

Transgender Professor Proposes a New Theory of Evolution Normalizing Homosexuality and Transsexuality

by Frank York

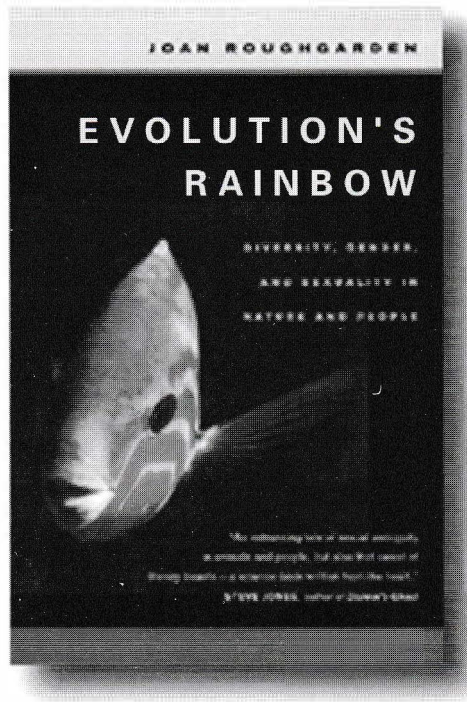
Joan Roughgarden, a male-to-female transgender, is a Stanford University biology professor who was recently featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The subject of the interview was his book, *Evolution's Rainbow—Diversity, Gender and Sexuality in Nature and People* published by the University of California press.

The Demand to be Proclaimed "Healthy"

In the *Chronicle* interview, Joan Roughgarden, who was formerly known as Jonathan, says that "The time has come to take a stand, to say that we, in all our shapes and sizes, in all our gender expression, sexual orientations and body parts, are healthy."

Evolution's Rainbow promotes a new theory of evolution. In it, Roughgarden maintains that more than 300 species of vertebrates have sex with the same gender and that there are gay sheep and lesbian lizards. He criticizes psychologists who have pathologized "gender and sexuality-variant people" and recommends social policies that protect and celebrate sexual diversity in our culture. In addition, he has proposed that a "Statue of Diversity" be erected in San Francisco harbor.

Roughgarden's book was reviewed in the May 14, 2004, issue of *Science* magazine by Alison Jolly, a British biologist at the University of Sussex. In it, Jolly quotes Roughgarden as saying: "When scientific theory says something's wrong with so many people, perhaps the theory is wrong, not the people."



Roughgarden proposes a new theory of evolution called "social selection," in which all members of a society are recognized—including those who pursue kin selection instead of reproduction.

Roughgarden chronicles the history of individuals in history who are alleged to have been transgendered individuals, including Joan of Arc. According to Jolly, "Following the arguments of Leslie Feinberg, Roughgarden describes Joan of Arc as 'a male-identified trans person' who chose to be burned alive rather than wear women's clothing—and who was so convincingly masculine that her executioners raked away the coals to display her naked body and remove people's doubts that she was a woman.

Jolly observes: "She [Roughgarden] ends her text with an agenda, a list of what she believes transgendered people want. It includes the desires 'to be cherished as a normal part of human diversity'; 'to be treated with courtesy and dignity'; and 'to be respected as people, not bodies.'"

Re-Inventing Darwin

Jolly urges scientists to expand Darwinian evolution to include a more expansive view of sexual diversity in our culture, including "biological bases of life choices that do not lead to personal reproduction, as well as the malleability of both sex and gender among other species."

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