

GQ

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genderquestioning

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credits

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a joint project of
Trans Melbourne Gender Project
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design Lin Tobias / La Bella Design
printed by Arena Printing
edition 1000

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trans melbourne gender pro  ject

“Whenever I go into a women’s bathroom, people look at me weird, like I’m not supposed to be there. I know they think I’m a guy. Actually I’d rather go to the men’s, because I feel like I’m a boy inside. But in the men’s toilets they think I’m a girl.”

“Sometimes at home I dress up in high heels and a 60’s dress I found at an op shop. I put on make-up and pretend I’m a princess. I’ve liked doing this for as long as I can remember, but I don’t know why.”

“When I was little, I thought I would grow up to look just like my Dad. I didn’t: everyone says I look just like my Mum.”

introduction

The first question often asked after we’re born is *“Is it a boy or a girl?”* The assumption is that a child will fulfil one of those two distinct categories. But we are not all born *‘standard male’* or *‘standard female’*. The reality is that humans are more complex. There are many shades of grey between male and female.

This booklet is for people aged 16 to 25 who are questioning their gender - for people who feel like the gender assigned through sex doesn’t fit. Some of us call ourselves transgendered. We called it **GQ: Gender Questioning**. We hope that reading this booklet will be a big help towards figuring out some very confusing stuff.

“I think I’m questioning my gender”

“

“I may be transgendered”

sexgender&transgender

The word ‘sex’ is usually used to describe our biology - whether we are born with a penis or vagina, and what kind of chromosomes we have: XX for girls and XY for boys.

The word ‘gender’ describes how we are expected to act as a male or a female. While there have been a lot of changes around women’s and men’s roles, at least in Australia, it’s still a very strongly held conviction that males should have one set of characteristics and females another. For example, we all know what it means if someone tells us to ‘act like a boy’ or ‘act like a girl’. We also know that you can face ridicule, intimidation and even violence simply for not fitting someone else’s ideal of a real man or a real woman.

Many people do not neatly fit into one of those categories.

The sex we are born is not the only factor to determine the kind of person we are. While our sex may be biologically determined, how we feel and do our gender is not. Different families/countries/religions have different expectations of how girls and boys should be. These expectations or rules of how to be a man or woman support the myth that “biology equals destiny” and limit how everyone, regardless of gender identity, live their lives.

There are biological facts disproving that everyone is self-evidently male or female. Some people are born intersex which includes people born with genitals that cannot easily classify as a penis or a vagina. Other people might not respond to or produce different hormones. This condition, called Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS), means that some people with XY chromosomes (traditionally “male”) might appear more female than male. Some people born

two

“I’m really a boy/girl.”

”

intersex might not have a chromosomal make-up that’s the XX (female) or XY (male) but a mix of chromosomes, eg. XXXO or XXY. ‘Transgender’ is a word that covers a large range of people whose common experience is that their inner sense of gender is different to their sex. Being transgendered doesn’t necessarily mean feeling trapped in the wrong body, but it includes it. Some transgender people are so uncomfortable with their assigned gender that they choose to change their bodies physically through hormone use and/or surgery. This is known as **transsexuality**.

three

being transgender is different to being gay

A person's gender identity refers to their deeply felt sense of being male, female, something other or in between.

Being gay or lesbian means you have lasting romantic and sexual attractions for people of the same gender. It does not necessarily mean that a gay man is questioning whether he is a man. Being a lesbian does not necessarily mean a woman thinks she is a man 'inside'.

Transgendered people have the same range of sexual orientations as the rest of the population – and so could be lesbian, gay, bisexual or straight.

While sexual orientation and gender identity are different, we live in a world that is prejudiced against us. Unfortunately this is one common experience for trans people and lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and intersex people. Regardless of gender identity, everyone would benefit from less restrictive understandings of gender.



Some of these questions might help you figure it all out:

What is gender? What makes a man a man? Or a woman a woman?

How many genders are there?

What would the world look like without gender?

Do you think that the gender you were assigned restricts the way you live or the things that you do? What about the clothes you wear?

Was the gender assigned to you the one you feel most comfortable with?

What privileges do you or don't you have due to the gender you've been assigned?

Do you feel forced to act in certain ways because of gender?

What happens when you don't act in these ways?

Can we unlearn gender?

