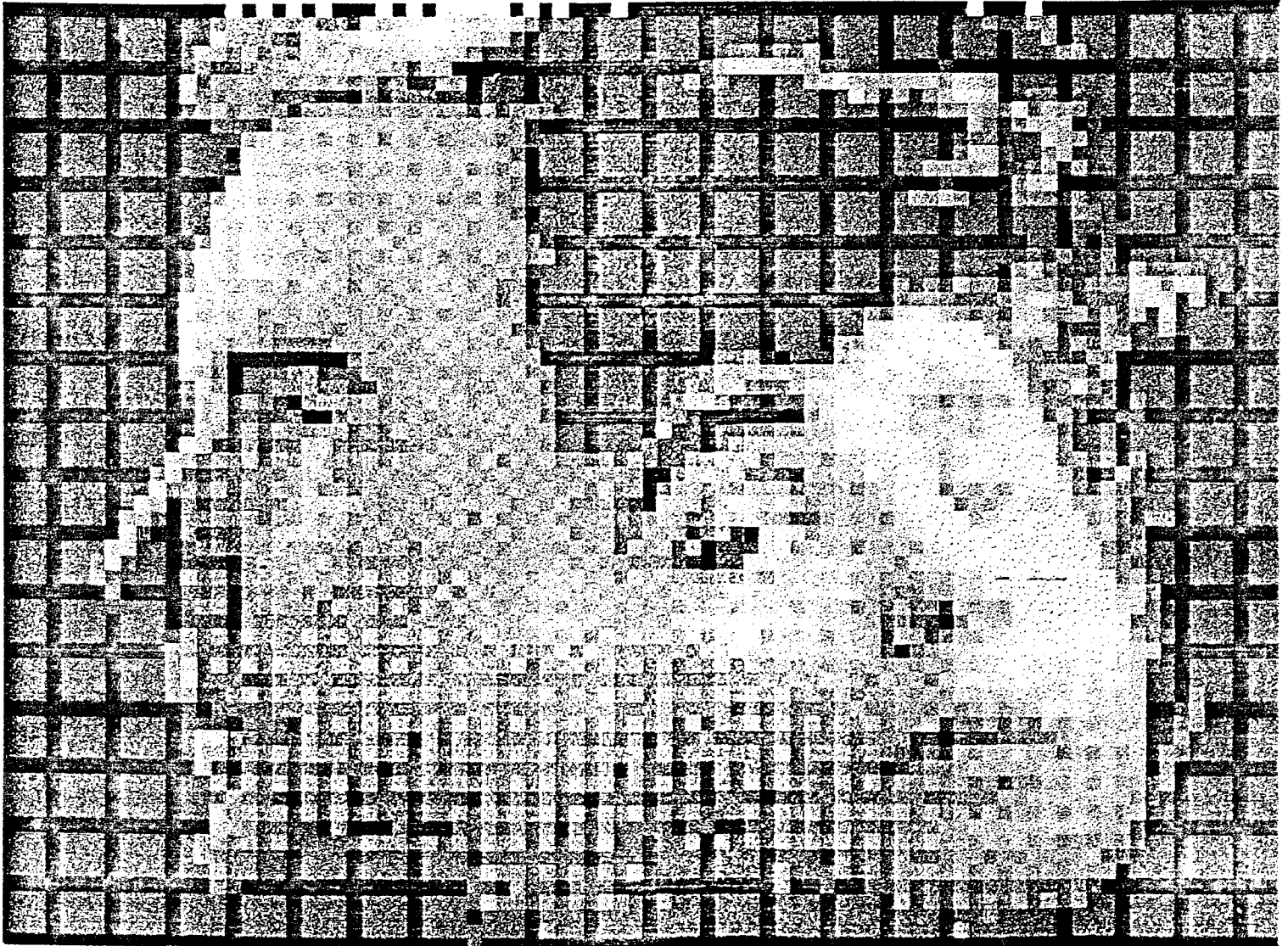


Out of darkness into the light

InSight

A publication of the Montgomery Medical & Psychological Institute

Fall 1990



T*his Edition: Transition Issues*
Standards of care - an update
Voice Modification Surgery
and more . . .

group. Congratulations: April E., April L., Stepheni, Margaux, Kristine, Leslie, Tommi, and John. By the way John, congrats for receiving your draft card! J.D. completed his final surgery-congratulations, guy! Lastly, on the congratulations list I would like to share my good news. I was also accepted for sex reassignment by Doctor Seghers in January of 1991. so goodly for me!!

