

February 2019

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Crossport Schedule of Events

The Monthly Schedule of Events for Crossport for February and March are as follows:

- First Friday Karaoke, Fri. Feb 1, 9:00PM Tostados
 January Board meeting, Tue. Feb 5, 7PM Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church
 Second Saturday, Sat. Feb 9, 7:00 PM Boswell's
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Feb 11, 7:30PM, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church
 Thursday Dinner, Thur. Feb 21, 7:00, Mokka in Newport then Social at The Crazy Fox
 Saturday Night Out, Sat. Feb 23, 7-11PM, TBD (see Facebook or website)
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. **Feb 25**, 7:30PM, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church
- First Friday Karaoke, Fri. Mar 1, 9:00PM Tostados
 March Board meeting, Tue. March 5, 7PM Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church
 Second Saturday, Sat. Mar. 9, 7:00 PM Boswell's
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Mar 11, 7:30PM, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church
 Thursday Dinner, Thur. Mar 21, 7:00, Mokka in Newport then Social at The Crazy Fox
 Saturday Night Out, Sat. Mar 23, 7-11PM, TBD (see Facebook or website)
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Mar 25, 7:30PM, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church

Other TG Support meetings may also involve a theme or speaker. Stay in touch with our website and Facebook for the latest changes. Suggestions for themes, venues and events are always welcome.

Crossport.org is posting additional meetings by other Trans- related groups. Please check out the website for more information

If you have questions or comments on meeting locations or times, contact Crossport at 513-344-0116 or at CrossportCincy@yahoo.com or post them on the CrossportCincy Facebook group

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR**Happy New Year!**

Wait Meghan, shouldn't that been LAST month? Nope, I'm talking about Chinese New Year. Starting of February 5, this is the year of the Earth Pig. And for those who know your sign, your luck is predicted as follows:

- Rat - A year full of happiness and prosperity!
- Ox - A good year for Ox. A time with good opportunities to make money.
- Tiger - Born in a strong and independent zodiac sign, as a general rule, you do what you please. This year through, you will need to learn how to come to terms with others.
- Rabbit - An excellent year is waiting for you! A bit less wary than usual, you will easily get close to others and make new friends.
- Dragon - For you, the impact of the Pig's calmness will mean a year of reconsiderations.
- Snake - This year you'll have to be combative and persuasive
- Horse - The year of the Pig 2019 is going to be more auspicious than the Dog Year 2018 !
- Goat - A 2019 year under the mark of chance, when all your ambitions will be fulfilled .
- Monkey - A year under the influence of chance !.
- Rooster - This year you need to actually pay attention to the quality of your relationships with others, if you want to succeed.
- Dog - This year count only on your own efforts in order to succeed.
- Pig - The year 2019 is yours, right? Start by setting your priorities and then get to work: once you start moving, you will start seeing results.

(<https://www.thechinesezodiac.org/astrology/chinese-horoscope-2019-year-of-the-earth-pig/>)

Now why in the world would I mention this, and what does it have to do with CD/TG reality? First off, it's just fun. And secondly it caused me to think about perception. The "Chinese" new year is based on an ancient lunar calendar, much like the old Judaic calendar which in turn determines Passover, therefore Easter, therefore Ash Wednesday (quite often in February, but not this year). Back in the old days, using the moon phase for keeping track of time had it's use. First, it is easier to trace the phase of the moon day to day than sunup and sundown with a lot of accuracy. Second, moon phase affects tides and floods, very useful for farmers and fishermen. But the

lunar calendar shifts a lot because it is not synched to the earths orbit around the sun.

Eventually people wanted something simpler and more accurate. It is not coincidental that the development of the modern calendar occurred at about the same time to the realization and acceptance that the earth orbits the sun instead of vice-versa. And we figured out that the Earth wasn't flat either. The same observations, math and technology that allowed for accurate tracking provided data that drove the "discovery" of a heliocentric celestial model (Actually it's *far* more complicated, starting around 150 BC). But wait! Not everyone LIKED this new theory. It defied what they had taken for granted as The Truth. It shattered world views, challenged religious teachings and scared the heck out of some people. And some of those in authority saw their power in jeopardy. Why couldn't things be left well enough alone? It took 350 years for the Church to finally absolve Galileo.

Sound familiar? I recently read an article that said in 1970, 90% of psychiatrist and other mental health providers still considered LGBT as a disease, and it was listed in DSM as such. But something happened. Real research, done in a scientific method, that removed situational bias showed that people who identified as Gay, and later Trans, were in fact no more mentally ill than the rest of the population. Up until then, since mental health professionals were only dealing with individuals that already were seeking (or forced into) treatment, they concluded that they were in fact deficient. But no one was dealing with a "normal" Gay individual. In the 1970's this all changed, and by the end of the 70's homosexuality was removed from the DSM, and then in the 80's Transgender was also removed. Not that there weren't remnants left for a while; there were.

