



QUEER WORDS

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Volume 9: Spring, 2013

Queer Words is an ongoing archive of writing by Friends' Central students, alumni, faculty, and staff of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The Gay Straight Alliance is thankful to all who contributed to this collection and is proud to publish these submissions.

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Queer Words began in 2002 when the following note was submitted anonymously to a teacher's mailbox:

"I don't know exactly what to say but I still want to add my voice here. I am gay... and it's really hard to even write that statement. I know Friends' Central is supposed to be really accepting, but I still have not come out to anybody. I guess I'm afraid. I don't want people to change around me. I will never be straight, but sometimes it feels good to pretend I am, so that I can just act the way I always have, and feel less out of place. I wonder how many other FCS students are in the same position: always pretending. I wonder how long it will be before I can't pretend any longer?"

The Gay Straight Alliance created *Queer Words* in response to this message to offer a forum for L.G.B.T.Q. (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) members of the Friends' Central community and their allies to express their voices.

We hope that *Queer Words* will be a powerful resource for everyone who reads it, and that these selections will deepen our understanding of LGBTQ issues in our school and world and encourage each of us to work towards a safer, more supportive, more fulfilling environment for individuals of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Al Vernacchio
GSA Co-Advisor

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A message from our graduating co-president:



What has made GSA so special to me is the combination of silly and fun conversations with some really serious topics. I joined GSA originally because my cousin had recently come out and gay rights felt suddenly very personal, but I've stayed a member because I've realized that these are rights that are inalienable, and that even as a 17-year-old I have the power to change the fact that these are rights that many people do not have. The fact that other high-schoolers are as interested as I am in helping and bringing about real change is comforting and exciting to me; I love the idea that FCS kids want to help and really care about social justice issues, even if they don't directly apply to them. This year I loved giving the presentation to the juniors because I felt that we really reached and engaged our audience in a new way with new material.

Besides the more serious sides, I've always felt that GSA has just been really fun. We have wonderful snacks; we're usually goofy; we plan awesome parties and everyone is always really nice. Not many clubs can entice people to come at 7:45 on a Friday morning, and I think it says a lot about GSA that we are always full.

I'll miss you all next year,
Hannah



Hannah L. (right)
with Rebecca B., our
incoming co-president

We asked members at our final meeting of the year, “What are you proud of?” Here are their responses:

I’m proud of...

...being an ally

...our straight allies and their presence in the club

...joining GSA

...the GSA presentation that the 12th graders gave to the 11th graders

...the people who come out

...being in GSA

...coming out

...being a part of this family

...I successfully got up at 6:30 most Friday mornings (GSA meets at 7:45)

...how I stick up for what I believe when people use words I’m not cool with

...being an out supporter / ally

...how GSA doesn’t care what other people think

...being a part of GSA throughout 4 years of high school - and it was a lovely experience



PROUD
TO BE ME



"Hope will never be silent"

The Voice Lesson

A reflection by Jacob B.

As I approach my graduation and reflect on my time at Friends' Central, I find my days are best marked, not with units of time, but by little epiphanies. These moments of incredible clarity and love have profoundly changed my perspective and altered the course my life takes. This is not the story of one on my own epiphanies, but one of a friend that I had the opportunity to be a part of...

On top of being a wonderful voice teacher, Claire* is also very close friends with many of her students. Perhaps the student she is closest to is one of her first. Claire met Sarah when she taught at a Catholic school in Delaware, and Sarah has taken voice lessons with her for many years. Recently Sarah has experienced a profound epiphany about gender identity. Coming to understand himself as transgender, Sarah has begun a process of transition – changing his name to Justin and beginning hormone therapy to reshape his body into one that seems more appropriate to how he sees himself and feels about himself.

I was at Claire's house discussing what pieces I could learn for an upcoming concert at which Justin would be playing bass. I asked Claire what his current range was to see if he would be able to sing some back-up vocals. The answer to my question was a look of dismay, followed by a silence. Eventually, Claire said, "I don't know." This surprised me because, for a voice teacher, knowing a student's range is a quintessential part of knowing their vocal character and nature.

