

TRANSlate

zine of ohio's
gender nonconforming
community

June
2025



Illustration by Lars Leetaru from The Hollywood Reporter. Used without permission, but we're just a tiny zine and we hope it's ok.

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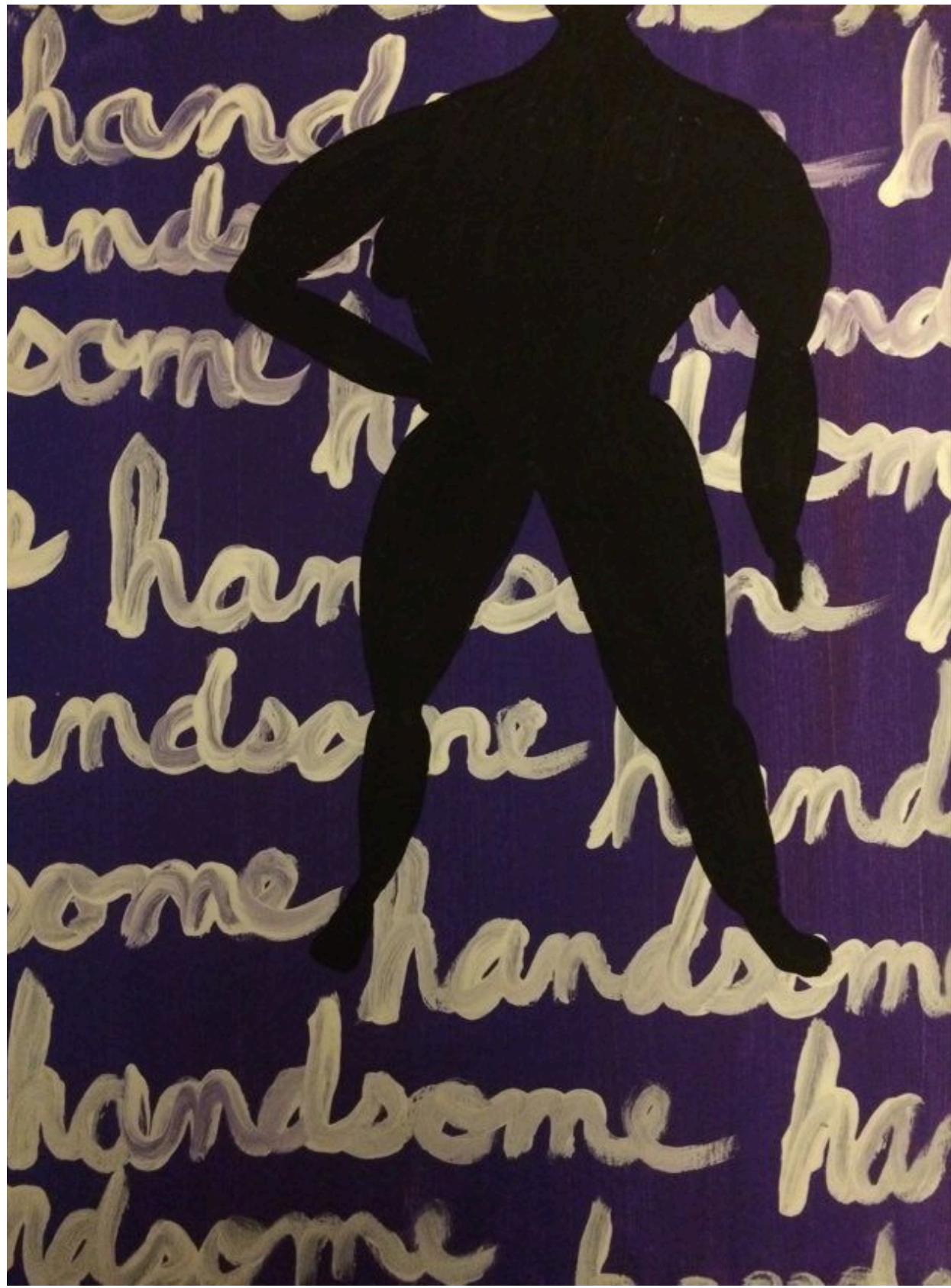
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Layout of this issue is in honor of HOMOCORE zine, an American anarcho-punk publication (1988-1991).



Handsome by Jaden

TRANSlate Health: What does that even mean?

Jaden

Starting around the end of 2019, a group of trans people, which we define as anyone who is not cisgender, gathered at the LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland to talk about our experiences in healthcare. We figured out that (1) healthcare professionals all too often don't really understand us and (2) we have a hard time understanding the healthcare system because - let's face it - the system wasn't built with us in mind.

So, what are we to do? Bite our tongues, keep our heads down, and hope for the best? Well, that's not going to help anyone improve or get the care they have a right to receive. Do we seek help from established organizations? Sure, that works some of the time. But lots of us already do that and we're still left with problems 1 and 2.

Thus, we've taken it upon ourselves to TRANSlate (see what we did there?) our problems into actionable solutions. We tried this in 2020, but there weren't a lot of us working on it and we burned out. But yet, here we are, at it again.

We've organized into a community-based action group led by gender diverse Ohioans. We are creating safer, healthier communities by improving the accessibility of healthcare for transgender people by: providing peer-to-peer education, training members of the healthcare field, advocating for legal equality, and providing transportation to transgender individuals in need. We came up with these goals by reviewing the LGBT community needs assessments found at <https://www.lgbtqohio.org>



In summary:

Vision: We envision a future of safe and healthy communities with easy access to integrated healthcare.

Mission: TRANSlate Health is an Ohio-focused advocacy group of non-cisgender people who first serve non-cisgender people through education, improving access to care, and political engagement.

Goals:

Education
Transportation Access
Legal/Political Advocacy

Are you 18+, gender diverse (meaning not cisgender) and want to join in?

Contact:

TRANSlateHealth.Ohio@protonmail.com

Things you could do:

- Lead the legal/political committee
- Complete any actions allies can (see examples list below)
- Generate new ideas for projects
- Contribute articles and art to our Zine
- More!

Are you an ally and want to help?*

Contact: TRANSlateHealth.Ohio@gmail.com

Things you could do:

- Host or connect us to your organization(s) so we can provide trainings
- Be a driver to improve access
- Help register transgender voters
- Spread the word about our services
- More!

* We really appreciate your help and dedication to our work! This group is led by and for transgender people. Allies will not be in leadership. Allies can help complete our action steps!

I wish it could always be this simple

Antiggonous

I admit I struggled getting this piece started. Not to pat my own back, but it's hard to celebrate personal wins when my community is obviously suffering. Nonetheless, I feel stories like mine should still be told - examples of how support systems we fought so hard for actually work and work well. I transitioned socially and medically significantly sooner than my initial time-line I developed for myself in a rural suburb of NE Ohio. I saw peers my age already in the middle of their transitions, making uses of the resources available in the greater Cleveland area. When it seemed so easy to do, no fighting the system, no giving up my life as it was to live as I needed; I said, that really could be me right now. Getting an appointment with Metro's Pride Clinic felt a little convoluted, still is admittedly, I had to reschedule my usual follow up with my provider on the phone instead of on myChart. But at its worst, it was just a hold as I was transferred to a special line just for the clinic. I got to start HRT on informed-consent, which was mindblowing at the time. I didn't need other people to prove to my new doctor that this is what I needed, I was trusted to know myself. Unfortunately, I was uninsured, so I paid out of pocket for most things. When I needed assistance, I had to schedule an appointment with Metro's financial office. I provided proof of income through work and school, and had most of my medical debts forgiven. It was both easy and hard. As helpful and kind the woman I was working with was, it still felt terrifying to be doing this alone as someone just freshly deemed an adult. HRT was somewhat affordable, mostly as the means of administration I was using was the cheapest available option (and the standard treatment). But as the years went on, I found it more and more difficult to give myself injections.

I know now that I am insured, getting another form of treatment would require hoops of proof of need and prior auths that I'd been thankfully spared by my care provider since 2019.

I've never had to submit much of anything myself outside of documentation for Top Surgery, which was standard for approval from the surgeon anyway. At the time I was on medicaid, and since I was unsure of my future, I decided to get surgery while I was on medicaid. Though I didn't get my choice of surgeon, due to working exclusively through metrohealth and what surgeons took medicaid, I got my surgery for nothing out of pocket.

Free top surgery.

To this day I still am overwhelmed at the privilege of that. Knowing the articles and blog posts and social media rally calls to sort out funding for people's care.

I was also getting all of my HRT at the time for zero dollars out of my pocket.

Even now I am getting insurance through my work.

It's so stupid, isn't it? That something anyone may need to just function is stuck behind a paywall.

Even moreso that people might be forbidden to even get that care, just because someone else doesn't like it?

I wish my straightforward, simple, affordable experience was universal.

It helped me so much to be a person again, to contribute to my community, to live without suffering.

It was possible, and it should remain possible. We only need people who live their lives with compassion and empathy in charge of our care. We need people to support us in the challenge of even getting that care.

We need to continue to advocate for ourselves and those like us.



Dismemberment, painting by Jaden

A call to healthcare professionals

Susanne

What does your routine visit to a doctor typically look like? We check in, the triage nurse takes a note of our weight, height, our blood pressure, measures body temperature and then we typically wait 10, 15 minutes maybe longer. Doctor walks in, logs into "mychart" and if we are here just for an annual visit, they check the numbers, order a blood test, perhaps immunizations, and renew your medicine. Conversations are short and to the point. Doctor needs to move on to another patient. I don't know about you but the process is bordering on alienating.

Seeing a therapist is definitely longer and more personal. The job of a therapist is to hear us. The focus is on us, the patients.

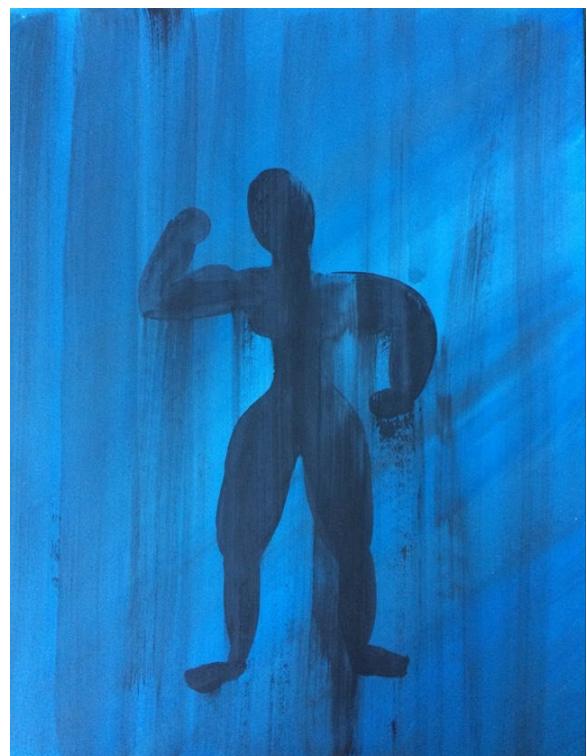
But truly, how well do we know our healthcare provider as a living and breathing person? We would like to contribute to a change of that attitude in our zine. In our future issues, our hope is to interview healthcare providers and allow them to tell us their story. Who are they? What drove them to be doctors, therapists, nurses, psychiatrists, surgeons, endocrinologists... How do they view the LGBT community? Are they one of us? How do they see the position of trans people in today's world? What's next in trans healthcare? What music do they like? What books do they read? What makes them laugh? What makes them cry?

If you are a healthcare professional, you want to tell us your story, you find our questions intriguing and you would love to help us get to know you better, send us a message! We would love to feature you in our zine.

As an author of this text, beyond the patient/physician roles, in my opinion, we are all

human - of flesh and blood we're made as they say in a song. So why not take an opportunity to learn about each other better.

To a trans person, healthcare is more than just a place where to get a vaccine, flu medicine or a routine catch up. To a trans person healthcare becomes an essence of our existence, perhaps more than to a cis person. And so, we need a healthcare provider to be our trusting friend, a part of the family. It's more than essential, it's life saving. We must get to know each other better on any possible level.



Still Strong, painting by Jaden.

Review of recent academic literature in transgender studies

Susanne

About This Section

The intention behind this section of our zine is to provide an overview of the recent academic research in transgender welfare. We will provide short reviews of journals and articles relevant to our cause. Hopefully our lightweight presentation of these important topics will contribute to the quality of information disseminated within the trans community. If you think we should review something that you find relevant, contact us, and we will include it in our next issue.

Getting access to the academic journals and articles might be tricky to a non-professional. You can try getting it through your academic institution if you are a student or faculty. Even that may not open all the links (for example, students of Case Western might have better luck than the students of Cleveland State), but we encourage the readers to try. You can also call your local library and ask for them to get you an access. Another way to go is to ask for a copy on Science Hub Mutual Aid (<https://www.smartquantai.com/>) which is usually reliable. If you wish to really stick it to a journal publisher, try “shi hub” - although that may get you in some legal trouble. And finally, you can email the authors and ask them for a copy directly into your inbox.

Journals

Transgender Health

Transgender Health is a bimonthly academic journal specifically focusing on transgender healthcare. This journal has a publishing tradition since 2016 and it's one the first of its kind in the world. The publisher is Mary Ann Liebert, an independent academic publishing company and the editor is Rober Garofalo, a professor of Pediatrics at Northwestern

University. Up to this point, 10 volumes were published, six issues per volume. The journal is a priceless resource for the transgender community with a variety of topics for all gender non-conforming individuals of all ages. And yes, articles on non-binary individuals are also covered. Geographically, it is not limited to just the United States.

Each issue is typically divided into a review section on work published elsewhere and original articles. All articles are peer reviewed. Writing style is academic, but fairly easily accessible to anyone interested in issues pertaining to transgener health.

<https://home.liebertpub.com/publications/transgender-health/634>

Transgender Studies Quarterly

...or TSQ for short. It's a quarterly academic journal focusing more on the cultural studies in humanities than the healthcare. Definition of the transgender used by TSQ is broad and it includes all non-conforming identities.

The journal is published by Duke University in North Carolina. The editors are professors Susan Styker of University of Arizona and Paisley Currah of CUNY. Both are transgender activists themselves. In fact, the journal often publishes articles written by transgender and gender non-conforming scholars and as such, represents a steady voice in our community.

The journal has been publishing since 2014 and it has 12 volumes so far, with four issues per volume.

Good chunks of TSQ are free to read.

<https://read.dukeupress.edu/tsq/issue/12/1>

Articles

A review of research on the school climate of transgender middle and high schoolers

This article is published by the Journal of School Psychology this month (June 2025) and it focuses on safety and overall wellness of young transgender individuals in an academic setting. Authors are affiliated to Rutgers and Arizona State University.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0022440525000329>

The intersection of the laboratory and transgender care

Societal acceptance of transgender care and information available to the transgender individuals is evolving at a great speed. Which is reflected in the increase and variety of demographics seeking for gender affirming care. However, reference intervals for pathological tests are frequently given in gender binary terms. As an obvious case, consider a “normal” testosterone level in a cis gender female. Clearly this number would not be “normal” for a trans masculine person. Thus interpretation for reference intervals needs adjustments for transgender individuals, especially given the complexity of gender non-conforming population. This paper in a format of an invited review focuses on this challenge in a scientific, yet gender affirming tone. The authors are affiliated to Australian universities and the work is published in Critical Reviews in Clinical Laboratory Sciences by Taylor and Francis in March 2025.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10408363.2025.2488839>

Body composition, exercise-related performance parameters and associated health factors of transgender women, cisgender women and cisgender men volleyball players

Trans people in sports have become a “hot political topic” which puts us all in a very vulnerable position. But there are academic groups which study it on a deeper level than your average Instagram or TikTok meme. This article analyzes various physical performance metrics for amateur volleyball players, some transgender women, some cis women, and some cis men. The article concluded that trans women athletes displayed more similarity in performance and biomarkers to the cis women, than to those of cis men. Article was published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine and although the UK is not a volleyball powerhouse, Brazil is! So it is not a big surprise that the authors are affiliated to Brazilian universities.

<https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2024-108601>



Transfeminine person studying. Drawing by Susanne



RISE TOGETHER FOR TRANS HEALTH

TRANSlate Health is an Ohio-focused advocacy group of non-cisgender people who first serve non-cisgender people through education, improving access to care, and political engagement

CALL FOR MEMBERS!



GENDER DIVERSE MEMBERS:

Leadership Roles • Legal and Political Committees
Generate New Ideas • Art and Written Zine Contributions
Plus All Areas Listed Below!

CISGENDER ALLY CONTRIBUTERS:

Register Your Organization For Our Trans Health Training
Provide Appointment Rides • Register Trans* Voters
Spread the Word About Us!

LEARN MORE



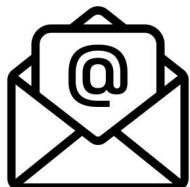
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Join us to improve healthcare for all gender non-conforming Ohians!