Much like the discovery of a round earth, the discovery that LGBT individuals aren't just nuts and do in fact exist, there is still resistance to this world view. Even though much of the medical/scientific community has adopted a more accepting stance, socially similar resistance still exists. Worry about being wrong, worry about losing power, disbelief, still exists. Let's hope it doesn't take 350 years to finally accept it.

Your Editor,
Meghan Fournoit
mhb2ist@yahoo.com

Spotlight on CALLIE LISZKAY

-Meghan Fournoit

As a welcome to the Crossport Board, I thought it might be interesting to interview her for the newsletter, so we all get a chance to know Callie Liszkay a little better. I met Callie over lunch at a very conveniently located spot right between my work and her abode. Callie arrived first and got us a table. Even though the restaurant filled up, it was the perfect place to have a conversation. I recognized Callie right away, as she was the same lovely young lady that I've seen in the past. I, on the other hand, was dressed in my drab workday self, so it was best that I could introduce myself. I was also pleased that she shared my appreciation for good Chinese food, which made the whole experience just that much better.

With most interviews, many answers to my questions were revealed in a very natural way. In some ways, I almost didn't even need to ask the questions first. I did so, however, just to be sure that I recorded her responses faithfully.

Callie is a lovely young lady. Without trying hard, she has poise and polish that matched her casual presentation with her warm and confident personality. At 31, Callie is Crossport's youngest board member. Callie first became of her identity when she was 6 years old. Her revelation of that epiphany to



her father went very badly, and she suppressed herself for many years. While she has written a fuller account of her discovery on line, she described the event that led to her rediscovery and self exposure to her partner, Theresa, many years later. Fortunately, that went far better, and her partner showed her much more acceptance.

In fact, it was due to Theresa that she even joined Crossport in the first place. Callie had already done research on line (as many of us do) and discovered that Crossport was (at the time) the only trans support group she could find.

"Theresa forced me to go. No, really, she made me get into the car and drove me down to the meeting." Callie recounted. "When I went in to that first meeting, it was an 'Oh Shit' moment. Oh so I AM...."

I asked Callie how long ago that was. "Three years ago. I started on the same day as Stacy"

Since that time, Callie has expanded her involvement in the Trans community. She participates with Heartland and Transohio. She has been active as a Crisis Call operator, and met all sorts of people on the full spectrum ("Under the Umbrella") in the community. Crossport holds a special place in her heart. Not just

because it was her introduction to the community, but as she sees it, it provides a special place as a mentor and focal point.

Callie comes from a different demographic and experience than the average Crossport member.

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CORRECTION. The Second Support Group meeting for February will be held on Monday, Feb 25. It was listed as Monday Feb 29, which is incorrect on two counts. There is no Feb 29 in 2019.

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Transcript of This American Life

For more information about the development of the modern approach to Psychology, Psychiatry, and the inclusion of LBGT in the DSM, or the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual, check out the transcript from [This American Life](https://www.thisamericanlife.org/204/transcript).

Aired on WBEZ in Chicago, Ira Glass discusses the topic with Alix Spiegel

<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/204/transcript>

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For her, we represent the “Elders” the community. She appreciates that Crossport pioneered the landscape at a more cloistered time, and the hard earned experience from those early days is very relevant to today’s needs. Callie felt that even though the younger generation has it easier in certain ways, they still need that link or heritage. “I have an amazing chosen family. That’s what it is, the Cincinnati Trans community. To me, it’s a family.”

I asked Callie about that difference in age. While she still sees Crossport as relevant, she also sees that the organization tends to maintain it’s current demographic from a natural self organizing mechanism. Participation from younger trans individuals tends toward other organizations, primarily because the age commonality. Callie also observed that the younger generation tends to have a differing view on what is defining and relevant to being Trans. Older Trans folks tend toward a more binary and traditional understanding of what defines a gender identity, while younger folks tend to view gender with a more fluid and less defined presentation. Callie speculated that some of this comes from the difference in general acceptance and the shift in Mental Health care understanding and practice. For the older generation, just to get treatment, there were more barriers. A transwoman would have to meet a checklist of criteria that sometimes was based in preconceived stereotypes.

When asked about her thoughts on how Crossport could maintain it’s relevance, Callie thought Crossport’s participation with other organizations and providing guidance would help. She also felt that there was a need and room for different or-

ganizations. I pressed her further to share her thoughts on any advice she could give to others exploring their own journey of self discovery. She responded “I would tell them that they should know that they are not responsible for anyone else’s happiness but their own. This is a hard lesson to learn.”

