

2 Team Assesses Applicants for Sex Change

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relatively brief interview to get an idea of how deeply motivated a person is to have the operation performed.

"We try to learn if the patient has any sort of serious mental disorder," she explained. "Is the patient psychotic, or is he or she a true transsexual?"

Psycho-Sexual History

"We often see individuals who have a homosexual orientation and feel guilty about it," she said. "There are others who might be more properly classified as transvestites, usually men who feel compelled to dress in women's clothing.

"Frequently these people have a mistaken idea that they are transsexuals, or they just want reassurance that they are still good people," she said.

"When we look at transsexuals, we try to assess their psycho-sexual history to see whether or not they indeed have the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the opposite sex and whether this has been a lifelong problem for them."

Among the tests she has the candidates take are the objective "paper and pencil" personality inventories and such projective personality yardsticks as the Rorschach "inkblot" test and figure

drawings.

Tests and Interviews

Descriptions of what inkblot patterns suggest to a person help to give a trained analyst a general psychological picture of that person, Crovitz said. Figure drawings tend to reveal how a person views his or her own body when compared with drawings done by more normal persons.

Psychiatrist Rhoads said he does not perform psychological tests but relies instead on lengthy interviews with the applicants.

"I take as complete a history as I can of the patient's life up to this point," he said. "Through the

answers I receive and through observation, I try to reach a conclusion as to what we should or should not do."

He said he frequently finds that "surgery would not only be not appropriate, but would also be a disaster" for some of the people who seek it.

No Married Patients

No one who is legally married or who has children is operated on at Duke, Rhoads said, because the emotional consequences may be too great, especially for the children.

Glenn said that if any of his colleagues has reservations about a particular patient, the surgical team will not operate on that patient.

Those who are tentatively accepted are asked to live as the opposite sex for a year and also to take the appropriate male or female hormones, Crovitz said.

Those adults who have had their sex changed at Duke have had little in common other than being mature, otherwise well-adjusted and "generally very nice people," the surgeon said. Among them have been a college professor, a dance instructor, a factory worker, a beautician and a hotel restaurant hostess, all of whom have reported being happy with their conversions afterward.

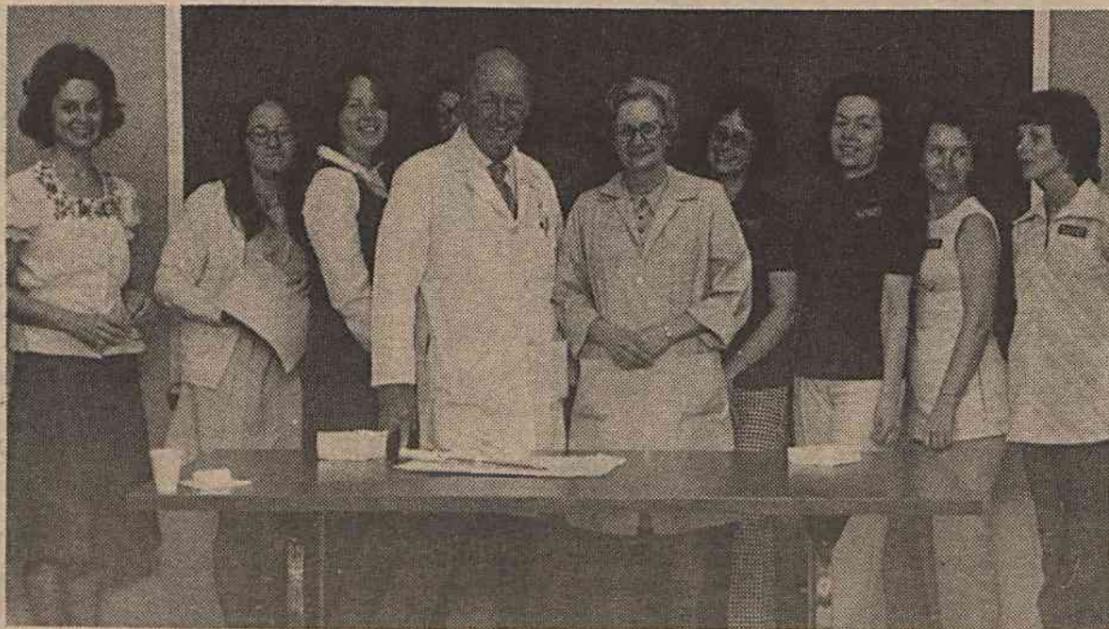
Rejectees Upset

"Some of those we turn down are very upset and don't realize that our rejection of them as surgical candidates is in their own best interest," Glenn said. A few have even threatened to operate on themselves.

"Clearly, these people are ill and need psychiatric help, not surgery they think will end all their other problems."

He said that after giving their opinions, he and his colleagues don't try to dissuade applicants from seeking surgery elsewhere "because they are going to have it done anyway."

