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**Minutes for Committee to Eliminate Homophobia and Heterosexism
December 14, 1995**

1. Meeting was convened at 12:05pm.
2. Attendance: Gary Burkholder, Bill Bartels, Holly Nichols, Carla Pickering, Marie Rudd, Gwendolyn A. Spencer, Andrew Winters, Jacque Lynne Washkwich.
3. Minutes for the December 1 meeting were approved.

4. Transgender Issue. Gary presented comments from Julie (a transgender URI student) concerning inclusion of transgender in the title. The first three paragraphs were read (this is a direct statement of her text): "I think that a lot of queer groups are on a bandwagon right now to change names to be more inclusive about issues that are very important, but many of the groups doing this really have no clue about these issues.

So I have mixed feelings about this. While it is a good idea to take a hard look at these issues, I fear that some groups are just changing the name just to say "look, we've done this" but not moving any further in terms of educating itself about transgender issues.

However, in the long run, none of this really matters - what a name change will do is to tell transgendered people that we are welcome to join the group and that it is there for us. This will, in turn, have the effect that when one of us joins we will feel entitled to have our issues addressed and the group will be forced to deal with these issues one way or another"

The text in its entirety will be made available at the next meeting

Next, Gwendolyn presented (I will do my best to capture the conversation between Gwendolyn and the committee. I apologize for any omissions, they are not intentional. Also, I don't use quotes. Unless otherwise noted, the comments presented are Gwendolyn's). She stated that the name change doesn't really matter. A group can embrace issues of transgender issues, but the name doesn't have to be reflective of this. There are pros and cons. The major "con" is that transgender is an issue of gender, not sexuality. Gwendolyn's response to this is that without gender, there would be no sexuality. There has been much discrimination against transgender people inside and outside of the gay community. It is a problem in San Francisco right now.

Transgender issues are the same as gay issues. Minnesota is the only state to include "transgender" in their civil rights bill. In Rhode Island, transgender people are not protected. RI removed this portion of the bill to help bolster its chances for passage. This issues are there, they are real, and they affect drag queens and kings, cross-dressers, and female impersonators. Transgender is perceived by a lot of people to be the same as gay. There is a fine line between gay and transgendered. In the past year, 2 known transgendered people have been killed. In Rhode Island, there has been only one, and that happened in late 1992 or 1993.

On experience at RI College: Gwendolyn was the only openly transgendered person at RIC. There were others, but they were not out. GLOBE (RIC's equivalent to the GLBA) tended to become exclusively gay and lesbian, at the exclusion of transgender

and even of bisexuals. For the most part, Gwendolyn said she didn't have a bad experience at RIC. She lost only one acquaintance. She became transgendered during her time at school, so professors knew her as both genders. She got no hate letters, and professors were generally good about it. She said that GLOBE couldn't handle the transgender issue. One male said: "Why do you want to be a woman? I like being a man." A female told her: "You have had male privilege, you are not like us."

Bill asked about lobbying by transgendered community for rights. Gwendolyn said that transgender makes up about 10% of the gay community, and there are about 1000 transgender people in RI, 100 or so she personally knows. Those who participate in organizations do so outside of the state, for fear of loss of job and family. People don't realize that transgender involvement in the gay civil rights movement was significant until the late 70's. They are always there at parades, demonstrations, etc. Female-to-male transsexual is more accepted than male-to-female transsexual: the first is considered a "step up" and the latter a "step down". People also don't realize that transgender men were the ones being beat up and put into paddy wagons at Stonewall, the macho men just looked on. The gay community, over time, began kicking out extremes, including transgender. This is when transgendered people began to organize and lobby more for themselves. Gwendolyn emphasized that there is room in the civil rights movement for everyone, we are all fighting for the same thing. In the March on Washington in 1993, there was a 40 person contingent. Transgender were not allowed to turn right into the mall. Gwendolyn overheard one of the marshalls state that "We don't want to confuse people". At Stonewall in NYC, initially, no transgender were allowed to march. Then, to allay criticism, it was decided that they could march, but without banners. When some transgendered legal people threatened the organizers, the transgender community was allowed to march with banners. In Texas, which is currently trying to pass civil rights legislation, the transgender community rallied, and forced the glb community to listen to their concerns. HRCF refused to include transgender inclusion in their statement. Transgender reps were not allowed time to testify. Gwendolyn felt that, on a national level, things are coming around, but it is slow, and she realizes that change is slow.

