

CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#61

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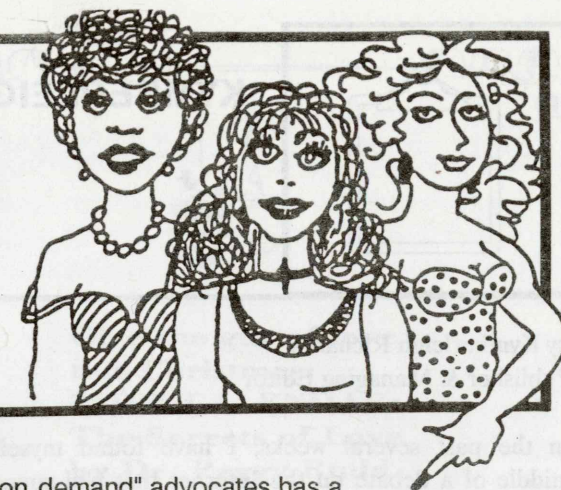
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CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

NOVEMBER 1994
(ISSUE #61)



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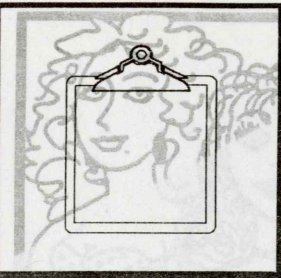
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SURGERY ON DEMAND?

by Kimberleigh Richards
Publisher & Managing Editor

In the past several weeks, I have found myself in the middle of a debate on the Internet that will sound all too familiar to anyone who has spent any amount of time in our community.

The topic of this debate is one that has been discussed not only in these pages but in practically every gender community publication at one time or another. And it comes up nearly every time the subject of transsexualism does.

I call it "topic" (singular), but actually it includes a second topic; they are interrelated in such a way that no discussion can include one without the other. And those who oppose one always automatically support the other ... and vice versa.

The topic is sex reassignment surgery on demand, and the (love 'em or hate 'em) Benjamin Standards Of Care.

I think most people by now know that I am a transgenderist; that is, in accordance with the original definition by my friend Virginia Prince, I live full time as a woman without seeking SRS. However, I like to think that I have put a '90s spin on the concept by the way my own life has progressed. As I have noted in past editorials and articles, I present more of a femme-ish dyke appearance. My closet has more oversize tops and wide leg pants than anything else (in fact, Virginia professes great surprise when she sees me in a skirt), and I prefer flats to heels and knee-highs to full length stockings or pantyhose. My social life outside the gender community tends to revolve around the lesbian community, where I have found great acceptance.

I say all this because I feel my orientation -- to put it in terms that our community understands -- is closer to a non-operative transsexual than a full-time crossdresser. My journey through genderland started with my thinking I was TS, and it took over three years of exploring that option, plus a couple of years completely divorced from the entire subject and another five or so years as a recreational crossdresser before I made the commitment to myself to live the way I do. So from time to time I re-explore in my

mind the question of surgery from time to time. And so far, every time the answer is still "no".

That's not to say that I condemn SRS in general. It is certainly the right option for some. But from my experience, I believe it's easier for someone to decide not to have it than to decide to go through with it. And that is the crucial factor in the whole question of transsexuality. And it is the most compelling reason possible for the potential SRS candidate to be in consultation with professionals and for those professionals to be guided by some type of peer consensus.

Note my use of the term "potential SRS candidate" rather than "pre-operative transsexual" in the preceding sentence. The first term is precisely how any helping professional sees their client; the second is a matter of the client's self-identification. Anyone who wants to can declare themselves a transsexual, but in actual medical

fact no one actually is one until the point of surgery.

The way I explain it when I lecture before graduate courses in human sexuality is that the early stages of transsexual behavior parallel the advanced stages of crossdressing behavior; unless you know where the person is actually headed, you cannot tell by observing them whether they are TS or TG. Every publicly visible thing about my lifestyle now is virtually identical to someone going through the pre-SRS real life test ... or perhaps even that of a post-op TS; one of my female neighbors, welcoming me to the building when I moved there six months ago, asked me point blank: "When did you have your surgery?" Since she has never seen anything but the woman, Kym Richards, upon perceiving me as transgendered she presumed I was a transsexual who had already "gone through with it" ... because I didn't give any indications of having any duality.

So if the only difference between declaring yourself TG or TS is whether or not you intend to have SRS, why is there such an outcry over having professional guidance once you believe you may want the surgery? Once you commit to being a woman, whether it be as a TG or as a TS, there is

Why is there such an outcry over professional guidance once you decide you want surgery?

no difference in who you are except for the question of whether or not you want to keep your penis! And not only does that concept logically require some kind of professional advice, it also raises the kind of legal and ethical questions that having some kind of "standards" for the helping professionals answer.

This is not a question of the helping professionals having any kind of "control" over your life, as the surgery on demand advocates believe. It is a question of having the ability to consult the helping professionals on the subject of life-changing surgery without the helping professionals themselves being at risk. Like it or not, we are a litigious society. And like it or not, there are those who decide post-surgery that they have made a mistake. And every helping professional lives under the constant fear of being sued for malpractice ... which in the case of a transsexual client could include the accusation of having abetted their sexual mutilation. In such an eventuality, is it not better for the helping professional to have a set of guidelines developed by an association of their peers, to justify their actions?

What many people who debate this topic wrongly presume is that the Benjamin Standards Of Care are a set of "rules" that the helping professional can use to delay what the client so passionately desires. How, I ask you, can there be "rules" when each individual is going to -- by virtue of being an individual -- be different? I do find fault with professionals who view the SOC as "rules", because they are doing their clients a disservice by forcing them into a conformity to a model that does not exist, even within the pages of the SOC.

I personally do not see anything harmful in having such guidelines for the care of a potentially transsexual person, provided there is sufficient leeway for both the helping professional and the client to adjust for the differences in each individual's situation. And I believe that flexibility exists within the SOC.

There are other arguments that have entered into this argument over the years. The debate on the Net brought into account the ability to have at least partial coverage from insurance (even though SRS is pretty much excluded at this point, hormone therapy is frequently still allowed by most companies) and there will also be those who mis-identify themselves and who would be doing themselves a great disservice by rushing into surgery. But the key question, in my opinion, is: What irreparable harm is there in taking the process slower, with more introspection, to see if perhaps the surgery to change your sexis not actually necessary -- if perhaps the change of gender that the RLT provides is sufficient -- for you to be happy with yourself?

If the surgery on demand advocates can give me a reasonable answer to that question, then -- and only then -- I'll consider their question.

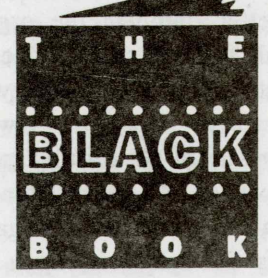
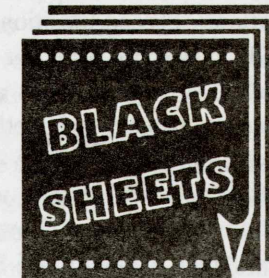


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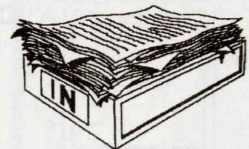
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"Cross-Talk" Newswire

News of the worldwide gender community

The leadership of the gender community organizations in Southern California have agreed not to object to IFGE holding its 1997 Coming Together-Working Together convention in Los Angeles.

Although it was generally agreed that holding the IFGE convention in the same geographic area and within several weeks of California Dreamin' does impose scheduling and financial impact on the local event, the leadership agreed that IFGE executive director Merissa Sherrill Lynn's repeated public statements that the convention would take place regardless of repercussions, coupled with the fact that none of the local organizations had been approached to act as host, made the decision not to object in the best interests of the local and national gender community. Each organization will be left to make its own decision as to how involved it wishes to be in the 1997 convention.

Lynn's preemptive press release announcing the convention and subsequent follow-up letters were generally derided as having a lack of courtesy and respect for the Southern California gender community. It was pointed out that even as IFGE board chairman Linda Buten sent a letter stating that the decision had not been approved, Lynn's follow-up letters were indicating that the location was definite. The text of Buten's letter appears in this month's "Vox Populi".

A letter outlining the organizations' agreed position in detail will be sent to the IFGE board in time for its meeting this month in New York. The organizations also agreed to improve networking between each other, improving on the existing good working relationships.

A total of 18 leaders attended the executive session, with each of the six major organizations in the area (Powder Puffs Of California, Born Free, Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, CHIC, Ladies Knight Out, and Neutral Corner) represented. **Cross-Talk** was also invited to attend the meeting and was represented by publisher/managing editor Kymberleigh Richards and associate editor Virginia Prince.

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A group of transgendered individuals, encouraged by political gains achieved in various state and city venues and simultaneously alarmed by the onslaught of anti-gay/anti-TG propositions in ten states, have formed the first real political action committee of the transgender

community.

Jessica Xavier of Washington, D.C., Jane Fee of Minneapolis and Karen Kerin of Vermont have been named national co-chairs of It's Time America (ITA), a registered lobbying organization for transgender rights formed during the recent International Conference on Transgender Law & Employment (ICTLEP). ITA takes its name from the It's Time Minnesota movement. Presently, Minnesota is the only state that protects transgender rights. ITA's mission is to lobby for transgender rights at the local, state and federal levels, as well as encourage individuals to become local activists.

Fee and Kerin, along with ICTLEP directors Laura Skaer and Phyllis Randolph Frye, are presently working on the inclusion of transgender language in SB-2238, "The Employment Non Discrimination Act of 1994". In addition, Xavier and Riki Anne Wilchins of New York addressed the Congress of Transgender Organizations at the recent Southern Comfort about ITA's goals.

It's Time, America can be contacted at P.O. Box 65, Kensington MD 20895.

○○○

The long-awaited results of the transgender research questionnaire distributed over three years ago have been released by the Boulton & Park Society.

Calling it "the largest research survey ever done by the transgendered community," B&P announced that 934 responses were received from 51 (sic) states and several foreign countries. Distribution of the questionnaire was through various support groups and at community events during the three year period.

Although the survey contained a specific prohibition against publication, an examination of the results showed a significant difference to those of other surveys done in the past. B&P indicated that they felt this was due to the "within the community" nature of the survey, saying that past studies by research professionals may have been flawed due to "the transgendered individual giv[ing] information ... based on what he thinks [the professional] wants to hear". However, it was noted that the questionnaire results were tabulated by well-known gender community physician George R. Brown, M.D. and group facilitator Gina Brooks, M.A.

B&P feels the limited involvement by professionals "who are more involved than most in our community" creates

less danger of "pre-judgement according to wrongly preconceived theories". They also felt that a survey conducted by a gender community organization would be de-stigmatized.

Survey results were included with the September issue of the B&P newsletter *Gender Euphoria*.

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In an attempt to bring members of the local gender community together with professionals and the public, the Los Angeles Gender Center held an open house September 11 which included a panel discussion on transgender issues.

Although the LAGC panel attempted to offer balanced perspectives, a public question and answer session appeared to be entirely transsexual oriented, to the dismay of several non-transsexual individuals. The majority of the questions fielded by the panel concerned hormone therapy. LAGC founder Marie Keller and clinical director Maureen Morrissey expressed concern for the imbalance after the event and indicated that future presentations would be more all-inclusive.

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A new support group oriented toward spouses/partners, children, parents, extended families and friends has begun in the Charlotte, N.C. area.

The new group -- as yet unnamed -- is facilitated by local therapist Barbara Carnal, who has also begun writing a column for the newsletter *All The Beautiful People!* published by the Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance. Initial reaction to both the group and the column have been positive, according to *ATBP!* editor Divinity, with the group drawing interest from the local Kappa Beta Tri-Ess chapter as well as from CTA.

Divinity stressed that Carnal's new group is not affiliated with either CTA or Kappa Beta, saying that "the primary benefit is that her group will not be coming from a positive prejudice toward crossgender behavior or preference." She went on to explain that groups affiliated with existing CD/TG/TS support groups are frequently viewed with suspicion by significant others.

Carnal may be reached at (704) 847-7953.

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A gay and lesbian experimental film festival has decided to include transgender material in a demonstration of interactive multimedia this month in New York City.

Cyberqueer, described as "blurring borders between identities by transracial and transsexual transmission, will use the interactive technology to create a "cyberspace" where one's identity is a matter of personal choice. The festival will include a forum hosted by the New York On-Line computer service to discuss and debate the use of new digital technology within the queer communities.

The festival will take place at the Anthology Film Archives in New York City November 10 through 20. Information is available from the festival office, (212) 807-8258, or on line at bes7@columbia.edu.

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A new on-line service has been created to provide easy access to information of interest to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities.

The information and referral database (IRD), to be maintained by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (GLBT) Programs Office of the University of Minnesota, is accessible through Internet connections and through public access terminals at University of Minnesota libraries. The IRD allows users to easily browse through or search for information on campus, local and national resources and regularly updated events and action alerts.

A few of the many topics covered by the IRD include information on University of Minnesota policies and descriptions of nearby community resources. The IRD also contains a series of "Research Guides" that will help users locate information sources on the history of the GLBT movement, parenting issues, marriage and domestic partnership, the military, psychological and mental health issues, queer theory and other topics.

The IRD uses Gopher software, a text-search program developed at the University of Minnesota. User instructions for access to the database, which can vary by terminal type and means of connection, are available from the GLBT Programs Office at gblt@maroon.tc.umn.edu.

Organizations and individuals wishing to list resource and event information on the database may receive information via the same e-mail address or by calling (612) 625-6042 either by voice or TDD.

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PHILIP SALEM UPDATE: I am happy to report that, although we have had little to report publicly in recent months, we have been making quiet progress toward putting our community's most hated con man out of business.

First, I would like to announce that we now know who Philip Salem really is, and also where his "legitimate" place of employment is. For this, I thank Jessie Hays, a non-transgendered lesbian in Seattle for a piece of information that we were able to use to confirm rumors that we had heard previously. While I am hesitant to reveal Salem's true identity due to the ongoing possibility that we might yet be able to bring some kind of charges against him, I will say that he is a journalist of sorts in the Seattle area. In fact, in July we had our friend Allison Marsh of The Emerald City anonymously mail a copy of **Cross-Talk** #51 (the one with my original editorial) to him under his real name at the publication he works for. I wonder what happened when he opened it and found himself looking at the headline "WARNING: THAT CON MAN PHILIP SALEM IS BACK!" on the cover? I will tell you this: He certainly hasn't contacted me about it ... no surprise.