"What we do is to give them the names and addresses of surgeons around the country who do this competently and try to steer them away from places where they are going to be hurt," he added.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY — The Department of Ophthalmology recently celebrated 12 full months without a delinquent medical record by sponsoring a party for the secretaries and medical records personnel involved. Pictured left to right are Sylvia Trembly, Judy May, Janie Messer, Carolyn Owen, department chairman Dr. Joseph A.C. Wadsworth, Brenda Edwards, Jo Ann Caldwell, Alwayne Gee, Mae White, and Lou Ann Gooch. (Photo by Ned Hinshaw)

Trading Post

FOR SALE—'67 Chevrolet Malibu. Call 489-2463.

FOR SALE—GMC Sierra Grande 1/2 ton pickup truck; automatic transmission, power brakes and steering, steel belted radial tires, excellent condition. Call 732-3841, Hillsborough, after 9 p.m. and weekends.

CAR POOL—Riders wanted to form carpool to and from Burlington, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Contact Jack Wray, 227-7892; or box 3112, medical center.

FOR SALE—1976 Chev. 1/2 ton pickup, long bed, 11,000 miles, like new, automatic, V-8 350; may assume payments and pay small equity or pay the balance and refinance; 30 months left owning. Call Hillsborough, 732-7731, after 6 p.m. and weekends.

FOR SALE—Two white pantsuits, size 7 double knit, 3/4 sleeves; \$12 per pair. Call Phyllis, 383-3760, after 4:30 p.m.

PLANT SALE—Indoor and outdoor, foliage and bloomers, some rare varieties; also kitchen herbs; proceeds used for care and aid of homeless abandoned animals of Durham Co.; Sat., June 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., 1102 Englewood Ave. (corner of Dollar, off Club, near Northgate).

FOR SALE—Children's clothes (boys' and girls'), size 4-6x; toys, good shape; misc. Call 682-4237, after 6 p.m.

FOR SALE—1952 Chevy bus camper; four burners, gas stove; refrig; sleeps four; 30 gal. water tank with sink; factory rebuilt engine; good tires. Call 383-6452.

FOR SALE—Window screens, aluminum, standard sizes, \$1; two window fans, excellent condition, \$10 & \$15; VW air conditioner & compressor, \$10 or make offer for parts; kitchen sink & faucet, \$10. Call 489-2628.

PLANNING HELP

Whether you plan to vacation in Timbuktu or on the Outer Banks ask at the Perkins Library Reference Desk for travel information such as motel directories and guides.

"I went on vacation to forget everything. When I opened my suitcase, I found that I had."

Biochemist Says Coal Not Genetic Hazard

By David Williamson

Fears that the increasing use of coal reserves having a high sulfur content will present a genetic hazard to humans have no scientific basis, according to a medical center scientist.

Dr. K.V. Rajagopalan, a professor of biochemistry, said that experiments conducted in his laboratory indicate that the human body has a very high capacity for detoxifying sulfur dioxide, a major environmental pollutant released into the atmosphere by burning coal containing sulfur.

The finding may be important, Rajagopalan believes, because the nation's coal reserves in some states have a high sulfur content, and large doses of sulfur dioxide are known to produce chemical modifications in nucleic acid, the genetic material of living systems, under laboratory conditions.

Still Concerned about Lungs

The researcher said his studies will not, however, lessen concern that acid pollution caused by burning low grade coal may result in lung

damage, as scientists now suspect.

In the sulfur dioxide experiments, Rajagopalan and his colleagues found that an enzyme known as sulfite oxidase, produced in the liver and some other organs in humans

and animals, converts a water soluble form of sulfur dioxide (bisulfite) to sulphate compounds that are excreted in urine.

The enzyme sulfite oxidase was discovered at Duke in the late 1950s by Dr. Philip Handler, now president of the National Academy of Sciences, and Dr. Irwin Fridovich, who is also a Duke biochemistry professor, Rajagopalan said.

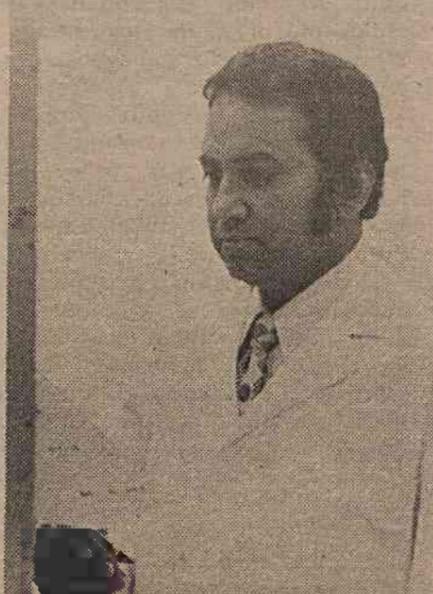
In Living Tissue

The enzyme has since been shown to convert sulfur dioxide to sulphate compounds in the test tube, but its action in living tissue had never been demonstrated.

"To learn whether the enzyme detoxifies sulfur dioxide in animal tissue, we had to develop a system in which the enzyme worked in certain laboratory animals and didn't work in others of the same species," the scientist said.

"We found that sulfite oxidase contains the rare metal molybdenum," Rajagopalan said. "This was interesting because very few enzymes are known to contain it."

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DR. K. V. RAJAGOPALAN

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