

Remember Our Dead!



Gwen Araujo

Latina Transgender

Killed on October 3, 2002

Age 17

TGSF TransGender San Francisco is a group for all members of the Transgendered Community. Transgender is used as an umbrella term that includes female and male cross dressers, transvestites, drag queens or kings, female or male impersonators, intersexed individuals, pre-operative, post-operative and non-operative transsexuals, masculine females, feminine males, all persons whose perceived gender or anatomical sex may be incongruent with their gender expression, and all persons exhibiting gender characteristics and identities which are perceived to be androgynous.

The Channel

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco, a California non-profit corporation), is a non-sexual, membership based organization serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-gifted people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends, and professionals in the helping services. For details about TGSF programs, membership, article submission guidelines and classified ads, please write to TGSF Secretary, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486.

ExCom 2002 - 2003 Officers

(Fiscal Year: May 1 - April 30)

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Membership Report

Final 2001-2002 Membership as of:

May 24, 2002 230

TGSF (TransGender San Francisco) is a CA non-profit corporation. Donations to TGSF are TAX DEDUCTIBLE on both Federal and California income tax returns. Talk to your tax advisor for details.

The Channel, the TGSF Newsletter, is published monthly. Submissions should arrive at TGSF by the 15th day of the month preceding publication. Contents reflect the opinions of the contributors and are not necessarily those of TGSF. Other organizations may reprint or reproduce uncopyrighted portions of the newsletter for their members, provided TGSF is acknowledged as the source of the material. Copyrighted materials may be reproduced only with written permission from TGSF.

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Ad Rates

	Per Issue	Six Months	Per Year
Business Card (3-1/2 x 2)	\$ 25	\$125	\$ 250
4x5	\$ 60	\$300	\$ 600
Full Page	\$100	\$500	\$1000

Personal ads from TGSF members: \$10 for up to 40 words per issue. We will not accept ads with a sexual objective. Ad deadlines are the 15th of every month. Send ad copy and check or money order to TGSF Advertising Dept., PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. **Please support our advertisers, and tell them you saw their ad in The Channel!**

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Be Thankful...



I'm sitting here one morning, approaching the end of October, watching the sun rise slowly from behind Mt. Diablo, pondering all the meaningless blather I've plopped down in this column over the past five years...wondering what pearls of wisdom I can afford to part with (and believe me, the supply is running low), and all I can think about is that young Latina Transgender in

Newark, who was brutally beaten and then strangled to death earlier in the month.

Gwen Araujo. So young - just 17 - still in the process of trying out a femme name (first Wendy, then Lida - but Gwen seems to have meant something to her). And at such an early stage in life, showing more courage than I ever had, to want to start expressing her outer self as it related to her inner self, sooner rather than later. No fear baby, no fear.

And now, no more pain. At least for her. This senseless tragedy has made me so angry! Stirred a lot of us up, fighting mad! And I was out there on Market Street shouting "Stop the Violence, Stop The Hate!" But despite the ranting and raving, it's got nothing to do with pronoun use. There are bigger issues to get fired up about. Personally, I think our TG activists made a bit much of the local media's bungling of pronouns, considering Gwen's own family were consistently doing the "Eddie=He" thing. Viewed with their intended audience, I think the media did a mediocre job of breaking the story down into soundbytes Joe Schmo and Family could digest. While I agree they could've done a better job, I think one of the next steps to take is overcome their ignorance with education. For an insightful observation in this regard, please see Ms. Calfas' remarks on Page 21. And support the "New Media Guides For Poor Underfunded 21st Century Journalists" Fundraiser at the DOR!

So much anger, so much sadness. I didn't even know Gwen Araujo, and her death has touched me deeply. It has made the boy side in me feel like confronting the bastards who did this and ripping their faces off! But then the more rational, sensitive girl side of me says, "that's not very lady-like now is it?" Arrgh! And therein lays the rub ladies and gentlemen, that society is still (goddamn it, they are STILL!) teaching our young boys and men to bottle up and channel their feelings into violence as a means to protect their fragile egos. Hey baby, looking fine girl! Sure do look and smell and feel like all woman to me honey. Hey what's this between your legs? Boy, you sure had me fooled. I can't let this get out. People will think I'm gay so I guess I'll just have to kill you now.

Poor Gwen - young, beautiful, desirable, misguided - in the wrong place at the wrong time. Feeling confident in her ability to pass, responding to the boys' attraction, caught up in that young sexual hormonal frenzy (hey, we've all been there, right?). The rumors have been flying, but the way I see the whole thing going down is that she probably gave one of those boys some head (and he probably couldn't believe his good fortune, nor ever had it so good in his life), and when he found out afterwards that he'd been "tricked, duped or otherwise fooled" into having sex with a "boy," well then there ya go - justification enough for murder don't you think?

I quote the SF Chronicle: "Araujo was attacked after Paul Merel's girlfriend [Nicole Brown] emerged from a bathroom that Araujo had been using and announced that he was male, according to police reports. It was not clear how many of the dozen partygoers saw the attack or kept quiet about what happened."

Don't you want to go up to Nicole Brown and just smack the shit out of her? Hey Miss Fancy Pants! Who gave you the right to be judge, jury and Public Announcer? Just why did you feel it was OK to expose and humiliate Gwen that way? A little jealousy perhaps? Was Gwen moving in on your man honey? Is that why you and she duked it out a few days before that party? How does it feel to know your maliciousness and spitefulness led directly to the death of another human being?

And you, dear reader, can you imagine the terror and then determination Gwen must have felt in summoning the courage to come out of that bathroom and rejoin the party, only to encounter such hateful violence? I can easily imagine Nicole Brown as one of the witnesses to the attack. Can't you just picture her standing there, with a self-satisfied smirk on her face, as the blows became more severe, and Gwen's body became more inert? I think about what I went through as a teenager, hiding my feelings and obliging society instead of being true to myself. You bet I was afraid. Terrified that my secret would get out and something like that would happen to me! My God how we all agonize over the issue of *When To Or Should I Tell?* versus *Stealth Survival Skills101!*

Continued on Page 3

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
FOR NOVEMBER

By Rachael Janelle

I hope you enjoy the Halloween party on the bay and the TGSF support group meeting at the LGBT Center in San Francisco. The support group will continue for 5 more months. Hopefully, you can attend one of the meetings.

We had the second Cotillion planning meeting and made some changes. We have a lot of work to do. We do want to make this the best because it's the 20th Cotillion. The theme will be "An Enchanted Evening in the Islands". If you want to get involved or be a contestant, please contact me. Please try not to miss this spectacular event.

We will have events for TGSF at the November, and December end of the month Events. Please be sure to check the dates. November and December will be on the third Thursday of the month instead of the fourth because of the holidays. I will be having a Thanksgiving dinner at my house between 12:00pm to 8:00pm. Dinner will be served at 5:00pm. All are welcome. Please call me if you plan to come for dinner so we can have enough food. My cell number is 408 219 1250

Day of Remembrance is November 20, 2002. This will be a special event that I hope you can make. Please see the ad in the event page. November 23, 2002 I will be co-hosting the San Jose IRML Court "Crown Ball" at Savoy Club, 3546 Flora Vista Blvd., Santa Clara. See the ad in the events Page.

This month I want to talk about gratitude. Today I have been crying since 5:00am and it's now 8:00pm. I still tears in my eyes. I know that I am struggling with an attitude with some gratitude added. Tonight I went back to my old 12 step home meeting and introduced myself as Rachael. It's a lot more difficult than you expect and some of the girls did come up after the meeting to give me support. I had been crying during the whole meeting. I'm grateful for many things, which include almost 11years of sobriety, my health, and being blessed with many friends. Today I cannot get in touch with that gratitude I usually have but tomorrow will hopefully will be a sunnier day.

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From the Editor...

Continued from Page 2

When young people like Gwen, who have such strength and conviction, are treated by their peers in such a fashion - beaten and killed and NO ONE AT THAT PARTY CARED - what does that say about our youth? What does that say about their parents, their friends, their teachers, and their clergy? What does that say about my own strategy? Small consolation, then, to have survived this long only to see those who come after rise up with such purpose, and then be cut down after showing such promise. I am shamed by survivor's guilt - there but for the grace of God go I.

I often look back and sometimes I wish I had started my transition a lot sooner in life - I'm convinced the estrogens would've filled out my hips more, for one thing. And yet, I rationalize that I'm glad I waited so long - it would've been a literal death sentence to come out when I was Gwen's age. Nowadays we have it better. Things have progressed socially to where our transgendered youth have begun to come out in greater numbers. The average age for any GLBT person to come out of the closet has dropped to 16! Unprecedented from even 10 years ago, when the average age was more like 28. And for a woman approaching the backside of 50, it gladdens my heart and I feel pride for my young beautiful sisters. It also makes me a little wistful, for I wish I wasn't such a coward when I was 17 and had the guts to do then what they're doing now. And then something like this comes along and just shatters everyone's faith and confidence. Amidst the pain, sorrow and tears, it becomes extremely difficult to call that progress.

Anyway, this expanded issue of the Channel has been devoted to Gwen (and let's not forget the equally devastating loss of Alexander John "Bear" Goodrum) - just in case someone reading this happened to miss it - and to all the countless men, women, boys and girls we've lost as a result of hate and prejudice against the transgendered. And by the time this hits the stands a lot of it will be old news. Gwen and Bear will have been laid to rest and the flurry of media coverage will have passed as quickly as it came. But old or no, it's something I feel the need to do. And I really need you, dear reader, to do something too. Well, two things actually:

First, a lot of businesses this time of year are having their annual United Way fundraising campaigns, and I'd like you to think about giving your money to our GLBT and Queer Youth organizations. Give your money to LYRIC (Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center), San Francisco. (800) 246-PRIDE (7743), www.lyric.org. Or to the Youth Gender Project in San Francisco and Berkeley. (415) 865-5625, (510) 665-9234, www.youthgenderproject.org. Or to the Lambda Youth Project in Hayward. (510) 247-8217, www.gayprom.org. Support our young people, give them a place to go, help them learn, help them grow, keep them safe, show them love. And parents - 'yo listen up: teach your young Trans daughters about what *not* to wear to fratboy beer blasts and what type of behaviors to avoid. I know it's hard to talk to your "sons" about blowjobs - especially with older, bigger, stronger, ignorant, insecure and unaware men - but goddamn it if you don't, do you want to be putting them in the ground before they're 20 like Mrs. Guerrero?

The second thing I'd like you to do - and this is something that I think we ALL really need, especially in response to how Gwen Araujo's death made you feel - is come out and join us and participate in the **Day of Remembrance (DOR)** on **November 20**. *Transcendence - the World's First Transgender Gospel Choir* (of which I am proud to be a member) will be dedicating their performance that night to Gwen, and the countless others whose lives have been taken simply because they were being true to themselves. I've reprinted a press release about the event from Gwendolyn Smith, the organizer and founder of the Day of Remembrance elsewhere in this issue (now reaching across the globe in its fourth anniversary).

I think in times like these (and I'm talking to my tranny brothers and sisters here), we all need to reach out to one another. A lot of us don't have much in the way of family any more. Those of us that do need to invite them in and join ours. And failing that, at least gather together on the 20th and create a family of our own, if for just one night.

Because a lot of us don't have anything close to resembling a home - we're lucky to have even a room. A lot of us don't have any real, close friends. A lot of us are able and willing to work but can't get a job. A lot of us are HIV positive and can't get health or medical care. A lot of us sell our bodies on the streets or for a sugar daddy. A lot of us can't think about anything except the next fix for the crack pipe or the needle or the bottle. A lot of us would be grateful for a hot meal and a safe, warm place to sleep at night. A lot of us just want to hear the words "I love you" maybe once in our lifetime before we die. A lot of us would give anything to feel the arms of our mother or our father wrapped around us just one more time. And a lot of us - those we know about at least - like the ones listed on the Day of Remembrance Website - didn't even get that much.

October 2002

TGSF ExCOM MEETING MINUTES

Minutes for ExCom meeting of October 14, 2002
Meeting commences at 4:30 p.m. Present: Rachael Janelle, Rachel Hill, Susan Laird, Kara Flynn, Stephanie Ann Blythe, Gia Louisa. Guests: Rochelle Cunning, Laura Fitler. Absent: Aiyana Eveningstar, Allison Grillo. Arriving fashionably late to the event was Kalani. Last month's meeting minutes are approved with no changes.

President's Agenda:

Cotillion: Contract received for the Design Center Costs are \$4,500 for the Center plus additional for technical personnel. Payment wanted for October 30th as opposed to December 1st as before. Call will be made requesting payment to be made in December to prevent a cash crunch for TGSF. 10,000 Handbills are printed and to be distributed. Layout of the show is discussed. Changes are being made to the show. Laura Fitler will act as director of the show. Laura Fitler presents her plans for the show and lists her requirements. Next planning meeting will be on November 5th at 7:30pm at the Blue Muse. Need for coordination of the clean-up crew is discussed.

Day of Remembrance: Check for \$500 from TGSF was sent and acknowledged. This to be deducted from the \$1600 Educational Grant Fund. ExCom approved this last month.

Monthly meetings at LGBT Center: Monthly meetings are warmly received by the community and 15 new people arrived at the first of the monthly meetings. Cost is \$240 for the first 6 months. This cost to be deducted from the \$1600 Educational Grant Fund. ExCom approved this expenditure last month.

Christmas party at Taragon Restaurant in Sunnyvale is announced. TGSF asked to donate \$100 for decorations. As we are a large part of this group it is proposed that we donate the money for decorations as well as two tickets for the Cotillion to be used for a raffle. Motion to make these donations is made. seconded. Approved, with Kara abstaining her vote.

Billy De Frank: Meet the transgender community event on Tuesday, November 12, at 7 p.m. is discussed. ExCom supports this event.

The LGBT Center of San Francisco: Noted that no correspondence or thank yours were received for the donation of the TGSF library to the Center.

Insurance Policy: Cost of a general liability policy is \$1230 for coverage. This would cover all events sponsored by TGSF and could also be used to meet requirements of the Design Center for coverage during the Cotillion. Proposed that funds be appropriated for expenditure which will be deferred until after the Halloween event. This will give flexibility to the use of the funds.

The ExCom is looking into all the options for maybe a new person to produce the Channel. Ayme's effort in doing this work is recognized. Motion is proposed to table this issue for further discussion as well as negotiations with Ayme for future expenses.

Vice-President's Report

Halloween Party: Cost/Benefit analysis is presented to ExCom. Plans for decorations are outlined. Request is made for funds to pay for boat rental, food and decoration expenses for the party. Noted that \$1000 was made for deposit towards boat rental. Money was never expended as of this time. Proposal is made that a budget of \$3500 be adopted for Halloween expenses. Seconded and approved by unanimous vote. Press releases have been made. Ticket sales are progressing well. The Blue Muse will be made available for an after-the-party Party. As there is an event scheduled for Marlena's on that night as well, there is an expected overflow of party-goers.



United Way: TGSF is now qualified for United Way contributions. Noted that funds specifically made to United Way can be earmarked for TGSF. Proposed that this be made known by way of the newsletter, the cotillion program, and other sources.

Oakland Schools: TGSF was contacted to provide lecturers for a LGBT program for three schools per week in the Oakland School District at the Ninth Grade Level. This is noted as the largest project of this type ever undertaken by TGSF in connection with public schools. Mention is made to involve other transgender groups as well. Communications are ongoing as of this meeting. Intent of the Oakland Schools is to educate their students of LGBT issues. Recommendation is to make announcement in The Channel and to sign up volunteers for this project.

Secretary's Report

Need for page announcing the Cotillion on the website is made. Membership database is same as last month. Request for suggestions with what to do with newsletters from other organizations throughout the world. Many of them come from other countries as well. Suggestions is made that they be made available at the end-of-month socials. LGBT Center does not want any of these flyers at their Center.

Pride Parade: No news of theme has been received as yet. Not expected until Jan/Feb. Trailer size is discussed. Rochelle will assist on locating a trailer for our use.

