

Femme Mirror

Reflecting the Feminine



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CAROL BEECROFT, Editor



*Grossman here wasn't much of a salesman,
but he's turned out to be a great secretary.*

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Wives Talk Back

with BERNADINE



It is time for us to get together and discuss our problems with each other. I'm sure that for most of us it concerns a topic that we would rather avoid but because it is one that touches each of us and isn't going to go away by avoiding it, we had better be grateful to Carol and the *Femme Mirror* for giving us the opportunity to air it openly with our unusual spouses in this editorial form.

During the past six years of my intimately close association with Norman/Norma Jean, I have spent hours and hours of frustrating time trying to understand heterosexual transvestism. Recently I ran across a book that has helped me to a much greater understanding of the subject, although I must admit in all fairness that it still perplexes me and causes more unwarranted anxieties than it should.

I'm going to share a little about this book with you, and also I'm hoping our sweethearts and husbands will search around for a copy of the book because it will be of even greater interest to them than it will be for us. Also, if there is a mother or sister in our reading audience, this book is exactly what you have been looking for. It is authentic, professional, and easy for the ordinary person to read. In fact, it is far more interesting and readable than my little editorial column, "Wives Talk Back." I wish I had been capable of writing the book, but I'm extremely pleased that there was a wonderful, sensitive, well-educated woman in an Eastern University, who not only sensed the need for such a book, but was also able to take the time to study and know the members of a Transvestite Sorority, which was a forerunner of our own Tri-Sig Society for the Second Self.

Deborah Heller Feinbloom, founder of

Gender Identity Service, is a Sociologist of considerable prestige. Her book is called *Transvestites & Transsexuals - Mixed Views*, Copyright 1976, Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, by Deborah Heller Feinbloom.

Dr. Feinbloom explains in the opening chapters of her book how she happened to stumble into the world of the heterosexual transvestite in the very same manner that the rest of us did, by having a close friendship with a fellow colleague who invited her to attend his Sorority meetings with him. She explains her dismay and her coping problems so well that there isn't a woman amongst us who won't feel identified with her. And then she explains how she managed to overcome her judgmental feelings and learn to accept and also to use her fine training in eliciting the needed information to help society in general, and loved ones like us in particular, to understand the dynamics of heterosexual transvestism.

I was particularly happy to see Virginia Prince being given so much credit for all the work she has done to inform the community-at-large, and great paragraphs are devoted to Virginia, because it was the FPE Sorority that Dr. Feinbloom attended on a weekly basis.

If any of our Tri-Sig members did not know of this book last year, I hope that you will make an effort to find out if your public library has a copy available for circulation.

I guess most of us are inclined to get large daydreams going whenever we read a book that really moves us, so I had a huge fantasy that I would like to hold a Seminar discussion group using Feinbloom: *Transvestites & Transsexuals* as the textbook for the class. It is that good.

Carol Beecroft is wondering is this column is of continuing interest to readers of the *Femme Mirror*. Please write to her or else to me about my column.

Bernadine



Don't we have enough trouble without the TVs rising up?

MITZI
GOES OUT ON THE TOWN

Mitzi (II-8-C)

As they say, "When the cat is away the mice will play" and with my family away in Europe on vacation, this girl decided that it was the right time to make a long week-end out of the normal Saturday night CHI Chapter June meeting.

Ariadne Kane was to be in Chicago to attend a Seminar and was interested in attending our chapter. Arrangements for her and also for me were made by Sharon (II-25-H), one of the bright new members of our Chapter. We were looking for a low-budget hotel in the north-side area near the lake. Sharon booked us with a "gay" hotel which didn't mind at all. Friday night Mitzi got dressed, picked up Ron, our escort, and we went to get Ariadne and then arrived at a nice Greek restaurant for a nice leisurely dinner.

While it didn't bother us girls, Ron got a little shook up when a co-worker with his wife and another couple sat at an adjacent table. Since he couldn't ignore them, Ron explained that he'd planned to go to dinner with two men that lived in the same apartment complex and was surprised when the "girls" showed up - but decided to go anyway as they were driving and it was too late for other plans. His friends said that they hadn't read us but who knows for sure? Then we were off to the BATON to see a great impersonator show and to meet Eve.

Eve is one of our former CHI Chapter members and an old friend of mine. She was Miss Dream of 1978 but not dressed that night. Finally to bed about 3:00 in the morning and up again at 9 to take Ariadne to the Loop. Ron and I (I had reappeared as a male the next morning) did some shopping while Ariadne had her nails done. Later that day I served as a Taxi driver and picked up Ron and Ariadne and the three of us were off to dinner and then the meeting.

We had a better than usual turnout at the meeting and Ariadne discussed the foundation's work and goals. Our hostess for the night was Deanna (II-35-G), CHI Chapter President, who has a lovely home and always serves the best refreshments. After a most interesting meeting, it was time to leave and I finally got to bed at 3:00 in the morning. Up again at 9 (this is killing me) and I got dressed in a pretty three-piece skirt-suit, picked up the others and went to see Eve's new apartment.

After a nice visit with Eve we left to pick up Ruthann (WI-14-L) who was coming as her brother for a week's training session in her new job. Since it was already afternoon and we hadn't eaten anything but snacks all day we ordered dinner in a restaurant by the bus depot.

Later we went to Rose Lee's. She handles exotic lingerie, publications, large shoes and other things of interest to crossdressers. She is one of the few that doesn't try to rip us off. Then back to Eve's for cocktails. The weekend was almost over.

What made it so good for me was that wherever we went, we were treated normally and friendly. We were probably "read" many times, but since we acted like ladies, we were treated that way. It was a very busy and exhausting weekend. I only wore three different outfits whereas if I had stayed home I would have tried on three times that many clothes. But our acceptance of ourselves and the public's acceptance made it great. We are all looking forward to New Orleans.