Here are some commonly used words to talk about gender. All of these words have different meanings according to who you talk to, depending on context, politics, place, culture. All of these definitions may be continually contested by the people who use them.

glossary/useful terms

Body dysphoria: the physical experience of feeling that your body doesn't match the gendered anatomy you feel you should have. People have described body dysphoria as being like phantom limb syndrome.

Cross dresser: a person who has an emotional need to express their alternative gender identity and be accepted in that role on a less permanent basis.

Drag: refers to theatrical performances of gender. Includes drag kings, drag queens.

Gender expression: an individual's characteristics and behaviours, such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns and social interactions.

Gender Identity: refers to a person's internal, deeply felt sense of being male, female, something other, or, in between. Everyone has a gender identity.

Gender reassignment: The physical, legal and social process of transitioning gender. May include surgery/hormone treatment, changing name, using a different pronoun, changing your birth certificate gender.

Gender variance: is defined as the "persistent sense that a person's gender identity is incongruent with the person's biological sex."

Genderqueer: refers to people who do not identify as, or who do not express themselves as, completely male or female. Genderqueer people may or may not identify as transgender.

Intersex: a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male.

Pronouns: he/his/him, she/her, ze/hir/zir, it/its, they/their/them.

Sexual orientation: How to describe who you like to sleep with, ie straight/lesbian/gay/bi/queer/pansexual.

Trans*: an umbrella term that can include all the variants of trans... transsexual, transgender, etc.

Transgender: an umbrella term used to describe all kinds of people who sit outside the gender binary. Historically, 'transgender' used to mean changing gender but without modifying your body.

Transition: Transitioning often consists of a change in style of dress, selection of a new name, and a request that people use the correct pronoun. This may or may not include necessary medical care like hormone therapy, counselling, and/or surgery.

Transphobia: Literally, fear of people who cannot be placed easily in either 'male' or 'female'. Transphobia includes violence, harassment and discrimination as well as the institutional 'law' that says everyone must fit into male or female.

Transsexuality: The medical or psychiatric term for a person who transitions from one gender to the other. People can also use 'transsexual' to describe themselves. Some people think that transsexuality is biological but it hasn't been proven. This issue is constantly debated and often divides the trans* community rather than unites it.

Transvestite: Someone who dresses in the clothes usually worn by the opposite sex. Transvestites may be bisexual, heterosexual, or homosexual.

The following list includes terms that transpeople might use to describe themselves. This is not a definitive list, there are probably many, many more:

MTF, M2F (male-to-female), FTM/F2M (female-to-male), Transwoman, Transman/Transguy, Trannyboy/boi, Trannygirl, Trans masculine, Trans feminine, Tranz, bi-gendered, third sex, polygendered, pangendered, transbutch, transrag, trannydyke, androgyne.

Genders outside male and female have been around as long as life has existed. But although gender variance has been around forever, it takes different forms and involves different practices in various cultures and historical periods.

This is a quick survey of different ways people have talked about gender variance in history.

atranshistorylesson

Genders outside male and female have been around as long as life has existed. But although **gender variance** has been around forever, it takes different forms and involves different practices in various cultures and historical periods.

This is a quick survey of different ways people have talked about gender variance in history.

Just like the global diversity of ideas about how the world was made, there are a million different ideas about gender. There are also a million different names for questioning or changing gender.

The popular English terms for talking about gender variance, like transsexuality, transgender, **transvestite**, and **cross-dresser** are all relatively new. In the 19th century, people who didn't conform to either gender were sometimes known as hermaphrodites. Many European sexologists confused homosexuality with 'abnormal' gender identity: both homosexuality and transsexuality were called 'sexual inversion'. The English writer Havelock Ellis called gender variant people *eonists*, after a French noble, the Chevalier d'Eon de Beaumont, who lived as both a woman and a man in the 19th century.

Although gender roles in Western countries in the 19th century were much more constrained than now, it seems that men who lived as women, and women who lived as men found spaces to love, work and play: perhaps in the bohemian pockets of large cities, perhaps elsewhere. In Australia, Marion "Bill" Edwards lived as a man through the early 1900's, working in bars, at racetracks and on farms around Melbourne, New South Wales and Queensland until he died in 1956.

