

TRUE SPIRIT CONFERENCE 2002

ANNOUNCES

The 1st Annual LOGO/ARTWORK CONTEST!!!

The True Spirit Conference is a conference held yearly for those labeled female at birth but feel that does not describe who we are and SOFFA's (Significant Others, Family, Friends, and Allies.)

We are now accepting submissions for logo/artwork to be considered for the True Spirit 2002 Conference held February 15-18, 2002, in Washington, DC.

The 1st place winning artwork will be the one that best captures the spirit of the True Spirit 2002 conference using this theme:

Letting Our True Spirits Soar.

The 3 best entries will be chosen as finalists. These finalists will be chosen by the conference co-chairs no later than October 31st, 2001. All submissions must be received or postmarked by October 1st, 2001.

- 1st PRIZE: 2 free admission passes to True Spirit 2002 conference, and artwork used on all conference materials. (You must still register)
2nd PRIZE: 2 free True Spirit 2002 Conference T-shirt
3rd PRIZE: 1 free True Spirit 2002 Conference T-shirt

Send all entries to:

Jodi Burchell, Booklet Editor
P.O. Box 3516
Smyrna, TN 37167
soffausa@yahoo.com

Rules: (No exceptions will be made!)

1. No entry will be considered unless the waiver form below is signed, included with the artwork, AND postmarked no later than October 1st, 2001.
2. Artwork may be done in color, but must be usable as a black and white image as well.
3. Formats accepted include floppy disk in .jpg format or copy/original artwork on standard white paper no larger than 8 1/2 x 11. Artwork may also be emailed in .jpg format to soffausa@yahoo.com
4. The 1st place artwork may be used all or in part for any and all conference literature or material as well as the artwork for the cover of the program booklet for the True Spirit 2002 conference.
5. No artwork will be returned unless a self-addressed stamped envelope is included.
6. All finalists' artwork will be displayed inside the True Spirit 2002 conference booklet and on the official True Spirit Conference web page.
7. The finalists and 1st place winner will be notified via email (phone or US Postal, if email is not provided.)

WAIVER: (Please **print** name)

I _____ understand all of the above rules and if my artwork is chosen as the first place winner, give full rights to the American Boyz and True Spirit 2002 organizations to use my artwork on any conference literature, material, t-shirts, booklet cover or TSC website for the True Spirit 2002 conference.

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Name (as you would like it to appear in the program book): _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Signed: _____ date: _____
Email: _____

True Spirit Conference
PO Box 1
Falls Church, VA 22040
www.true-spirit.org

Hotline: 703-354-3185 (Voicemail box #1)

(To get a Word Document version of this waiver/ announcement, send email to SOFFAUSA@yahoo.com)

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Mailing Address:

Name _____

Street Address _____ Apt _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check one:

____ Student/Disabled \$10.00/yr ____ Regular \$15.00/yr ____ Institution/University \$25.00/yr

Send check/money order made payable to 'Jodi Burchell, editor' with completed subscription form to:

Jodi Burchell, editor
'Your SOFFA VOICE'
PO Box 1916
Smyrna, TN. 37167

NOTE: 'Your SOFFA VOICE' is a quarterly newsletter produced in partnership with the American Boyz organization.

YOUR SOFFA VOICE

Volume 4, Issue 3

August 1st, 2001



CELEBRATE LIFE!!!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

COLUMNS:

- 4 FROM THE BROTHERS—
I'll Build For You by Colton Van Wolfe
- 5 VIEW FROM THE SOFFA—
Minnie Bruce Pratt — interview by Joell
- 9 MEN LOVING FTM MEN —
Relationship Wishes by Arthur Freeheart

FEATURED ARTICLES:

- 2 The Sculpting of a Man — by Melissa
- 4 You Know You've talked About His Transition Way Too Much When...

MISCELLANEOUS:

- 3 SOFFA RESOURCES
- 6 ANNOUNCEMENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings!!

I was lucky enough to be in Indianapolis a couple years ago when Minnie Bruce Pratt, famed poet and author, activist, femme, and partner to Leslie Feinburg, did a reading from her new book "Walking Back Up Depot Street" at a local queer bookstore.