When asked what prompted her to join the board, Callie stated that she wanted to help Crossport thrive because she gets a lot out of the organization. She sees her strengths and role as being some one that welcomes people and puts them at ease. While she is not adverse to taking an active role, she prefers to work a little more in the background.

Callie indicated “Crossport is the first Trans organization I’ve joined. It was the first one I was aware of.” She went on to explain that it is one of the longest standing trans groups in the area, and certainly in Cincinnati. She appreciated that it was well organized and had a lot of experience and provided guidance to the Trans community, including to other organizations.

Callie already has a Bachelor’s degree, and is currently working on an advanced degree in the Health Information field. Over time, she would like to be able to use meta-data to research and conduct ACTUAL study of Trans related health issues and experience. This led to a discussion of various advances in the health field for LBGT individuals, and the need for good, scientific, fact based and unbiased research. Callie also mentioned that she likes writing, so my ears really perked up. I am looking forward to seeing how she continues to grow.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

As a reminder, Membership dues cover the period from January to December, with the dues being prorated over for partial year membership.

Crossport members can choose to become a member at an increased level. Those donating to the organization through the higher levels will be acknowledged quarterly in the newsletter, much like donors to the symphony or other non-profit organizations. The levels of membership are:

\$30 - Basic Membership

\$50 - Bronze Level

\$75 - Silver Level

\$100 - Gold Level

Please consider a donation at the higher levels to support Crossport’s mission to the transgender community in Greater Cincinnati.

Refer to the last page of this newsletter for the membership application and payment methods. You may want to use the application to update any of your contact information.

Crossport Board Meeting Minutes

January 2, 2019

Cathy was the meeting Facilitator.

Board members present: Cathy, Stacy, Jill, Laura Ann, Callie, Wendy, Jean

Board members absent: None

Guests present: Vicky, Shep Englander

The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm.

Old Business:

Install Board Members: The board was constituted for the January 2019-December 2020 term with five previously serving board members; Jill, Laura Ann, Jean, Cathy and Stacy, and with two newly elected board members; Callie and Wendy.

Presentation by Jewish Federation President, Shep Englander: From 7:10 until 7:25 we had a question and answer with him about the opportunities available to trans people from various local Jewish organizations, particularly the Mayerson Jewish Community Center.

Minutes: Cathy submitted the Minutes from the December 4th meeting. They were accepted.

Holiday Party Wrap Up: Feedback on this event from those who attended was universally positive, though one board member was disappointed with the room decorations. Of those who did not attend, only one person of 14 who responded mentioned price as a factor. Most listed distance as the reason.

Vicky reported that the total expenses was \$1682.45, and total income (dinner tickets+raffle and split the pot tickets) was \$1643.64 for a loss of \$38.81. Additionally, there was a discrepancy of five twenty dollar bills between what Vicky and Stacy totaled and turned over to DeShay's and what DeShay's reported receiving. The decision was made to cover the loss that night and to pursue it with DeShay's management. Vicky was in the process of doing that but had not yet heard back. [Post board meeting update:

Vicky reported that DeShay's agreed to reimburse Crossport for the \$100 discrepancy.]

Annual Outreach Calendar: Laura Ann created an annual outreach calendar. During discussions, there ten events and outreaches identified that need planning, a lead an volunteers for implementation.

New Business:

Clothing Donation: An email came to the Crossportcincy address asking if we would be interested in accepting a clothing donation for someone who was transitioning. The board discussed and agreed, providing the items were a size 12 or greater.

The board also discussed the possibility of Crossport and Heartland working together to have two joint swaps rather than one individual swap each. Cathy will discuss this with Heartland.

Monthly Reports:

Hotline Phone. Stacy submitted a report to the board. No new phone yet. Previous plans fell through and she plans to purchase a new one this coming week.

Membership. Vicky submitted a report to the board. As of this Board Meeting, six of the 14 memberships which expire in January have been re-pledged, and one new membership came in. CrossPort currently has 23 voting members for 2019. Cathy will send reminders to the remaining 8 January expiring members and also post a request on CrossportCincy.

Finances. Vicky submitted a report to the board. CrossPort currently has \$1066.27 (not counting memberships paid after December 31). This is \$373 more than January 2018.

As Vicky is no longer on the board and the bylaws require the Treasurer to be a board member, Cathy volunteered to take over the role of Treasurer from Vicky and Callie agreed to take over the job of writing up the minutes from Cathy. Cathy will get together with Vicky before the February board meeting to complete the checking account transfer.

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CrossPort Website and Social Media. Jean submitted charts showing in December, the number of active members on CrossportCincy averaging 65/day meaning over 32% of the 201 members are active on a given day.

In December, crossport.org attracted an average of 12 unique visitors per day, the majority accessing the calendar.