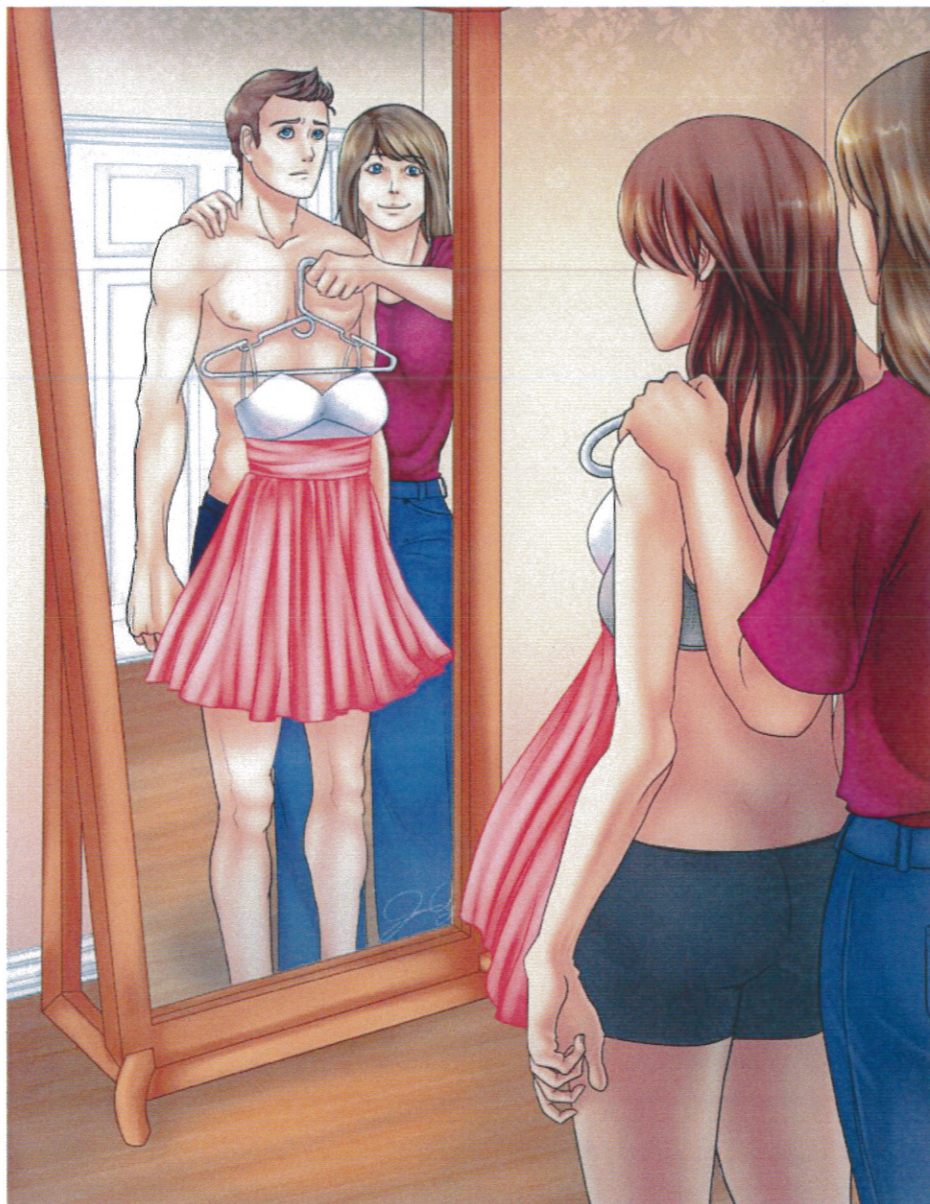
Hormone therapy had caused Justin's voice to change, and this was unexpected and particularly scary to Claire. She and Justin's relationship had been based around his voice, and she seemed to feel that Justin's desire to change his voice was also a desire to change their relationship. Claire felt that all the hours they had spent training and all the closeness that they had been developed was now all for naught. Justin seemed to be a new and unfamiliar person with a new and unfamiliar voice.

Then Claire remembered that Justin had sent her some recent samples of his singing and that through those we could reassess where his range lay. As we listened she turned to me and said, "It just sounds so natural." She went on, "I believe that when we open our mouths and sing beautiful music, what comes out is not just notes, but the truest expression of who we are. All those years Justin's known he's a guy, but this is the first time he's actually been able to sing like one. That must be why it sounds so

natural." In that moment, Claire understood that if she loved Sarah, the best thing she could do was love Justin.

...Change is scary, for conservatives and liberals alike. As activists and allies who help to usher in positive change, it is our duty to help those who push back understand why it is necessary. Only then can we move to a world where everyone can sing their song the way they want to sing, and appreciate that song for its unique beauty.

*[*NOTE: Names of the people in this story have been changed.]*



The Emergence of Transsexualism and Sex Reassignment Surgery

by Maria G-V

[NOTE: This was written for the eleventh grade American History class which requires students write an original research paper utilizing primary sources on an area of interest.]



Sex-reassignment surgery (SRS) gained national attention in 1952 when Christine Jorgensen, a former GI in the U.S. Army, had a male-to-female sex change operation in Denmark. After Jorgensen's surgery, *The New York Times* reported a large increase in calls made to the hospital Jorgenson visited, demonstrating a rise in America's vocal demand for such surgery¹. In 1966, Johns Hopkins Hospital became the first U.S. hospital to perform sex-reassignment surgery publically². During this same time period, American doctors and psychologists were analyzing the condition of transsexualism, in which a person's biological sex is different from their psychological or socially assigned gender. Originally, through the 1960s and 70s, sex reassignment surgery in the United States had a core of advocates who were crucial to the development of sex reassignment surgery and its acceptance of it as a fundamental criteria of

¹ Verner Forchhammer, "300 Request Sex-Change Operations," *New York Times*, February 20, 1953, accessed February 28, 2012, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/490997360/1352C047302C30E8829/4?accountid=10986#>.

² Later sources indicate that some surgeries were actually being performed for years unbeknownst to the public. Dwight B. Billings and Thomas Urban, "The Socio-Medical Construction of Transsexualism: An Interpretation and Critique," *Social Problems* 29, no. 3 (February 1982): 269, FN. 8, accessed February 28, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/800159>.

transsexualism. However, in the 1980s, questioning of transsexualism's medical legitimacy promoted opposition to sex reassignment surgery from social critics. Many relied on medical criticism to support their point that SRS reinforced existing strict definitions of gender roles. This criticism caused later sociologists and professionals outside of the medical realm in the late '80s and early '90s to analyze previous assumptions and broaden conceptions of gender.