MITZI (IL-8-C)

ROUGHING IT IN THE "COOLER" IN ILLINOIS

Thought that I would drop you a note and relate to you an incident that happened in my area a couple of weeks ago. I found out about this because one of the people that I work with has a relative who works in the office of the county clerk. This person said that one day a rumor floated through the office that everyone should watch for a Deputy coming in with a man dressed as a woman. Most of the people who witnessed this found it hard to believe that the "girl" with a skirt and matching jacket and boots, along with stylish shoulder length hair and makeup was really a man. Turns out she had been picked up the night before for speeding and driving with a suspended license. The State Trooper took her to the county jail where she did not have the money to post bond and so she was kept overnight for an appearance before the judge. The regular Matron had the day off so the Sheriff and his wife came in to check her out to be sure that she was not concealing anything. This was supposedly only the second shake-down for the Sheriff's wife and to her amazement she found out that she was checking a male. No one at the jail had an experience in a situation like this, but they knew it was illegal for a male to shake down a female and for a female to shake down a male. So, they had to put her in a separate cell in a seldom used section of the jail to await her appearance before the judge. Naturally every State Trooper, city Policeman and Deputy had to walk by the cell to check her out. The officials did not know what kind of legal problems they were getting into so they made a deal that the traffic charges would be dropped if she would agree to have someone pick up her car and if she would leave town. Before releasing her they also called her employer in Chicago to verify that a person by that name was on their

payroll.

The person telling this story did not seem to know if anyone said anything to her about the way she was dressed and naturally I could not ask very many questions for fear of arousing suspicion. A couple of days later, this same person at work did tell us that the sheriff is taking a lot of kidding about getting lessons on "How To Tell the Difference Between a Man and a Woman." You can probably imagine all the nasty remarks that were made at work about the things that should be done to a man when he is caught dressed in women's clothes. It would have been a poor idea for me to say anything so I just listened to the conversation and realized all the more just how stupid people can really be. The newspaper "blotter" report of this case said "Illinois State Police arrested Femme Name), 23, Chicago, this morning on charges of speeding and driving with a suspended driver's license." This is the only report I have ever read in the newspaper where the words "he," "his," "she," or "hers," was not used. I do not know if she was a TV, TS, or what and do not know if the county said anything about the sex of the person when they called the employer. Is it possible that a job was lost over this incident?

Anonymous in Illinois

(Taken from the CHI TRIBUNE, official newsletter for the Eastern U.S., and edited by Donna of Tri-Sigma Sorority.)



*Painting of LORD CONBURY,
New York Governor.*



*'Tis a pity . . . old George has been like this
ever since he starred in 'Charlie's Aunt.'*

Ladylike Laughs



Oh, Susan! Have I got a surprise for YOU!



*Now go to sleep and tomorrow
daddy will tell you about his trip
en-femme to New York by plane in 1967.*



*... the children are old enough to know
there can't be a masquerade party at the V.F.W.
EVERY Saturday night!!*



*George, this is America, a land of opportunity!
Where do you get off telling him
he can't grow up to be Miss America?*



*How come you take off your dress
whenever there's work to be done?*

sick. Or worse, I'm sick of your not caring."

"Who doesn't care?"

"Both of you!"

Moreno snorted. "Light us a couple, huh, Carlie?" Carlson lit two cigarettes and passed one to Moreno, who puffed on it, blinking his eyes, driving along by the loud strokes of the sea. "Just because we don't scream and yell and throw fits —"

"I don't want fits," said Latting, in the back, crouched by the sheeted figure. "I just want a little human talk, I just want you to look different than you would walking through a butcher's shop. If I ever get like you two, not worrying, not bothering, all thick skin and tough —"

"We're not tough," said Carlson, quietly, thinking about it, "we're acclimated."

"Acclimated, hell, when you should be numb?"

"Kid, don't tell us what we should be when you don't even know what we *are*. Any doctor is a lousy doctor who jumps down in the grave with every patient. All doctors did that, there'd be no one to help the live and kicking. Get out of the grave, boy, you can't see nothing from there."

There was a long silence from the back, and at last Latting started talking, mainly to himself.

"I wonder how long she was up there alone on the cliff, an hour, two? It must have been funny up there looking down at all the campfires, knowing you were going to wipe the whole business clean off. I suppose she was to a dance, or a beach party, and she and her boyfriend broke up. The boyfriend will be down at the station tomorrow to identify her. I'd hat to be him. How he'll *feel* —"

"He won't feel anything. He won't even show up," said Carlson, steadily, mashing out his cigarette in the front-seat tray. "He was probably the one found her and made the call and ran. Two bits will buy you a nickel he's not worth the polish on her little fingernail. Some sloppy lout of a guy with pimples and bad breath. Christ, why don't these girls learn to wait until morning."

"Yeah," said Moreno. "Everything's better in the morning."

"Try telling that to a girl in love," said Latting.

"Now a man," said Carlson, lighting a fresh cigarette, "he just gets himself drunk, says to hell with it, no use killing yourself for no woman."

They drove in silence awhile past all the small dark beach houses with only a light here or there, it was so late.

"Maybe," said Latting, "she was going to have a baby."

"It happens."

"And then the boyfriend runs off with someone and this one just borrows his rope and walks up on the cliff," said

Latting. "Answer me, now, *is* that or *isn't* it love?"

"It," said Carlson, squinting, searching the dark, "is a kind of love. I give up on what kind."

"Well, sure," said Moreno, driving. "I'll go along with you kid. I mean, it's nice to know somebody in this world can love that hard."

