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# Transgender panel comes out

■ The "Gender Evolution" panel hopes to break down some misconceptions of transgender people

By Anna Seeley  
Oregon Daily Emerald

In support and celebration of the transgender community, the Women's Center and LGBT Educational and Support Services are holding a speaker's panel tonight and a musical performance Friday. "The Gender Evolution" is one of the events leading up to National Coming Out Day on Oct. 11. Speakers on the panel tonight will discuss personal experiences and viewpoints from different generations on coming out transgender.

Activist and artist Lori Buckwalter, one of tonight's speakers, will later perform "Vignettes and Music" on Friday. The performance will incorporate songs she wrote dealing with her personal experiences with coming out transgender.

Kristina Armenakis, the Women's Center LGBT coordinator, said the goal of the event is to educate, support and celebrate the transgender community.

"I do think they get relatively ignored by the general public," she

said. "I think this event is really important."

Jamison Green, a San Francisco activist speaking tonight, said there are a lot of misconceptions about people in the transgender community. For example, people wrongly assume that all transgender people are homosexual, he said.

"Anyone can be transgender, but not all are homosexual," he said.

Green, an international advocate on LGBT safety and civil rights, said very little is known about what transgender people go through.

"People feel trans issues aren't important since it doesn't touch their lives," he said. "I have been astounded by what they found out about themselves when they learn more about it."

Green graduated from the University in 1970, which is one reason why he chose to speak, he said. He said he never came out at the University because there wasn't any language to describe his situation.

Green said he was born with a female body, but had very masculine qualities.

"A lot of time people couldn't tell what sex I was," Green said. "I am now legally male and am definitely much more comfortable with myself and the world."

Three years after he had the operation, he noticed that a lot of transgender people live in fear and shame, he said. He started doing activist work to help make the world a safer place for transgender people, although he hasn't personally experienced bigotry.

"I've been very fortunate," Green said, "and that's why I feel capable as an effective spokesperson with the ego strengths and communication skills to make a difference."

Buckwalter, executive director of a Portland LGBT activist group, "It's Time Oregon," has not been so fortunate. She said she has experienced different types of prejudice as a result of her being transgender.

"I lost my job and had to fight for medical care," she said. "I lost friends, and people say nasty things and do threatening things."

Despite negative reactions to coming out, Buckwalter said the alternative of people hiding and lying about themselves is ultimately more destructive and painful.

"The whole coming out is therapeutic," she said. "We look for love and dignity in this world just like everyone else."

Anna Seeley is a student activities reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. She can be reached at [annaseeley@dailyemerald.com](mailto:annaseeley@dailyemerald.com).

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## News brief

### "Cans Film Festival" takes place Thursday

FOOD for Lane County continues its "Cans Film Festival" this Thursday by teaming up with Hollywood Video stores throughout Lane County. This will be the second phase of the food drive.

A person can receive a video and microwavable bag of popcorn in exchange for donating three cans of food. The organization holds the event each October.

The first phase of the festival brought in about 5,200 pounds of food last Thursday. Movie-goers gained free entrance to Regal Cinemas for donating food.

Holding a food drive is one way for FOOD for Lane County to gather supplies to give to more than 50 social service agencies and provide for low-income families, as well as others.

— Sue Ryan

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## Towers

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unincorporated areas of Lane County. Taylor suggested the ordinance's jurisdiction be extended to include incorporated cities.

"I would prefer to have the county deal with it," Taylor said.

Activists are currently pressing for a moratorium on the issue, which would stop the construction of proposed towers until an ordinance could be passed. County commissioners were split 2-2 on a vote earlier this year on whether to declare a moratorium, according to Sorenson.

Brook Reinhard is a community reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. He can be reached at [brookreinhard@dailyemerald.com](mailto:brookreinhard@dailyemerald.com).

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