



Open
7 days

Special
orders
welcome

We are proud to carry the area's
largest selection of gay, lesbian,
and bisexual books and magazines.

81 Church St., Burlington, VT
802-862-4332 1-800-NEW BOOK

**BETH ROBINSON
LANGROCK SPERRY & WOOL**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
15 SOUTH PLEASANT STREET
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT
05753

Burlington Office:
275 College Street
Burlington, Vermont 05402
802-864-0217

Area Code: 802
Telephone: 388-6356
FAX#: 388-6149



Feminist Therapy
Sheila D. Rawls, M.S.C.

Pathways for self-discovery and growth

addictions ▼ coming out ▼ relationships ▼ spirituality ▼ ACOA

(802) 865-2609
*sliding fee scale

2 Church Street, Suite 4E
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Quite Simply...

The finest collection of
Furniture, Carpeting & Accessories
in Vermont

Rutland House Ltd.

162 south main street
rutland, vermont 05701
(802)775-2911



rts. 11/30 - in the heart of
manchester center, vermont
(802)362-2001

from all over vermont: (800)649-2911

Helen Oetjen, Ph.D.
Licensed Psychologist

Timberlane Psychology Associates
41 Timber Lane
South Burlington, Vermont

(802) 863-4333



Psychotherapy for individuals and couples



Tax & Accounting Services

Browns Trace Building
P.O. Box 910
Richmond, VT 05477

Julie M. Miller
Certified Public Accountant

802-434-6466 TEL
802-434-6465 FAX

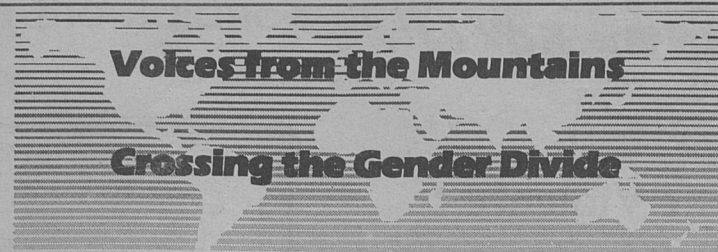
Dr. Shoshanna Shelley
Licensed Psychologist

Helping Individuals & Couples With Depression,
Anxiety, Abuse, Sexual Identity, Addictions,
Self Esteem & Relationship Concerns.

Over 20 Years Experience
Most Insurance Accepted

496-4964

WARREN, VERMONT



by Jess Bell

"Men don't wear earrings," was the strongly stated sentiment of my three-year-old nephew. During my last visit, I noticed my nephew had changed since I saw him last. He was taller and thinner, true, but he was also more rigid in his understanding and presentation of gender.

At two, he would dance uninhibitedly around in sparkling high heel shoes in one moment and be down in a baseball catcher's stance in the next. His parents thought both were cute, but the shoes were only "permitted" whereas the tough little athlete play was encouraged.

At three, the high heels are stuffed in the back of his closet and only brought out on rare occasions. The house is full of armor and swords, balls and bats, and other traditional "boys' toys." My nephew wanted to "rustle tussle" during my entire visit, and I was saddened to hear him say things like "men don't wear earrings."

During my visit, I was also engrossed in a new book called *Gender Shock* by Phyllis Burke that looks at the lives of children who do not embrace their gender training and sex-typed roles. *Gender Shock* exposes what it means to be a powerless kid going up against the rigid and strictly policed system of gender in our culture. I read case history after case history about the Psychiatric Abuse of Gender Variant Children (PAGC), a disturbing practice that occurs every day in public and private institutions and is funded, in part, by the United States federal government.

The Psychiatric Abuse of Gender-Variant Children has actually been around for decades. Before 1973, it was disguised as the cure-all for homosexuality. Children were placed in locked wards without their consent for defying traditional gender roles because they were suspected of being pre-homosexual. It was reasoned that the "sissy-boy" and the "tomboy" had a greater chance of becoming gay and lesbian than the traditionally gendered child. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered activists worked hard to de-pathologize homosexuality, and in 1973 they succeeded in removing homosexuality from the DSM, or Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, which is used to diagnose psychiatric and psychological disorders.

The same year that homosexuality was removed from the DSM, a new listing

appeared: Gender Identity Disorder, or GID. The wolf had found new clothing.

Since 1980 and to this day, children diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder can be institutionalized without their consent as a strategy to cure adult transsexuality. The criteria for GID as spelled out in the DSM for boys in 1997 includes: an assertion that his penis or testes are disgusting or will disappear, an aversion toward rough-and-tumble play, or a rejection of male stereotypical toys, games, and activities. For girls in 1997, the criteria includes: a rejection of urinating in a sitting position, an assertion that she has or will grow a penis, an assertion that she does not want to grow breasts or menstruate, or a marked aversion toward "normal" feminine clothing.

The focus of the criteria for institutionalizing gender variant children in 1997 is the child's feelings about his or her body, whereas before 1973 the focus of the criteria was the child's presumed sexuality. The shift here is clearly one that has taken place in the cultural consciousness. Before 1973, homosexuality was viewed as a pathological and criminal behavior by medical and psychiatric institutions. In 1997, transsexuality is pathologized and criminal in the cultural consciousness.

My three-year-old nephew may not intellectually grasp the seriousness of defying narrowly defined and socially constructed gender roles, but intuitively, all children understand that the mark of sex and gender qualifies one as human in our culture: "Is it a boy or a girl?" As long as our dominant culture only recognizes male and female bodies — and the masculine and feminine expressions that supposedly correspond to those bodies — there will always be strong forces policing the boundaries of both sex and gender.

Even the most progressive of parents fall into the role of gender cop, finding their own children guilty of breaking "natural" laws when, in fact, gender variance itself is known and recorded throughout history across lines of culture, class, race, age, ability, faith, and sexual orientation. It could be easily argued that gender variance has a much longer and richer history than the rigid binary gender system acknowledged by our dominant culture. ▼

"Glitter" Brings Culture to Burlington

BURLINGTON — A new gay and lesbian group focusing on literature and movies has formed in Burlington.

"Glitter," the Gay & Lesbian Literature and Film Club of Burlington, was organized by Steven Kopstein of Hanksville. The group meets once a week at the Blue Couch Cafe in the Old North End of Burlington.

Books are the topic the second Monday of every month. The club has established a reading list and plans to read and discuss one book from it each month. The selected book for March will be Stephen McCauley's *The Object of My Affection*. Check the calendar for more details.

The other Mondays of the month are devoted to movies. Some of the films have a gay or lesbian theme, although not all. The common theme is that they have some interest to the gay and lesbian community. March screenings will include "Sister to Sister," "The Garden," "Law of Desire," and "For a Lost Soldier" (see calendar for complete listings).

The early meetings of the club have been well attended and a full schedule is being developed for the coming months. For information about the club or to get on its e-mail list, e-mail to GlitterVT@aol.com or call Steve at 434-5653. ▼