In the earliest stages of research, the late 1950s into the 1960s, transsexuals had to be distinguished from two other groups: homosexuals and transvestites. The endocrinologist Harry Benjamin was one of the first to define the condition of transsexualism, and most subsequent research was based on his terminology. Benjamin defined a transsexual as a person who feels “a lack of harmony between their psychologic sex and their anatomic sex”³. Basically, a transsexual was thought of, and is often thought of today, as a man trapped inside of a woman's body, or vice versa. At the time when Benjamin was writing, not everyone understood the difference between transsexuals and homosexuals, who have no desire to change gender but are attracted to members of same gender. Likewise, even fewer could articulate the difference between a transsexual and a transvestite. In 1973, Harry Benjamin and Charles L. Ihlenfeld published an article in which they created six distinctions along the spectrum of transsexualism/transvestism. The fundamental difference they found was that transvestites generally identified psychologically as the same gender as their

³ Harry Benjamin and Charles L. Ihlenfeld, "Transsexualism," *American Journal of Nursing* 73, no. 3 (March 1973): 457, accessed February 19, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3422704>

anatomical sex. Benjamin and Ihlenfeld believed that transvestism was rooted in a sexual desire to cross-dress rather than a gender identity difference⁴.

Harry Benjamin was one of the earliest advocates of SRS, and one of the first to endorse the desires of transsexuals for sex-reassignment surgery. Primarily, by presenting transsexualism as a distinct condition in his earlier articles, Benjamin legitimized its existence in the medical community. In 1973, Benjamin distinguished himself in *The American Journal of Nursing* by saying that:

“Whether or not one believes that transsexualism is a birth defect, the patient and his or her needs remain... Often the persons can work out most of their problems by themselves *if they are given a chance to express themselves in the sex role that is comfortable.*”⁵

In this article, Benjamin’s rooted his unique sensitivity to the struggles of transsexual Americans in his medical research. Based on the success of operations and the abilities of postoperative patients to integrate into mainstream society as their reassigned gender, Benjamin justified his advocacy for sex reassignment surgery⁶. His sympathetic language, however, distinguished this article from other, strictly clinical ones. For example, Dr. D.O. Cauldwell was one of the first doctors ever to use the term transsexual, but his opinions about transsexualism and tone towards transsexual individuals were very negative. In 1949, Cauldwell labeled “PSYCHOPATHIA TRANSEXUALIS” as “a pathologic-

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

morbid desire to be a full member of the opposite sex”⁷. More than twenty years later, the contrast between Benjamin’s portrayal of transsexualism and Cauldwell’s is inescapable. Though Benjamin was not a perfect advocate for transsexual individuals, he saw transsexuals as patients that had a healthy desire for surgery and deserved a say in their treatment, unlike Cauldwell and later critics⁸.

Benjamin’s clinical approach also represented a departure from Cauldwell’s thoughts because Benjamin did not seek to alter a person’s desire for SRS. In essence, Benjamin temporarily ignored the root cause of transsexualism, believing that it was an incurable psychological condition, and aimed to treat the key symptom: discomfort in one’s own body. Though his viewpoint was later criticized, it was largely supported in *New York Times* articles. While *The New York Times* wrote almost entirely fact-driven articles about the controversial issue of sex-reassignment surgery, they consistently featured Johns Hopkins doctors remarking on the positive impact of SRS on patients. For example, in their first article explaining the sex change operations taking place at Hopkins, *The New York Times* focused the story on Johns Hopkins doctors and heavily

⁷ D.O. Cauldwell, "Psychopathia Transexualis," *Sexology* 16 (1949): page #s, accessed March 18, 2012, http://www.iiav.nl/eazines/web/ijt/97-03/numbers/symposium/cauldwell_02.htm.

⁸ Harry Benjamin, "Newer Aspects of the Transsexual Phenomenon," *Journal of Sex Research* 5, no. 2 (May 1969): 140, accessed February 26, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3811605>. Benjamin claimed in this article that nearly all transsexuals displayed an unpleasant personality defect.

quoted Benjamin's reassurances that surgery positively impacted the lives of patients⁹.

As reported in *The New York Times* as well, many doctors were curious about the causes of transsexualism in this relatively early stage of research. Psychiatrists generally agreed that transsexualism was contributed to by influences throughout childhood. One often reiterated claim was that sons raised exclusively by their mothers or sons that were exceptionally close with their mothers during childhood were more likely to develop a female gender identity. Many doctors agreed that if a son grew up sheltered by his mother and saw her, rather than his father, as a strong role model, he would tend to identify as female¹⁰. John Money, a Johns Hopkins Hospital doctor, believed that the presence or lack of the hormone group androgens in the womb could also alter a person's gender identity¹¹. However, even Benjamin later revealed the reason for attempting to find the source of transsexualism was to eradicate it. In 1969, Benjamin stated that sex-reassignment surgery and hormone therapy are "palliative only" and that he looked for the future to provide "psychiatric or chemical weapons"¹². His choice of the word "weapons" here conveys his tone perfectly, and his perspective was shared by most other doctors in the 1960s.

⁹ Thomas Buckley, "A Changing of Sex by Surgery Begun at Johns Hopkins: Johns Hopkins Becomes First U.S. Hospital to Undertake Program of Sex Change Through Surgery," *New York Times*, November 21, 1966, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/117729934/1352CCC0BFFABF0191C/3?accountid=10986#>.