They all thought for a while, as the ambulance purred between quiet palisades and now quiet sea and maybe two of them thought fleetingly of their wives and tract houses and sleeping children and all the times years ago when they had driven to the beach and broken out the beer and necked up in the rocks and lay around on the blankets with guitars, singing and feeling like life would go on just as far as the ocean went, which was very far, and maybe they didn't think at all. Latting, looking up at the backs of the two older men's necks, hoped or perhaps only nebulously wondered if these men remembered any first kisses, the taste of salt on the lips. Had there ever been a time when they had stomped the sand like mad bulls and yelled out of sheer joy and dared the universe to put them down?

And by their silence, Latting knew that yes, with all his talking, and the night, and the wind, and the cliff and the tree and the rope, he had gotten through to them; it, the event, had gotten through to them. Right now, they had to be thinking of their wives in their warm beds, long dark miles away, unbelievable, suddenly unattainable while here they were driving along a salt-layered road at a dumb hour half between certainties, bearing with them a strange thing on a cot and a used length of rope.

"Her boyfriend," said Latting, "will be out dancing tomorrow night with somebody else. That grips my gut."

"I wouldn't mind," said Carlson, "beating the hell out of him."

Latting moved the sheet. "They sure wear their hair crazy and short, some of them. All curls, but short. Too much makeup. Too —" He stopped.

"You were saying?" asked Moreno.

Latting moved the sheet some more. He said nothing. In the next minute there was a rustling sound of the sheet, moved now here, now there. Latting's face was pale.

"Hey," he murmured, at last. "Hey."

Instinctively, Moreno slowed the ambulance.

"Yeah, kid?"

"I just found out something," said Latting. "I had this feeling all along, she's wearing too much make-up, and the hair, and —"

"So?"

"Well, for God's sake," said Latting, his lips hardly moving, one hand up to feel his own face to see what its expression was. "You want to know some-

thing funny?"

"Make us laugh," said Carlson.

The ambulance slowed even more as Latting said, "It's not a woman. I mean, it's not a girl. I mean, well, it's not a female. *Understand?*"

The ambulance slowed to a crawl.

The wind blew in off the vague morning sea through the window as the two up front turned and stared into the back of the ambulance at the shape there on the cot.

"Somebody tell me," said Latting, so quietly they almost could not hear the words. "Do we stop feeling bad now? Or do we feel worse?"

Nobody answered.

A wave, and then another, and then another, moved in and fell upon the mindless shore.

First Time Ever: American Fashion History was made several months ago at the College of Marin when several males put on a man's fashion show featuring "skerts" for men and "dresses" for men. The garments were very much like women's dresses and skirts and were de-dised for "the modern man's lifestyle and are practical and comfortable without any difference in the way he walks or sits."

Joan (IL-6-C) doesn't let any grass grow under her feet in regards to getting "the word" out to Tvs in her area. Your Editor sent her some "throwaways" to give out and Joan replied that she had placed over half of the hundred that she had received. In a library visit she looks at the books on their racks pertaining to Tvism and places one of the throwaways beside a blank page near chapter one. She says that a drop of Elmer's glue at an appropriate spot helps to keep the "throwaway" from falling out of the book. What have you done with our "throwaways"?

We were pleased to hear that Patricia Louise (PA-4-M) placed ads in both the *Pittsburgh Press* and the *Tribune Review* for seven days. The ad was similar to the ad that Ruthann (Wi-14-M) developed for use in her area. Your Editor is pleased that a number of letters were received because of these ads. How about placing an ad in your local paper?



The femme shopper

CALL FOR HELP

When I rejoined the sorority last September, I told Virginia that I was thinking of writing an article on mail ordering by TVs. She said it sounded like a fine idea and that no one had put together a complete list of companies to that date. Well, after a few false starts and some thought (along with a little procrastination), I decided that if I was ever going to finish this article, I was going to need a little help in finding material on these companies.

Dear sisters, this is where you can be a big help, not only to me but to one another. I am asking any of you that have bought any item(s) in interest to TVs *through the mail* to write to me and give me as much information as possible. If you would answer the following questions, it will be a very big help to me.

1. Name and address of the company (please give full address).
2. List the type of items the company handles (like clothes, wigs, cosmetics, lingerie, shoes, boots . . .). If the company has a specialty, then list it as such. Please state sizes.
3. Quality of items and workmanship.
4. Price range. Do you feel you are paying too much or that you are getting your money's worth.
5. Does the company know and deal to transvestites.
6. Does the company have any retail outlets. (If so, state the area(s) they serve. Please give address, especially if they will serve TVs.
7. Time it takes to receive your goods.
8. Comments on the company. (If you have had good or bad dealings with the company, let me know so I can pass it on.)
9. How do you receive your order. (How do they package and send your goods to you.)

Example:

1. Lane Bryant
2300 Southeastern Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46201
2. L.B. carries sizes in Women's, Half Sizes and Taller Miss with some items carried in Minims (half size for those 5'3" and under). This is a complete catalog of clothes, lingerie, hose and shoes (sizes 5-13 AAA-EEE).
3. Quality is good to excellent.
4. Prices are very reasonable.
5. Company does not know about TVs.

6. L.B. has stores nationwide. (Some stores do know about TVs, and will help you.)

7. It usually takes two weeks for me to receive my order from the date I send it in (from San Diego, California). If an item is out of stock, they will tell you so and give you a shipping date (and updates if it goes over that date).