If our past encounters with Salem are any basis for prediction of what will happen, we can expect him to go deep underground for several months. Perhaps longer given the scare we've delivered him. And since we have no basis for taking legal action until we can "catch him in the act", it won't be until he resurfaces that we can explore that possibility again.

In the meantime, I intend to make it much more difficult for him next time (if he decides there will be one). With the help of another friend who has access to all the

telephone directories in the Seattle metropolitan area, I have compiled a list of all the private mailbox rental agencies that Salem has easy access to. The managers of those agencies will soon be receiving a letter from me, including a copy of my editorial from issue #51, urging them to be vigilant and not rent Salem (or any of his other aliases) a mailbox should he attempt to do so. Since his *modus operandi* is based in part on the use of an anonymous, nearly untraceable, mailing address, he will undoubtedly attempt to secure one if he wants to resume operations. I hope to make it much more difficult -- if not impossible -- for him to do so, and I believe the mailbox renters' desire to not become unwilling parties to mail fraud will predispose them toward cooperating with us.

However, your continued vigilance is needed in case Salem somehow manages to slip past us. Knowing that the gender community's publications are all very much aware of his activities, he now tends to approach us through affiliated interests. Remember, this last time he used *The Leather Journal* as his unwilling pawns to spread the word of his "organization". He may well try a similar tactic next time.

If you see Salem resurface, bring it to my attention **immediately** and send me the name of any publication he may use, along with their address and publisher's name. I have had success in having him unceremoniously removed from publications before, and I'm certainly not afraid to attempt to do it again, if necessary.

The battle -- for the moment -- is won, though.

Kymerleigh Richards
Publisher & Managing Editor

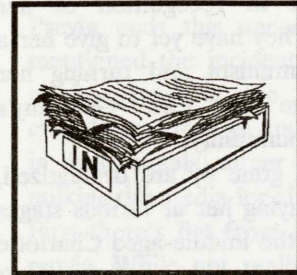
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ERRATA: In **Cross-Talk** #60, the attribution for Shannon May Burke's article "Communication?" was lost in the composition process. The article originally appeared in *Devil Woman*, the newsletter of the Diablo Valley Girls, Concord CA, and was reprinted with permission.

Also in #60, part of Virginia Prince's "Virgin Views" column was inadvertently deleted in the editing process. The missing text occurred where the article jumped from page 16 to page 19, and should read as follows:

Another verification of my contention is that society, which is largely governed by men, doesn't much care what women do in a masculine direction because it is seen as a somewhat pathetic attempt to elevate themselves to the higher ground of masculinity. After all, what "red-blooded" male could accept the idea that a female might prefer a dildo, the movements of which she can control, to penetration by a penis which she can't control?

The cover artwork for issue #57 was inadvertently not credited. It was created by **Cross-Talk** cartoonist Kay Lightner ("The Passing Scene").



The Diva Of Dish

-- Angela Gardner

TRANVESTITES BEHIND BARS: No, its not a B movie from the fifties. The *Los Angeles Times* ran a story back on June 29 of this year about a man, David Glascock, and the inmates who are kept in the Witches Castle. It sits on a hill overlooking the Peter J. Pitchess Honor Rancho (that's the county jail) and it's where Los Angeles county houses transgendered prisoners. Mr. Glascock is an advocate for "The Girls" and he works for the ACLU as a paid monitor crusading for the rights of all gay prisoners.

"The Girls" are all street queens. They're uneducated teenagers who felt like dressing up and had no way to hide the activity from parents or family. (How can you hide something if the whole family lives in one or two rooms?) Who knows if they are all really homosexual, or transsexual? If you are transgendered and you don't know anyone who feels like you do except the drag queens you see hustling on the street, who do you use as a role model? Where do you go when your parents find you dressed up or in makeup and they call you a faggot as they kick you out? You join the queens on the street and then, to make a living, you fall into prostitution. Crossdresser fiction uses this scenario a lot. It's portrayed as hot and sexy. It's not as sexy as it's pathetic.

When the girls are arrested they are sent to the jail and David Glascock, along with Senior Deputy Ken Irwin, must decide if they will be housed in the Witches Castle. The only inmates allowed into the Castle are the queens. Glascock and Irwin must play detective to sort out those who are presented for entry. Why? Neo-Nazis, gang members and other tough guys have tried to pass themselves off as gay to get into the environment where they could push people around. These are the people who get grilled by Glascock with questions about the gay bars they've been to and the men they have had sex with. Glascock is gay. He manages to sort out the pretenders.

Not all of the queens want to go to the Castle. They will try to convince Glascock they are just gay, not queens. Why? They want to get a boyfriend while they're in jail. That wouldn't be possible if they are kept with the other queens. That's why transgendered prisoners go to the Castle. If they are placed in with the other gay prisoners, man-trouble starts.

But, there's trouble in the Witches Castle anyway. The rules don't allow the girls to have makeup. Girls with breast implants are not allowed to go topless. No one is allowed to wear jewelry. That doesn't stop them. The

queens make mascara by burning the black telephone receiver and mixing the melted plastic with toothpaste. They use the foil tops of orange juice containers to create earrings and they mix soap with their morning oatmeal to make beauty masks. The attitude of jail officials toward this creative feminine activity is summed up by Glascock as, "Dammit, these are men and they're going to be treated like men." He adds, "Well, they're not men. Nobody would choose this lifestyle unless they had something burning inside them." No, Mr. Glascock, no one would.

David Glascock tries to help all the gay prisoners and he works to help the transgendered prisoners. He wasn't successful in getting them the right to wear makeup, but he did get them part-time use of a classroom where they can study for high school equivalency tests. With his intercession they have been allowed to put on talent shows and hold a mock wedding. He is the only friend most of them have outside the jail and he is the only one doing this job ... a job he is paid \$930 a month to do. His time has been cut from 100 hundred hours a month to 62. He is 56 years old and he is HIV positive. How much longer will he be there for the girls? What will they do without him? Time will tell.

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TITS ANYONE? On a lighter note... sheesh, darn leaky eyes. My mascara is smeared. I better start using a different brand of toothpaste. O.K., what's the header? Ah yes. Tits. Have you seen *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* yet? It's a hoot and in the press package the distributor sent us the instructions on how to make fake boobs for *Priscilla* star Terence Stamp. The title of this inventive (almost as inventive as the girls in The Castle) bit of instruction is, "Instructions for Preparing Terence Stamp's Boobs" as directed by Lizzy Gardiner (Costume Designer) and Cassie Hanion (Make-up Artist). [Note: That Ms. Gardiner is no relation to this Ms. Gardner.] For those of you wishing to have breasts that look like Bernadette's as she trekked through the outback, I reproduce the directions here:

6 Party Balloons in White

6 Bulldog Clips

Fill all six balloons full of water. Fill so they are stretched, then put a bulldog clip over the top and leave in a kitchen or bathroom overnight. They will probably leak a little.

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it easily into the palm of your hand. Tie a knot in the top of the balloon (still with water inside). They should have a strange texture, not unlike an old ladies boobs.

Terence will choose which balloons are the best and will fit them in his bra.

Terence's Bra: Ideally you need either an 18B or 16B bra (English sizes?) -- 18 is better, but it is difficult to find a B cup bra -- with long shoulder straps. Let the straps down as far as they will go, otherwise the breasts will be too high like the spring chickens! Try to get a bra without any seams over the breast area.

Good luck. No one is to hug Mr. Stamp when he has his bra on as it will burst. This is highly amusing, but not the look you're after.

Mr. Stamp Speaks ... Terence Stamp, coming from films like *Superman*, *The Hit*, *Legal Eagles*, *Young Guns*, *Wall Street* and *The Real McCoy* was terrified about playing Bernadette, an aging transsexual showgirl. Stamp said he had to stop and think about what it was that terrified him. It turns out it was his "fear of the ego," and a weakness that manifested itself in "an obsession to look perfect." I know a few crossdressers like that.

Anywho, by embracing the role, one which he thought made him look like "an old boot," he broke out of that obsessive perfectionism and is now just a rich actor living in the Hamptons. Hooray Terence! Terence has also said *Priscilla* was the "most fun I ever had."

ART FILM? I GOT YER ART FILM! *Priscilla* and *Just like A Woman* are considered "art" films and, as such, they are only playing in small theaters in selected markets. Now here's a film about a transgendered character that is almost underground. It's called *I Am My Own Woman* and while its subject, Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, might be mistaken for any other hefty farm woman, Charlotte started out in this world answering to the name Lothar. Mahlsdorf lives in the former East Germany and not only survived being persecuted as a gay transvestite but managed to establish the only private museum in that country and keep it going for over thirty years. As the film opens she is receiving the Federal Order of Merit Cross

from the German government in recognition of her achievement with the museum. They have yet to give her a medal for living through Communism and turning her museum home into a refuge for East Germany's homosexual and transgendered community.

Charlotte's recollections of days gone by are dramatized, with three different actors portraying her at various stages of her life. The actor portraying the middle-aged Charlotte is named Ichgola Androgyn. Gotta be a stage name, don't ya think?

The film is directed by lesbian filmmaker Rosa von Pruanheim and while it probably won't be appearing in a theater near you, it would be worth watching for it in the video store or maybe the Shocking Gray catalog.

MORE SHOW BIZ NOTES: According to Andre Previn's autobiography, *No Minor Chords*, Previn did the music for the 1954 flick, *It's Always Fair Weather* starring Gene Kelly, Dan Dailey and Michael Kidd. MGM decided to throw a big press screening in the studio's projection room and they invited everybody from *The New York Times* to *Newsweek*. To escape the crush of attendees and get a breath of fresh air Previn went upstairs to the steps of the Thalberg Building. A cab pulled up and a tall woman in a white dress got out, paid her fare and made her way unsteadily up the steps. As she got closer, Previn realized that this was no lady, it was Dan Dailey, drunk and in drag ... tasteful drag that included short white gloves and a large green garden-party-type hat.

Previn was stunned as "the woman in white" said "Hi, going down to the screening, are we?" Andre had a choice at this point. He could escort the lady down to the room full of waiting media or he could try to save Dan's career. He had heard rumors of Dailey's "odd predilection, which evidently had absolutely no basis in homosexuality," so he wasn't too surprised. Doing a bit of quick thinking he told Dailey he had been sent up to intercept him and take him to an office for a private interview. Previn found the head of publicity and they got Dailey out of the dress, into a cold shower and a suit from wardrobe. After a couple cups of coffee Dan was ready to meet the press at the screening.


Previn ends this anecdote by saying, "None of us ever mentioned the incident again." It's rather ironic that this all happened at the Thalberg Building: Irving was a crossdresser too, ya know. Moral of the story? 1954: Actor in drag equals career suicide. 1994: Actors in drag are milking the media for all kinds of good publicity.

First there's Pat from *Saturday Night Live* in his/her own movie. While not really drag, Pat is so androgynous that no one knows what she/he is. The film is called *It's Pat* and it stars Julia Sweeny as Pat and David Foley as Pat's gender neutral mate. During the course of the film they do a Fred and Ginger type dance routine but you can't tell who is Fred and who is Ginger. When Sweeney was asked about the origins of Pat she said, "I really wanted to be an altar boy."

Next is John Leguizamos, currently working on *Wong Foo*. Leguizamos is no stranger to drag, having appeared in HBO specials portraying female and TV characters. He's going to be busy after *Wong Foo* wraps 'cause he's going to be starring in a new show for Fox TV called *House of Buggin'*. No word on the characters he will play, but if any of them wears a dress we'll let you know.

Did I say new show? I think I did, and another new show for the fall stars an actor and comedian who has had experience with *Renaissance*. No, not me. Almost eight years ago *Renaissance* produced a talent show AIDS benefit called the "Traveling Trash & Talent Tuesday" and one of the acts who appeared was Ralph Harris Jr., a young, black comedian I knew from The Comedy Works in Philadelphia. Now, Mr. Harris is the star of a new fall program called *On Our Own*. He plays the oldest brother of the seven child Jerrico family. They are orphans and social workers are going to send them all to foster homes without a supervisory adult. Since their mother's wardrobe is still upstairs Ralph's character goes into the closet to save his family and comes out as the long-lost aunt, Mama J. Maybe he got the idea at our talent show.

Entertainment Weekly says in their September 9 issue:



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"Harris' bizarre female impersonation makes Flip Wilson's Geraldine seem like the height of subtlety." They go on to say, "*On Our Own* says that without parental guidance your older brother could turn into RuPaul."

Well, I knew Ralph way back when and he's no RuPaul. Hey, come to think of it RuPaul isn't RuPaul anymore. Good luck Ralph. Watch the show on ABC, Sunday nights at 7:30. The Diva will give you a review as soon as we see the show.

Another show to watch for big yucks and some female to male crossdressing is George Schlatter's new show, *SHE TV*. It's on ABC, Tuesday nights at ten, and it's a hoot. I love the woman who does an impersonation of Fabio. Lets hope for more episodes.

And now, with the end of this column looming large upon the horizon of my word processor, I turn to my incoming mail file to see if anyone sent any crossdresser jokes to replace my closing quotes. Ah, alas, no. It seems no one thought I was serious when I said I'd make up my own joke (no pun intended). I refuse to be held responsible. You had your chance.

How many TVs does it take to change a lightbulb? Five. One to change the bulb and four to take the pictures. *Hasta la vista, muchachas!*

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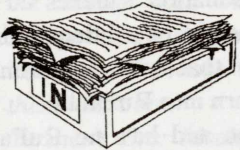


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HotBuzz!

-- JoAnn Roberts

Veritas numquam perit -- Truth never perishes.



Dina Amberle commented in the September issue of *Renaissance News & Views* that some folks don't like the idea of commentary on their newsletters from outside the organization. My response to that has always been ... "then don't put controversial stuff in your newsletters." If you publish it, we have every right to our opinion, and every right to express that opinion. It's called Freedom of the Press, you know, First Amendment and all that ... I get my share of such letters, like the brief note I received from The Phillippses, of Texas "T" fame. Cynthia (the one with the cigar) wrote that I must be a very unhappy person and very angry to be so negative. What the Ms. Phillipps (plural) take for negativism is my proactive position against hypocrisy and bigotry within our own community. Call me a cynic, but I get really pissed-off when some of our own pretend to work on behalf of the community while putting self-aggrandizement, self-interest, and personal gain ahead of any community motive. Like, what ever happened to that monumental survey the Phillipps promised the community they'd get published in a refereed journal? Last I heard, they were hawking the survey results for \$5.00 a copy ... although they also sent copies with the last issue of *Gender Euphoria* (which is not exactly a "refereed journal"). If that's what they call community service, I'll pass.