¹⁰ Jane E. Brody, "500 in the U.S. Change Sex In Six Years With Surgery: 500 Change Sex in Six Years With Surgery; Hundreds Waiting," *New York Times*, November 20, 1972, accessed February 13, 2012, <http://search.proquest.com/pagepdf/119472002/Record/134C8CB892339E92036/1#>

¹¹ *Ibid.* Androgen is a category of hormones which includes testosterone.

¹² Harry Benjamin, "Newer Aspects of the Transsexual Phenomenon," *Journal of Sex Research* 5, no. 2 (May 1969): 136, accessed February 26, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3811605>.

Transsexualism was seen as negative, and something that had to be combated. This shows that regardless of whether doctors were for or against surgery, they aimed to eliminate the need for it in the future by getting rid of transsexualism's mental basis. Pro-surgical efforts of the 1960s should not be seen as a sign of acceptance of transsexuals. Rather, part of the only common ground that all doctors agreed upon was that they needed to combat transsexualism and reinforce the superiority of traditional sex and gender correlation. Their lack of consensus about the cause of transsexualism added to the controversy among doctors about how to "treat" the ambiguous condition.

Sex-reassignment surgery faced criticism from its earliest years because it was intended as a physical cure for what was considered a psychological problem. In the same 1949 article mentioned earlier, Dr. Cauldwell became one of the first to say that a transsexual "is mentally unhealthy and because of this the person desires to live as a member of the opposite sex"¹³. Few, if any, later doctors questioned the assumption that the desire for sex reassignment surgery must come from a distinct psychological root. Numerous psychoanalysts in the 1960s were outraged that surgery was being performed to fix a psychological issue. One, Dr. Meerloo, believed that surgeons performing surgery at their patients' requests were in "collaboration with psychosis"; complying with the

¹³ D.O. Cauldwell, "Psychopathia Transexualis," *Sexology* 16 (1949): page #s, accessed March 18, 2012, http://www.iiav.nl/eazines/web/ijt/97-03/numbers/symposion/cauldwell_02.htm.

demands of mentally disturbed patients¹⁴. Psychoanalysts like Meerloo tended to take the opposite position to Benjamin, who saw SRS as a way to ease the mental anguish of transsexuals. All sides were in agreement that transsexualism was a psychological condition. While Benjamin decided that doctors must treat the body to make the patient most comfortable, psychoanalysts took issue with allowing psychologically abnormal people to choose their own treatment.

In the 1980s, sociologists began analyzing medical research about transsexualism and contesting its status as a medical condition. In 1982, sociologists Dwight B. Billings and Thomas Urban published a criticism of sex-reassignment surgery arguing that transsexualism was a socially and technologically created disease, not one based in medical objectivity. In their own words, "The legitimation, rationalization and commodification of sex-change operations have produced an identity category - transsexual - for a diverse group of sexual deviants and victims of severe gender role distress"¹⁵. Billings and Urban claimed that the category 'transsexual' was a new social construct one based on the surgical option of SRS that had been unavailable before its development in the United States. Because all people who desired sex reassignment surgery were labeled transsexual, Billings and Urban found the

¹⁴ Meerloo, Joost. 1976. "Change of Sex and Collaboration with the Psychosis" *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 124: 263-264. As quoted in Dwight B. Billings and Thomas Urban, "The Socio-Medical Construction of Transsexualism: An Interpretation and Critique," *Social Problems* 29, no. 3 (February 1982): 269, accessed February 28, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/800159>

¹⁵ Dwight B. Billings and Thomas Urban, "The Socio-Medical Construction of Transsexualism: An Interpretation and Critique," *Social Problems* 29, no. 3 (February 1982): 266, accessed February 28, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/800159>

category an umbrella term that did not properly differentiate transsexualism from other conditions that could lead to a desire for surgery. They also took issue with the fact that the diagnosis of transsexualism was often made based on what kind of treatment a person desired, which was not true for any other medical disease or disorder¹⁶.

Other influential critics also doubted the medical legitimacy of transsexualism, and this debate was necessary in order for transsexualism to later be seriously analyzed from a societal perspective. In 1978, Edward Sagarin was one of many to declare that transsexualism itself was not a distinct condition from homosexuality and transvestism, which directly opposed Harry Benjamin's earlier publications¹⁷. Critics like Sagarin were among the first to consider gender identity clinics and the relative popularity of sex-reassignment surgery might encourage a broad sample of gender-confused individuals to ask for surgery. In 1992, more than 10 years later, Bernice Hausman argued that previous doctors set the precedent that desire for surgery was the primary criteria of transsexualism, leading patients to be diagnosed solely on the basis of their desire¹⁸. Furthermore, Hausman stressed that medical technology was a factor as well: desire for sex change surgery would not have been a primary component of transsexualism had the technology not been developed (with transsexuals as the

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Richard Ekins and Dave King, eds. *Blending Genders: Social Aspects of Cross-dressing and Sex-changing* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 76. From Sagarin, E. (1978) 'Transsexualism: Legitimation, Amplification and Exploitation of Deviance by Scientists and Mass Media', in C. Winick (ed.) *Deviance and Mass Media*, Beverly Hills: Sage.