Treasurer's Report

Current balance in the treasury is \$4088.33 Cash flow is now negative as memberships have been mostly renewed and Halloween party funds are still forthcoming. Possible cash shortage until after the Halloween party is noted. Suggest that TGSF does not make any more additional donations until after sufficient funds are present.

Taxes: Returns to be prepared and sent to the state.

Advertising: Noted that outstanding invoices for advertising in The Channel need to be made. Approximately \$1,000 in outstanding invoices exist.

Education Co-chair

Plans for education events are announced to be held at the Blue Muse and at the LGBT Center. Noted that there are rules under our 501-3c status that limits our involvement in political action. Next planning is on Saturday Nov 2, 2002. Next Community Meeting is on Dec 6th (?) 2002.

Noted that many individuals are confused by the sheer number of transgender groups in the area. Many of them are focused on their own particular agenda. Mention is made that TGSF needs to be proactive in representing a wide diversity of people.

ExCom advised of the need to locate and identify future leadership for TGSF. Difficulty of doing this is stressed. It is noted by the leadership of TGSF that there is simply an overwhelming amount of work to do and often far too few individuals to do it. Rachael's 6 month's notice is reviewed and the future of TGSF is going to rely on fulfilling these offices and promoting membership.

Social Report

Report on events covered by TGSF education. End of month socials to be held at the Blue Muse. Christmas Party to be held on December 19th at the Blue Muse January Social will not be held because of the Cotillion

Old Business

Rachel Hill to be profiled for November; T-shirt project has been cancelled for lack of sufficient funds but to be reviewed later.

New Business

Proposed that next ExCom will be held on Nov 24, 2002 and Jan 5, 2003 At 4 p.m. Both meetings to be held at Susan's house, 2222 Pruneridge Ave., Santa Clara.

Motion to adjourn, seconded and approved.

This Month's ExCom Profile

VICE PRESIDENT - RACHEL HILL

WOW! Is the best way I can explain it.

If you haven't recently taken the time to reflect on your own personal journey, I urge you to do so. I did in preparation for this assignment and all I could say was WOW. So much happens so fast that one would find it surreal if they were not indeed playing the lead role.

Therefore my challenge was to condense some of this into something meaningful for you, the reader. After many attempts, I narrowed it down to this, the typical late onset, male to female, transsexual story.

I had driven for some time now, quite a ways from my neighborhood. The lid on the bin was heavy and creaked as I lifted it. A quick look to the left and then to the right and I hoisted my bags over the edge and into the dark container. The thud told me it had been recently emptied and I hoped nobody would find the bags. I hesitated a moment as I sat behind the wheel. It's funny, I always feel so empty after this.....

Yeah, I fought it. Every minute for 30 some years. From the age of 12 I made sure to maintain facial hair, a sure sign of maleness. In high school I hung out with the cowboys and had the biggest belt buckle and hat I could find. I learned about cars and had the fastest one in school - a big block Chevelle with an engine I built. Later I was involved in racing and ran high performance automotive shops in several states. I worked with "Big Daddy" Don Garlits, Don "The Snake" Prudhome, and hosted Monster trucks in Phoenix. After becoming a homeowner I learned carpentry and found there wasn't anything I couldn't build. I became a tool hound and bought enough to be the envy of any guy. Seems funny now.

Of course all during this time my motivation to dress grew and grew. I hid my activities and desires during 14 years of marriage. At times the feelings were very strong and at others they would completely go away. Sometimes for several weeks. I hid boxes of clothing in various places in the house always shifting their location so as not to get caught. I became a master at deceit (not something to be proud of) and dressed whenever I had the opportunity. The guilt was incredible. The self-hatred was almost unbearable. Each time I encountered a difficult situation in my life I assumed it was God's way of punishing me for whom I was.

November 1999 late one evening the weight of my secret became too much to bear. My eyes blurry from tears, my body shaking with fear I confessed my deceit to the woman I have loved for most of my life. Her words were lost, but I could see her struggle to understand. Oh the awful thoughts she must have had. At least now it was out in the open. The next year I spent all my spare time on the Internet and reading books to find out what "it" was. Sharing my condition with my wife made my life so much more bearable. At least

I had gotten out from behind the hiding and deceit. Now I could concentrate on learning as much as I could about my feelings.

In January 2001 I was determined to seek out others like me and joined a gender group that met twice a month at a church (RGA). This gave me an opportunity to meet many wonderful people and to share the feelings, the thoughts, the difficulties, the family issues and so much more. I took my time and did a lot of listening, learning, experiencing.

January 2002 I went to the TGSF Cotillion; an event that changed my life. I became more and more involved with TGSF and helped out wherever I could. I had a lot of fun building and riding on the float during the Pride Parade and walking in the Dyke march. I was a guest at Mama's 2nd annual Breast Cancer Emergency fund dinner, the Mr. and Miss GAPA Pageant, Model Search 2002, the Miss Trans Globe Pageant supported by the Filipino Task Force on AIDS, and several gatherings at the SF LGBT Center. I am still a member of RGA and participate in the Mid-Peninsula TG group as well as the TGSF meetings. I was asked to MC the TGSF fashion show and have been honored with producing the upcoming "Halloween on the Bay" event. With every new adventure I would meet beautiful people and experience new things. I owe much to you, Sis.

Since that time I have gone full time, have legally changed my name, transitioned at work, worked through the ending of my marriage (a happy story for both) and will be moving into my new place shortly. I have gone from being a part time participant at socials to serving as your Vice President. My first big event was the 2002 Cotillion and now I find myself competing for the title in 2003. I recently completed some facial surgery (nose) and breast augmentation and feel wonderful inside about all the changes. I have met more wonderful people than I ever imagined and owe a huge thanks to so many people for their love, support and encouragement.

Thank you for the opportunity to share,

Rachel



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Saturday / November 9 / 3:00pm - 5:00pm

TGSF EDUCATION SEMINAR

TGSF presents an education seminar featuring Dr. Kaplan, who will be presenting a discussion of male to female sex reassignment surgery. Included in the discussion will be surgical options and techniques, and post-op care. LGBT Center, 1800 Market Street, San Francisco. See announcement in this issue for more details.

Tuesday / November 12 / 7:00pm - 9:00pm

MEET YOUR TG COMMUNITY

Informal reception to meet individuals from the transgender community and asked the questions you always wanted to ask. Location Billy DeFrank Lesbian and Gay Community Center, 938 the Alameda, San Jose, CA 95126; 408 293 3040. For more information contact Rachael Janelle at 408 219 1250, or Rachael_Janelle@hotmail.com

Sunday / November 17 / 6:00pm

OKLAHOMO!

Marlena's Bar 488 Hayes Street, Hosted by Mr. Cowboy SF 2002. Canned Food Drive benefiting Project Open Hand - First Annual, a new Mr. Cowboy SF tradition! Raffle benefiting Imperial Court of Truth or Dare Monarch Charity Fund.

Tuesday / November 19 / 7:30pm - 9:30pm

SF TRANSGENDER SUPPORT MEETING

Location LGBT Center 1800 Market St, San Francisco- room Q-33. Questions contact Rachael Janelle.

Wednesday / November 20 / 5:30pm

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

6:30pm Candlelight March from Harvey Milk Plaza at (Market and Castro) to LGBT Center (bring candles!). 7:30pm Speak out and presentation at LGBT Center, 1800 Market St, San Francisco Rainbow Room. See announcement in this issue for more details.

Thursday / November 21st / 8:00pm - 10:00pm

TGSF END OF MONTH EVENT (WEEK BEFORE THANKSGIVING)

The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street, San Francisco. For more information contact Rachael Janelle at 408 219 1250 or Rachael_Janelle@hotmail.

Saturday / November 23 / 7:00pm

SAN JOSE COURT'S CROWN BALL

Doors open at 7:00pm show at 8:00pm. Your Host will be Crown Princess Rachael Janelle of San Jose IRML Court. Location: Savoy Club 3546 Flora Vista Blvd. Santa Clara. Questions contact Rachael Janelle.

Sunday / November 24 / 4:00pm

TGSF ExCOM MEETING

Next meeting will be held at Susan Laird's house in Santa Clara, 2222 Pruneridge Avenue. Call 408-430-2196 x1230 - all TGSF members in good standing are invited to attend. Please note, there will be NO meeting for December 2002!

November's Birthdays

11/00	Erin Cadiz	11/21	Sheri R.
11/03	Tracy Jaquith	11/22	Angela Marie
11/05	Lorri Levy-Conner	11/22	Michelle Patrick
11/06	Valerie Valeska	11/25	Dale R. Carlson
11/06	Andrea Drane	11/25	Lee Powell
11/07	Mary Ellen Ratcliff	11/25	Glinda Corner
11/13	Debbie Cook	11/25	Sandy Campbell
11/11	Ann Grogan	11/25	Mikayla Connell
11/12	Katie Kearney	11/26	Meredith Memaran
11/15	Marcia Chapdelaine	11/28	Randall Stone
11/16	Ricki Ballen	11/29	Kathryn Ryder
11/19	Leah Christina Segman	11/30	Carol Alexander
11/20	Lola Hurley	11/30	Rom Bimbaum

Many Happy Returns of the Day!

Thursday / November 28 / 12:00pm - 8:00pm

A TG THANKSGIVING DINNER

At Rachael Janelle house - 931 Bidwell Ave Sunnyvale, CA. Dinner served at 5:00pm - all are welcome. Call or contact Rachael if you want to help!

Coming Next Month!

Sunday / December 15

BAY AREA TRANSGENDER GROUP XMAS DINNER

All local Bay Area support groups unite to celebrate the holidays! Location Tarragon restaurant in Sunnyvale. Questions contact Rachael Janelle!

Thursday / December 19th / 8-10pm

TGSF CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS - END OF MONTH EVENT XMAS PARTY

The Blue Muse 409 Gough Street, San Francisco. For more information contact Rachael Janelle!

Transcending Transgender

Sponsored by
City of Refuge UCC Outreach Ministries
A support group facilitated by Janetta Johnson and Portia Denard; Where: City of Refuge, United Church of Christ, 1025 Howard Street, San Francisco CA 94103, (415) 861-6130. When: Every Friday, 6 pm to 7:30 pm. Food and snacks will be provided.



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Calendar of Events – November 2002

OTHER BAY AREA GROUPS

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Pacific Center for Human Growth (PacCtr)

A counseling oriented growth center sponsors all-inclusive gender support groups on every Friday at 8:00pm, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 510-548-8283

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA)

Meets 1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8:00pm at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. Mail: PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170 or call 408-984-4044.

Sacramento Gender Association (SGA)

Blue Rose Chapter meets 8:00pm the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month in Sacramento. Write PO Box 162907, Sacramento, CA 95816 or call 916-364-7212 for meeting locations. Website: www.transgender.org/sga; email: sga@transgender.org

Diablo Valley Girls (DVG)

Meets 1st and 3rd Monday of every month. 8:00pm at Club 1220, 1220 Pine Street in Walnut Creek. Write to DVG, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885 or call 925-937-8432.

DVG Rap Group (RCC)

Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month, 7:00pm at Rainbow Community Center, 2118 Willow Pass Road, Suite 500 in Concord. For more information call 925-937-8432.

FTM

A support group for Female-to-Male CDs and TSS; Holds open Informational Meetings and closed Support Meetings. Write FTM International, Inc., 1360 Mission Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94103 or call 415-553-5987.

TGIF

A social group for transgenders. Meets one Saturday each month at a private home in Santa Rosa for a potluck social from 4:00pm until early evening. Space is limited - Reservations Recommended! Call Diane or Anne at 707-544-1540.

Silicon Valley Gender Association (SVGA)

A new transgender support group meets at the Billy De Frank Community Center in San Jose on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. For more information, call 408-293-2429.

Far West Women (FWW)

A support group for TGs affiliated with the GLBT Alliance in Humboldt County. Meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month at 8:00pm in the GLBTA Center at Fourth and "D" Streets in Eureka. For information call the Center at 707-445-9760.

Santa Cruz Trans (SCT)

Bi-weekly social/support group for gender-gifted persons serving Santa Cruz and Central Coast. 1st and 3rd Thursdays every month at The Diversity Center, 1328 Commerce Lane, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (831) 425-5422; 7:00pm

The Mid-Peninsula Transgender Group (MPTG)

A support group for the LGBT community that meets at 7:30 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at the Women's Health Boutique, 1115 South B Street, San Mateo - (408) 619-2908.

Central City Hospitality House (CCHH)

288 Turk Street, SF. 415-749-2167. Facilitated TG discussion group every Monday, 5:00pm - 6:30pm.

Transcendence Gospel Choir (TGC)

Ashley Moore 510-682-7763; http://tgchoir.home.attbi.com/

					1 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	2
3	4 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	5	6 7:30 PM MPTG	7 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT	8 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	9 3:00 PM TGSE: Education Seminar 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
10	11 5:00 PM CCHH	12 7:00 PM SJ "Meet Your Community"	13 7:00 PM TransBay	14	15 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap 8:00 PM RGA	16
17	18 5:00 PM CCHH 8:00 PM DVG	19 7:30 PM TGSE Support Meeting @ Center	20 5:30 PM 4th Annual Day Of Remembranc e	21 7:00 PM DVG (RCC) 7:00 PM SCT 7:30 PM TGSE: End Of Month Event	22 7:00 PM SVGA 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	23 7:00 PM SJ Court Crown Ball 8:00 PM FWW 8:00 PM SGA
24 4:00 PM TGSE ExCom Meeting	25 5:00 PM CCHH	26	27	28	29 8:00 PM PacCtr: Rap	30

TGSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Membership Year is May 1 to April 30 / \$30 Single Membership; \$40 Family.

Please Print / Check all that apply:

New Member | Renewal Member #: _____ | with Family Member | What Year did you first join TGSF? _____

Preferred Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Mailing Name: _____

Family Member's Name: _____ Birthdate (Month/Day): _____ / _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Optional: Telephone: (_____) _____ What Name should we ask for if we need to call you? _____

Your Email address: _____ Website URL: _____

Would you like a link from the TGSF Website to your URL? Yes No

May we use photos of you taken at TGSF events in our newsletter or website? Yes No

Send Check or Money Order to: TGSF, PO Box 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486, or hand to any Board Member at a TGSF Social.

Announcements!

Update/Review

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT MEETING

Hey Baby, We did good. The room was full - 17/18 people, all chairs used. We covered topics like police and TG persons, TG employment, the need for a mentor program, and political action, good topics all. We got support from other support groups too, and I'm going to try to get to some of their events so that I can support them also. So good job, it fills a need and its good to see us helping to put the T in the LGBT Center. Thank you so much for letting me get involved.

Tekla K. West

Buttercup: *We'll never survive!*

Westley: *Nonsense! You're only saying that because no one ever has.
- (The Princess Bride)*

DEAR FRIENDS:

It pleases me to announce the release of The Discovery Channel's new documentary "**Changing Sexes: Male to Female**" airing on **Friday, Nov 25th 2002 at 10:00pm**. Check your local listing!

I was honored to have worked with a wonderful producer with Film Garden Productions, whose intent was to educate viewers about GID. This world premier documentary follows the transition process of three male to female women—showing the hard and sometimes dubious process a pre-op and post-op TS woman experiences.

It was our goal, to help educate the viewing audience about Gender Identify Dysforia with respect and dignity—and hopefully take away some of the damage done by programs with the "Jerry Springer" mentality.

I would be honored if you set aside a few moments on November 25th, at 10:00 to watch this documentary. If you are TS, and have loved ones who do not understand what your going through—then be sure and record it. I have a short segment in the film, which shows my work coaching a new TG woman on feminine poise.

Please pass along this information, to any friends, therapists, loved ones, or your local support groups.

May all of you have a blessed holiday season!

All my best,

Denae Doyle

FemImage; <http://www.femimage.com>

November 12, 2002

"MEET YOUR TG COMMUNITY"

7:00-9:00pm

Informal reception to meet individuals from the TG community and ask your questions!

**For More Information Contact Rachael Janelle
At 408-219-1250 or Rachael_Janelle@Hotmail.Com**

Billy Defrank Lesbian And Gay Community Center

938 The Alameda in San Jose, CA 95126 • 408-293-3040

November 7-10!

