



News Letter

JYOTI NIVAS COLLEGE AUTONOMOUS-PG CENTRE

TRANSGENDER

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Director's Message



Well, I was discussing about Transgender as early as 1986, while doing my BA in Jyoti Nivas College. During that period of time I read an article that spoke of transgender as a person where *a woman's soul is caught up in a man's body* in other words a *female is trapped in a male body*. This came to me as a *figurative interpretation of transgender*, and convinced me of their given physical, mental and emotional state to a great extent. Despite, the understanding given to us by our society, I realise that I need to scale above a given understanding of gender.

From then on my understanding and outlook to them changed completely.

In their social interaction, I observe that there is a kind of familiarity in the way they relate to men. These days there are many of them at traffic signals and they ask for money from everyone but specifically from men. Sometime it appears to me that they demand from men as if it is their duty to give. There is a kind of expectation and that keeps them going and continue this practice as a way of life.

Personally I have come to accept them as people just as we are and above all else, to be respected. To me they are persons who needed to be understood and supported adequately.

Today we are more aware than in the past. In the yester years they were considered as a curse and something unthinkable for a family. Many family disowned them purely for the social stigma attached to them, and due to the fear of facing the taunting remarks and queries of people.

Today what is expected of us is a belief change in our perception, an alternative thinking in lines of multiple gender. This will be instrumental in reorganising the norms of our society. When this happens, we can be sure we will find a way out in this vast beautiful world for all of us to coexist, as one happy family.

We the young generation, must make a world of difference in the way we encounter transgender, with agility and freedom.

Dr. Sr. Lalitha Thomas

TRANSGENDER- EPHEMERAL

*The body belong to me, yet why do I feel it doesn't!
I love the woman in me, but why am I called a man.
From the tiny window, the sky looked at me,
She whispered into my tender ear "aww, you're such a blessing".
But the world down here, held a mirror for me,
She asked me look inn, and it was written "why are you such a curse?"
I asked the lord; in the Garden of Eden, you created the man and women,
But where do I belong?
With fruit not immoral and life not free.
Why did thou create me?
A voice from above echoed in wrath;
I created you with the heart of a woman and the mind of a man,
If the voice of the world broke you apart,
Raise and pick the shattered pieces.
He said in a voice with deep pain;
"I have created you in my image and likeness, you are mine".
The darkness left and soon a beam of light hit my eyes,
The word no more seemed like before,
I looked around, I found a community which I belong to,
A society that accepted me, a law that moulded itself – all for my sake.
Life is ephemeral, for I knew not I was a drop in the ocean of many who felt the same.*

Anisha Cruze, II year MBA

SHE KEEPS MOVING

The red lipstick she wore quite matched her yellow saree.
The scorching heat kept her moving.
She moved from one vehicle to another, stood for 3 seconds near the window of each car.
People in the car would respond negatively or positively.
One would pull the window down and hand rupees 10 or 20 to her.
Some would throw a little shade on her by not even pulling the window down.
She keeps moving,
making specific palm sounds,
She keeps moving.

Little did she know that her life would be this miserable?
This misery wouldn't fail her, she hopes for a better life and to live one, she begs.
The embellishment on her face;
the not so perfect winged eyeliner, the smudged lip liner, the jhumkas and the bangles, screaming voicelessly at people that she too is a woman,
A trans woman.
The big bindi she wore, adds to her appearance.
Children in the car, taxis and bikes are scared when they see her.
Why should children be scared?
Isn't it the duty of elders sitting next them to educate who a Trans woman is?
She doesn't intend to scare children instead she blesses them.
She blesses them and keeps moving,
making specific palm sounds,
She keeps moving.

Sonu Fakiha, 1st MA

IT'S HER SUCCESS STORY

“I am happy and liberal than most ‘born women’ I have seen” – Kalki Subramaniam

Kalki Subramaniam is a transgender rights activist, artist, actor, writer, inspirational speaker and entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu. Kalki is a transgender with her born in a remote village located 30km from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Young and fierce, she carries the badge of being the country's first ever transgender artist. She has lived through a journey that is no less than a roller-coaster ride. From battling gender disparities at her adolescence to today holding two masters degrees, she has written her own success story, the one that continues to be an inspiration to many. Though her childhood days were difficult, she was accepted in her family, which is a rare occurrence when one looks at the lives of other transgender.