8. This is a large mail order company that has been in business for over 75 years. I have shopped with them since 1973 and have never had any major problems. They put out three catalogs (Lane Bryant, Hayes and Tall Collection) in Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter editions with a sale edition that comes out about three months after each main catalog. About 1 to 1½ months after the main catalog comes out, an additional envelope of new releases that they say they send to preferred customers only is available. These additional items can be ordered on a 15 day free trial period (I have used this with great results). All items come with a money-back guarantee. This can be by check, credit to your account or in exchange for a different item (they pay all shipping costs on returned goods).

9. Orders are shipped in envelopes (heavy brown) or boxes that often have a design on it (very noticeable). Orders of around three pounds or less are usually sent through the mail with any order over three pounds going UPS. I receive all my orders at home under my full femme name.

With prices going up all the time, it will be helpful to most of us to know all of the good and bad companies. Please let me know about any company you have dealt with (or know of through a GG). It just might help some sister you don't even know.

I would like to have Carol publish the finished article in the *Femme Mirror* about six months after this article is published. After being in the *Femme Mirror*, I would like to have it published in *Transvestia* to help show those girls that are not members of our sorority that we really do help one another.

One thing I would like to see in this article is a greater use of pictures. I feel that if you can see examples of merchandise, it will help you decide much easier than just taking the word of another. I have already taken some pictures that I hope to use showing certain goods. If you have something to show, take a picture of it (or you in it), put your name and code on the back as usual. Then, place a note with it, describing what it is you are showing off. All pictures will be

sent to Carol with the article (even if not used in it). If you want your picture back, please state so on the back of it so I can make arrangements to return them.

The following list is just some of the companies I have heard of. The only company that I have dealt with regularly has been Lane Bryant (both Lane Bryant and L.B. Tall Collection). I would love to hear about any or all of these and especially any that are not listed that you know about. (I have put Sears, Wards and J.C. Penny on the list but I have not dealt with them so any info on them would also be a help.)

Lane Bryant (L.B., L.B. Tall Collection & Hayes)

Sears

Wards

J.C. Penny

April Adams

Michael Salem TV Boutique

Custom Shoe Company

Lawson Hill Leather & Shoe Shop

Shoecraft

Fredricks of Hollywood

I would like to state again that I need your help. I feel that this article could be a real help to a lot of sisters. If you have any information (even if you feel it may not be important) send it to me, as the more material I can get the better the article will turn out. I'll thank you for it and another sister may thank you too.

Karle (CA-66-H)



I invited you to a TV meeting
not a track meet.



TEE VEE TIPS by Sussie

You can make heavy-duty coat hangers for your heavy winter coats and long dresses by taping together two or three light wire hangers such as the ones the dry-cleaning comes back on. Wrap a piece of masking tape around the twisted part of the hangers to anchor them together, and then add more pieces of tape around the ends and on the cross pieces.

A nice, useful, legal and eminently ladylike weapon to carry in the city (even if it doesn't look like rain) is a furled umbrella. It's a formidable weapon if used right, but rather an ineffectual one if used wrong. Unfortunately, it is usually used wrong. Obvious though it should be, an umbrella makes a very poor club, as the rolled fabric is good padding for the metal parts. So don't waste your energy beating your assailant over the head with it! Instead, hold the handle tightly with one hand and with the other hand grip the umbrella on the rolled fabric about six inches from the point. Aim the point toward your attacker and use the umbrella to jab and poke at him when he gets in close. If he is wielding a knife and you can't make a run from the spot, use the umbrella held as above to counter his knife thrusts. Holding your bumbershoot this way makes it nearly impossible for an assailant to wrest it from your grasp, and renders it a very deadly weapon indeed.

Keeping our feminine things clean and dainty is extra important for TVs, for our whole way of life is particularly hard on our clothing. We wear the "goodies" for a few hours and then stuff them back into a satchel. This allows for a build-up of perspiration that can permanently stain the delicate fabrics. A good habit to get into is to drop bras, panties, hosiery and girdles into lukewarm, not hot, water with about three tablespoons of a gentle detergent to a gallon or two or water. Dissolve the detergent completely, drop in your lingerie, and swish it around to get it soaked, and then leave it alone for at least twelve hours. Examine the things at the end of that time to see that all stains have been removed, then rinse in lukewarm water until detergent bubbles stop forming, and hang to dry. Persistent stains and dirty streaks may need a repeat of the detergent dunk. Remember to *never* wash your sexy black lingerie with other colors or white; the black color is not fast and may spoil the other things. Hosiery should also be washed separately, as the colors in these items will also often run.

If your fingernail polish has thickened up to the point where it's gluey and is too

thick to flow on uniformly and to dry smooth, check your "brother's" paint supplies down in the cellar to see if he has any lacquer thinner. If he has, get him to put two or three drops of the thinner into your too-thick nail polish. Close it up tight and let it sit overnight and then stir it well with the brush and it should have a new lease on life.

If you should run out of nail polish remover and you must get the old polish off right now, and if you know your "brother" has lacquer thinner on hand, use that to soften and remove old polish. It's not advisable to use the thinner on a regular basis, though, as it may make your nails dry and brittle.

To reduce somewhat the utter confusion in your jewel box often caused when several strings of beads or necklaces become intimately entwined with several pairs of earrings, take a few seconds to drop the two earrings in each pair and their matching necklace into a small plastic bag. A small bag takes less space in your jewel chest than does a plastic box. The little bags are equipped with a "Ziploc" top closure to seal them, and they're available at many hobby shops for a few cents a dozen.

If your skin tends to be too dry anyway and the makeup removers you've been using seem to dry your skin even more, don't despair! Get a small bottle of Johnson's Baby Oil at your friendly neighborhood drug store and try that as a makeup remover. It will fight the dry skin problem as it very effectively takes off powder, foundation, rouge, eye shadow and even some lipsticks if they are not too indelible. Try it; you'll like it!