GREETINGS TRANS ACTIVISTS AND ALLIES!

Creating Change is going to be great this year! There will be tons of transgender and gender-related workshops, discussions, and caucuses on top of our all day Pre-Conference Institute on November 7, Gender Splendor, which will be focusing on issues important to and affecting transgender people of color.

Creating Change is in Portland, Oregon, from November 7-10. The Gender Splendor Pre-Conference Institute starts on Thursday, the 7th, at 9:00am. The Conference ends at 1:30 on Sunday, November 10th. (Monday, the 11th, is Veteran's Day.)

For those of you who don't already know, this year we launch the first-ever Creating Change Conference theme: Building An Anti-Racist Movement. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is firmly committed to addressing the impact of racism in this country and in our movement, and to that end, much of the programming, workshops, discussions will be oriented toward issues of racism both inside and outside of our communities.

Our slate of transgender-themed programming is extensive. Our Gender Splendor day is coming together, with a planning committee including about thirty transgender people of color from around the country. On Friday night, there will be a gathering for transgender activists to get to know each other and network. A tremendous performance piece, B4T, by Imani Henry will also be performed on Friday, at 1:00 PM.

Transgender-related workshops and caucus discussions cover a full gamut of topics including federal legislation, youth, healthcare access, genderqueer identities, and sex. This year, the Transgender Civil Rights Project has worked to create more opportunities to talk about the federal agenda than ever before, with one workshop being a discussion of the transgender federal agenda and another focusing on the best methods for lobbying for transgender inclusion at the federal level.

NGLTF received over 300 workshop proposals for only 150+ available workshop slots. Our schedule is completely full; our conference director was unable to schedule many, many great proposals. In fact, we added additional workshop time slots in order to accommodate more workshops over our three days together.

I hope that everyone will come to this year's **Creating Change** so that we may all learn about and from each other, as people, as activists, and as sisters and brothers in the movement.

Complete registration and housing information for the conferences is on our website at <http://www.creatingchange.org> (including info about free community housing) and if you can't find something on the web, call the NGLTF Creating Change information number at (202) 639-6333. Read more about the Project at: <http://www.nglft.org/statelocal/transgender.htm>

See you in Portland!

Lisa Mottet

Legislative Lawyer

Transgender Civil Rights Project

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

lmottet@nglft.org (202) 639-6308

Special Events This Month!

November 9th, 3-5pm

TGSF EDUCATION SEMINAR

TGSF presents an education seminar featuring Dr. Kaplan, who will be presenting a discussion of male to female sex reassignment surgery. Included in the discussion will be surgical options and techniques, and post-op care.

Dr. Kaplan graduated from the Loyola University Ob/Gyn residency program, and has spent time training in Russia and the Graduate Hospital at Allegheny University in Philadelphia. He has had the opportunity to learn gender reassignment surgery techniques from Dr. Donald Laub, Dr. Neal Wilson, and Dr. Annette Cholon. He is currently seeing patients at the Center for Advanced Gynecologic Surgery and Pelvic Floor Medicine in San Ramon and San Francisco locations. He has privileges in most of the Bay Area hospitals.

There is limited street parking available near the LGBT Center, so public transportation is recommended. The Center is accessible by MUNI J, K, L, M, N or F, or bus lines 6, 7, 61, or 71. A suggested donation of \$4 is recommended to help defray the costs of the room rental. LGBT Center, 1800 Market Street, San Francisco.

Transgender Law Center Presents:

FREE TRANSGENDER LEGAL CLINICS!

Schedule a 30 minute appointment at this clinic to meet one-on-one with an attorney. Get legal information on subjects like document changes, asylum, marriage, child custody, and Medi-Cal, and gender identity discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodation.

The attorney can provide you with general legal information, an overview of some of the legal options available to you, and, when possible, contact information for local non-profit agencies or private attorneys who can represent you. However, our attorneys will not be able to provide you with direct representation.

Call or email to reserve a consultation slot. However, even if you don't make a reservation, you should still stop by the clinic. Free pamphlets on legal issues like housing, employment, asylum, Medi-Cal, and document changes will be available in Spanish and English.

The clinic is wheel chair accessible. If you need assistance in sign language or a language other than English, please contact us in advance. Every attempt will be made to accommodate these needs. If you can't make one of these clinics, or you have an immediate legal question, you can send us questions at the above phone number or email address.

Reservations/Questions: (415) 392-6257 x308 or daley@nclrights.org / 7 to 9pm on **November 12th and 26th** / 870 Market Street, Suite 570 (Market and Powell)

Significant Other Support - East Bay

Questions or concerns about your partner's crossdressing? Please call Julie at **(925) 937-8432**, e-mail **julie39@attbi.com** or write to: Julie Freeman, PO Box 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885.

Now, More Than Ever: Transgender Day Of Remembrance Honored with National, International Events

EVENT HONORS TWENTY-FIVE VICTIMS SINCE 2001 MEMORIAL

Contact: Gwen Smith
gwen@gwensmith.com

In a year marked with two dozen reported anti-transgender murders, members of the transgendered community will be holding events on **November 20th** to honor those lost.

"Too often people want to make our dead into forgotten people," said event founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith, "Now, more than ever, we need to stand together and say that taking life from anyone is not acceptable. Now, more than ever, we must remember, and let those memories spur us to more education and more action to safeguard the diverse character of our communities."

The event is designed to draw those from across the community to come out and say that each and every human is valuable and honored, that no one should ever be so marginalized that their death doesn't matter. From candlelight vigils to performance events and art installations, each city finds a unique way to make the lives of those murdered visible.

A total of 19 states and the District of Columbia will have Transgender Day of Remembrance events, and four countries — the United States, Canada, Chile and Spain — will have them within their borders. In addition, several prominent transgender websites will also be blacking out their main pages on November 20th, as a show of solidarity with the cause.

Events this year include a candlelight march down Market Street in San Francisco, California, a rally in Washington D.C., the dedication of a permanent memorial space in West Hollywood, California, an on-campus event at Ohio State University, and a memorial service in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota.

The Transgender Day Of Remembrance began in San Francisco in 1999 as a response to the murder of Rita Hester, a transgendered woman who was stabbed to death in her apartment. A murder that, like most transgender killings, remains unsolved.

Through the work of the Remembering Our Dead project which spawned the Transgender Day of Remembrance, it was discovered that an average of one person is reported dead due to anti-transgender violence every month. In 2002 this figure has doubled, with 25 cases since last year's event. Organizers point to better reporting, rather than an increase in crime, as a primary reason for this jump.

"Some might think that the rise in numbers points to an increase in deaths this year," Smith said. "While I think there may be some weight in that, I personally feel this points more to a heightened sensitivity to these cases in the media and amongst our community. The sad thing is that it could well mean that these cases have always happened in numbers like what we are finding now — and that there is a chance, perhaps a good one, that there are even more still out there we are missing."

Although not every person represented during the Transgender Day of Remembrance self-identified as transgendered - that is, as a transsexual, crossdresser, or otherwise gender-variant - each was a victim of violence based on bias against transgendered people.

Information on Transgender Day Of Remembrance events around the US is available online at <http://www.gender.org/remember/day>.

Other Announcements!

AUDITIONS!

...for Trans Womyn, Men and Third Gender

When: Sat Nov 2 at 2pm

Where: Luna Sea Theater 2940 16th St. Second Floor SF (one block from 16th Street BART)

The show will be the last weekend in January and the first weekend in Feb 2003. It will feature the original performance art of trans people. The show will be directed by Luna Sea's Artistic Director, Claudia L. Vierra Allen and Luna Sea Director Intern Marcus Rene Van.

People wanting to audition should RSVP to Luna Sea at (415) 863-2388. Everyone will come at 2pm. Please prepare a 3-5 minute piece of your own work on the topic of passing, privilege, or passion. If you are a musician, dancer or singer please also prepare one other piece to audition with.

We are looking for a diverse cast of 6 transpeople. Transpeople of all colors, ages, sizes, orientations are welcome to audition, as well as people identifying anywhere on the transpectrum. Transdykes and people of color are encouraged to audition. The show will follow a collaborative process whereby the cast will workshop together the pieces for the show. We will write new work together and individually.

At the audition we will look at your pieces plus have people work together with improv provided by the directors. We are particularly interested in finding 6 people that can work together to produce an excellent show.

Also, there will be an additional Audition for lesbian and/or dyke identified (lesbiandyke, bidyke, transdyke, etc) performers who are current or former partners of trans men or womyn.

When: Wed, Nov 13 at 7pm

We are also looking for performance pieces for partners/former partners of trans people. This will be a collaborative process with the cast. We are looking for a diverse cast of 6 performers.

Don't Miss Our Upcoming Scheduled Performance!

Nov 22 & 23 at Luna Sea

During *Luna Sea's 9th Anniversary* show, www.lunasea.org, we will feature the play **Butterfly** by Trish Cole. It was originally presented during the DykeDrama Festival at Luna Sea this year. This chilling powerful play is about a mother's tragic inability to cope with her child's transformation from a little girl to dyke to FTM. It will touch you to your core. The anniversary show will also feature poet Marcus Rene Van from Luna Sea's excellent sold out show *TransMen Tell their Tales*. Tickets are \$15-\$25 and reservations can be made by calling (415) 863-2989.

Thank you for getting the word out!

Claudia L. Vierra Allen
www.lunasea.org

HEY!

\$10 Bucks Per Issue Gets You An Ad Like This...!

Tall, feminine, graceful closet CD seeks Big Sister to help with shopping and makeup tips. I live alone so it's helpful if you can come here, but I can certainly travel. SF Area. Call (415) 000-0000.

Up to 40 words only \$10.00. Send text of ad and Check or Money Order to TGSF's PO Box, ATTN: Editor. Reach out and come out!

HELLO!

I just wanted to let you know that I currently have openings in my Transgender Support Group. This has been an ongoing group for the past 2 years. Anyone with gender identity issues is welcome, including MTF, FTM, bi-gendered, crossdressers, intersexed, questioning, post-op etc. Group is structured to be a safe place to receive support for gender concerns, and dealing with family, friends, or workplace issues. Transitioning is NOT required. I support people's right to express gender in the ways that are right for them.

Group meets in El Cerrito near BART on Monday evenings 6-7:30pm. The cost is sliding scale \$20-45/week, payable monthly. I also accept Medi-Cal for Alameda and Contra Costa counties. A 3-month commitment is requested, and a FREE pre-group interview is required. Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

I am a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and have been working in the mental health field since 1989. In my full-time private practice, I specialize in sexual minorities (lesbian, trans, S/M, poly, bi, gay), relationship problems, recovery from addictions, sexual concerns, abuse survivors, and disability/chronic illness.

Valerie Igl, MFT
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
510-527-5662
valigl@aol.com

Save The Date!

HOLIDAY PARTY DECEMBER 15

Save the date of December 15 for the fourth (!) annual Holiday Party! This year RGA is taking the lead, and the event is co-sponsored by TGSV, the Mid-Peninsula Gender Group, TGSE, and Carla, and represents the first coming together of the Bay Area groups in one event. This should be a wonderful party.

More details will be coming later, but here's what we know so far: **Sponsors:** RGA, MPPG, TGSE, TGSV, and Carla's. **Date:** Sunday December 15. **Time:** Evening. **Cost:** TBD, but about the same as last year. **Place:** Tarragon in Sunnyvale—same place as last year.

Stay tuned for more details on how to sign up, but mark your calendars now! And a special thank you to Jackie and the team at RGA for organizing us this year!

Jennifer Wolcott
jwolcott@eldil.com; 408-323-5366

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP

Safe ongoing group
All gender queers welcome
Transitioning NOT required
Monday eves * East Bay near BART
FREE interview * Sliding scale \$20-45/wk



Valerie Igl, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
<http://members.aol.com/valigl/page/feministtherapy.htm>
valigl@aol.com 510-527-5662

Takin' Care of Biz...

TGSF BALANCE SHEET

(September 16, 2002 through October 18, 2002)

Assets

Cash	\$4,123.33
Event Equipment	
Decorations	\$1,000.00
Food Service	\$200.00
Office Supplies	\$50.00
Total Assets	\$5,373.33

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$5,000.00
Educational Fund	\$0.00
Taxes	\$0.00
Insurance	\$0.00
Utilities	\$0.00
Operations	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$5,000.00
Equity	\$373.33
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$5,373.33

Monthly Income Statement

Revenue

Membership	\$60.00
Advertising	\$150.00
Cotillion	\$0.00
Donations Received	\$59.00
Social	\$0.00
Education	\$0.00
Outreach	\$0.00
Halloween Party	\$390.00
.....	\$659.00

Expenses

Cotillion	\$498.02
Halloween Party	\$0.00
Big Shew	\$0.00
Pride Parade	\$0.00
Social	\$40.00
Education	\$240.00
Outreach	\$0.00
Newsletter	\$321.48
Operations	\$222.42
Donations Paid	\$0.00
.....	\$1,321.92

Net Income (Loss) (\$662.92)

TGSF DONATIONS

Our Friends Who Give

as of October 18, 2002

There were no donations for the period.

Won't you Consider a Tax-Deductible Donation?

CONTACT TGSF!

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Comments and suggestions concerning the TGSF web site www.tgsf.org

Information

Rachael Janelle rachael_janelle@hotmail.com
..... or 408-219-1250

Requests for information concerning TGSF and upcoming events

Calendar **www.tgsf.org**

Submissions can be made online directly. Canceling mistakes or for other problems, please contact the Webmistress.

TG's In The News!

NTAC Press Release

SUPREME COURT REFUSES TO HEAR TRANSSEXUAL MARRIAGE CASE

The Supreme Court has the final authority to make pronouncements on the application of existing laws, by actively considering, or by passively rejecting consideration of a case. On Monday, October 7 the Court did the latter by rejecting the case of J'Noel Ball Gardiner.

Under Kansas law, Ms. Gardiner, whose marriage was called into question after her husband, Marshall Gardiner, died in 1999 without a will, should have been entitled to half of her husband's estate. Her husband's son, Joe Gardiner, wanted the marriage invalidated on the grounds that J'Noel, a transsexual, had been born male.

Joe Gardiner challenged J'Noel's inheritance claims in probate court, and a trial court agreed with the son. But a Kansas Appellate Court later overturned the decision. The Appellate Court ruled that gender is not fixed and that gender at the time of marriage is the determining factor in the validity of that marriage.

Joe Gardiner appealed this decision to the Kansas Supreme Court, which ruled, in a 9-0 decision, that J'Noel was "male for purposes of marriage." Relying heavily on dictionary definitions, the Kansas Supreme Court announced: "The words "sex," "marriage," "male," and "female" in everyday understanding do not encompass transsexuals.

"The common, ordinary meaning of 'persons of the opposite sex'", according to the state's Supreme Court opinion, "contemplates what is commonly understood to be a biological man and a biological woman. A post-operative male-to-female transsexual does not fit the common definition of a female."

The Kansas Supreme Court decision, and the U.S. Supreme Court's concurring sidestep of the issue, is problematic on several levels. It defines "male" and "female" according to ability to produce sperm or ova and to beget or bear offspring. But this seems to render sexless any women who had a hysterectomy or man who was infertile. It would also exclude those with extra chromosomes, or ambiguous genitalia at birth.

The decision should be a "wake-up call to the entire post-operative transsexual community," according to attorney, Alyson Meiselman, based in suburban Washington DC. She opined that it's possible the petition to the nation's high court may not have "properly preserved or argued" the Article IV issue. Meiselman, herself transsexual, added that "unless that attorney is an expert in transsexual legal matters, the transsexual client's cause will suffer."

"The court's ruling completely ignores the existence of intersexed citizens and totally denies their rights to marry," stated Vanessa Edwards Foster, chair of the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition (NTAC). "There are a large number of American citizens who are now legally barred from marrying." Foster continued, "Women who are unable to conceive, men who are impotent, males with androgen insensitivity syndrome - none of them have the right to marry thanks to the state of Kansas. And the Supreme Court apparently agrees."

