

# CROSSPORT *InnerView*

**March 2019**

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Issue 3**

## Inside this issue:

Upcoming events	1
Note From the Editor	2
Gold Sponsors	2
Transgender Day of Visibility	3
Membership Dues	3
Cathy's Corner	4
The Eyes Have It	5-7
February Board Meeting Minutes	7-8
Not All Transgender People Have Dysphoria	9-11
Birthdays	11
Swap Night	12
Graphic Artist Needed	12
Movie Review: "A Star Is Born:	13-14
Advertisements and rates	13-14
General Schedule	15
Membership Application	15

## Crossport Schedule of Events

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

First Friday Karaoke, Fri. Mar 1, 9:00 pm Tostados  
 March Board meeting, Tue. Mar 5, 7:00 pm 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, Mar 21, 7:00 pm, Mokka in Newport then Social at The Crazy Fox

Saturday Night Out, Sat. Mar 23, 7:00 pm, TBD (see Facebook or website)  
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Mar 25, 7:30 pm, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church

**Transgender Day of Visibility, Sun Mar 31**

April Board meeting, Tue. Apr 2, 7:00 pm Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church  
 First Friday Karaoke, Fri. Apr 5, 9:00 pm Tostados  
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Apr 8, 7:30 pm, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church  
**SWAP NIGHT, Fri Apr 12, 7:00 pm Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church**  
 Second Saturday, Sat. Apr 13, 7:00 pm Boswell's  
 Thursday Dinner, Apr 18, 7:00 pm, Mokka in Newport then Social at The Crazy Fox  
 Transgender Peer Support, Mon. Apr 22, 7:30PM, Mt Auburn Presbyterian Church  
 Saturday Night Out, Sat. Apr 27, 7:00 pm, TBD (see Facebook or website)

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****Toxic Masculinity**

I started writing this editorial before the Gillette commercial came out. A day or two later, there it was, and I must say that I was pretty well impressed. I think the commercial makes a great point. Lately I've seen articles and blogs covering "Toxic Masculinity", and they've given me pause to reflect on my own thoughts and experience. In short, much of the current conversation about Masculinity focuses on destructive (or Toxic) behaviors from people with stereotypical male gender expressions. Focus on this behavior has been heightened by recent events and coverage of many stories associated with the "Me-Too" movement. From physicians, to actors, producers, businessmen and public servants, the list of abuses has grown.

However, it is not only the clearly misogynistic abuses that are being pointed out, but also the pattern of aggression and assumption of privilege. In our culture, we have seen a pervasive reinforcement of a general stereotypical attitude of what it means to be male. A lot of it surrounds a ridged adherence to an emotionally vacant and stoic expression. Essentially it is boiled down to never showing weakness and conquering all others regardless of cost. In doing so, any expression outside these narrow bounds are rejected and ridiculed. You know the messages; Real men don't eat quiche. Big boys don't cry. Man Up.

Historically aggressive behavior and physical dominance has been rewarded. Let's face it, when your older sibling decides he wants to take your pop-art, unless someone is stopping him, guess who's eating it. Even though people have become far more sophisticated than this, the principle is still pretty basic to our experience. Supporting this behavior can curry favor and a social contract including mutual reward. Social contracts lead to group affiliations. Not only does the strongest individual survive, but the group they represent is similarly rewarded.

By pushing aside discomfort and fear and striving to push limits of physical and emotion endurance, great accomplishments can be realized. The reality of biology is that those with larger amounts of Testosterone tend to be physically larger and have a more aggressive brain response. However, biology is not typically just a binary reality, there are continuous distributions of all kinds of physical and mental distributions. As it turns out, some stereotypical "male" behavior is useful and good, but like all other behaviors, it needs checks and balances.

There is a difference between a healthy embodiment of personal strength and the toxicity of the perversion of aggressiveness. The point of the Gillette ad is that our current culture does not need, nor should we espouse, an excess in this behavior. I find it interesting that the Trans and Crossdressing experience almost seems to be a laboratory for gender expressive behavior. I sometimes wonder if a culture were more balanced in acceptance of varied expressions would spawn fewer individuals that felt a strong discontinuity with their "assigned" gender. Further, while both female to male and male to female gender expression variances occur, in our society the FTM situation is not as pronounced, and by some standards (not all) less rejected. Of course my observation may be incorrect or tainted by my personal experience. Still, it puts the question into my mind, "would I still have a trans experience if the expectation for masculine expression wasn't as extreme?"

I think that there are a lot of questions here, and I would dearly love to hear the thoughts and experience of our brothers on the flip side of the coin. Including FTM individuals in our community can only make us more enlightened.