I've been telling you in the last several issues about connecting to the Internet. One of the curious things I found on the net was that most of the postings in the transgender newsgroups made no mention of the organized community we all know and love out here (as opposed to "in there"). So, I posted a message with three survey questions just to see how community-aware the net is. Here are the results of that survey, based on 36 received responses:

The most recognized organizations are Tri-Ess and IFGE (tied at 89%), with AEGIS next (75%). In terms of publications, *Tapestry* is the most widely recognized publication (92%) with *Chrysalis Quarterly* coming in second (64%) and the magazine you're reading (*Cross-Talk*) third with 58%. As for events, the Texas "T" Party is the best known of gender events (69%), followed by Southern Comfort and California Dreamin' (56% and

50%, respectively). There were several strong opinions about IFGE and Tri-Ess, which in no way surprises me at all.



Everybody is getting into the drag act and just maybe drag is getting a little more respectable, even in the gay community. The fall preview catalog from Shocking Gray has two pages of drag related items for him and her, including a "slim fitting, easy step-in, feather-appointed elastic dress covered in shimmering sequins (\$139.95)" and a "100% durable cotton marine-style T-shirt" for the more macho of the ladies. There is even a tiara for \$26.95 that comes with the warning "Avoid wearing during electrical storms." Well, it ain't exactly Frederick's of Hollywood or Vernon's Specialties, but their hearts are in the right place. Two items that may be of some real interest are a Camp Calendar featuring notable Female impersonators in and out of drag (Item #40029, \$10.99), and *Pussy Tourette*, a collection of comedy and music by Ms. Tourette (Audio tape Item #41302, \$9.95). Shocking Gray can be reached at 800-788-4729.



Let the community beware! Renaissance received a letter from a group calling themselves "Freedom Associates." The letter purports to help you raise up to \$300,000 in a year by sending them \$30 a month. In reality, this is nothing more than a chain-letter and it is illegal, regardless of the claim to the contrary in the letter. The mail-forwarding service on our letter is Broadview Associates, P.O. Box 2314, Livonia MI 48151. If you or your organization receive such a letter, send it off to your state's Attorney General's office. Don't be a sucker.



If you haven't gotten your patent leather fix for Fall, you still have time. Patent leather seems to be the accessory *de rigueur* this season. If you opt for a jacket, make sure it's black, otherwise it won't much go with anything else. Of course, patent shoes are always in style, or a patent purse. One tip: go lightly. Don't gleam for head to toe with patent leather. It looks tacky.



Want to have some dress-up fun and raise a little money for your group? Why not hold a Worst Bridesmaid Outfit contest and invite the public? I've seen it done in

Philadelphia and it looks like quite a bit of fun. Every woman has at least one really ugly Bridesmaid dress in her closet, so if you can't buy one, you can probably borrow one.



Here are some tips from *Cosmo* to pep up your wardrobe ... All you crossdressers with a "thing" for cheerleader outfits will be "in" this Fall. Cheerleader skirts at one hot item ... Narrow, "cigarette-leg" pants are in ... Knee-length skirts and dresses ... Anything velvet ... Black hose (when did they go "out?") ... Jeans and slim skirts in leather ... Slip dresses and jumpers over knit tops and turtlenecks ... Anything silver. Give away, or destroy anything that is grunge or waif. Dump the hiking boots, too. Spikes are hot.



As for hair, blondes are back. Go Golden, not Ash. By the way, the older you get, the lighter your hair should get. Dark hair ages you.



The **HotBuzz** about suits is the length of the skirt. The latest craze is the extra short skirt under the suit jacket. This has been dubbed the *Metrose Place* suit after the television show of the same name. Looks like the trend was held over for *Models, Inc.*, too. Just be careful if you have to bend over. A sight like that could scare the horses.



Here's an interesting tidbit about David Bowie as told by him to *Cosmo*. "When I first became well-known, I told reporters I was bisexual. For most of the period when I was going through the bisexual thing, my attraction was always to really beautiful transvestites or drag queens. But I was never gay or a transvestite. And it wasn't long before I realized I was truly heterosexual."



As if saying it simply makes it so, *Allure* magazine has declared Drag is Dead. Yep, Drag is on the "Not" side of their "Not & Hot" list. *Quelle Damage!* We shall all have to just give it up and find something else to occupy our time. **NOT!** Don't believe everything you read. What do a bunch of fashion editors know about drag anyway?!? We've only just seen the tip of the 'berg. Two more movies are due *Ed Wood* starring Johnny Depp as the crossdressing Wood, and *To Wong Foo* with Swazye, Snipes and Leguizamos. Hell, we're jes gettin' started. By the time this drag-wave hits its peak, every kid in the hood will be doin' drag just to be cool.



The **HotBuzz** on hosiery seems to be fishnets. I know I mentioned this before, but perhaps you thought the Queen was off her heels. Just about every single fashion ad has shown the models in fishnets. Hey, they're great for clubbing, but get real for daytime. Also, if you don't want a

semi-permanent waffle pattern on your legs, wear nude Lycra hose under the fishnets.



My good friend and Reba McEntire impersonator, Kelly Sheriden, let me in on a little secret about M.A.C. cosmetics, which I have touted here many times. The Toronto-based company makes a line of theatrical foundations in addition to their regular daytime makeup bases. Kelly says the M.A.C. stuff is the greatest, but the only hitch is that the theatrical stuff is only available in two locations, the M.A.C. store in NYC and the one in Los Angeles. At either place, if you hold a SAG card or can prove you're a bona-fide drag queen, they'll give you a professional discount. Now, that's courtesy!



Oh, yeah, before I forget. Lady Di from Vernon's Specialties sent me some samples of large-sized, hinged bracelets. They come in enameled color finishes as well as goldtone and silvertone. All are hinged and some have a safety chain and they're just darling. If you're looking for that perfect bracelet to complete an outfit, get in touch with Vernon's by calling 800-227-0605. Prices start at about \$15.



Quote of the month: "The best high-heeled shoes should never be used for walking." Ann Magnuson in *Allure*.



I told you about the fracas over holding part of the Summer Olympics in Cobb County, Georgia, where the county commissioner passed an anti-gay statement. Well, the gay community seems to have won out. First, one of the daughters of the head of the county commission came out as a lesbian. Then the backlash of gay/lesbian protests and the threat of an economic boycott. led Olympic officials to move the volleyball contests to another venue. Alternative Lifestyles: 1, Rednecks: 0.



Among the many fads for Fall that are **hot** right now, there's one that will be dear to the hearts of many TVs -- corselettes. Yes, those waist-nipping, bust-building, boned body builders are showing up everywhere and sometimes



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on the outside of the clothing. Look for new styles in colors like peach and sand, in addition to old standby black.



Shameless plug (why else do you think I write this column?) I haven't been sleeping all summer. CDS is planning to release several revised publications and at least one new one ... Alison Laing has been hard at work on the second edition of *Speaking As A Woman*, which should be available around Christmas. Alison has revamped the only book on feminine speech based on her experience teaching her techniques at seminars all over the country. While she doesn't promise you'll sound like just like a female, you can develop a more feminine voice ... The 1995 *Who's Who & Resource Guide to the Transgender Community* will be along in November, still only \$10. The '95 edition has a greatly expanded caregiver section. I did a mailing to over 1000 professionals and the response was overwhelming. The number of counseling resources in this edition is staggering. There are also a number of additions to the *Who's Who* section ... Finally, the long-awaited monograph *The Straight Dope On Hormones* by Delia Van Maris, M.D., will be available in November.

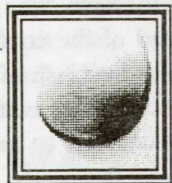


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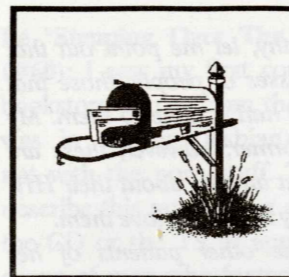
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Letters to the editor and reader feedback

Re "HotBuzz" (#59): JoAnn Roberts states, "Anyone who presents them selves as a female in cyberspace is presumed to be male until proven otherwise. All you trans-whatevers aren't fooling anyone on the Net." I have been on America OnLine (AOL) for about a year-and-a-half, much of that time under my "official" screen name (I host the Sunday Gender Conference on AOL, and monitor a chat in a lesbian area). Both my screen name and my logon ID are female, and have a female profile. As such, I am always assumed to be female except by the most suspicious and paranoid folks, which ... well, I've only come across enough of 'em to count on one hand.

My situation is not rare, I may add -- most of the rest of the community has reported similar situations.

However, I do see plenty of people with non-gendered names (a screen name that is not a female surname, i.e.: *pinhead*, *Quirk*, or even *cdspub*, for that matter) be assumed to be male, but usually due to their actions more than some Internet social rule.

As I mentioned above, I also monitor a lesbian room. Often people will come in, either with female or genderless names (or even their regular male screen names, sometimes!) and say that they are female. They also are usually rude, obnoxious, and often are trolling for cybersex. And yes, they are usually considered to be male. These traits, I may add, are not what I normally see in that room from its regulars.

But I merely wanted to refute the "blanket statement" you had put in your column. We aren't all assumed male ... at least not on America OnLine.

Gwen Smith
via Internet

Re "Deep Thoughts (not by Jack Handey)", *Cogito Ergo Fem* (#58): Ms. Blackwood's column left me feeling rather annoyed. "Even before I realized that I am transsexual it was my opinion that we are not one united transgendered group." Alas, this is not the first time I have seen such statements by TSs.

Why am I annoyed? Her premise is that crossdressers are just playing out a fantasy of being women, while TSs are trying to make their place in the real world. This, she claims, makes TVs and TSs fundamentally different; TSs aren't really transgendered, they are somehow above it all, and are not part of the transgender community.

Actually, I think CDs have as firm a grasp on reality as any TS. We know what we are, and we know what we are not. In general, we have no desire to be women for the rest of our lives, but we can not really be happy being only men, either. Gender is a social construct, a role everyone is assigned to play throughout life. We play two roles; therefore, we are transgendered.

For Ms. Blackwood, TSs have always been women; they are trying to shape their reality to reflect that. Therefore, she says, TSs are trans-sexual, not trans-gendered.

What Ms. Blackwood has failed to take into account is a lifetime of living one role, then switching to live the other role. TSs cross from one gender role to the other; therefore, they are transgendered.

I have read arguments that TVs and TS are the same, just at different places on a continuum. I have read arguments that TVs and TS are different. I, personally, think they are different ... just how different, I am not quite sure. When the TSs claim that they are not a part of the larger community, though, I don't agree. We may have our differences within the community, but our views of gender, and what it means, are very much different from the views held by the rest of society. Whatever else, we have that in common.

We are all unique; being together in a single community does not diminish our uniqueness. TVs and TSs must both deal with the reality of living in our society. Most people in our society don't understand anything about us. Too many people are hostile to us. If, because each of us is a little different from the others, we all go our separate ways, there will be no community. Then we will be destroyed, separately, until we are all gone.

Roberta Steel
via Internet

[Editor's Note: Ms. Steel is the editor of *Muliebrity*, the newsletter of the *Sunshine Club*, Springfield MA, and this letter also appeared in the September issue of that newsletter.]

Re "On Being Responsible", *Cogito Ergo Fem* (#59): I found Anne Blackwood's column irresponsible beyond belief. It is full of homophobia and sex negativism.

There are billions of people on the planet, and every one of them is here because of an act that carries the risk of HIV transmission. Sexual behavior is part and parcel of being human. Those with HIV are not the ones who

engage in high-risk behavior; they are merely the ones who are unlucky.

Ms. Blackwood states she has no sympathy for those who acquire HIV except through blood transfusions or from blood clotting factors. What of babies born with the disease? What about rape victims? What about hospital workers? What about Kimberly Bergalis, who acquired the disease from her dentist? What about those who, believing their relationship is monogamous, contract the disease from their partners? What about persons who are unable to understand the consequences of their actions, or those who do not know how to protect themselves? What about those who acquire the disease from a simple kiss or other "low-risk" behaviors? And yes, what about those who took a gamble and lost? Are we to point our fingers at them and say "We told you so! Kindly go die on someone else's lawn." I guess so, if we are like Ms. Blackwood.

Ms. Blackwood's column is not, in fact, a commentary about responsibility, as she claims. It is a commentary on hating those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Dallas Denny, M.A.

Executive Director, American Educational Gender Information Service
Decatur, GA

[Anne Blackwood replies: As to the charge that I promote homophobia, balderdash. The friend I wrote about was gay, and I never have given a damn about how anyone loves. I can see how someone may misinterpret my comments about staying out of the gay/bi communities in the early '80s as being homophobic, but the real reason is that while condoms were promoted as a way of reducing the risk, my faith in them was zero as at one time I had three condoms (high quality, brand name) fail in a row. Now is that homophobia or just lack of faith in a product borne of experience? More to the point, though, the desire to remain healthy can hardly be equated with homophobia.

Next, the sex act from which we all originate is not inherently one which carries the risk of HIV transmission. One of the partners must already be infected for that to happen. So let us rid ourselves of that misconception, shall we? To dismiss those who act irresponsibly as merely "unlucky" is an act of intellectual dishonesty, or the act of someone who themselves does not want to admit their own lack of judgement or willingness to take responsibility, which amounts to the same thing.

As for the fact that I didn't go on and on listing all the

people for whom I do have sympathy, let me point out that by example I listed two distinct classes of people, those that did it to themselves, and those that had it done to them. My lack of sympathy is only for the former; however, these are not times when one can blindly trust anyone about their HIV status, no matter how much you may think you love them.

As for Kimberly Bergalis, and the other patients of her dentist, there is evidence that they did not contract the disease from him. There was evidence which did not come out at the trial that painted a very different picture of Kimberly, one which showed that she engaged in risky sexual practices, and for her it was, perhaps, easier to blame her dentist than to admit to her family that she was sleeping around. And before you dismiss this possibility, let me tell you that a very close friend of mine's son was accused of rape by a girl (his own age, 14, at the time) who had consented to and enjoyed sex with him, only to accuse him of rape when her Catholic parents found out. It was easier for her to lie about what went on between the two of them than to admit to her parents that she was sexually active and enjoying it.

