

## **PERSPECTIVES I HAVE LEARNED FROM MY GENDER ALTERED FRIENDS**

**This is a one page summary. Detailed comments follow on the next pages.**

- **In the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, intersex and Agender communities, LGBTQIA, T is a different, separate category.** I refer to “transgender/intersex” as “gender altered” since this is reality in many varieties of alterations, often unwittingly triggered by chemicals we spray on our school lawns and public spaces, and serve in our school and college cafeterias.
- **The gender altered community in general does NOT appreciate Bruce/Caitlyn Jenner.**
- **The gender altered community is much MUCH larger than commonly believed.**
- **The gender persona transition process often but not always all the time, relieves the dysphoria these people suffer a great deal. However, then family and friends usually desert them, at least for a time, which creates significant loneliness and heartbreak.**
- **Suicide attempt rate among the gender altered is about 42%. 1/3 are successful.**
- **When the bathroom bills became a political football the suicide hotline calls tripled!**
- **Bathroom bills exacerbate gender altered folks true fear of arrest/danger/murder.**
- **Gender altered people are much more likely to be murdered than the general population.**
- **In most states of the USA, if someone murders a gender altered person, they can use the “transgender panic” defense to avoid or downgrade the murder charge.**
- **The gender altered community is not statistically known to attack women in bathrooms or at all, rather they are the ones who are attacked.**
- **Their chosen name and correct pronouns are very important to gender altered people.**

## Details of the summary above:

**In the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, Agender community, LGBTQIA the TIA is a different category in most cases.** In most cis folk's minds, "transgender" conjures up the perception of a dangerous sexually variant individual. In most cases this is inaccurate. Transgender is not behavior. It is who the person IS. Most/many hermaphrodite/transgender/intersex, aka gender altered individuals are quiet, law abiding and insightful persons who suffer and try to get through life as best they can with their alterations with very little comfort or support other than in their own communities. For that reason I will use the term "gender altered" in this paper. This avoids the "perception of threat" that the term "transgender" evokes, and reminds us of environmental factors. Gender altered people do not like to publicly specify if they trans or intersex/hermaphrodite.

**The gender altered community in general does NOT appreciate Bruce/Caitlyn Jenner.** They say this person inaccurately represents who they are, and has plenty of money for bodyguards, medical treatments, to look pretty and has no idea what the rest of them suffer. This may change in time.

**The gender altered community is much MUCH larger than commonly believed.** Many of them are not recognized at birth, because the alterations may be internal and/or functional in the endocrine system or in structures in the head, and other systems that are undiscovered/not understood. For years many of them may have sensed but not fully understood that their misery really was because they were gender altered. Some may privately cross dress to relieve their dysphoria and therefore may initially assume that they are cross dressers. Later they conclude that they are truly gender altered. Some may not have money for medical diagnosis or treatment, and may suicide eventually without the help they need, although more information is available today.

**The attempted suicide rate in the gender altered community is 42-46%, and 33% of those attempts are successful.** They really do experience gender dysphoria, and are often rejected socially due to their mix of male and female characteristics, with or without the completion process. If they complete to one gender or the other medically they may be very much relieved in many ways, but their family and friends usually desert them, many churches reject them, and now they cannot even use the bathroom safely. They trade significant physical and psychological relief only to become worse social outcasts.

**When the bathroom bills became a political football the suicide hotline calls tripled.** My friend helps work the phones, and has talked people off bridges, called the police, and spent up to 18 hours with a suicidal person getting them to hospitals. She grieves very much when she loses a caller. A few weeks ago her best friend committed suicide. She believes the bathroom bills were the final straw for her friend.

**The completion process often but not always relieves the dysphoria.** In most cases the completion process helps them tremendously but like all other processes in life, not in every single case. They are still both male and female. However, the claim that there is a 30% regret rate is not accurate in the real community. An author who has introduced that statistic was not himself gender altered..

No one I know who works with this community sees even close to a 30% regret rate. It still remains though that fully transitioned people still suicide much more often if their family rejects them. Family and friends' support appears to normalize the suicide rate.

**Gender altered people are much more likely to be beaten or murdered.** In most states a person who murders a transgender is allowed to use the "transgender panic" defense to avoid or downgrade the murder charge! This is one reason why a normally quiet community that wishes to blend in has become very vocal. They are in danger.

**Gender altered people are not a notable threat in bathrooms.** They wish to use the restroom matching their persona, as we all do, and leave quietly, for their own protection. They live in fear of being murdered. Unfortunately old fashioned peeping toms have always been around, but with heightened awareness, and cell phones, might this crime be less probable?

True gender altered people dress in the persona that matches the restroom they quietly use. Cowboys in women's rooms taking advantage of bathroom bills would stand out and likely quickly scatter any women who happen to walk in.

**Bathroom and other antitransgender bills exacerbate gender altered people's true fears of arrest or physical danger.** They sometimes do not have funds to physically or legally complete transition, and even if they do, the process takes time. Therefore they may carry identification that does not yet match their persona. This is dangerous for them as they may be jailed or worse if someone "clocks", (recognizes) them. A gender altered person was recently jailed when the person checked into a hotel and a clerk noticed a discrepancy in the driver's license.

Unfortunately some gender altered people struggle to survive financially. Gender altered persons of color are at high risk for homelessness. True, some may turn to prostitution, as "cis" persons may also. However, the gender altered community does not have a record for violence in restrooms.

**Mandated public family bathrooms, or lockable single stall rest rooms make a lot more sense than multiple stall gender neutral ones.** Small businesses such as gas stations already are so equipped. Larger facilities with multiple stall restrooms can afford renovations. When the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed years ago, it cost to convert public spaces, curbs, parking lots, but America got it done.

- **It is an insult to anyone to be misgendered, misnamed, or misidentified with incorrect pronouns.** This is especially important to gender altered people. It is a prime insult to intentionally "dead name" a gender altered person or use the wrong pronouns. They will be patient with mistakes but not intentional ones.