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# **TRANS EQUITY within the HEALTH CARE and SOCIAL SERVICE SYSTEMS in CANADA**

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# Agenda

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- Introduction of a Transactivist
- Trans Issues (health care; social services)
- (Ontario) Trans Health Project (Key Issues)
- Equity Initiatives & Proposals
- Strategies for Change
- Types of (Trans)activism
- Community Advocacy Resources
- References/Resources

# Introduction Of A Transactivist

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## Rupert Raj:

- 1971 to present (& still trans-active!)
- Multiple Roles: transactivist, therapist, consultant, university instructor, trainer, published researcher, book author-in-progress, gender specialist
- Earned 2 Lifetime Achievement Awards for 30 years of transactivism (1971 - 2001)
- Listed in The International Who's Who In Sexology (First Edition, 1984)

# Trans Issues

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- **Overall Health Issues & Care: access & equity; transpositivity** (see Gapka & Raj, 2003; Goldberg & Lindenberg, 2004; Namaste, 1995; Namaste, 2000)
- **Trans Specific Health Issues & Care: gender assessment; gender reassignment** (see Gapka & Raj, 2003; Goldberg & Lindenberg, 2004; Namaste, 1995; Namaste, 2000)
- **Mental Health Issues & Care: access & equity; transpositivity** (see Gapka & Raj, 2003; Goldberg & Lindenberg, 2004; Namaste, 1995; Namaste, 2000; Raj, 2002a; Raj, in press)

# Trans Issues *(cont'd)*

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- **OHIP: De-listing of Electrolysis Coverage for Transwomen in 1991/92**
- **OHIP: De-listing of Sex-Reassignment Surgery in Ontario in 1998**
- **Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary: De-listing of Sex-Hormone Therapy in 2005**

# Trans Issues *(cont'd)*

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- **Overall Lack of Social, Community & Government Services for Transpeople in Ontario: access & equity; transpositivity**  
(see Gapka, 2002; Gapka & Raj, 2003; Namaste, 1995, Namaste, 2000; Namaste, 2005; Raj, 2002b)
- **(Until 2001) Lack of Transpositive Shelters in Toronto** (see Darke & Cope, 2002; Cope & Darke, 1999; Gapka, 2002; Goldberg, 2002; Ross, 1995; White 2003) – still a problem for transmen who don't have “bottom” surgery

# Trans Issues *(cont'd)*

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- **Inclusion of Transwomen in Women's Organizations, Programs & Services** (see Cope & Darke, 1999; Darke & Cope, 2002; Gapka, 2002; Goldberg, 2002; Ross, 1995; White 2003)
- **Violence, Sexual & Physical Abuse, Discrimination & Harassment** (see Goldberg, 2002; Goldberg & White, 2004; Gunn & Goldberg, 2002; Hill, 1993; Namaste, 2001)

# (Ontario) Trans Health Project & Position Paper (Key Issues) (Gapka & Raj, 2003)

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- **Health Care Consumers (Transpeople) need to be/have:**

- ? Trans-empowering/self-empowering
- ? Meaningful input into health care
- ? Patient/client choice
- ? Part of a participatory process

- **Health Care Providers need to be/become:**

- ? Transpositive
- ? Properly educated (basic core knowledge and ongoing training)
- ? Culturally competent around and clinically sensitive to the diversity and complexity of the broader Trans community

- **Health Care Services need to be/become:**

- ? Trans-inclusive
- ? Comprehensive
- ? Holistic
- ? Community health model

# Equity Initiatives (applied health research)

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- **Trans Health Project & Position Paper**  
(Gapka & Raj, 2003): **Ontario Public Health Association** is implementing its Resolutions  
([http://www.opha.on.ca/ppres/2003-06\\_pp.pdf](http://www.opha.on.ca/ppres/2003-06_pp.pdf))
- **Sherbourne Health Centre's Trans Research Committee** is aiming to generate applied research to influence policymakers to identify gaps in service and improve quality of care for transpeople in Ontario

# Equity Initiatives & Proposals

(health care; funding)

