

# TABLE-OF-CONTENTS

intro 3

**PANSY DIVISION PLAYS  
15 QUESTIONS**  
an interview 6

**BURNING INSIDE  
A COMING OUT STORY**  
by Kurt Dyer 10

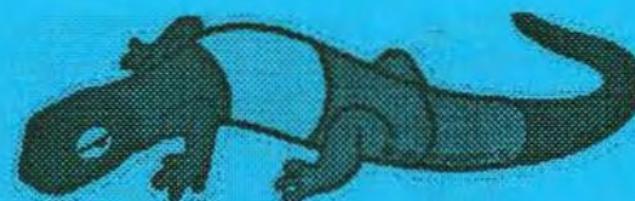
A Poem About Gender  
11 --binarygirl //

**MY DAY IN THE SUN**  
13

14. *Sellout*

Gender GAP 16

19 THAT  
LITTLE  
BOY  
a binarygirl story



as i sit down to write this there are 52 hours till the new year . if the whole world doesn t come to an end, then someone somewhere will pick this up and read it. probably you. so enjoy. and move forward into the next 1000 years with love and peace. ok, enough of that claptrap....

moving on...

winter is upon us. it s dark, and cold. all a little GF/mutant wants to do is snuggle up with someone. but if the recent past is any indication, this mute has one resoloution. no more impossible crushes. in the past couple of months we had 4, and they were all hearbreaking and fun, sad and beautiful non-affairs. so we ll try to move on to something more productive. becoming nuns.

let s see...worth mentioning: a\*teens, a super cute abba cover band; tori remixes from brett on mp3; being john malcovitch as a good existential headfuck; the el vez xmas show; olive, the other reindeer; and of course the little elves who fill my closet with the smell of dank kind buds...

In this issue:

¥ an awesome interview with pansy division. they made me laugh my ass off, and were poingnent at the same time...lookout for a new album sometime soon...they hinted that it may be black metal

¥ a couple of different peices about gender...one s a poem and one s a story...both are by my pal binarygirl.

¥ an irritating twist of online shopping

¥ some more musing on a lost? childhood

not in this issue:

¥ an article about domestic violence in same-sex relationships

• •

Leaglese - "First thing we do, we kill all the lawyers"

-William Shakespeare

but seriously. Mutate is free. if you paid for it. then you got ripped off. dildohead. if you want to submit something, please feel free. now accepting contributions for #4. Mutate is a new qweer zine. if you like it, or have questions or comments, please tell us. we attempt to distribute in boston, milwaukee, madison, nyc, ashville, atlanta and san francisco. check your local coffee shop, alternative/qweer book store, or get it from a friend. if you picked this up and aren t going to keep it, please pass it on. and please recycle. duh.

Reach out and touch somebody

email: miloboy@execpc.com

web: www.milosworld.com/mutate.html

↳ music reviews

↳ film reviews

↳ anything about the wto protests

now back to our regularly scheduled program. in our last episode we made a claim that we couldn't keep. but we'll try. N, the good-kissin str8 boy from mutate#1 traveled to san francisco for halloween. and it blew his mind. he hung out in the castro and mission districts. he shmoozed with a gaggle of jeansies, stole a martini glass from the pilsner, took pictures of tippy headron in a phone booth, met tons of cute bois and gyrls, then came back to brew city and fell in love. with C. i was there and, damn! i just want to wish them the best. i love them both, want them to know that their joy is mine, also. hopefully, we'll continue sharing their adventures for another couple of issues.

taking care of business

or

as e. would say, tcb, baby

to everyone who sent stamps but missed #2, i hope this fulfils that hole. thanx.

jojo: what the fuck kinda zine did you think i would write? just cause i love everyone doesn't make me not kweer.

d and hv on opposite coasts: thank you for being cute nice bois in my life.

rei-rei: you are my hero. i love you.

and finally...

here's the part i'm still unsure of. so far mutate has been a free zine. no ads, no coverprice. well, it does cost a little money to make. so what i've decided to do to help cover the cost is sell stickers. the order form is on page 15. If these work out, i'll make more.

That should just about wrap this up. Until next time, i'm a little gender fuckin freak saying Goodnight.

 Hey Mutants!  
we're moving. we finally found  
a permanent home. our new  
mailing address is:  
**Mutate Zine**  
**2935 N. Fratney St.**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53212**

4

**and now a moment of  
silence for all the  
people whose minds  
have been destroyed  
by following jesus  
christ in a fanatical,  
cult-like manner.  
do not fear.  
i'll pray for you.  
asshole.**

# PANSY DIVISION PLAYS 15 QUESTIONS

note: We caught up with Pansy Division at their show in Milwaukee, Oct. 10, 1999. We shot the shit with them for about an hour before their gig. We spoke mostly to Chris and Jon, but Luis and Patrick did pop in with their two cents. All are smart and funny, and seem to be worthy of the worship I heap upon them. All photos accompanying this article ©1999 Neil Keikhofer.