¹⁸ Bernice L. Hausman, "Demanding Subjectivity: Transsexualism, Medicine, and the Technologies of Gender," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 3, no. 2 (October 1992): 282, accessed March 18, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3704058>

target audience in mind)¹⁹. Universally accepted medical diseases are rarely questioned by nonmedical figures, and transsexualism surely would not have received the same attention from social scientists if sex-reassignment surgery was broadly accepted. It was only because of criticism of the earliest advocates' medical procedures that analysis could be done on the possible negative societal effects of sex reassignment surgery.

In later years, generally the 1980s and 1990s, professionals outside of the medical realm began to criticize SRS from a societal perspective rather than a strictly medical one. For example, the 1996 book Blending Genders explained the findings of research from as early as 1973, which revealed that in order to receive the surgery they desired, candidates for male-to-female sex reassignment surgery were expected to act ultra-feminine²⁰. While on the surface these findings seem to suggest a purely medical criticism of flawed patient screening, this knowledge allowed the authors to make a broader point about gender. They argued that in many gender identity clinics, male-to-female surgery patients were not allowed to discover what kind of a woman they want to be, and were trained to act in a way that promoted the existing gender role stereotypes²¹. Rather than broadening gender norms, the diagnosis of transsexualism seemed to cast individuals into rigid, stereotypical gender roles. While the status of being transsexual implied an escape from social expectations of gender, this research

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Anne Bolin, *In Search of Eve* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1988), 106-108.

²¹ Ibid.

and analysis revealed that most preoperative transsexuals were conditioned by their doctors into especially tight gender roles of their new genders.

Awareness and spread of transsexualism also fostered criticism outside of the medical and sociological fields. Feminist Janice G. Raymond spoke out extremely strongly against transsexualism and SRS²². Some of Raymond's initial points echoed earlier research about the reinforcement of gender stereotypes in diagnosis of transsexuals. In fact, Raymond directly criticized Harry Benjamin's pre-surgery evaluations of male-to-female patients because they were based on his subjective "belief that a reasonably successful 'woman' could result"²³. Raymond argued that this method had no medical basis and only allowed for a certain stereotypically feminine patient to receive surgery. However, the most controversial aspect of Raymond's book was her thesis that transsexualism was both a product and an engine of the "patriarchal hegemony" and that "the problem of transsexualism would be best served by morally mandating it out of existence"²⁴. Raymond's work represented a backlash against SRS sought to deny the right of individuals who identified as transsexual to surgically alter their bodies. However, aside from the specifics of her argument, it is important to recognize the source of her opposition. Raymond's anger towards transsexual

²² In the early 2000s, Raymond's work was labeled transphobic. Rose, Katrina C. (2004) "The Man Who Would be Janice Raymond." *Transgender Tapestry* 104, Winter 2004; Julia Serano (2007) *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*, pp. 233-234; Namaste, Viviane K. (2000) *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People*, pp. 33-34.; Hayes, Cressida J., 2003, "Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory: The Case of Transgender," in *Signs* 28(4):1093-1120.

²³ Janice G. Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (1979; repr., New York: Teachers College Press, 1994), 92.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 178.

advocates was based on social rather than medical concerns and furthered debate about transsexualism on a societal level. To Raymond, all transsexuals and advocates of transsexuals denied women the opportunity for equality with men. As a feminist, Raymond was resentful that a person could be labeled “female” or would be considered a woman based on a purely physical sex change operation.

The outrage over reinforcing traditional gender roles encouraged a broader dialogue among intellectuals about non-binary definitions of gender and sex. From the end of the 1980s through the 1990s, multiple books were published that questioned previously assumed ideas of sex and gender. The 1998 book In Search of Eve acknowledged in its conclusion that transsexualism prevented the existing dichotomous view of gender from continuing, because a person’s genitalia could no longer be thought to determine their social categorization²⁵. People had to look more closely into distinguishing between sex & gender as a result of transsexualism because the defining characteristic of transsexualism was that a person’s biological sex did not match his or her self-conception of gender. Additionally, books like Third Gender, Third Sex questioned the strict lines of gender & sex drawn in American society. This 1994 book detailed the history, from as far back as Byzantine society, of non-conforming individuals and communities that did not fit exactly into 20th century boxes of male and female²⁶.

²⁵ Currently, sex is defined as a person’s chromosomal and biological status while gender is defined as a person’s social categorization "Gender, Women & Health: What do we Mean by 'Sex' and 'Gender'?" World Health Organization, accessed April 22, 2012, last modified 2012, <http://www.who.int/gender/whatisgender/en/>.

²⁶ Gilbert Herdt, ed. *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History* (New York: Zone Books, 1994).

These works demonstrate an intellectual trend towards the careful analysis and discussion of gender and sex throughout the 1990s, which was fueled by the analysis of transsexualism.

Both sides of the controversy over sex reassignment surgery were crucial in developing a broader dialogue about gender and sex. Each endorsement or condemnation was influenced by its predecessor; such as Hausman's article which directly analyzed the effects of Harry Benjamin's earlier diagnostic work. As social criticism of transsexualism mounted, this dialogue was pushed outside of the medical realm. For example, Janice Raymond's The Transsexual Empire specifically targeted a male-to-female transsexual for working at an all female music collective, and this very same woman, Sandy Stone, responded 10 years later with "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto"²⁷. Raymond's work found its audience among feminists, sometimes thought of as extreme, while Stone was widely regarded among transsexuals and transsexual advocates. Stone's response demonstrated a rise in dialogue and transsexual pride outside of the intellectual community, which directly led into social movements in the 1990s.