As for "low-risk" behaviors, the operative word there is "risk". If Ms. Denny knows of any documented cases of people getting HIV from merely kissing, I'd like to know about it. I will bet that those reports are anecdotal. The fact is that people lie about their behaviors so that others won't think the worse of them. "Oh, we only kissed," she said, knowing full well they'd f---ed their brains out.

About those who gamble and lose? You took the gamble and you lost. No one held a gun to your head. You gamble, you live with the consequences, or die with them. As far as wanting them to die on someone else's lawn: What were they doing on my lawn in the first place? Yes, it would be wonderful if there were a cure for AIDS, but there isn't and you, Ms. Denny, know that. There isn't likely to be one in the foreseeable future either, and you know that too.

Are you advocating people play Russian Roulette? I'm just saying, "There is a bullet in that gun, and if you pull the trigger I'm not going to mourn you." I also find your analogy between sex and gambling curious when you accuse me of sex negativism.

I feel no need to apologize for writing the truth and expressing what many people are thinking but are afraid to say because it would be viewed as "politically incorrect". I'm an American, and the notion of "political correctness" is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.]

Re "Stepping Over The Line", Kymberleigh's Clipboard (#60): I saw my first copy of *Transformation* at a corner bookstore across from the University of Florida campus. It was in the gay/lesbian/alternative lifestyle section and not with the porn stuff. That dismays me, as I would not describe this publication as one that would be of interest to the CD or the TS. It appeals to the prurient interests of a group of men who fantasize about "she-males". (And that's fine, because I think there are a lot of them. I think it is a way to be gay without actually having to admit it.)

But one of our biggest problems with the public at large is convincing them that the CD tries to separate sex from gender. The "dressing" activities are not directed toward attracting sexual partners. Now of course, there is that small contingent that would suggest that this is not true (blatant she-male ads, contained in *Transformation* #5). The point is that if the magazine does indeed have access to the mainstream, we all get labelled.

I am anything but naive, and quite honestly dismayed at the determinations and generalizations that could result from such a magazine. I am husband, father, heterosexual, professional, grandfather, teacher and many other things. The diversity that is "us" does not escape me and I don't pretend to be the mean, median, or mode. Many of us will wear a distasteful label if this periodical presents us all with a particular slant.

How did they achieve such widespread circulation and accomplish the impossible task of placing their product on the average newsstand? The editorial in issue #5 is unrealistic. It states that "the more copies we get out there, the more people will understand who we are ..."

Uh-huh. "Freaks and perverts" ...

As to copyright infringement, I am very sensitive to that issue, but not in the same context. For example, at a recent national meeting, a major review session was devoted to a line of research/investigation that I have labored in for some twenty years. The first slide shown by the speaker to a room of 1000 people came directly from my work, with no credit as to source. Even worse, the slide was a drawing that I had actually drawn myself, personally, with my own two hands ... talk about pride of ownership!

This plagiarism cannot be tolerated. It labels the rest of us with yet another fringe designation; that we are outlaws, unwilling to comply with publication standards, legal and ethical, and -- by inference -- sexual outlaws as well. Or

should I use the word "deviate"?

Some things and some people are best left in the closet.

Delia Van Maris, M.D.

via Internet

[Editor's Note: The following letter was sent in late August by Linda Buten, Chair of the IFGE Board of Directors, to the leadership of the Southern California transgender community in the aftermath of the miscommunication regarding the 1997 IFGE convention which I commented on in #58 ("Could We Please Talk To each Other?", *Kymberleigh's Clipboard*). Ms. Buten has subsequently granted us permission to publish it verbatim and without comment. Although it is decidedly not a "letter to the editor", we offer it to our readers as another perspective.]

I'd like to make a public comment concerning the convention for L.A.

I don't have the time, nor do I want to expend the effort to detail or try to rationalize what's been said on this matter over the past months.

There appears to be concern about IFGE planning the "Coming Together" convention in Southern California in 1997, and the possibility of it hurting the attendance of California Dreamin' '97. Therefore I feel obligated to speak.

I want to first clear up some misconceptions. IFGE is governed by a board of directors. All major programs, such as the "Coming Together" conventions are approved by the Board. Merissa [Sherrill Lynn] is the convention director. Her job is to put together future conventions as well as organize current ones. She reports quarterly on all convention-related matters. At the summer board meeting, she reported that the desired site for 1997 is L.A. She says that many individuals over the past few years have repeatedly asked, "When is it Southern California's turn?" She stated that she is currently conducting a preliminary study on hotels. She also stated that Melissa Foster has been asked to speak with the individuals in her area to find who would be interested in the convention. She also noted that New Orleans would also like to be considered for 1997. At the outset of her report, concerns were brought up, since the preclusion of problems had already surfaced.

Obviously, Merissa's letters were very disturbing to certain

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members of the gender community in Southern California, when she announced word of an IFGE convention for L.A. Her intent was to get people interested and get a feel for the participation she could expect from the area. Regardless of what you have heard, there have been individuals who have invited IFGE to bring the convention to Southern California. Some don't belong to any organized group. But then, who has the right to speak for everyone else?

Problems have arisen in the past in multi-organizational cities when one group was approached or spoke up before the other. Also, IFGE has found that getting local support too early from one particular group can be troublesome. Leaders and organizations can make some drastic changes in a few short years. Some actually dissolve or reorganize and it's not unusual for feuding because of personality conflicts. Most of the local individuals who do help with the convention are acting independently in their efforts, and though we recognize the group from which they belong, most groups are not organized to the point that we receive a board resolution inviting IFGE. Also, most local involvement is usually within 12 months of the convention, not three years previous, so don't get too excited about being uninformed.

Merissa has a gift for putting together good conventions. Unfortunately, she no tolerance nor the ability to deal with the political gender arena of Southern California.

Recent correspondence and articles sound like IFGE is moving in on L.A. turf if one likes it or not. This is not the case. Regardless of what you have heard, as of this date, the Board of Directors has not approved the L.A. area for the 1997 convention site.

I have heard quite a few negative comments to date from some individuals. I don't know if what I read is individual opinions or official statements from the local groups' directors and/or leaders.

I will say I find this mess most confusing and disturbing. I would like to think we are all on the same team. IFGE's next board meeting will be held at the Holiday En Femme in November. I would therefore like to make the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the groups from Southern California who have an interest for involvement, choose a single individual or coalition to speak on their behalf, and

WHEREAS, this entity over the next several months diligently comprises all thoughts and concerns of the organizations, and

WHEREAS, this appointed entity attends the 1994 Tri-Ess Holiday En Femme this fall in New York City, and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, November 12, the entity meets with Linda Buten, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, members of the program committee, and present members of the Board of IFGE, to discuss this matter through arbitration in a sane and intelligent matter, and

THEREFORE BE IT SAID, that by the end of the day, a final conclusion will be arrived at as to a yea or nay to the Coming Together convention in 1997 in Southern California.

I hope this will be acceptable, since as Directors for IFGE, we must move forward on this matter.

This constant jawing, especially in newsletters, does nothing to strengthen the gender community. It only shows those whom we try to educate that we have not reached the professionalism we so desperately need for future acceptance.

If these terms are acceptable, I would like some documentation, perhaps signed by the local leaders, showing our board your willingness for cooperation.

As the chair of the IFGE Board, I speak on behalf of the whole board, and I can assure you we will commit to doing everything possible to bring this to an equitable demise.

Linda Buten
Chair, IFGE Board of Directors

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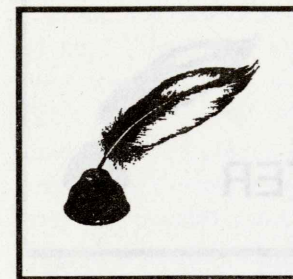
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VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT WOMEN? AND WHY DO YOU WANT TO DRESS LIKE ONE?

by Virginia Prince

The second question in the title of this month's column -- the "why" -- has been around since the beginning of time, it seems, but I would like to ask it anyway ... not in an etiological sense but rather in conjunction with the first question about women.

"What's so great?" can be asked in a broad sociological sense and also in a narrow personal sense as "what do women mean to me?" Actually I think I am asking it in a much broader sense (no pun intended): Why does society put a special and greater value on women than on men?

The phrase "women and children first" states the case quite bluntly.

Women are more valued because they are females. Females can bring forth babies and raise them to adulthood. Babies, infants and children comprise the next generation and satisfy the adults longing for immortality. We can't have it on our own but we can

achieve it in some sense through our children. It takes a male's sperm to start the process to be sure but it is possible to initiate the process through what is termed "parthenogenesis" which means, in effect, virgin birth. That is, cell division is started by the prick of a needle or some other means of stimulating the egg to divide.

That cannot be done with a sperm. For one thing, eggs have a lot of nutrients built in to them which enable a fertilized egg to divide and which feeds the resulting new cells. Sperms have no such food supply. They are essentially just little packets of chromosomes which must be inserted into the egg to provide the necessary hereditary material. So the females of our -- and every other -- species are essentially more important than the male. This fact doesn't mean much in the lower animals, but in humans (who have developed the capacity to think and to be self aware) it is very significant. It is hard on the ego of thinking men to realize and accept that he is unable to do what females can do and that his only actual purpose in the scheme of things is to introduce variety into the reproduction process and thus make evolution possible. As a compensation males have always tried to show that they really are important by using their two principle assets; the fact that they are both bigger and stronger than females. Thus they

quarrel, fight, and, among young humans, do anything that will bring them attention. My assertion that "women just are, men are always trying to become" expresses this concisely. Thus men are always doing something to attract attention to themselves which is a way of saying, "Hey look at me. I may not be able to make a baby but I am an important person."

There are three ways that men can handle this situation *vis a vis* women: They can resort to machoism by attempting to "prove" their importance and superiority to

**Men tend to be envious
of not being curtailed in
their self-expression by
social roles.**

"lowly" women who aren't as big, or as strong ... and until recently were not as smart because they didn't have access to the education, opportunity and experience that men had; they can just resign themselves to the situation, not recognize the need to do anything about it and thus just stew in their own juice; or they can be envious

of women and desire to share in some of their social advantages (if not their biological advantages).

This third solution is what leads to crossdressing.

In the last analysis, in spite of all the high falutin' answers to the "what and why" questions, I believe it boils down to envy. Whenever a person, (regardless of sex), sees another person (also regardless of sex) who has something the first person does not have -- be it money, material possessions, talent, authority, ability, personality or whatever -- there is a desire on the part of the less fortunate one to envy the one who is better off. Let's face it. Women are frequently envious of men for their opportunities, power, greater earning capacity, freedom or whatever, i.e., for qualities they do not have. So it is not surprising that men envy women but not for the same things that women are envious of obviously -- they already have them. Men tend to be envious of not being curtailed in their self-expression by social rules which dictate what they can and can't do, should and shouldn't do. Well, women *used* to be curtailed, but in the last century they have broken out of the stereotypes to an amazing degree. It was called "women's liberation" and women have it ... men don't.

This can be seen not only in clothes but in behavior, attitudes and expectations. These are the (continued, page 20)

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INTERVIEW WITH A DAUGHTER



by Barbara Jean Jasen

Almost two years ago, in the Tri-Ess magazine *Femme Mirror* there was an article entitled "Interview with a Daughter". Part of it reads:

"I'm 11 years old and my name is Alice. I found my dad's suitcase full of women's clothes in the basement about six months before my parents told me anything about Joanne. They never knew that I knew and I didn't tell them.

When my parents told me about Joanne they explained her in a very open minded way. I was curious about how Jo looked, so they showed me a photograph.

At first I thought it was Halloween. They promised me that Dad hadn't changed, that he was the same as he always was.

It was important for me to understand this and it made me feel a little better.

The way I see it, Joanne wants to understand more about women and that's why she likes to dress up like one.

Some of my friends were over one day, and one girl noticed how long my dad's fingernails were. I told her my dad was an electrician and needed his nails to work with long wires.

I am learning to cope with stress because of my dad's hobby. I worry that one of my friends might drop in when he's dressed up. My mom and I are the only ones who know, and sometimes I think I want to tell one of my friends, but I am afraid they will not understand. It's hard keeping a secret. I can't have anyone over for a slumber party because Daddy's dressed up. I go out with mom and Joanne for dinner, and I'm afraid someone will see us, even though we go to smaller out of the way places.

If I hadn't heard about the good side of crossdressing from my mom and dad, I might not have understood their side of the story. If I had learned about how some other people think of it, like the ones that don't like it or think it's bad it would be harder for me to accept my dad when he does it. I think they told me about it at the right time. I want to be an actress, so I understand about having fun dressing up."

Joanne ought to be very proud of her daughter Alice. To have a son or a daughter that knows, accepts and understands is something that I think all crossdressers who are parents desire. In this article I see a little girl

who has an immense love for her father, a love that would make any father proud of his son or daughter.

But sad to say, I also see pain. Because of Alice's love for her father she is willing to give up part of what would be a normal childhood for a little girl. While Alice is willing to give up of herself for her father, I don't think she should have to. Is it right that she can not have friends come over, is it right that she can not have things like a slumber party? These are things that are important to a little girl, things that she can share with her children when the time comes.

In Alice I also see the pain that many wives feel. The need to keep things a secret and the need to have someone that she can talk to and share feeling with. The fear of what might happen if she did confide in someone.

Elsewhere in the article, Alice said that some of the people at her father's group were uncomfortable when they saw her at the club simply because she was only 11,

and yet how much better would it be for Alice if one of the other members had a son or a daughter who knew, who also attended the meeting so that Alice would have someone she could talk to and confide in.

As crossdressers we have strived hard to show society that we are normal males who simply wish to express rather than suppress our feminine qualities. But how much normality is there in causing pain for those we love? Groups should provide more in the line of family type of activities, activities that do involve the wives and children.

Perhaps Joanne could arrange to spend a night at a motel so that Alice could have a slumber party. Perhaps she can arrange a few nights per week where she does not dress, or does not dress before a certain hour so that Alice can have friends come over. I am certain that Alice's friends would understand if Alice said that certain days of the week were family days where it was only the family and no friends at her house. This of course would allow Joanne to come out at home and still relieve Alice of her fears of friends dropping in when Joanne was around.