Every time I meet and talk with Minnie Bruce, I am impressed. She is friendly and warm and is always willing to share her experience and knowledge about many issues, including living in "gender fluid space." She is one of my personal heroes and I feel honored that she has granted us an interview.

Needless to say, I am very excited about this issue of the newsletter!! Check out Joell's interview with Minnie Bruce on page 5.

It's that time of the year again, subscription renewal time! If you have been receiving this newsletter for more than a year then you're probably getting a reminder letter in your envelope at some point for either this or the last issue.

I hope that this newsletter is and has been a useful source of information and support for you. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to email me at soffausa@yahoo.com.

Recently, someone suggested that the newsletter was a bit too "stand by your manish". I thought about it and can see where someone might feel that way. So, hopefully, I'll be able to add a little more 'realism' into the mix in the future.

Thanks for all your support!

~Jodi

The Sculpting of a Man

For MY Transman Daniel From Your Melissa

Pain and struggles

A man within

I see the overwhelming pain

I share in the struggles

I chip away to bring the man to the surface

The process is slow

I get tired and weak

Frustration sets in

I need time to rest

The pain lessens

Pure, sweet nectar is shot into his veins

Attitudes skyrocket

One step closer

On the floor remnants of what used to be

Chipped away

It is not enough

He chips away a little on his own

He carries the weight while I recover

When he is strong nothing holds him back

His concentration keen

His progress is astounding

The pain lessens

I am strong again

We work together

Both strong

Our love is great

The workload is diminished

We see the goal

The pain lessens

We sculpt his chest, strong and true

Femininity gone

The heart of a man beats within

The pain lessens

Resources dwindle

The chipping is put on hold

The outer world sees the man

Not enough

The chips at his feet are washed away by his tears

Love and tenderness rebuild him

The pain is stronger

In time the chipping continues

He falters and must rest

His muscles fail

His heart screams out to continue

I panic and work more feverishly

Closer than ever

Will the struggle ever end???

Final step

Sculpting complete

All parts male

The man emerges

The pain is washed away

Blissful peace finally arrives

SOFFA RESOURCES

~~SUPPORT GROUPS

Support Group for Significant Others, Family, Friends, and Allies [SOFFA's] of Transsexual and Transgender People.

Group focuses on issues that spouses, partners, parents and loved ones cope with when a family member struggles with gender identity issues. Group meets once per month for two hours. For information about fees, times and meeting place, please contact Choices Counseling & Consulting.

arlene istar lev csw-r, casac
choices counseling and consulting
321 washington ave.
albany ny 12206
518.463.9152
<info@choicescounseling.com>
<http://www.choicesconsulting.com>

~~Personal ads

FTM_Personals - FTMs (at any stage of transition) and those who would like to date them (of any gender/orientation) can post a personal ad of any length. SOFFA / future significant others are especially welcome! Discussion focuses on FTMs meeting people, dating, and sex. Photo and ad required to join. Explicit is OK!

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FTM_Personals

~~EMAIL LISTS

➤ Support

BOOKCLUB ONLINE LIST - A new informal book discussion list has been started for FTMs and SOs. Its called FTM-SOsBOOKCLUB. Check it out at:
www.yahoo.com/group/FTM-SOsBOOKCLUB

FemmeSOFFAs – a list offered as an alternative to those that are so all inclusive the femmes sometimes get lost in there with the partners of FTMs who ID as straight or heterosexual, butch, or are bio-male.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FemmeSOFFAs>

FTMSOS – for any type of SO of FTMs, regardless of background, gender, or sexual orientation. For more information, go to: www.yahoo.com/group/FTMSOS

Nytecafe – a list for straight-identified wives/lovers/girlfriends of FTMs. Send email to: Nyteflyer1@aol.com or go to: www.yahoo.com/group/Nytecafe

Trannyfags – a list for gay-identified FTM/SOs. To join, go to www.queernet.org and search for trannyfags.