The term "transsexual" was coined by an American doctor in 1949. Doctors had been performing gender reassignment operations since 1902, but people weren't named "transsexuals" until the early 50's. Christine Jorgenson, an ex-soldier from New York City, became the first famous MTF. She obtained gender reassignment surgery in Denmark and became a media sensation on arriving home in the USA. Jorgenson starred in her own show at a New York nightclub, and later wrote an autobiography. Meanwhile, terms like 'drag queen', 'cross-dresser' and 'transvestite' were becoming popular, although most people still assumed that a feminine man must be gay, and that a masculine woman must be a lesbian.

Transsexuality also became a classifiable 'mental disorder' during the 1950's¹. At first, doctors thought transpeople could be divided into categories, depending on how long they'd experienced cross-gender feelings, their feelings about their genitalia, and how well doctors thought they might pass after surgery. (For example, an MTF who had known she was a woman since early childhood, who had a feminine facial structure and struck the medical profession as a potentially attractive woman would be classified a 'primary' or 'true' transsexual.) Doctors began to develop stringent standards about who could, and could not, medically or legally transition genders.

Sadly, not a lot has changed in 50 years. Ads tell us that we can all choose to live the way we want to, that the choices are endless. But we don't always have a choice about gender. Nevertheless, we can always choose to fight the rules that our bodies and selves bely, and find ways to be happy no matter what gender we are.

1 Homosexuality was defined as a medical disorder up until 1974 when it was removed by the American Psychiatric Association from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

what should I do if I'm questioning my gender

Figuring out your options At some point you may want to take action about your gender identity issues. There's no 'how to' guide for figuring this out. But other people have gone through this, are going through this. Look at the back of this book for places to go for information. It depends on what you need, what you're comfortable with, and what you think you're ready for.

You might decide to talk to others about gender issues, or change your name, or experiment with changing your appearance to better fit your identity. These are all scary things to think about. Where to go from here can also depend on things like where you live or who you live with, your financial situation, what services you've got access to, and your age.

Be careful not to make big decisions about your life until you're ready. There are no rules about who you can be: all you need to do is be yourself.

Accepting who you are You've probably heard the saying 'Don't judge a book by its cover' a million times. Most of us know that what's on the inside is way more important than what's on the outside. But it's harder to apply this rule when your body doesn't match with how you feel.

You may worry that you aren't 'normal'. It takes courage to acknowledge a part of you that defies the accepted norm. Even when you are comfortable with your gender identity, life presents problems and challenges. You are a special, unique and valuable person. You might want to start taking steps towards making the body you see in the mirror reflect how you actually feel, but sorting out your head is even more important. It takes time to know who you are. It's ok to question your

gender, it's ok to be unsure, and it's ok to take your time. Lots of people experience feelings like this.

Getting support It's not easy to decide that you might be gender-questioning or trans. You might feel on your own, scared or depressed, especially if you haven't talked to anyone about how you feel. These are really painful feelings, but they are sane responses to stress. Dealing with these feelings includes taking care of yourself and your body.

Some people try to escape by using alcohol and drugs but you probably don't need us to tell you that's not going to keep you safe, or change how you feel about yourself in the long term.

If you are feeling like you might harm yourself or feel suicidal it's important that you keep yourself safe. Many trans/GQ people have struggled with accepting themselves but have got through tough times. Remember if you are having terrible thoughts now, they are only thoughts. Have a plan for these times when you are feeling hopeless. You don't need to work through all of this alone. Find someone you trust enough to talk to or ring a helpline. The Reachout website also has good information on coping with life challenges.

Good support for you might also include learning how to cope with other people's prejudice, rather than having a problem with your gender identity.

REMEMBER, IF YOU NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE RIGHT NOW, YOU CAN CALL:

- **Victorian Gay and Lesbian Switchboard**
from 6pm - 10pm, Wednesdays 2pm-10pm.
(03) 9827 8544 (Metropolitan area)
1800 184 527 (Country Victoria)
- **Lifeline: 131 114 (cost of a local call)**
- **www.reachout.com.au for info on services and 'survival plans'.**

Telling people If you decide that you want to change gender, or even experiment with living as a different gender, you might want to talk to someone. Even if you are at the early stages of questioning your gender, you still might find it helpful to talk to others. This is often called 'coming out'. Coming out can be painful, so try not to feel like you should tell. The main thing is that you feel ready.