- Milo

## Musik

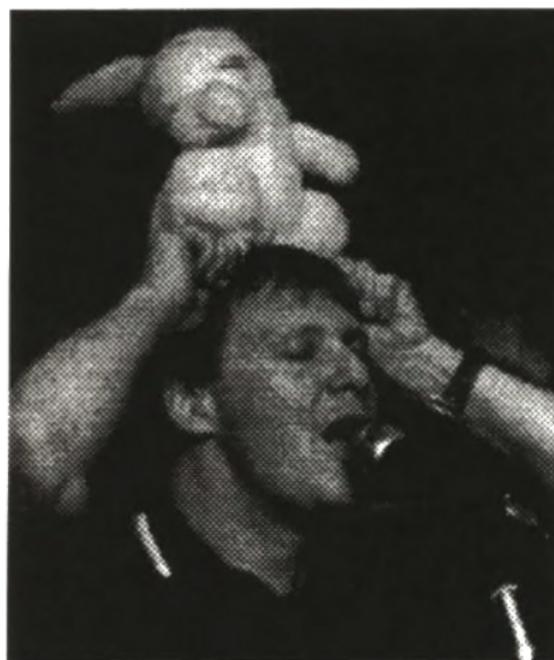
**1) How much of your music is influenced by your life experiences? Do you know Denny, The Beer Can boy, and the infamous "cowboys"? Have you had a 'Crabby Day'?**

**Chris:** I wrote Dick of Death about two different situations; James Bondage about my former partner and fantasy figure Sean Connery; This Is Your Life about another former partner; so yeah, it's life experiences I've had, would like to have, or have seen others go through.

**Luis:** When playing drums I usually think about bills I haven't paid,

ex's, or other things that make me mad or frustrated.

**Jon:** I've had a crabby day, met a beercan boy, never met Denny or The Cowboy.



**2) What other "queer" music has influenced you, or do you listen to? Do you differentiate between gay music and straight music?**

**Chris:** I don't listen to music just

because it's gay or not. It has to be good, first, or at least fit my taste. Most "gay" music is lousy anyway.

**Patrick:** Ditto. There are people in music who are gay that have influenced me but as far as what's considered "gay" music.....ick!!!!

**Luis:** Team Dresch, Glen Meadmore, and Shudder To Think (even though he's a closet case) have influenced me a lot. Do I differentiate? Of course! There's so little decent music made by queers that when I hear something good I totally rejoice, but it's very seldom. Oh, yea, Morrissey influenced me TONS in high school.

**Jon:** Those early Little Richard records are some of the wildest sounds I've ever heard. They're so out there, it makes me laugh. I hope some of our songs do the same.

**3) Is it difficult to be queer in the seemingly straight scene of punk/indie music? Do you get shit for it?**

**Chris:** No, not really. When punk started that's where a lot of queers were; well, disaffected ones, anyway.

**Patrick:** We get more shit for not being "punk" or "indie" enough than we do for being fags.

**6 Luis:** It's not difficult if I don't care what people think, I don't

give people the opportunity to give me shit, if they do, I make THEM look like assholes, y'know?

**Jon:** No, but it's difficult getting queers to pay attention. Most gays want to be spoonfed their culture, which makes them as dull as the average American. But we rarely get shit for being gay in our music "scene"; those that don't like us usually avoid us.

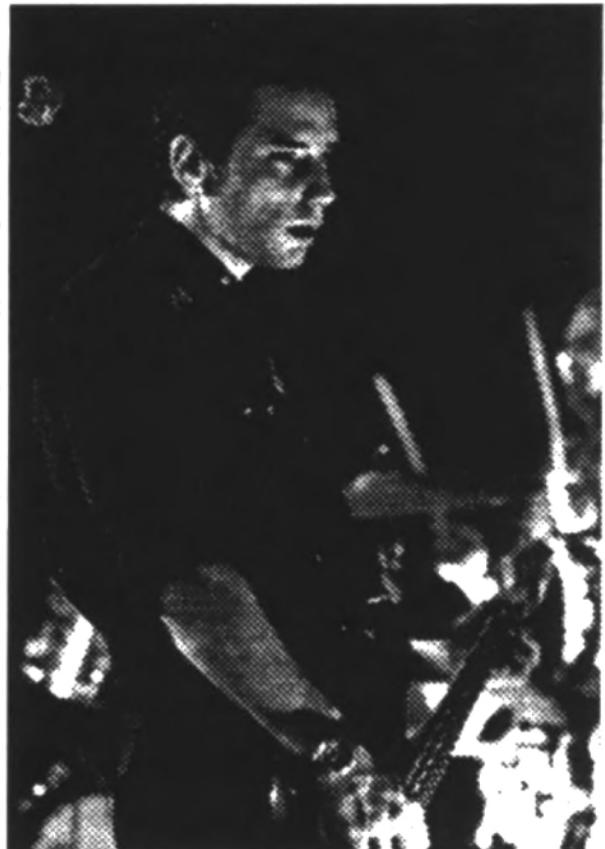
## Art

**4) If given the opportunity would you be willing to become a "house band" for an art movement, kind of like Velvet Underground and Andy Warhol's Factory?**

**Chris:** I never say never, but it better be a goof "cause"

**Patrick:** Yes, I love a lot of music that sounds "visual" or thematic if that's what you mean...but I wouldn't want to be part of some "hippie" collective or something.

**Luis:** Yes, absolutely. Probably with a more psychadelic, trip-hop band like Tricky meets Pink Floyd meets Air meets Tom Waits.