An invaluable little safety device to carry in your handbag: a police whistle! If you are hassled, blowing the whistle on the hasslers will usually discourage them from bothering you further. It doesn't take up much space and is sure to attract someone's attention to your plight.

When traveling alone on a bus or trolley, try to sit near a serviceman in uniform, a fireman or a policeman when you get on the car. Seldom if ever do hoodlums molest anyone sitting near a man in uniform. Avoid sitting in the back of the bus or car. Troublemakers frequently gather in the most remote spot from the driver. Sit up front for maximum safety. Always pick the most crowded car you can find that still has room.

A simple little plastic pocket taped into your handbag along one inside surface will give you a handy place to keep your house or car keys in that delightful jumble that our purses always seem to become. Use a piece of heavy plastic salvaged from a store package or old comb

case, and tape it into place at a handy corner inside your handbag with the colored tape obtainable in most food or hardware stores.

If you get into a "sticky" situation in the inner city when traveling in your femme clothes, remember that a woman's best weapon is her voice. A scream carries farther than a brick, is more piercing than a knife, and is the unmistakable signal that someone is in trouble. So learn to scream, especially if you become a "lady in distress."

Unless you suffer with a skin disorder or allergy, you may find that rubbing alcohol of the isopropanol or propyl alcohol type is an excellent makeup remover, as good or better than expensive ones bearing the names of large cosmetic houses. If you want to "dress" up the rubbing alcohol a little to make it seem more like the expensive removers, simply add a few drops of your favorite femme perfume.

Sisters desiring correspondence should send a request to the *Femme Mirror* to be printed in a column. Thus far, 3 sisters have written to invite letters. They are:

**Lana 10-3-P
Antoinette FMA-1-M
Maria WA-5-R**



TRI-SIG ALBUM



MAXINE CA-124-D



GISELLE FCO-7-C



A YOUNG TV



NANCY CA-39-A



ANTOINETTE FMA-1-M



CONNIE NY-25-N

← HERE & THERE →

QUASIMODO MEETS FARRAH FAWCETT-MAJORS

by Karen CA-30-G

"O wad power the giftie gie us to see
ourselves as ithers see us."

— Robert Burns

To begin with, I am writing these lines for me, anyone else who wants to come on the journey . . . all aboard!

Recently I received a reply to a letter I sent to a *Tri-Sig* girl. Many of us have experienced writing to one another, forming impressions from the prose and then finally meeting that sister. Upon receiving the reply I made arrangements to meet this sister for lunch, both of us, it was agreed, as our boyselves. Many people do not understand that TVism has little to do with what one looks like, but is more directly associated with what one feels. From previous experience I had learned this and so when this six foot 5 inch, 230 pound fellow came in the door and introduced himself I really didn't bat an eye. I liked this "sister" right off, though I knew how difficult it would be for someone of that size to have desires to "pass" and always know it would be really impossible for he stands nearly a head taller than most men.

I have enjoyed the discovery that most TVs are well-adjusted to their situations in life. Life itself must be taken with the proverbial "grain of salt," to be enjoyed. One must not take oneself too seriously and a healthy sense of humor is absolutely essential to TVism. Carol Beecroft demands that I stuff as many cartoons as possible into each issue of the *Femme Mirror*. We need honest chuckles.

Several *Tri-Sig* sisters I have written to have acquired superb senses of humor. We all seem to search for some deep soulful explanation or cause for our transvestism: i.e., faded recurring memories of previous life incarnations; genes; hormones; environment, etc., etc. Many theories are hogwash, some are quite logical. I pull out my trusty salt shaker and pour it all over the theories with relish. For me the important thing is to come to grips with my TVism and learn to rationally and sensibly live with it . . . not just putting up with it, but trying to fashion this phenomenon into some useful tool in life. Maybe it is useful to me as a diversion, a recreation, a "self-appraisal guage." Maybe things I feel and think while "dressed" will help me understand my wife, sister, daughter or mother-in-law, better. Not all the answers are ob-

vious, some take a lifetime to ask, let alone answer. But let's enjoy the journey to whatever degree is reasonable to our own life circumstances.

A sense of humor couldn't hurt!

Accepting your femme image *honestly* is probably the most difficult thing to do in this whole business. We tend to look in the mirror with our hearts rather than our eyes, so it gets difficult to "see ourselves as others see us."

Let's assume that everyone who reads this article is between Quasimodo and Farrah Fawcett-Majors with regards to feminine beauty. Just because we are physically men, most of us tend toward the Quasimodo side of the scale. This makes the beauty syndrome difficult (but not impossible) to overcome. Every human being is beautiful in his own way. That isn't just a cliché. I've met real women I wouldn't choose on sight who turned out to be truly beautiful as people when met. As Vickie (IL-48-M) recently wrote, confidence is half the "passing" battle. Some of us because of size or other reasons may not ever be able to "pass," but we should be beautiful inside.

If we can "pass," let's do our best: avoid sleaziness, overdressing, flamboyance and most of all . . . gloom! If we can't pass, find a *Tri-Sig* member with whom you can occasionally "dress" behind doors and express yourself! If you feel guilt about TVism, start now to study those emotions and make good decisions. Hopefully, we'll all find happiness if we try hard enough.

Most of all, if we look in the mirror and see that we look like the back end of a bus, make sure it's a damned happy looking bus.



Phyllis CA19-M at the Beauty Shop.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE
KIDDING!?
THE UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE? REALLY?



The busty Bobby-Soxers at the Richards-Gebaur show were: (l to r) James Hilburn, Frank Pinkshaw, John Lahey and B.J. Longenbaugh. Reminiscent of the Fifties, Donne O'Brien was the AFSA Hit Parade dancer.



