TRANSADVOCATE

Forty-Four Years Since Going Full Time and Forty-One Years Since SRS

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Abstract

The seasons turn and summer begins. Yesterday a manager at the local Tom Thumb Market became the first this year to ask me the standard Texas summer rhetorical question, "Hot enough for ya' yet?" When the thermometer creeps up to the century mark and the trees are the lushest deep green of the year I [...]

Article

The seasons turn and summer begins.

Yesterday a manager at the local Tom Thumb Market became the first this year to ask me the standard Texas summer rhetorical question, "Hot enough for ya' yet?"

When the thermometer creeps up to the century mark and the trees are the lushest deep green of the year I count another year lived, another year of surviving, overcoming the odds. Another year of living a life I was told as a child would be impossible.

The Sexual Revolution and the Hippie Movement along with all the other movements for personal liberation helped make my life possible.

It wasn't an accident that I came out in 1969. Throughout the 1960s people like April Ashley and Rachael Harlow had been showing me that it was possible.

By 1969 all the support structure was in place.

Free hormones from the Center for Special Problems, 12 dollar visits to Dr. Benjamin.

When 1969 bloomed it was only a matter of time before there would be a Stonewall uprising some where in the country. NY, LA and SF were all in the running. In the months before Stonewall the Gay Liberation Movement had finished gestation and was crowning, pushing its way down the birth canal.

I had started hormones in March, by May I confused people who looked at me to the point they were asking what sex I was.

I had put off going full time to participate in the People's Park uprising in Berkeley.

By mid-June my friends were telling me I had to either go full time or stop taking the hormones.

That summer I went up to the Russian River with some friends. I took some acid and went off alone, climbing a hill/mountain where I took off my top and sat on a rock watching the raptors sour over the

valley.

It felt right.

Forty-one years ago today I had my surgery.

It wasn't a bliss filled period my mother had just run a huge number on me trying to manipulate me into not having SRS. My family disowned me.

My surgery was painful and I had complications. I wound up spending a year with hideous looking genitals. Labiaplasty etc corrected that but it was still a hard period to live.

But here I am many years later, a survivor, the last of my group.

It does get easier, but you have to let it.

There really is something to the idea of post-transsexual or woman/man of transsexual history.

Painful cuts become angry scars and in time those scars fade and weather into pale thin lines.

It isn't about where you came from, dwelling in the past is being trapped in that difficult and painful time.

When all is said and done, when all the glasses have been drained, all the hard times become the stuff of memoirs. Life goes on.

These days my struggles and problems are the same as many, perhaps most old working class women and men.

The pensions were raided by the junk bond dealers and the thieves of Wall Street. Social Security won't pay the rent on a tent under a bridge.

My joints ache. Tina, my life partner and I are trying to build up a swap meet business and life goes on.

Like Joni Mitchell's song The Circle Game.

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