If you think your friends and family won't be supportive then try to gather enough support around you to handle what happens next. Support can be from all kinds of areas in your life: friends, counselors, teachers, siblings, neighbors, relatives, other trans/GQ people, a support group or counselling service.

Who you tell, what you tell them, when, why and how is all up to you. Some people drop the news into ordinary conversation; others make time to talk about it alone with a friend, parent, colleague or teacher. A written letter (even to someone you see regularly) is a good way to give the person time to take in the information.

Think through what you want from people before you tell them. Do you want the people around you to think or refer to you as 'he' rather than 'she' or vice versa? Do you want to be called a different name? Do you just want to tell someone, without any changes to how they treat you? If you tell your boss, do you want her/him to tell other people or deal with administrative changes? It doesn't have to be all traumatic, either. This is also about celebration. You could throw a party or invite a group of close friends to celebrate your decision.

It's natural to want people to respond positively when you tell them. Some people will be very happy for you. Some may have already suspected, while others will be surprised. Other people may express fear, anger or disbelief.

If you encounter conflict: Remind the person that you're still you, and that being trans/GQ doesn't change who you are – you're not hurting anyone. Stress that you are telling someone about your decision to be more honest with them about how you feel, in the hope that this strengthens your relationship.

Your family You've probably spent a lot of time thinking about telling your family. Having their love and acceptance can make a big difference. It's an important decision. More so if you're under 18 or relying on their financial support. At first the people closest to you may have the most difficulty reconciling your new gender identity with the person they know and love. They may have trouble making sense of what they perceive as a difficult 'choice' in life. Being

transgender is normal, but it's not common. So they probably don't know much about it. Having some information that they can read could be a good idea. We've included a few sources of information at the back of this booklet. Your patience is very helpful here. Given time, lots of families of trans/GQ people come around.

You have a right to be the person you are, no matter who says otherwise. You are sharing an important part of yourself. If people ignore this, they are missing out on knowing who you are. Hold on to the fact that you are special. You deserve to be loved and respected the way you are.

What's in a name? Sometimes trans/GQ people decide to go by a different name that fits better than their birth name. In Australia, you can change your name legally by deed poll for any reason, as long as you only do it once a year and the name is not obscene. You might have known the name you'd prefer for a long time. Or you could try out lots of different names and combinations to see what you like. Alternatively, you might want to keep the name you were given.

You might tell others that you want to start using a new name as your nickname, to see how you like it. You might also want to think about when to use what name: for instance you might only want to be called 'Sam' around friends or school and not around your family.

It may take a while for others to adjust to using your new name. Even if people mess up, they might not mean to. A new name takes a while to stick.

About pronouns You may feel as if neither male nor female pronouns (she/he/his/her) fit you properly. You might want to use gender neutral pronouns such as 'hir' and 'ze'. It can really hurt when people use incorrect pronouns. Most people don't think twice before using a pronoun, so even if you've asked people to change pronouns for you, it may take a while for people to stop slipping up.

Physical transition For some GQ people it is important that they change their body to make it look more like how they feel on the inside. Choosing to change your body is a big decision and one that shouldn't be made quickly or for the wrong reasons.

Generally people who want hormonal therapy or surgery (Sex Reassignment Surgery) will in the first instance visit their GP, who would then refer them on to a psychiatrist or surgeon. Questioning

your gender or being trans is not an illness but if you want safe medical intervention you need to deal with the medical system. The thought of raising this issue can be an intimidating, so it can help to go to a GP you already know and trust or find a GP who is experienced in working with GQ people. It may be helpful, if you're feeling stressed at this point, to have a counselor.

A good doctor will listen, help sort out what you want to do, suggest counselling/therapy if it is needed, and tell you exactly what will happen if you decide to have hormone therapy or surgery. You may need to attend a gender clinic. In Victoria, the Monash Gender Dysphoria Clinic handles all gender reassignment surgery.

Getting hassled about gender People who don't exhibit typical genders often get targeted for bullying or harassment at school, on the street, and at home. Lots of people get flak for wearing the wrong clothing or presenting themselves in a way that doesn't reflect society's rules about gender. Girls who are androgynous, wear short haircuts, work in 'men's' jobs like mechanics or other trades, play sport, wear masculine clothing or get mistaken for boys are often labelled dykes or butch. Similarly, boys who don't present a stereotypically masculine appearance or who like doing things that women are supposed to do - like cooking, crafts, art, theatre, etc - are often labelled sissy-boys or faggots.