Perhaps the most troubling issue in this decision is its violation of the U.S. Constitution. Article IV, clause 1 of the Constitution states: Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and Judicial Proceedings of every other State.

Gardiner's appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court asked whether this clause "requires a State to recognize an individual's sex as reported in a birth certificate issued pursuant to court order by the State in which the individual was born." The State of Wisconsin recognizes J'Noel Gardiner to be female as manifest on her birth certificate.

The state of Kansas has opened a breach in Article IV of the Constitution. "The decision of the Supreme Court of Kansas side-stepped the Full Faith and Credit issue" based on the Kansas Appellate Court ruling, according to attorney Meiselman.

The attorney who petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Christie Lee Littleton, Meiselman added the high court's declining to hear the case would have two effects. "First, it leaves the Kansas Supreme Court's decision as the law in Kansas, as well as being au-

For the 2nd Time, Supreme Court says SURGERY DOES NOT MATTER!

Just as the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the Littleton case, as they did two years ago, the same court has said that it doesn't want to hear the Gardiner case either.

By doing this the DC9 are letting stand lower court rulings in Texas and Kansas that say the following:

1. Genital corrective surgery does NOT matter for the legal status of male or female.
2. What does matter is XX and XY chromosomes that are presumed, not tested.
3. The chromosome presumption is from birth genitals, not testing.
4. The intersexed do not legally exist.
5. SAME-GENITAL MARRIAGES REMAIN LEGAL in those states that presume chromosomes (parts of Texas centered at San Antonio, and Kansas) and those states that will not amend birth certificates regardless of the genital surgery (Ohio, Tennessee and probably a few others) if the presumed chromosomes are different.
6. Constitutionally imposed Full faith and credit given to the laws of one state by another state are now passe! Consider the ramifications of that!

So, thanks again to the DC9, anyone who ever bothered to have genital surgery has wasted their money — from a legal standpoint, that is. And, the HBGIDA has no real reason to exist in the United States.

And those who have married into penile-vaginal relationships (as did Littleton and Gardiner), you can just forget it. I suggest that you get a federal passport as your legal sex identifier and get married all over again.

Who shall we thank for this mess? Anyone who, during the last 22 years, has voted for conservative state legislators, conservative governors, conservative members of congress, conservative presidents and, in those states that elect judges, conservative judges. These conservative law makers, conservative rulers and conservative appointees, are the people who have created the legal hurdles in statutes or who have appointed conservative judges who made such burdensome rulings.

These conservative elected folks have been pushed on us for decades by the right wing religionists who want their extreme beliefs imposed in our government are no different from the Muslim extremists who have pushed their own brand of theocracy in countries like Afghanistan. That is why separation of church and state is important.

Why do people vote conservative when their very life is an ANATH-EMA (50 cent word, look it up) to conservative elected officials who make or rule on the laws that DIRECTLY EFFECT THEM?

Why doesn't LAMBDA, or NCLR or HRC or NGLTF or GLAD or ACLU or other legal groups use the transgender inability to alter legal sex status and the intersexed inability to legally exist as the wedge test for equal protection arguments to push for the legalization of GLB same-sex marriage? For details, read my law review article entitled "Same-Sex Marriages Have Existed Legally" on my website at <<http://transgenderlegal.com>>.

Phyllis Frye
a.k.a. the Phyllabuster

thority that opponents to recognition will use in future cases outside of Kansas, as persuasive authority."

On the other hand "it allows the possibility that the U.S. Supreme Court may address the issue in the future," though Meiselman added it's unlikely given the ultra-conservative ideological make-up of the conservative Justices.

The decision not to consider the Gardiner v. Gardiner case definitively brings the case, and marriage, to an end. Meanwhile, J' Noel Gardiner, an assistant professor of finance at Park University, has had her personal and professional life turned inside out.

Gardiner, who met her husband at a university reception four years after having undergone sexual reassignment surgery, issued a statement after the ruling. "The pain, intrusion of our privacy, and the anger that

Continued on Page 13

TG's In The News!

TG PEOPLE PROTECTED IN WORKPLACE IN CALIFORNIA

Until recently, transgender people had little recourse from workplace discrimination and harassment. Even though advocates have long argued that transgender people should be protected by sex discrimination laws, courts largely ignored these arguments. Recently, courts and administrative bodies throughout the country - including California - have recognized that discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming people is a form of sex discrimination.

In response to this positive trend in the case law, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing ("DFEH"), the state agency that receives and investigates all complaints of discrimination filed under California's anti-discrimination law, has recognized that it must accept complaints based on gender identity and/or gender non-conformity discrimination.

The Basics of FEHA Coverage for TG People

The California Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA") is a law that prohibits discrimination in employment and housing in California based on race, sex, religious creed, color, national origin, age, disability, pregnancy, medical condition, marital status, ancestry and sexual orientation. It is the state counterpart to the federal employment non-discrimination law, Title VII of the Civil Rights of 1964 ("Title VII"), but is broader in many respects. Under FEHA (and Title VII), transgender and gender non-conforming people are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex. Depending on the circumstances, transgender and gender non-conforming people may also be protected on the basis of disability and perceived sexual orientation under FEHA. For further explanation of these protections, contact one of the organizations listed below to receive the publication, "Gender Identity and Employment Discrimination." The types of discrimination prohibited by FEHA include: discharge, demotion and refusal to hire, transfer to a less desirable position, failure to use appropriate names, pronouns and titles, failure to allow bathroom use according to gender identity, and harassment by co-workers, supervisors or management, among others.

Recognizing and Proving Discrimination

If you believe you have been subject to a negative employment action - such as demotion, transfer or non-promotion - because of your transgender status, you must be able to show that you were treated differently than other similarly situated, non-transgender employees. For example, if you were hired before a non-transgender employee with the same experience, and this person was promoted over you, this person could be a similarly-situated non-transgender employee, or "comparator," for purposes of proving your case. You must also disprove any legitimate non-discriminatory reason your employer may provide as a reason for not promoting you (for example, poor work performance).

To prove a harassment case, you must show that: the harassing conduct is severe or pervasive; and the harassment was directed at you because of your sex. Isolated incidents are not enough. Physical touching or assault, for example, is considered severe: conduct occurring regularly for an extended period is considered pervasive. To show that you are the target of harassment "because of sex," you must show that the treatment was directed at you because of your sex, which includes gender stereotyping. For example, a co-worker refers to you with slurs such as "drag queen" or "he/she," or makes comments indicating that you do not meet stereotypical notions about how a man or woman should act, such as commenting on your hair, clothing, manner of speaking or walking, etc. The conduct need not be sexual in nature.

One note of caution: employment discrimination cases can be extremely difficult to prove. Although you may have suffered extreme or blatant discrimination, you may have little legal recourse if you cannot produce evidence in the form of comparators, witnesses, or other documentation of the discriminatory conduct.

Filing an Administrative Complaint

The first step in dealing with discrimination or harassment is to report it to your employer or union and to attempt to resolve the situation through your employer's internal complaint process and/or the union grievance process. An employer can't be held liable for harassment if the employer is not aware of what is happening.

If you cannot resolve an incident of discrimination or harassment with your employer internally, filing a complaint with the DFEH is the next step in securing legal protection. It is also a necessary precursor to filing a

Supreme Court Refuses Case...

Continued from Page 12

runs through our blood could not be felt by anyone not in our shoes - not even the well-intentioned."

"People don't realize we have personal lives," lamented Christie Lee Littleton, who endured her own mistreatment at the hands of the courts. "What J'Noel needs right now is privacy. She just needs time to heal."

"The media wants to get quotes from us, and people call us wanting to help, but they don't realize we just want to be left alone," Littleton added. "We just lost our husbands ... we need time to grieve."

"We're just human beings."

Founded in 1999, NTAC - the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition - is a §501(c)(4) civil rights organization working to establish and maintain the right of all transgendered, intersexed, and gender-variant people to live and work without fear of violence or discrimination.

Ellen Remarks...

IMO this is not entirely a bad thing. If the Supreme Court had taken the Gardiner case, it would most probably have been a "Dred Scott" disaster — since this Court would surely have ruled that Gardiner is not a woman. Such a ruling would fly in the face of the recent unanimous finding of the European Court of Human Rights that a post-op transsexual woman is a woman with a right to marry as a woman. It would have strengthened the intransigence of the U.K. and set back human rights for transgendered people for another generation. By not taking the case, the Court leaves open the possibility that they will take a similar case in the future when the majority social opinion in the US is more clearly opposed to gender bigotry.

Ellen McGowen

File Under Annals of Justice

TRANSVESTITE FINALLY GAINS ENTRANCE TO BEAUTY SCHOOL

Reuters News (with thanks to Stephen L. Braveman, www.bravemantherapy.com)

Justice was served in Los Angeles earlier this week. "Sandy," a transvestite who was denied entrance to the Marinello School of Beauty because the school claimed "she" was still a "he," will be allowed to enroll after all. Sandy's lawsuit against the school was the first to use L.A.'s ordinance against discrimination based on sexual orientation. The law breaks ground by defining sexual orientation not via biology but by self-image. To appease the nervous beauticians-to-be, Sandy will have her own rest room with her own lock.

Cotillion 2003

"An Enchanted Evening in the Islands"

Applications for contestants are now available and must be submitted by **November 30, 2002!**

For applications and information contact Rachael Janelle at 408-219-1250 or rachael_janelle@hotmail.com

Continued on Page 23

Remember Our Dead - "Bear" Goodrum

Visible Man:

REMEMBERING ALEXANDER GOODRUM

Jamison Green offers a man's POV on life in the trans lane. Opinion, advice, and information from an internationally respected leader of the FTM community.



Recently I received a question from a medical doctor who is preparing a series of articles on gender. She wrote: "Your Gender Journey has been a series of steps: presumably, first 'cross-dressing,' then living the role, then hormones, then surgery. What point or step was the most significant in giving you 'inner peace'?" This question arrived just days after my friend and fellow FTM activist, **Alexander John Goodrum**, killed himself in his room in a psychiatric facility where he had checked himself in for observation, apparently suffering from depression.

In response to the doctor's question, I'm afraid I don't think the four steps of the "gender journey" that she outlined are always so clearly delineated or undertaken in the order she specified. I think one is much more likely to find male-to-female (MTF) people who have followed that trajectory, though I'm certain there are MTFs who would not fit the pattern either. But definitely most female-to-male (FTM) people have more variation in their individual trajectories than those "steps" imply.

As I tried to respond to the doctor, I kept thinking about Alexander's inner peace. How can it be possible for someone to kill himself while under observation? Were the attendants not looking because he was trans? Did they not care? Did they not know how to relate to his transness? Did they think his transness was the problem?

I kept drifting from thoughts of Alexander to the doctor's question: What "step" was most significant in giving me "inner peace"? What's wrong with those "steps"?

Right off the bat, the first "step" is problematic. It is difficult to identify cross-dressing in FTMs. Although I wore men's jeans, trousers, shirts and sweaters exclusively (except for a very few special occasions) after I left home for college at age 17 (in 1966), I would not say I felt confident enough to wear what would be clearly identified by others as a "menswear ensemble" until after I started taking hormones as part of a medically supervised sex reassignment program in 1988. Many women wear men's clothing without identifying as transgendered, transsexual or even lesbian or bisexual, so when can you tell that someone who might later become an FTM transperson is cross-dressing? I think individuals must define it themselves.

On the other hand, I think that I was "living the role" at every opportunity at a much earlier age, specifically age 4, which is my earliest memory. I had a clear sense of my gender identity as far back as I can remember, even though at times I tried to pretend I didn't.

In addition, not all FTMs start hormones before having surgery: There are many instances where occupational situations or safety concerns require that chest reconstruction (breast removal and shaping of the male chest) be done before hormones are administered and "living the role" can begin officially.

Further, it is a fairly small percentage of FTM-identified people (who are living full time as men) who have complete genital reconstruction (which is the mark of the "sex change" in popular understanding, because it equates with the removal of the penis and testes in an MTF). Is simply having one's gonads removed equivalent to "sex change surgery"? Some FTMs have hysterectomies long before they ever realize they are going to undergo sex reassignment, and gonad removal is not a required component of genital reconstruction for FTMs. So the question becomes, what is meant by surgery?

Of course it is possible to attain inner peace or a sense of completeness at any of these "steps." I've heard many FTMs comment that they don't care about surgery, they just want people to address them as Mr. or sir, and otherwise leave them alone. Sometimes inner peace never comes, and that may be true for any number of reasons that have nothing to do with being transsexual.

It is very difficult to isolate one's experience as a transsexual person from one's life experience in general. And unfortunately, many people have tried to analyze and generalize about transsexual experience to the extent that they try to create patterns that we are all supposed to follow. This makes it difficult for people whose trajectories don't follow the prescribed path.

For example, early on (back in the 1970s) I understood transsexual people to be so unhappy that they were suicidal. I was not suicidal, therefore I must

not be transsexual. I held off for another 10 years before seeking treatment, and I might have done numerous other things in that time had I transitioned earlier, though I do NOT regret the general sequence of events that has occurred. Nevertheless, now I know that line of reasoning is false. I would rather that people look at the struggle trans people have to engage with as simply an extra layer of complication in their lives as opposed to a specific set of obstacles with particular criteria, actions, goals or patterns.

It is easy, even tempting, to imagine that Alexander killed himself because life as a transperson was too painful to bear, but we cannot know his motivation. Alexander was a brilliant and dedicated warrior, a queer transman of color who thought, spoke and wrote clearly, whose political consciousness was raised and honed. Losing him is a blow to his family, his friends, his community in Tucson and to the larger community of transpeople all over the U.S. and Canada, especially his activist colleagues who also appreciated his wisdom, his humor, his leadership abilities and his collaborative spirit. I may be wrong, but I can't imagine that anyone kills himself out of anything other than painful despair. I am so sorry that Alexander found himself there and took his own life. But it may have been a rational decision on his part. He must have had his reasons, which I feel must be respected, too. We will never know for certain why he did it.

At what point did I, personally, find "inner peace" with respect to my "gender journey"? I think I have reached a number of stages of inner peace: When I found the courage to apply for SRS. Again when I felt my body changing with the effects of testosterone (that enabled me to feel balanced and whole for the first time in my life) after several weeks of administration (that is, not right away after the first injection). Again when I had my chest reconstruction. Again when it healed well enough that I felt I could take my shirt off in public. When I realized there was no more confusion on the part of other people as to whether I was male or female. When I had genital reconstruction and realized I could still have an orgasm. When I had sex for the first time in a male body. When I got my court order specifying my sex as male. When my reissued birth certificate arrived in the mail. When I saw my daughter give the graduation address at her middle school. When my daughter or son hugs me. When I asked Heidi, the woman I love and want to spend the rest of my life with, to marry me and she said yes. When her dogs, Hannah and Cody, lean on me in that special, affectionate way. And on and on. I can see that in the early part of my "gender journey" (abstracted for the doctor's logic) my sense of inner peace came from my connection with myself, and now it comes from my connection with others.

Alexander chose a different route. The world is a poorer place for it, but he did leave much richness in the time he was with us. For an informative obituary notice regarding Alexander John Goodrum, created by his friend Michael Woodward of the TGNetArizona advisory board, see <http://www.true-spirit.org/basics/alexander.htm>, and for a newspaper report on the fact that an investigation of Alexander's death will take place, see the Tucson Citizen at http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/local/10_7_02goodrum.html. To help defray expenses associated with his death or to make a memorial donation to a cause close to Alexander's heart, see <http://www.transcribes.org/alexander/services.htm>.

Please show your appreciation for the people you love while they are still alive to receive it. We can never predict where or how anyone will find their inner peace.

Community Pillar, Alexander John "Bear" Goodrum, passes. Huge Loss!

I received a call from a friend in Tucson this morning that a good friend, and a true pioneer in our community, Alexander Goodrum took his life Friday night. Alexander had been suffering from depression and was in a community facility, where he apparently hung himself over night.

