

BROWNSTEIN BRINGS 'EM OUT

Our December '87 Get-Together was the most successful yet! Sixteen FTM's and 5 friends gathered to hear Dr. Michael Brownstein speak on female-to-male surgery. Applause burst out when Dr. Brownstein was thanked for being an exception to the rule of the rushed and too-busy, noncommunicative surgeon. He commented that it is not right that surgeons don't discuss their services with their patients, "because surgeons can go home at night, and not have to lay in bed wondering what's happening." His usual open and charming self, Dr. Brownstein described his techniques for mastectomy and genitoplasty to a very attentive audience and answered numerous questions. Copies of The Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Assn.'s "Standards of Care" were made available.

Get-Together #5 will be held Sunday, March 27, 1988 and will feature an "Old Timers Panel," giving us a chance to hear and learn from FTM's who made their changes long ago and live to tell it. In addition, copies of Harry Benjamin's The Transsexual Phenomenon will be given away in a drawing.

Have any ideas for a future Get-Together program? Should we invite an endocrinologist? a minister? a panel of girlfriends/wives? Let us know: contact Lou at Identifying Information Redacted, San Francisco Identifying Information Redacted.



VERA - A Film Review

Brazil, 1987. In Portuguese, with English subtitles.

Ana Nogueira won the Best Actress Award at the 1987 Berlin Film Festival for her role as Vera Bauer, and this film was lauded as "one of the most intriguing portraits of gender construction yet seen on the screen." But Vera seemed more like "One Month in the Life of a Female Thinking of Changing Her Sex." Too much time was spent on videos of rocket ships blasting off (maybe phallic symbols?) and on Bauer's irrelevant orphanage experiences, where she was not even considered "butch."

But, for showing "one month," the film was not far off-base: Vera is a portrait of a female-to-male. Revealing scenes show Bauer demanding to be called by her last name and confiding to her guardian her plans to go to America, "where it is possible" to change from female-to-male. Protected by boxer shorts and a not-very-effective binder, Bauer refuses to undress during love-

making, protesting to her girlfriend that she is a man. In one scene, Bauer is truly confused when admonished at work for wearing a man's suit and tie, asking if her suit was not "the right fashion," and pointing out that another male employee was not correctly dressed as he had no tie. Only once did she pass.

I guess all this is very overt and shocking to someone who has never considered the feelings of the female-to-male. But to someone struggling with it every day, Vera only teased and prompted the question, "Yeah, so? And then what happened?" We never find out.

REPORT ON SUPPORT GROUP

by Kevin [Information Redacted]

A small group of FTM's and MTF's attended an 8-week gender discussion group which began in early February. An attempt was made to keep a more or less equal number men and women. However, this proved more difficult than imagined. In general, the issues for transsexuals moving in opposite directions are completely different. Although it would seem that each could help the other with an array of experience in the desired gender direction, such was not the case. FTM's seemed uncomfortable discussing their issues in a mixed group, and expressed a feeling of superiority in terms of becoming "men."

Additionally, the MTF's seemed much more emotionally blocked/withdrawn, and less able to share feeling/intimacy with the kind of abandon genetic women enjoy.

I have concluded that FTM's benefit in a different way from group support than MTF's; therefore, although the group was certainly a useful and productive one, it seems unlikely that another mixed discussion group will be undertaken at this time.

Dear FTM,

I wanted to write since the female-to-male get-together in December to tell you how great I thought it was! It was really interesting to hear Dr. Brownstein, and fun to meet new people in the same situation as I am. My girlfriend was a little nervous about attending the get-together with me. She was afraid that girlfriends weren't welcome. I am glad that this was not the case at your get-together. I think she had a good time. We saw two FTM's who we had met previously, and made new friends as well.

Anyway, I was really looking forward to attending the get-together in March, because I really want to meet Steve Dain. Unfortunately I start my new job that day. Would you please send me a copy of your FTM Newsletter #3 since I cannot pick one up? Also, I regret missing out on the drawing for Harry Benjamin's book. Do you know where I can purchase a copy?

Thanks, an FTM

FTM CONTACT LIST

Are you making contacts with other FTM's at our Get-Togethers? Do you think we need an FTM contact list (address and/or phone numbers). Because our FTM mailing list is confidential, only those specifically requesting to be on the contact list would be included, and the list would be distributed only to other FTM's on the list. Tell Lou or Kevin if you wish to be on the contact list. Find the other FTM's in your area - you know they're there!