There was a spirited discussion on when and how to moderate contentious threads within CrossportCincy. The board recommended that due diligence needs to be done beforehand so that all parties involved have input before something is posted.

Email Correspondence. Cathy submitted a report to the board.

- There was one request for information about the peer group events or socials. Cathy resolved it.
- Email request for an alternative to The Thing Shop. Cathy posted this request on CrossportCincy. Person then joined that group.
- One TG newsletter was received, from Chicago Gender Society.
- Confirmation email from Ohio Secretary of State that the Fictitious Name Registration was accepted.
- Five emails about payment made for the Holiday Party.
- One email that they could not find their link to the board member ballot. Cathy sent a replacement.
- Email sent to all voting members on the board election results.
- Email from NKY mental health therapist looking for housing options for a trans veteran. Cathy answered it.
- Email sent to everyone who attended the Holiday Party asking for feedback. Three very positive responses returned.
- Email received offering to donate clothes for someone who is transitioning. Forwarded it to the board.

CD/TS Peer Support Group. Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported that there was only one meeting in December due to the holidays and attendance was 12.

First Friday Social. Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported that Tostados attracted 12 in December.

Second Saturday Social. Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported there was no Second Saturday because it was the next day after First Friday.

Thursday Night Social. Stacy submitted a report to the board. She is looking for new venue. The board recommended Washington Platform not be a place to be considered.

Saturday Night Out. Stacy submitted a report to the board. She scheduled it for The Birdcage but no one showed up but her.

Library. There was no Library report or discussion.

Outreach. Cathy continues to work to get a checking account set up for the new 501(c)(3) group but is still having trouble scheduling a time with the treasurer of that group.

Newsletter. Cathy submitted a report to the board. The December newsletter was emailed to 318 email addresses on November 29. It also included a link to purchase Holiday Party tickets. One bounced and one unsubscribed.

As of January 2, 102 unique emails had been opened (32.2%), an increase of 14 since the previous report, and 68 had clicked through to access the InnerView (21.8%), an increase of 13 since the previous report. 1 had clicked through to the CrossPort Cincinnati FB page, 0 had clicked through to crossport.org, and 6 had clicked through to the Holiday party tickets page.

On January 2, 2019, a link to the January InnerView was emailed to 323 email addresses.

Not enough time has gone by to report statistics on this issue. 322 emails were delivered. There was one soft bounce.

Between December 1 and December 31, three more email addresses were added.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49pm. The board agreed that Cathy would facilitate the February meeting.

Sheer Necessities

-Meghan Fournoit

Editors Note: This month, I am including an article about a local business that has supported our community over the years. First of all, the people that run these businesses should be thanked for their support and acceptance. As many of us have experienced, a welcoming and knowledgeable business can make a world of difference in both our personal psyche and our ability to select the right products and services. Our best thanks to these businesses can be expressed by our continued support and patronage of them. I plan on future articles of other businesses, and would certainly welcome feedback and suggestions. A personal introduction to the owner may also be a great icebreaker in asking for an interview.

Ah February! The month of Valentine's day. And what would a self-respecting crossdresser want on this day? Flowers? Pretty, but fading. Chocolates? Mmm, but we are still working of the 5lbs+ from Christmas. Lingerie? Ohhh yes, something to heat you up in the cold winter. Figuratively, of course, because that lace doesn't provide a lot of extra thermal layering. And what better Lingerie experience is there in the Cincinnati area than Sheer Necessities!?

Located in the Bridal district at 201 W. Benson in Lockland, Sheer Necessities has been a mainstay since July of 2000. Ana M. Gil-Kevorkian, the shops proprietor, was kind enough to grant me an interview for this month. We met at her shop over my lunch break and had a wonderful chat. Admittedly, this was not my first trip to her boutique. Ana, a smart and pleasant woman, remembered me from previous encounters and was happy to participate.

I decided to start at the beginning and ask Ana how she created this business. Originally Ana and her sister had operated a restaurant a couple of blocks away in Lockland. After 6 years in that business, they decided to close. Ana's entrepreneurial spirit wasn't satisfied and she loved running a shop in the area. After considering her options, she decided to provide services and products that were needed but not being offered in the area. Sure, there are several Bridal shops and clothing stores in the area, but no one was offering lingerie, and what bride doesn't need something a little fun, pretty or maybe even a little naughty. Beside the bridal business, a whole host of other customers need or want that something special.

Very quickly, Ana found that her customer base was quite diverse, and the type of products she had to offer were also of a personal nature. Many of her customers tend to be on the shy side. Sensing this Ana responded to them with discretion, welcome and encouragement. Just what a timid Crossdresser of Transgender gal would need to boost their confidence. It didn't take Ana long to get to know our community and recognize that treating her customers with dignity was a great approach.