Your Editor,  
Meghan Fournoit

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**A BIG THANK YOU TO  
Darlene L.  
And  
Nancy S.  
For Becoming  
GOLD Level Members!!!**

## Transgender Day of Visibility

Transgender Day of Visibility will be celebrated Sunday, March 31 from 1-4pm.

As of this publication, the venue has not yet been finalized, but Crossport has joined with Heartland Trans Wellness, and individuals from Central Clinic, TransOhio and Transsaints to make this event happen. Once the venue is determined, we will email out a separate notice to everyone as well as post it on our website and on Facebook.

If you would like to speak or entertain at this event, please send an email to [crossportcincy@yahoo.com](mailto:crossportcincy@yahoo.com) on your presentation topic or your entertainment type.

“International Transgender Day of Visibility is an annual event occurring on March 31 dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide. The holiday was founded by US-based transgender activist Rachel Crandall of Michigan in 2009 as a reaction to the lack of LGBT holidays celebrating transgender people, citing the frustration that the only well-known transgender-centered holiday was the Transgender Day of Remembrance which mourned the murders of transgender people, but did not acknowledge and celebrate living members of the transgender community. The first International Transgender Day of Visibility was held on March 31, 2009. It has since been spearheaded by the U.S.-based youth advocacy organization Trans Student Educational Resources.” \*

\*From

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Transgender\\_Day\\_of\\_Visibility](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Transgender_Day_of_Visibility)



(Photos from last years TDoV  
Courtesy of Samantha Slover)

## MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

As a reminder, Membership dues cover the period of one year from the time you submit payment. Crossport no longer prorates dues to a calendar schedule.

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.



## Cathy's Corner

-Cathy Allison

After being on this planet more than 60 years, I still manage to have new experiences. This past month I got my first ever pedicure.

I never really was that interested in getting one, I am perfectly capable of trimming, filing and painting my own toes. Plus I really don't like to be touched by someone I don't know, even if it is just my feet.

But Laurie announced one afternoon that she was going for a pedicure in two days and that she expected me to go with her. She seems to think I spend way too much time working on Crossport stuff. So who is to argue?

On the day she had selected, I got dressed in my best casual; a blue jean skirt, tank top with over shirt and flip flops. Fortunately, though it had been raining most of the day, the temperature was in the low 50s.

We went to a place across Kemper Rd from the Tri County Mall called American Nails. I have no idea why they call it that because everyone who works there is Vietnamese.

After picking out a color for my nails, I was led to a massage chair with a foot bath attached. Apparently they call this a "spa-pedi". Laurie was seated in the chair to my left. The person working on my feet was a young man who introduced himself as Andy.

He was a polite young man but his English



was quite limited. For some reason he thought Laurie looked Russian so he asked if we spoke Russian. Umm, no, we don't. The only other question he asked was if we "were family", which was an easy answer to the affirmative.

The first thing the staff did was show me how to use the massage chair, then Andy draped a "modesty towel" across my knees and removed my existing nail polish.

Following the polish removal, my feet went into the bath which was like a mini hot tub; quite warm but not too hot.

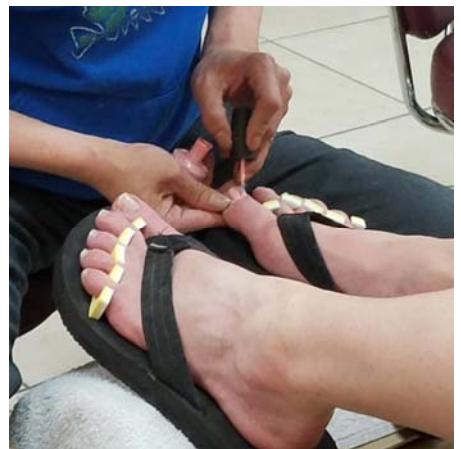
After a bit of soaking, Andy first trimmed up my cuticles and filed a couple rough spots off my nails. Then out came a grater that looks like some-



thing you use on cheese and Andy used it to remove the top couple layers of dead skin from my heels and the bottom and sides of my feet. I will tell you straight up that this tickles something fierce.

When Andy was finished grating my feet, he painted a conditioner on my nails and massaged my feet and calves with warm lotion. At this point, between the massage chair and the warm lotion, I was wondering why in the world it took me so long to allow myself to get treated in this way.

After all the soaking and lotion, Andy dried my feet and legs off and I put the flip flops back on, and got spacers between my toes. On goes my chosen color, then after a little dry time, on goes a second clear coat.



After that, a few minutes with my feet under a dryer and I was all done. Cost? \$30 plus tip. The whole process took about an hour, and even though I do a pretty good job painting my own nails, I don't think my feet had ever looked better. And yes, I would do it again.

