexual activists from across the country. When Sarah DePalma, one of the attendees, downloaded the language of the 1995 ENDA bill from the Internet and saw that transgender language was once again not included (*i.e.*, HRCF had once again made sure it was not included) she told the other atten-

dees; this resulted in a special planning session at which a comprehensive strategy to protest HRCF was developed.

Because of the ease and speed of communication through the Internet (for those who can afford a computer), it was possible to bring together protests against HRCF within one week. There were actions at Pride events in Atlanta, Seattle, Houston, New York, and Philadelphia; most typically, leaflets were quietly handed out, although in Houston, Phyllis Frye brought along a large sheet advising people not to give money to HRCF.

Transgender protests are continuing at HRCF events. At an HRCF black-tie fundraiser in New Orleans, the keynote speaker, Dee Mosbacker, M.D., Ph.D., co-producer of the films "Straight From the Heart" and "All God's Children," lambasted HRCF about the transgender issue, asking the over 500 members and politicians in the audience, "Who do we think we are, as we go about obtaining our (Gay) rights, to exclude others from obtaining those same basic rights? Who do we think we are to exclude the Transgendered, the Drag Queens, and the Dykes? Who are we? ... These people have made valuable contributions to us and we should value them."

HRCF has steadfastly maintained that it does not "believe that changing the language of ENDA in its current form is the best way of accomplishing this goal." Chai Feldblum, Ph.D., legal consultant to HRCF, suggested that transgendered and transexual persons are covered against employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1963; however, Phyllis Frye of ICTLEP pointed out to Feldblum that courts have consistently

ruled that transexual persons are not covered under title VII.

HRCF has agreed to negotiate with delegates from the transgender community, but Riki Anne Wilchins of Transexual Menace and Phyllis Frye have called for protests against HRCF to continue until the matter has been resolved to the community's satisfaction.

Those who are interested in the HRCF issue and wish to follow HRCF and other political issues in the community and have e-mail can join the Transexual Menace mailing list [send e-mail to majordomo@zoom.com with the following in the body of the message: subscribe to menace your full e-mail address].

To show HRCF the community means business, send them e-mail at hrcf-comm@aol.com, write them at HRCF, 1012 14th St., NW, Ste. 607, Washington, DC 20005, call them at (202) 628-4160, or send them a FAX at (202) 347-5323. Remember: HRCF is not the enemy. Be firm, but please be nice.

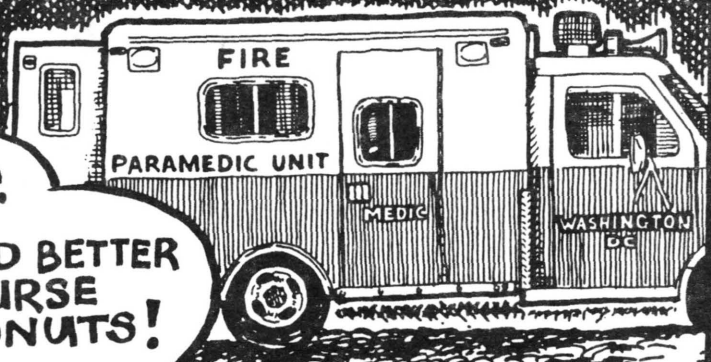
Transgender Lobbying Day

On 2 October, 1995, more than 50 Transgender and Transexual lobbyists will gather on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC to make lawmakers aware of the needs of the community. A prime topic, you can bet, will be transgender and transexual inclusion in ENDA. For more information, join the Transexual Menace mailing list or contact The Transexual Menace NYC, (212) 385-6023 (Voice); (212Z) 267-5084 (FAX); menace@virtualx.com (e-mail).

WHOA!
THIS IS A
MAN!

OPPS!
GUESS WE'D BETTER
GO AND NURSE
SOME DONUTS!

WE'RE
OUTTA
HERE!



MOTHER ALWAYS TOLD
ME TO WEAR CLEAN
UNDERWEAR!!

AND TO MAKE
SURE ITS THE
RIGHT GENDER'S



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