Crossdressing and Transgender customers are almost a daily occurrence at the shop. Often, a new customer will come in, and she can predict if they are shopping for themselves or their S.O. It's the nervousness, the flustered answer, and the typical story. "I am only doing this for Halloween". Occasionally there will be an individual that blurts out that they crossdress, almost as a challenge. Ana has met so many of us that is doesn't even phase her.

When asked about how 19 years of business has gone, Ana indicated that it's been good. Clearly there have been some up times and down times (like right after 9-11 and the 2008 crash). I commiserated with her on this point, as I also ran a business from 2000-2013. The business, and of course her CD/TG customers also tends to be somewhat seasonal. Evidently, CDs tend to be more active in the winter months. Ana provides a variety of products related to lingerie, with a helping of accessories and few more adventurous items thrown in (there's this room in the basement.....). Sheer Necessities also offers some additional services, including measurements, alterations by SowNina, makeovers and photography. Ana

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suggested that customers call ahead about these services, and that some of them can be performed after normal hours. Another helpful suggestion was that shy clients should call ahead to pick a time when the shop is quieter, and that she is personally available. Custom or "off-the-menu" items (like custom Corsets) can also be ordered.

stockings are getting harder and harder to find in a Brick and Mortar store. While she carried a good selection of forms, they are more difficult to keep in stock. The most popular forms are the Triangular Silicon forms (with the pert nipple, of course).

As the interview progressed, it became very conversational. Ana and I discussed tricks of the trade, and she related good advice on things like



how to cinch a corset to avoid bulges, what to do about that back bulge (which occurs with wedding dresses as well). We talked about beard cover and bra sizing. The conversation went on to other tricks and techniques, people we both knew, showing each other photos, family, etc. As I ran out of time, I couldn't resist asking for a quick bra measurement. Much to my relief, I think I've been doing it right. All in all, I really enjoyed speaking with Ana, and could have gone on for another hour. My experience with Ana and Sheer Necessities has been very positive. Ana has been a wonderful supporter of our community. In fact, she mentioned that if you

I was curious about the most popular items that CD/TG clients request. Ana said that undergarments, foundation and shapewear were at the top of the list. She indicated a whole selection behind the counter of gaffs, tape, forms, pocket bras and other items. Along with those items, Ana carries a wide selection of stockings, including new stock of hard to find vintage stockings. This made me happy, since

let her know you are a member or Crossport, she will honor a 10% discount. Now I'm dreaming about a new corset...

Get Your Swag On

If you join at the Bronze Level or higher, you will get a membership badge like the one pictured here:



The back is a very strong magnet so you will not put holes in your clothing when you wear it.

(If you want me to wear thirty-seven pieces of flair.....)

Happy Birthday!

- Lauren B.
- Brice M
- Jane B. L.
- Debbie J
- JoAnne B
- Barbara Ann M.
- Amy S.

If you would like to be added to our list, please send the month and date of your birthday along with your name to:

Crossportcincy@yahoo.com.

New Studies Disparage Fears About Transgender Hormone Therapy

Mila Madison



https://mavenroundtable.io/transgenderuniverse/news/new-studies-disparage-fears-about-transgender-hormone-therapy-D3g9AvkOGEaXjeTjVITLfQ/?fbclid=IwAR20bz1SU_oVes3vLL4YhmkVW5B-DGeVFxf8KcptAWaQGNkHWHPsy2qdiA

Research shows less risks with HRT in trans patients compared to birth control and better outcomes with heart disease.

The new research has been published in the AACC's January Men's Health Issue of the Clinical Chemistry journal. The American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC), is a global scientific and medical professional organization dedicated to clinical laboratory science and its application to healthcare.

In the first study, a team of researchers led by Dina N. Greene, PhD, of the University of Washington in Seattle has found evidence of better outcomes related to blood clots in transgender women taking estrogen compared to premenopausal cisgender women taking oral contraceptives. Though the outcome showed a slightly higher rate of blood clots in transgender women taking estrogen (2.3 per 1,000 person-years) compared to the incidence rate of blood clots in the general population (1.0-1.8 per 1,000 person-years), it is less than the estimated rate in premenopausal women taking oral contraceptives (3.5 per 1,000 person-years). The results of the study show that transgender women who take estrogen are at a much lower risk for blood clots compared to cisgender women taking birth control pills.

Greene's team performed a systematic review of all studies that have included the incidence rate of blood clots in transgender women receiving estrogen therapy while identifying 12 that were the most relevant. Using meta-analysis, the researchers combined the results of these 12 studies and calculated a risk estimate that is based on all available evidence to date.

