

“KELLY” FROM FIFTH PAGE

pored over them at lunch and came up with more questions to ask me. Rob confided that he wished he had written stuff down because he used to have some pretty brilliant ideas. He told me all about one such idea: PMS pants. They would be pants women could wear when they had their period. The pants would be made of lots of pods that would simultaneously absorb blood and release perfume. There would be docking stations, which looked like urinals, that would suck all the blood out of the pods and the process would start again. Intense.

True to Josh-style, Rob did not see my gender as something that was too serious to joke about. One day, he told me:

Rob: I'm going to do some stuff in the walk-in. If someone comes, you can I. Do something for yourself, 2. Think about getting me, realize how much I'll yell at you and then do something for yourself, or

Kelly: I'll take option three.

A little while later, he came back to tell me a joke: “God asked Kelly, “Male or female?” Kelly said, ‘I’ll take option three.’”

By the end of the week, all boundaries were gone. When my friend, Jordan, came in for lunch, I pointed out that he's the one who gives me my testosterone shots. He replied, “Now that I know who gives you man juice in your butt, I just want you to know that for the past three days, I've either woken up late or something came up so I haven't been able to shave my testicles.” I was unsure if he was serious until he intensely told me, “It feels like there are fire ants in my crotch.” Woah.

Now that I'm no longer working there, I sort of miss Rob. But I can't figure out how I could possibly fit him into the rest of my life. Maybe it's for the best that we've parted ways. And hopefully he misses me too. •

“TAMPON” FROM SECOND PAGE

technically plants, sea sponges may not be the option for a vegan). They can be used for about 4-6 cycles, before being replaced—considerably cheaper than disposable products. www.jadeandpearl.com offers environmentally sustainably harvested sea sponges.

Re-usable cloth pads/period panties: These can be made, or purchased in a wide variety of styles depending on personal preference. You can find some at www.gladrags.com or www.lunapads.com.

This is just a quick over view and a few viable options for people ready to move beyond disposable tampons and pads. Some of these alternatives take some getting used to, but once you make the change your vagina will thank you.

GJAM will be presenting Beyond Tampons; Alternative to Corporate Feminine Hygiene on Monday, April 30 at 5pm in the Krey-Zeigel Room in the MSC Student College Center. Join us in creating and opening the dialogue in our community about the risks and alternatives associated with disposable menstrual products.

Peace and Shout Out to Doohickey Phoenix for the resources and inspiration to begin communication in my local community. •

BE THE MEDIA!

State of Disunion

PERCENTAGE OF MALES circumcised in the US: 61.1

PERCENTAGE OF ABSTINENCE ONLY PLEDGERS who engage in anal sex instead: 8.5

PERCENTAGE OF US POPULATION that has had sex outdoors: 38

NUMBER OF TAMPONS AND PADS that are used and disposed of annually: 19,000,000,000

PERCENT WOMEN EARN compared to their male counterparts in 1997: 80

PERCENTAGE OF MALES circumcised in Denmark: 1.6

NUMBER OF RED PILLS found in a package of sheets from the local Kohl's store: 1

PERCENTAGE OF MALES who are sexually assaulted: 10-20

NUMBER OF WOMEN WHO contracted TSS 1985-1994: 20,000-120,000

PERCENT WOMEN EARN compared to their male counterparts today: 69

CALL TO ACTION

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IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE

The Red Pill



GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

EVERYONE'S

DOING IT

MAY 2007

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TAMPONS OF DEATH

When I was first educated on the health risks associated with tampons and that for decades alternatives have existed, I was angry. Why, after 15 years of menstruating had I not been exposed to anything other than disposable tampons and pads? Why don't the stores carry re-usable cloth pads, sea sponges, or The Keeper?

This past March, I attended a workshop at the Local to Global Justice Teach-in, in Tempe, AZ, titled, Moon Blood vs. Capitalist Patriarchy sponsored by the group, Doohickey Phoenix. While I had all ready made the switch to alternative products, I wanted to hear what they had to say, as well as experiences and points of view of the other women (as well as the several men) who attended.

Pages can be written on the health and environmental risks associated with tampons, on the decades of cultural indoctrination that menstruation is dirty and shameful, on the exploitation of women by corporations' who are making billions off of us (not to mention the government in the taxing of these 'luxury items'). I would like to briefly cover some health risks, the environmental impact of disposable products, and some alternatives.