LONG AFTER MIDNIGHT

by CA-30-G

A brief review of the TRI-SIGMA sorority directory will indicate that transvestites tend to be readers. Their reading appetites run the gamut of human knowledge, of course, but several have stated that their preference was science fiction. I still read some sci-fi and have been interested to find transvestism, or experiences close to it, included in some of the best.

Years ago the now-famous science fictionist Ray Bradbury wrote a short story about an alien child found by an earthling couple who was brought up as a girl despite the obviousness of its male anatomy. The reason was that this alien child was possessed of a caudal appendage (a tail) and for fear that the child would be harmed by others the foster parents hid the offending tail by long skirts. This intelligent and otherwise normal boy reached early teens before putting the general questions into words and finally came home to ask why he had been brought up in this contra-normal fashion.

As a young teenage transvestite who had not yet so much as heard the word "crossdresser" I could relate to this alien being. I felt quite a bit "alien" myself. Though I had no caudal appendage I trailed guilt and being so unique a creature as to be interested in the lovely, soft, forbidden clothing of the opposite sex. For the young who find their gradually increasing femmephilia decreas-

ingly easy to control and hide, confusion and guilt can mount to alarming tension. A boy can talk to his dad about girls, hunting, games or sports. He can talk to his mother about nearly everything. But who can he talk to about these strange urgings? This isolation seems to indicate to the boy an exclusion from the human race. Depending on other circumstances in life a boy in this situation may become so morose and confused that he no longer can deal with his "evil" desires.

In 1976 Ray Bradbury again published a story (though it is fantasy, not sci-fi) in which he again touches upon the subject of cross-dressing, but this time it is not couched in "alien" terms. It is not a happy story because of the intolerance, ignorance and misunderstanding of our society and of the boy himself. He is penultimately a victim of society and finally a victim of his own inability to cope with it.

The TRI-SIGMA Sorority has been the instrument by which many have found a new self-dignity and self-confidence by which they deal with their femmephilia. No longer are they emotionally isolated, but have found kindred spirits who understand and can share experiences. As an educational facility the sorority has accomplished much. It is by meeting together, regulating our cross-dressing and learning more about ourselves that we can avoid such stories as

LONG AFTER MIDNIGHT

A single phone call had come in about midnight telling what they might find out here on the edge of the cliff and whoever it was hung up swiftly and did not call again, and now the hours had passed and all that could be done was done and over, the police were finished and leaving, and there was just the ambulance now and the men with the ambulance to load the quiet burden and head for the morgue.

Of the three men remaining around the sheeted form there were Carlson, who had been at this sort of thing for thirty years, and Moreno, who had been at it for ten, and Latting, who was new to the job a few weeks back. Of the three it was Latting now who stood on the edge of the cliff looking at that empty tree limb, the rope in his hand, not able to take his eyes away. Carlson came up behind him. Hearing him, Latting said, "What a place, what an awful place to die."

"Any place is awful, if you decide you want to go bad enough," said Carlson. "Come on, kid."

Latting did not move. He put out his

hand to touch the tree. Carlson grunted and shook his head. "Go ahead. Try to remember it all."

"Any reason why I shouldn't?" Latting turned quickly to look at that emotionless gray face of the older man. "You got any objections?"

"No objections. I was the same way once. But after a while you learn it's best not to see. You eat better. You sleep better. After a while you learn to forget."

"I don't want to forget," said Latting. "Good God, somebody died up here just a few hours ago. She deserves —"

"She *deserved*, kid, past tense, not present. She deserved a better shake and didn't get it. Now she deserves a decent burial. That's all we can do for her. It's late and cold. You can tell us all about it on the way."

"That could be your daughter there."

"You won't get to me that way, kid. It's not my daughter, that's what counts. And it's not yours, though you make it sound like it was. It's a nineteen-year-old girl, no name, no purse, nothing. I'm sor-

ry she's dead. There, does that help?"

"It could if you said it right."

"I'm sorry, now pick up the other end of the stretcher."

Latting picked up one end of the stretcher but did not walk with it and only looked at the figure beneath the sheet.

"It's awful being that young and deciding to just quit."

"Sometimes," said Carlson, at the other end of the stretcher, "I get tired, too."

"Sure, but you're —" Latting stopped.

"Go ahead, say it, I'm old. Somebody fifty, sixty, it's okay, who gives a damn, somebody nineteen, everybody cries. So don't come to my funeral, kid, and no flowers."

"I didn't mean . . ." said Latting.

"Nobody means, but everybody says, and luckily I got the hide of an iguana. March."

They moved with the stretcher toward the ambulance where Moreno was opening the doors wider.

"Boy," said Latting, "she's light. She doesn't weigh anything."

"That's the wild life for you, you punks, you kids." Carlson was getting into the back of the ambulance now and they were sliding the stretcher in. "I smell whiskey. You young ones think you can drink like college fullbacks and keep your weight. Hell, she don't even weigh ninety pounds, if that."

Latting put the rope in on the floor of the ambulance. "I wonder where she got this?"

"It's not like poison," said Moreno. "Anyone can buy rope and not sign. This looks like block-and-tackle rope. She was at a beach party maybe and got mad at her boyfriend and took this from his car and picked herself a spot . . ."

They took a last look at the tree out over the cliff, the empty branch, the wind rustling in the leaves, then Carlson got out and walked around to the front seat with Moreno, and Latting got in the back and slammed the doors.

They drove away down the dim incline toward the shore where the ocean laid itself, card after white card, in thunders, upon the dark sand. They thrived in silence for a while, letting their headlights, like ghosts, move on out ahead. Then Latting said, "I'm getting myself a new job."

