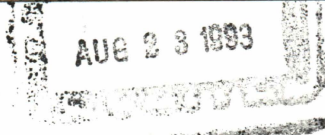


The EON Accord



AUGUST 1993, Volume 2, no.2

Which Choice

by Charliss Dolge

It has been said that God knows itself through its creation. The corollary here would be that God does *not* know itself, see, or experience itself through anything that it does not create. What is not created is made up by humankind from time to time as societies and cultures go through flux and redefinition. Thus, the "two worlds" that have been recognized by mystics and spiritual teachers throughout the ages, the duality that consists of what has been created and what has been made up. It is easy to confuse the two. Perhaps we need to consider the idea that real growth and fulfillment as individuals and as a world consists of willingness to let go of what has been made up and an openness to creation itself so that we may express it and fulfill it in our individual ways.

The writings that you will find in this issue's EXCERPTS section are about the natural, and the reality of gender and sexuality, as opposed to what has been made by us over a long period of time. This section contains a wide selection of thinking and experience on the subject of the dualities, or the pairs of opposites, of male and female, masculine and feminine.

As we attempt to live out or actually live out what we experience, deep within, to be our transgender nature, we often come face to face with the resistance, and many times the prejudice that is incorporated in the oppressive belief

system — the made up world — that has been superimposed on the natural, put over and above creation itself.

Sometimes these encounters we have as transgendered people living in a society of extremely rigid beliefs about gender roles and sexuality can not only be demoralizing but may also cause severe self-doubt and anxiety about our future. At such times we need to remember that we too, as well as those who will not honor our transgender nature, have been taught, over the years the very same falsehoods of a rigid and illogical belief system that does not admit to the infinite nature and function of creation at the level of humanity. At such times we may need to see if we are still internalizing this negativity. Are we merely just in conflict with society or worse — *are we still in conflict within ourselves?*

It helps to remember the ancient wisdom that we cannot serve two masters and still experience the joy and reality of our individuality and our purpose. The choice might come down to this: to express creation or what is false. Both have hardships. The difference is that one set of hardships leads to the experience of the real self, to freedom; the other leads to the denial of self and the *illusion* of freedom.

Will we choose to end up dying, within and eventually literally, in the service of illusion or will we choose to see ourselves and others differently — to begin anew? Can we believe that by being real we will not only be aligning ourselves with creation in one of its particular ways, we will also be helping others who are like us, and, very importantly, also helping people whose personal truth is different from ours.

What's Inside...

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Support Group Schedule

EON offices and meeting rooms are open every Saturday evening from 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM. A light buffet is available with coffee and other non-alcoholic beverages. The cost of this meeting is \$5.00 per person.

Attendance is limited to support group members (crossdressers, transgenderists and transsexuals) except where noted. Meetings are organized as follows:

"Especially in times
of darkness,
that is the time
to love,
that an act of love
might tip
the balance."
— Aeschylus

Also, please note...

FIRST TUESDAY of the month:

*Board of Directors,
Expressing Our Nature, Inc.
7:00 PM*

Contact a board member if you have an idea or a topic that you would like the Board to put on its agenda.

FIRST SATURDAY of the month:

An unstructured social evening. Relax with your support group friends; share experiences and practical advice. This is an opportunity to be supportive of each other in an informal setting.

SECOND SATURDAY of the month:

A moderated discussion group is included in this meeting. Bring your topic with you and explore it with others in a non-interruptive and meaningful way. An opportunity to allow each person to be attentive to her own voice and needs, as well as those of others. Any relevant topic is safe and welcome — whatever you need to explore in a non-judgmental setting. The discussion segment of this meeting is limited to one hour beginning at 9:00 PM.

THIRD SATURDAY of the month:

An unstructured social evening that may include family members and significant others. This is an opportunity to introduce others to your support group environment and your friends. They will be warmly received and assured of any assistance they may need from others to feel more at home with your own feminine reality.

FOURTH SATURDAY of the month:

An open social evening for support group members, prospective members, friends, and others who may have a desire to learn more about, and to interact with, our transgender community. This evening begins at 9:00 PM and ends at 11:00 PM.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday & Wednesday — 2:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Support group members are welcome to use the facility individually or in small groups during these hours. The video and book library will be available; the dressing/makeover room can be reserved for a \$5.00 fee. Membership interviews for newcomers are also held on these days.

Call ahead if you wish to use the facility on these days or evenings. Board members and volunteer workers are often in the offices at other times as well; please feel free to call if you need to talk with someone or would like to use the facility at these other times.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

The current support group schedule was set up by EON, Inc. board members and others who are active within the support group. Please let us know if there are other types of programs that you would like to have for Saturday night meetings. Also, you may want to have a week night meeting of some kind, or perhaps you have an idea for a special event.