Transgenderedcouples is a list for TG people in relationships where all partners are transgendered and dealing with gender issues.

www.yahoo.com/group/transgenderedcouples

Transsensualfem is an email list for femmes who are primarily attracted to tgbutches and/or FTMS. To join, go to www.queernet.org and search for transsensualfem.

Trans-Jews list - go to www.queernet.org to subscribe or to find out more about it- it's under their Geographic/Ethnic/Religious/Spiritual category.

➤ Dating/social

FTM_Dating is a list designed as a place where FTMs both gay, straight and bisexual can meet people (TG and non-TG) who are attracted to or open to the idea of dating or being a partner to an FTM.
www.yahoo.com/group/ftm_dating

TG_leather is a list focused on FTMs and their SOFFA's who are active in the leather/BDSM/fetish community. www.yahoo.com/group/tg_leather

FTM_n_WWLT is an email list for FTMs and the women, who prefer their company ---and who are interested/concerned with today's FTM issues.
www.yahoo.com/group/FTM_n_WWLT

~~SOFFA WEBSIGHTS

SOFFAUSA is a resource websight for SOFFAs of any type of TG person. Go to: www.aol.com/SOFFAUSA/index.html

FTMSOS has a new webpage!! Check it out!
<http://homepages.about.com/ftmsos/ftmsos>

FTMSOFAQ is a dedicated to answering all those questions about being a SOFFA of a transman. Go to: <http://members.xoom.com/ftmsofaq/>

FROM THE BROTHERS

I'll Build For You

By Colton [REDACTED]

The fires of emotions feed the heart, which stills the hunger of the soul.

Echoes of yesterday border today's memory, with the softness of tomorrow's dreams.

To you I offer all that is me, perfect I'm not.

My love may fall short of a poets words, my ways may be different then your ideas, but my devotion is as complete as the stars that makeup the heavens.

The simple things in life are all I ask for, in return, the chance to hold your hand and walk the meadows of my dreams with you at my side and maybe be the reason for your smile now and then.

I'll voice no outlandish requests and make no demands.

When I want sunshine, I'll look to your smile. If I want softness, I'll retreat to the comfort of your arms. If I search for understanding, you'll find me at the doors of your heart. When I wish to wash my soul of all pain, I'll bathe in the depths of your eyes.

We will surround our reality with fantasy and create a realm where pain will be banished for all time. Happiness will rule this kingdom, it's subject, the pure emotion of our hearts.

Never will the river of sorrow flow through our land. Nor will there exist the force of loneliness. I'll slay all dragons of doubt, then lay them at your feet. And build for you a tomorrow that will make forever seem a fleeting memory. ♥

You Know You've talked About His Transition Way Too Much When...

...You accidentally call your mom 'he' and your dad 'she'.

...You have perfected the art of having a conversation about your lover, never once using a pronoun.

...You consider naming your unborn children gender-neutral names....just in case.

...You start wondering how you can tell if animals are transgendered.

...You see a shortish, bearded, balding man on the street and wonder if he's an FTM.

...You realize that you now have a whole different vocabulary using new words like chesticles, chestnuts, dicklet, and neo-phallus.

...Suddenly passing doesn't have anything to do with school and packing has nothing to do with taking a trip.

...You've learned how to count the hairs on his legs and back.

...You've learned the difference between peachfuzz and facial hair.

...You barely know your family doctor's name, but you know every chest surgeon from coast to coast....and in Canada too.



An Interview with Minnie Bruce Pratt

by Joell

When Jodi asked me if I'd be interested in doing an interview with Minnie Bruce Pratt, I jumped at the opportunity. I met Minnie Bruce about three years ago, when my partner and I picked her up in Cincinnati and brought her to Indianapolis to do a reading at our local queer bookstore. We found her to be as articulate, intelligent, and thoughtful face-to-face as she is in her writing, as well as a wonderfully warm woman who made us feel instantly comfortable.