Moreno laughed. "Boy, you didn't last long. I had bets you wouldn't last. Tell you what, you'll be back. No other job like this. All the other jobs are dull. Sure, you get sick once in a while. I do. I think: I'm going to quit. I almost do. Then I stick with it. And here I am."

"Well, you can stay," said Latting. "But I'm full up. I'm not curious anymore. I seen a lot the last few weeks, but this is the last straw. I'm sick of being

MORE HELP IN LOCATING STORES AND SHOPS TO SERVE TRI-SIG MEMBERS

Want to help locate shops and stores that will cater to your TV needs and who will treat you nicely — and even locate some that will allow you to come in dressed and others who will allow you to try on clothes?

We at headquarters have prepared a form letter which can be sent to various businesses and professional services. The letter explains what our organization is and the nature of the organization itself. It mentions that our membership is seeking places where they can spend their money and be treated courteously and with understanding. It describes the types of clothing and services that we are in need of and even asks if our members can come in "dressed." We also have asked that the staff of any store be aware that our members would be rather nervous and shy. We even asked if they did business by mail.

What we need from you is your willingness to participate in this project. We are having a thousand of the letters professionally printed and will send them to you for mailing. Then all you have to do is go to the yellow pages of the phone book and address envelopes with the information contained in those pages. You gals who lived in organized areas might undertake to assign some gals to send the letters to shoe stores, and others to write to dress shops. And still others can send their letters to professional services, like optometrists, electrologists, etc.

If we send out at least a thousand letters (and we can have more letters made up), we should find a number of places that will accommodate us. The letters will be returned to this office and we will then contact Shirley (OR-7-B) who will organize the material. Soon after that we intend to publish a booklet with the information from this project as well as the information on stores and services that we have accumulated in the past.

The success of this project depends on the number of mailings we do. Obviously, if we can send out at least 1,000 letters we have more chance of getting the success that we are looking for. Your work will not be that difficult. All you have to do is copy the name and address onto an envelope, put the letter into the envelope, stamp it, and then mail your letters. We at headquarters feel that if enough people got organized and enthusiastic about this project, we'd come up with many additional places that we do not have now. And if those organized areas were to especially go out of their way and send out hundreds alone, then we certainly will meet with success.

So, the letters are being printed now and all you have to say is: "Hey, Carol, send us a couple hundred of the letters" and I'll send them to you pronto. This is

your organization and so please do your part in helping in this worthy project. There is no embarrassing work for you to do — just address and mail some envelopes. But wouldn't it be nice if we could come up with an additional 50 to 100 places where our sisters could shop without having any problems.

Write me at: Carol Beecroft, Box 194, Tulare, CA. 93274.

Carol

ARE YOU USING OUR LIBRARY CARDS?

From time to time your Editor receives letters similar to the following:

Ladies:

While paging through the card catalogue at the University of Minnesota, I found this address. Hopefully you will be able to provide helpful information on transvestism for me as such is quite rare . . .

Dear People:

I got your address from the Denver Public Library and I'm writing this letter to request more information about your organization . . .

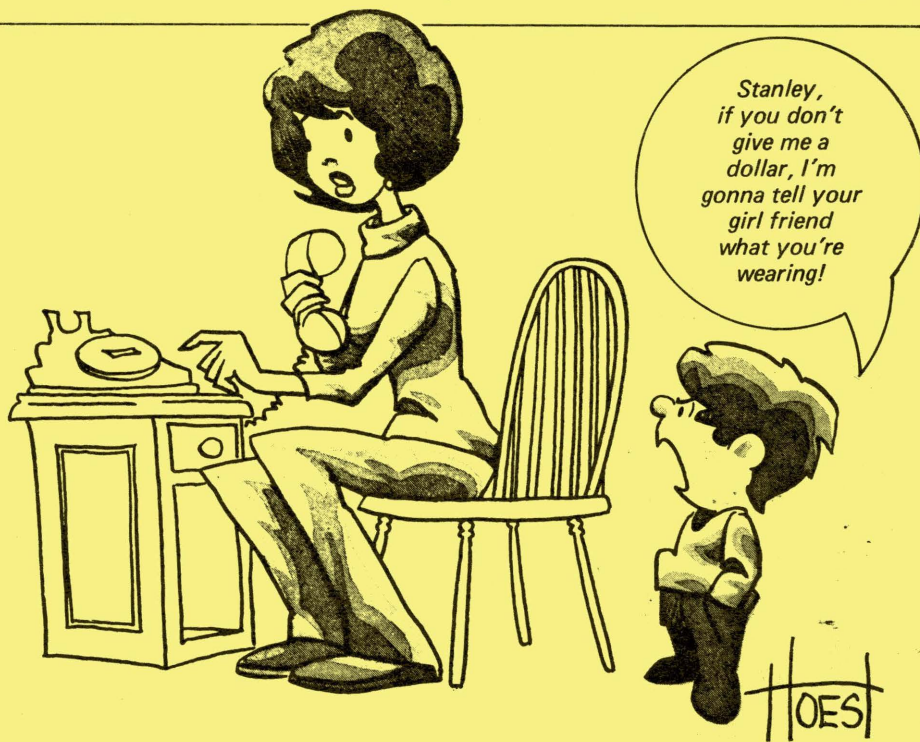
Dear Society:

I was looking through the card catalogue of my local library trying to find books that will help me learn more about transvestism. I found no book dealing with that subject but I did find your card with your address . . .

There are literally tens of thousands of TVs out there, many of whom are seriously looking for information that will help them to better understand themselves and the subject of transvestism. One such place that TVs often try is the local library. I can remember the many, many libraries that I used to go to for the sole purpose of learning more about transvestism. But usually there was nothing there that would help. But as most of you know the Society has promoted the placing of library index cards in local libraries — there to await some TV who is looking for help. And, interestingly, it is not only the TV who will write, but your Editor has received letters from troubled wives and those in the medical profession.