Once you have the desire and the idea for something new, are you then ready to help create the program, the meeting, or the event?

If you want to influence the movement and direction of your support group, you must take responsibility for making your ideas a reality. Every one encourages you to speak out.

National & Regional Calendar

CONFERENCES...MEETINGS...AND EVENTS...

2ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSGENDER LAW AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

August 26 - 29 Houston, Texas
 Contact: Phyllis Frye
 5707 Firenza Street
 Houston, Texas 77035-5515

PARADISE IN THE POCONOS

Sept. 16 - 19 Pennsylvania
 Contact: Creative Design Services
 P.O. Box 61263
 King of Prussia, PA 19406

NEW WOMAN CONFERENCE

(For post-operative transsexuals and
 their female partners)

Sept. 23 - 26 Russian River, California
 Contact: New Woman Conference
 P.O. Box 67
 South Berwick, Maine 03908

SOUTHERN COMFORT CONFERENCE

Sept. 29 - Oct. 3 Atlanta, Georgia
 Contact: South Eastern Reg. Conference, Inc.
 P.O. Box 33296
 Decatur, Georgia 30033

7TH ANNUAL MARDI GRAS IN THE MUSKOKAS

October 1 - 3 Mississauga, CANADA
 Contact: Monarch Social Club
 Mississauga "A"
 P.O. Box 386
 Mississauga, Ontario
 CANADA L5A3A1

19TH ANNUAL FANTASIA FAIR

October 15 - 25 Provincetown, Massachusetts
 Contact: Outreach Institute
 405 Western Avenue
 Suite 345
 South Portland, Maine 04106

BI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE HARRY BENJAMIN INTERNATIONAL GENDER DYSPHORIA ASSOC.

October 21 - 23 NYC, New York
 Contact: HBIGDA
 1515 El Camino Real
 Palo Alto, California 94306

HOLIDAY EN FEMME

Nov. 10 -14 Los Angeles, California
 Contact: Erie Sister CD Club
 2115 W. 8th Street
 Suite 261
 Erie, Pennsylvania 16505

THE ORIGINAL GREAT GENDER POWER SHIFT?

An olive tree sprang from the earth, and in another spot water gushed forth. Frightened, the king sent to Delphi and inquired what this meant and what was to be done. The god replied that the olive tree meant Minerva and the water Neptune, and it was for the citizens to decide after which of the two deities they wished to name their city.

Thereupon Cecrops called an assembly of the citizens, both men and women, for in those days the women also took part in public deliberations. The men voted for Neptune, the women for Minerva, and since there was one more woman, Minerva won out. Neptune was angry at this, and the sea flooded the entire Athenian territory. To appease the god's wrath, the citizens imposed a threefold punishment on their women: they should lose their right to suffrage, their children should no longer take their mother's name, and they themselves should no longer bear the title of Athenians.

Excerpts

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: Thoughts on Androgyny and Transgender

Our August EXCERPTS section offers you a variety of views, experiences and theories from a number of writers. Some of us hold conventional beliefs about gender identity, roles, and sexuality. Others express more revolutionary ideas. *Each of us is on a personal journey, and while personal, the journey must necessarily make peace with other minds; for its purpose is to experience happiness and effectiveness in the present and in the presence of diversity.* We hope these excerpts prove useful to you.

DOES SOCIETY DICTATE GENDER?

According to Elaine Draper, Ph.D., assistant professor of sociology at the Univ. of California, "From a historical and cross-cultural viewpoint, there is an incredibly strong indication that the intrinsic differences between man and woman are minimal — they are actually learned." In her early work, Sandra Bem, Ph.D., professor of Psychology and Women's Studies at Cornell University, explored ways of

creating gender-less environments within which to raise her children. Her basic premise was that whether you are a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, it doesn't matter unless and until you want to make a baby. She and her husband shared household tasks, gave her children gender-specific toys regardless of their sex (dolls and trucks), doctored books, and censored television programs.

In a graphic example of the liberations from and the restrictions on possessing or not possessing a narrow biological view of sex, Bem recounts the story of how her son Jeremy naively decided to wear barrettes to school. In an attempt to contradict a boy who claimed that because Jeremy was wearing barrettes he must be a girl, the incensed child pulled down his pants to end the debate. The response of the other boy? "Everybody has a penis; only girls wear barrettes." We live in a heavily gender-stereotyped society, based on what public opinion thinks is male or female, say Bem.

from PRISONER OF GENDER,
by Tina Gaudon
Harpers Bazaar (June 1993)

MINIMAL DIFFERENCES

If an Extraterrestrial Being visited our planet from a distant galaxy, it might derive a number of possible conclusions from its first look at our species, homosapiens. It might, for example, take note of some differences between those called "males" and those called "females." This same extraterrestrial might also conclude that these forms of humanity are simply two varieties of the same species and are extremely similar in many respects. If, for example, our space visitor ventured into a biology laboratory and came into contact with full female and male skeletal displays, it would be hard-pressed to differentiate between the two. Further, in terms of external appearance, males and females are all unique as individuals; but, when taken as a group, are not all that different.