JSB: *For a lot of women who identify as lesbian, all kinds of identity issues are stirred up when a partner comes out as a transman. My fear, as a bisexual woman, was more about becoming invisible—disappearing into heterosexuality. Did you face issues like that when you and Leslie first got together? Were you ever ambivalent about his choosing to pass or not to pass as a man in a given situation?*

MBP: Because Leslie is a transgender lesbian, I experience our relation to sex and gender in a very fluid way. Certainly when we walk down the street together, someone on the corner might read him as male and see him as a gay male and me as a female friend—and taunt us with “faggot.” Or maybe they'd perceive us as a very strange heterosexual couple and just stare rudely at us. And it's just as possible that someone else at the other end of the block would read him as female and curse us both as “dykes.” So my experience is really not about Leslie “choosing” to pass or not as man. Leslie just *is* and then other people make decisions based on their own preconceptions about sex/gender and assign him an M or an F and a pronoun. In non-queer, non-trans situations, my main concern is usually our safety, since the impossibility of neatly assigning a sex/gender to Leslie can result in abuse or worse from transphobic people.

And despite the risks, living in this fluid gender space is thrilling for me. It is also an extension of my life in women's liberation, and the struggle I began there with other women against rigid sex/gender categories. I entered this struggle in 1975, when I was “coming out” as a lesbian, I was also wrestling then with the fact that my identity as a “woman” had been completely shaped by the place and culture of my birth. (And this is what many of us in women's liberation were struggling with!)

For myself, I understood that my parents and the people of my small Southern town had intended me to be heterosexual, marry only a white man, submit my ideas and plans to my husband, continue in the Christianity in which I had been raised, become a mother and be responsible for the home, and

not inquire too carefully into what the men were doing who were running the outside world—the world outside the home.

A “real” woman was some who had female genitals (of course), who was “white,” who was heterosexual, who was “feminine,” who had passive sex within serial monogamy, who was married and had children, who had a low-paying, low-status “woman's job”—and all of these characteristics had to be simultaneously true for a woman to be a “real” woman.

One contribution of our wave of women's liberation in the U.S. was to shatter this congruence, to break through this monolithic definition of “woman.” This breaking down of the monolith meant many different struggles against sex and gender assumptions: The movement organized a fight against job and wage discrimination, saying that some jobs should not be designated as “men's jobs” and some as “women's jobs,” and compensated unequally. Some of us fought for unlimited right and access to abortion, saying that “woman” should not be based on forced maternity. Some of us fought for increased access to affordable daycare saying that “woman” should not be based on the backbreaking work of unsupported motherhood. Some of us fought against forced sterilization of women of color, because we believed that women should be able to choose motherhood if they wished to do so; we believed that “woman” could not be defined in a racist way, with motherhood a choice for affluent white women only. Some of us fought for sexual freedom for lesbians and bisexual women, saying that “woman” could not be reserved for heterosexual women alone.

In breaking down the restricted social meanings of “woman,” we acknowledged that women's experiences and lives were different, based on class status or ethnicity or region, on sexuality, physical ability, language, nation. We acknowledged that “woman” was the result of a complex interchange between birth sex and cultural conditioning in relation to “maleness” and “femaleness.” We quoted Simone de Beauvoir: “Woman is made, not born.”

But there were limits beyond which most of us did not go in applying this quotation. The struggle for me, for instance, as one who grew up thinking of myself as a “girl,” was to reclaim the idea of “woman” as an act of self-definition. And certainly part of this was to begin to travel back and forth across the boundaries of what had been called “male” and “female”—I learned to travel alone, to have sex outside of marriage, to become a poet. But still in place were some unexamined assumptions.

Cont. pg. 7

ANNOUNCEMENTS

~~New women's sexuality guide: you're the expert!

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to ask your help in creating a new book on women's sexuality—The Whole Women's Sex Book—for publication by Cleis Press in 2002.

The Whole Women's Sex Book will feature brief, anonymous quotes from a diverse array of women addressing all aspects of women's sexuality. I'm asking your help in reaching women who would like complete a confidential questionnaire. Their input will make this a great resource, one that will provide encouragement and support to thousands of women.