Her family backed her education and have stood by her all times till date, helping her play every role with perfection. Kalki holds two master's degree – Masters in Journalism Mass Communication and Masters in International Relations. During her post-graduation studies, she started publishing a monthly magazine in Tamil for transgender women called Sahodari (which means sister).

This is the first Tamil magazine published for transgender in India. She has walked down the path of entrepreneurship when a friend, a young artist approached her for help in promoting his craft, especially musical instruments. With this she invested in his products and began selling online. Brand Kalki Enterprise was born. She is soon starting a new venture called Kalki Organics offering pure, eco-friendly, zero chemical organic soaps and personal health care products.

Her Achievements

In 2008, Kalki founded the Sahodari foundation an organisation that advocated for transgender people in India. In 2010, she received international recognition when she was the official guest of the United States of America as a Human rights activist and was honoured in the United Nations Office in New York City for social work. In 2014, she was chosen by Facebook as one of the 12 inspiring women of the world who used Facebook for community development. In 2017, she found the **Trans hearts Art Project**, through which she has trained more than 200 transgender people in creating expressive artworks supporting their livelihood through workshops. In 2019, Kalki was invited by Trans Amsterdam, a transgender art and culture organisation in Netherlands and was conferred the International Ambassador for Life title by the organisation.

“Though I was bullied and cornered innumerable times, I promised myself that I will bring back the pride my family lost because of my gender and today, I am proud that I have succeeded in achieving it, to some extent” says Kalki

Transgender face all types of discrimination in nearly every aspect of their lives. They are victims of subtle discrimination, which is everything from rude glances on glares to disprovable invasive questions about their body. Transgender are not allowed to join military and also face discrimination on ones work. Twenty to fifty percent of transgender said they face employment decimation, including being fired, denied a promotion or a job in general or even being harassed.

The transgender community across India has been battling for basic livelihood, dignity and social acceptance. Most of them have been thrown out of families, experience lack of education, lack of good housing and medical services and live without any assurance and security for their future.

One should understand the fact that transgender people are no strangers to the society. Providing transgender people with discrimination protection is exceedingly important. They have the same right to feel comfortable just as a normal human being. Transgender discrimination has been on the rise for many years causing the suicide, murder, rape rates to increase and also the major reason for them to indulge in certain wrong doings which they consider it necessary to support their livelihood.

In light of this, we find few transgender people in spite of the hardships faced by them they have turned to be successful in their fields.

1. Sathyasri Sharmila – India’s first transgender lawyer
2. Joyita Mondal – India’s first transgender judge
3. Prithika Yashini – India’s first transgender police officer
4. Shabi – India’s first transgender soldier
5. Akkai Padmashali – a human rights activist against all odds

“Transgender people deserve something vital. They deserve your respect. And from that respect comes a more compassionate community, a more empathetic society, and a better world for all of us”.

Immaculate Sandra N, II year MBA

THE BRAVE BUT HEART-BREAKING JOURNEY OF INDIA'S FIRST TRANSGENDER COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

” Be Yourself, The World Will Adjust”- Manabí Bandopadhyay,



Hijras, as transgender people are called in India, are mocked for their mannerisms, feared for their dark powers and labelled as only suitable to begging for alms by singing and dancing. To dream beyond these stereotypes and aspire to a life of respect is a rare feat in a society that is unfair and prejudiced out and out.

But Bandopadhyay demanded nothing less than what she deserved -- respect and dignity as any human being. Her long struggled paid off and she crossed several milestones. Born as Somnath Banerjee, she had to face a lot of ridicule for taking preference to feminine habits from not only the society, but also her father who was extremely conservative who wanted her to work and earn, since she was the only son among two sisters. Oppressed by her father, Manabí, who had just finished schooling, decided to visit a psychiatrist on her own to fight the dilemma she faced. But, since psychiatry was at its nascent stage in India, most psychiatrists told her to forget about it.