## The Eyes Have It

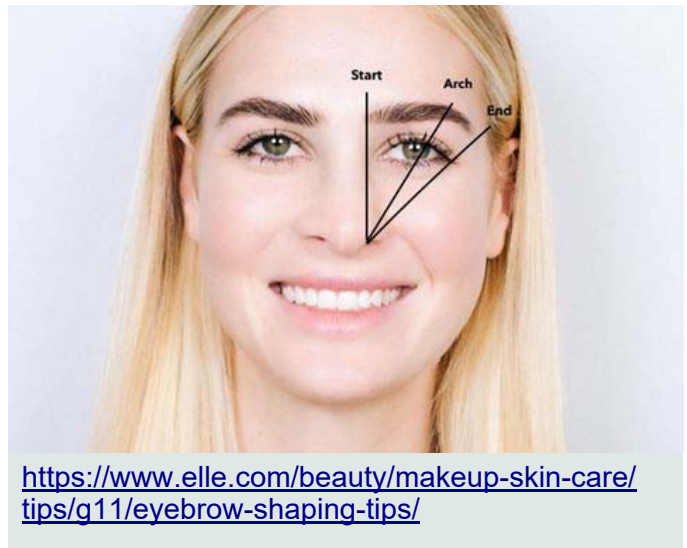
-Meghan Fournoit

While this may seem to be basic information, I find that sharing tips and tricks is often helpful and may provide just that extra little bit to perfecting a look or saving time or money. Beside the obvious hair style and five o'clock shadow challenges, eye-brows are one of the more important aspects of a good, kempt, feminine presentation. Well-groomed eyebrows are also important to a clean and handsome male presentation as well. While shaping and coloring will vary a bit between gender presentation, grooming is important to all genders. In this article I will discuss some tips that focus on female presentation, but they are also important to note for male presentation as well.

**Keep it trim and tidy.** As we age, our eyebrows seem to go wild. You know the look, the stray hair poking out of that caterpillar called a brow. Great for wise old owls, this look is not very clean and can be distracting. If you do nothing else, at least trim them back, and perhaps try combing them into submission. While you can certainly use a scissors to trim, I found that it is very fast and effective to use a small electric trimmer. The one I use has an eyebrow attachment and attachment for nose and ear hairs as well (which you should also keep neat). What I like about the trimmer is that it is set up to trim back to a good maintainable length, and generally won't trim back too far. The trimmer is also great for arm hair if you don't want a full shave.



**Eliminating the Unibrow.** Some people like their unibrow, and there are famous male and female celebrities that have one. But for most people, they aren't that attractive and potentially distracting. Sure, Brooke Shields could get away with it, but so could I if the rest of me looked like the rest of her! But the question is how much unibrow should you lose? The advice I've heard is that you can take pencil from the side of the nostril straight up to define the start of your brow.



<https://www.elle.com/beauty/makeup-skin-care/tips/g11/eyebrow-shaping-tips/>

**Arch and End.** In addition to starting your brows at a proper distance from the bridge of your nose, it is a good idea to determine where the highest point of your brow should be and how far the brow should extend. Using the pencil method, a line from the nostril, running across the mid pupil and up should help locate the arch point. A line from the nostril to the outer corner of the eye is a good guide to the end of the brow. This technique is helpful for both Female and Male presentation.

**Determine your outline.** This is where the differentiation between male and female brows really start and is heavily determined by personal style. At this point, you want to decide what shape and thickness you want with your brows. Brow styles change from time to time. All the way from eliminating the brow altogether and painting them back on to a heavier straight look, there are a lot of choices. Some of these choices are noticeably feminine, while others are very acceptable in a male presentation. One caution is that the more extreme thinning and arch can look unnatural or create a permanent expression of surprise.

Arches can be rounder, pointier or more slanted. The thickness can be adjusted to be more

*(Continued on page 6)*

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localized near the nose, with the tails being quite thin, or having a more consistent width most of the way. Typically, the end of the brow should end in a point, but not always. Having a professional assist your choice is a good idea. A good way to determine how you want your brows to look is to cover them with foundation first, and then drawing them back in. You can buy a nice set of drawing templates from stores like Sally's Beauty or on line.

**Pluck Away.** Once you decided on your outline, it will be time to pluck away. You can wax or thread to speed up the process and give your self a nice line to start with, but this can be tricky. I tend to have this done for me and love the experience. A professional is so much faster and better than I am. However, I still pluck for maintenance. Get a good set of tweezers and go at them one hair at time. It doesn't take long to figure out the best technique. I tend to pull in the direction the hair is growing, but sometimes there is a short or tough one that needs to pull against the grain. Plucking is far better than trying to cut or shave. First, it is so much easier to control, and second, since the hair pulled is recessed into the skin, plucking lasts longer than cutting.