In 1999, I wrote <http://www.cleispress.com/Pages/wholelesbian.html> "The Whole Lesbian Sex Book: A Passionate Guide for All of Us", the first comprehensive guide for lesbian and bisexual women, filled with an encyclopedic array of information and encouragement for all sexual styles. A breakthrough book, The Whole Lesbian Sex Book is recommended for all readers by Library Journal: "Newman's sex guide for lesbians is superb. Why can't more heterosexual sex manuals be this good?" Good Vibrations and other sex toy stores sell The Whole Lesbian Sex Book to their heterosexual women customers, because they say that none of the books aimed at heterosexual readers are as good.

The Whole Women's Sex Book will be comprehensive, positive, sexy, and helpful, and will reflect the concerns of ALL women — heterosexual, lesbian, and bisexual, young and old, partnered and single, trans and traditionally gendered, sexually experienced and new to sexual exploration....

If you would like to fill out a confidential questionnaire, please contact me.

Thanks so much,

Felice [REDACTED]

ANONYMITY: I will excerpt brief passages from questionnaire responses to weave throughout the text. These will appear anonymously. I may write back to you to ask you additional questions, and I will send you a notice when the book comes out. Your responses will not be shown to anyone else, nor will you be added to any mailing list. If you are concerned about your email address identifying your response (or if you know me!), please send your response from a FREE anonymous HOTMAIL or YAHOO account. Responses needed by December 31, 2001

~~New website

Femme Resources, Butch in Film, Appreciation of the Bitch

<http://www.geocities.com/piratefemmex/honeybarbara.html>

And don't forget to sign the guest book! It's there to build a homesites resource page for femmes, at a later date

~~TRANNNY FEST

Tranny Fest: Transgender & Transgenre Cinema, in San Francisco will be held Mid-November, TBA
Our website: <http://members.aol.com/trannyfest>

We are looking for donations and volunteers.
Our volunteer form is also on our website.

Tranny Fest is a weeklong celebration of the sweet complexities of the Transgender experience. Our festival theme this year will be Tranny Fest 2001 "Gender Armageddon!" Trans and fan will participate in our Multi-galaxy of performance, panels and parties ending in a glamorous marathon of "Finger-Snappin, groin-bumpin, tear-jerkin, heartwarming, gut-bustin mix of experimental, documentary, drama & pornographic films!" Our event proudly boasts diversity and an array of cultures. We have as many genres and we do genders. Please come join us.

~~NEW FTMSOs WEBSITE!

FTMSOs, the email support list has a new websight.
Check it out at:
<http://homepages.about.com/ftmsos/ftmsos>

~~SEEKING SUBMISSIONS

FTM International is seeking SOFFA's to submit columns for publication in our regular SOFFA column. Please send submissions and inquires to: PO Box 34500, Phila. PA 19101 or write: FTMmalebox@aol.com.

~~SUBMISSIONS FOR "Your SOFFA VOICE"

If you have a SOFFA-related announcement, please send it via email to SOFFAUSA@yahoo.com.

Cont. pg.10

For instance, though my socializing in gay bars made me familiar with "femme" as way of being lesbian, I was so caught up in re-learning how to be "woman" that I did not closely examine my "femme" identity during those early days. After all, "feminine" had been synonymous with "weakness" in the old definition of "woman." On some level, I understood that my gender expression was not inextricably linked to other attributes that I had been socialized to define as "female" (inability to change the oil in a car, inability to be direct in communication, etc.). But neither the outside world nor I thoroughly understood that gender expression (masculinity, femininity, androgyny) was simply that—a gendered expression of one's self—nothing more or less. And that this was separate from one's sex/gender identity.

These are the kinds of assumptions that are being challenged, wonderfully, by the contemporary transgender liberation movement. This movement is reopening the discussion, begun by women's liberation, of what does it mean to say: "Woman is made, not born"? Because of course, then, the same question must be asked of "man." So it is thrilling to me, as the partner of a transgender person, to find myself living inside those questions, every day.