The Health Risks:

Tampons don't absorb just blood. They absorb vaginal mucous as well, which

is necessary for a healthy Ph balance of the vagina. Continuous use of tampons can lead to frequent yeast infections. In addition, the abrasiveness of tampons can cause tiny lacerations in the vaginal walls, increasing the risk of infection.

If anyone reads the instructions and warning that accompanies tampons, they are well aware of the increased risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS)—a bacterial infection. Younger women may not know of the TSS scare in the 80s, when over 1100 cases of TSS were reported, 55 of those resulting in death. TSS is mainly associated with younger menstruators and the use of higher absorbency tampons. After these deaths (and still not soon enough) tampon manufacturers were required to change tampon ingredients, standardize absorbency and include warnings. These companies have never been required to list ingredients in tampons and still aren't required to do so.

In addition to TSS, women are exposed to dioxins—potential carcinogens related to Agent Orange, through the use of tampons. Dioxins are by-products of the bleaching process (keep in mind that just because tampons and pads are bleached, does not mean they are sanitized, or required to be for that matter). While tampon companies say they no longer

use this process in their tampon production, this does not guarantee that this process wasn't used earlier in the production of rayon out of wood-pulp.

While the tampon companies will tell you, there are acceptable levels of dioxins that we are exposed to in the environment, the fact that the vagina is the most absorbent part of the body and tampons are worn anywhere from 2-8 hours, is still cause for alarm when it comes to what exactly is getting absorbed into our bodies every month.

Environmental Effects:

Not only does tampon manufacturing release chemicals such as dioxins into the environment, the waste produced by disposable menstrual products is overwhelming. It is estimated that a menstruator will use anywhere from 11,000-17,000 disposable pads or tampons in their lifetime. Not many people think about where their waste goes after they flush the toilet. Tampon applicators and hypodermic needles are the two most common waste products that wash up on our beaches. Between 1998 and 1999, 170,000 tampon applicators were collected off our shores.

Tampons are mostly made of rayon, a synthetic fiber made out of wood-pulp and cotton. Cotton require about 25% of all insecticides used. Five out of nine of pesticides used on cotton are cancer-causing and listed as some of the most dangerous chemicals. Yet, there is no regulation on the use of pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers for cotton to be used in tampons.

And it makes you wonder, who is running things here? Who is making money off the disposable feminine hygiene industry? Corporations. And who runs corporations? Men.

Alternatives:

As women, what can we do? Take control of our bodies back. The tampon industry wants you to believe that you need their product, but you don't. There are many economical and safer alternatives.

The Keeper/The Diva Cup: This is a small reusable cup inserted into the vagina and can hold up to an ounce of fluid. The Keeper is made out of natural gum rubber and the Diva Cup is made out of silicone. While a little pricey, they do have a 10 year-lifetime span. Check out www.thekeeperinc.com or www.divacup.com.

The Sea Sponge: These are natural plant-like creatures found in the oceans (because they aren't



“TAMPON” ON EIGHT PAGE

A BISEXUAL'S GUIDE TO GIVING HEAD

FELLATIO

First and foremost: make sure the penis is erect! Otherwise you'll just spend a lot of time with a stick of mush in your mouth and pubic hairs in your throat. If his penis is not already erect, then a few seconds of stimulation should do the trick (if that doesn't work, cut your losses and leave). Now you're ready to give head. Here are just a few methods:

The basic vacuum suck— This is just the basic up and down, in and out movement accompanied by slight sucking (as if using a straw). This motion can produce results when used by itself, but I recommend using it in tandem with any of these other methods. This can be performed in any position in any place and is good for practice when you're still not totally comfortable with a huge hard cock in your throat, which is necessary for some of these other methods.

The circle— With his stiff penis in your mouth, do not tighten your lips around the shaft and move your head in a circle motion. His penis will slide around to different places in your mouth as you continue the circle motion (watch your teeth on this one!). Try both clockwise and counterclockwise. This can be performed in any position.

The lollipop lick— This works best when he's standing. Take his penis in your hand and move it so you can get at his balls. Starting at the underside of his scrotum, lick with the very tip of your tongue all the way to the tip of the penis. This should be repeated several times in succession, like licking a lollipop.