Threading and waxing are just different methods of plucking, but they also get little hairs that you might not otherwise notice. Some people advise to only pluck from the lower edge of the brow, moving up and avoiding plucking along the top edge. That is good if you are trying to achieve a higher arch to open the eyes and minimize your brow bossing or protrusion. Avoiding the top edge is not entirely advisable; If there are strays outside of your outline, or if a slightly more pronounced arch is desired, then the top edge is not off limits. One final bit of advice on plucking: Take your time and don't overdo it. While they will typically grow back in, hairs may come back thinner or not at all over time.



**Pull Them Out, Paint Them In.** For those inexperienced with make-up, this seems counter intuitive. Why on earth would you remove eyebrows just to paint them back in? Painting them provides a bolder, more noticeable look by increasing the con-

trast between your backdrop and the brow. For many people, brow hairs have a distribution of color and thickness, allowing the shape to fade into the face. This is especially true with age and the prevalence of grey or white hairs. Plus, there may be thin spots along the brow that make the brow spotty or less defined. Brow definition and contrast is also an area where male vs. female expression is noticeable.

There are numerous products and techniques for filling in the brow. Entire articles and online tutorials are available on the subject. The basic products are pencils, powders and creams, each with its own uses and drawbacks. Pencils can be convenient and not require additional brushes, while a good power or cream can be used for great effects. Technique can vary from outlining to heavy coloring in to feathering to approximate individual hairs. Or a mascara wand brushed across the brows may provide the desired effect. Different colored products are also available. Typically, the eyebrows should similarly match hair color, but sometimes a more dramatic effect is desirable.

If you have a hard time keeping a steady hand drawing the brows back in, this is a good use of the templates mentioned earlier. Finally, remember to brush the brow hairs for the smoothest, cleanest look when you are finished.



**Sisters, Not Twins.** I've heard this from a couple of sources, including my wax girl. When shaping brows, symmetry from the left to right is important, but not imperative. Bodies generally have imperfect symmetry. The left and right side are often not quite the same. One brow may tend to be longer, thicker, fuller or higher than the other. Even the cheeks, ears, jaw and nostrils may have differences in size, shape and placement on a face. The key here is to provide an attractive balance for the entire face, not a mirror image. Attempts to perfectly match the brows may promote overdoing it, especially with plucking.

**Not Arched Enough?** Male brows tend to be lower, closer to the eyes than female brows. Part of

(Continued on page 7)



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this is how they grow, and part of it is related to the boney projection of the upper ocular portion of the skull and the slope of the forehead. Men tend to have a more pronounced brow bossing than women. Despite careful plucking and coloring, a Male to Female crossdresser or transwoman may not be satisfied with their look. Several things can be done. On the permanent side, plastic surgery (brow lifts and face lifts) can make a huge difference.

For the weekend warrior, a couple of tricks can be used. One is to erase the brow altogether using stage wax or elementary school glue sticks. The brow is smoothed out and hidden with foundation, then a new brow is drawn on slightly higher and possibly thinner. This technique is effective, but a little challenging to master, and does not look quite natural close-up. This is a preferred method for

stage actors. An alternative method (or as an adjunct) is to perform a temporary brow lift. This can be accomplished with a good wig cap, or with medical



tape, and involves pulling the facial skin above the brow up and back. Again, this can be a challenging technique which may be

uncomfortable or slip over time. The effect of the brow lift is excellent, as it not only helps with the brow shape and placement, but it also opens the eyelid as well, helping with eyeshadow art.

## Crossport Board Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2019

Cathy was the meeting Facilitator.

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

Board members absent: Callie

Guests present: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:08pm.

### Old Business:

Cathy submitted the Minutes from the January 2nd meeting. They were accepted.

**Bank Account/New Treasurer:** Cathy and Vicky went to get the bank account transferred. After 90 minutes, the bank decided that since it had been opened as a sole proprietor, the account had to be closed and reopened as a non-profit. They are going to try again next week. Until then, Stacy has the only working debit card.

**Annual Outreach Calendar:** Stacy will reserve a picnic area large enough to accommodate Crossport and the other local trans groups. Date is July 27-Aug 10.

**Cincinnati Pride.** The booth must be reserved in the next week to get the best price. Stacy will do that. No info yet on NKY Pride.