JSB: *S/HE was a tremendously important book for me when I was dealing with my partner's transition. I felt like I had found someone else who felt the same way I did about a person who was living in and moving between the gray spaces between male and female. Do you think that being attracted to that gender fluidity or transitional bodies is a sexual orientation of it's own?*

MBP: At the first F2M conference in San Francisco there was a SOFFA workshop where one of the participants raised this very question. There were about 100 of us in the workshop, most of us partners/lovers/spouses of trans people—and that loving part was the only aspect of our identity we held in common! Because otherwise we identified as femme lesbian women or butch lesbian women or femme straight women or butch straight men or butch gay men or transsexual women or transsexual men or male drag queens or—there was practically a different sex/gender/sexuality identity for each of us in the room.

What we shared was our desire for our trans partners—And one woman asked: "Is this really my sexuality?" Is "transerotic" a sexual orientation/preference? Certainly I can now go back into my memories and see how each one of my significant loves has been for a person who lived his life on the edge of "male" and "female," "masculine" and "feminine."

JSB: *Is writing part of your way of processing the changes and*

issues in your life? Did writing S/HE change your perspective or affect the process you were going through at the time? Are you going to write more about gender? Is there ever a day when you don't think about gender in some way?

MBP: During the time just before I met Leslie, I was certainly confused and challenged about what sex/gender meant, and what gender expression meant, in my realm of loving. And it was during this period that I began to write the pieces in *S/HE*, as a way of exploring that confusion. Years earlier, when I had begun to be politically active in women's liberation, I had gained a basis for understanding my public female self. I got familiar with feminist theory that challenged the social roles assigned to men and women. I began the adventure of expanding what I could do and think "as a woman" beyond the boundaries drawn around me in my girlhood. I was able to affirm forthrightness and power in my life as a woman, rather than relying on the manipulation and indirection, the passive-aggressiveness, often characteristic of us as women when we exist only in oppressed space.

But, meanwhile, in my private and sexual life, I continued to experience a feeling of powerlessness with lovers—a dissonance between my growing public powerful self and my private sexual self. And this was reflected in the dynamic between me and my lovers—the initial attraction between me as femme and a butch lesbian, the early intense eroticism, and then the coldness, withdrawal, or hostility. Finally, when I went through a personal process of recovery, as I got sober and dealt with my family's history of alcoholism, I could see that these negative interactions were connected, at least in part, to unresolved issues about sex/gender identity—both in my butch lovers and in *me*!

One of the important aspects of writing *S/HE* for me was to look at the specifics of my own gender expression, as a femme woman—to look at the way that "feminine style," or being a femme, has been equated with "woman." At least in an Euro-American context and economy, those of us seen as feminine—and therefore belonging somehow to woman—are devalued, literally. We are seen as a commodity, an item of exchange, someone for sale or to be consumed, used. So the social values attached to femininity have become negative—femmes are thought of as "brainless," "passive," "sluttish."

These were valuations of me that have sometimes emerged in the past, from my lovers' subconscious and out of their mouths, often during sex. Later they wouldn't even remember saying hurtful words. But of course I remembered. Yet it took me a long time to understand that this kind of dynamic is not intrinsic to individual relationships, but that the historical basis for anti-femme attitudes is linked to the reasons for anti-

woman oppression in the larger world. And, of course, I could see that those of us who identify as women but who are perceived as being masculine, like butch lesbians, or butch straight women, or women working "nontraditional," i.e. "men's," jobs, are devalued in other ways—by being told they aren't "real" women, for instance.

And I got a much better understanding of how intense social pressure is put on men—all kinds of men, including transmen—to deny any part of themselves that could be perceived as "feminine." Writing *S/HE* really helped me grasp the connections between anti-woman attitudes, and anti-transgender and anti-transsexual attitudes.