The development of the transgender identity is perhaps the most apparent product of transsexualism because it signified that the boundaries of sex and gender would be pushed farther and farther over time following the rise of

²⁷ Sandy Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto," in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 221.

transsexualism. In the 1990s, a community of non-gender conforming individuals began labeling themselves as “transgender”. This group wanted to be recognized and respected as the opposite gender of their biological sex without sex reassignment surgery²⁸. The emergence of “transgender” as an identity stemmed from both the advocacy of a core of doctors beginning in the 1950s that recognized ‘transsexual’ as a valid identity and the spirited public debate in the 1980s over the nature of gender and sex, which largely asserted that not all individuals fit into the box of either male, female or transsexual. Just as transsexuals were not satisfied with the two existing gender categories, transgendered people were not content to live in an uncomfortable gender role or to receive surgery they did not actually want. Indeed this trend has continued today; new gender identities such as pangender and genderfluid are not fully known or respected by mainstream America, but individuals have more freedom to define their genders due to the legacy of transsexuals who first broadened the gendered boxes of masculine and feminine.

**TRANSGENDER
RIGHTS
ARE HUMAN RIGHTS**

²⁸ Gordene Olga Mackenzie, *Transgender Nation* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994), 3.

"It's OK"

A poem by Freddie P.

[NOTE: Freddie wrote this poem when he was in Middle School.]

It's OK that you're gay.

Just because you may
live your life in a different way;
don't listen when some say
that it's immoral or fey.

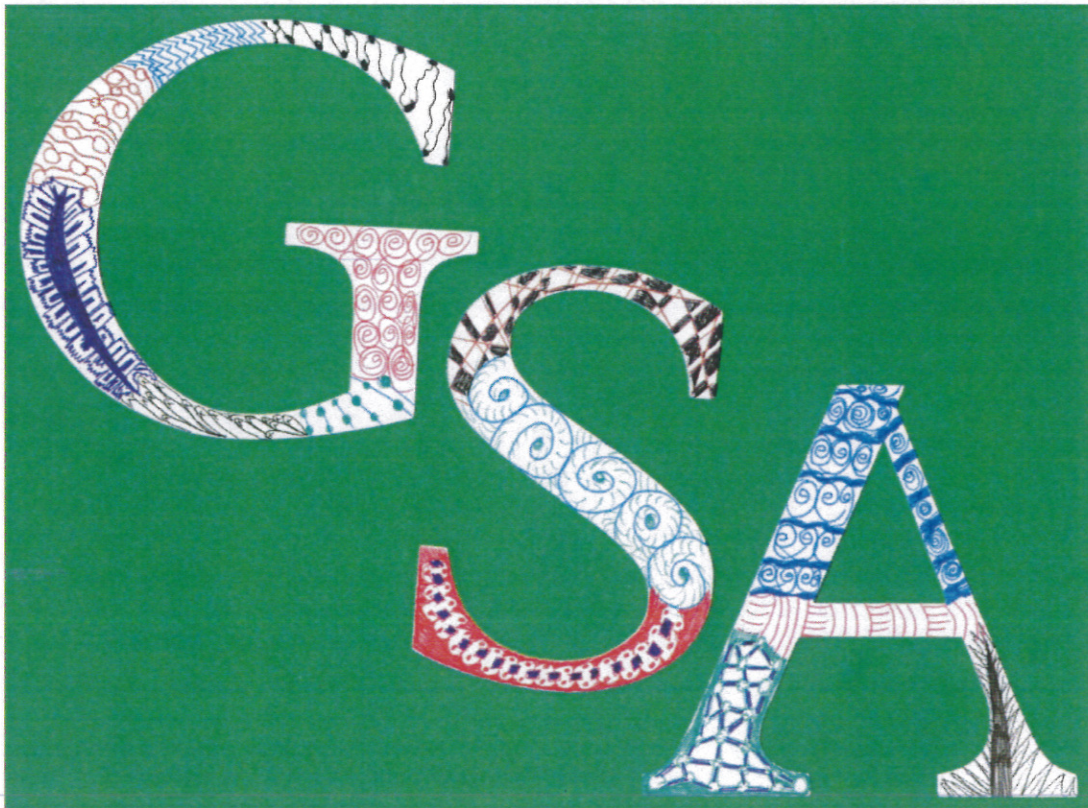
They may use their religion to keep you at bay,
but, remember that area's still gray.

And it's OK to delay
informing those who you fear might not stay.
but how many loved ones would actually sway?
And you know that your true friends won't go astray,
and if they do that friendship might decay, but if they
can't accept you
who needs them anyway?
They'll wish they had accepted someday.

So just remember that it's OK,
and don't let other people give you dismay,
or leave you in a state of disarray.
Because there is only one person who you should obey -
that's you, as only you can portray
yourself.

So jump and say hooray
and be proud that you're gay!





