Transforming Practice: Transgender Health and Well-Being

Lisa Stewart Women’s Health Center
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Visioning Transgender Justice

- Social Justice Issue
- Civil Rights Issue
- Human Rights Issue
- Medical Rights Issue
Terminology

- Sex: Anatomical Male, Female, Intersex
- Gender: Masculine, Feminine, Androgynous
Terminology

- Gender Identity: One’s Internal Sense of Being Male, Female, or Other
- Gender Role: Socially Proscribed Behaviors for Being Male, Female, or Androgynous
Terminology

- Gender Dysphoria: Persistent Distress with One’s Current Sexual Characteristics or Ascribed Gender Role

- Gender Incongruence: Difference between One’s Anatomical Sex and Gender Identity
Terminology

- Transgender
- Gender Queer
- Cisgender
- Transgenderphobia (Transphobia)
Terminology

- Transition: Processes Related to Aligning One’s Physical Characteristics with One’s Gender Identity. Can Include Hormone Therapy, Sexual (Gender) Reassignment Surgery (SRS)
Transsexual or Transgender?

- Transsexual
- Transgender
Prevalence

- No Reliable Research
- Estimates: 1-3% of Population Experience Gender Dysphoria
Sexual Orientation

- To whom one is sexually/physically attracted; with whom one wishes to engage in sexual and/or romantic relationships
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Asexual
- Queer
Sexual Orientation

- All Transgender Individuals have Sexual Orientations
- Not All Transgender People are Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual
Sex, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity

Sex

Sexual Orientation

Gender Identity
Intersex/Disorders of Sexual Development (DSD)

- Individuals born with external genitalia, chromosomes, or internal reproductive systems that are variations from what is considered usual for male or female infants

- Chromosomal and Non-chromosomal
Psychopathologizing Transgender Issues

- DSM III; DSM IV-TR; DSM 5
- Gender Identity Disorder in Children and Adolescents
- Gender Identity Disorder in Adults
DSM IV-TR to DSM 5

- Gender Dysphoria
Basis of Anti-Transgender Ideology

- Androcentrism (Sexism; Misogyny)
- Gender Polarity (Binary)
- Biological Determinism
- Race; Socioeconomic Status
Critiques of Gender Identity Disorder

- Gender Madness in American Psychiatry
  - Kelly Winter, Ph.D.

- GID Reform Advocates: www.gidreform.org

- International Foundation for Gender Education: www.ifge.org
10 Specific Issues with Gender Identity Disorder

- Lacked Clarity on Dimensions of Gender Dysphoria
- Stigmatized Behavior that is Seen as Normal In Cisgendered People
- Suggested That Gender Identity was Disordered
Risks for Transgender People Living in Transphobic Environments

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-harm
- Suicide
- Substance Abuse
- HIV/AIDS

- Subject To:
  - Violence
  - Reparative Therapies
    - Children
Strengths/Protective Factors

- Resilience
- Endurance
- Perseverance
- Wellness/Wholeness Orientation
TRANSforming Alternatives to Psychiatric Illness Model

- Wellness Model
- Biopsychosocial Model
Person-centered Trans-Affirming Interdisciplinary Team Approach

- Medical Professionals
- Psychology Professionals
- Social Work Professionals
- Gender Specialists
Bio-psycho-social Perspective

- Biological Perspective
  - Medical assessment/evaluation
Bio-psycho-social Perspective

- Psychological Assessment
  - Gender Identity Profile
  - Effects of Transphobia
  - Other Psychological/Emotional Issues
Bio-psycho-social Perspective

Bio-psycho-social Perspective


- Clinical Assessment for Determining Client Readiness for Gender Transition
Bio-psycho-social Perspective

- Social/Social Work Assessment
  - Social Environment Supports
  - Barriers to services
Developmental Perspective

- Children and Gender Identity
- Adolescents and Gender Identity
- Younger Adults and Gender Identity
- Older Adults and Gender Identity
Children and Gender Identity

- Natural Fluidity
- Parents’ Fears
Adolescents and Gender Identity

- Exploring Identities
- Puberty/Hormonal/Sexual Changes
- Social Development Challenges
Younger Adults and Gender Identity

- Gender Identity Still Fluid, but Identity Formation More Solid
- Gender Fluidity Not Pathological
Older Adults and Gender Identity

- Freedom to Explore Gender Identity Now Possible
- Other Developmental Tasks Accomplished
TRANSforming Your Practice

- Self-assessment: Your Gender Identity
- Who, ME???
- Effects of Transphobia
How Can Health Professionals Respond?

- Create a Non-judgmental Environment
- Mental Health Assessment and Evaluation
- Medical And Surgical Management
- Link to Community-based Support Services
Creating a Non-judgmental, Welcoming Environment

- Have Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Materials on View

- Have LGBT Affirming Forms (Miller and Weingarten)

- Have LGBT Affirming Trained Staff
Competent Mental Health Assessment and Evaluation

- Gender Specialists
Medical And Surgical Management

- Nurses and Nurse Practitioners Primary Healthcare Providers
- Form Team with Transgender Affirming Medical Professionals
Link to Community-based Support Services

- Know Where and to Whom to Refer
- Maine Transnet
Educate, Learn, Educate

- Lack of Knowledge is Greatest Barrier to Serving Transgender People
- Knowledge is Available
- Transgender People Should Not Be Primary Educators
How Can Health Professionals Respond to Trans People?

- Facilitate Self-exploration

- Assist in Coming Out Process

- Assist in Transition
  - Refer to Competent Medical Personnel
  - Write Letters of Recommendation if Required
Ethical Framework for Working with Transgender People

- National Assoc. of Social Workers (NASW) Policy Statement
- American Nurses Association
- American Psychological Association
- American Psychiatric Association
- American Counseling Association
Practice Guidelines

- American Counseling Association: “Competencies for Working with Transgender Clients”
- National Association of Social Workers
- American Psychological Association
Transitioning Guidelines

- World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH)
  - The Henry Benjamin Standards of Care
Have to Have

- Transgender Care: Israel and Traver
- Transgender Emergence: Arlene Istar Lev
- Social Services for Transgender Youth: Gerald Mallon
- Fenway Guide to LGBT Health
Have to Have

- *Sissies and Tomboys: Gender Nonconformity and Homosexual Childhood*. Matthew Rottnick (Ed).

- *The Transgender Child*. Brill and Pepper

- *101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks, and Other Outlaws* Kate Bronstein
Resources

- Maine Transnet [www.mainetransnet.org](http://www.mainetransnet.org)
- TransCare Collaborative
- Outright
- American Boyz
Resources

- Maine Human Rights Commission
- Maine Transnet
- GLAD
- Equality Maine
Resources for Children

- Dr. Jerry Olshan, Children’s Gender Clinic, Maine Medical Center
- Gender Management Services (GEMS) Boston Children’s Hospital
- Trans Youth Equality Foundation
  - www.transyouthequality.org
Recent Positive Events

- New Efforts to Establish Transgender Medical Expenses as Coverable by Insurance
- Maine Supreme Court Decision: Transgender Children Have Legal Right to Use Facilities of Their Choice
- Recognition of Tax Deductible Medical Expenses Related to Transition
Dedication

- Nicole Maines and her Family
- To Transgender Individuals Everywhere Who Have Suffered Because of Misinformed and Inappropriate Mental Health Treatment
Presenter Information

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