**5) Who rocks your visual world?**

**Jon:** The American landscape. The Canadian landscape. Nature is the most perfect art.

**Chris:** I love visual art, but I have no particular favorites. Dali, maybe. I go to SF's Museum of Modern Art [SFMoMA] at least twice a month when I'm home. And I do love a good film. Lately, I REALLY liked American Beauty!

**Patrick:** I like abstract stuff...Pollock is cool...I can't play the name game with visual art. I do like Architecture as well.

**Luis:** Ricky Martin!! Uh...I mean, um...Nameless street art. I love

seeing unintentional art. Like clusters or litter or a trashy liquor store or a hobo with a hot shopping cart!



## Sex

**6) What's the most interesting sex that you've ever had?(Not necessarily the best/worst, just interesting?)**

**Chris:** S/M with my former partner involving Christmas lights and Duct tape. I can't give you more details, but I was the top.

**Patrick:** Probably fucking in a park on the Chicago River right behind a police station. Or in a dirty alley while cars were driving by.

**Luis:** There's no way in hell I'm gonna tell you!!!

**Jon:** Sleeping with my best friend from high school, 10 years after high school (it was his bi-curious phase) and a dear college friend, also a decade later. Having sex with them, after wanting it, and trying to imagine it for years was VERY interesting.

**7) Do you use rubbers ALL the time? If not, when and why?**

**Chris:** Yes, except in committed non-HIV+ relationships. I recommend the new Reality female condoms.

**Patrick:** Not with my partner, otherwise yes, always.

**Luis:** I gotsa a long tem boyfriend, so no. But otherwise yes.

**Jon:** Yes, always, even with my boyfriend.

**8) Do any of you switch hit?**

**Chris:** I'm 80% gay, 20% straight, but I haven't had sex with a woman in over a decade. If I had a chance to have sex with Neve Campbell, I would!

**Patrick:** Never. No "happy dugout" for me.

**Luis:** I did like two years ago. It was fun, but not what I want to do on a regular basis.

**Jon:** No.

## Fun, Fun, Fun

**9) If you were building a mini-golf course, what three 'obstacles' would you HAVE to have?**

**Chris:** Of course, the windmill, but how about a huge pair of legs and the ball goes into a vagina, anus, what have you, or maybe having something involving breaking glass.

**Patrick:** Having to do mushrooms before playing, swarms of locusts and molten lava....I guess it would be a biblical theme park.

**Luis:** A 20 foot tall Donnie Osmond or Michael Jackson

**Jon:** Right-wing religious and political figures in embarrassing posses.

**10) The mysterious Somebody hands you a roll of quarters and drops you off in an arcade...what video games or pinball machines would get your money?**

**Chris:** I'm all about pinball. My favorite is World Cup Soccer.

**Patrick:** One of my all-time favorite games is Crazy Climber and the Simpsons game; other than that...Asteroids, 720(), Galaga, Moon Patrol, Journey and the Guns 'N Roses pinball machine.

**Luis:** Ms. PacMan for 30 hours non-stop!!!

**Jon:** Those virtual reality road race games.

**11) What do you read for pleasure?**

**Chris:** Agatha Christie, Stephen King, rock trivia

**Patrick:** Magazines, shit on the Web and books about rock bands.

**Luis:** Steinbeck, murder mysteries, Kafka (sorry, so art fag), also scandalous biographies of celebs, especially the king of pop, MJ.

**Jon:** Newspapers, political mags, music mags, rock books. My boyfriend is currently feeding me Genet novels.

## Queer Issues

**12) It has been a year since the murder of Mathew Shepard. In addition to your music, what tools do you use in your day-to-day lives to fight bigotry and ignorance?**

**Chris:** Just getting to know people. It puts a face on their "fear". I just try to be the best person I can, and by example, hopefully others will do the same.

**Patrick:** Nothing. I just be myself, which does shock some people that I am gay. I also call people on their bullshit preconcieved notions of "gay".

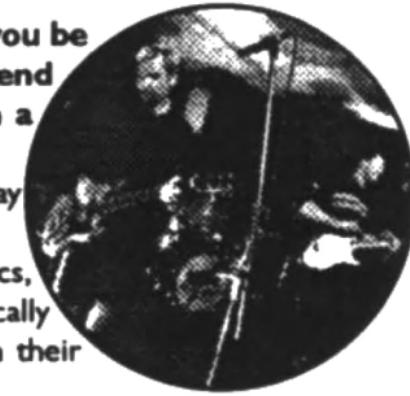
**Luis:** Living by example. If a homophobe can get along with me and then find out I'm a queer, then he has to rethink his prejudices. I just try to have a really good rapport with all types.

**Jon:** Music! Our band! Go team! Crush Biggity! Yeah!

**13) Do you bash back? Would you be willing to use violence to defend yourself or someone else from a homophobic attack?**

**Chris:** Ideally, no, but I'd rather stay alive, and I'm willing to fight for it.

**Patrick:** Not as in "revenge" tactics, but if someone verbally or physically harms me, they have a problem on their hands.