I hope that Joanne sees this article, and that she has as much love for her daughter as Alice has (continued, page 20)



ENVIRONMENTS OF OUR MINDS & HEARTS

by Linda Peacock

I have a friend (whom I've never met) who is a poet, and a good one. He writes poetry twice -- once on a non-crossdressing level and again on a crossdressing level. In other words, he writes a poem, then readjusts it to how he feels when crossdressed. He recently asked me my opinion of his work, and I told him that I felt his work was far more powerful when expressed on a non-crossdressing level; that I found the message could easily be interpreted on different levels, according to what was going on in the reader's mind. I felt that the emphasis on his crossdressing took away from the message itself -- and urged him to concentrate on his poetic messages to be accessible to the minds of everyone.

Having the gift of composing thoughts on paper is admirable and enviable. In fact, having the ability to be able to put your thoughts and dreams into words that others can grasp and enjoy and think about is a true gift, and one which should not be taken lightly.

The interesting thing about being a writer is how two people can interpret what you write so differently. It is much like a piece of music in that each of us hears it differently, and either likes or dislikes it.

The gifts of music and writing are received so differently because the environments of our minds are so different. Have you ever thought about how truly unique you are in the wholeness of space and time? There is no one else, past, present or future who was, is or will be identical to you. You are a rare and special creature, who has intelligence, thought process, the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, to have emotions, such as joy or sorrow, jubilation or pain.

When we are born, we are like vessels ready to be filled with a magic solution which places us in society. We are innocent, unknowing of all but sound and light and hunger and pain. From birth begins the infusion of society's interpretation of right and wrong, positivism and negativism, guilt, pride, likes and dislikes. From birth, we are literally at the mercy of our outside environment and unfortunately, many such outside environments do not

encourage free thinking; rather, we are "thought for."

As a woman married to a man who crossdresses, I faced exactly what each of you faces. I had been "thought for" by my parents, my teachers, other family members and my first husband. Anyone "different" was perverted, a filthy creature. I have heard my father speak venomously against the gays -- yet, as far as I know, he has never personally met or known a gay person. Society told him they were all

"bad" people, and of course, to him, society is right. He has never allowed himself to think of these people as human beings, who live their lives feeling the same feelings we who are heterosexual feel, loving, laughing, hurting, crying ... that one has a different sexual preference in no way makes them less human or not as

worthy as us.

So, in meeting and falling in love with a man who was so obviously different from other men I had dated, and certainly a far cry from my first husband, I had to put aside all that I had been infused with over the years, and begin thinking for myself. I had to begin weighing the pros and cons, and I had to begin making my own decisions. Basically, I see it as a maturing of the environment of my mind. My body was grown up, and now it was time for my mind to grow up.

I realized that the decisions I had to make about this man who had taken over my heart needed to be made quickly. Happiness is often a fleeting thing, a quick cool breeze in the heat of daily life, and often it blows quickly out, leaving us just realizing how close it had come to us ... and we hadn't felt it.

This man was a sensitive, caring person, who felt deeply and emotionally, who saw in me something far better than I saw in myself, who desired my mind and heart as much as he desired my body. He wanted me enough to take the chance to share his innermost secret -- that he crossdressed -- knowing that he might well lose me.

And had I allowed all the preconceived notions about people who were "different" to dominate my mind, I would have left. Instead, I chose to change the environment of my mind, to be fair to him and look at him in his entirety,

From birth, we are
literally at the mercy of
our outside environment.

rather than just this one peculiar facet of his personality. I made my decision quickly and have never looked back. His crossdressing has been a burden at times, confining, even oppressive once in awhile, but when I look at all the good that comes from this man, the obvious mental connection we have, I find his crossdressing has no impact on our relationship at all -- and I encourage him to participate in it as much as he feels he needs to. I do not look at his exterior person -- I only see who lives inside.

I realize that my story is different from yours, and in many cases, your husbands or partners did not choose to tell you before you made a commitment, and therefore, did not give you the choice to stay or leave. I can't offer you the magic potion that will make this indiscretion go away. And yes, I feel that this is a type of indiscretion, for it is a betrayal of your trust. You were not given a chance to change the environment of your mind until commitment was made, and he felt "safe." I don't condone what he has done.

However, in spite of the loss of trust you must feel, it is not too late for both of you to change the environments of your minds. For you, there is a chance to put aside all you have heard or been indoctrinated with by society, and give yourself the opportunity to learn about his crossdressing and to see if you can live with this part of him. You can make the decision of how much you can tolerate or accept -- and you can make the decision to stay or leave. It is more difficult, it is true, at this point in the relationship, especially when there are children involved, but you cannot live the rest of your life in a turmoil about his dressing; you have a right to have a peaceful environment of your mind, of your heart, of your soul. And only you can give yourself this gift.

Your husband or partner, too, can change -- in that he realizes what a cruel thing he has done in not trusting you

VIRGIN VIEWS ... continued from page 17

sources of envy. Obviously, the solution to the problem of envy of another person is to try to get into his/her space ... to see life from the same vantage point. One of the chief sources of envy is that of attractiveness and the attention it provides. There are other areas of attractiveness but gender attractiveness is visual. What you see is not only what you get but it's what you envy and therefore want. What you see in a woman is largely her hairdo, her makeup, her clothing, jewelry and shoes. If you want what she has you have to go into her space in order to view the world from her point of vantage. Ergo you imitate her in those ways that particularly attracted you. When you get them then you too will be attractive and gain attention and ego satisfaction and you will no longer have to abide by the social limitation imposed on men.

One last note: Wwhen I speak of "attractiveness" I am specifically **not** talking about "sexual attractiveness". Gender attraction is something else again. Sooner or later, I'll have something to say on **that** difference, too.

enough to take the chance to tell you before you married him, and to realize that you deserve and have a right to such chances. Your husband needs to understand how important trust is in your relationship -- for without trust, there is no relationship, but instead, simple joint existence. That is not living, it is simply "being there." And your husband needs to recognize how extraordinary and rare you really are. He needs to cherish you, encourage you, be there for you.

Perhaps with such giving on his part, it will become easier on your part to give back to him -- once you have regained the trust level you need, once you feel loved and cherished, it might be so much easier for you to look on a mature and honest level at his dressing, and make rational decisions -- perhaps changing the environment of your mind, thinking your own thoughts, being you ... the unique and special you that you are.

[Linda Peacock is the Tri-Ess director of wives' and partners' concerns, an IFGE board member, and chair of the SPICE board of directors. She also publishes the quarterly newsletter for wives and partners The Sweetheart Connection, and may be reached by mail at P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221 or by phone at (501) 227-8798.]

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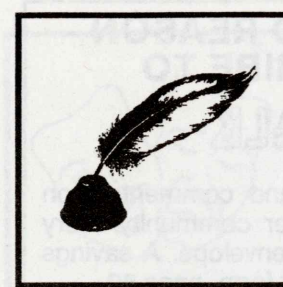
INSIGHT ... continued from page 18

for her ... enough love that she is willing to work with Alice to help insure that Alice has as much of a normal childhood as any other little girl.

Just as it is important that we communicate with our wives, I think it is also important that we communicate with our children, especially when they know of our *femmeside*, and communications involves listening as much as it does talking.

Just as our children have an immense love for us, let us also show them our immense love for them. Let us do all that we can to insure that they have as normal of a childhood as any other boy or girl.

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T NOTES

SHAME AND GUILT

by Anne Vitale, Ph.D.

Shame and guilt are all too common in psychotherapy. This is especially true for gender clients. In fact guilt is usually the first order of business after dealing with the fear and anxiety of just being in my office for the first time. Shame sneaks in later, almost as if it is not connected to the guilt at all.

Guilt is especially inappropriate. Most of my clients are upstanding, socially responsible people. People who are honest and productive citizens. A typical gender client is highly educated, holds a medium to high level position in the professions, and is well respected for his or her abilities.

If the individual has children, he or she usually wants to be the best parent possible. In short most transsexuals are the very model of what society professes to value most. Couple this with increasing evidence that gender dysphoria is either a birth defect

or the result of events that occurred in our environment shortly after birth and there nothing to feel guilty about.

So why is there so much guilt in wanting to be a member of the opposite assigned sex? Surely it's alright to be female and surely it is alright to be male. Yet with regularity, many of my clients come in feeling that they are amongst the lowest of the low. For decades they have kept within themselves what they feel to be one of the worst secrets imaginable. Long before they give others a chance to evaluate their dilemma, they often view themselves as being sick, perverted, queer and God knows how many other disparagements. They are convinced that if they give in and try to make it in their desired gender, they will be considered all of the above. In addition they fear with some justification, being called "uncaring" and "selfish" and ostracized by the people they love the most.

Those of us who have pushed the established gender envelope know society's mute but clear message: "Stay in the boundaries of behavior allotted to your assigned sex or face possible banishment from all that you know and love." The reasons for this social dictum are, of course, very complex. In all probability it has -- at least in part -- something to do with maintaining sexism.

The control mechanism for sexism is shame expressed

through deprecation of all of those that are unable or unwilling to be men (or man-like). This includes genetic women as well as genetic males who can't make the cut.

Shame of not being able to "make it as a man" is often the reason for questioning one's transsexualism. It is also the primary reason for the delay in seeking help. I need only look back (in horror) at my own transition for evidence of this notion. At that time (1977), I remember trying to justify my needs in male terms to my psychiatrist by telling him: "It takes a real man to be a woman." Perhaps I was

Why is there so much guilt in wanting to be a member of the opposite assigned sex?

equating courage with manhood but I can't imagine saying that to anyone ever again. It is very common for male-to-female transsexuals to make super-masculine efforts to be the "machoest" male possible. This notion is based on the mistaken theory that male activity makes the

man. My male-to-female client

load currently contains eight fathers, a motorcycle gang member with three very male tattoos, two Vietnam military heroes, two pilots, and even a foreign revolutionary.

Now, as a woman, I know better ... a lot better. Pride in being female comes hard even for some genetic women, but female hormones and living with women who do have a healthy sense of self and sincere pride can be a wonderful teacher. After 14 years of post-operative life, I can't imagine a truer state of being.

Keep in mind that shame and guilt are mental constructs. Ironically, transsexuals often develop these constructs to protect others from what they feel to be their "perverted desires". Is a transsexual's search for authenticity really that dangerous to society or loved ones? I think not. Growth in any one individual benefits everyone. It may take a while to feel good about the search but there is nothing wrong in wanting to resolve gender dysphoria. I have had the privilege of working with some wonderful people in my practice. I regularly see people take their lives from despair to beginnings in a radically redefined world. In fact, working with people as a therapist -- no matter what the issue -- has given me a deep respect for humanity. Life is difficult for everyone. Those who have the courage to face the situation as it really is rather than what

they fear it might be often go on to full and productive lives.

[Copyright 1994 by Anne Vitale, Ph.D. Dr. Vitale is a psychotherapist specializing in gender related issues. She is an associate of the D Street Counseling Group, 610 D Street, San Rafael CA 94901, telephone (415) 456-4452. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Vitale's name and address appears with it. Other publications must obtain written permission from Dr. Vitale. A copy of any reprints must be sent to Dr. Vitale.]

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CROSS-TALK



#56 (June '94): Working with, not against, the gay community; the difference between "being" and "becoming"; parallels between racial prejudice and gender prejudice; Stonewall retrospective; first installment in "information superhighway" series; review of the movie *Grief*; Ellen Summers' speech on the gender community family.

#57 (July '94): Accidentally "outing" someone; is it your boyself or your girlself looking in the mirror?; Kym Richards' changing perspectives after living full-time for four years; how (and when) to tell children about crossdressing; passing should be easy if you don't over-glamourize; review of *Even Cowgirls Get The Blues*; recognizing the non-operative option.

#58 (August '94): Miscommunication regarding IFGE 1997 convention in Los Angeles; the difference between sex and gender is the same as the difference between biology and sociology; separating the CD and TS communities; political activism in and out of the gender community; travelling *en femme*; Internet and the gender community; humorous commentary on labels.

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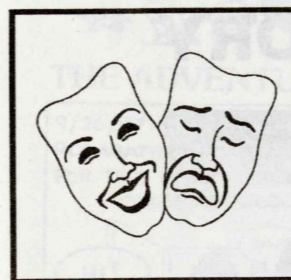
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THE BEARDED LADY

CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT (OR IS THAT A DOG DOING A CAT'S JOB?)

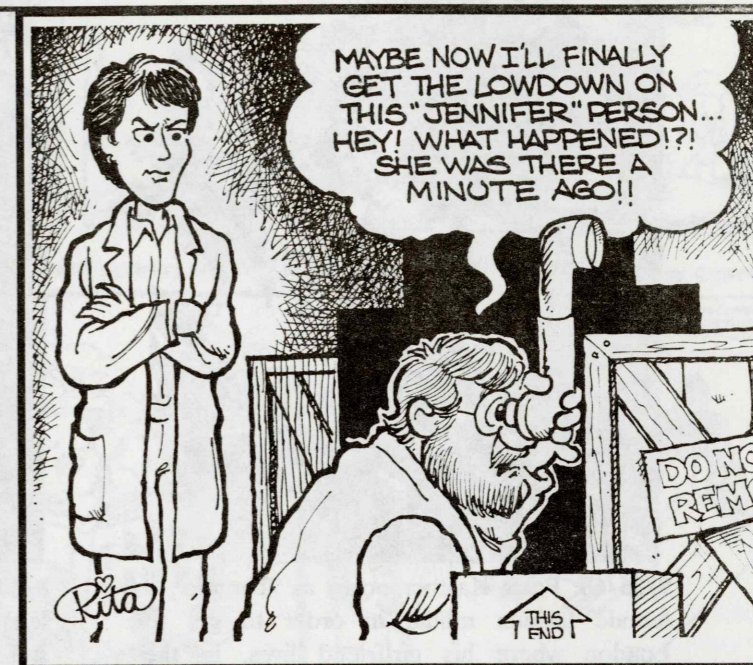
by Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita

I am a model of restraint, I think. You couldn't tell it by looking at me -- unless you measure the tensile strength of my corset strings -- but you couldn't see that either. In the latest of my temporary jobs I have ended up in yet another machine shop, building yet another machine. With each of these jobs you meet a new group of men ... not people, they're exclusively men.