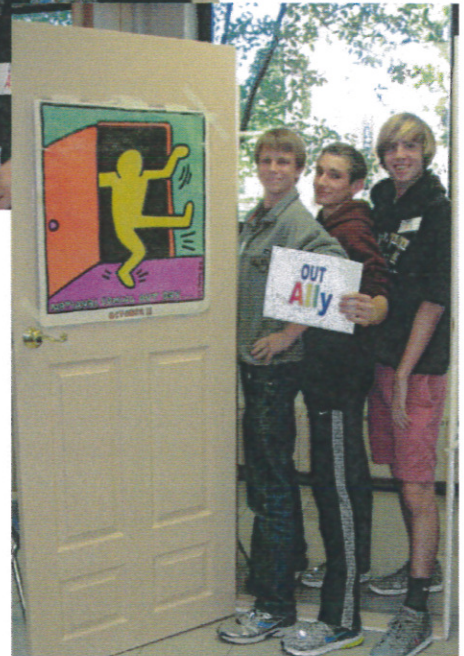
GSA Zentangle by Miss Mazullo

This year in GSA, I learned...

- ...there is a lovely place to come every Friday morning
- ...all about different sexual orientations
- ...that there is a difference between sexual orientation and behavior
- ...about transgender rights and stories of transgender people
- ...a lot about gayness
- ...all about LGBTQ politics
- ...about the gay community and social media
- ...generally how to be more open-minded
- ...to be comfortable with myself
- ...what LGBTQAI means
- ...that tiaras look fabulous!

Some of Our Favorite GSA Events from this Year

National Coming Out Day!



The AIDS Timeline Comes to Campus for World AIDS Day



AIDS Fund Staff



GSA and Drama present "8"



YOU'RE INVITED!



Friends' Central Drama Department and Gay-Straight Alliance invite you to Dustin Lance Black's *8*, a play about marriage equality.

Sunday, February 10, 2013,
2:00pm Shallcross Hall (1101 City Avenue, Wynnewood, PA 19096)

Admission is FREE. Donations to support The American Foundation for Equal Rights will be gratefully accepted.

The play will be followed by a brief Q&A

Refreshments and social time to follow the Q&A in the Shallcross Dining Hall.

ABOUT THE PLAY:

A play by Academy-award winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black (*Milk*, *J. Edgar*), *8* demystifies the debate around marriage equality by chronicling the trial of *Perry v. Schwarzenegger* (now *Hollingsworth v. Perry*).

Learn about the historical context of marriage from expert testimony. See the human cost of discrimination. Uncover the arguments used to justify bans on marriage for gay and lesbian couples. Using the actual court transcripts from the landmark federal trial of California's Prop. 8 and first-hand interviews, and with additional material created exclusively for the FCS production, *8* shows both sides of the debate in an unforgettable play.

Love is
gender-blind.
Support marriage
equality for all.



GSA and Harry Potter Club YULE BALL!



Final Meeting with our Seniors: Tiaras and Cake





HISTORY QUIZ: TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF LGBT HISTORY

Source: GLSEN, *Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gay*
Downloadable from: http://www.pflagwestchester.org/History_Quiz.pdf

1. The word "homosexual" was coined in what year?
a. 545 B.C.E. b. 1745 C.E. c. 1869 C.E. d. 1938 C.E.
2. Which of the following empires was ruled for over two centuries by openly gay or lesbian emperors?
a. China b. India c. Greece
3. True or False: Jesus condemns homosexuality in the bible.
4. In what century did homosexual acts become illegal in Western Europe?
a. 13th century C.E. b. 1st century C.E. d. 19th century C.E.
5. In what nation did the first large-scale "gay rights movement" begin?
a. England b. France c. Germany d. The United States
6. In what year was the first public speech asking for gay rights made?
a. 1776 b. 1867 c. 1945 d. 1969
7. True or False: Gay concentration camp survivors were often re-imprisoned by German authorities after being liberated from the camps by allied forces after World War II.
8. True or False: American Indians discriminated against people who they perceived to be gay.
9. In what year was the first known person executed for their sexual orientation in North America?
a. 1492 b. 1566 c. 1778 d. 1869
10. In which of the following years was the first American soldier dismissed for being gay?
a. 1621 b. 1778 c. 1865 d. 1969
11. When was America's first "gay rights group" founded?
a. 1869 b. 1924 c. 1951 d. 1969

12. Which President made it illegal for the American government to employ homosexuals?
a. Washington b. Reagan c. Eisenhower d. Clinton
13. Name America's first lesbian rights organization.
14. Name the gay African-American man who organized the 1963 March on Washington where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous "I have a dream..." speech.
15. When was the first gay rights protest in Washington, DC?
a. 1924 b. 1953 c. 1965 d. 1979
16. Who was the first openly gay or lesbian American elected to state political office in the United States?
a. Roberta Achtenberg b. Barney Frank c. Harvey Milk d. Elaine Noble
17. Two-part question:
A. What state was the first to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation?
B. In what year?
18. Name the 2003 Supreme Court decision which overturned all existing sodomy laws in the United States.
19. Name the direct-action group whose civil disobedience demonstrations are credited with getting the government to take action on the AIDS epidemic:
20. Which of the following countries federal governments allow gay people to marry?
a. Australia b. Denmark d. the United States

(Answers on the next page)



ANSWERS:

Give yourself 1 point for each correct answer; or 1/2 point for each part of a two part question.