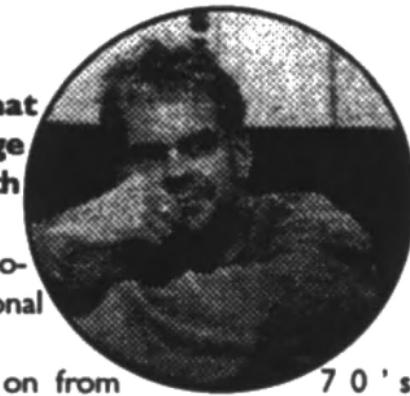


**Luis:** Absolutly. My friend Jerry punched out a homophobe who attacked him and I missed it by 5 minutes, Damn!! I would bash back with no remorse.

**Jon:** Hopefully, I wouldn't have to, but I would if I had to. I'm small, so I have to be careful.

**14) What can you suggest that queer kids do to effect change and make the world deal with us more positively?**

**Chris:** Stop perpetuating stereotypes! Stop shopping at International Male! Stop listening to bad techno.



70's

**Patrick:** Amen Brother!!...move on from disco. Stop trying to be perfect looking and marketable.

**Luis:** Carve your own path and don't be appologetic. If you're a disco queen, do it. If you're into wrestlemania, Do it, Who care what you're supposed to be. Live your own way without appologies. Whatever you do, your self assurance speaks louder than a million slogans or rainbow flags.

**Jon:** Be yourself. This can be very difficult though if what you are conflicts with a hostile environment. But being a cookie-cutter gay person isn't much more interesting than a cookie-cutter straight person. Boring! Just 'cause you're gay doesn't automatically make someone interesting.

**15) Do you feel seperation between gay men's community and lesbian's community? How can this be overcome?**

**Chris:** The more gay people come out, the less of a "comminity" there is. Is there a "straight community"? I see this as a natural progression, that gay will mean less and less, like left-handedness. As far as gay men vs. Lesbians, I see it all the time. I have no answers for it other than I don't discriminate, myself.

**Patrick:** I can be all so very "high school". Yes, there is a seperation but I think it mostly is because of each groups "intrests" and I don't always think of it as a bad thing. I do hate when men give women shit about being in a gay bar, wheather or not the women are gay themselves, sex based prejudices are bullshit...and then dykes can be pretty ruthless as well.

**Luis:** I don't feel the seperation in my own life. I have tons of dyke friends who are sooper wild and fun (NY)!! As far as the main-stream gay/lesbian communities I see the separation, but main-stream gay/lesbian community is so petty that I guess they deserve whatever their gripes are that separate them.

-Fin

# BURNING INSIDE A COMING OUT STORY

Have you ever had something burning inside of you so intense you thought people could see it in your eyes? Well, if you are queer at some point in your life you can probably relate to that question. We all have different "coming out" stories...some much better than others and some in the making.

Well, here's my "coming out" story. I grew up in a small town in northwestern Wisconsin. Like most youth my age I knew I was gay since I was very young. My first crush was on a teacher at my elementary school. So I don't know what it means to be "straight." To have a desire to be with a woman like I am with men. This is all I know and what I am. Anyways, for my entire childhood I grew up having all of these crushes on guys; the entire time thinking that I am just like every other boy. It wasn't until I started seeing all of my friends dating girls and teasing girls did I start to realize that I was quite different than my friends. For reasons that nobody can tell me, I understood at such a young age that what I felt was wrong and that I should NEVER allow anybody to find out my little secret. So I played the part. I played it the best I could...dating woman, playing sports, and never acting on the true feelings I had.

Now, let's jump to middle school. I remember the exact moment when I heard "faggot" being yelled by some of my friends at a "reject" in our grade. At that age, I heard "faggot" all of the time...and it clicked to me that "faggot" was me. I was this incredible sin that dare not speak it's name. So, I knew that I wasn't worth the air that others' breathed and it would be best for me to die. I can't even remember the number of times I tried to kill myself. Each time lowering my self-esteem & driving me farther into a dark null.

I went through all of that struggle silent. Without support from friends or family. Hell, my family wasn't even worth the name of family. I lived with 4 other people...my family. I had 2 brothers, my mom, and my step-dad. My step-dad hated me with every bone & muscle in his body. Maybe because the first time I saw him come into my house I screamed and locked my bedroom door. Maybe because I told my mom I didn't like him. Or maybe because he knew I was gay. Either way, I was forced to raise myself and struggle through any problem by myself.

*continued on p. 18*



# A poem about gender



your clothes  
your walk  
the way  
you talk  
your purse  
your wallet  
do you drag?  
or haul it  
your face  
made up  
a boy or girl  
the pronouns used  
a gender blur  
your hair. your eyes  
your gesturing hands  
i see the girl  
inside your glance  
your kickass boots  
your muscled arms  
i see the boy  
inside your charms.  
- binarygirl 

# MY DAY IN THE SUN

It's kinda strange. Or maybe it's just me. Over the last couple months I figured something out that I wish people had told me when I was younger. I'm a late bloomer. I feel like I missed so much of my childhood, only to 'rediscover' it in my mid twenties.

## Music

I was always an awkward, dorky child. When I was in 4th and 5th grade I shunned the pop music that my peers were listening to for the soul-less sounds of WBBM-AM news radio out of Chicago. I tuned into PBS and NPR religiously. Eventually, I discovered the syrupy sweetness of the Beach Boys and Jan & Dean. Then it was the Beatles for ever.