The figure eight— When you've gotten used to having a dick deep in your throat, this is a killer method. After doing the vacuum suck for a little while to get the penis erect and lubricated with your saliva, slowly move in so the penis is as far into your throat as is comfortable. With your lips slightly tight around the shaft, trace a sideways figure eight with your nose. This can be performed in any position.

Modifications— There are so many ways to modify these movements to come up with something that works perfectly for you and your partner. Try using different techniques with breath, fingers and palms, tongue flicking/fluttering, etc. You can also utilize other areas of your man (like putting slight pressure on the area just under the balls) or you can even play a little with his asshole (if he doesn't get freaked out by that kind of thing).

CUNNILINGUS

I find that this can be much more difficult than giving head to a man. The clitoris usually starts out much more sensitive than a penis, so don't just dive in there and start rubbing or licking away; this will cause nerves to shoot into your partner's body and make them do or feel things that are not necessarily pleasant. It takes time for a clitoris to become hard, so take it slow at first. I suggest starting with slow, gentle licking and sucking of the labia, vaginal entrance, clitoris, and anal area. This will get her wet and start to make the clit hard and ready for more action. Once you've stimulated her for a little while, try these different techniques:

Vulva stimulation— Start by lapping her vulva from vaginal opening up to her clit with your tongue while keeping your tongue and jaw relaxed (much like licking a lollipop). Run your tongue between the inner and outer labia on one side, while keeping the two sides together between your lips (there are two lips on each side of her vulva, do this to one side at a time), stopping at the clit as you move up one side and down the other.

Tongue sex - Make love to her vulva with your tongue; in and out, around and around, try with your tongue hard, then soft and change the tempo often. Spread her outer lips with your hand and with your tongue pointed and stiff, gently flick the end of your tongue here and there. Play with the vaginal opening— insert and flick it with your tongue— but keep coming back to her clitoris. This can be done in any position.

Clit stimulation techniques - With the clitoris exposed, give it a quick little suck by pulling it into your mouth briefly and letting it go. Take the clit into your mouth and gently suck on it, at the same time flick your tongue over and around her clit. This can be done very lightly or very aggressively. Also try rolling your tongue into a tube around the shaft of her clitoris, sliding it up and down, making a tiny vulva of your own for her clitoris to enjoy.

Finger/dildo stimulation— While stimulation of the clit and vagina with the tongue is nice, most women enjoy some sort of penetration while other things are going on. Insert fingers or dildos into the vagina and anus (if she can handle that) while you work on her clit. This can produce fast and multiple orgasms.

Modifications— Like sucking dick, any of these activities can be modified with breath, hand and palms, dildos or other objects. Don't neglect her breasts; the nipples can play a crucial role in sexual stimulation and gratification. Also try different positions, like her on her back, her sitting on your face, or even her on her knees with you behind. Much of the excitement of cunnilingus is her being able to watch you do your thing, so try to be in a position where she can see you. One note: direct stimulation of the ball of nerves in the clit is usually not a good idea; the nerves can cause discomfort and even pain. Stimulation of the clitoral hood works best but be sure to pay careful attention to how your partner responds when playing with the clitoris. Too much can ruin the entire experience!

Like anything, giving head should become more comfortable for both partners with time and experience and should be modified to fit your needs. Become familiar with your partner's sexual anatomy; look at it, study it, notice the different ways your partner responds to different motions and methods. Play around, experiment, and don't be afraid when something awkward or unexpected happens (to either of you!). Although oral sexual encounters with practical strangers can be fun and thrilling (and can possibly get you in trouble), I find that the best head is given when you are familiar with your partner, not only sexually but emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually. HAPPY HEADING!!! •

RED PILL LOCATIONS

You can pick up your copy of The Red Pill at the following locations: Planet 9, Heart of the Dragon, Third World Imports, Spekulationz, Planet Earth, Kleen Sting, Colorado Java, Himalayan Feeling, Contemporary Glass Works, Change Skateboards, The Hot Tomato Cafe, Coffee Muggers, Triple Play Records.

Download the Red Pill at: <http://colorado.indymedia.org>.

Become our friend on Myspace.com @ http://www.myspace.com/gjam_theredpill

Every Monday • 5PM

Grand Junction's peace group, A Voice of Reason meets to discuss and act on issues surrounding the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Call 245-3720 for more info and meeting place



Every Friday • Noon

A Voice of Reason holds a lunch hour peace vigil to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the intersection of 12th and North.