So I was a bit surprised to notice a woman machinist. It took me a while to notice her; after all, baggy work clothes and protective coats have a certain sameness about them. I will admit I was curious about the gender of this person, so I covertly took inventory. The result was pronounced androgyny, something even more rare than outright misogyny on the shop floor. An earring in both ears, short hair, slim build, no discernable hips, slightly feminine mannerisms (I know a machine shop is not exactly the best place to observe this), no beard shadow and no makeup to hide one. The matter was settled at lunchtime in the lineup to punch out. Without the coat well defined breasts were visible, but casual conversation revealed a rather low and pleasant voice and the time card revealed a distinctly feminine name.

I know that I shouldn't have been so damned interested in assigning a sex to her, that as one of amorphous gender myself it shouldn't matter to me. Yeah, about the same way the color of a person's skin shouldn't matter. Face it, I grew up in a culture that makes a big deal of sex and skin color, and which lays great store in those differences. One of my greatest complaints against the pervasiveness of racism is that I will always be aware of a person's skin color before I am aware of them as a person. Over the years I have had acquaintances with skin tones other than my own, even a friend or two, but no matter how close or casual the relationship that cultural barrier was still buried in my mind. As much as I dislike it, it will be there as long as I am alive, an unwanted but real vestige of a sick culture.

So why should I be so surprised at myself for wanting to



assign a gender to a casual acquaintance in the workplace? Part of it was that cultural need to define, part was my insatiable curiosity and part was a hope that here in this bastion of male chauvinism a possible TS could work without harassment. The worst part about the string of temporary jobs I have been working is the pervasive macho attitude, homophobia and crude sexual humor that seems to be a part of the very atmosphere. As individuals they are nice people, but as a group their consciousness needs raising, and it would take more than the five ton overhead crane to do it. In this atmosphere I would have expected a TS to have suffered verbally, if not physically, but nary a word was spoken, no hints were dropped. No comments, to her or me or anyone else.

So anyway, my curiosity about visible gender has been satisfied, and I was tactful enough not to inquire about the subject of former gender or sexual anatomy. But I'm still curious. So Jennifer, if you work in a machine shop near an airport in New York, and really are a TS who reads this magazine, drop me a line and let me know, OK. Otherwise I'll put on my foundation garments and restrain myself.

Cross-Talk can now be reached via Fidonet! Send your letters to the editor, comments, and suggestions to Kymberleigh Richards at [1:124/3103].

GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd



9/26/68: Peter Kastner poses as "Timmie", a female fashion model in order to get to London where his girlfriend lives, in the premiere episode of *The Ugliest Girl In Town*, ABC.



8/30/84: Judge Harry Stone (Harry Anderson, left) disguises himself in order to help his rock star friend duck into the ladies' restroom and be carried out in a gunny sack to avoid a mob of fans, on *Night Court*, NBC.



Airdate unknown (late 1950s): Maurice Gosfield plays a dual role as both Pvt. Doberman and his mother, on *The Phil Silvers Show*, CBS.



11/19/89: Chris Lemmon (following in father Jack's footsteps) dons a Vegas showgirl costume in the conclusion of a two-part episode of *Open House*, Fox.

CROSS-TALK COMICS

THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

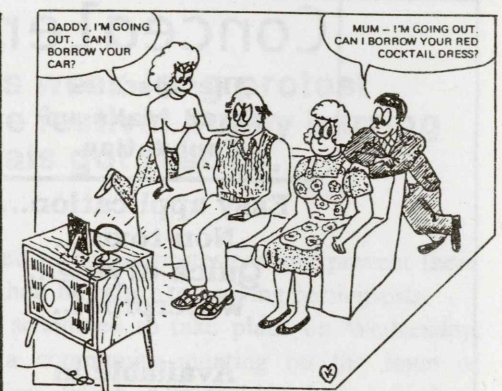
by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner

here in the (un)real world by Nancy Wilson

WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT? by Christine-Jane

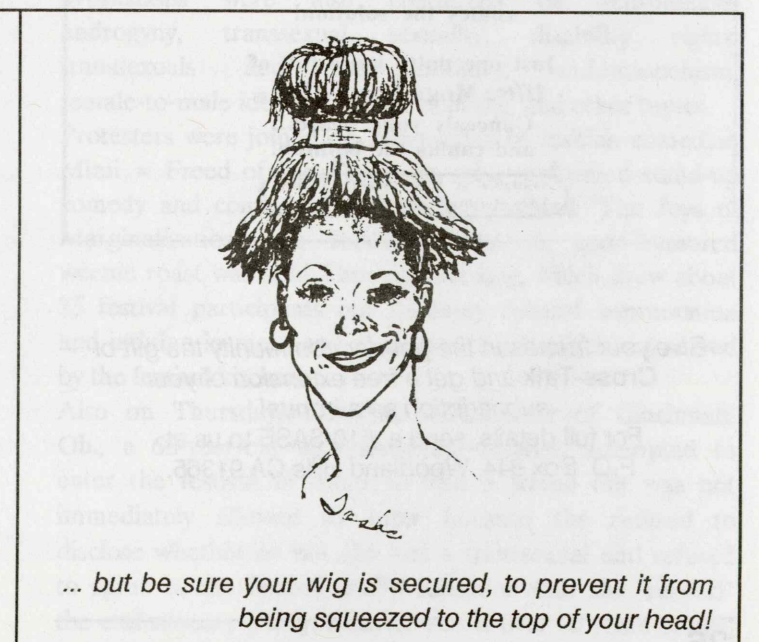


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Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard



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ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE by Karen Rusnak

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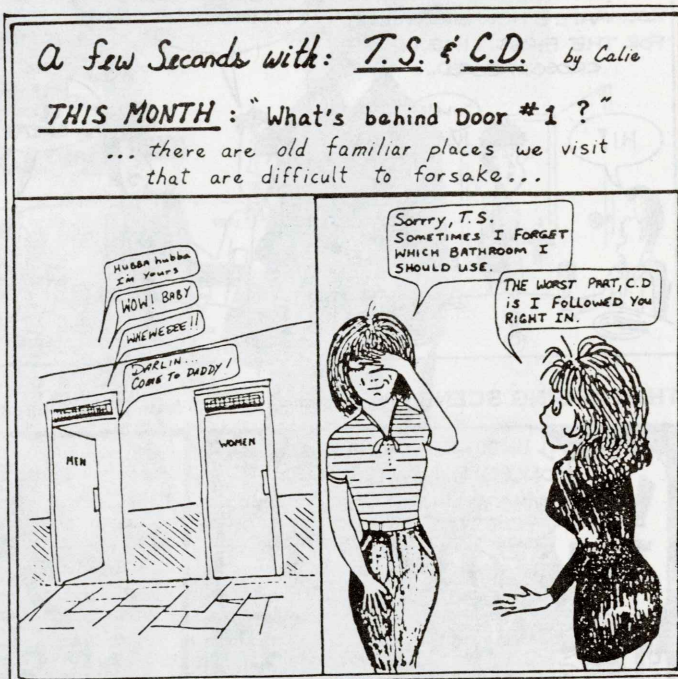
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**MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL 1994:
TRANSSEXUAL PROTESTERS ALLOWED TO ENTER**

by Janis Walworth

Six openly transsexual women were allowed to enter the 19th annual Michigan Womyn's Music Festival near Hart, Michigan, on Saturday, August 13, 1994, following a week-long protest of that event's "womyn born womyn" only policy. The six transsexual women were: Zythyra Anne Austen of Winchester, Va.; April Fredericks and Riki Anne Wilchins of New York City; Rica Ashby Fredrickson of Philadelphia; Davina Anne Gabriel of Kansas City, Mo.; and Jessica Meredith Xavier of Silver Springs, Md. Accompanying the transsexual women were several nontranssexual supporters who were also taking part in the protest, including authors and activists Leslie Feinberg and Minnie Bruce Pratt, both of Jersey City, N.J., and one intersex individual, Kodi Hendrix of Kokomo, In.

The protest of the festival's policy of excluding transsexual women from attendance was the third consecutive and largest action staged against the policy since Nancy Jean Burkholder was expelled from the 16th annual festival in 1991. Thirteen transsexual women with their friends and supporters, including 12 nontranssexual women, one transsexual man, one nontranssexual man, and one intersex person camped out during the week of the festival at "Camp Trans" on national forest land across the road from the main gate of the festival and took part in a variety of activities designed to inform festival participants about gender issues and to protest the festival's exclusionary policy.

The transsexual women at Camp Trans who did not enter the festival were: Hannah Blackwell of Kansas City, Mo.; Nancy Jean Burkholder of Weare, N.H.; Nancy Anne Forrest of Philadelphia; Wendi Lynn Kaiser of North Berwick, Me.; Lynn Walker and Krissy Withers, both of New York City; and Arlene Wolves of Ashland, N.H.

The protesters began setting up their camp, including a large, bright green banner proclaiming, "Camp Trans: For Humyn-Born Humyns," before festival participants began arriving on Sunday, August 7. The following day, protesters began distributing a schedule of 29 activities consisting of workshops, speeches, meetings, readings, concerts, religious services, games, and meals, taking place at Camp Trans over a four-day period, to women in their cars waiting to enter the festival. Also distributed to festival participants was a joint statement addressing the need for respectful and constructive dialogue on the issue of transsexuals in the women's and lesbian communities, which was issued by one of the transsexual protesters, Riki Anne Wilchins, and lesbian musician Alix Dobkin, a

supporter of the festival's exclusionary policy, who has been actively involved in the festival since its inception. Protesters received an overwhelmingly positive response, and only very slight negative reaction, to their presence and their flyers. They continued to distribute their literature to women arriving for the festival throughout the week, as well as to the many women who came out from the festival to visit them. Festival workers at the gate engaged in a variety of tactics throughout the week

**This year's week-long protest
against the festival policy barring
transsexuals got results.**

apparently designed to harass protesters and prevent them from distributing their literature to arriving participants. The first activity, scheduled to take place on Wednesday, August 10, was a community meeting on the issue of transsexual inclusion, which Alix Dobkin had agreed to attend. However, Ms. Dobkin sent a message to Camp Trans on Tuesday, August 9, stating that she had changed her mind and that she would not be attending because it might appear that she was in support of the protesters' position. The community meeting, which was attended by approximately 20 festival participants, was held without Ms. Dobkin and sparked a thought-provoking discussion. Workshops were also conducted on self-defense, androgyny, transsexual sexuality, disability rights, transsexuals and the military, sadomasochism, female-to-male identity, gender bending, and other topics. Protesters were joined on Wednesday by lesbian comedian Mimi = Freed of San Francisco, who performed stand-up comedy and conducted a workshop entitled "The Joys of Marginalization" the following day. A good-humored weenie roast was held Thursday evening, which drew about 25 festival participants out to enjoy relaxed conversation and indulge in meat and chocolate, comestibles not served by the festival kitchen.

Also on Thursday, Charlotte Manheimer of Cincinnati, Oh., a 68-year-old nontranssexual lesbian, attempted to enter the festival in order to visit a friend but was not immediately allowed to enter because she refused to disclose whether or not she was a transsexual and refused to agree to the festival staff's condition that she "respect" the exclusionary policy. Because she is over 65 years of age,

Ms. Manheimer is eligible to attend the festival free of charge. Staff offered to escort Ms. Manheimer to find her friend but were reluctant to issue her a festival wristband. After a two-hour period of deliberation among festival staff, Ms. Manheimer, who traveled to the festival for the express purpose of demonstrating support for the transsexual women taking part in the protest, was given a wristband and allowed to enter the festival unescorted and without disclosing whether or not she is a transsexual.

Acclaimed authors and activists Leslie Feinberg, Minnie Bruce Pratt, and James Green joined protesters on Friday, August 12. Ms. Feinberg is well-known for her popular novel *Stone Butch Blues*, and Ms. Pratt for her poetry. Mr. Green is a postoperative female-to-male transsexual and the publisher and editor of the *FTM Newsletter*, which is the most widely circulated publication in the world specifically addressing female-to-male transsexual issues, as well as the director of the *FTM Support Group* in San Francisco. Mr. Green conducted two workshops on female-to-male experience and identity at Camp Trans. Each was attended by 20 to 30 festival participants.

The highlight of the scheduled activities was a speech entitled "Sisterhood: Make it Real!" delivered by Leslie Feinberg in which she discussed the necessity for the women's movement in general, and the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in particular, to adopt an "all women welcome" policy. Approximately 150 festival participants came outside to hear Ms. Feinberg's address, making it the most well attended event at Camp Trans during the course of the protest.

This was followed by a concert by the Celtic Transsexual Modal Band from Hell, consisting of Arlene Wolves and Beverly Woods of *Beyond the Pale*, Zythra (formerly Seth Austen), and Jessica Xavier. Hammered dulcimer, keyboard, and guitar blended exquisitely, but the highlight of the concert was the original "Ballad of Nancy B.," which retold the story of Nancy Burkholder's expulsion from the festival in 1991.

Later in the evening, Ms. Feinberg and her lover Minnie Bruce Pratt conducted a re-creation of their joint reading originally performed at the 1992 Out/Write Conference,

which consisted of selections from *Stone Butch Blues* and Ms. Pratt's upcoming book *S/he*, to be published by Firebrand Books in February 1995. Ms. Pratt conducted further readings from her book the following morning.

Another of Friday's highlights was the wedding of two festival participants, Kym and Becki, performed by transsexual minister Lynn Walker. James Green and Leslie Feinberg stood up for the couple in a lantern-lit ceremony attended by everyone in Camp Trans and several visitors from the festival, and accompanied by Camp Trans musicians.

On Thursday, Riki Anne Wilchins, who is a member of the New York City chapter of the Lesbian Avengers, was invited by Lesbian Avengers inside the festival to attend their scheduled meeting on Saturday, August 13. Ms. Wilchins agreed to attempt to enter the festival as an openly transsexual woman in order to attend the meeting if the Lesbian Avengers would provide a contingent to escort her, which they readily agreed to do.

On Saturday morning, in an attempt to obtain clarification of the "womyn born womyn" policy, protesters requested to meet with Communications coordinators Lucy Tatman and Sue Doerfer. They were asked whether Leslie Feinberg, James Green, and Kodi Hendrix would be permitted to buy tickets without violating festival policy. Leslie Feinberg introduced herself as a person who was born anatomically female but who passes and lives as a man and has a driver's license showing her sex as male. She asked whether she would be welcome to enter the festival. Ms. Tatman said that "the festival would prefer not," a statement she retracted after Ms. Feinberg declared that she would tell audiences on her upcoming book tour that she had received confirmation that she "is not welcome at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival."