Eventually, for my 13th birthday, my friends Erin and Vashti began to save me. They bought me my first real tapes that would lead me down the beautiful, dark, twisted path that has left me sitting here pounding away on the keyboard of my little PowerBook. The Smiths' *Strangeways Here We Come* and Robyn Hitchcock and the Egyptians' *Globe of Frogs*.

So I became a devoted Smiths fan. I loved Morrissey, with his sexy, mopey voice and writhing body language. And eventually I followed that to it's logical conclusion. He began to annoy me. After his first two or three solo albums, I gave up.

Unfortunately, while I was so busy being in love with Mr. Whiney, I missed a lot of the music that I absolutely love now. The Pet Shop Boys. Erasure. Bronski Beat. A different sort of fag music.

## Fashion

**12** I was never a 'goth' in the traditional

sense. Maybe a little punky in appearance by my last year of high school, but that's it. Now, however, I am discovering the joy of looking sexy. Fishnet shirts.

Makeup.(I am trying, at least.). Baggy jeans with boxer briefs sticking out.

And of course, I am hopelessly stuck on 'grunge'. I was never a big Nirvana fan, hated Pearl Jam and all the rest of that Seattle krap. But ripped jeans with flannel shirts over long undearwear tops with a t-shirt in between is the shit. So comfortable, and I always look about 1993.

### Sex

Again, I was slow to develop the sexuality I currently reside in. I mean, I am. I still wanna fuck everybody. Most of my friends and peers seem to be settling down, or at least comfortable with the notion of monogomy. I hate it. I don't want one boyfreind or gyrlfriend. I want all of them. Why should I be limited? This notion seems to be so 1970's, however. It's like AIDS took the party out of everyone born after 1972.

All in all, other than being a geek with a Mac, I really am behind the times. Culture and the world have moved on, and I am busy learning and enjoying shit that passed two decades ago.



©Milo

# Sell Out

Yes, it's true. *Mutate* is gonna sell out. I believe, ideally that zines should be free. unfortunately, it costs a little money to keep making cool shit. To help subsidize the cost I am making stickers, and maybe eventually t-shirts. If you think this is disgusting and wrong, please let me know. Like wise, if you think this is cool, please buy some. they make great gifts, too.

MOM AND DAD  
I MUNCH  
RUGS

Unfortunately,  
Signs of Lesbianism  
Aren't This Obvious

©1999 Mutate Zine

Mom And Dad, I Munch Rugs \$2.50  
(4  $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 5  $\frac{1}{2}$ ")

*mutate* zine



our still nameless mutant \$1  
(actual size)

**C'mon Kids!**  
**Fill out**  
**the form**



**...it's FUN!!!**

**Order Form**

<u>Description</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Price</u>
mutant		\$1 ea.
rugmunch		\$2.50 ea.
total		

**please send well concealed cash.**

**Mutate Zine Stickers**

**2935 N. Fratney St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212**

**And Don't Forget to Include:**

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

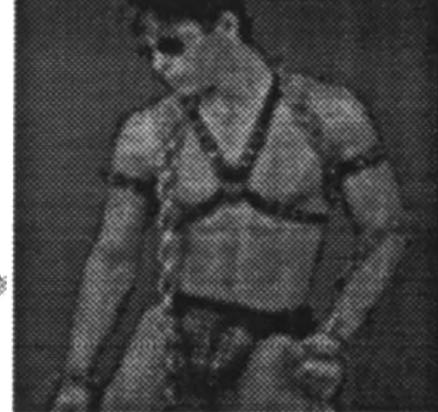
**Your Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your email:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Everyone In Leather?

COWS AGREE: RUBBER, LYCRA, PVC, AND NEOPRENE ARE HOTTER

## Gender GAP

Who makes up the rules anyway? In order to generate the spoof ad above, I recently went 'shopping' for a logo-image at [gap.com](http://gap.com). The original 'Fag' tag gets credited to this guy i went to skewl with, a big kween named PLE. I have always loved the concept, and wanted to redo it for the Gap's recent 'Everyone in Leather' ad campaign.

I've been a gap shopper since i was in middle skewl. over the years, I have discovered the miracle of their sales rack. While i hate the thought of dropping 40 or 50 bucks on a pair of jeans, occasionally, i find some great bargins. (I know, I know...there are a lot of issues surounding the gap, the biggest being the fact that everyone ends up looking like a clone.. ')

I'm a small person, so I can wear both boyz and gyrls clothes without a problem...If the cut is right. When cruising the sales rack in a brick-and-mortar store, I move between both, finding and rejecting clothes for both genders.