Some of you probably knew Alexander, and others of you may have heard of him. If it was not for Alexander, Tucson would not have had an anti-discrimination ordinance that was Trans-inclusive. I can still remember him telling me the story on how he stood his ground at a meeting on the city ordinance, insisting that gender expression had to be in the bill. I was impressed at his strength. He was one of the people early in my activism career who showed me, by example, the right way to be an activist. He helped mold me as an activist when I lived in Arizona. He also helped make me a better person.

Continued Bottom Page 15

Remember Our Dead - "Bear" Goodrum

NTAC MOURNS THE LOSS OF A TRANSGENDER LEADER AND A FRIEND

Friends, family, and community leaders gathered at the Stone Avenue Temple in Tucson, Arizona on October 5th to remember a man short in physical stature, but who cast a very long shadow. **Alexander John Goodrum** leaves an emptiness that will take a long time to fill, if indeed it may ever be filled.

"Bear", as he was affectionately known, was a disabled African-American bisexual female-to-male transsexual. Characterized as a true gentleman who made good use of sardonic wit in place of anger, Goodrum was a quiet, yet highly effective leader in the transgender community. Goodrum was the driving force behind the transgender-inclusive non-discrimination ordinance in Tucson in 1999.

Goodrum founded TGNet Arizona, a grassroots transgender education and advocacy organization, and remained its director until his untimely death. In addition to the effort establishing civil rights protection for Tucson's transgendered population, Goodrum instituted an educational program named the Arizona Transgender Workplace Project to help the Arizona business community deal responsibly with transgendered employees.

Goodrum was involved in organizing and social justice issues for the GLBT community in Chicago and San Francisco beginning in 1980. He had also been one of the original members, and a recent co-chair of Tucson's GLBT Commission - at that time, the first of its kind in the country.

Involved at the inception of a group later to be known as NTAC, Goodrum emerged as an early leader in the fledgling organization. He was one of three nominees for the Steering Committee Chair, precursor to what would become the first Board Chair. More recently, Goodrum was one of six coordinators across the country, helping compile data on the American Public's thoughts on transgender issues.

More recently, Goodrum was part of the just-announced HRC study that gauged the perception of the American public on transgender issues. His efforts on behalf of the transgender community may yield a very positive dividend in terms of next year's work to bring transgender-inclusive non-discrimination legislation to fruition.

The opening night keynote speaker at the 2002 True Spirit Conference, Goodrum was also an organizer of the 2003 conference. He will be missed as a powerful voice and an able leader of the transgender community, but he will also be missed as a person, as a friend, as a compatriot.

As befitting his community stature, transgender leaders traveled in from New York, Washington, Houston, Los Angeles and San Francisco to pay their respects to Goodrum. NTAC was well-represented with ex-officio Chair, Yoseñio Lewis, current chair, Vanessa Edwards Foster, as well as Board Member, Sean Camargo jointly representing PFLAG National attending.

Goodrum's close friend, C. Michael Woodward of TGNet Arizona; Kevin Maxey, president of Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA); and Amanda Simpson, who sat on the City of Tucson GLBT Commission with Goodrum, were among those eulogizing the fallen leader.

His ideas and ideals cut across all parts of the transgender community without regard to class, race, or place on the gender spectrum. Members

He was a gentle man, but never wanted to be referred to as "Alex." because it did not sound as dignified as "Alexander." Some knew him by "John," and others by "Bear." I knew him as "Friend." He has always had a special place in my heart, and now, that heart is breaking.

Our community has lost a shining beacon, in a state where Transgender activists are few and far between. Why he took his life is not for any of us to ponder. I feel sad that he could not see himself as his friends and fellow activists saw him. All we can do is to mourn, and to move on, remembering the lessons he taught us. And, here I sit, 2000 miles from Tucson, alone with my tears and my memory. I have a picture on the wall of him, and I have not yet brought myself to look at it. I may, one day.

Alexander was one of those rare souls who we get blessed with in knowing. He has helped many in his time with us. His work will go on helping many others who are not even born yet. They will be his true legacy.

Alexander John "Bear" Goodrum, we will always remember you.

Monica Helms
Atlanta, GA

from NTAC's formative era remember him as an unassuming man, yet firm and committed to transgender equality. "Alexander was always extremely polite," NTAC's Courtney Sharp recalled, "in way which was extraordinary and immediately noticeable."

Kylar Broadus, the first transgendered employee of the Human Rights Campaign, remarked that Goodrum was a great leader and role model. "Our community will miss him dearly," Broadus said. "He was bright, articulate and committed to working towards equality for transgender people."

"For years Bear and I would be confused by people all the time - apparently we all look alike," quipped NTAC's Yoseñio Lewis during a lighter moment in his eulogy. "We started calling each other twin brothers."

"Today I am desperate for my twin to come back, to tell me it was nothing more than a nightmare. He did a lot of great work, but I will remember him because he was my friend, because he was my twin brother."

Mere days before his 42nd birthday, Goodrum was found by staff at the La Frontera, a Level One facility to which he'd been admitted for depression issues. He'd hanged himself by using strips from a towel tied to a doorknob. "The hospital thought he was just a transgender. They didn't realize he was anyone special." Woodward informed them that Goodrum was "not just another patient, but an important [transgender] political figure of national prominence."

"The hopelessness that has been created by society has to be eliminated in order to turn others away from the decision Alexander had made," said NTAC board member Monica Helms, who worked closely with Goodrum while living in Tucson. "Otherwise, more tears will flow, more sad words will be spoken, and more gatherings like this [memorial] will take place."

Regardless of the circumstances of his death, we must remember how Goodrum fought the good fight for himself and for others. "For such a little guy, he made a huge impact," said TGNet Arizona's Michael Woodward before the memorial service.

Goodrum will be missed; but it is up to those who remain to take the torch and to prove that life and struggle do, indeed, go on. "My son worked for years doing civil rights work!" said Goodrum's mother, Patsy Brown of Las Vegas during the eulogy. "You all can honor his memory by continuing his work! You must continue the fight!!!"

There has been an outpouring of generosity to cover his memorial expenses and assist Alexander's family. NTAC has reactivated its Bereavement Fund to assist the Goodrum family with their expenses, and has to date raised over \$700. All donations received by October 11, 2002 will continue going to the family of Alexander Goodrum. See the website www.ntac.org/donation/ for details.

Tucson's GLBT community has been extremely generous, opening their homes to out-of-town friends of Alexander, and also raising over \$700 to cover various expenses. During the funeral, an announcement was made that Kylar Broadus of the Human Rights Campaign managed to pull in another \$500 from HRC to go towards memorial service expenses as well. And TGNet Arizona has also had an unspecified amount donated to the organization in wake of Goodrum's death.

ONLINE SO LIST!

New online mailing list for wives and SOs of crossdressers and men who consider themselves to be transgendered; no topic off limits. Attitudes range from complete acceptance to really struggling. Open to women only - no crossdressers please! Women need a place where they can feel safe to discuss these issues. Write to Cheryl at triess_family@yahoo.com and explain a little about your situation.





Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



[Editor's Note: The next few pages have been devoted to reprints of actual media items published surrounding Gwen Araujo's murder, culled from various news sources verbatim, obtained online during the period October 13 through October 26. These in turn gave rise to numerous comments from members in our community, which I've faithfully reproduced as space allowed.]

FAMILY, COMMUNITY SAY FAREWELL TO KILLED TRANSGENDER TEEN

Michelle Locke, AP Writer
San Jose Mercury News, Posted Oct. 25

NEWARK, Calif. - To family members, Eddie "Gwen" Araujo was a struggling but beloved teenager whose killing, allegedly committed in a fit of homophobic rage, is a private sorrow. To sexual rights activists, Araujo represents the 25th victim since last November, by their count, of violence against people who don't fit traditional gender molds.

"Hatred has killed Eddie, but love is helping to sustain this family," attorney Gloria Allred, representing Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, said as the family prepared for Friday's funeral. "Angels don't have a gender and he's my angel now. I know that he's safe somewhere where no one can hurt him," said Araujo's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, speaking to hundreds of mourners later at St. Edward's Church.

Araujo, 17, was beaten and strangled at a house party on Oct. 3. Police say three men attacked him after discovering the beautiful blonde they knew as Lida was biologically male. Two weeks later, one of the men led officers to Araujo's body in a shallow grave in the Sierra foothills about 150 miles east of San Francisco. One has pleaded innocent and the other two have not yet entered pleas. All three face charges of murder as a hate crime. Activists in the often-ignored transgender community are marching and holding vigils, saying they don't want Araujo's death to slip into the shadows.

"We can't let one of our sisters' lives go unnoticed," said Rachael Janelle Light, president of Transgender San Francisco. But Araujo's family has shown a reluctance to see the name Eddie Araujo added to the list of hate victims such as Matthew Shepard, the gay college student beaten and left to die on a fence outside Laramie, Wyo., or Brandon Teena, whose murder at the hands of men who discovered she was anatomically female was the basis for the Oscar-winning movie "Boys Don't Cry." Jaron Kanegson of the Youth Gender Project said activists sympathize with the family.

"No one wants to be remembered because they got killed in a horrible way. That's not what you want for your family member. "I think one reason so many activists in this area are so sad and upset is because they do know people who've been hurt or been killed," Kanegson said. "I don't think that transgender activists are missing that this was a young person who was a person."

For the funeral, the family decided on a service for family and close friends Friday morning, followed by an afternoon service open to the public. Not welcome, the family said, was anyone who wanted to express hatred, a veiled reference to anti-gay preacher Fred Phelps, pastor of the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan. Phelps and his followers, who regularly picket events and were at Shepard's funeral, said they would be at Araujo's funeral. The group also claims the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks were a punishment from God.

Hundreds of people turned out for the viewing, filing somberly past the open casket where Araujo lay, high-boned features frozen in the serenity of death. The family said they felt Araujo would want to be buried as a woman

and they honored that, choosing a black blouse smoothed over a modest swell of bosom. On Araujo's hands were fingerless black gloves that showed off a gleaming metallic manicure.

Some sobbed quietly as they walked past the body, some stooped to leave bouquets of flowers, some crossed themselves. At one point Araujo's 64-year-old grandmother fainted with grief, prompting a harsh outburst of sobbing from those nearby, but she later returned to the small auditorium.

Later, more than 700 people packed into St. Edward's for the funeral, many standing outside when there was no more room.

"I believe that our lives are changed now," said Father Jeff Finley. "I believe, I want to believe, that we will be able to say to each other, 'I appreciate who you are.'"

Family members spoke touchingly of Araujo's smile and generosity. Aunt Imelda Guerrero, remembered the teen as "a beautiful young person who loved his family, his friends, his music." She drew a rare laugh when she added, "not to mention he was really good at doing make-up."

Turning serious, she fought back tears as she talked about what is lost. "Eddie deserved a shot in life," she said. "Take flight, beautiful butterfly. Take flight."

Meanwhile, a threatened picket by anti-gay preacher Fred Phelps fell flat. Phelps, who regularly pickets events and was at Shepard's funeral, never showed.

Violence against people like Araujo is common, activists said. Transgender does not mean gay. It is an umbrella term that includes cross-dressers, transvestites, transsexuals and those born with the physical characteristics of both sexes.

The attackers sometimes try to justify their violence by claiming they were tricked. The stereotype is that "this is really a boy dressing up like a girl, not that this is really a girl who happens to be in a body that's not what you'd expect," Kanegson said.

But from the victims' perspective, far from tricking anyone, "they're just finally expressing who they are," Kanegson said. The case has raised many issues for transgender activists, one of which revolves around whether Araujo should be referred to as "he" or "she." Activists have complained that news reports using "he" show a lack of respect for the way Araujo lived.

Family members say Araujo struggled for acceptance from an early age, was taunted at school and later got turned down for jobs because of his appearance. In recent years, Araujo had taken the name Gwen after his favorite musician, Gwen Stefani of the group No Doubt, and also gone by Wendy and Lida.

Guerrero said "Gwen" would be on Araujo's tombstone. "Eddie was different, and people were mean to him. But he was my baby. He was my son. I loved him unconditionally," Guerrero said at a vigil held the day police confirmed Araujo had been murdered. "When you see someone like Eddie," she said, "smile at him."

"I feel so much love in this room," she said at the funeral Friday. "If only he could have felt that." Then the family walked out into the sunny parking lot where they released 17 butterflies, one for each year of Araujo's life.

23rd Death in 2002, 25th since last Day of Remembrance The Remembering Our Dead Project Mourns The Loss Of Gwen Araujo

17-year-old Gwen Araujo had lived largely as a woman since she was 14, and had indicated that she did desire a sex change at some time in the future. She admired singer Gwen Stefani, and took her first name as her own. Others had known Araujo as Lida, or Wendy.

On October 3rd Gwen Araujo was beaten, dragged into a garage, and strangled before her body was transported over 100 miles to a remote part of Northern California. Why? Because her killers were upset after discovering that Araujo was born male.

Gwen Araujo is one of 23 reported anti-transgender murders in 2002, and one of 13 such cases in the United States this year. Like Gwen Araujo, at least one person dies in this country at the hand of anti-transgender violence.

As the case has developed, we have seen Gwen Araujo disrespected in newspapers and on local television, her desire to be seen as a woman forgot-

ten in the desire to sell the news. This disrespect flies in the face of established journalistic protocols set up by the Associated Press.

The Remembering Our Dead project calls for justice in the case of Gwen Araujo, and the hope that her killers are tried and convicted for their crime. We also call upon the press to again review their guidelines towards the treatment of transgendered people.

We also call upon individuals to donate on behalf of Gwen Araujo through the Gwen Araujo Bereavement Fund. 100% of the proceeds donated will go directly to the family memorial fund. Information for donating by mail, by credit card (Visa or Mastercard) or for online contributions via PayPal to the Gwen Araujo Bereavement Fund can be found at < <http://www.ntac.org/donation> >. We would ask that all organizations that serve the transgender community consider a donation to this cause.

We also encourage everyone to attend and participate in local Day of Remembrance events in your area on November 20th. This event is dedicated to Gwen Araujo and all those lost at the hand of Anti-Transgender Violence and Prejudice. Details may be found at <<http://www.rememberingourdead.org>>.

Remembering Our Dead is a project of Gender Education and Advocacy, Inc. Contact: Gwendolyn Ann Smith, gwen@gwensmith.com



Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



[Editor's Note: I reprint this piece not to reopen old wounds, but to give context to a lot of the ensuing articulate community response, some of which is also reprinted in this newsletter.]

SEE NEWARK TEEN FOR WHAT HE WAS: STILL JUST A KID

By Joe Rodriguez, Mercury News
Posted on Oct. 24, 2002

At age 14, a Latino boy from a traditional culture and macho town starts dressing like a woman. After years of teasing, fights and an attempted suicide, he's strangled to death recently at a drunken party, thrown in the back of a truck and buried in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Then his sad story takes off. His pretty face appears on national TV and, against his family's wishes, he becomes a martyr to the gay community. He was 17.



Gwen Holding Her Niece

The recent slaying of Eddie Araujo has got me squirming and asking questions I cannot answer right now. The few answers I have make me feel like a sanctimonious outsider. I wasn't even sure what to call him. His given name was Eddie. That's what his mother called him even after he started calling himself Gwen, Lida and Wendy. Now she'll bury him as Gwen. I was going to call him a transvestite, but that's become pejorative. The new, culturally acceptable word is "transgender," though he never underwent sex-change surgery. I think I'll call him Eddie because he was still a boy. And I'll describe him as transgender because he surely felt more woman than man.

Fatal Discovery

The police blotter says Eddie was killed at a party in Newark, a working-class town in the East Bay, after three men — ages 19, 22 and 24 — discovered he wasn't female. They've been booked on murder charges with hate-crime enhancements.

Starting this weekend, there will be at least five gay-sponsored events in Eddie's memory and more to come later. Who knows, maybe some day we'll see a play like "The Laramie Project," a stage interpretation of the murder of Matthew Shepard a few years ago in Wyoming.

Eddie's mother, Sylvia Guerrero, wants nothing of the sort. "This is not a gay issue," she told reporters. "This is a human issue." From what little we know of the family, Guerrero had accepted her son's sexual orientation, but many in their extended, Mexican-American family had not.