This imaginary scenario raises the question of just how "different" males and females really are. Though there are some studies which suggest that young boys have slightly higher tendency toward aggressiveness than young girls, and that there may be some small differences in mental abilities between the sexes, the overwhelming conclusion is that there is *very little evidence* to prove that the psychological differences commonly attributed to each sex are inherent.

from LOOKING AT GAY AND LESBIAN LIFE,
by Warren Blemenfeld and Diane Raymond

BORN TRANSGENDERED

A member of the Lakota Indian tribe describes his berdache (transgender) experiences; in the language of his people he is called a *winkte*:

I have always filled a winkte role. I was just born this way, ever since I can remember. When I was eight I saw a vision of a person with long gray hair and with many ornaments on, standing by my bed. I asked if he was female or male, and he said, "Both." He said he would walk with me for the rest of my life. His spirit would always be with me. I told my grandfather, who said not to be afraid of spirits, because they have good powers. A year later, the vision appeared again, and told me he would give be a great powers. He said his body was man's, but his spirit was woman's. He told me the Great Spirit made people like me to be of help to others.

I told my grandfather the name of the spirit, and Grandfather said it was a highly respected winkte who lived long ago. He explained winkte to me and said, "It won't be easy growing up, because you will be different from others. But the spirit will help you, if you pray and do the sweat." The Spirit has continued to contact me throughout my life. If I practice the winkte role seriously, then people will respect me.

from THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH,
by Walter Williams

RIGID GENDER CONSTRUCTS

Anatomically, contrary to the prevailing notion, the sexes are not "opposites." In many ways we are biologically similar; for example, both males and females have so-called male and female hormones, but the proportions are different for the sexes. Besides the external and internal accessory sexual organs all else is shared between the sexes, although the distribution are, statistically speaking, different.

As far as physical traits are concerned, it is possible to differentiate between different physical characteristics, for example, pitch of voice — at the statistical level — between males and females, but the difference is one of range rather than an absolute difference. As far as character traits are concerned (e.g., gentleness, dependence, emotionality for women; roughness, independence, and nonemotionality for men) we can identify sex stereotypes (as Bem has done for the construction of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory) and we can observe statistical distributions which point toward differences in the distribution of behavior traits (e.g., greater verbal ability of girls and greater physical aggressiveness of boys). All people encompass in themselves some elements that are stereotypically ascribed to the other sex, and most people seem not to worry about that. However, when we read the accounts of transvestites and transsexuals, we are struck by the perceived inappropriateness of engaging in behaviors that are seen as being fitting for the other sex.

...Clinicians need to believe fairly strongly in the appropriateness of "sex-appropriate behavior" and a "proper gender identity" in order to be able to justify to themselves and others the removal of physiologically perfectly normal and healthy sex organs in substantial numbers of patients. Clinicians involved with transsexuals (at least those who perform sex reassignment surgery) must not only accept the present sex structure but must passionately believe in its essential rightness.

...Instead of viewing a situation in which games are rigidly divided by sex, in which boys and girls are supposed not to like to play with the other, not supposed to cross dress in any way, not emulate each other in any way in terms of traits or behavior, and so

on, as a case of social pathology, children who refuse to participate in this form of social sickness are seen as individually pathological. It is striking that the discussion of transsexual pathology concerns almost exclusively gender identity rather than sex identity. Patients do not have a confused image about their sexual organs, although they display a strongly negative view of their own sex organs since these symbolize to them at the anatomical level the restrictions that they think they must accept at the personality level. Clinicians further this interpretation by themselves subscribing to a sexual dimorphism at the psychic level.

...Individual transsexuals are casualties of an overly rigid sex-role differentiation, and clinicians who perform sex reassignment surgery help to maintain this overly rigid sexual dimorphism which is restrictive to every human being, whether female, male, or transsexual.

Performing the operation implies that the physicians agree that the *perceived* discrepancy is a *real* discrepancy — that indeed the behavior and character traits are legitimately determined by one's body, in the face of the evidence that suggests that our sex identity is imposed on a largely or entirely undifferentiated character structure and that, therefore, sex identity is a *social* rather than a *biological* product.