'BRING THE WHOLE BABY HOME'

If circumcision were suddenly invented today and performed on some victim, the perpetrator would be dispatched to the slammer as a sadist and sicko. Gawd, who would willingly submit to penile reduction?

Imagine a stranger grasping a child's penis, then attacking it with sharp objects and leaving it a bloody mess — causing pain and permanent damage. Why isn't it a crime, a premeditated sexual assault that began as molestation? Where are medical ethics? Where are human rights? Where is sovereignty over one's own body? Why must the first violence visited on a male when he comes into this world be chopping off part of his little wanker—first peeling loose the foreskin fused to the glans, or head, then crushing it and cutting it off?

Trimming off the moving part of a male infant's penis to satisfy some cock-eyed cultural or religious notion is absurd. The foreskin is a supremely specialized structure that magnificently covers a guy's glory and then unrolls back and forth over itself in a gliding motion that nature developed to perfection. For a lover, it's an eminently fascinating piece of work—grasping it and pulling on the package to see what's inside. That nature-engineered roll of skin provides pleasure, lubrication, protection and even some privacy for the glans that really has a gleam to it in its natural state.

But some jerk doctor amputates a guy's sleeve of skin and hangs the end of his cock out to dry for the rest of his life. No wonder they call it the "unkindest cut."

It took me decades to really realize what was stolen from me without my consent, but once informed, I was mad as hell and set out to raise the awareness of other males oblivious to it, too. My genital mutilation happened in 1946 in the first wave of so-called Baby Boomers. Hospitals were quickly getting mothers to show up there to deliver, and doctors had them as a captive audience to run them through the works. Back then, "informed consent" about the medical procedure was not the rule of the day.

Though I had younger cousins who had all their boyhood, I gave my forsaken foreskin no second thought until I was a 25-year-old graduate student when I read Gore Vidal's "Myra Breckinridge." Chapter 22 hit me like a hammer. The first sentences: "Just as I expected, seventy-two per cent of the male students are circumcised. At Clem's party, I had been reminded of the promiscuous way in which American doctors circumcise males in childhood, a practice I highly disapprove of, agreeing with that publisher who is forever advertising in the New York Times Book Review, a work that proves circumcision is necessary for only a very few men." Vidal called circumcision "a rape of the penis." He said up until the 1940s, only the upper or educated classes were circumcised in America. "The real people were spared this humiliation."



In his next breath, Vidal, speaking the words of Myra, told how circumcision quickly became standard procedure, "making money for doctors, as well as allowing the American mother to mutilate her son in order that he might never forget her early power over him." She went on to say that up to fifty percent of the sensation of the glans, or head, is reduced, "a condition no doubt as pleasing to the puritan American mother as it is to her co-conspirator, the puritan Jewish doctor who delights in being able to mutilate the goyim in the same vivid way that his religion (and mother) mutilated him."

Reading that launched me into research, though little could be found in the early 1970s. Four years later, we had a baby boy, and we took his whole body home from the hospital, though Midwestern parents and in-laws rolled their eyes like we were Hippies.

Beginning in about 1980, books opposed to circumcision burst into print, a remarkable number of them by Jews debunking the peculiar procedure easily visited on Jewish boys with vengeance. From a rate of about 90 percent of boys being circumcised in America, it's down to just over 50 percent today and still falling. Insurance companies drop coverage, more violated males are filing lawsuits and parents are wising up.

But uninformed and misinformed parents still ask for it. It never occurs to them that their son may well wish one day to be all there and to know what a foreskin is like. They say doctors especially leave their sons intact because they know what it's good for, but they cut away on other people's boys and make enough money to keep purchasing the latest BMW.

Sons don't have to look or lack like Daddy. If nature or God wanted baby boys to have foreskins, they'd have been born with them. I got smart in the 1990s and stretched the remnant foreskin with tape and elastic. It took a couple years, but one doctor who didn't know me gave me a physical and put "normal uncircumcised penis" on my chart. You've gotta love it. •

THE RED PILL BETWEEN THE SHEETS

This is a shout out to all the people out there that take it upon themselves to print and distribute The Red Pill. Thanks to the cats in Boulder, Denver, Durango and beyond. Thanks to the soliders who xerox and distribute The Red Pill in the field, and a special thanks to the person who put a Red Pill in my new sheets from Kohl's Big Box Store, keep it up.