Carla commented that, even if we don't include "Transgender" in the title of the brochure, the Committee needs to look at the issue.

Bill commented about the tradeoff between the principle of equality and the practical politics involved in passing legislation. Gwendolyn acknowledged that the transgender issue tends to damage the agendas for civil rights legislation. In Rhode Island, 2 house reps told William Fitzpatrick and Frank Gashon: "If transgender wording is not excluded, the bill would be killed before it even gets to the floor". Gwendolyn is not happy about what happened, but understands why it did. She said that many are mistrustful of the Alliance because of what happened in the House during debate on the bill.

Andrew commented that transgender people are still targets of heterosexism and homophobia.

Gwendolyn stated that transsexuals are a small part of a larger transgender community.

Marie wanted to know how we should include transgender in our organizations. Gwendolyn made the analogy that transgender people are today where gay and lesbian people were in the 50's and 60's. They feel they have no voice, that they have no say in any of the issues. 90% of the gay community feels that transgendered people are fetishists. What we can offer is a place where transgender people can go and where they would feel welcome.

There was some brief discussion about how the GLBA and H&H committee could work together to educate ourselves in this issue.

5. It was decided that the decision for including "Transgender", as well as the issue concerning whether to include committee members as personal contacts in cases of homophobia, should be decided at the first meeting of the winter semester, when more people are there to engage in the debate. Gary will make all changes to the brochure with those two exceptions.

6. Jacque drafted a response letter to the Journal concerning the placement of an article on gay and lesbian teenagers between two articles on AIDS. She wondered if we as a committee wanted to submit the letter. Because of the attendance, we did not feel we could make a decision for the whole committee. Individuals interested will sign on the letter, and Jacque will mail it to the Journal, with copies to Gordon Smith and the Front Page editor.

7. Bill is going to look into getting a larger room.

8. The next meeting is January 19, 1995, 12:00.

9. Meeting was adjourned at 1:20pm.

Attendance 12/14/95

Hobby Nichols
Carla Pickering
Mavis Rudd
Gwendolyn A. Spencer (guest)
ANDREW VINSON
Zell Ball

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the GLBA) tended to becoi

1/15
Meeting convened @ 12:05

Minutes approved

3. Transgender Visitation did not make it (weather)

Andrew provided handouts on Transgender.

- Gwendlyn Spencer (Visitor)

- Gary read statement from Transgender person

~~Paragraph~~ The statement will be distributed next

Meaning

- Name changes don't really matter

- Embrace issues - Co-ordinator but doesn't see how hard to be

reflective of the

- Should have been changed

Con: Gender vs sexuality

But; w/o gender, you could have sexuality

Dec. made/outside gay community

Problem in St. now

Transgender Same as gay issues.

Minnesota only state incl. "T Man" in state prof law

RT: Transgender not protected (PT removed this fund)

1. Issues there, issues real

Affect: Drag queen, kys, cross dresser, etc. impersonate

Transgender perceived as being gay by a lot of people
There is a fine line between gay + transgender

Post 9/11, 2 XGends killed in Boston.
only 1 in RI, late 92-93.

Exp @ RI College

G. was only open transgender at RI.

There were others, but they weren't out.

Group became exclusive (G4).

For most part, didn't have too much trouble. Lots of
acquaintance, no hate note, professors were good about it

Globe couldn't handle it

Male: "Why do you want to be a woman, I like being a man"

Female: "You have had male privileges, you are not like us"

Probs - XG lobby for rights.