I belong to that ethnic group. We are politically liberal but socially conservative. A lot us know where the line is, Eddie's family included. A Latino son's sexual orientation is strictly family business.

But this is where I feel more like a wretched observer than a Latino-values guy. As much as I understand the family's wish to let Eddie rest in peace, I think gay-rights groups are entitled and even obligated to demand justice for him. In the end, Eddie belonged to two minority groups or, if you will, to two cultural families with conflicting views on sexuality. Both have claim to Eddie's life and death.

Delicate Questions

Now for the questions I'd like to ask without blaming the victims or parents or sounding like a religious right-winger. When is it OK for a gay kid to cross-dress? At age 17? At 14? At 12? I'm not challenging the transgender lifestyle. Gay boys and girls discovering their true nature is a fact of life. Get used to it. But is it a good idea for the transgender ones to cross-dress in public while they're so young, trusting and vulnerable?

Shouldn't we tell them society can't protect them every minute of every day from hate-filled thugs? For those who will cross-dress anyway, shouldn't there be a line of dress they shouldn't cross, parties they shouldn't attend? Would that be any different from telling a teenage daughter she can't wear a skimpy halter to a fraternity beer blast?

I know this sounds like telling a rape victim that she asked for it, but we're talking about naive children who haven't figured out how to navigate a mean, nasty world. Some places and times, you just don't call attention to yourself.

I'd like to hear real-world advice from the transgender community. [Boy, did he ever!] I'd also like to hear it from prosecutors, politicians and community leaders. As much as he was anything else, Eddie Araujo was just a kid.

1 Of 3 Suspects Pleads Innocent

TRANSGENDER TEEN'S DEATH LAMENTED

Margie Mason, Associated Press
AZCentral.com, Oct. 25, 2002

SAN FRANCISCO - Eddie "Gwen" Araujo was a good-looking girl - so good, it cost him his life. The 17-year-old with high cheekbones and soft, pretty eyes never came home from a house party earlier this month. Instead, police say, Araujo was beaten and strangled by three enraged men who discovered she was a he. One of the men, Jaron Nabors, 19, pleaded innocent Thursday. The other two men appeared in court but did not enter pleas.

Although saddened by the killing, members of the transgender community say stories of assaults and murders have become so common that new crimes are almost expected. "I hear so much of it, it makes me sick," said Theresa Sparks, a transgender commissioner on the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. "All of these are young people."

Araujo, who identified as a girl, left for the Oct. 3 party from his hometown of Newark, a San Francisco Bay area suburb, dressed in flip-flops and a denim skirt and going by the name "Lida." He took a change of pants so it would be easier to conceal his true sex when he got drunk, according to court documents.

That plan failed after a girl [Nicole Brown] at the party returned from the bathroom and said, "It's a man," the documents show. Police say the three men then attacked Araujo and dragged the half-conscious teen into the garage where they strangled him with a rope. His body was found buried in a shallow grave in the Sierra wilderness two weeks later, his wrists and ankles bound.

Sylvia Guerrero said that her child will be buried today in makeup and women's clothes and that "Gwen" will be engraved on the headstone. Araujo chose the name because he liked singer Gwen Stefani of the band No Doubt. "He was born this way. He always felt like a girl," she said at a vigil last week. "Eddie was different, and people were mean to him."

"But he was my baby. He was my son. I loved him unconditionally," she said. "When you see someone like Eddie, smile at him."

Nabors, Michael Magidson, 22, and Jose Merel, 22, face murder charges with a hate-crime enhancement that carries up to an additional four years in prison.

According to police reports, Magidson said he tied a rope around Araujo's neck, hands and feet before wrapping him in a blanket and helping to bury the body in a remote area near Lake Tahoe. Nabors told police he was not involved in the death but admitted going with Magidson and Merel "to dump the victim's body," while Merel has denied any responsibility, according to police reports.

In a study conducted by the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition five years ago, two-thirds of transgender respondents said they had been physically or sexually assaulted, executive director Riki Wilchins said.

Gwen Smith started tracking transgender deaths in 1998 as part of the Remembering Our Dead Project and said many of the slayings share the same details. On average, about one transgender murder is reported in the United States each month, she said.

Most of you have read about the recent murder of a teenager who was murdered for attending a party dressed as a girl. What really angers me IS THE STRAIGHT MEDIA who continue to report this as a story of a gay boy who crossdressed.

What I have read from the queer media is that she was brought up as a boy and began to crossdress early and often went to school dressed as a girl. She went out as a girl most of the time. This is a transgendered teenage who is seeking to be who she is. And yet, the STRAIGHT media cannot, even in death, give her the dignity of who she is.

Two days ago, I was driving home and listening to NPR's "All things Considered." The news report constantly called her a HE and talked about the gay and lesbian community outrage. Who was the idiot who produced that mess?

WE AS A PEOPLE NEED TO SEND ANGRY LETTERS TO EVERY SINGLE MEDIA OUTLET, PAPER OR RADIO OR TELEVISION, THAT CANNOT EVEN GIVE US THE RESPECT OF OUR PRONOUNS, EVEN IN DEATH.

Phyllis Frye



Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



Many Knew, None Told Killing Story Newark Wonders About Silence

By Matthai Chakko Kuruvila, Yomi S. Wronge, Lisa Fernandez and Putsata Reang, Mercury News, Posted on Mon, Oct. 21, 2002

The story — almost too unbelievable to be true — slowly wound its way through Newark. It was first spilled to a friend watching a “Monday Night Football” game. Then it was shared by roommates, gossiped to a girlfriend, even spread at a party. Within a week, at least a dozen people had heard the tale about the guys who supposedly killed a beautiful 17-year-old when they discovered “she” was really a boy in women’s clothing.

But no one told police, not until the tale reached the family of Eddie Araujo, a transgender teen who used the names Lida, Gwen and Wendy. Eddie’s body was found Wednesday, buried in a shallow grave, 150 miles away, near Placerville. Three men have been charged with murder.

Both Newark police and Eddie’s family are grappling not only with understanding what happened that night, but how so many people in this community of 43,500 could have known what happened, or at least had some knowledge, but never came forward. “This has saddened a lot of people in the community,” said Lt. Tom Milner. “As a family man myself, I can’t believe how people wouldn’t have spoken up.” David Guerrero, Eddie’s uncle, said simply: “It kills me.”

According to statements made to police, Jaron Nabors, 19, who is one of the three men charged with murder, became distraught and told a friend, Adam Hewson, 21, what had happened while they watched the Oct. 7 Packers-Bears football game. Hewson said Monday, “Jaron is a good friend of mine and I just don’t feel like talking about it right now.” He also said he shared the story with one friend, Brian Covert, 28, who told his two roommates.

Brian Seabrand, 25, one of those roommates, said Monday he didn’t know what to make of the tale. “It’s hard to believe stories these days because everybody tells lies or a fake story,” Seabrand said. “It’s a small town. People go to different parties. Somebody comes back from a party and they tell a story.” Seabrand said he then told a friend, Robert Simao, 26, who is related

...The coverage of Gwen Araujo’s murder in The Chronicle and most other media outlets continues to refer to her as a 17-year old boy living and dressing as a girl. No one is asked at birth what their gender is and by what name they wish to be called. Gwen had the courage to live her life the way she knew it to be in her heart and mind. While a gang of thugs took her life, The Chronicle has stripped her of the last shred of dignity and respect by referring to her by a name and gender that never belonged to her once she recognized and embraced her true self.

The Chronicle has been covering the transgender community for decades. When are you going to give us recognition for who we are and demonstrate that you understand who we are? You can begin by calling Gwen Araujo by her chosen name and the gender she knew herself to be. Then you can report with respectful coverage of the Day of Remembrance on November 20 when we will honor our transgender sisters and brothers who have been murdered for being who they are by persons who could only hate them for who they are.

Stephanie Ann Blythe

...Let us be very careful not to blame the victim here. But, certainly, Mr. Rodriguez is onto something valid: transgender youths do need knowledgeable counseling and medical help to navigate an uncomprehending, unsympathetic and largely hostile world, or they can easily wind up dead.

But where are they supposed to get this knowledgeable help? How many school nurses or school counselors or teachers or ministers in Gwen Araujo’s past understood her condition professionally and helped her? Where are the adults in her community who can help? Merely forbidding her to express her gender identity (which Mr. Rodriguez calls “cross-dressing in public”) will cause her to suffer gender dysphoria — an agony Mr. Rodriguez has never known and does not even mention, but which is the cause of suicide in so many transgendered people. Again, I suggest he read Dr. Brown’s True Selves.

These issues are of great concern to all of us in the transgender community. But until the Mercury News writers can address these subjects in an intelligent and respectful manner in public, we cannot hope to discuss them. For that reason, we insist that the Mercury News style guide for reporting on transgendered people be brought into conformance with the current Associated Press style guide rules. Until this minimal standard of politeness is met, we cannot hope to have a civil discussion.

Ellen McGowen

Transgender Community of Silicon Valley, San Jose

by marriage to a cousin of David Guerrero’s. Simao and his wife, Candice, told Guerrero.

By then, the story had taken on an almost urban legend quality. One account detailed a three-day sex binge; another said that when Eddie’s gender was discovered at the party he offered \$5,000 to keep it secret. But embellishments aside, the core of the story was true: A transgender teen had been killed. The Guerreros called police and provided information that helped lead police to Hewson. Police persuaded Hewson to wear a wire and record a conversation with Nabors, who ultimately led police to the shallow grave.

Outside the courtroom Monday, Paul Merel would say only that he and his friends thought that Eddie was a woman until the night of Oct. 3, when police say the teen was beaten and strangled to death in the Merels’ garage. “I knew her as Lida,” he said outside the courtroom. “We were all tricked.” But Eddie’s family told a different story Monday. David Guerrero told the Mercury News that he believes some of the people at the party already knew that Lida, as they knew Eddie, was a boy.

According to police reports, some witnesses and at least one of the defendants had questioned the Newark teen’s gender before the party. “To be honest, to be completely honest and I don’t know if it’s true, but the first night I met her, I looked at her . . . and I said this might be a boy,” Nabors told police during an interview when asked if there was anything about the 17-year-old that struck him as unusual. Emmanuel Merel also told police he had a feeling Lida was male before the party. Witnesses also told police that Brown, who is Paul Merel’s girlfriend, had a fistfight with Lida at the Merel home days before the party. Brown declined to comment Monday.

Eddie’s mother, Sylvia Guerrero, said in court documents that the fight was over Eddie’s gender. It was Brown who allegedly told the guys at the party that Lida was a boy, after Brown had followed the teen into a bathroom. David Guerrero said that after the scuffle his nephew was hesitant to go back to the Merel house. But Guerrero said that one or more of the defendants had called to smooth things over.

Guerrero now questions whether his nephew was lured to the party — and ultimately his death — under a false sense of security. “He was set up,” Guerrero said. Milner, of the Newark police department, would say only that investigators are checking into that possibility.

...The SJ Mercury News owes the transsexual and transgender community of this area a huge apology for the manner of its coverage of Gwen’s death.

Gwen had been out as a transsexual teen for 3 years and actually brave and strong enough to take the abuse for dressing and acting as herself much of that time. That takes an incredible amount of courage and self-honesty. To refer in the headline to her as a cross-dressing boy shows no knowledge or sensitivity and is a gross insult of a central premise of her life and of all transgendered people. The article and the follow-up article today continue the insensitivity and totally miss the truth of her gender dysphoria. It utterly denies the primary truth of her life that she put her life on the line for.

There is no question that her murder was a hate crime. It is a violent reflection of the general lack of understanding of transgendered people and the lack of tolerance. Sadly that lack of understanding is visible in and supported by the SJ Mercury.

In this area I personally know 200 male-to-female transsexual women and a few dozen female-to-male transsexual men. There are many thousands of transgendered people in the area. Many of us are respected members of society. Among us are doctors, lawyers, judges, managers, bankers, engineers (many of these), ministers and police officers. Do you really wish to insult all of us?

When I was 17, 30 years ago, there were not a lot of successful role models about. The issue was not well known. There was no support whatsoever. Back then I knew what I was and what I needed to do just as Gwen did. But back then I knew it wasn’t safe and it was very likely I would die in the process and that I would not in the least be understood. So I buried my knowing and the truth of myself for almost 20 years until I thought it was relatively safe and that I could succeed.

But this is not three decades ago. This area has one of the most concentrated TS and TG communities in the world. Today, if I was 17, I would believe I could make it and I would start living as myself while I waited to come of age so I could proceed with formal treatment. Today, I could well have been a victim like Gwen.

Her murder was an atrocity. Her additional murder in words in your paper is also an atrocity. I suggest this publication apologize formally immediately. I can suggest sources of sensitivity training concerning transgender people and topics if you are interested.

Samantha Atkins



Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



...Thanks for sharing your thoughts on THREE MEN ARRAIGNED IN DEATH OF TRANSGENDERED TEEN, this very tragic event.

We spoke at length regarding this issue yesterday at the Monterey Transsexual Support Group. The responses were mixed as expected. Most were hurt, scared and angry. Some were numb. My guess is that these feelings are generally shared in our communities as a whole across the entire nation.

Unfortunately, there were probably also some misguided responses. Some ignorant responses and some that actually cheered this violence on. Very sad indeed. Events like this do predictably bring out the best in some. Communities find union. Unfortunately, this effect only lasts a short while. It is because of these events and responses that I daily applaud the brave souls who come out and search for their true selves.

I also call on all other service providers to speak up on a regular basis. This means openly advertising their services. This is so that not only do trans folk find the help they need but also to educate the public that professionals, many who are not trans, not GLBT, are not only aware of people with diverse sexual/gender/identity issues, but accept and support them.

I urge other providers to attend special educational events so that we stay as up to date on these issues as possible. Speak up politically so that the current administration does not eliminate sexual rights we have all been fighting for (*note: the U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Sactcher, contacted us at AASECT - American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists, WAS - World Association of Sexology, etc., for help. He drew on actual scientific knowledge and put together a national Call to Action which strongly urged comprehensive sex education, promotion of condom use and full acceptance and protection for all genders, orientations, etc.. The Bush administration took one look at this, killed it and called for Dr. Sactcher's immediate resignation).

Together we, trans folk and service providers a like, need to work toward full sexual rights for all. Hopefully some day we will, as a society as a whole, end such senseless discrimination and violence.

May no more innocent people with diverse sexual issues die at the hands of ignorance and prejudice!

Stephen L. Braveman, M.A., L.M.F.T., C.S.T.

More Culprits In Gwen Araujo's Death

...In today's Mercury News cover story by Karen de Sa (October 26, 2002), we encounter new culprits in the murder of Gwen Araujo.

Denied access to competent gender therapy and medical assistance, it appears Gwen Araujo spent years at the tender mercies of a religious quack named Linda Skerbec, who said she was on the verge of persuading Gwen to "move beyond the label" of transgender and "claim the sexual identity that matched his identity. In other words, she was trying to get Gwen to deny her true self and enter the closet.

Linda Skerbec, and the homophobic zealot group Focus on the Family with whom Skerbec was associated, are guilty of malpractice and, in moral if not in legal terms, of being accessories before the fact to the murder of Gwen Araujo. They should be prosecuted as vigorously as the physical murderers for their willful psychological abuse, therapeutic malpractice and their monstrous, sacrilegious attempt to murder Gwen's feminine spirit — a truly demonic act they perversely represent as religion.

I sincerely hope that Mrs. Araujo finds the involvement of Skerbec and Focus on the Family in the death of her child extremely lucrative.

Kudos to reporter Karen de Sa — certainly for the hugely improved reporting style over previous Mercury News articles about Gwen, but even more so for reporting these important facts about the abuse of Gwen by these religious quacks. In probing the psychological background of Gwen's murder the Mercury News has finally moved beyond knee-jerk blaming the victim and has begun to function as an investigative news organization.