JSB: *You and Leslie both speak often about coalition building, and how important it is for all minority communities. There seems to be an alignment appearing between the bisexual and trans communities; do you think that's a natural coalition? What do those groups have in common that makes that coalition so easy? Which other marginalized communities would you say the trans community has some natural alignments? Which connections are more difficult?*

MBP: The modern gay movement in the U.S. was sparked by the Stonewall Rebellion in June 1969 in New York City, when the most oppressed members of the lesbian/ gay/ bisexual/ transgender communities united in fighting back against police brutality. The people who fought back at the Stonewall Bar were African American and Latina drag queens, transsexuals, gay men, and butch lesbians. Some of them were homeless or having to turn tricks as sex workers for a living, all of them were being harassed by the police for not living in the "appropriate" gender. The origin of the modern gay movement in this moment has never been forgotten in the U.S., and efforts are being renewed today, with the emergence of the transgender movement, to reinforce those connections. Leslie has written eloquently and helpfully on the building of these

coalitions in a recent book of essays, *Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue*.

But the link between various sex and gender oppressed people will be strengthened only if we include in our analysis a clear understanding of the role of racism and class inequality in perpetuating oppression. Because just as "woman" is not a homogenous group, our "queer" community is not simply one homogenous group of people. There is more violence, more discrimination, more oppression against queer people of color, against poor queer people, against those most obviously or openly living a transgender life. To be effective, any alliance between sex and gender oppressed people must be based on addressing the needs and lives of the most oppressed within our communities. That is how significant, lasting change will be made. Anything else is cosmetic, and can be wiped out with a shift in the mainstream political winds.

JSB: What are you working on now?

MBP: I recently published a book of poems, *Walking Back Up Depot Street*. These are story-poems about what it means to love "outside the boxes," both in the struggle for connections across the segregation imposed by racism, as well as how truly queer it is to love across sex/gender boundaries.

This summer I'm putting together a *Selected Poems: 1981-200* that should come out next year. It will have queer love poems from early out-of-print work, as well as poems about my relationship to my sons, and some new poems as well. Folks who'd like to know more could go to my web site www.mbpratt.org, later in the fall for publication information. ♥

—A very special thanks to Minnie Bruce Pratt for sharing her personal insight with us.

American Boyz

American Boyz is a support and social group for people who were born female but who feel that is not a complete or accurate assessment of who they are and our significant others, friends, family, and allies (SOFFAs). Our membership includes Butches, FTMs, Transmen, FTV's, Gender Outlaws, Transexals, Drag Kings, Boychicks, She-Bears, Shapeshifters, Tomboys, Passing Women, Amazons, Intersexuals, Female Guys, Boss Girls, Transgenderists, Sirs, and our SOFFAs. We provide education, support, social events, newsletters, online forums, local meetings, political action, and a national conference.

To learn more about The American Boyz, send email to amboyz@iximd.com or check out the websight at <http://office.iximd.com/mailman>

Or send SASE to: The American Boyz, 212A S. Bridge St., Suite 131, Elkton, MD, 21922 FAX: 410-620-2024

RELATIONSHIP WISHES

By Arthur Freeheart

I'm no longer a primary significant other of an FTM. I'm a single & available guy!

A friend recently suggested a romance-related exercise. It involves making a list of things you want in partnership then using that list as guide, inspiration, and catalyst in developing relationships. I figure if I list wants that specifically relate to being a transsexual man in relationship here it might be of some relevance and/or interest to other FTMs and FTMSOs.

I pay little attention to gender as an indicator of personality traits. I don't expect men to be all that much different from women. I've never seen "the sexes" as opposites. I see people as people. (This isn't a universal FTM guy attitude. It might not even be a majority FTM guy attitude.) I would like to leave gender expectations and gender-linked stereotypes out of my future relationships.

I would like to be able to share intimacy without considerations of what being with an FTM says about my partners' sexual orientation overshadowing our interaction.

I would like to share my comfort level with my hormonal replacement therapy and surgical gender modifications with partners. Intellectual tolerance and/or acceptance of FTM surgeries isn't the same thing!

I would like to share any concerns I have about the differentness of my sexual response post-surgery with partners without those differences being seen as defects.

I would like considerations of my being FTM to be part of "getting to know each other" rather than a major theme in relationship. (If I were pre-transition, going through transition, or anticipating more surgery this would not be on my list.)