In a second published study, a team of researchers led by Guy G.R. T'Sjoen, MD, PhD, conducted a systematic review of all studies measuring risk factors for cardiovascular disease in transgender people who are taking hormone therapy. The team identified 77 relevant studies, finding the majority of them show no increase in cardiovascular disease in either transgender men or women after being on hormone therapy for a period of over 10 years.

The study did reveal a higher cardiovascular disease risk for transgender women who had been taking ethinyl estradiol compared to other forms; however ethinyl estradiol is now considered obsolete and is no longer used.

Both research teams have indicated that though the research does much to overcome many misconceptions related to hormone replacement therapy, the sample sizes are small and they would like to see further research performed on a larger scale.

Currently, many transgender patients often experience difficulty finding adequate care when it comes to obtaining hormone replacement therapy. In many cases, even when care is found, many doctors do not have a sound understanding of what the long term effects of hormone replacement therapy would have on transgender patients and often provide inaccurate information regarding the risks. Due to the limited and conflicting information available, many doctors are denying patients treatment due to a lack of understanding regarding the risks. Currently, 1 in 4 transgender women are forced to obtain their hormones through illegal means.

"Documenting the risks associated with hormone treatment may allow for prescribers to feel more comfortable with prescribing practices, allowing for better overall management of transgender people," said Greene. "Our data support the risk of thrombotic events in transgender women taking estrogen therapy being roughly comparable to the risk of thrombotic risks associated with oral contraceptives in premenopausal women. Given the widespread use of oral contraception, this level of risk appears to be broadly accepted."

Top Catholic Ethicist: Do Not Assume Transgender Identities Are “Sinful” or “Disordered”

August 5, 2018/7 Comments/in Parish Life & Pastoral Care, Theology & Church Teaching, Transgender, Uncategorized /by Robert Shine, Associate Editor



David Albert Jones, left, with Cardinal Vincent

A leading Catholic ethicist offered positive words about transgender identities in a recent interview, saying it should not be assumed that someone naming their gender identity is problematic and that such identification could be affirmation of how God created them.

Professor David Albert Jones, who leads Oxford University’s Anscombe Bioethics Centre and advises bishops around Europe, commented on many aspects of the current debate in the Catholic Church over transgender identities. Jones told Crux:

“Discernment is needed, however, to distinguish what is sin and needs to be renounced (though perhaps this will only be accomplished by steps) and what is not sin but is an element of diverse and complex human experience. In the case of divergent gender identity, we should not assume, as perhaps the question seems to assume, that someone expressing a deep-seated sense of gender identity is doing something sinful or objectively disordered. On the contrary, the person may be accepting his or her gender identity as something given by God.”

That discernment, Jones said, only emerges after pastoral accompaniment, which is the first step in discerning the “difficult moral issues related to incongruent gender identity.” He cited Pope Francis’ own engagement with trans people before stating that answers to such questions “should arise from

‘speaking with’ and not just be ‘speaking about’ Catholics with a divergent sense of gender identity.” He flatly rejected quick and simple answers, saying “if you think it is [simple] you are probably misunderstanding it.”

Jones’ engagement with trans issues has been informed by his own encounters with trans Catholics and the need for the Church to have proper theological resources for their support, which he said were quite lacking. He explained:

“On the basis of what I had written, I was asked to help develop pastoral and theological resources in this area. This gave me the opportunity to seek out transgender people who were practicing Catholics to ask them about their experiences and what they felt would be helpful. I also spoke to canon lawyers, educationalists, and priests with experience accompanying transgender people but the most important thing for me was to listen to people who were seeking to live their faith while accepting their deep-rooted sense of gender identity.”

“Despite the very personal nature of the journey that each had made, I found a great willingness to talk and an appreciation of my attempts to listen, as one person said to me, ‘thank you for speaking to us and not just about us.’”

On the issue of gender confirming surgery, and in particular the ethics of Catholic hospitals providing such care, Jones affirmed that there was no authoritative teaching on the matter. He continued:

“In the absence of any official teaching most Catholic moral theologians, where they have considered the question, have taken one of two views. Some have characterised such surgery as mutilation, direct harm to the body, and therefore as incompatible with Catholic medical ethics. Others have argued that such surgery could be considered justifiable, if it helps alleviate the extreme distress of gender dysphoria. However, typically, this second group of theologians have cast doubt on whether such surgery is effective in providing long-term relief.”

“My own view is that surgery may alleviate the suffering of some patients. However, I cannot see how gender reassignment surgery, where this causes sterility, is compatible with the ethical principles of the Catholic tradition. Never-

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theless, it is important to stress that, as yet, there is no explicit and authoritative Catholic teaching precisely on this question.”

“Furthermore, if Catholic hospitals do not offer gender reassignment surgery this must not be because of a reluctance to care for transgender patients. Any such refusal, to be ethical, must refer not to the person to be treated but only to the nature of the procedure.”