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- **Sherbourne Health Centre & Rainbow Health Network's** proposal for an **Ontario Rainbow Health Resource Centre** to: 1) provide info' & resources for trans & queer folks, 2) facilitate LGBTTT research, 3) train providers re: culturally-competent LGBTTT care, and 4) put on an annual conference
- **Rainbow Health Network's Trans Health Lobby Group** is lobbying the Ontario Ministry of Health re: OHIP's de-listing of health services for transpeople (sex-reassignment surgery, cross-sex hormones, electrolysis treatments)

# Equity Initiatives (shelters; human rights)

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- **Trans Communities Shelter Access Project & FTM Safe Shelter Project** (519 Community Centre & The City of Toronto) is making shelters, hostels & detox centres trans-inclusive & transpositive
- **Egale Canada's Trans Issues Committee** (with our lawyer allies) is strategizing to help pass Private Member's bill by Burnaby, BC MPP Bill Siksay to include "Gender Identity" in Canadian Human Rights Legislation

# Strategies for Change

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- **To encourage more Applied Research that specifically influences policymakers re:**
  - health care: broader social determinants of health; access & equity issues; trans-inclusivity; transpositivity
  - social services (esp., shelters, transitional housing)
- **To enhance Trans Community Development:**
  - by consolidating diverse trans communities across Canada (incl. transsexual, transgender, two-spirit, intersex, etc.)

# Strategies for Change *(cont'd)*

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- **To develop Capacity-Building within Trans Community:**
  - self-advocacy skills
  - community activist skills
- **To enhance Coalition-Building with our allies:**
  - loved ones, queers, straights, health care/social service providers, lawyers, politicians, activists, etc.
- **To continue strategic & effective Trans Activist work together:**
  - political & legal advocacy
  - other forms of activism...

# Strategies for Change *(cont'd)*

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## Types of (Trans)activism

- Self-Advocacy
- Community Activism
- Political Activism
- Legal Activism
- Educational Activism
- Scientific Activism
- Religious Activism
- “Artivism”
- Therapy-as-Activism

# Strategies for Change *(cont'd)*

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- *“Think globally; act locally.”*
  
- Work strategically:
  - municipally
  - provincially
  - regionally
  - nationally

# Community Advocacy Resources

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- **Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition (2001-):**  
[www.rainbowhealth.ca](http://www.rainbowhealth.ca)
- **Egale Canada's Trans Issues Committee (2003-):**  
[www.egale.ca](http://www.egale.ca); [transcommittee@egale.ca](mailto:transcommittee@egale.ca)
- **519 Community Centre's Trans Communities Shelter Access Project (2001-):**  
[http://www.the519.org/programs/trans/access\\_project/index.shtml](http://www.the519.org/programs/trans/access_project/index.shtml);  
[transaccess@the519.org](mailto:transaccess@the519.org)
- **FTM Safe Shelter Project (2006-)** (an initiative of the Trans Communities Shelter Access Project). Contact Zack Marshall, Coordinator: (416) 222-1153 x152; [zmarshall@griffin-centre.org](mailto:zmarshall@griffin-centre.org)

# Community Advocacy Resources

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- **Ontario Public Health Association's Trans Health Project & Position Paper** (incl. Resolutions) (Gapka & Raj, 2003): ([http://www.opha.on.ca/ppres/2003-06\\_pp.pdf](http://www.opha.on.ca/ppres/2003-06_pp.pdf))
- **Rainbow Health Network's Trans Health Lobby Group** (2002-): [www.rainbowhealthnetwork.ca](http://www.rainbowhealthnetwork.ca)
- **Sherbourne Health Centre's Trans Research Committee** (2005-): [www.sherbourne.on.ca](http://www.sherbourne.on.ca)

# References (Resources)

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- Raj, R. (In press). **“Transactivism as Therapy”** (2006 issue: *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*)
- **Zenning the Art of Transactivism: Empowerment, Burnout & Self-Care** (powerpoint presentation)
- Exciting new forthcoming book (2-in-1) by **Rupert Raj**:
- **“Zenning The Art of Transactivism: A Workbook & Survivor Manual for Transactivists of Today & Tomorrow”** (Book 1)
- **“True Tales Of A Toronto Transactivist”** (Book 2)

# Contact Information

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