In 1995, she achieved another first of sorts – she published India’s first transgender magazine, title Ob-Manab (Sub-human). “If I had named the magazine Maha-Manab (Great humans), would there have been any change in the way the transgender community was treated? I named the magazine in tune with how society treats transgendered people – sub-humanly. If they were not treated like sub-humans, would I have been required to publish a magazine for them?” She told in a piece published in Ananda Bazar Patrika. When Manabí Bandopadhyay started work the Krishnagar Women’s College on Tuesday, teachers and students lined up to welcome her with sweets and gifts.

It was quite a contrast to the hostility that had greeted her in her first job. In 2003, she gathered enough courage to undergo a sex-change operation which cost her a whopping Rs 5 lakh at that time. After the long continuous process in which she had to also undergo multiple sessions of counselling, Manabí finally felt free. Manabí understood the importance of education, and focussed all her energies on excelling professionally. Having put a premium on education since her early years as a means of moving into the mainstream and a life of dignity, she earned an MA and a doctorate in Bengali literature. She had a college lecturer's job and became an exceptional figure in her community, which, to this day, is stigmatised by society. When Manabí applied at the Vivekananda Centenary College in Jhargram, she was coerced to apply as a male lecturer. Soon, she became a lecturer, and was, yet again, the first transgender to do so. In a little over a year, the scenario had turned so ugly that Bandopadhyay admitted she was "defeated", her hopes for the institution had been dashed. Manabí said, "All of my colleagues went against me.

Some of the students went against me. I tried to bring back discipline and an atmosphere of education in the college. Most probably, that is why they went against me. I always got co-operation from the local administration, but never got it from my colleagues and students." She went on to say that she had been under tremendous mental pressure and could not take it anymore, forcing her to resign.

Harshitha G and group, 3rd Year MCA

ANGELIC BOLD PERSON

A man with a feature of a women.
I'm a girl with beauty
I'm a girl with passion
I'm a girl with hope
I'm a girl with courage
But, people choose to ignore me,
I just don't know why?
I was confused, worried and scared,
Until I knew that I'm,
A man with a features of a women.
Yes, I'm a transgender, who isn't becoming another person.
I already am who I am, who isn't changing from the person you have always know.
I'm a girl who is compared to an angel and,
A boy who is compared as a bold character
Then why not a transgender be called,
AS AN ANGELIC BOLD PERSON!!!!

Monisha N, Iyear M.Com (FA)

EFFORTS TAKEN BY INDIAN GOVERNMENT ON TRANSGENDER

Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression, or behaviour does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth. Gender expression refers to the way a person communicates, gender identity to others through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, voice, or body characteristics. The ways in which transgender people are talked about in popular culture, academia, and science are constantly changing, particularly as individuals' awareness, knowledge, and openness about transgender people and their experiences grow.

There are many problems that are being faced by the transgender community are of discrimination, unemployment, lack of educational facilities, homelessness, lack of medical facilities like HIV care and hygiene, depression, hormone pill abuse, tobacco and alcohol abuse, penectomy and problems related to marriage and adoption.”

In Aug 2014, Transgender people in India cheered when the Supreme Court of India, in National Legal Services Authority, Union of India declared them to be a ‘third gender’ and affirmed that the fundamental rights guaranteed under the constitution of India will be equally made available to transgender people. The judgement gave them the right to self-identification of their gender as male, female or third-gender. On August 5, 2019 Lok Sabha passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019 which aims to set up a mechanism for social, economic and educational empowerment of transgender people.