On the question of Pope Francis’ multiple condemnations of “gender ideology,” Jones said the pope’s words were about theory and systems rather than individuals:

“The movement for greater acceptance of transgender people is part of a much larger debate about sex and gender in society. On these questions there is more than one secular view, more than one religious view, and the Catholic view, while constant in its essentials, has developed over time. . . .”

“It is also important to note that the focus of this papal teaching is on various errors of a theoretical kind and the way these errors have been promoted by governments and educational bodies. It is not directed at the situation of people who experience a consistent, persistent and insistent sense of identity incongruent with their natal sex.”

Jones, like Pope Francis, seeks to preserve an understanding of gender complementarity, which claims men and women are equal in dignity but different in function. He said the magisterium is most critical of explanations which deny complementarity, and also of understandings of gender that separate it from biological sex and make gender a choice. On this point, Jones commented:

“When we try to make sense of diverse expressions of gender identity it is natural to reach for analogies with other issues. Transgender identity is seen as being like feminist ideas of social gender roles, or as like sexual orientation (hence the initialism LGBT), or like physiological divergences of sexual development (popularly known as “intersex” conditions), or as a type of body dysmorphia (like anorexia). I have argued

that incongruent gender identity is like (but also unlike) each of these phenomena.”

On legal and social transitions, Jones cited trans philosopher Sophie-Grace Chappell’s comparison to adoption where the adopted child is given a new social and legal identity, while retaining knowledge of their biological identity:

“If you’re an adoptive parent, you’re a parent for most purposes and no one sensible scratches their head over it – they don’t decree that you can’t sit on school parents’ councils, or see it as somehow dangerous or threatening or undermining of ‘real parents’ or dishonest or deceptive or delusional or a symptom of mental illness or a piece of embarrassing and pathetic public make-believe...”transwomen are to women as adoptive parents are to parents.”

Finally, on the issue of referring to trans people by their names and pronouns, Jones again cited the pope, saying further:

“Catholic pastoral practice must begin with welcome and the first sign of welcome is how we address someone. There is nothing un-Catholic about the use of names and pronouns that reflect a person’s sense of identity.”

There are problems with Jones’ views, like his affirmation of gender complementarity and his equivocation on gender confirming surgery, but his interview models a path more church officials and theologians should follow: theological reflection that take seriously trans Catholics’ voices, is grounded in pastoral concern, and includes an engagement with contemporary science. The full interview is worth reading, and you can find it by clicking here.

(*Link Removed*)

—Robert Shine, New Ways Ministry, August 5, 2018

Editors Note: This article can be found at:

<https://www.newwaysministry.org/2018/08/05/top-catholic-ethicist-do-not-assume-transgender-identities-are-sinful-or-disordered/>

Cathy's Corner

-Cathy Allison

Everyone please keep our board member Jean Fine in your thoughts and prayers. Jean will be undergoing surgery on February 19 to have a tumor removed from her brain.

Jean went to a presentation in November 2018 at the Mayerson Jewish Community Center for the Global Day of Jewish Learning. This particular presentation was on gender identity and the featured speaker was Rabbi Susan Goldberg of Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles. Rabbi Goldberg was a script consultant for the television series *Transparent*.

What surprised Jean was that while there were about 120 people attending, less than a half dozen were members of the trans community. This led Jean to speak with Shep Englander, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. Then Mr. Englander came to Crossport's January board meeting to discuss what opportunities trans people have with local Jewish organizations with emphasis on the Mayerson JCC.

This is what Mr. Englander told us:

- All Reform synagogues (the largest and most liberal branch of US Judaism) are welcoming of trans people. About 25% of those who attend Temple Sholom in Blue Ash are LGBTQ.
- Many Conservative synagogues are supportive of trans people. The Rabbi at the Adath Israel Congregation in Amberley has a trans child.
- About 50% of those who go to MJCC are not Jewish.
- MJCC is open to learning more about supporting the needs of their trans clientele.
- There are a few trans people who go there to work out because they feel more comfortable at MJCC than they do at their local fitness gym.
- There is a monthly fee to be a member of MJCC, but if you have limited income, you should ask about scholarship opportunities.
- There are often part time jobs available working the front desk at MJCC and they are willing to have trans people be a face for the center.

Two women sexually assaulted

trans woman in North Carolina bathroom, police say.

Amber Harrell and Jessica Fowler were charged with second-degree kidnapping and sexual battery for allegedly assaulting a transgender woman at a bar in Raleigh.

Jan. 9, 2019, 11:48 AM EST

By Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Police in North Carolina say two women sexually assaulted a transgender woman at a Raleigh bar.