Many of our sisters have taken a number of these index cards and placed them in various libraries; however, there are a lot of our sisters who do not know of the satisfaction gained through such a service to others. I would like to ask all of our sisters to get into the act and put at least one card in a library index file. Colleges are also great places for placing the cards and many colleges and universities have as many as half-a-dozen libraries all on one campus. It is only through each of us doing our share that we will be able to assist those TVs who use the library in a search for information concerning TVism. And, on occasion, one of the cards will disappear — either the TV has taken the card or the librarian has taken it away. But some of our sisters anticipate that and check back on occasion to insert another card if needed. So, gals, write your Editor for some of these library index cards. It's an easy way to help another sister.

Carol Beecroft



The Editor's Mailbag

NEW ENGLAND SISTER HAS NEAR MISS

Dear Carol:

It couldn't happen to me, but it did! Like a lot of Tvs I wear a few goodies under my business clothes. Recently I was driving home after taking my wife to work when a 19-year-old kid in the opposite lane braked to avoid hitting another car and skidded into my lane. I had about two car lengths before the crash. I slammed on my brakes and braced myself. Then the crash! Although I was not knocked out I did realize that I was not breathing. Somehow I forced the door open and swung my legs out and this effort started my breathing again. As I rested my hands on my legs I realized that I had on my thi-hi stockings and panties. I knew that I was hurt awful bad, my right eye was cut over the lid and I was bleeding badly. My injuries, however, seemed unimportant to me. I was panic stricken about the femme things I was wearing. In the emergency room I lied, saying that my legs were all right, although they were both cut. I was left alone for a moment and I climbed down off the table and somehow got my shoes and stockings off. But I couldn't do anything about the panties. I tried to tear them but I didn't have the strength. The plastic surgeon was delayed for some reason and in the meantime my wife had arrived. We were alone for a couple of minutes and there were scissors handy and she cut the panties off of me. The image was saved! The point I wish to make is this — without knowing what my internal injuries were, nothing mattered to me except getting those femme things off. As it turned out I was lucky. I'm home now and it will be awhile before I will be myself again. But sisters, I hope that YOU will never go through what I experienced. If you dress en femme under your business clothes be prepared to face the consequences that might occur. Be careful!

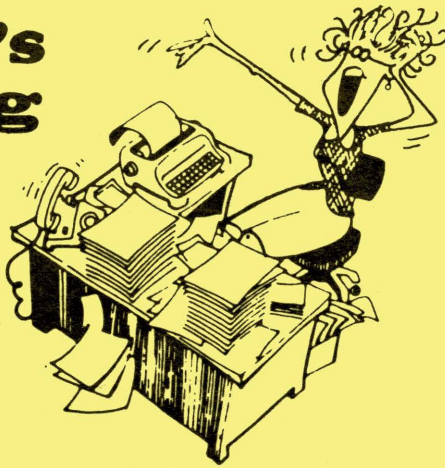
Anonymous (New England)

JOAN SPREADS THE WORD

Dear Carol:

You might recall a few months ago that I requested you to send me about a hundred of the "throw-aways." I need a repeat order of another 100 of them. Would you believe that there are over 80 hard-cover books in various libraries around this area that now have that little flier stuck in them with a couple of dabs of Elmer's glue! And we are still going strong. A couple of the local college libraries have more than a doze of such books.

Joan (IL-6-C)



MARGIE & RUTH THANK CAROL & NORMA

Dear Carol:

You likely will not remember me — my wife and I met and visited with you at the gathering in Portland

I think that we were both quite well impressed with your presentation and enjoyed your visit with us very much. Somehow these things always leave me with a feeling that I'd like to continue. I do believe that the programs and goals of Tri-Sigma are worthy of my support by membership. It seems such a small price to pay for something that very likely can and will be a great help and value to others. We enjoyed the copies of the *Femme Mirror* that were passed out and ran into several familiar names while reading them. Thank you very much. I would appreciate it if the necessary papers were sent to me pertaining to Tri-Sigma membership. Again, I would like to say how much Ruth and I enjoyed meeting you and your wife. We hope that we can cross paths again.

MARGIE (WA-8-K)

GAYLE CHANGES NAME FOR THE BETTER

Dear Carol and Norma :

Thanks so much for the hospitality you showed me recently. Your warmth made a very self-conscious person feel very welcome and comfortable. I would like to offer a special thanks to you, Norma, and to the other wives who attended the Alpha chapter meeting. The kind words and acceptance enabled me to come home and have a wonderfully open conversation with my own wife. One of the discoveries made was that my wife was very distressed over my femme name — Gayle — because it was also the name of a former girlfriend of mine. My wife mistakenly thought that I was thinking of that old girlfriend when I assumed my femme side. Not true but it was a source of threat for her so together we chose a new name for me. I am now MARIA. Needless to say I am thrilled beyond words to have my wife become involved enough to even suggest a femme name for me. I have recently contacted Ellen in Portland and between the two of us I think that we can make some very positive steps towards the formation of a chapter in the Portland/Seattle area. At least we will try.

Things are going well for me at home and I've been able to feel so much happier now that my wife and I are communicating at a much higher level than before. Once again, I want to thank you and Norma for your kindness and hospitality during my visit to Los Angeles. Your warmth and understanding has really opened new horizons for me and for my wife. And for this I cannot thank you enough.

MARIA (WA-5-R)

Drag Racist (FROM "WHACK YOUR PORCUPINE" by B. KLIBAN)