I want everyone to know that I am available to chat on the phone on Thursday evenings now that I am answering the support group "hot-line". Anyone wanting to share ideas or just talk, please call me on that night using the Institute telephone number, (404) 603-9426.

Finally I would like to thank everyone in the group for helping me through my "up and down" times with my family these past few months. I am happy to report that during the second week of October, I spent two whole days with my parents and had a really good time. I'm finally starting to feel like they may actually be able to accept me as a woman. I am working on an article for the newsletter about my trip from point A to the present and how I went about writing Doctor Seghers and what he requires before he will accept you for surgery.

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the Christmas party in December. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE.....NO ONE BRING SCARVES OR PANTIES. Until then....Be good! I love you all!!! ☺☺

Send your request for ON PASSING to :

MM&PI
c/o Leslie
P.O. Box 33311
Decatur, Georgia 30033

From the desk of Dallas

On the weekend of 11 August, representatives from the Montgomery Institute met with representatives of I.F.G.E. and of gender groups throughout the Southeast at the Holiday Inn on Monroe Drive in Atlanta. The purpose of the meeting was to "come together," and that is indeed what happened. In their column, Lynn and Jerry discuss the importance and outcome of the meeting.

The theme of this issue of Insight is "Transition." We have tried to point out the physical and behavioral obstacles that transsexual persons must overcome; to make the reader aware of the generally accepted standards and procedures which have been formulated to ease transition (safeguarding both consumers and providers of services); and to highlight problems that transsexual persons may face, with a special eye toward problems that are caused by ignoring or disregarding those standards and procedures.

I cannot stress enough the importance of having support and objective feedback during the transition process. Friends, family, and lovers are not enough: the input of therapists, physicians, and support groups is paramount in keeping transsexual persons on a productive track. Of course, the knowledge and opinions of others are without value to someone who will not hear.

If I have learned anything in my year as director, it is that transsexual persons should be good consumers—but often are not. Transsexual people tend to face the reality of their inner selves through a haze of doubt, guilt, insecurity, and ignorance; this is compounded by the apathy, distrust, prejudice, and ignorance of the general public—and, unfortunately, sometimes of service providers. Often, transsexual persons stew in their own juices until they can stand it no longer, and then act in a desperate frenzy. To say this is self-destructive would be an understatement. Transsexual people should plan for transition just as for any other major life change—education, career, or marriage. They should not "closet" themselves for years and then expect to blossom overnight. Nor should they stop in mid-transition, accepting deviant lifestyles because they have found some acceptance as she-males, drag queens, or street hustlers. Unfortunately, the haphazard and slipshod manners and lifestyles of many transsexual persons lead them into continual difficulty throughout the transition process, and eventually land them in the gender twilight zone.

Successful feminization or masculinization is possible, and with planning and perhaps some luck, can be accomplished with minimal disruption and anguish. There are, unfortunately, myriad ways to foul up—and the consequences are maladjustment, unhappiness, disfigurement, disability, and even death.

The mistakes made by some transsexual people are legion. I worry about those who have sent large amounts of money through the mails to receive illegal hormones; who have prematurely dismantled their lives—before there was any reasonable chance of passing in the gender of choice—leaving them with inadequate support systems; who have tried to transition or even have surgery before beginning electrolysis; who needlessly reveal their transsexual status at an early stage; who have transitioned before hormones and electrolysis have made them passable; who have had trouble giving up their transsexual status for that of a "real" man or woman, ending up in gender limbo; who have expected hormones (or surgery) to turn them into men or women overnight; who have been "pumped" with illegal silicone until they look like caricatures of women; who have taken inappropriate dosages of hormones or who have taken hormones in inappropriate ways; who have denied they needed therapy (yet who obviously did); who have come on great guns, and then disappeared into the closet. Others have calmly and methodically gone about the business of turning themselves into men and women. I have no doubt that the latter individuals will make it. I worry about the others. ☺☺

Call for papers

We are currently in the process of expanding our editorial base and are now accepting materials of interest to transsexuals. These include professional & non-professional works, bios, and book reviews. To submit a manuscript please call or write:

The logo for the journal "Insight" features the word "Insight" in a stylized, serif font. Above the letter "i" in "Insight", there is a small, dark rectangular box containing the text "Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter 1991" in a very small font.

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