Well, doing it online, I found something a little strange. At [gap.com](http://gap.com), you HAVE to be one or the other, kind of. For as much as the clothes can be andro, while shopping, the customer must pick either male or female. It's not just 'shirts' or 'cargo

**pants' or whatever. This phenomenon surpasses the Gap, too. At Abercrombie & Fitch and Banana Republic you have to be Men or Women.**

**Now, dear reader, you are probably saying to yourself 'big deal' or 'who gives a fuck'. We are all used to being told by society that there are two genders. You are either male or female. The reality is that for a lot of us, there is a huge middle ground. It goes beyond clothes. Boys in makeup. Drag queens. Andro gyrls. Transsexuals. Mix-and-match butch/femme for ALL of us.**

**Back to reality: As a geek, owner of milosworld.com, etc. I understand that what appeared in my URL window that night was just part of the cgi script that powered gap.com's shopping engine. It's just a chunk of code. However, I think it informs us of a larger evil that is trying to pigeon hole us into neat little boxes.**

**I like my penis, but I don't want to be a capitol B boy. And I certainly don't want The Gap to be the one to tell me that I should be.**

**'For more on 'Gappiness' check out Microserfs by Douglas Coupland. pages 268-270. (ISBN 0-06-039148-0)**



**This Is  
Creepy**

I was much different than all of my friends in high school...for more reasons than sexual orientation. I lived 2 lives. My school life and my home life...and neither of which overlapped. To my friends, I seemed to be a very happy, intelligent student. I always smiled to hide the agony of depression and loneliness. At home it was very common for me to come home from school and be hit by my step-father for something he thought I had done. My step-father continuously told me how worthless I was and every time he hit me it just reaffirmed my worthlessness. I continued to struggle with my depression and continued to make weak attempts at taking my life...hoping that someone would realize what was going on and help me.

It wasn't until I found out that another kid at my school was gay. My tiny little world collapsed!

I found out his name and tried so hard to find out who he was...without being discovered myself.

Somewhere in that dark cave I was living in, a flame sparked and a candle was lit. For the first time ever, I had a grain of hope. A thought that maybe there wasn't anything wrong with me at all. Something or someone to prove to me that I was valuable. I was looking for someone to validate me...and that is what I found in that one other gay student. His name is Wells. I took me months to go up and talk to him and even longer for me to finally "come out" myself.

But I was lucky. I was lucky to find someone in my school who was out and proud. I feel grateful to have had someone to model myself after. But, everything wasn't perfect after I met Wells. Yes, I met a whole community that was just like me. That was going through the same stuff that I was going through. But, I still had to deal with an abusive step-father who tried his hardest to make my life hell. He continued to beat me and several times he read my journal and read how I hated him and wanted him to die. So my life was getting better and severely worse at the same time. It wasn't until the end of my high school career that my life made an 180\* turn. My step-father kicked me out of the house. That day replays in my head everyday. All of my things were thrown into garbage bags and tossed onto the back porch. I didn't hesitate a moment and began to grab my



# THAT LITTLE BOY

a binarygirl story

When I was a little boy, I remember my mother telling me that she was going to die. I didn't know what this meant. I didn't understand what would happen. I only knew that it was bad, that I was scared, that this had something to do with my world caving in.

When I was a little boy, I remember dressing in my mother's clothes. I did it to be close to her, to hold on to her, to maybe preserve her, to tie her here to me. Something about wearing her clothes made me a warrior, made me able to stave off her death, made me the reason she was still alive.

As she got sicker, I more furiously donned her garments. I did it passionately, I did it ritualistically, I did it sorrowfully and powerfully and fetishistically. Finally, I did it obsessively, I did it secretly, I did it sexually.

She died when I was 13. I continued wearing her clothes. I saved some, stolen from her dresser. I embodied her. I called to her. I tried to pull her back from death.

I worked at it. I waited. I conjured. I prayed. I wore her perfume. I would stand like her, talk like her, gesture like her. I walked to the cemetery on the weekends and took dirt from her grave to rub on my body. I wore pieces of her clothing while I was at school. She remained dead. And I kept looking for her ghost.

Soon, I was buying new clothes "for my girlfriend," or "for my sister," I would tell the sales clerks. I went through all the phases, dressing up, seeing if I could pass, watching women, watching other cross-dressers. Going out dressed in guys clothes and listening to other boys pass judgement on how the "girls" looked.

I learned to pass. I learned a femininity and sensitivity that was not overwrought. I learned to feel and to look for what was under the surface, not the exterior trappings.

This whole time I was in therapy.

"Faggot!" "Sissypants" "Shut up you skinny twerp!" That's how they talked to me. I was 15 when I dropped out of school. I didn't have anything in common with anyone. I couldn't gain weight. I couldn't gain muscle. I didn't play sports. I didn't care about those things, anyway.

Then my father kicked me out because I wasn't in school and I wasn't working and I wasn't the son he wanted. It was summer, and I quickly learned the places to sleep and where to get food. I found a job washing dishes and cleaning in a bakery. I'd wash up at night after everyone left. Both myself and my clothes. It was so hot in there they'd be dry by

the time I left. When I got my first paycheck I moved in to a small rooming house 3 blocks away. Those were hard days.

I took another part time job and saved money. Then I moved to a different city. I knew if I needed to, I would move again. Far from my father and my sisters. Far from anyone who knew me, so that I could recreate myself. And that I did. One happy day I started on hormones.

Soon after I found a friend who looked a little like me—dark hair and eyes, anyway. He was cute and sweet and safe to tell, and he agreed to be my "brother." I changed my story and took on his. I learned about his history, his family and their habits, culture and traditions. We worked out a plausible story for me. So now I tell people it was my father who died. I never mention my sisters. I use religion as the reason I never see my mother. No one knows where I'm really from. It doesn't matter anyway. I've recreated a new history to go along with my new self.