SURVIVING MALE SEXUAL ASSAULT

The smell of sagebrush and juniper flooded the night, the sweet perfume of the desert that a man in a lab could never recreate and bottle. Overhead a half moon and stars, like diamonds tossed across a black silk sheet, so close and so bright that it seems I could reach up and pluck them from the dark night sky.

It was an activity I had done dozens of times above my small town. When things got hectic and stressful, I would retreat to the hills drink some whiskey and coke and gaze at the stars for hours. It always calmed and soothed me. When you are looking up at the night sky and no sound floods the night, but the hiss of your burning cigarette and the wind through the trees, you can feel all of the petty problems of your world fade away. Seeping into the quiet of the night and slowly wither from your consciousness. I always considered it a form of redneck meditation, a sip of booze and nature all around you...

One night stands out for me though, a night that would fuck up my world for a long time and leave me bewildered and paranoid, hurt and ashamed. It was in the early spring about the time of year when four wheeling enthusiasts flooded the trails, escaping their slave labor jobs in the city and come out to shred their jeeps and trucks on the high desert trails. I had drank far more than I intended by myself that night, so I was planning on rolling up in my blanket in the back of my beat up Nissan truck and sleeping it off.

Just as I was pulling out my bedding and lighting up a good night cigarette, two sets of headlights burst out of the trees below my hill and forged up the rocky road, White Snake and Garth Brooks blaring over the stereos, destroying the quiet of the night with there overloud battle for supremacy. Both trucks were older, lifted Chevys, outfitted with a four wheel shop's dream of overpriced, under used four wheeling equipment. Suburban rednecks, who came out to get smashed over the weekend, listen to bad music and heckle each others manhood until they fought or passed out drunk. Goddamn, I always hated the tourist time of year...

They plowed up the hill at a maniacal speed and slammed on their brakes next to my camp, dust billowed and danced in the headlights temporarily hiding all but the glow of headlights and the shouts and hollers of some wasted dregs of humanity out for what they considered a good time. Calmly waiting to see what they wanted I popped the tab on my lukewarm Coors Light and took a drag of my Pall Mall.

Slapping each other on the back, wrestling and chugging the last of their shaken up beer, they slowly bunched up around me and my truck. Nervously laughing and nudging each other, I remember how the air seems to have grown colder and apprehensive butterflies stirred my stomach to a boil. "Can I help you guys? Are you trying to find the main trail to the camping area?" I asked.

One spoke up, a guy about thirty with a close shaved beard and the cleanest cowboy hat I had ever

seen. "No, we come up here all the time and we were just looking for a little fun, you know something to keep us entertained for a little while."

"Well, its pretty quiet up here, it would probably be a little more entertaining in the campgrounds. Unless you want to do some four wheelin' tonight, I would gladly give you directions to a couple of trails." I replied.

A big smile split his face and he answered with a little snicker, "No, that's okay I think we've found what we wanted tonight."

Stars seemed to burst in my head as a fist slammed into my temple, dropping my beer and staggering, I dodged another fist and planted my foot in a belly. Then I was tackled from behind and the boots started raining down like artillery shells, curling into a ball and covering my face with my hands. I felt like a drum set being pounded upon by sledge hammers, fist bouncing off the back of my head, cowboy boots keeping the beat on my ribs, with an occasional counter beat thrown at my hand covered face. For what seems like hours it continued on, until I felt my vision turning black and my body begin to fade from my mind and then it stopped and I almost wished that it hadn't...

Bloody, exhausted and semi-conscious, they grabbed me by my arms and dragged me across the dusty road and threw me over a fallen cedar tree. Then something I had never even thought of, something I had never even imagined happened. With a couple holding my arms and several pushing my shoulders and head into the rough bark of the fallen tree, I felt my pants being ripped off and I listened to that horrible drunken laughter. Shouts and suggestions of what they should do filled my mind and with renewed strength I screamed, struggled and cursed out, but it was to no avail.

I was sexually assaulted that night and then left in the hours of darkness with memories more horrible than any nightmare I've had, relived over and over again in my head. I would describe it more, but each key stroke brings back each humiliating painful thrust. I've never really shared my experience with people, as a male it's the most humiliating, painful, skeleton in my closet. Something that will be with me forever and something that will always give me a nervous twitch around large groups of people or something that will always interfere with my ability to open up and trust others.