1. (1869) Austrian-born Karl-Maria Kertbeny invented this term. Prior to this date, people may have committed homosexual "acts" but they were not labeled "homosexuals" (a particular group whose identity derives from that act).
2. (CHINA) In China during the Han dynasty many emperors were openly gay or bisexual. The Chinese term for homosexuality, "duanxiu," means "cut sleeve," referring to a famous story when an emperor cut off his sleeve rather than awaken his lover, who had fallen asleep on his arm.
3. (FALSE) Most passages, which are interpreted as condemning homosexuality, are found in the Old Testament, and derived from Hebraic tribal law; all of the few New Testament references are all in the book written by Paul, who was born decades after Jesus' crucifixion. No condemnations of homosexuality are found in any of the Gospels, or books that deal with the life of Jesus.
4. (THIRTEENTH CENTURY) Only in the late Middle Ages were homosexual acts made illegal in Western Europe. Some historians feel this was a reaction to the "black" or bubonic plague, which killed one-third of Europeans at that time. Terrified, people began looking for "scapegoats," and persecuted many minority groups, such as Jews and homosexuals, who were "different" and blamed for the disease.
5. (GERMANY) German activists began organizing in the 1860s and had formed an organization dedicated to advancing gay rights, which had over 100,000 members by the early twentieth century. Its petition drives for legal reform and was signed by such people as scientist Albert Einstein and writers Thomas Mann and Hermann Hesse.
6. (1867) Karl Heinrich Ulrichs, a German lawyer, delivered a speech before the Congress of German Jurists in Munich in 1867 when he called for the repeal of "paragraph 175," which made same-sex sexual activities illegal. He also founded the first gay magazine and lobbied for legalization of gay marriage before his death in 1895.
7. (TRUE) As violators of "paragraph 175" homosexuals were judged to be criminals. Since concentration camps were not considered jails, the liberated gays were often sent to civil jails after the war to serve their sentences.
8. (FALSE) Many traditional Native American tribes institutionalized gender systems that were not binary, but rather recognized three and sometimes four genders. The umbrella term Two-Spirit is used for people who did not identify with the gender typically associated with their body.
9. (1566) The Spanish executed a French priest for living with a Two-Spirit person.

10. (1778) Gotthold Enslin, a lieutenant, was dismissed at Valley Forge for having been caught in same sex sexual activity. From 1945-1993, over 100,000 Americans were dismissed from the armed forces for being gay.

11. (1924) The Chicago Society for Human Rights was America's first gay rights group, but it lasted for less than a year due to police and media harassment.

12. (EISENHOWER) In Executive Order 10450 in 1953, President Eisenhower bowed to the pressures of Senator McCarthy's "witch hunts," which claimed that not only Communists but also gays were betraying American secrets to the Russians. These laws were not repealed until 1975, and not until 1995 were gays allowed to receive federal security clearances.

13. (DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS) Founded in 1955 in San Francisco, this organization also published America's first lesbian magazine *The Ladder*.

14. (BAYARD RUSTIN) Rustin also taught King the non-violent civil disobedience techniques that made him famous.

15. (1965) Organized by Frank Kameny and The Mattachine Society, this picket of slightly more than a dozen people aimed to repeal McCarthy-era restrictions on the employment of gay people by the federal government.

16. (ELAINE NOBLE) An open lesbian, Noble was elected to the Massachusetts State House of Representatives in 1975.

17. A. (WISCONSIN)
B. (1982)

18. (LAWRENCE v TEXAS) In the 6–3 ruling, the Court struck down the sodomy law in Texas and, by extension, invalidated sodomy laws in thirteen other states, making same-sex sexual activity legal in every U.S. state and territory.

19. (ACT UP) The "AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power" was founded in New York in 1987, six years into the epidemic. At that point, President Reagan had yet to say the word "AIDS" in public, which killed 20,000 Americans during that time.

20. (DENMARK)

SCORING:

15-20 POINTS = "FABULOUS!" You really know your stuff!

10-14 POINTS = "FINE!" You know a lot but could brush up a bit. Hit that library!

6-9 POINTS = "FAIR." You really need to buy a LGBT history text and read it tonight.

0-5 POINTS = "FLUNK!" You've got a lot of work to do, but we'll help!



**We Want Your Queer Words:
Add your voice to this unique FCS archive!**

How to submit:

- ▼ Email submissions to avernacchio@friendscentral.org or to gsa@friendscentral.org
- ▼ Drop submissions into Ms. Ewen's or Mr. Vernacchio's mailbox in the FCC
- ▼ Give submissions to any GSA member

What to submit:

Any kind of writing— poetry, personal essay, fiction, nonfiction, or two-dimensional artwork.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- ▼ Something you wrote for a class that speaks to L.G.B.T.Q. issues
- ▼ Your perception of queer issues at FCS. Is it a welcoming and supportive community? Is it both LGBTQ-friendly and LGBTQ-safe? Is it too focused on sexual orientation?
- ▼ Coming out anecdotes (someone coming out to you or you coming out to someone else) or imagine what it would be like if a close friend or relative came out to you.
- ▼ Your role as a straight ally in our community. What's it like to be a straight person at a school that deals with queer issues the way we do?
- ▼ A short story, poem, etc. that speaks to queer issues, experiences, or sensibilities.
- ▼ Your experience or observations of what it's like to be queer at FCS, at home, in the world, etc.
- ▼ Words of advice or comfort for those who are questioning or in the closet.
- ▼ Anything you think would be good for our community to know about queer issues.