I would like to be body-positive and size accepting with my partner.

I would like "gender play" [or any other kind of scripting] in lovemaking to be an option rather than a given.

I would like my chosen social self-presentation to be affirmed and acknowledged by my partners. My social self-presentation is as an androgynous man. I don't want a partner who feels obligated to "out" me to people or explain my social self-presentation to them in some way.

I would like to avoid being habitually "serious" [meaning non-playful, "heavy", process fixated] or having a "you and me against the world" life raft mentality.

I want to be spontaneous. I want to keep things as simple as possible. I want open, clear communication. I want mutual commitment to relationship success. I want fun!

I'd be very interested in seeing FTM-specific lists created by other trans guys. I'd also be interested in FTMSO-specific lists. Feedback to this one appreciated!

~~Arthur [ArthurFreeheart@aol.com] is the American Boyz National Bi/Gay Liaison.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Continued....

~~Northeast Bisexual Conference

The Northeast Bisexual Conference has expanded. It's now "Transcending Boundaries: Celebrating the Spectrum of Sexuality, Gender, & Sex," and the search for workshop/presentation submissions has begun! We are actively looking for workshops geared towards poly/bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, and intersexed people.

As people who fall between the established norms of gay or straight, male or female, bisexuals, pansexuals, trans, and intersexed people have struggled as minorities within a minority. With increasing visibility in the general GLBTI community and the political realm, the time has come for an event dedicated to the particular concerns of our communities, and to our common issues.

In New Haven, CT, on October 19-21, 2001, "Transcending Boundaries" will provide a forum in which bisexual, pansexual, trans, and intersexed people, as well as allies, can find a larger sense of community and a renewed sense of the importance of fighting for our rights.

Workshops may be geared toward one community, towards more than one, or towards all. While some topics, such as "Transitioning" may be suitable to just the trans community, other topics such as "Coming Out" or "Building Community" can apply to many communities at once.

We want workshops on bisexual experiences, transgender experiences, the intersections, the links, the divides, the commonalties, the strengths between the two. We want workshops on families, sexuality, relationships, health, community, spirituality, race, activism, youth, aging, dis/abilities, day-to-day life, queer theory, legal issues, literature and the arts, and more.

We want to give you a forum to discuss what you want to discuss. We want seasoned presenters. We want people who have never presented before. We want people at their first conference.

We want discussions, panels, forums, presentations, performances, and activities, whatever you want to do. For more information about the conference, or to download the workshop proposal form, visit www.transcendingboundaries.org
Please note: submissions are due August 31, 2001. (If this is absolutely impossible for you, please e-mail me as soon as you can.)

If web access is a problem for you, please contact me and I

would be happy to get the form to you via e-mail, snail mail or fax. Also, feel free to contact me with any other questions you may have. Please forward this e-mail to any appropriate lists you know.

Alex the glitterboi
Workshop Coordinator
femmeboy@netzero.net

~~INTERNATIONAL DAY OF INCLUSIVENESS

to coincide with the closing of the ILGA Global Gay Summit and the opening of the UN World Conference Against Racism.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st, 2001, 1:30 PM -
OGAWA PLAZA, DOWNTOWN OAKLAND,
CALIFORNIA

KICKOFF: SUNDAY, AUGUST 26th, 7:00 PM -
HARVEY MILK PLAZA, 18th & CASTRO, SAN
FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Please come and show your true colors...peace out.

OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE:
<http://www.ilgaoakland2001.org>
or CALL 510-663-3980

TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY HOUSING
FOR INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES:
ILGAOakland2001@aol.com
or CALL 510-663-3980

TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE CONFERENCE
Volunteer Email:
EastBayPride@hotmail.com
or CALL 510-287-5733

EAST BAY PRIDE EVENTS HOTLINE:
510-287-8780

MEDIA/PRESS:
ebpmedia@aol.com
or CALL 510-663-3980

www.eastbaypride.org
www.ilgaoakland2001.org
www.ilga.org
www.iglhc.org

Be a part of history. And help make homophobia and sexism a part of history, too.