No matter your gender, sexual assault happens and it fucks up lives. Some of us recover and learn how to move on to the next sunrise and some of us never do. In all, 10 to 20 percent of men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, just as with the opposite gender though, most men will never report a sexual assault. Statistically most men who assault other men consider themselves heterosexual and most sexual assaults are carried out by someone known to the victim. •

Monday, April 30th • 5:00PM

Grand Junction Alternative Media is hosting a roundtable discussion "Beyond Tampons: Alternatives to Corporate Feminine Hygiene."

Krey-Ziegler Room in the MSC Student Center

Monday, April 30th • 7:00PM

A Voice of Reason is proud to present Dr. Bob Bowman's Patriot Tour which seeks to take back this country from those who've hijacked it.

Moss Performing Arts Recital Hall
@ MSC Campus

GREEN SEX

The idea of 'going green' can send the average American mind into a conniption fit faster than a threatened rise in taxes. Not that it's hard to go green, but sometimes it simply takes a couple of small steps, recycling, walking and riding your bike or board instead of driving that four blocks to the store. Or you can start with your bedroom, the kitchen floor, backseat of the car or wherever your sex life may take you.

According to a Durex survey, 43% of Americans have used a vibrator or sex toy at some point in their life. Now, if you have bought a vibrator, haven't you often wondered why so many of them say "for novelty purposes only?" Well, that's because many sex toys are made of polyvinyl chlorides (PVC), plastics that release some detrimental toxins during their production and afterwards. They also contain hazardous chemicals, known as phthalates, which are used to soften the PVC. In recent studies on mice, phthalate exposure has been shown to cause cancer, damage the reproductive system, kill sperm, damage sperm reproduction in men, and it has been shown to have very negative effects in the womb and in breast milk for male babies and fetuses (permanent damage to their private regions).

Even the things you do to attract a mate can have dire consequences for you and the greater environment at large. The beauty industry is a global giant that rakes in billions of dollars a year offering people the chance to look better and conform to that image of beauty that they and advertising agencies have crammed down our throats for generations. Unfortunately, they are possibly the least regulated industry in the world; their products are hardly ever tested by governmental organizations for consumer safety. Everything from deodorants to nail polish contain PVCs, parabens (found in shampoos, moisturizers, shaving gels and personal lubricants), phthalates, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, petroleum, and carcinogenic coloring additives (hair dyes).

One simple example of some strange unnecessary chemicals being slipped to you without your knowledge, are anti-perspirents and deodorants that contain aluminum—which is one of the harshest mining activities on the planet. These products are being linked to an increase in breast cancer among women across the globe. Deodorants and anti-perspirents are easy to stop using though, either embrace your smell, which contains natural pheromones made by nature to attract others or use all natural products that don't contain aluminum and other freaky, untested chemicals. So you will be helping the environment by decreasing the need to mine for more aluminum and helping yourself by cutting down on the risk of untested chemicals threatening your body.

In the bedroom itself there are many alternatives to those expensive petroleum sheets. Bamboo and Hemp are renewable sources that are now being used to make bedding and those sexy, wonderfully, teasing bedroom outfits as soft as anything produced from an unnatural non-renewable source. These products even use all natural dyes and much safer processing of plants than conventional factories.

So please be aware of what you place upon you or in you and your partners. Buy glass or steel dildos instead of plastic, only use products that use organic additives to make you more attractive, and stop using harsh chemical lubes and anti-perspirents. It's much better to roll beneath that blue sky in the grass enjoying your natural lover instead of one smothered in chemicals and cancer. •

For more info on natural sex check out: www.treehugger.com, <http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/contentlookup.cfm?CFID=6479600&CFTOKEN=94112043&ucidparam=20060908125938&MenuPoin=C-D-C>, or <http://www.fuckforforest.com/> (if you want to watch porn in which most of the proceeds go towards conservation).