Transsexuals are people who suffer so deeply from the sex structure that they are willing to endure terrible pain and loneliness in order to reduce their suffering. This group of people would — potentially — be the most potent group of people pressing for changes in the sex structure, because their aversion to their "sex appropriate" roles is apparently insurmountable. By declaring them, by surgical fiat, as members of the other sex, this change potential is diverted and becomes as conservative as it could have been revolutionary. Each situation is individualized, rather than being recognized as the result of a social pathology, and the social pathology has overcome one more threat to its continued well-being.

from SEX CHANGE OPERATIONS:
THE LAST BULWARK OF THE DOUBLE STANDARD,
by Margrit Eichler

EVERY ROAD IS OPEN

Anyone who becomes conscious of role playing will swiftly discover that just about all his attitudes are roles, that he cannot find out what he is genuinely, and is therefore at a loss what to do to express himself sincerely. Thereupon he is self-conscious and blocked in his relationships, finding himself in the double-bind predicament where every road is closed. This leaves him in a state of complete paralysis if he persists in thinking that there is some "right" course of action and some particular set of feelings which constitute his real self. Where he expected to find the specific truth about himself he found freedom, but mistook it for mere

nothingness. For human freedom does indeed comprise an order, yet because it is the nonlinear order of *li* and of the *Tao*, it cannot be classified; it cannot be identified with any particular role. Therefore at this point of the double-bind he must wait, and see what happens of itself, spontaneously. He will find that the sensation that every road is barred abruptly switches into the sensation that every road is open. He can play all roles, just as in Hindu mythology the true self is pictured as the godhead acting all the parts of the multitude of finite creatures.

from NATURE, MAN AND WOMAN
by Alan Watts

“June 19th... A Family Outing”

All around the country, the month of June is thought of as Gay Pride Month by the gay and lesbian community. It is a time for events and activities that demonstrate the pride and self esteem of gay people. It is a time for communicating these qualities to each other and to the rest of the society in which gay people live. Each event, every activity, is an opportunity to celebrate, to stand up and be counted, and to intensify the process of stating and demanding those rights and considerations that are due them simply because they are human beings but which are largely withheld from them by society simply because they are different. To participate in the gay community, especially in the Gay Pride events and activities, is to be very aware of the difference: their difference, the reason why society and authority can be so mean-spirited toward gay people, is not that they are uncaring and unloving — it is that they care for, and love, each other.

This was so evident, this capacity for caring and loving, during the Gay Pride events and activities in Syracuse on Saturday, June 19th.

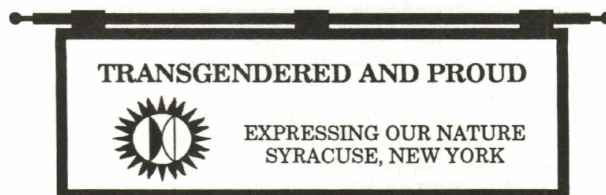
EON was honored by the invitation extended by the Gay Pride Committee to participate in this day's events and activities. Named “A Family Outing,” we enjoyed, and felt empowered by, our inclusion in the family and its special day.

The transgender community has much in common with the gay community. To begin with, membership in the two communities overlaps in terms of sexual orientation and gender identification. Also, once we make the decision to leave behind the shame and the oppressiveness of the closet, we too become subjected to the discrimination and prejudice that is incorporated in a superimposed belief system that does not admit to the validity or the rights of naturally occurring alternative gender and sexual relationships.

Thus, the struggles and challenges of gay people are our struggles and challenges, too. But this is so only if we are visible as they are visible, that is, living out our reality in the stream of life itself, for otherwise we do not experience in our own lives what it is that needs to be overcome, that needs to be changed; we only hear word of it, or read about it, as others live out our truth for us by putting their own on the line.

And so, our hope that day was that we could demonstrate and communicate this commonality to the gay community itself, as well as to other parts of our society. For in the future, we will not only want to assist gay people in their struggles, we will also want their assistance as we move through our own challenges. We will want to become aware of the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Community.

Looking forward to June 19th, the participating members of the EON group had a number of preparations to attend to. Anne Harper designed the banner which we carried in the parade that marched from Trinity parish house and out to Salina Street, ending up at the rally location at Hanover Square. After her design work (which included our logo in color) Anne also arranged for the manufacture of this 3' x 12' banner. Carried in the parade by Anne Harper and Angela Sheedy, our banner reads:



Following Anne and Angela were our friends from the CD Network in Rochester, Pam and Jesse, and the EON group member Wilma Moore. Next, following in the car which provided transportation for the return trip after the rally, were Toni and Charliss.

