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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"

would this be true of URI group?

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

after 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 the recent Stonewall commemoration 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. *subcommittee?*

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 happen 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. *This is for GLBAs to decide though.*

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 teenages 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 for our next meeting.

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

9. Meeting was adjourned at 1:20pm.