**TDoV.** No info yet on TDoV. Cathy will check out situation with the other local trans groups.

**Clothing Swap** will be joint Crossport/Heartland effort on Friday, April 12.

**Annual General Membership meeting** (State requirement) will be at Mokka, Thursday, July 18th.

### New Business:

**Informational Brochures:** Stacy brought up that as new brochures need to be ordered, several board members would like to see the artwork on the cover redone. Cathy will put out a request on CrossportCincy.

### Monthly Reports:

**PO Box:** Stacy submitted a report to the board. There were three membership renewals this month.

**Hotline Phone.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. A new Crossport phone was purchased at Crickett for \$62.33. She added a replacement/damage plan which increases the monthly fee from \$35 to \$45 per month.

**Membership.** Cathy submitted a report to the board. Cathy sent reminders to the January expiring members and also posted a request for memberships on CrossportCincy. As of this Board Meeting, Crossport

(Continued on page 8)

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has 30 members, 14 of who are carryovers from 2018.

**Finances.** Vicky submitted a report to the board. CrossPort currently has \$1919.22. This is \$979 more than February 2018.

**CrossPort Website and Social Media.** There was no report this month.

**Email Correspondence.** Cathy submitted a report to the board.

- There were three requests for information about the peer group events or socials. Cathy resolved them.
- There was one request to be added to the newsletter.
- There was one request from someone looking for a roommate.
- Two emails from Wayne Herriford about January Building Bridges meeting.
- One TG newsletter was received, from Chicago Gender Society.
- One email about payment made for the membership.
- Email sent to all voting members whose membership expired in January.
- Email from OH social worker looking for housing options for a trans person. Cathy answered it.
- Series of emails from an SO in Louisville looking to talk to other SOs.

**CD/TS Peer Support Group.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported that the last meeting was held in the Social Hall as the interior doors were locked and they could not gain access to the regular meeting room. She has been in contact with the church so that does not happen again. 10 showed up for that meeting.

**First Friday Social.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported that Tostados attracted 13 in February but had 21 for January.

**Second Saturday Social.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. She reported there was no Second Saturday in January. The board advised her to find an alternate hostess for that event.

**Thursday Night Social.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. People were able to stay at Mokka until almost 10. 24 people showed up and 8 went to Crazy Fox afterward.

**Saturday Night Out.** Stacy submitted a report to the board. She scheduled it for The Birdcage and 11 people came.

**Library.** Jill submitted a report. Nineteen books were donated in December, 12 were books already in the library and 7 were new items.

**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.

Heartland's website no longer exists but has agreed to co-host both Spring and Fall Clothing Swaps with Crossport.

Brice Mickey no longer works at Living with Change.

Cathy reached out to the HR manager at a local business after a transwoman reported on FB that she had been denied access to the women's restroom there. She is awaiting a response.

**Newsletter.** Cathy submitted a report to the board. The January newsletter was emailed to 323 email addresses on January 2. Two bounced.

As of February 4, 107 unique emails had been opened (33.2%), an increase of 5 since the previous report, and 74 had clicked through to access the InnerView (23.0%), an increase of 8 since the previous report. 0 had clicked through to the CrossPort Cincinnati FB page, 0 had clicked through to crossport.org.

On February 1, 2019, a link to the February InnerView was emailed to 331 email addresses. Three bounced and one was unsubscribed by the admin.

As of February 4, 88 unique emails had been opened (26.8%) and 68 had clicked through to the InnerView (26.8%). 0 had clicked through to the CrossPort Cincinnati FB page, 0 had clicked through to crossport.org.

Between January 1 and January 31, eight more email addresses were added.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11pm. The board agreed that Cathy would facilitate the March meeting.



## Not All Transgender People Have Dysphoria – And Here Are 6 Reasons Why That Matters

August 13, 2015 by Sam Dylan Finch

*Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an article from <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/08/not-all-trans-folks-dysphoria/>. While an interesting topic, this does not constitute the opinions of Crossport or its members*

I remember talking with a friend of mine who is transgender with the assumption that we both experienced dysphoria, which is the distress or discomfort that occurs when the gender someone is assigned does not align with their actual gender.

As I was talking, I could see their eyes start to stare off in another direction.

“Are you alright?” I asked, puzzled by their sudden disinterest in our conversation.

On an ordinary day, Kai and I could talk gender for hours. The only person who seemed more passionate about trans identity than me was definitely Kai.

But suddenly, in conversation that should’ve excited them, they seemed to be someplace else entirely.

“Well, I don’t...” Kai paused. “Don’t judge me or anything, but like, I don’t experience dysphoria.”

At that point, I had never heard of a transgender person not experiencing some kind of dysphoria. But there they were, right in front of me.