Our day began earlier than the 12:00 Noon starting time for the parade. Parade marchers, floats, workers and organizers began arriving at the Trinity parish house parking lot at 10:00 AM. Since the parish house is also the location of the EON offices, we had already set up tables for serving the coffee and donuts which EON provided. This hospitality was arranged by Wilma, Toni, Patricia and Flo.

The parade's destination, Hanover Square in downtown Syracuse, was the site of the Gay Pride Rally, which featured scheduled speakers — including Angela and Charliss — and several occasions when the microphone was open to anyone else who wished to speak. Attendance at the rally was approximately three hundred and fifty gay and lesbian people, their families, friends and supporters, and the few of us from the transgender community.

The return trip to the Trinity parish house ended with a picnic on the lawn, and later in the evening there was a dance party at May Memorial Unitarian Society.

While EON has participated in two other past June Pride Day events — co-sponsoring the picnic two years ago and being represented by Anne Harper's rally address of last year — this June 19th was the first time that EON had its own banner and this much representation at all the day's events.

“Inclusion of Transgender in the Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement”

—An opinion by Charliss Dolge

People within the transgender community are speaking out for inclusion in the agendas of the gay and lesbian movements, and they are right to do so. To anyone with an awareness of history and oppression, the question is not why this is right. The question is how to achieve the inclusion.

Any activity directed toward fulfillment of a need is preceded by an experience of lack. What is lacking? A nicety or a refinement of some sort? Opportunity or permission to more safely or frequently engage in some personal indulgence that is unusual or offbeat?

Or is what is lacking of a much more fundamental nature? For there is a hierarchy of needs within the transgender community, and this diversity can be found within any support organization of any size. Some people who crossdress need, and want, more from their community and its associations and relationships, than others.

I think it can be honestly said that very many, perhaps the majority of cross-dressers in our community, have already arranged for their fundamental fulfillment as human beings through the ways in which they have been able to organize their lives as males living in a white male supremacist society. As long as they remain within this structure, they experience the fulfillment available in this land of freedom and opportunity.

Employment, careers, wives and families, girlfriends, vacations, investments and pensions, and supportive goal-oriented friendships within a prescribed social circle are often hard-won standards of achievement. For a cross-dresser, however, these achievements are still only eleven out of twelve on the standard measure.

Enter the cross-dresser's support group. For many, this could be the opportunity to round out one's life, to achieve that precious extra inch on the measure; an addition — a separate attachment within which whatever one is can be normative, and wherein the type of support and activity can be experienced that leads to increased fulfillment on psychological, emotional and sensual levels. And if one maintains his membership long enough, there is even opportunity to expand outward somewhat from the support group itself via social occasions in settings that are judged to be accepting of cross-dressers and safe from the judgement and danger posed by the structure of one's primary and “real” life allegiance — gay and lesbian bars and nightclubs, restaurants and party occasions,

fund-raising, benevolent, and political events. Thus as cross-dressers, we can expand our viewing audience and experience being the women we want to be.

If this indeed is the truth regarding the position that most of our people in the transgender community occupy in the hierarchy of needs, then we are at a point

now where we must ask ourselves a very important question about the issue of inclusion of transgender in the gay and lesbian liberation movement: thus far, and as described above, who among us desire and have demonstrated a need for liberation as transgendered people?

Until we need, and are willing to take the closet door off its very hinges and include its contents in the structure of our real lives, until we need, and become willing to liberate ourselves from the limitations of self expression in safe and non-judgmental gay and lesbian social settings that are distinctly separate from our real life structure, only then can gay and lesbian activists who are in the process of building wholeness and fullness even begin to take us seriously in our attempt to have transgender included in gay and lesbian liberation.

Until such time, we can be their supportive friends, in or out of their community social settings, but it will be difficult for either of us to say that we share the same agenda.

If our real agenda is to maintain separate lives and secrets and hope that their agenda for human rights will result in written legislation and corporate and institutional policy that read “gay, lesbian, and transgender” simply because we speak out for such inclusion loud enough and long enough, then we are out of touch with a gay activist, liberationist movement that is born out of a history of risk, danger, sacrifice, suffering and courage. If this is our agenda, then we are wanting what they are moving toward without our being willing to come from where they are coming from. We may not have to go through what gay people have gone through, *but we must be willing to if that's what it takes.*

This may seem harsh, but the perception would be false. The real world is challenging, or perhaps honest. Remember, there is a diversity of needs in our community, as well as a variety of levels of idealism and commitment. Simply, not everyone needs to actually live transgendered, for that is not what is real about them. They need to be able to do it part-time without offending the other, the primary, parts of their world. Except for on a theoretical level, they don't need to be liberated,

Continued on page 10...