SHORT AND QUEER

The following excerpt is from the Denver zine, *shortandqueer* #7, *kelly shortandqueer* often writes about his experiences as a transguy, focusing on how gender affects everyday interactions and looking at the assumptions that are made based on perceived gender. For info or to order one of Kelly's zine email shortandqueer@yahoo.com

For those of you who have read *shortandqueer* #6, you may remember my ridiculous coworker, Josh. He was a surprising ally in the way that he had little to no contact with queer community, and seemed to understand my gender better than folks in my life I expected to just "get it." In the process of showing me his perception of my gender, Josh would say inappropriate, although sometimes funny, things to me.

When I started working at a gourmet food market, one of my coworkers reminded me of Josh. A lot. Rob was loud and obnoxious, but there was something soft about him if you let the annoying parts go. There was a sensitive side, hidden below the surface, although not very deep—if you were willing to look.

The main difference between Josh and Rob, though, is that Josh was around to witness my transition. Rob only knew me as a boy and never questioned it. So, when Josh was shitty about women, he knew my past and thought that my passing as male would mean that I would also become a misogynist. When Rob was shitty about women, he was just interacting with me as a fellow member of the "boys club".

The first time I saw Rob was during orientation for work. I remember thinking that he was such a jerk that I was concerned that I wasn't going to be able to work with him. He talked over people. He dismissed people. He just seemed generally awful.

I can't remember how it started, but suddenly, I developed a soft spot for Rob and flirty banter ensued. He's adamant about his heterosexuality but is also a bit flamboyant. I think it was this awkward flaming-ness that finally got to me. That and the fact that he kept jokingly hitting on me.

The more he would flirt with me, the bolder I got in joking with him about his sexuality. One day, he told me, "I wish I were gay so I could date you, just to use the nicknames." He went on to list a bunch of pseudo-sexual nicknames, including things like "my little leprechaun". Another day, we were putting pickle spears into little zip lock baggies, for to-go sandwich orders. He picked up a spear and slapped me across the face with it. If that's not homo-erotic, I don't know what it.

So, one day I asked:

Kelly: Rob, when are you going to start dating men?

Rob: When they have pretty, pink, soft places.

Kelly: They do.

Rob: (nervous laugh and smile) Uhhhh...no...I mean...(walks away)

Rob has a pretty good sense of humor and can laugh at himself. While making it really clear that he's straight, he wanted to tell me about an interaction he had with another co-worker that he thought was hilarious. He was talking about how fast he is at the register:

Rob: They don't call me fire fingers for nothing.

Lindsay: As flaming as you are, your fingers must be on fire.

During my last week of work there, I decided to come out as trans to Rob. I was originally planning on doing it on my last day, but Dylan convinced me that doing it earlier was a better idea. I'm glad I followed his advice because I got to watch Rob process this information for a week, and turn into a Josh-style ally.

His immediate response was, "Woah...that's trippy." He said, "that's trippy" about a million times before he could think of anything else to say. Then, "That sucks. You have more facial hair than I do." And he launched into how he wishes he was able to grow more facial hair. Not in a way that was offensive to me. In order to make sense of me, he defaulted to talking about himself. We talked for quite a while and overall, I thought it went well. He definitely doesn't have a radical queer politics like so many people in my life, but he was able to step back and check himself. The next day, he came in and told me that after work, he started thinking about all of the things he said to me that he "wouldn't have said to a woman." I was impressed with his self-awareness. I let him know that it's important to me that people don't change the way they act just because I come out to them. I was impressed because he would continue to be crude and then blurt out, "Wow, I never would have said that to you if you were a woman." This transparent processing was cool to watch. My interpretation was that he thought he's someone that didn't behave differently around men and women, but he was starting to realize that he did.

I wondered if coming out to Rob would mean that everyone at work would find out, but he was respectful when I told him he was the only one who knew (I've since come out to two others from that job). It became our little secret and it actually made us a bit closer for that last week of work. He wanted to know about funny things that people have said to me or bizarre situations that came up related to my gender. I tried to explain that little things happen all the time. During that last week, he started to see what I meant. One day, Mariah was fussing with her bra and she turned to me and said, "You guys are so lucky you don't have to deal with this." Rob was bewildered, realizing the gender assumptions of which I'm hyper-aware.

In an effort to let him into my life a little more, I brought Rob copies of my *shortandqueer* zines. He

"KELLY" ON PAGE EIGHT

LIBERTAD



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June 6-8th
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QUOTE OF THE DAY:
"Lord, make me chaste, but not yet."
—St. Augustine of Hippo