The glaring lapse of the present Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019 is that no steps to implement the Supreme Court direction of reservation to the transgender people in admissions to educational institutions and public employment. The transgender people are the most socially and educationally backward section of society. As such, as the Supreme Court directed, they should be granted reservation in education institutions and public employment

Jeevitha B.N, II year M.Com (FA)

TRANSGENDER

I attended a regional conference a few years ago on the LGBTQ community where I met different kinds of people, and it was an eye opening one for me because, I understood the social stigma and also a lot of hurdles they undergo just to survive. Firstly, I had a conversation with a lesbian, she told me how difficult it was for her to express her feelings and thoughts to her family and how they forced her to marry a man. She also told me that she thought twice to even visit her parents who lived in Tamil Nadu. I understood how much of mental pressure and trauma she was undergoing at that point in time.

I was encountered with a few gays and bisexuals, they told me how surviving was difficult for them. And how the society discriminated and disrespected their existence. The transgender indeed are an integral part of our community. But are they given due importance? Is still an unanswered question. According to me the transgender community should be identified and given importance in the society, to help them celebrate the gift of life. By uplifting them and also by giving them proper employment facilities.

Inclusive approach for transgender should be implemented by the government, though the policies that have been framed which are poorly implemented. Provision of social entitlement and also free legal aid must be ensured. Liberal credit facilities and financial assistance must be taken into consideration for budding entrepreneurs. Transgender should be the part and parcel of the society.

Nikitha Paul, MBA- III Sem

REFLECTION ON SYMBOLISM IN TOM HOOPER'S 'THE DANISH GIRL'

A project that took longer than Rama's total exile from conception to fruition ‘The Danish Girl’ was intended to be a game changing modern-day cult symbol, liked by the public and recipient of a half century of nominations around the globe as per various reports. With its niche credentials, the film has divided opinions amongst fans and critics alike. With a ten feet pole, despite agreeing to its probable potential, the film industry would not touch it. The screenplay by Lucinda Coxon, a rendition of David Ebershoff's book, ‘A Danish Girl’ is a cinematic account Lili Elbe's life who was one of the first persons to undergo a sex reassignment surgery.

Lili (earlier Einar Wegener) is played by Eddie Redmayne while Gerda Wegener (Einar's wife) is played by Alicia Vikander, who enliven the screen with their performances. The couple is artist living in post First World War Copenhagen. The film is a tale of self-discovery, identifying one's true self and carrying the conviction to complete one's identity. One of the things that make it a great film is the successful narrative coupled with fine aesthetics.

The exquisite usage of photography, paintings, music and words work together to make the film aesthetically invigorating for the audience. Through subtle symbolism, using the aforesaid elements and effective dialogue, the film succeeds highlights several tangents of themes and ideas peripheral to the central themes of gender dysphoria and love. The landscapes covering the silver screen highlight the protagonist's positions of thoughts and emotions.

Here, the camera beautifies the screen with its treatment of architectural landscapes as a medium to narrate the story of a transgender woman, an alien topic for many. The architectural landscapes reveal Einar's state of mind, if noticed. One of the early scenes of the film involve Einar filling in for Ulla (a female model), Gerda is working on for a painting. This experience proves to be enthralling for Einar as he essentially feels more like a woman than man. A landscape that a few frames later, exhibits rippled water in Nyhavn canal, followed by an introspective scene where Einar looks at Gerda's sketches of him as a female figure.

The ripples are suggestive of Einar's sexuality: the feminine resurfacing. Another symbolism of clear skies is used to indicate clarity in thought when Einar and Gerda, both realize that he feels suffocated in a man's body. A distinctly noticeable is the one with the Sun in landscape which stands for hope when the possibility of sex change surgery is before the protagonist.

Music acts as a prior defence system to and seismograph for Einar's emotions. One hears Einar's instincts awakened before we find him looking at herself wistfully. Similarly, in scenes of serious conversation the background score is on a nil. Both Einar and Gerda's paintings are windows to their souls. Einar paints dark, solemn landscapes from Vejle. It is almost tragic to see Lili give up painting as she associates the art with her former identity of a man, which she struggled with for most part of her life.