My instinct was to be protective over my transness. The idea that dysphoria was not required, and that anyone could just identify as trans if they wanted to, seemed to water down the importance of my identity and the struggles of my community.

No — their community. Our community.

I was getting possessive, trying to deny Kai’s identity, which was so unlike me. Just a minute ago, Kai was my comrade; now, suddenly, I was pushing them to the margins. Why would I try to tell someone what their gender is and isn’t, having spent a lifetime of being told the same?

“Yeah, I get it,” they said, seeming to read my mind. “It’s threatening to a lot of people, so I don’t often talk about it.”

But in my years as an advocate, I continue to meet more trans folks like Kai who don’t experience dysphoria, and further, who are afraid to open up about it.

I’ve been lucky enough to learn from them, and I understand now why my gut reaction — to exclude them — was such a problematic one.

So why shouldn’t we define transgender people on the basis of dysphoria?

Let’s talk about it.

### 1. It Suggests That Gender Identity Is for Outsiders to Decide

It’s weird that some trans people are totally on-board with making a rulebook for transness, instead of encouraging people to self-identify and declare their gender identities for themselves.

When we allow other people to make the rules, we strip away the rights of trans people to self-identify. If we tell trans people that their identities don’t belong to them, we uphold a culture where the naming of gender identities belongs to outsiders instead of ourselves.

When I started to doubt Kai’s transness, what I was saying to them was, “You say that you’re transgender, but I don’t recognize that or believe that.” I was saying that I knew Kai’s gender better than they did. Yikes.

I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to exist in a world where I have to follow a set of prescribed rules before I can claim my own identity.

I should be able to declare what my gender is and have it validated, regardless of how I experience it.

Transgender people constantly have to resist having an assigned gender imposed on them. Do we really want to assign and impose a gender onto other trans people?

### 2. It Medicalizes the Experience of Being Transgender

The phrase “gender dysphoria” became the go-to phrase after “gender identity disorder” was deemed offensive and inaccurate. Since then, the two phrases have been used interchangeably in the medical realm.

Need I remind you that Western medicine has been less than kind to trans people historically?

Trans people were “treated” by being encouraged to conform and accept their assigned gender rather than transitioning. Medicalizing the lives of trans people hurt us for a long, long time — it meant that we were treated as having a psychological disorder rather than a valid identity.

Placing the lives of trans people into an “illness” framework ultimately stigmatized their identities and left their needs to be dictated by “medical professionals” rather than trans people themselves.

The medical model disempowered trans people.

Trans people were treated as deviants with a shameful mental disorder, and language like “gender identity disorder” and “gender dysphoria” is tied to that history. The medicalization of trans people was a major source of oppression and harm.

When you suggest that dysphoria is the one way of determining whether or not someone is trans, you are relying on a medical model that wasn’t created by trans people, but rather, created by Western medical “professionals” who viewed transness as a disorder rather than an identity.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

And I'd like to move as far away from this framework as possible.

Changing it from "gender identity disorder" to "gender dysphoria" doesn't change the fact that it's still operating within the same medical model and still functioning as a "diagnosis."

### 3. It's a Eurocentric Definition of Transgender

A lot of trans folks will say that "transgender" as an experience didn't originate in the West – and they would be correct. There have been "trans" experiences in many cultures globally, long before the West had any concept of "transgender."

Some identities outside of the West that you might know of include two-spirit, hijra, and kathoeys, and they have a history that precedes ours.

Many trans folks in the Western world insist that to be transgender is to be dysphoric, without acknowledging that this is a very Western understanding of what it means to be trans.

It doesn't acknowledge that transness can exist outside of the West and has existed outside of it long before we came along – with its own definitions, language, insights, and experiences.

To say that being transgender is exclusively about experiencing dysphoria is making a universal statement for all trans people, but it's steeped in Western understandings about gender. It completely erases indigenous and international identities and experiences.

It's tricky (and sometimes, really problematic) to apply individual understandings of gender to all people.

"Transgender" as an umbrella is so diverse and complex that it's best to avoid generalizations altogether, and allow people to name their own experiences.

### 4. It Equates Being Trans with Distress and Dysfunction

Gender is complex. Transgender even more so.

The thing that Kai and I have in common is that we underwent a process in trying to understand ourselves and our gender, teasing apart what society asked of us and what we wanted for ourselves. We both discovered through that process that we didn't identify with the gender we were assigned at birth.

The difference is that this realization doesn't cause distress for Kai in the way that it does for me.

And if that's the only difference, so what?

If distress is the defining characteristic, what are we saying about what it means to be trans? And what are we telling our youth, then, too? That who they are is contingent on how much pain they feel?