Kodi Hendrix then informed Ms. Tatman and Ms. Doerfer that he was born with both male and female genitalia and asked whether "only half of [him] could come in." James Green stated that he had no desire to enter the festival, and was only there "in support of [his] transsexual sisters," but wanted to know if he would be considered a woman by the festival owners using the same logic by which they

consider male-to-female transsexuals to be men even after sex-change surgery. Ms. Tatman and Ms. Doerfer were unable to provide answers to either of these questions. Protesters then requested that they receive clarification of the policy regarding these three individuals from festival owners Lisa Vogel and Barbara Price.

Less than an hour later, Ms. Tatman and Ms. Doerfer delivered a message from the festival owners declining to further clarify the term "womyn born womyn" and stating that it is up to each individual to decide whether or not she is included in that definition. Communications coordinators also assured protesters that no one attempting to purchase a ticket would be harassed and that none of them would be asked by security to leave the festival, because it was "no longer a security issue." The decision was then made that protesters who wished to enter the festival would attempt to purchase tickets when the Lesbian Avengers sent their contingent out to accompany Ms. Wilchins inside for their meeting. Ms. Feinberg, who had previously stated that she would not enter the festival until her transsexual sisters were allowed to attend, decided to enter if the transsexual women were also allowed to enter.

Upon approaching the box office, the contingent of protesters presented a statement to the box office staff declaring that their group consisted of transsexual women, nontranssexual women, an intersex person, and

transgendered women, and that each of them interpreted the term "womyn born womyn" to include them. None of the protesters were refused tickets or asked questions regarding their medical history or their commitment to uphold festival policy. The protesters were then surrounded by the contingent of Lesbian Avengers and escorted to the scheduled meeting, with a number of other festival participants joining the contingent along the way.

At the Lesbian Avengers meeting, both Ms. Wilchins and Ms. Feinberg spoke at length regarding the festival's exclusionary policy and received an overwhelmingly positive response. After the meeting, the protesters, again surrounded by Lesbian Avengers and joined by numerous other festival participants, conducted a parade through the festival grounds chanting "Support Our Policy: All Women Welcome!" As promised, no one in the Camp Trans contingent was asked by security to leave the festival.

Following their return to Camp Trans, the decision was made to strike camp because of impending severe thunderstorms and forecasts of rain throughout the night and into the following day, and because it was felt that the protest action had been highly successful. However, protesters still feel that the wording of festival policy as "womyn born womyn" only remains unclear and that it is still uncertain whether openly transsexual women will be allowed to attend the festival without fear of expulsion in the future. Unless there is further clarification of these issues in the interim and the festival abolishes its "womyn born womyn" only policy, activists say they will continue their protests next year.

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ALL THE PEOPLE YOU ARE

by B.J. Seymour

Young and old, masculine and feminine, laid-back and intense, dreamer and realist -- you're all of these at once, and more. You're a one-person group! Getting to know and understand your various inner selves can help resolve not only gender issues but all kinds of other ambivalences. Suppose you're a highly successful, creative corporate executive. In a single morning, you've made a smoothly organized presentation that could land your company a lucrative contract; chaired a staff meeting to plan specifics for immediate action as soon as the contract is final -- timeline, who does what, solutions to any possible glitches; called your tennis partner to set up a game for after work tomorrow; directed your secretary to make hotel and flight reservations for an upcoming speech in Australia; answered a call from your mother who's concerned about whether you've planned to take adequate clothing for the Australian winter weather and who needs your advice on some money management issues; and left a message on the answering machine at home reminding your teenage daughter that she's agreed to get the lawn mowed and her homework done so the two of you can go to the basketball game tonight.

In a single morning, you've been contract negotiator, team leader, friend, boss, son or daughter, financial advisor, and parent. They're all you. But is the self-assured corporate representative the same person who's saying "yes, mom, of course I know it's cold in Australia at this time of year, and yes, I do have an all-wool scarf -- you really don't need to buy me another one ..." scarcely two hours later? Does the coolly efficient boss with all the details worked out in advance even **sound** the same as the casual caller saying "hey Pat, how 'bout gettin' together on the courts tomorrow night"? Yes and no. You're the cool executive in the flawlessly tailored jacket, answering the client's questions with ease and humor. Then you're the dynamo in shirt-sleeves at a staff meeting, directing an action plan that has to be ready yesterday to stay ahead of the competition and keep the commitments you've made to the client. But your chair tilts back and you're doodling cartoons on your scratchpad while your friend is checking tomorrow night's calendar.

Who are you really? You're a whole lot of different people, all rolled into one. Each goes at a different pace, sits differently, talks differently, moves differently from each of the others. They even have different names: Your tennis partner calls you by the same nickname you answered to when the two of you were college roommates, and your mother calls you "Honey". No one at the company staff

meeting would dream of addressing you like that.

What does that make you, anyway? Some kind of multiple personality, like in *Sybil* or *Three Faces of Eve*? Of course not. You're a normal, everyday human being, playing all the diverse roles life demands of you. You are, in fact, a one-person group. You control which group member you choose to be to meet the demands of a given situation.

And the characters we've seen so far aren't even the whole cast. At home, late at night, the corporate dynamo becomes the passionate primitive or the tender lover. Somewhere, way down deep, there may be a little kid who feels as if being an important executive is just another game of pretending -- like being a mommy or a daddy when you play house -- or is scared of getting lost in Brisbane traffic.

Can you really handle being all these different people

"You're a whole lot of people, all rolled into one. Each goes at a different pace, sits differently, talks differently, moves differently from the others."

without getting mixed up? Of course you can. You've been doing it all your life. So has everybody else you know. In fact, you've shifted from one to another in a single conversation: Talking to your mother, you moved from the dutiful child, promising to bundle up for the cold weather -- while perhaps one of your selves was whispering inaudibly, with an edge of impatience, "after all, I'm not five years old anymore ... am I?" -- to the competent adult on whom Mom depends for financial advice; with your daughter, you're both the firm parent reminding her of responsibilities and the buddy who'll cheer as loud as anybody when the home team wins tonight's game.

The gender element. What does all this have to do with gender? A lot. Did you assume all the different characters in the scenes we've just witnessed were male? Why? This is the nineties -- surely you realize that some corporate executives are female. So are some bosses.

Go back and look again at that one-person group. Assume half the characters are female -- you choose which. Now think about the group again. Looks different, doesn't it? You already know your group members aren't all the same age -- there's a little kid among them, remember? And with your old roomie you probably don't seem -- or act -- any older than you did in your college days. So why should you assume they're all one gender?

Maybe the nurturing, caring parent is one of your feminine selves; maybe the vulnerable, little

kid; maybe both. Regardless of which sex your anatomy says you are, you're likely to have several masculine selves and several feminine ones -- you're a whole group, in which each member has a different personality and each fills a different function in your life.

The same is true of your spouse, if you have one. Marriage isn't "boy meets girl" -- it's boy's group meeting girl's group on multidimensional levels. Think of the riches a relationship can attain, if each of you accepts both the male and female aspects of your own personality as well as your partner's, and you both work toward balancing them in ways that complement and enhance each other!

Finding your group. How do you figure out your cast of characters? You've seen a hypothetical sample, but these people aren't you. How do you find your own collection ... old and young, masculine and feminine?

Start with introspection. Sit down in a quiet place and think about yourself: What kind of person are you most of the time? Describe that person. Jot down your list of characteristics on a 5" x 8" card. Now think about times when you're different from what's on that list. Make a new card. C'mon, you can think of more than two aspects of yourself ... make a third card, then a fourth ...

The list of characteristics needn't be exhaustive. You can add details as you go along. The main thing is to get the qualities that distinguish one persona from another. Then add what feels right for that character: gender, age, physical description, habits ... plus any special things that make your image of this person more vivid. Let your imagination run free -- if you refuse to recognize a character who talks too loud or isn't as neat as you'd like to be, you may be leaving out someone who needs to be heard from. A character who's left out, if it's one who's really part of you, is the very one who'll cause trouble, showing up uninvited and being a really obnoxious guest.

A word of caution here: Just because you always wanted to be a beautiful princess or movie star doesn't mean you **are** one, even occasionally. Ask yourself: "When am I like this? Can I think of any real life situations when I've been this person, or is this a daydream?"

Don't worry if you leave somebody out. At some point, maybe months from now, you'll ask yourself "which of us is doing such-and-such?", and if nobody answers, you'll need to make another card. It's OK to add a character or drop one over a period of time. People change.

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If you think you've missed someone, ask yourself about the roles you play: "Who am I at work? At home on weekends? At a party? With my best friend? With each of my parents? At the dentist?" (And does the dentist turn into your father when he says "open your mouth" and you obey?)

Once you've identified your personas, give them names -- not descriptions, like "fatso" or "grumpy" or "kid" -- but real names: George, Margie, Susie, Sam ... so the grumpy one can stop being grumpy and the kid can grow up.

There's one name none of them can have ... yours. You're the whole group put together, and no one member of it is the whole you.

Reaching consensus. Once you've identified your characters and named them, they're ready to help you make decisions. Take a felt marker and write each one's name on the back of his or her card, so you can read the names from across the room. Then put each card on a different chair (if you haven't enough chairs, some of them can sit on the floor).

Suppose you're faced with a really important issue: Changing jobs, moving, buying a car or house, telling someone important to you that you crossdress. Which of your selves wants to do this? Sit in that one's chair. Take a moment to study the characteristics of that self -- longer, if necessary. Now **be** that one. Talk about the issue from that one's point of view: What are the advantages?

Some of the other selves don't agree. Move to one of those chairs. Be that one. Talk about what you don't like -- not only what's awful about it, but what's bearable that you'd prefer to see improved.

Make sure you hear from everyone. If some have no opinions, give them a chance to say so after they've thought about it carefully. You can't afford to ignore anyone, because the one who hasn't been listened to is likely to sabotage the decision. This isn't a group that members can resign from if there's an action they don't like -- every member is a part of you, and you're all in the group for life.

You need more than a simple majority. You need absolute agreement, not just riding roughshod over minority views, and you need to negotiate among the group members until you get it: "What would it take to make this OK for you? Would it work if we did it a different way, for instance ... ?" Some of those who didn't have strong opinions may be

especially helpful here -- they have less invested in the issue, and they may be able to mediate and suggest alternative approaches.

DRAG IN THE MOVIES

has been going on as long as the movies themselves ...

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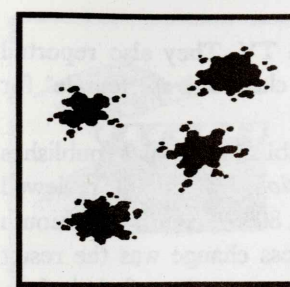
Credit card orders, call (800) 637-2256.

California residents, add your local sales tax.

You're inclined to postpone this. You're afraid it'll take hours, like some of the staff meetings at work, and you haven't time right now. It won't. The people at work each have an inner group of their own, and they qualify everything they say so other people won't think they're being arbitrary, and so all **their** inner selves get heard from. Your inner selves all know each other, and they don't have to explain things. Your intragroup meeting could be over in minutes, and when it is, you'll be comfortable with the decision. (If you're not, reconvene the group and ask who's unhappy and why; negotiate some more -- get whichever of your selves is most creatively involved in the process. Open up your sense of fun -- the kid in you can help with this part.

Until now, if your life hasn't been going the way you'd like it to, maybe there's someone in the group you've been ignoring. Maybe you've been afraid to acknowledge your female selves, thinking they weren't supposed to be part of you. Now you know that having them is normal; you can let them help with decisions, with understanding other people, and -- most important of all -- with understanding yourself ... the whole one-person group.

[B.J. Seymour is a counselor specializing in gender identity. She may be contacted at 1405 SW Park Ave. #34, Portland OR 97201, or by phone at (503) 228-2472. This article is adapted from a keynote speech Ms. Seymour presented at the 1994 IFGE "Coming Together-Working Together" convention.]



ALTERNATIVE PRESSES

by Kimberleigh Richards

I heard about *Transgender Nation* by Gordene Olga MacKenzie on the Internet, as parts of the book were used to defend several of the more "radical" proposals for our community that seem to be put forward rather frequently there. (As an example, note in my editorial this month that "surgery on demand" is a recurring topic on the Net; *Transgender Nation* has been quoted many times during the online discussions.) Needless to say, I requested a review copy from Bowling Green University's Popular Press to see for myself just how radical MacKenzie was.

Surprisingly, the book is neither radical nor conservative, gender community-wise. MacKenzie manages to cover all sides of the many facets of our community rather well, beginning with a chapter on the increased visibility of transsexualism in America, leading to an overall heightening of the public's realization that there are more transgendered people than they imagined. Although discussion of the terminology gets a bit muddled -- due more to the changing nature of what we want terms to mean than to any fault of the author -- it does serve as a decent primer on the subject to the uninitiated. I do, though, take exception to MacKenzie's introduction of the terms "male-to-woman" and "female-to-man" as replacements for the more appropriate "male-to-female" and "female-to-male"; the mixed metaphor of combining sex- and gender-defining words will, in my opinion, make matters more confusing to the layperson, already bombarded to the point of exasperation by the many "flavors" of transgendered behavior presented through our increased exposure in the media.

The second chapter, outlining the history of transgendered behavior (and much of the gender community's early history as well) is very well laid out and nicely explained. Many in our own community who are interested in "how we got here" would be well-advised to read this chapter, as well as the chapter on the "gender movement" that closes this book.

Before I get ahead of myself here by mentioning the fifth chapter, I need to talk about the chapter on transsexual ideology, which contains most of the passages I've seen quoted on the Net. Unfortunately, MacKenzie's earnest attempt to create a balanced presentation of all the medical community's points of view means that conflicting perspectives are frequently juxtaposed in such a way that it

becomes necessary to reread entire passages to fix the context more securely in the reader's mind. This, unfortunately, means that the passages I saw in cyberspace (taken out of context) "proving" someone's position actually were linked to passages expressing opposing views, and I was left feeling as if I had attended a debate in which no one was declared the winner. Again, I don't believe this is the author's fault. Transgendered people are confusing (and sometimes confused) animals, and there are as many theories about the "why we do it" and "what should be done about it" as there are listings in the Chicago phone book.