Although, she expresses her emotions in her journal, after the surgery, which is another vent of creative stream for an artist. On the other hand, Gerda's portraits of Lili have originality and novelty which attract many art dealers. This was her transition from traditional portraits to contemporary ones. Mirrors and glasses are used in contrasting fashions in different emotions expressing clarity and complexity of thought. For instance, Einar's clear naked reflection tells the viewer of his real identity.

While in another the scene where Henrik Sandal (a homosexual man attracted to Lili) calls her Einar, she leaves his house filled with guilt and irritability. The hazy and unclear reflection of Einar on window glasses reflect his perplexed state of mind. He wants Einar to be forgotten.

Of words, Tennyson said "Words, like nature, half reveal and half conceal the soul within." Likewise, dialogues in the film are so profound, they leave one in awe. To Gerda who wonders if he'd slip through the surface of the painting and vanish into the bog, he replies "And don't worry, I don't disappear into the bog. The bog's in me, silly". The word "bog" (referring to a deep dark hole) is also symbolic of the discovery of Einar as a woman. Not universally loved, 'The Danish Girl' broadens horizons of thought and empathy. Not only does the film, with a stellar group attracts audiences but also leaves an undeniable mark on the landscape of art films. The mirrors probably are the strongest symbol of seeing oneself as the closing scene mirrors the opener albeit as reproduction of his introductory memory into reality.

Sanya Mishra , I MA

POEM ON TRANSGENDER

Shunned by the society,
Separated from the masses,
I'm forced to live in utter seclusion.
Wherever I go, gazes follow
With criticisms and condemnation
That do not approve of me breathing.
My mere sight arouses curiosity,
Hushed voices, yet loud for my ears.
If coerced to be someone I am not,
I rather live my life in enigma
in confinement from the world outside,
With solitude as my only solace.
I walk with heavy steps on the streets
in clothes that don't cling to my skin,
Striving to hide the wonder about my gender,
From everyone and everything,
To not be labelled as odd.
Approval is not what I desire,
Neither is a life full of hatred.
All I ever want is, to breathe,
Without being frightened of it stopping.

“DON'T BE ASHAMED OF YOUR STORY, IT JUST MIGHT INSPIRE SOMEONE”

The year that went by perhaps added another chapter to the disclosure of what it means to belong to the transgender community. As societies across the world still there is transition towards acceptance, the community is standing up for itself and becoming a part of more mainstream conversation today into many social media platforms. Be it from the army to a judge, activism to modelling, the gender non-conforming persons of today know what their identity belongs to them. Here we glance at the most inspirational stories of transgender persons.

Anjali Lama: Famously known as a Nepali transgender model, Anjali walked the ramp for 20 shows at Mumbai's fashion week in January 2017. Anjali was originally born as a boy, but now at the age of 32, she is able to finally assert herself and fight for her identity and existence with pride after years of tortured life. With time her modelling career grew, in spite of it, she was often rejected by the casting agents, Now, however as society slowly gets more empowered and accepting, Anjali is able to finally shine her own light.

Jennifer Peace: American Army captain Jennifer peace was born a male, but after being enlisted in the military, she came out of the closet in 2015. Reclaiming her identify as a women, Jennifer wanted to be respected as a soldier first, Unfortunately, Donald Trump's tweet believed that enlisting members of transgender community in the military is a financial burden; fortunately though his opinion has been disregarded by the pentagon captain peace strong that members of the transgender community play a pivotal and crucial role in the us military.

Joyita Mondal: A woman who became India's first transgender judge she says that she will continue to fight for justice a respect, she was the appointed as lok adalat judge in north Bengal in a historic appointment that she hopes will pave the way for other people. But after working for transgender rights organizations, she was much inspired to complete a law degree to be able to fight for anyone facing social discrimination.

Whatever it is, transgender can bring effects at the same time, to prevent this issue is not easy as we think because everyone should plays their role, we should educate our self to become more knowledgeable, so that we can't easily blame them discriminate them and judge them without knowing the truth about a transgender." Never Judge a Book By Its Cover"

Meena lokesh, II year MBA

Pinky, I year, Mcom(FA)