IMO the involvement of Focus on the Family changes everything. These guys are much bigger fish to fry than the SJ Mercury News. I hope some of the lawyers in our community will be able to think of ways to help the Araujo family profit hugely from these idiots. Since these people are equally the enemies of gays and lesbians, some of the lawyers in those communities should get involved too. If we can't drain them of their funds, let's at least defame them of all respectability. Let's put Linda Skerbec and her kind of "therapist" out of business for good!!!

Ellen McGowen
Transgender Community of Silicon Valley, San Jose

Dear Joe [Rodriguez, SJ Mercury News],

I found your column in today's Mercury News about the tragic death of Gwen Araujo to be quite shocking and disappointing because I believe that inside you somewhere is a real human being trying to get out. What you had to say was so full of ignorance, misinformation and outright prejudice that I hardly know how to respond.

A good human sexuality class would do you (and the rest of the staff writers working on this story) a lot of good. I know that most men think they know everything there is to know about sex and then some, but what you wrote demonstrates for the entire world to see how faulty that assumption is. In a good college level sex Ed class, you would learn something about the distinctions between gender identity, gender roles, and sexual orientation. You would know better than to call Gwen gay in one sentence and transgender in another and a boy who cross-dresses in another. Gwen was not gay, not a cross-dresser, not a boy, but a transgender female in the process of carving out that identity for herself in the best way she knew how.

After explaining how Gwen could have prevented her own death by staying home or changing clothes or some other such thing, you go on to say, "I know this sounds like telling a rape victim that she asked for it." It doesn't sound like it; it is exactly like it! Basically, you blame the victim. If she had only done things differently, she would not have provoked these boys into murdering her. Can't you see what a lie and excuse that is?

You have a lot of questions in your article, but never once do you ask: What causes men to feel that you prove your manhood by violence? Why did these young men feel threatened by someone's private anatomy? Why do so many straight men believe that being a "real man" means "beating up queers" or abusing women?

Why don't you ask these kinds of questions? It might actually get you somewhere. Far too many men are as pathetically insecure about their masculinity as these young men were. Real men don't have to prove themselves by brutalizing other people. Men who do so simply prove themselves to be the cowards they themselves suspect they are, afraid of appearing weak, afraid of differences, afraid of what they don't understand or don't want to understand, afraid of being a real human being.

You are capable of something better than the mishmash you served up today.

Rev. Denis Moore, Senior Pastor
Spirit Connection, MCC San Jose

It is a familiar story to the transgender community. Generally our murders go unremarked and unreported, the dead remembered only in our candlelight vigils. Then one murder captivates the media and the uncomprehending coverage begins: a "boy", a "cross-dresser" was killed by hateful homophobic men who had discovered "his" "true gender".

As with all people, Gwen Araujo carried her "true gender" between her ears, not between her legs. According to her mother she had identified as a girl from early childhood. Her gender identity, her "true self", was female, though her body was not. Society, like an embarrassing dog, sniffs between the legs but is oblivious to the brain, where true gender resides. For most people the crude sniffing works, but for some it does not, and Gwen was one for whom it did not. She was no "boy", not a "cross-dresser" but rather what she told a friend she was: a girl trapped in a boy's body — a transsexual girl.

Gwen's mother has grasped the truth of this and declared she will put Gwen's chosen name on her tombstone, in recognition of her child's true gender. But the social script that condemned Gwen to die and then to be reported as a "boy" who "cross-dressed" as a girl remains unchallenged in the reportage, and it is that transphobic script which must be rewritten if transgender people are to have dignity and a right to live as their true selves.

Ellen McGowen
Transgender Silicon Valley
San Jose

ISO an apartment, house, etc—SF area. Part time share basis. Have income and experience of similar arrangement. References. Am NS. Contact immediately. erikacarter61@hotmail.com or call (831) 332-1566. Thanks, Erika Carter, TGSF Member.

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Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



Newark Teen's Family, Activists Differ On Memorials

By Yomi S. Wronge, Mercury News, Oct. 22, 2002

To the family that had come to accept his sexuality, Eddie Araujo was so much more than a transgender teen. Eddie, who sometimes used the name Gwen, was a multidimensional human being — a great kid, a music lover, a stylish dresser — cut down in the prime of his life. That's the story they want told.

To members of the transgender community, the fact that Gwen Araujo was transgender is the story. They feel strongly connected to the 17-year-old who was allegedly killed by three men who found she was not anatomically female. They want Gwen's story to raise awareness and highlight discrimination.

And therein lies the point of contention in an awkward situation where both family and advocates want Eddie remembered for what they believe he, or she, represents. "This not a gay issue; this is a human issue," said Eddie's mother, Sylvia Guerrero. She and other family members fear that Eddie's story is being used to further political causes. "Right now," said Eddie's uncle, David Guerrero, "we just want to bury Eddie and focus on bringing those responsible to justice."

But to a community that has long suffered intolerance, the death is one in a string of violent acts against transgender people, and there is an obligation to speak out. "If the family doesn't want to be associated with the community we definitely respect their feelings," said Rachael Janelle Light, president of Transgender San Francisco, an advocacy group. "But we must represent that we lost a young sister."

While Eddie's family plans a private funeral service for later this week, activists from throughout California and the nation are organizing vigils, rallies and protests. "I'm getting 40 e-mails a day," Light said. The Bay Area activist groups "are bringing in more of their heavier guns. I'm definitely seeing a rallying around."

...In Her Letter #239 of October 21, 2002, Anne Vitale wrote about the murder of Gwen Araujo: "This story sickened me. What is it about the way we raise men that causes some of them to panic and resort to violence when confronted by the gender variant condition?"

According to one of the articles you linked in your newsletter: The alleged killers were described as popular former athletes in the small suburban community. "They were like the cool guys. Everyone knew who they were. They played football, baseball, soccer, had a lot of friends," said Danielle Giacoletto, another classmate. So these murderers were not just "some" men. They were the "cool guys", the model men.

I know the model men well, and so do most of us Ts. They used to beat me up, call me names (chiefly, "faggot"), hurl rocks at me, and on a couple of occasions, they put me into the hospital. And I was not living as a 17 year old girl, not dating them or flirting with them. If I had been, I would surely not be alive today.

I have a completely crazy theory about why the model men behave as they do. No therapist in the world would endorse my theory, I am quite sure. The therapists like theories in which a normal male ego is incapable of such behavior. Once a violent act has been perpetrated (outside of war), they will discover ex post facto reasons why the perpetrator was defective. He was not a "real man" because we mustn't allow the thought that real men do such things. Except in war, of course, where acts of violence by real men are rewarded with medals.

Here is my crazy theory. The male gender role as we know it in patriarchal society is basically military training. Its purpose is to create warriors. Warriors are not born, they are made. To understand the psychology of how warriors are made, we need to do two things. We need to look at how warriors are made today, and we need to go way, way back in time and look at how the first warriors were made. It is actually quite possible to do both of these things. And in fact, both these things have already been done quite extensively and the results written up in books most therapists have never read and never heard of, books with names such as *The Chalice and the Blade*(*), *Sacred Pleasure*(*), and quite a few others.

Essentially, warriors are made by teaching boys to replace their natural desire to give and receive pleasure with the desire to give pain. I know that sounds completely crazy, but it explains the historical record better than any other theory does. This reversal of the pleasure principle to the patriarchal pain principle is, as you might expect, a very painful process, one accomplished largely through terror and brutalization. Military boot camp in the paradigm in the modern world, but the role training of young boys also is directed to this end.

The National Transgender Advocacy Coalition estimates there have been 25 killings of transgender people this year, making 2002 the deadliest year on record, according to the group's Web site. There have been 38 such slayings in California since 1990, the Web site states. "Another one of us is gone," said Elaine Rhodes, 47, of San Jose, a pre-operative transsexual who has been living as a woman since January.

"Unfortunately, when gay, lesbian or transgender persons of color experience violence . . . the media pays little attention," said Monica Taher of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, based in Los Angeles. The group recently launched a Spanish-language initiative and has teamed up with two other Latino groups, AGUILAS and Proyecto Contra SIDA Por Vida in San Francisco, to address Eddie's slaying.

Hundreds of people from across the state and the country are expected to descend upon the Bay Area this weekend to pay homage to Gwen with marches and vigils. They also want to be on hand to confront the Rev. Fred Phelps, a fundamentalist preacher from Kansas, who on Tuesday said that he will picket Eddie's funeral — if he can find out where it is.

"No one is going to scare us back into the closets we came out of," said Fremont teen Felicia Avila, 17. She is organizing a march Friday with other high school students.

Identification

"My feeling is the community is not wanting to make a political football out of Gwen," said Denis Moore, pastor at Metropolitan Community Church of San Jose. The ministry supports gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. But "there's a strong sense of identity with her," he said. "They want to lift her up."

Carolyn Laub, executive director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, which oversees 300 clubs at schools throughout California, said that whether or not Eddie's family embraces the attention, their actions support the cause.

"What is inspiring to me is to see a family that loved and accepted their child for who she was," Laub said. "That, in itself, is a political message."

In order to make a pain-giver out of a human, even a testosterone-damaged human, there must be some threat that is literally "worse than death". A dualism of good vs. evil must be installed in the mind, and made the very identity of the person, a dualism which says: you are one thing, one half of this dual: the male half. The male half is the good half, the ruling half, the pain-giving half, the conquering and dominating half, the Mind and Spirit, (male) God. The other half is the female half, weak, innately pain-receiving (c.f. Freud on female masochism), subordinate, the body, birth, death and cycles of Nature (which let us never remember as Goddess). To be the one, a man, you must kill the other, the Mother, in yourself, just as at the beginning of patriarchy the male war God everywhere killed the Mother Goddess.

Killing the Mother in yourself is not easy to do, since she is your first identity, yet you must. For what will happen to if you do not? Why, what happened to Gwen, that's what.

You see, the model men who killed Gwen Araujo were reenacting the supreme, founding Sacrament of Patriarchy: they were Killing the Female Soul, releasing themselves from Her in order to become Warriors in the never-ending state of war we know as history.

That is what I think. But then, I am certifiably crazy with a DSM-IV diagnosis of GID.

Ellen McGowen
(*) Books by Riane Eisler

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Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



...Like all of us, what I am is what I bring to life experiences. Among other things, I am a long-time (30+ years) educator, and, more recently, your editor Ayme's partner/mate. I have been appalled at the ugly treatment I've seen her receive from total strangers, for example on a BART train. She tells me that what I've seen is not unusual.

Like many, I was horrified to hear about the murder of Gwen Araujo. Eventually I found myself wondering what we could do to improve things. And it is very clear to me: we need to **educate** people, give them the information and opportunity to understand. You can't expect people to understand things they haven't been taught. There needs to be more and better information out there.

It reminds me a lot of the way dyslexics were viewed 25 years ago. Dyslexics were accused of being lazy, dumb, unmotivated, not trying in school, and they suffered a lot of abuse. Then, with advances in medical science, we learned that dyslexics actually have a different brain structure than the "normal" reader. They have a larger right hemisphere (and thus greatly increased creative abilities), they have brain cells in places we don't usually find them, and a void (absence) of cells in places that we do. There is a **PHYSIOLOGICAL** reason why they are the way they are, and they don't have any choice about it. These differences occur during the time their brains are developing before they are born. That was a real eye opener for me - there was a **PHYSICAL** reason they didn't learn to read like everyone else. It was something they **COULDN'T HELP**. It wasn't anything they had control over, it is just the way they were born; Same with transsexuals.

We found a way to improve the situation for dyslexics. My interest in Dyslexia let me to serve on the Board of Directors of the International Dyslexia Association in the early to mid-80s (it was called The Orton Society in those days). We realized that many Dyslexics were being treated badly because people around them didn't know and understand about Dyslexia. We started putting on a learning disabilities simulation called "Put Yourself in the Shoes of a Dyslexic." It was a very effective way of educating parents and teachers about the existence and frustration faced by dyslexics every day. (I wonder if we could develop something like that for Transsexuals?) In later years, we discovered that, having taught people about the existence of dyslexia, we needed to help them understand about the treatment that was most effective with Dyslexics.

In the case of Transsexuals, I think that if we want things to get better, we **MUST** educate people. People need to know, for example, that transsexuals are born with a brain that does not match their body. My guess is that most people aren't even aware that boys and girls have different kinds of brains, and some haven't made the connection that brains and brain "wiring" **DO** affect behavior and feelings. Transsexuals have no control over the fact that they are born with a mis-match between their body and brain. That this mis-match is so painful that about 50% of them don't survive. People need to know this.

There are four main places I think education would be most fruitful:

(1) Media reporters. Many people who have already gone through the school system rely on what they read and see on the news for continuing learning and education. They **LEARN** from what they see on TV and what they read in newspapers. So it would help if the people who write what they hear and see have the knowledge base to be able to report about Transsexuals in a sensitive manner. Where, after all, do you expect that a reporter might have learned about Transsexuals? In journalism school? Not likely. In their high school? Not likely. So if we want them to know, we're gonna have to help them and give them the information they need.

(2) Students and teachers. Believe it or not, children learn a LOT in school. But you can't reasonably expect a teacher who doesn't him/herself have information and knowledge about Transsexuals to teach it. I have participated in workshops where they told us how to teach "diversity" (in reference to homosexuality) and it wasn't terribly successful, either for the faculty or what (little) trickled down to the children. But I think there **ARE** activities that guest speaker Transsexuals could present at school assemblies and/or district level staff development meetings that would be valuable and effective.

(3) Parents and families. Where does a parent/family go for help, guidance and accurate information when they learn a member of their family is a Transsexual? I think if parents/families had a support system of some sort that would give them accurate information and help them understand the situation realistically it could, in many cases, make things easier for everyone.

(4) Interested church groups. I think that there are some congregations that actually practice the love that they preach, and would be open learning more.

I know that there are some people who are not likely ever to be open to learning and increasing their understanding, but I feel strongly that we should make information available to those who might be. The more people who have been given the information so that they **CAN** understand, the less likely it will be that tragedies like Gwen's are to happen.

S. Dee Dee Calfas

Teen's Sad Tale - Troubled Years Preceded Attack

By Karen de Sá, Mercury News, Oct. 26, 2002

Most who knew her in the town of Newark called her Gwen, a bubbly kid who wore jeans and sneakers and spent long afternoons dancing to music videos and painting her nails with friends. She was a sympathetic ear for teenage moms, an expert on makeup application, a fun companion at the mall. But Gwen was anything but a carefree 17-year-old. There was alcohol and drug use. She had stopped going to school. She came home so late so often that her mother moved some of her stuff into the garage. And Gwen was a transgender teen, born a boy named Eddie Araujo, still with a male body.

When that fact was revealed at a party on the night of Oct. 3, police say, three men beat and strangled the youth to death. Police say the men, who face murder charges with a hate-crime enhancement, then took Araujo's body 150 miles away and buried it in a shallow grave on an abandoned logging path near the Sierra foothills. "He was willing to stand his ground and be who he wanted to be, and people aren't used to that much confidence," said childhood friend Jennifer Woods, 16. "Ultimately, I think his strength killed him."

On Friday, Araujo was buried again, this time surrounded by the love and compassion of people who knew him as Eddie and knew her as Gwen. In a casket adorned with butterflies, Araujo's slight frame lay in a lace blouse and padded bra, fingernails stunning in rainbow glitter. "I wonder how many times Eddie cried in secret, wondering, where do I fit in?" the Rev. Jeff Finley told hundreds gathered at Araujo's funeral at St. Edward's Catholic Church in Newark. "Maybe we were not there enough for you, because we did not understand."

From Eddie to Gwen

Maybe there were signs during boyhood, maybe not. Araujo was raised with three siblings by his mom, Sylvia Guerrero, a legal secretary. His parents divorced when he was 2, but 13 aunts and uncles and 32 cousins swirled through his life. A mischievous boy who hated oatmeal so much he would dump it under the table, little Eddie learned to cook breakfast himself, at age 7. He climbed trees and played in the neighborhood clubhouse. He had a guinea pig named Snuca, and lots of girls had crushes on the skinny boy with a smile stretching ear to ear.