Here's Looking at You, Babe...

Finally, after reading all those articles in newsletters past, we get a chance to review all the steps in order. If you have kept each article, you will be able to go back and review the details for each step I will be giving you. Hopefully, you will be able to fit the pieces of the puzzle together and come up with the technique.

After following this outline a few times, you will be able to duplicate it without having to review the notes every time you put on your makeup. *Remember that "practice makes perfect."*

STEPS FOR YOUR MAKE-OVER:

1. Clean face, shave closely, pluck and cut eyebrows, nose and ear hairs;
2. Apply moisturizer;
3. Apply light coating of powder to eye areas;
4. Color eyelids with eye shadow;
5. Form eyebrows with pencil;
6. Apply eyeliner on *upper lid only*;
7. Apply false eyelashes, curl eyelashes if desired and apply mascara;
8. Wipe under eyes to remove any excess eye make-up;
9. Apply under-eye lightener creme or stick to cover dark areas;
10. Apply Camouflage to cover beard areas;
11. Blend in under-eye cover and Camouflage around the edges;
12. Apply light foundation creme around *front oval* area of face;
13. Apply dark foundation creme *around sides* of face and *under* chin;
14. Powder lightly over entire area that foundation has been applied;
15. Apply dark powder to shadow areas around face and under chin;
16. Apply rouge to "apple" of cheeks, tip of nose and on chin;
17. Outline upper and lower lips with lip liner pencil;
18. Apply lipstick with brush and blend in with lip liner; powder lightly with translucent powder and re-apply lipstick with brush;
19. Apply eyeliner to *bottom* of eyelid and blend to meet eyeliner from *top* lid toward *outside* of each eye;
20. Lightly color the lower eyelashes with a brush;
21. Fix your hair, put on your best outfit and jewelry, dab on your perfume, slip into your 5" heels and go give the world a thrill, honey!

That's about all there is to it. It may seem like a lot of steps, but as I have said, if you go through these steps a few times, you will be surprised at how easy it will become to remember them without the notes.

Please don't forget the necessity for using the right tool or applicator and that *you alone* should be using your makeup and tools to prevent eye infections, or worse. It is also a good idea to wash your brushes and tools frequently.

As you begin to know the sequence, you will find that if you stay with this system, you will increase your speed of application. This will allow you more time for detail work around areas like the eyes and the lips and will also allow you more time to experiment with confidence when using new types of makeup.

It also helps to realize that you do not have to follow all these steps if you have a light beard or you want to wear your makeup more casually, like in the summer or if you are just going shopping in the daytime.

Before I leave you this month, I want to mention what a great time I have had writing this column about makeup tips, but I hope that next month I will be able to continue with some new ideas that might be of help to all of us.

Until next month...

LOOK AND BE YOUR VERY BEST!

—Angela Sheedy

“Special Interest Group”

by
RavenWolfe

While at a pagan festival called the Wellspring Gathering, I was conversing with the Ar nDraiocht Fein (Our Own Druidism) Archdruid Isaac Bonewits about special interest groups while being bathed in a hot tub amidst a myriad of bubbles one Saturday night.

I suppose I must admit that I was complaining somewhat (but who better to complain to) about sexism, gender bias, and a general lack of understanding especially out in Mundania and somewhat in the pagan community about gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered individuals. People who lead alternative lifestyles have been discriminated against throughout the centuries right up to now.

I explained about the difficulties, subjugation, humiliation, and isolation I have experienced being both bisexual and transsexual. I used to joke, “By being transsexual, bisexual, Native American, and a Witch, everyone can find something to discriminate against.” It wasn’t until what seemed years of therapy that I realized that making such a statement wasn’t such a laughing matter.

I am thankful and pleased to say that ADF and the Pagan community at large has been very open to me (especially Muin Mound Grove), and has made me feel welcomed, appreciated, and needed. I feel a lot healthier about myself as a result. Last year at another pagan festival called Starwood I learned about empowerment — I took my vulnerability and held it high — feeling the strength and energy it contained. Feeling good about myself made it all happen. When gender and preference are not an issue, I am better able to function intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and creatively. ADF ensures the right for each member to express him or herself as it says in What is Ar nDraiocht Fein? “we have deliberately chosen to make gender and affectional preferences irrelevant to participation in ADF.” And they practice what they preach. Society gives us those rights but doesn’t seem to let us exercise them.