I want to live in a world where transgender doesn't equate to pain and suffering. Because ultimately, the pain we feel

is not what unites us. It's the identity we claim and the unique journey we each took to find it.

I don't want any trans person to go through this thinking that to be trans means to hurt. That only succeeds in saying to the world, "If you want to be in pain, be trans. If you want to be happy, be cis."

We are so much more than that. Our lives and our experiences are so, so much more.

### 5. We Privilege Some Narratives Over Others

I've been told before that I'm not "trans enough."

I was hurting so much the first time I heard it that I actually blogged about it (this was, pretty ironically, before I understood the asterisk is problematic).

If someone came up to you and asked you what it was like to be transgender, it probably wouldn't be as simple as saying, "It's terrible."

It can be terrible. The pain can be very real. But for most people, being trans is a very complicated thing that involves a whole spectrum of emotions.

This is kind of where using dysphoria as the exclusive defining characteristic of trans people isn't necessarily an accurate way of representing the experience of being trans.

As a trans person who does experience dysphoria, I can tell you that dysphoria is not the only thing that makes me transgender. It's not even the bulk of my experience as trans.

It's about the journey it took to disregard expectations and find myself. It's about the layers I had to peel away just to figure out who I was. It's about the pride and elation I felt when I found the words to describe my identity. It's about the sense of community I found with others like me. It's the way that I understand gender and the way that I move through the world.

As a genderqueer writer, I've been told more than once that I have no business writing about the transgender community because I'm not "actually trans."

And since I experienced that kind of invalidation, I've been sitting pretty comfortably in the camp of "everyone is trans enough and your gatekeeping is bullshit."

At what point will we stop tearing each other apart and start lifting each other up?

I know what it feels like to have an identity that completely opened up your mind and your world, something that gave you new life and a sense of home, come crumbling down at the accusation that you're not actually trans and, instead, just following the latest trend.

I'm just not interested in creating a power dynamic where some trans people are inherently better, more worthy, more trans, or more important than other trans people. That, to me, is not what social justice looks like.

Using dysphoria as the ultimate measure of transness

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

means that any trans person for whom dysphoria is not present, not the language or framework they prefer to use, or not significant in their experience is suddenly invalid.

It says, “These trans people are the real trans people, and everyone else should be quiet.”

Our community has a history of doing this. Take, for instance, the transgender community’s initial resistance to including non-binary people.

Oh wait, that’s not history. That still happens.

I’m fed up with the power dynamics in our community and see absolutely no need to create more; we are still struggling day after day to dismantle the hierarchies that already exist.

We can already see the ways that certain narratives are privileged over others, the ways that certain voices are heard and others are silenced. And frankly, I don’t want to be a part of that.

I think we should be disrupting those narratives – not going along with them.

We should be affirming that the trans community is diverse, complex, and unique – not monolithic and homogenous.

## 6. It Breeds Transphobia

There is a pervasive fear that if we leave transgender” as a term that relies on self-identification, it will be rendered meaningless by people who claim it for the wrong reasons.

But this weirdly mirrors a lot of oppressive attitudes that are used against all trans people.

Take the trans bathroom debate, for instance. There is a widespread belief that cis people will pretend to be trans just to get into the wrong restroom and violate other people.

Um, when you’re on the side of Fox News, maybe it’s time to reevaluate your stance.

If trans people interrogate other trans people with disbelief, we are giving permission to the rest of the world to do it to us.

If we bully trans people and tell them they are deceiving other people, or following a fad, we’re telling cis people that they can accuse us of being imposters, too.

We’re taking away the right to self-identify and giving the rest of the world permission to misgender us if they, too,

decide we’re not “trans enough.” We tell the rest of the world that they don’t have to believe us because we don’t believe in each other.

If you don’t believe a trans person when they say that they are trans, why should a cis person believe you?

\*\*\*

When my friend told me that they didn’t experience dysphoria, my initial reaction was one of hostility, judgment, and skepticism. I’m forever grateful, though, that they took the time to educate me.

I had no idea that there were trans people who didn’t experience dysphoria – but now that I know, I work hard to make sure that Kai and others like them are included in the trans community.

I’ve received a lot of pushback as a writer when I talk about dysphoria not being a requirement for trans people. And I don’t necessarily blame them. I was resistant, too, and it took a while for me to come around.

But I believe that there are greater consequences when we exclude trans people on the basis of having a different experience from our own.

We become the “gender police” that we’ve spent decades criticizing. We become the very thing that has oppressed us for so many years.

If gender isn’t something that someone else can decide for you, then the reality is that it’s up to the individual, and that there’s no wrong answer. It’s not up for debate between outsiders – it’s personal, and it always has been.