Between the ages of 10 and 14, Araujo and the family attended the Evangelical Free Church in Newark, which preaches a literal interpretation of the Bible. Araujo joined Sunday school programs and a youth study group. In middle school, he began wearing makeup. At age 14, he started wearing girl's clothes — not dresses or skirts, but "just normal girl clothes," his friends said. He corrected people when they called him Eddie, shooting back, "It's Gwen," in encounters again and again to get others to understand what he felt. "When he was a him, he was a very cute guy," said Araujo's best friend Julia Valenzuela, 15. "When he was a her, he was really gorgeous. He looked like he was going ballroom dancing every night. He caught the stare everywhere we went."

Paying A Price

Courageous as it was to live as Araujo felt, it exacted a toll. As his need to dress and act like a girl grew, the family left the church, his mother said. And increasingly, they would distance themselves from extended family. Uncles were too macho, Araujo told his therapist, and the taunts from kids at school that he was effeminate, which began even in elementary school, were growing unbearable. "He was harassed all the time," said Tara Rodriguez, 16, "especially by boys."

Continued on Page 22

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Gwen Araujo Media & Responses



The Real Sting Of A Hate Crime

Janine DeFao, Chronicle Staff Writer, October 24, 2002

Standing on the stage of Newark Memorial High School, freshman David Wood talked about a town stunned by a horrific hate crime. "If you would have asked me before, I would have told you it's a beautiful town, a town with a strong sense of community," he said Wednesday. Now, "we've become a town defined by an accident, a crime. We may be able to get over it, but it will sure take awhile."

Wood was reciting his lines in the "Laramie Project," a play his high school is putting on about the beating death of gay college student Matthew Shepard in his Wyoming town. But he might as well have been describing his hometown of Newark, a suburb on the edge of Silicon Valley that has been thrust into the national spotlight by the slaying of Eddie "Gwen" Araujo.

The slaying has become the talk of the town, and the town has become the talk of news media, from the New York Times to "20/20," and of gay and transgender groups across the country. "It's just such a shock. Laramie happened here. It's too real for us," said Joe Magdalena, a Newark Memorial junior and cast member of the "Laramie Project."

"It has stirred up a lot of emotions. It meant this wasn't the quiet little community that we all thought it was, that it wasn't safe," said Pat Skillen, who has received more calls than usual on the help line of the Fremont chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Newark, once a largely blue-collar town, now boasts industry from Cargill Salt to Sun Microsystems. The median family income is \$71,000. The town's reaction to Araujo's death ranges from shock to sadness to outrage. Sylvia Guerrero, the victim's mother, called the community's response overwhelmingly compassionate, said Gloria Allred, the Los Angeles attorney representing her.

But some residents question whether Araujo may have put himself in harm's way. Police are investigating whether the teen, who wore makeup and dressed in women's clothing, may have had sexual encounters with one or more of the suspects, who knew her as "Lida."

"She played with their emotions," said Stephanie Estacio, a neighbor of Merel who attended several parties with Araujo. "If Lida had said she was a cross-dresser from day one, she would be alive to this day. They never would have invited her to a party."

While Araujo did not attend Newark Memorial, he grew up in Newark, as did the suspects. Nabors played baseball and acted in a Charlie Brown play as a kid. Merel played football. None was known as a troublemaker, said Newark Memorial Principal Jack Roach.

The death has made a particular impact on the cast of the "Laramie Project." "It's not a play anymore. It's real," said senior Ryan Gonzalez. "When people have to cry onstage, it won't be hard."

In the play, anti-gay activist and Baptist Rev. Fred Phelps of Kansas pickets Shepard's funeral. Before Araujo's death, Phelps had announced that he would protest the play, which begins Nov. 8. "The distinction between what is the play and what is real is becoming very blurred," said drama teacher Barbara Williams, who has been inundated with calls and e-mails of support from across the country. "They praise our courage," she said. "My response back is this doesn't take any courage, what we're doing. It took courage to do what Eddie was doing."

Williams chose the play, in part, because a former Newark Memorial student beat up a gay man four years ago. "That's still here, this undercurrent of dislike about anyone who is different," said Williams. "We had this idealized vision that we might make a difference. At this point, we're feeling rather sad that we couldn't stop this."

But several cast members said they believe the play is more important now than ever. It will be dedicated to Araujo's memory. "This town needs this show," said Magdalena. "It needs to see how Laramie coped with it."

Teen's Sad Tale...

Continued from Page 21

Araujo was already looking beyond Newark, reporting to friends and family that he would go to Hollywood and be a makeup artist. He would make "hella money," he said, but meanwhile his school attendance was slipping. High school was a patchwork of independent study and continuation programs. This would have been Araujo's senior year at Crossroads High School, but he never showed up. Araujo planned instead on a high school equivalency diploma.

At home, the family struggled to sympathize, but Guerrero never turned her son out. "I wanted to love and protect him," she said. Then, using a term of endearment for a boy, she said, "I would say 'Mijo, I'll call you Gwen when you have a sex change.'" But in the meantime, Araujo's behavior grew more self-destructive, and his mother concedes now that she "never understood the magnitude of his pain." He wanted acceptance, but he found little, Guerrero said. Employers refused Araujo because his legal name and physical appearance did not match.

People offered Eddie their help, including Linda Skerbec, a therapist associated with the Focus on the Family ministry who had known the family for years and saw Araujo between the ages of 14 and 16. She said she was on the verge of persuading Araujo to "move beyond the label" of transgender and "claim the sexual identity that matched his anatomy."

Focus on the Family is a Colorado-based ministry that sponsors "National Coming Out of Homosexuality Day" and promotes "reparative therapy" to change homosexuals into heterosexuals. The practice has been condemned by the American Psychological Association. "To me, Eddie was very much a male, a creative, sensitive male," Skerbec said. "But I worried some. I knew that kids like Eddie could be hurt."

More Pain, Greater Risks

Social researchers are only beginning to understand the hardships gay, lesbian and bisexual youth suffer from and how lack of acceptance results in self-destructive behavior. Studies show suicide rates and substance abuse at two to four times that of the general population. Even less is known about their transgender peers.

For Araujo, the perfect facade was often just that, not a safe place to embrace a deeply felt identity. Guerrero said Araujo attempted suicide and drank more frequently. He had no job and wasn't studying. Friends told police he traded sex for beer and marijuana.

Last month, Araujo was found unconscious in front of St. Edward's, just up the street from the modest duplex where he lived with his mother and two siblings. Guerrero collected her son, who had passed out after a night of drinking. But it wasn't unusual. He often wouldn't come home at night. Friends and family insist that she remained devoted through all the hard times and that Araujo felt loved. But survival as Gwen required increasingly complex calculations — and as Araujo became sexually active, the risk also increased.

On Oct. 3 Araujo went to a party with friends who knew him as Lida. Araujo, who was wearing a skirt for the first time in public, had taken along jeans as a precaution, thinking she might become too drunk and someone might look up her skirt. But she never changed. Police say Araujo was killed that night after someone at the party discovered he was anatomically male and told the others. Days later, investigators came to the Araujo home searching for clues to who might have done it. Amid the teen's belongings, they found a Harry Potter address book — and the names that led to three arrests.

Seahorse Medical Clinic Joy Diane Shaffer, MD



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WRITER'S BLOCK

Five, six hundred words, and I'm done. The problem is where to start. If I can start, the rest works itself out with a little coaxing and adjustment and thoughtful rewriting. Sometimes very little. The notion and the words come like a gift. It's so easy.

Reread your gift a month later and you see that it wasn't fit to wrap used gum. But, oh, how I'd love to feel the light of false inspiration now. I got about 400 words into a real downer about how nobody understands anybody else and we all live shallow lives. True enough, but something told me, "Leave it for awhile." I went into the living room and watched some television and came back and what I wrote didn't seem bleakly profound but silly and contrived. OK, Kierkegaard I'm not.

I feel the way I feel when I look at a piano and know that talented hands can find the combinations of keys to make it sing and flow with music. Not mine. If I try really hard I might pick out "Danny Boy" with one finger and plenty of sour notes.

I'm tired. I think we turn the clocks back tonight. There's a blessing. I did pick the best possible time to have writer's block, didn't I? It's past midnight, but not really. It's like money in the bank. But here I am squandering my investment when I could be spending it on much needed sleep.

235 words so far. (243, with a little padding.) Almost half of what I need for 500, which is sort of the minimum. Not that Ayme gives me minimums or maximums. I've gone on for as much as 1,700 words and she never says "Shirley, it's a column, not a novel. Get to the point, make it, and go." Which I believe is required for column writing. Otherwise you're writing an essay, and probably a bad one. What's the difference? To me, a column focuses on something particular and tries to imply more than it can say in its brevity. An essay takes the time it needs; it can point its lens here and there, dwell on one thing awhile, move onto something else and finish with as many questions as it started, but better ones. A column, like a joke, needs resolution, a punch line, even if it isn't meant to be funny. Even if it's serious.

The best columns, I think, can be like extended aphorisms. George Will used to be the master. I recall reading him during the Watergate investigation when he and I were both rather young. As the evidence mounted, he summarized and portrayed the dangerous foolishness of the Nixon administration better than anyone else; or so I thought. Every terrible event needs someone to express what it is and means in memorable language, and thereby reduce and contain it; for me, that's what George Will did. I don't know if I would want to reread what he wrote back then. It might all have been so much a part of its own time that I would be disappointed how much of what he said was not as insightful and timeless as I had thought but rather antique, if beguiling, as an old Life magazine cover.

George Will today is another matter. His writing isn't as gemlike as it was. I hardly read him at all. He can be such a right wing priss. Perhaps that is what a daily deadline does to you. Even a monthly deadline can dry you out. As you can see.

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lawsuit. You must file a complaint with the DFEH within one year of the last act of discrimination. If you do not file within this time, you lose your right to pursue your complaint with the agency or in court. There is no cost to file a complaint, and filing can be done without the assistance of an attorney.

To file a complaint, contact the DFEH Communications Center at (800) 884-1684 and state clearly that you believe you have been discriminated against because you are transgender or gender non-conforming. If your situation meets certain legal requirements (such as the filing deadlines noted above), you will receive an appointment time at the DFEH office closest to you. You will also be sent a questionnaire by mail asking you to detail the facts of the discrimination.

In filling out the questionnaire, it is essential that you indicate each possible basis of discrimination (sex, disability, sexual orientation, etc.). It can also be helpful, although the form does not request it, to attach a one or two-page summary explaining why you believe what happened was discrimination. Be sure to include a description of any comparators, and the names and contact information of any witnesses to the discrimination or harassment. Preparing a timeline or a log of each incident, especially in the case of harassment, can also be very helpful. Include the date, time, a description of the incident, and any witnesses who observed the incident.

At the interview, you will meet with a consultant who is responsible for collecting information from you, drafting your discrimination complaint, and ultimately investigating your case. Retain the name and contact information of the consultant, because she will be your contact throughout the process.

During the interview, provide information about any comparators, the names and contact information of witnesses, and any documentary evidence, such as notes, email or letters from your employer. Be sure to indicate that you wish the DFEH to cross-file your complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"), the federal counterpart to DFEH, which enforces Title VII. Thanks to a work-sharing agreement between DFEH and EEOC, you need not file with both agencies, but you do need to make sure that DFEH cross-files your complaint in order to ensure that you retain your right to sue under federal law as well.

After the interview, you will receive a draft complaint in the mail. Check to make sure that the boxes for each kind of discrimination you are claiming are checked, that the date of the last incident of discrimination is correctly noted, and that the statement of facts is complete and accurate. Also make sure that the box indicating your desire to have the complaint cross-filed with the EEOC is checked, and that the complaint has been assigned both a DFEH and EEOC complaint numbers. Contact the consultant before you sign if any changes are necessary.

Once you sign and return the complaint, the DFEH will send a copy to your employer, who will be required to provide a written response within a few weeks. You may ask the consultant to read the employer's response to you over the phone. The response can provide important information about what you will have to prove to prevail; for example, refuting an employer's claim that you were not promoted because of poor work performance, rather than because you are transgender or gender non-conforming.

The DFEH will then begin its investigation, which can last for several months or up to a year. The investigation will be most effective if you can provide specific names and contact information for people that can corroborate your story. Check in with the DFEH consultant periodically to find out how the investigation is proceeding and to provide any additional information that may be useful.

At the end of the investigation, the DFEH will issue a "right-to-sue letter" that includes one of three findings: that the DFEH believes discrimination did occur, that the DFEH believes it did not, or that there is insufficient evidence for the DFEH to determine whether discrimination occurred. A finding of discrimination can be very useful in any lawsuit you may bring, but a finding of no discrimination or insufficient evidence does not preclude you from bringing suit. At any time during the investigation, you may request that the DFEH stop its investigation and issue you a right to sue letter.

You must file a lawsuit within one year of the date of the right-to-sue letter, or you will lose your opportunity to file. To file a lawsuit under federal law, you must do so within 90 days of receipt of the right-to-sue letter from EEOC.

For information or assistance in filing a complaint with DFEH, contact Chris Daley at the Transgender Law Project of the National Center for Lesbian Rights at (415) 392-6257 or Sheryl Harris at the Legal Aid Society - Employment Law Center at (415) 864-8848.

Public is Broadly Aware of Transgender Americans, But Much More Education Is Needed, Says HRC

HRC RELEASES GROUND-BREAKING PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH ON TRANSGENDER ISSUES

WASHINGTON - The Human Rights Campaign announced today the findings of a landmark HRC-commissioned poll conducted by the firm Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc., that focuses on public perception of transgender issues. The poll shows that while most people accept that a person can be transgender, more education is needed to help people better understand the lives of transgender Americans, says HRC.

"The data shows that most people want to treat transgender Americans fairly and protect them from workplace discrimination and hate crimes," said HRC Communications Director and Senior Strategist David M. Smith. "Still, the majority of Americans report being uncomfortable about transgender issues, especially when confronted with the challenges that transgender people face."

Seventy percent of Americans have heard the word transgender and a majority have, on some level, contemplated the issue. "The concept of transgender is something that the public is aware of, if not focused on," said Celinda Lake, of the polling firm Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc. "Most people accept that it is possible for a person to be 'born as one sex but inside feel like the other sex.' However, many are confused about what transgender means, and which people would be considered transgender."

All voters overwhelmingly favor transgender students attending public schools, according to the poll results. Additionally, despite differences between sympathizers and opponents, there is a strong general consensus that no one should be subjected to violence and discrimination because of who they are. There are, however, differences between the two points of view on how to address these issues.

The poll found that sympathizers who believe in transgender equality favor transgender-specific laws and opponents prefer using what they erroneously believe to be existing laws to protect transgender people. However, the fact remains that there are very few jurisdictions in this nation that prohibit discrimination against transgender Americans, says HRC. Additionally, the poll found a very critical correlation between whether the public sees being transgender as a moral issue and whether they think people have a choice about being transgender.

"Three-quarters of those who say being transgender is a choice, also see it as a moral issue," said Lake, "while two-thirds who do not see it as a moral issue say people are born transgender."

Despite some negative segments of the population, much of the public expresses interest and concern for transgender people. The majority of respondents disagree with statements that say, "I do not care about transgender people," "I don't want to hear about transgender people," "There is no reason to worry about such a small minority," or "Transgender people get what they deserve." Conversely, the majority favors laws to protect transgender people's rights. Transgender individuals also face the same problem as gay and lesbian Americans, in that a great number of people believe that the law already protects these groups.

"The data clearly suggests that a strategic, step-by-step educational campaign that focuses on broadly supported issues - such as hate crimes and discrimination protection — are the best place to start on the road toward equality," said HRC's Smith. Among other findings:

- 61 percent believe the country needs laws to protect transgender people from discrimination.
- 57 percent incorrectly believe that it is not legal to fire a person just because they are transgender.
- 67 percent agree that it is possible for a person to be born as one sex, but inside feel like another sex.
- 53 percent believe it is "all right" for a person to be transgender, while 37 percent believe that it is wrong.
- 77 percent of people believe that transgender students should be allowed to attend public schools.
- 48 percent of Americans would have "no problem" working with a transgender person, while only 8 percent claim they "would not" be willing to.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

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