“Big Brother” God has permeated the very flux of civilization and thought; and like a cancer, has spread into other religions and cultures. Male and female gender/sexuality seem to be measured on a linear scale of opposites. A person is supposed to be one or the other and each extreme has gender rules of conduct and affectional preference. Unfortunately, even many pagans unconsciously buy into these concepts and we, as human beings, are supposed to fit into either the God or Goddess archetype.

“Many moons ago,” people like me were revered as being “touched by the Great Spirit.” Too many “apples” (red on the outside, white on the inside) have been unknowingly westernized beyond their wildest dreams and the patriarchal Church has convinced them that we are evil. Have you ever been called “an abomination

against nature?” I have and by a “skin.” That was not an opinion reflective of ancient ways. Look at what the Church has done to my People! Look at what patriarchy has done to my Earth Mother!

About five years ago during a circle meditation, I was in a trance state when my Spirit Guide came to me and told me these things:

■
*“With leather shield and spear of willow
and flint in hand, I am protector...
provider...comforter...”*

*My Spirit of ages past seeks to express
its essence...*

*Time and history follows its course;
giving me new opportunities to
express that essence in so many ways...*

*Experiencing anew what I have known forever
I walk in my footsteps, I follow my
footsteps, I watch over and guide
my footsteps...*

LISTEN...

*Balance, life and soul as one,
no limitations...*

*And then — now — we are one,
as we have always been...
walking as one through the eons...
amongst the stars.”*

■
Mundania views my transgenderedness as a problem or an issue. My former psychiatrist still considered it a “dysphoria.” My family is in denial. Ancient Native ways and the pagan community see it as a gift — *as I do!*

We, as transgendered persons, have the unique opportunity to experience and develop *both* our male and female energies. Everyone has both energies, but “conventional” male or female individuals usually develop the one that is in synch with their orientation and the latent energy lies dormant. As I develop both energies simultaneously, my potential becomes more and more apparent and mind boggling. Imagine the raised energy of a Coven full of transgendered Witches

Continued on next page...

SPECIAL INTEREST...

who can utilize both energies to their maximum? At pagan gatherings, many others understand what my gift is all about. Too bad straight-laced, mundane, narrow-minded society misses out on what we have to offer.

How are we going to change these things? How can we educate whoever wants to learn? How am I going to find out about myself and others like me? How can I discover my place in the overall plan for the Cosmos and what I have to contribute to the betterment of Humanity? I am a member of a gender support group but I am still isolated. Why? There are lots of transgendered people but I don't know any pagans. In ADF there are lots of pagans but I don't know any transgendered people. I know that I am not alone.

Isaac suggested that I help form a Special Interest Group to address the issues of the "alternative" groups in the Pagan community. Charliss at EON suggested that I form a Special Interest Group to address the issues of Pagans in the Transgendered community. Gee, what a coincidence, huh?

Perhaps we can pool our information and talents and see how we, whose energies have developed apart from the "mainstream," influence the magical mystical powers that be. I don't want to paddle around in the pool alone. Why not jump in?

If you have any suggestions, ideas, comments, gripes, are interested in forming a Circle, would like to discuss this further, or would like to contribute articles, please write to me at the EON address Attention: RavenWolfe. I have a computer so disks in ASCII or WordPerfect would alleviate redundancy in typing.

ACCORD ESCORTS

This is a networking service for those support group members who would enjoy the companionship and support of their members who are experienced in such *en femme* activities as:

- shopping
 - dining out
 - museum visits
 - evenings at the symphony

There are a number of stores and restaurants where several support group members are known and appreciated, and this is helpful to those who are just venturing out.

Call us, or let us know at meeting time, if you would like to participate in this program.

A FAMILY OUTING...cont. from page 6

We should hope for and envision a much greater participation on behalf of EON at next year's June Pride. And perhaps we will see the day when the public celebration of Transgender Pride will be an idea whose time has come, and we will be inviting the gay community to march in our parade and speak at our rally.

This can be a reality for us, just as progress and change have become a reality for the gay community, if only we can achieve the willingness and the courage that they have achieved. Not to mention the caring and the love that they so clearly demonstrated this past June 19th, for themselves and for those of us whom they chose to include in their family, the transgendered.

INCLUSION...cont. from page 7

for they wouldn't change their lives anyway even if they woke up one morning and read in the newspapers that transgender rights had suddenly become the law of the land.

And so, we have many people in our community who have a very real financial and social interest in not being identified as what they present themselves to be off-hours. They work very hard at maintaining and preserving their first and primary image. They also work very hard at creating the playground that is the natural habitat of their secondary, or *femme* image, and frankly, they are quite good at this; witness the great number of community, social, shopping, and practical workshop events that occur monthly all across this country. And what they create, this playground where males can safely and securely present themselves as women, is an important contribution to the transgender community.