I got my driver's license altered — a slight spelling change in my name, so that my biological gender was not evident; my birthdate (changed the "6" in 1966 to a "0"), so that I would no longer be a minor; and my gender. When I went to the DMV, I dressed up. Not too much, but I had long hair then and was wearing a powder blue blouse, some eye shadow and a little lipstick. I was sick to my stomach, shaking inside. I told them that they messed up on my license. The woman behind the counter looked at me and saw that I was a girl, not a boy. I had a photocopy of my birth certificate which, of course, I doctored so that it showed the right name, gender and birthdate. It was almost lunchtime, and I think that's what saved me. She was in a hurry to get out of there. So she just keyed in the new information. It was so easy. I felt light-headed with euphoria.

After that, I went through phases. First and briefly through a "high femme" phase. I don't know why I did it. It made me feel sick after a while, like I was a big fake. But maybe I needed to get it out of my system. Then, I flipped to the other side and became really butch—I shaved my head and wore men's dress clothes: nice shoes, crisp ironed shirts, and ties. I have a very fine tie collection now, and I'll still wear one on occasion. But that wasn't right either. It was all too much.

So I settled into what was comfortable, and decided that I needed to remove myself from the world and its expectations. So now, I'm wearing ripped jeans, a flannel shirt and boots; tomorrow maybe I'll wear my baggy black pants and a long-sleeved, white shirt.

I'm learning to define myself from the inside out, instead of the other way around.

Today, I have breasts. I still have my penis (and plan to keep it), but no testicles. I have a smooth, hairless face. I don't ever wear dresses anymore. I'm just another dyke, almost always accepted, but

still always alone. I've spent so much time studying human behavior and gender expressions, that I have become almost uncaring of how those things are perceived in group dynamics, and I really am not sure how people see me, whether or not they wonder, or question or know. But I am comfortable with myself, and life is short, and I've just decided to be who I am, however I feel, no matter where that puts me on someone else's gender scale.

I try now to remember that little boy who I once was. I've become so used to cleaning up my language that my words and what I'm trying to convey have changed my memory. You'll not catch me saying "when I was a little boy," but "when I was a child," "when I was a kid." I think back to the boy who was trying to hold on to his mommy. And how my actions that originated in a childish need have matured and been so fine-tuned that the need itself has changed. My actions have almost no suspected hidden agenda. Very few people question my motives, and what's really behind the mask I wear. In fact, I no longer think that I'm wearing much of a mask at all, at least not when it comes to gender.

But the question of identity haunts me. Who am I? and Who am I in relation to others? and How would my friends react if they knew? Would they view me as someone else? and Would that change who I am?

I've come to the conclusion that I am many different people. I am one way with these friends and another way with those friends, one person in the past, someone else in the future. I am sometimes empty and sometimes full. And when I am one way, I cannot remember the other. And that's ok with me.

Now every once in a while I catch myself wondering about my father. What would he think of his "daughter?" Or my sisters—I fantasize about going back to the city we're from and watching them. If they met me, would they recognize me? I doubt it. I've changed in so many ways. But thinking of them reminds me of the feelings of longing and sorrow that I have for my lost family. Feelings of emptiness and of a home to which I can never go back. And those feelings are mingled and tainted with violent anger and disgust, the harsh emotions which have been the fuel that kept me alive. Yes, the springboard that propelled me to be true to myself. And so when I think of my father and sisters, there is also a gratitude for this gift of freedom that came from breaking their shackles.

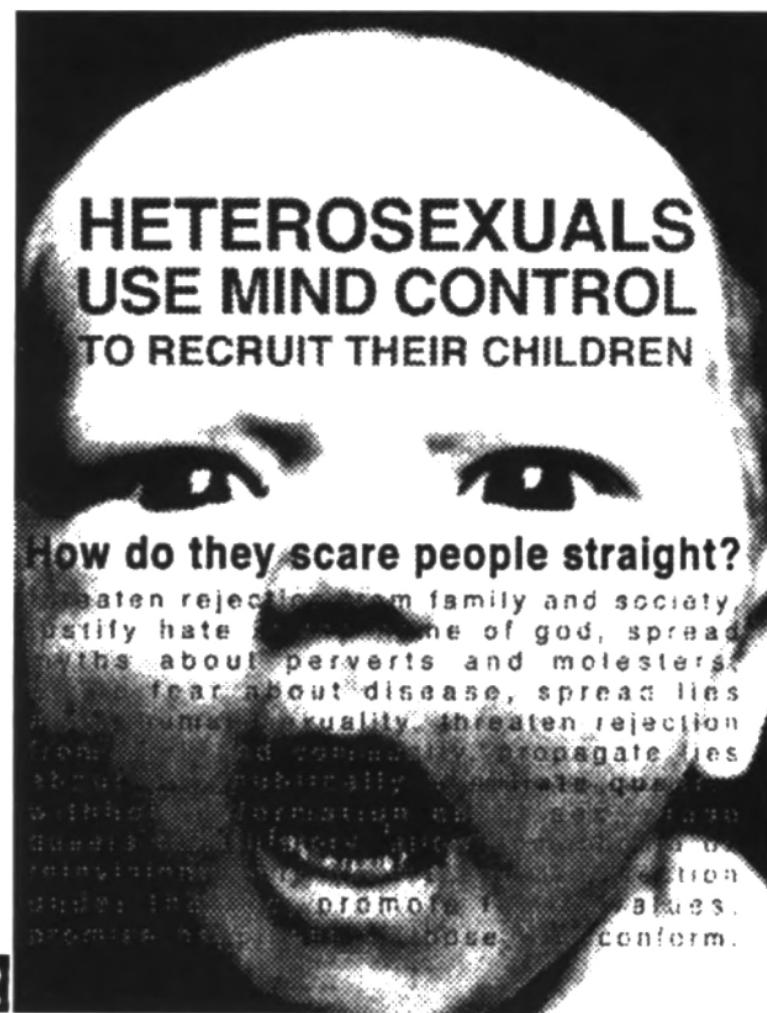
But to this day, it is my mother that this little boy thanks most of all.