It might be as serious as a stranger attacking you because "you look like a fag" or as trivial as your Dad asking you over and over when you're going to grow your hair. You might be ostracised at school because you aren't 'girly' enough, or prefer making art to playing footy.

To stop harassment, violence or bullying – whichever way it comes at you, it can help to tell someone. It might be family, friends, or teachers or lecturers. If the harassment is happening at school or uni or at work, each of these places has a duty to make sure you are safe and not harassed. Teachers and counsellors are specially trained and it's their job to help. In the workplace this could be a Human Resource manager or union rep.

If someone is violent to you and you have been hurt, you can call your local police, or 000, or if you prefer Victoria Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers, who have been trained in the issues relating to transgender people. You can call them on 03 9247 6944 or 0414 181 403.

Transphobia Abuse like this is unacceptable and wrong. It has a name: **transphobia**. Transphobia ranges from disapproval to an irrational hatred of transgender, transsexual or gender variant people. It's similar to homophobia ie the fear or harassment of homosexual people. People who are transphobic are usually this way because they haven't thought about or heard the idea of only two genders challenged. Transphobia is not limited to people's everyday reactions. It can also be present in social institutions like the law, medicine and government. For example, until recently, transpeople could not legally get married or change the sex on their birth certificates. In Victoria in 2005 transsexual people who have had "sex affirmation surgery" are now able to get a new birth certificate with their affirmed gender.

Another example of the discomfort society has felt with people not conforming to one of two genders is about babies born with atypical (meaning 'not usual') genitalia. They frequently have surgery so that the child's genitals look more like a typical male or female, whichever has been decided at birth. This does not always work out well for them in the long term.

Knowing your rights In Australia some parts of the law are changing. Discrimination on the basis of perceived or actual gender identity is now illegal. Under the Victorian Anti-Discrimination Act, it is prohibited to treat someone unfairly or harass them because of their actual or assumed gender identity. This covers transgender people, transsexual people, and intersex people

You must be permitted to behave according to the gender with which you identify. Employers and schools must allow you to dress in the gendered style that you choose. You have the right to be referred to using the right name and pronouns. You also have the right to use the facilities that fit with your preferred gender ie, if you identify as a male, you should be permitted to use male toilets or change rooms.

Because anti-discrimination law around gender identity has not been tested in court, and because community attitudes can lag behind the legislation, you may find that employers, parents, teachers are unaware of the legislation. The enforcement of gendered school uniforms or work dress codes is a big source of discrimination. If you have trouble with people in power acknowledging your gender identity, check out the "Action" part of the resources section.

what should I do if someone I'm close to is questioning their gender?

If you're reading this, someone you love may have recently told you something like, "I think I'm questioning my gender," "I may be transgendered," or maybe "I'm really a boy/girl."

If you have always known a person as a male or female, and he or she questions the 'rightness' of this gender, it can be confusing and scary. Watching someone close to you struggle with their gender identity may make you feel like you don't know them as well as you thought.

When people become close they develop handles to interact with each other. Gender is usually one of the most basic, 'assumed' handles: you don't have to figure out that your friend is a boy every time you see him, he just is. If that basic handle shifts, it might seem as if all the other things you know or trust about a person might have disappeared. But your friend is still the same person. Even if she begins to wear radically different clothes, takes on new mannerisms, asks you to say 'he' rather than 'she' or vice versa, or asks to be called a new name?/s/he is still the same person. A good way to look at it is that gender identity questioning is about *someone becoming more herself/himself/hirself*.

On the other hand, you may have guessed at what was coming. Perhaps you always 'sensed' that your friend didn't feel comfortable in the gender assigned him at birth. You may already feel like you understand and support what's happening. If this is the case, great.

The following tips are designed to help out people who know someone who is questioning their gender identity, or transitioning gender. It's not a complete list: add your own tips if you want.

The most important way you can show your support for a trans/GQ person is to say, "I support what you're doing." A gender-questioning person needs to know that the people close to him love him and are prepared to 'go on the journey' with him. The next important thing is to ask what the person needs from you.