It is especially important in that from this separate environment may emerge the true liberationists who are heart and soul transgendered in much the same way as those other people who are heart and soul what they are, that is gay, in terms of identity and a way of life, not merely sexually and socially, but spiritually as well.

These are the transgendered people who will be joining each other on the spiritual, the very fundamental level of fulfillment, and these are the gay and lesbian people who are joining each other at this level. And it will be these spirit-oriented people from both communities who will create the larger community of inclusion.

What they have in common is that they live with integrity in the midst of challenge to that integrity, and using this same integrity they will be able to work together in a way that produces results for all. This is how inclusion will be achieved.

EON Library

NEW TITLES: Books...periodicals...videos

TRANSGENDER STUDIES

In Search of Eve *by Anne Bolin*

A researcher expands her life to include the members of a transsexual support group and documents their changes, growth, and values.

April Ashley's Odyssey *by April Ashley and Duncan Fallowell*

From youth through the years of mature adulthood, Ms. Ashley tells the story of her transsexual experience as it unfolds in her relationships throughout her life in England, France, Italy, and other foreign countries. A story of challenge, courage and conviction, as well as one of international society gossip and intrigue.

The Transsexual's Survival Guide Vols. 1 and 2 *by JoAnn Altman Stringer*

A married post-op TS woman writes about the areas of counseling, economics, employment, relationships, family, and much more.

I Always Wanted To Be A Woman *by Jerry McClain*

A novelist, husband and father changes his name and lives as a woman — encouraged by his publisher to do so and write of his experience. This person thus finds her true place in life and continues on beyond the original assignment.

Crossdressing, Sex, and Gender *by Vern and Bonnie Bullough*

A history and overview of the transgender reality written by professors/researchers.

Feelings *by Stephanie Clark*

From Canada, the autobiography of a transsexual, from youth through sexual reassignment surgery.

Transgender Liberation, A Movement Whose Time Has Come *by Leslie Feinberg*

A female transgendered person traces the origins of transgender oppression and writes about the wide range of gender expression that creation uses to inform its world — what the author calls the “gender outlaws” of a rigid and fearful society.

The Transsexual Phenomenon *by Harry Benjamin*

The classic study written in 1966; research, case studies, and a theoretical endeavor.

RELATED LITERATURE

Essays on Sex and Justice *by John Stoltenberg*

Observations and reflections on our culture's objectification of women by males.

Brain Sex *by Anne Moir and David Jessel*

A look at some of the research and thinking about sex, gender, behavior, and biology.

Beauty Secrets *by Wendy Chapkis*

Women and the politics of appearance. An examination of the requirement put on women to “pass” by wrapping their “unacceptable” and “undisguised” selves in layers of conformity to meet acceptable beauty standards.

VIDEOS

The Power of Myth *PBS television series*

Joseph Campbell interviewed by Bill Moyers; this segment examines the mythology of the ages that was created to communicate experience and truth. Much to say about the challenge and purpose given to people of difference.



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Expressing Our Nature, Inc. (EON) is a non-profit community service organization for crossdressers, transgenderists, and transsexuals.

Services include:

- peer support group membership;
- regularly scheduled programs and discussions each month;
- weekly class nights;
- special social events for members, family and friends.

EON also maintains offices, meeting rooms and a library which are open to peer support group members at various times throughout the week.

The peer support group is an open group, that is, all are welcome regardless of gender identification or sexual orientation.

EON stresses a holistic and non-discriminatory approach to personal development within the support group.

EON also engages in educational outreach activity aimed at: colleges and universities; groups within the gay/lesbian and women's movement; the social justice community; the media; other occasions and organizations where real communication about the transgender issue is necessary and important.

The EON Accord is a monthly publication. Cost of the newsletter is included in the current annual peer support group dues. Articles, news items, reprints and original artwork are welcome. All submissions will be subject to editorial policy.

Statement Of Philosophy

WE BELIEVE IN:

The right of the transgendered person to full participation in and acceptance and affirmation by society as a whole. **This is the Right to Dignity.**

The right of all people subject to oppression to come together in unity and to create mechanisms of support for others of like kind. **This is the Right to Peaceful Community.**

The right of individuals to define themselves as they wish to be and to seek out their personal integrity without hindrance. **This is the Right to Self Love.**

WE FURTHERMORE BELIEVE:

That persons who are transgendered are endowed, by virtue of their differentness, with a special charisma and unique vocation to transform the perceptions of others and the world itself by being exemplars of tolerance and love.

That our happiness, personal growth, and sense of fulfillment as individuals can only be achieved when we persevere in honestly opening the reality of ourselves to others. EON exists to help create and to promote that courage.