News outlets report 38-year-old Amber Harrell and 31-year-old Jessica Fowler are charged with second-degree kidnapping and sexual battery.

The woman told Raleigh police she was inside the women's bathroom at Milk Bar in December when Harrell and Fowler started verbally abusing her, exposed themselves and started touching her. The woman says Harrell and Fowler continued to assault her outside the bathroom and ignored her and the bartender's orders to stop.

According to the [2015 U.S. Transgender Survey](#), 47 percent of trans people surveyed reported being sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

Harrell and Fowler were released on bond; it's unclear if they have lawyers. According to local NBC affiliate WRAL, the two women will have to register as sex offenders if convicted.

Public bathrooms have been a flashpoint in North Carolina since Republican lawmakers in 2016 required transgender people to use rooms matching their birth certificates. The requirement was rescinded last year.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/two-women-sexually-assaulted-trans-woman-north-carolina-bathroom-police-n956671>

Editor's Note: This is the very definition of irony on many levels. Part of the whole point of fighting to allow transwomen access to female bathrooms is to protect them from harassment and assault. I am sure some pundit somewhere is saying "See, that's why they shouldn't be in there!"

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Social Review

-Cathy Allison

What great attendance we have had so far this January.

At the First Friday social at Tostado’s we had 20 members, SO’s and allies show up. People ate and danced and sang karaoke until midnight.

At the Third Thursday social at Mokka, we had 24! I do believe that is the most we have had in the last two years, and that is not counting Paula or Marsha who just popped in for a minute.

And all the “new” faces there. JJ and Liz came to their first Third Thursday even though they have been coming to Crossport events for a long time. Donna Hamilton came to her first Third Thursday in about 20 years. Nancy from Lawrenceburg came for the first time as did Carla and Jamie. Jamie recently moved here from Greenbay, WI and I first ran into Carla at the TDoR protest which was held at the gazebo in Washington Park. Last but certainly not least was Endrick, a transman who came all the way in from Sardinia. Meade and Jill convinced him to come. It is always nice to have a guy in the group.

Seven Third Thursday “newbys”. Can anybody remember the last time we have had that many?

After Mokka, eight of us went to the Crazy Fox where we hung out for a couple more hours, then three of the girls headed over to Rosie’s Tavern where they shut that place down.

Unfortunately the bad weather kept everyone home for the Second Saturday at The Birdcage, so Stacy was forced to cancel it. With luck, this won’t happen to Saturday Night Out on January 26.

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Crossport Social Meeting

The social is held on the *third Thursday of each month at 7:30pm* at a local restaurant (currently Mokka) and its purpose is to provide an opportunity for all transgender individuals to get out and socialize at a safe environment. Following dinner is a gathering at The Crazy Fox, Newport, an LGBT friendly bar that is used to TG patrons.

Combined Peer Support Meeting

Meets 7:30pm on the second and fourth Mondays of each month Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church. The meeting, which focuses on female-to-male and male-to-female transition as well as crossdressing issues, and living your authentic gender identity, offers an opportunity to network in a supportive forum.

Crossport Board Meeting

The board typically meets on the *first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm*, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church, to discuss club matters. All members are welcome to attend.

Crossport Saturday Night Out

This is an evening out at a local nightclub. It is tentatively scheduled for the *fourth Saturday* evenings of each month. The time and location of this event will change with each occurrence.

Crossport Second Saturday Social

This is an evening out at a local dining establishment. Similar to Third Thursday, but for those of us who can't get out during the week. It is scheduled for the *second Saturday* evenings of each month. Held at Boswell's in Cincinnati's Northside neighborhood, dinner is at 7:00.

Karaoke Friday Nights

The *first Friday* of the month Crossport meets for a social engagement to share fellowship, music and merriment at a Tostado's, dinner at 7:00pm and music at 9:00pm Spouses, Significant Others (S O's), and family are also welcome and encouraged to attend all meetings and events.

For more information on all meetings please email Crossport: crossportcincy@yahoo.com, visit the Crossportcincy Face Book group, or call the Crossport Phone number listed below.

Contacting Crossport

Mail: PO Box 19936, Cincinnati, OH 45219
 Email: crossportcincy@yahoo.com
 Phone: 513-344-0116

Our phone line is a digital mobile telephone answered by a designated Crossport Member. Please be assured that you can safely leave a message and your call will be returned in confidence at a time of your choosing.

Crossport Website: <http://www.crossport.org>

Message us through Facebook, either through the Crossport Cincinnati page or the Crossportcincy group.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION/CAREER/SKILLS? (TELL US ABOUT YOU!) _____

YOUR INTERESTS: TS ___ TG ___ CD ___ GAY ___ FRIENDSHIP ___

EVENTS ___ OTHER ___

*YOUR DATE OF BIRTH: ___/___/_____

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