PROSTHETIC DEVICE

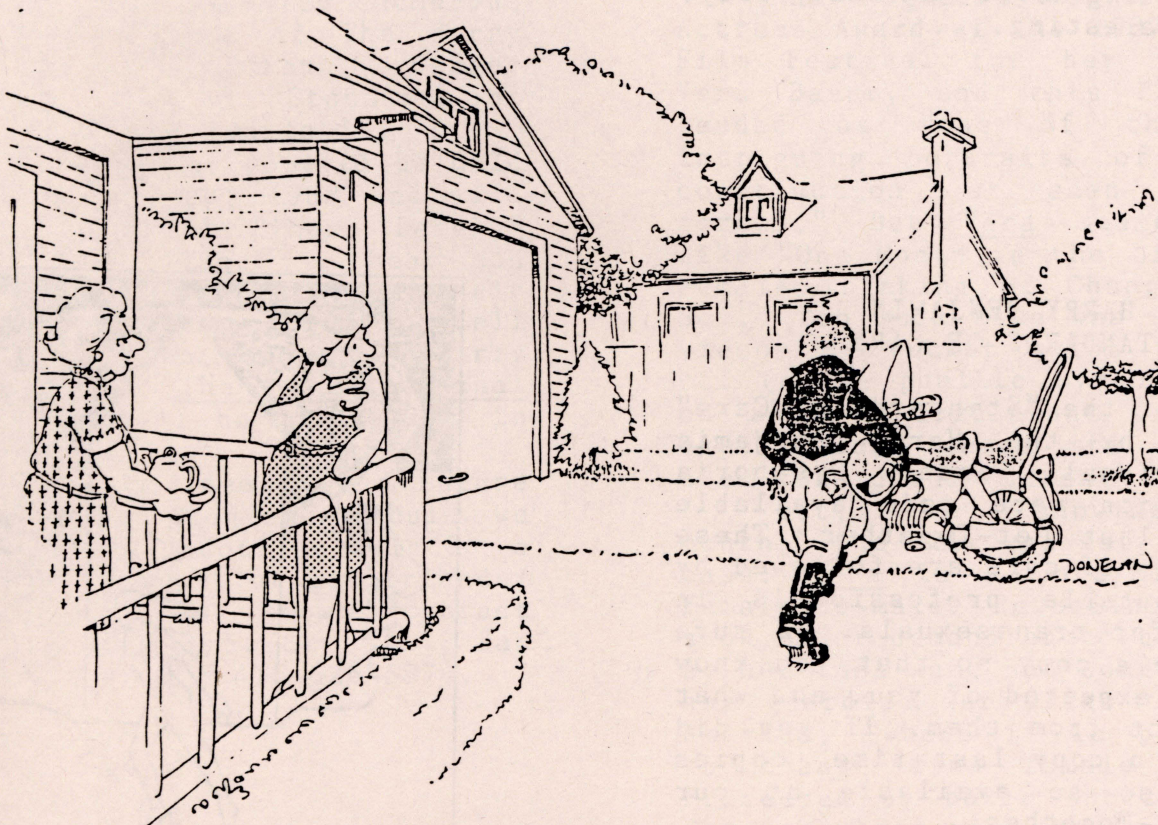
An engineer working on prosthetic devices met with 4 FTM's recently in Los Gatos. The meeting was organized by Millie Brown, in an effort to develop a new design for prostheses which could benefit FTM's. The basic idea involves a soft, pliable material in the shape of a phallus which attaches by suction to the clitoral base. Several of those present were actually examined by the engineer, and a mold made of each elongated clitoris. From there, more experimentation will be done in order to, hopefully, design a suction-type prosthesis which can be firmly held in place. Such a devise would be a useful addition, sexually, and even though nothing's perfect - every small improvement adds up.

METAMORPHOSIS Back Issues Available

Back issues of Metamorphosis, the magazine from Toronto for the female-to-male only, are available. Inquire at P.O. Box 1000, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Identifying Information Redacted.

HOW'D YOU PICK YOUR NAME?

A future issue of FTM will reveal how/where some of us got our names. Sometimes it ain't easy! Drop us a line--let us know how and where you came by your name. And you have a right to remain anonymous.



I said, "So, Nancy, when are you getting married?" And your daughter says to me, "Get with it, Aunt Sophie!" Get with what? I should get with something!

IF YOU HAVE...

...an interest in working on the FTM Newsletter

...one free evening or afternoon per month to meet in a small group and work on the Newsletter
...or almost no free time, but have a juicy idea for the Newsletter

Contact Kevin at [Identifying Information Redacted],
or write us at P.O. [Identifying Information Redacted],
San Francisco CA [Identifying Information Redacted]
Who knows? It could be fun!

FTM MUSIC VIDEO?

Have you seen the video of the song "Don't Tell Me The Time" by Martha Davis on MTV or your favorite music video program? Davis dresses in her boyfriend's clothes in private and caresses herself, but the camera shows her hand moving over a male body. Very interesting....

HARRY BENJAMIN "STANDARDS OF CARE"

Copies of the "Standards of Care" written by the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association were made available at our last Get-Together. These standards of care are followed by all reputable professionals in caring for transsexuals. Be sure you have a copy so that you know what is expected of you, and what to expect from them. If you did not get a copy last time, copies will also be available at our next Get-Together.

STUDY NEEDS FTM's

Why, you ask, are FTM's always in the minority, or entirely left out, of research on transsexuals? Here's our chance to participate. A study of transsexuals, their experiences and characteristics, needs more FTM input. You will be asked to complete a lengthy anonymous questionnaire & return it no later than April 30. If you can commit to returning the questionnaire, contact: S. Ruben, Dept. of Human Development and Family Life, Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045; 913-864-4950.

HELP A BROTHER!

Andy is looking for doctors in Sacramento or No. Calif. If you can help, please take a minute to contact him at P.O. [Identifying Information Redacted] Redway CA [Identifying Information Redacted].