The fourth chapter, on popular culture, is both the most interesting and most disappointing section of *Transgender Nation*. MacKenzie seems to have devoted the least amount of research to this subject, resulting in some obvious gaps: She mentions *Tootsie* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*, but not *Some Like It Hot*; *Soap*, *Saturday Night Live*, and even the short-lived Fox network sitcom *Good Grief*, but not *Bosom Buddies*; *The Crying Game* and *Paris Is Burning*, but not *Yentl*. Additionally, when she attempts to discuss transgender images in rock and roll she ends up misspelling several of the performers' names. This chapter could have easily been the hook to draw the mainstream public into a full-fledged discussion on acceptance, but it moves as quickly as possible through the subject and thus leaves the reader feeling as if she missed something along the way.

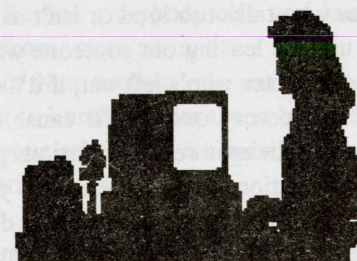
Chapter five, though, more than makes up for any shortcomings elsewhere in the book with a thorough discussion of how the transgendered community is becoming more activist in the 1990s, including specific references to the socio-historical and political events that have led to this activism. MacKenzie centers this discussion on the premise that society is bipolar where gender identity is concerned and that this rigidity must be overcome before transgendered people can be openly accepted. While that may be an oversimplification, it does make explaining such organizations as Tri-Ess and IFGE to the layperson much easier. In the case of Tri-Ess, MacKenzie allows that virtually all modern gender community organizations have their roots in Virginia Prince:

... almost every cross-dresser and transsexual organization has in some way been influenced in Prince. Usually the

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"We would all be just the same if there were no crossings"

founders of the organizations have disagreed with Virginia or been excommunicated by her. The important point here is, as a catalyst, Prince inspires the creation of new groups and stimulates change ..."

The chapter also makes the observation that more members of the transgendered community are "coming out" in the '90s and that this is acting as the impetus for civil rights campaigns within the community.

All told, *Transgender Nation* sends the message that it is not the transgendered community that is sick and in need of healing, but society's attitudes that must be changed. I see this book as a strong source of empowerment as we continue to seek mainstream acceptance, and I recommend it most highly as a sourcebook of strategy and ammunition for those in our community who are pushing for that acceptance, as well as to those who simply wish to know a little more about our history.

[The book carries ISBN numbers (0-87972-596-6 clothbound, 0-87972-597-4 paperback) and should be orderable from any retail bookstore. The publisher's suggested retail price is \$41.95 clothbound and \$14.95 paperback. It is also available through the IFGE Bookstore, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.]



Two quick items of note: One of our subscribers sent us a 'zine called *Perceptions: The Journal of Imaginative Sensuality*, which -- while not having direct gender community content -- did conduct a survey of its readership, reporting that about 20% of their readers crossdress,

although only one identified as a TV. They also reported one MTF transsexual, who they classified as "female" for statistical purposes. Interesting ...

Also, the address for Winter Publishing, which publishes the *Alternative Lifestyles Publication Directory* I reviewed in #59, has changed to P.O. Box 80667, South Dartmouth MA 02748-0667. I hope the address change was the result of business expanding beyond the capacity of their box, requiring a bigger one!



I have changed the name of this column -- again -- to Alternative Presses to better reflect the diversity of media supporting the gender community. Right now, in my "to be reviewed" stack, I have three videos, a compact disc, two books, three magazines from overseas, a magazine on computer disk, five newsletters and a newsletter reprint. See what I mean by "diversity"?



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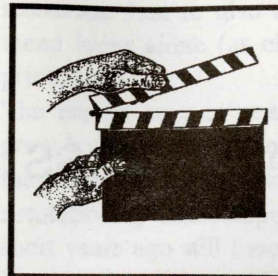
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MOVIE REVIEW

SPLIT: PORTRAIT OF A DRAG QUEEN

by Charlene Day

Through interviews, archival footage, and still photos, *Split* tells the story of the metamorphosis of a boy from the Bronx into the extraordinarily beautiful drag queen International Chrysis.

As pointed out in the movie, she was a traffic stopper. She was born with a delicate conformation of features which contributed to her good looks. She tended to be chubby and injections of hormones increased her feminine appearance. She also had breast implants of some kind of wax because it was cheaper than other methods. She named her breasts Johnson & Johnson after the maker of the floor wax. However, the breasts were hard and painful.

She was crossdressing at 11; in some misguided attempt to change her, her parents sent her to a mental clinic at Bellevue Hospital. I think that she must have been fairly intelligent, because she confounded the people at Bellevue by not giving them the answers that they expected. (She is quoted as saying later in her life that she proved to herself what she was and did not have to prove it to her family.)

Chrysis became estranged from her family at an early age. She is reputed to have "come out" at 14 performing at Town Hall. Some older drag queens took her under their wings and she was in the 1965 beauty contest that is documented in *The Queen*, which I will review in next month's issue.

Chrysis was one of Salvador Dali's inner circle. He was fascinated by her and made drawings of her ... and some people wonder where those drawings are today because they could be worth money. She publicly accompanied him

to many affairs and became internationally famous touring Europe with The Hot Peaches troupe (who are also featured in this movie).

She lived as a woman, but did not want surgery. She said that if she changed, "I would just be another woman".

She didn't take care of her health, though, and eventually

developed cancer caused by the leakage of the wax from her breasts. While the movie does not reveal the final cause of her death, the combination of the cancer, excessive use of drugs and high doses of hormones most probably were contributing factors.

Split also answers the question "What happens to drag queens when they get older and are no longer beautiful?" One person said that many of them go back to being men, but "Chrysis could not because she had gone too far to turn back." She told producer Ellen Fisher Turk that she saw herself as a creation, not as a man or as woman and she had transcended gender. (How about a new term, "Gender Transcender"?) *Split* left some questions unanswered, though, and you can not help but wish you knew more about the person



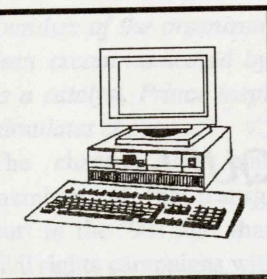
International Chrysis (Photo credit: Kevin Duncan)

Chrysis.

However, I found the movie very enjoyable and would see it again just to marvel at Chrysis' beauty.

[This movie is playing in special engagements throughout the country, along with *The Queen*, which Charlene Day will review next month.]

You can save **40%** off the cover price of **Cross-Talk** when you subscribe by mail! See page 40.



THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY AND YOU

HOW MUCH INFORMATION HIGHWAY ACCESS DO YOU REALLY NEED?

by Emily Clarke

When I was a small girl (okay, so I was never small) a Christmas ritual was to travel between my two grandmothers' houses for early and late dinner. There were two ways to cross the Raritan River, which was a part of the journey; one via the Parkway and one via an old U.S. highway, Route 9. The Parkway was a toll road, and had appropriately placed toll plazas on each side of the bridge that required one pay a 25 cent toll.

My father used to take great delight at slipping off the exit before the first toll, crossing on the Route 9 bridge, and rejoining the Parkway after the toll on the other side. Cheating the government out of four bits gave my father great delight even though we lost time travelling at 35 MPH rather than 60MPH, probably added a few extra miles to our trip and added wear and tear on the car travelling over the less reliable and pothole-riddled U.S. Route 9.

The same holds true with the information superhighway -- it can be the information super-tollroad or you can find a way around the fees and use it for practically nothing. Like the analogy I gave before, the tradeoffs are usually exactly that -- speed and reliability versus money, service and principal.

On the high end of the spectrum, the nationally known service providers (Genie, Prodigy, America OnLine, Delphi and CompuServe ... pun intended) have many services ... but you must pay the high tolls that include a monthly service charge ranging from \$10 to \$25 month, additional charges for mail messages, access time and "extra" services such as file downloading and storage. Though the price is high, you are provided with a slick and easy to use interface, technical support and reliability. So even if you blow a tire on a pothole, someone from the service is usually there to change it for you, the routes are well marked and maps are provided.

On the low end, you can pay nothing ... as long as you have the time, patience and can put up with mail that doesn't quite always make it through, slow performance, traffic jams in the form of busy signals and usually having to get out in the rain to fix that blown tire. A friend of mine still runs such a system using an old 286 system running with a 2400 baud modem that kicks off any user logged on from 3:00 to 4:00, AM and PM, so it can dial up another computer to pick up the mail. But: It's free, constantly busy

and when Ruthie went on vacation for a few weeks last March no one seemed to mind when it was down for 10 of the 14 days because it ran out of disk space when someone tried to get a copy of Doom mailed to them.

But between the two extremes, there remains a full spectrum of service providers, and while I would love to tell you which ones are the best, it would be almost impossible given that the growth is unimaginable. The best way to determine if you can get away with less than the stellar services of the major service providers is investigate it on your own. A list of access numbers for the smaller service providers, arranged by area code and country, appears at the end of this article. By using it to find the service providers in your immediate area, you can investigate them to find out what their costs are, how much they charge for extra services -- if anything -- and usually you can get a free trial to find out if your needs will be met. Many of these are bulletin board systems (BBS) that provide electronic mail and echos of Usenet newsgroups (which ones are usually based on the whim of the system operator, but you can always request a specific group). Others provide full services but may have a primitive user interface.

There is one other alternative worth mentioning that may make the entire point moot, and that is the concept of the "freenet". A freenet is a computer system, usually at a university or other agency, that is operated by people who believe that virtually no-cost computing should be available to one-and-all and demonstrate it by providing exactly such kind of services. An example of a freenet is the Nyx freenet system at nyx.cs.du.edu where Internet accounts are allocated to applicants free-of-charge. The system is operated using donated hardware and volunteers who are involved in maintaining the system.

While Nyx is a small scale operation, many can be quite huge. Take the Cleveland Freenet, probably the best known largescale manifestation of free computing concept. In this case, Case Western Reserve University provided some seed resources such as computer hardware, telephone and net connections and system administrators to initiate a "big bang" which eventually grew by community effort to its current size. It is huge, and consists of many resources that range from local community services, national Internet access, and educational and recreational

resources. Just to give an example of how huge it is, the menu index alone (as of January 1994) occupied over 300 printed pages.

The easiest way to realize why the freenet concept will grow is that while business, industry and colleges all need the super-computing power of the latest hardware, the revolutionary minicomputers and mainframes of just a few short years ago still function and can be put to good use ... just as I handed my 386SX down to my daughter when I bought my 486. So if there isn't a freenet in your area, be patient -- it may come.

Better yet, get in touch with the computing departments of your city, county and local colleges and start the ball rolling yourself.

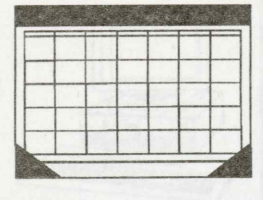
So, here are the numbers ...

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 414-342-4847, *solaria*, Milwaukee WI
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 503-293-1772, *agora*, Portland OR
 503-297-3211, *m2xenix*, Portland OR
 503-632-7891, *bucket*, Portland OR
 508-664-0149, *genesis*, North Reading MA
 508-853-0340, *schunix*, Worcester MA
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 510-623-8652, *jack*, Fremont CA
 510-704-1058, *HoloNet*, Berkeley CA
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 513-779-8209, *cinnnet*, Cincinnati OH
 513-887-8855, *iac*, Cincinnati OH
 514-435-8896, *ichlibix*, Blainville Queb CA
 515-945-7000, *cyberspace Jefferson IA*
 516-586-4743, *kilowatt*, Deer Park NY
 517-487-3356, *lunapark*, E. Lansing MI
 517-789-5175, *anubis*, Jackson MI
 518-346-8033, *sixhub*, upstate NY
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 602-293-3726, *coyote*, Tucson AZ
 602-321-9600, *indirect*, Tucson AZ
 602-649-9099, *telesys*, Mesa AZ
 602-991-5952, *aa7bq*, Scottsdale AZ
 603-429-1735, *mv*, Litchfield NH
 603-448-5722, *tutor*, Lebanon NH
 604-576-1214, *mindlink*, Vancouver BC
 605-348-2738, *loft386*, Rapid City SD
 606-233-2051, *lunatix*, Lexington KY
 608-246-2701, *fullfeed*, Madison WI
 608-273-2657, *madnix*, Madison WI
 609-896-3191, *njcc*, Lawrenceville NJ
 610-539-3043, *cellar*, Trooper/Oaks PA
 612-458-3889, *skypoint*, Newport MN
 612-473-2295, *pnet51*, Minneapolis MN
 613-724-9817, *latour*, Ottawa ON
 613-837-3029, *micor*, Orleans ON
 614-868-9980, *bluemoon*, Reynoldsburg OH
 615-288-3957, *medsys*, Kingsport TN
 616-457-1964, *wybbbs*, Jenison MI
 617-593-4557, *northshore*, Lynn MA
 617-739-9753, *world*, Brookline MA
 619-278-8267, *cg57*, San Diego CA
 619-634-1376, *cyber*, Encinitas CA
 619-637-3640, *crash*, San Diego CA
 703-281-7997, *grebyn*, Vienna VA
 703-528-4380, *sytext*, Arlington VA
 703-551-0095, *ukelele*, Woodbridge VA
 703-720-4144, *unx*, Fredericksburg VA
 703-803-0391, *tnc*, Fairfax Station VA
 707-444-6614, *northcoast*, Eureka CA
 708-367-1871, *sashimi*, Vernon Hills IL
 708-425-8739, *oaknet*, Oak Lawn IL
 708-833-8126, *vpnet*, Villa Park IL

(continued, next page)

EVENTS CALENDAR



November 10-13, 1994: Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", New York City. Open only to Tri-Ess members, wives and partners, and other heterosexual crossdressers. Details from Lynda Frank, 330 W. 45th St. #3H, New York NY 10036; telephone (212) 765-3561.

November 17-20, 1994: "Fall Harvest '94", Cedar Rapids IA, sponsored by MAGGIE. Host organization: Iowa Artistry. Details from P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids 52406-0075 or by calling (319) 373-3031.

February 21-26, 1995: 7th Annual "Texas 'I' Party", San Antonio TX. Details from P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163 or by calling (210) 980-7788.

March 13-19, 1995: International Foundation for Gender Education "Coming Together-Working Together Convention", Atlanta GA. