

The Arquives, Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives.



Rupert Raj fonds

<https://collections.arquives.ca/en/permalink/descriptions16420>

Collection: Archives

Material Type: Textual records

Sound recording

Moving image

Graphic material

Electronic records

Date Range: 1968-2015

Part Of: Rupert Raj fonds

Creator: Rupert Raj

Fonds Number: F0021

Language: English

Physical Description: 193 cm of textual records
14.5 cm graphic records [Two photo albums, loose photographs, photocopies of photographs]
12 cassette tapes
4 8-track tapes
21 VHS tapes
28 DVDs
1 poster 28 x 43 cm

Extent: 207.5 metres

Physical Condition: Records are largely in good condition. There is some damage that comes from normal record use, particularly the newspaper clippings which are difficult to preserve.

History /

Biographical:

Rupert Raj (1952-) is a Eurasian (East Indian and Polish) pansexual trans man who came out in 1971 in the queer community of Ottawa as a bi-sexual trans man. He provided peer-counselling, research and education for transsexual and transvestite men and women and their significant others, as well as for the medical/health communities of Ottawa, Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto between 1971-1990, and later, from 1999 to 2015. He founded several trans organizations: 1) Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals (FACT) (1978-1986); 2) Metamorphosis Counselling Services (1982-1983) (which morphed into Metamorphosis Medical Research Foundation (MMRF) (1983-1988)); 3) Gender Worker-cum-Gender Consultants (1988-1990), which changed its name in 1989 to Gender Consultants, with his wife Michelle Raj-Gauthier as partner; closed in 1990), 4) the Trans Men/FTM Peer-Support Group (1999-), 5) the Thursday Night Group (2000), 6) the Trans (Health) Lobby Group (2001-), and 7) TransFormations (2003-2004). He also co-led the Gender Journeys group from 2006 to 2013. He also founded three transsexual periodicals: 1) Gender Review: the FACTual Journal (1978-1981); 2) Metamorphosis newsletter-cum-Metamorphosis Magazine (1982-1988); and 3) Gender NetWorker (2 issues, 1988). Rupert worked at Sherbourne Health Centre in Toronto from 2002 to 2015 as a psychotherapist and gender consultant in its LGBT Program, and also had a part-time private practice (RR Consulting).

In the first newsletter for FACT, Nick Ghosh writes that he was born in Ottawa in 1952, the second oldest of five siblings, and was raised Roman Catholic but subsequently became atheist. He lists a number of jobs he has held, including: landscaper, hotel clerk, encyclopedia salesman, medical research assistant, security officer, librarian, caterer, cab-driver. He graduated with a BA in Psychology in 1975, and an MA in Counseling Psychology in 2001. Raj's given surname was Ghosh. He changed his name first to Nicholas and then changed both names to Rupert Raj. The name "Rupert" was inspired by his childhood teddy, Rupert the Bear. Raj chose a new surname because he sought a "measure of protective anonymity" when he went "high profile" in the course of his trans advocacy. He chose "Raj" (East Indian king) to reflect his South Asian ethnic heritage.

He had male chest-construction surgery in Yonkers, NY in 1972, a pan-hysterectomy in Calgary in 1978 and a metoidioplasty ("bottom" surgery) in Montreal in 2012. In May of 1988, Raj closed out *Metamorphosis* due to "two years of chronic burn out"; the magazine also ended at this time. In July 1990, Raj phased out *Gender Consultants* due to "personal and professional" reasons.

In January 1978, while living in Calgary, Raj founded F.A.C.T: the Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals (F.A.C.T) as a lobbying and educational organization on behalf of trans people, with Raj as founding Director, Kyle J. Spooner as Associate Director, and Chris E. Black as Secretary Treasurer. On July 1, 1979, Raj moved the organization's "head office" from Calgary to Toronto, while various colleagues participated from Winnipeg, Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, Kitchener and London, ON. As of April 1980, F.A.C.T. was under the management of Susan Huxford and the HQ moved to Rexdale, ON, while Raj remained involved in various capacities, including editor of *Gender Review* (until December 1981). (At some point between 1981 and 1986, Huxford changed the name of the organization to the Federation of American and Canadian Transsexuals (F.A.C.T.). Raj was the Toronto Liaison Officer for F.A.C.T from 1985-1987, while running the *Metamorphosis* Medical Research Foundation (M.M.R.F.). After Raj moved to Toronto and began his publication *Metamorphosis* (in February 1982), he relinquished his role in publishing *Gender Review*.

Metamorphosis was founded by Raj in February 1982 as a bi-monthly newsletter "Exclusively for F-M men" (with an intended readership among their families, wives/girlfriends, as well as professionals and "para-professionals interested in female TSism"); the newsletter presents a more specific focus than FACT's broader activist mandate. By the third issue, the newsletter averaged around 8 pages, whereas in 1986, most issues were 24 pages. The last issue was in 1988.

Gender Worker was a counselling/consulting service for transsexuals and transvestites and their partners and family members founded by Raj in 1988 (and soon after renamed "*Gender Consultants*" to include his then new wife, a trans woman named "Marg" [a pseudonym] Gauthier, as a co-consultant). (Rupert joined their surnames, becoming "Raj-Gauthier," until they split in late 1997). The two issues of the *Gender NetWorker* newsletter appeared in June-July 1988 and August-September 1988. This publication was directed specifically towards "helping professionals and resource providers." Raj wrote that he wanted to facilitate a communication network between professional (mostly cisgender [non-trans]) and lay (transsexual/transvestite/transgender) providers, to bring together trans people and the medical and health professionals who worked with trans populations. Some decades later, Rupert became a (mental health) professional himself, and also a published author. He (co-)wrote five trans-focussed clinical research papers for scholarly journals (and elsewhere) and six trans-themed book chapters, and (co-)edited two book anthologies: *Trans Activism in Canada: A Reader* (with Dan Irving, PhD) (Canadian Scholars' Press, 2014), and *Of Souls & Roles, Of Sex & Gender: A Treasury of Transsexual, Transgenderist & Transvestic Verse from 1967 to 1991* (unpublished manuscript, 2017, revised 2018) (free PDF accessible online via the Transgender Archives and the Digital Transgender Archive websites). In August 2017, he self-published the first edition of his memoir (*Dancing The Dialectic: True Tales of A Transgender Trailblazer*) through Amazon. The second (revised) edition is due in early 2020 through

Scope and Content:

Fonds consist of materials gathered by Rupert Raj, a Canadian trans activist, born in Ottawa, who lived in Toronto most of his adult life before relocating to Vancouver, B.C. in 2017. Highlights of this donation include materials relating to the three trans-related periodicals Raj founded and edited in the 1970s and 1980s; the original, unpublished manuscript of his international transsexual/transgenderist/transvestic poetry anthology ("Of Souls and Roles, Of Genes and Gender," 1991); correspondence with other transsexual/transvestite/transgender people (including activists) and medical/psychological professionals, around the world, research on phalloplasty and other trans issues; personal scrapbooks and photographs; and AV materials. Books, periodicals, and AV materials are catalogued separately.

Storage Location:

C.02.01.01 : 01-05
C.02.01.02 : 06-10
C.02.01.03 : 11-14
C.01.02.01 : 15 (F0021-07-012 to 015, scrapbooks)
S.03.07 : 16-17 (photos)
MC. 6.1 F0021-05-058

Access Restrictions:

Restrictions have been divided into the restrictions on textual records and on photographs.

Written Documents: items in this list are restricted in the following way: researchers are required to a) apply for access and b) agree to use pseudonyms for all named individuals in these records. These restrictions shall be in place through Dec 31, 2040. Restricted on specific files are indicated in the 'Access' column of the finding aid below.

Restricted photographs are in the following folders:

F0021-06-008
F0021-06-009
F0021-06-010

In addition, the Country Scene' album is restricted. For all of these restricted photographs, approved researchers can access the photographs in person at CLGA. They shall not be reproduced, however, unless the researcher receives approval from Rupert Raj. These restrictions shall be in place through Dec 31, 2040.

Conservation:

The vast majority of paper clips have been removed. Archival clips and paper separators were added where determined necessary. Or no division has been marked if determined unnecessary. Users need to be mindful that records should not be shuffled, or else records may lose their adjoining pages.

Arrangement:	Contains series and subseries: Series 1. Correspondence and Administration, 1972-2001 1.1: Trans experiences 1.2: Medical profession and other service providers 1.3: Trans activism and research (including medical) 1.4: Correspondence with prominent figures 1.5: Personal administrative records and correspondence Series 2. Activism, Organizations, and Newsletters 2.1: A.C.T., F.A.C.T., and Gender Review 2.2: Metamorphosis [newsletter/magazine] 2.3: Gender NetWorker 2.4: Gender Worker 2.5: Activist Efforts 2.6: Newsletters and material from other trans organizations and groups Series 3. Metamorphosis Medical Research Foundation Series 4. Manuscripts and other writings for publication Series 5. Research + Resource Files 5.1: Bibliographies, secondary literature, and press material 5.2: Resources, Referrals, Research Studies (unpublished) 5.3: Conferences Series 6. Photographs Series 7. Scrapbooks
Description Level:	Fonds
Accession Number:	2006-167, 2012-102, 2013-008, 2014-094, 2015-045