Letting go of our need to control who’s in and who’s out and, instead, investing that energy into affirming and uplifting others in our community seems like a much more worthy effort.

So who is transgender? Let’s keep it simple: Anyone who identifies differently from the gender they were assigned at birth. Full stop.

*Sam Dylan Finch is a Contributing Writer for Everyday Feminism. He is queer writer, activist, and educator based in the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to his work at Everyday Feminism, he is also the founder of Let's Queer Things Up!, his hella queer and very awesome blog. You can learn more about him here and read his articles here. Follow him on Twitter @samdylanfinch.*

## Happy Birthday!

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Samantha S.

Owen

Jackie M

Jeanne F.

Robyn D.

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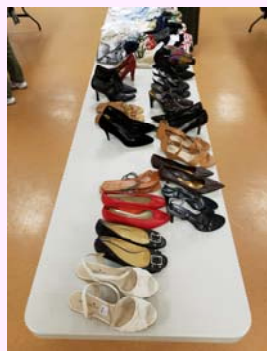


## SWAP NIGHT!!!

Crossport and Heartland Trans Wellness will host a clothing Swap Night. This is a swap meet, where members can bring gently loved clothing that they are willing to donate to other members, free of charge. If you participate, be sure to do a nice job cleaning the items before bringing them, and try to bring items in good repair.

Clothing and items may also be donated at the Monday April 8 support meeting.

The swap meet will be held at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church on Friday, April 12



Some of Last years offerings.  
Photos courtesy of Samantha Slover



## Graphic Artist Needed

The above graphic is the cover of the tri-fold brochure that Crossport supplies at outreach events. Crossport's board has expressed a desire to re-vamp the graphics and is looking for someone that would be willing to design a new cover.

Please contact Cathy Allison through the crossportcincy@yahoo.com Email if you are interested.



## Movie Review: A Star Is Born

-Meghan Fournoit

One of the more anticipated films of 2018, A Star Is Born received good reviews and numerous nominations for awards. Starring Lady Gaga (Ally) and Bradley Cooper (Jack) in the lead roles, this film represented some interesting developments for both. While this wasn't Lady Gaga's first film appearance, it was her first major role in a feature film. Her previous experience on film has mostly been related to music videos and documentaries. This film, as the lead character, pushed her to flex her acting muscles. Gaga's performance was very compelling, that had a naturalness that made her believable. Her ability to adapt to the screen was better than the average singer turned actor.

Bradley Cooper also expanded his horizons in this film. Not only did he perform musically, with impressive singing talent, but he cut his directing chops on this film as well. While it was no surprise that his acting was on par, his vocal abilities in both speaking and singing were a delight. Evidently Bradley spent a lot of time learning to lower his reg-

ister and modulation to match Sam Elliot, who played his older brother for the film.

The supporting cast also did a fine job. As previously mentioned, Sam Elliot played Jack's brother. The portrayal was pretty similar to other characters that Sam has played in the past, but matched well with the character. Dave Chappelle departed from his typical zany characters, and put in a solid performance as Jack's best friend. The actor that surprised me the most was Ally's father played by Andrew "Dice" Clay. I could help thinking, "I've seen this guy before" and didn't realize it was Dice until the credits. While not straying too far from his roots, his portrayal was toned down from his normally acerbic act to a believable and even slightly likeable character.

While the story itself was still fairly predictable and slightly formulaic (it was, after all, the second remake of the original 1937 film), the execution was well done. The modern spin on the tale, with current cultural references and understanding of the music industry kept the film fresh. The strength of the film is that it does a fair job of building empathy for most of the characters. There were a couple of scenes or characters that were a bit stereotypical. The overly ambitious music producer has become a

(Continued on page 14)



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(Continued from page 13)

trope. The drag queens, while stunningly beautiful and somewhat supportive, seemed a bit like the contestants on Ru-Paul's reality show (not that this stereotype doesn't have a grain of truth). As a whole, even with some stereotypes and predictability, the film was cohesive and well done.

For myself, a lot of the enjoyment of the movie was around the music scenes. While Jack's genre is billed as Country, its more of a Southern Rock (think Allman Brothers) cross over, with great guitar and piano performances. Lady Gaga continues to impress me with her ability to shift styles, from French Burlesque, to folksy country, to rock while maintaining her mainstay pop. I am not an expert on camera work, editing or lighting, but I got a sense that this was also well done. There were some great scenes from concert venues, the Grammy's, the Arizona country side, as well as some enticing intimate scenes. And of course, as I mentioned, some fine Drag eye candy! All in all, I think the movie is certainly worth spending the \$6 to rent at home.

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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](mailto: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](mailto: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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