didn't hesitate a moment and began to grab my things and put them into my friends car. It took me 5 trips to get all of the garbage bags...everytime I had to pass the window and watch as "he" was laughing at me and watching TV. On my last trip, my mom came out of the house crying telling me that it was all "his" idea and she had no control over him. I told to not to bother with me...I knew where I was going.

I have always been lucky. It was fate that had me kicked out of my house...because I moved in with my bestfriend, Kristy, and her family and they took care of my like I was a child. I finally had a roof over my head and people that loved me more than anybody had ever loved me before. If I ever see my step-father again, I would like to look him in the face and tell him, "Thank you for kicking me out and giving me the chance to find a real family who loved me for who I am. Oh, and by the way, I am still gay."

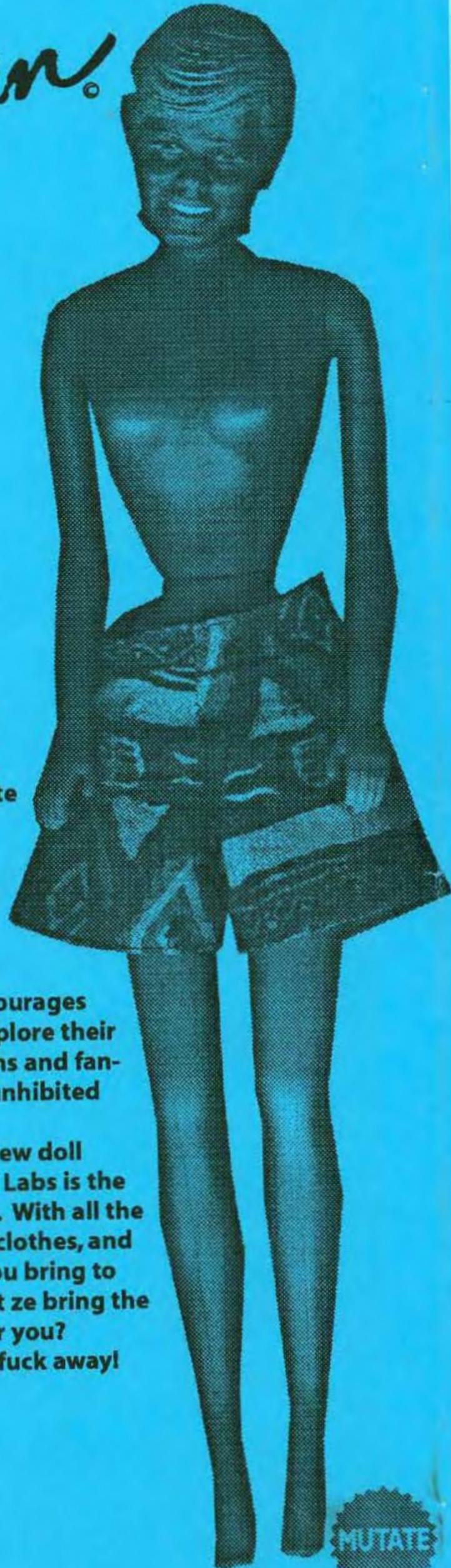
I guess what I want to say is...if you can be "out" and have resources that make that possible. DO IT! You will be the spark of hope in another closeted youth's life. You will have the chance to help someone in more ways than most people in their life ever will.

If you are a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender youth than you should check out Project Q. Project Q is a program "by and for" lgbtq youth ages 24 & under. For more info call 223.3220--email: [projectqyouth@yahoo.com](mailto:projectqyouth@yahoo.com) - webpage: [www.projectqyouth.com](http://www.projectqyouth.com) - or stop by 170 South Second Street, Milwaukee, WI 53204



If they weren't,  
people wouldn't  
do them. The  
next time you are  
feeling groovy,  
remember that if  
you loose too  
much control you  
might have to  
trade your Extacy  
and K in for  
Retrovir, Videx,  
savdine, and oth-  
ers. And then you  
would feel less  
than groovy.

# Bean.



## We

here at Mutate  
think it's  
healthy to  
play with  
dolls, no  
matter how  
old you are.

Dollplay encourages  
people to explore their  
hopes, dreams and fan-  
tasies in an uninhibited  
manner.

Bean®, the new doll  
from Mutate Labs is the  
best for that. With all the  
accessories, clothes, and  
ideas that you bring to  
hir, shouldn't ze bring the  
plaything for you?  
Now genderfuck away!

MUTATE