- XG ~ 15% of Gay Community

~ 1000 in RI

Knows 100 personally

Those who participate in orgs do so out of fear of
loss of job, family

transgender rights, Gay rights Movement up until late 70's
They are always there

If assume role of opposite gender, are you gay or transgender?
Female → male accepted more readily than male → female
in GLB community (constantly step up, one taking step down)

Stonewall: Transgender men the only ones being beat up &
thrown in wagons. "Macho men" just looked on

Transgender left when Gay community kicking out extremists
started working on their own

Proom in civil rights for everyone, we are fighting for the
same thing

History

1953 - March on Wash - 40 person contingent
transgender not allowed to participate in the march. Overheard
one say: "we don't want to confuse people"

Stonewall NO transgender will march at all
they can march, but will carry no banners
they can march w/ banners, after threatened legal action

per. trying to pass laws, Xgender ruled, OLB / Transgender forced to talk

HRCF refused to include Transgender inclusion.
16 reps weren't allowed time to testify

National level: They are comparing, but it's 52w

Carla: Even if we don't include it in the title, we need to look at the issue

Ball: Example of equality for all vs practical politics

Gene: Issue is, it damages agenda sometimes to include

TG

In RE: No XG person asked to testify

I in House of Rep told Will Fitzpatrick: If XG
wouldn't be excluded, ^{bill} would be killed before it even
gets a house floor. Not happy with what happened,
but understood why it was done

Many misunderstood full of Alliance because of this (what happened
in RE)

Andrew: ~~Reddy~~

XG still susceptible as targets for heterosexism & homophobia

Transsex small community vs Transgender community

^{more} College Students: How do you feel we should include this now?
Given XG now where gay people were in the 50's-60's
XG don't feel they have say in anything, only voice in
issues

How should we as a committee deal with XG community?

Given: 90% perception of gay community: XG are fetish
people

What can we offer? Some place to go when there are
Alber, whether or where they would feel welcome

Might get bigger room

Brochure → Decide Post meeting, Transgender
Contracts.

Calgary-b

Dec 1995 06:37:57 -0400 (EDT)
DRYCAS.CLUB.CC.CMU.EDU (Song Weaver)
BYU101@URIACC.URI.EDU>

they changed it! Is there something I could read for you? Any
would be great for this discussion. Thanks (((: Gary

Well, here's my feelings:

I think that a lot of queer groups are on a bandwagon right now to
change names to be more inclusive about issues that are very important, but
many of the groups doing this really have no clue about these issues.

So I have mixed feelings about this. While it's a good idea to
take a hard look at these issues, I fear that some groups are just changing
the name just to say "look, we've done this" but not moving any further in
terms of educating itself about transgender issues.

However, in the long run, none of this really matters-- what a name
change will do is to tell transgendered people that we are welcome to join
the group and that it is there for us. This will, in turn, have the effect
that when one of us joins we will feel entitled to have our issues addressed
and the group will be forced to deal with these issues one way or another.

So, basically, I think it s a good idea to change the name,
regardless of what else happens. However, you should all be prepared for
the fact that other changes might follow. This more or less obligates you
to make sure that you include at least one speaker/workshop on transgender
issues when you have a weekend-long forum. It also means you should
occasionally have in-group discussions about gender issues. I'd be glad to
help facilitate or arrange such a discussion sometime in the spring term if
people are interested-- I've been lecturing on gender issues since '93 and
educating myself on them since October of 1990, when I first came out to
myself about my transsexualism.

Oh, as a side note: This is by no means uncontroversial in the
transsexual community. While some transsexuals regard themselves as queer
or radical sex activists, a good many just want to fold themselves into the
mainstream of society after their operations. This isn't at all unlike the
separation between groups such as queer nation and the assimilationists in
the gay rights movement in the late 80's/early 90's. Obviously, the
assimilationist transsexuals do not particularly care for the idea of TG
issues being included in queer groups. But I don't personally think that
should be a problem. People who feel that way would never come to your
group to begin with. The name change isn't for them. It's for those of us
who do feel marginalized, and for yourselves as well. There's a lot that
various queer communities could learn from one another and we devote a lot
of energy towards infighting. But that's just part of life-- I'm just
thrilled that we finally are large enough to no longer -be- the fringe
group, but instead to -have- fringe groups of our own.

--Julie

Julie@drycas.club.cc.cmu.edu http://drycas.club.cc.cmu.edu/~julie/

I am Perot of Borg, you see? Y'all are gonna be assimilated, you see? You
see, it's like this: I'm that giant vacuum cleaner and you're just that
teensy weensy speck of dust. So y'all are gonna hear that great big
sucking sound and then that'll be it. You'll be gone. Finito. Sayonara..