You may think that the trans/GQ person in your life is going through a phase, or that it's not real. Even if you don't accept what's happening, and even if the person doesn't look any different to you, you may need to respect how different he feels. This is most likely a very intense time for the person you're close to. Remember that it has probably taken him a long time to talk to you about this.

You can show your support in a concrete way by respecting the choices someone makes about clothing, name, and pronouns. It's important to make an effort with these things even if you don't understand or feel comfortable with it, and even if you don't see the person as the gender she's chosen.

If you have difficulty with pronouns or a new name, remember that these things are just handles. You are in the habit of using one handle; now you need to train yourself to use another. As with everything, this requires time, practice and patience.

Try to maintain a normal relationship. Call as often as you would have before they came out to you. Take the initiative in organising social events, like coffee or beers or whatever you may have enjoyed together in the past.

The other important thing you will need to ask a gender-questioning or trans person is how to negotiate this with the other people in your own life. For example, she may prefer that you not talk about her decision to other people; on the other hand, she may encourage you to tell other people. Some trans and gender-questioning people only use their 'new' pronouns or name around particular people or social groups. Respect her decision. This is especially important if the GQ/transperson you know is financially dependent on someone else, ie parents or relatives. By contrast, if someone is living as the gender they've chosen, it is Very Bad Manners to out her.

It's a good idea to ask what areas are and are not appropriate to talk about. Be discreet about the changes your trans/GQ friend is making in hir life. Don't ask about gender reassignment surgery or hormones. Don't ask what genitals a person has or if ze's "had the operation".

If you have lots of questions, sometimes the best thing to do is get online, or go to a library, and do your own research.

If you had a drastically different haircut, and everyone you knew offered their opinion on how great or crap it looked, you'd get sick of it pretty quickly. Trans/GQ people are the same. Try not to offer your opinion unless it's invited.

Perhaps the worst thing you could do as a supporter of a trans/GQ person is to feel sorry for them. Not conforming to the laws of gender may mean going through a lot of hardship. But don't assume that someone hates being GQ/trans and sees it as a burden. Figuring out who you are is also cause for celebration.

Lastly: when someone is questioning their gender identity your own ideas about the world may get shaken up a great deal. You may need to adjust your own sense of what gender is and how it works.

usefulresources

BOOKS NON-FICTION:

Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Warriors, Trans Liberation*

Minnie Bruce Pratt, *S/he*.

De La Grace Volcano, *Sublime Mutations* (photography)

Dean Kotula, *The Phallus Palace*

Kate Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook and Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us*.

Boylan, Jennifer Finney. 2003. *She's Not There: A Life in Two Genders*.

Cossey, Caroline. *My Story*.

Kailey, Matt. *Just Add Hormones: An Insider's Guide to the Transsexual Experience*.

Tracie O'Keefe & Katrina Fox, *Finding the Real Me*

Loren Cameron, *Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits*

Katherine Cummings, *Katherine's Diary: The Story of a Transsexual*

Arlene Istar Lev, *Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines for Working With Gender-Variant People and Their Families*.

Jamison Green, *Becoming a Visible Man*.

Joan Nestle, Clare Howell and Riki-Anne Wilchins, *GENDERqUEER: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary*

Del La Grace Volcano and Judith Halberstam, *The Drag King Book*.

Riki-Anne Wilchins, *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender*

Mildred L. Brown, Chloe Ann Rounsley 2003. *True Selves: Understanding Transsexualism-For Families, Friends, Co-workers, and Helping Professionals*

BOOKS FICTION:

Julie Anne Peters, *Luna* (young adult fiction)

Rose Tremain, *Sacred Country*

Lucie Delarue-Mardua, *The Angels and the Perverts*

Jeffrey Eugendies, *Middlesex*

Leslie Feinberg, *Stone Butch Blues*

Taste This collective, *Boys Like Her: Transfictions*

FILMS

There are many, many films with trans themes in all different genres: schlock, horror, indie, Hollywood, 'foreign'. Here are just a few:

The Rocky Horror Picture Show

Boys Don't Cry.

Ma Vie En Rose.

Normal.

Orlando.

By Hook Or By Crook.

A Boy Named Sue.

MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Antony and the Johnsons, *I Am A Bird Now*.

Bitch and Animal.

MC Katastrophe:

<http://www.katastropherap.com/>

Storm Florez:

<http://www.stormflorez.com/>

Lipstick Conspiracy:

www.lipstickconspiracy.com

Dana International

King Victoria: Melbourne Drag King show every

Friday night at the Star Hotel, Collingwood.

<http://www.kingvictoria.figasia.com/>

WEBSITES

The Gender Centre

www.gendercentre.org.au

Sydney-based site. The Gender Centre offers a wide range of services and information to people with gender issues, their partners, families and friends. Good information on all aspects of transition.

Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria

www.glhv.org.au

A Victorian health resource unit for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. Good links to transgender information.

Some good information for your family or school:

• *'Challenging Transphobia'*

From: Department of Education Tasmania,

<http://www.education.tas.gov.au/equitystandards/discrimination/support/transphobia.htm>

An excellent site which clearly explains being transgendered with advice on making schools safe and welcoming.

• *'Guide for parents: raising a gender-variant child'*

From: Children's National Medical Center - Children's Hospital Washington D.C.

<http://www.contemporarypediatrics.com/contpeds/data/articlestandard/contpeds/092005/148384/article.pdf>

Focused on young children but still worth a look – some good information for parents.

COMMUNITY

Here are some of the community groups operating in Victoria that you may want to check out.

Trans Melbourne Gender Project

A coalition of people who want to be able to freely embody the gender we feel are. Might be men, women, transgendered, transsexual, intersex, genderqueer, mtf, ftm, queer, or none of the above. Support/social meetings every first Monday of the month at 6pm, City Library, Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

Ph: 0425 769 896

Email: info@genderproject.net.au

Web: <http://www.genderproject.net.au>

Gender Identity Support Group

Gender Identity Support Group is a non-profit organisation for people who have issues with their gender identity, their families and supporters. GISG runs a drop-in centre at the Victorian AIDS Council on the second Wednesday of every month from 10am-4pm.

PO Box 4151 West Footscray VIC 3012

Ph: 0421 209 608

Web: <http://www.gisg.org>

Minus 18

Holds dance parties for queer and gender-questioning youth.

Level 1, 6 Claremont Street

South Yarra, Vic, 3141

Email: info@minus18.org

Web: <http://www.minus18.org>

TransGender Victoria

Victorian trans activist and lobby group.

PO Box 762, South Melbourne, 3205

Ph: 9517 6613 (voicemail)

Email: transgendervictoria@yahoo.com.au

Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~victrans/>

The Rainbow Network

The Statewide Network for workers who work with transgender and same sex attracted young people.

Ph: 03 9285 5203

Email: F.Martin@latrobe.edu.au

Web: <http://www.rainbownetwork.net.au/>

<<http://www.rainbownetwork.net.au>

The Seahorse Club Victoria

A support and social group for crossdressers, their partners and others within the transgender community.

PO Box 86

St Kilda VIC 3182

Ph: 03 9513 8222

Email: seahorsevic@yahoo.com.au

Web:

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~seahorse/contacts.html>

The Chameleon Society

An organisation, for those persons who, because of gender identity problems, experience loneliness and isolation.

PO Box 500

Williamstown

VIC 3016

Ph: (03) 9517 9416.

Victorian Gay and Lesbian Switchboard

Trained counsellors available to speak to daily from 6pm until 10pm, and Wednesdays from 2pm until 10pm.

(03) 9827 8544 (Metropolitan area)

1800 184 527 (Country Victoria)

MEDICAL

Carlton Clinic

88 Rathdowne Street,

Carlton VIC 3053

Ph: 9347 9422

Web: <http://www.carltonclinic.com>

Centre Clinic

Rear 77 Fitzroy Street,

St Kilda VIC 3182

Ph: (03) 9525 5866

Prahran Market Clinic

Has a number of doctors with experience in dealing with trans patients.

31 Commercial Road

Prahran VIC 3181

Ph: (03) 9826 4500

Monash Gender Dysphoria Clinic

Dr Trudi Kennedy (Director)

Dawn Wallwork (Secretary)

270 Clayton Road,

Clayton, VIC 3168

Ph: 03 8541 6333

Victorian AIDS Council

Counselling team trained to deal with trans/GQ clients.

6 Claremont Street,

Sth Yarra, VIC 3181

Ph: (03) 9867 6500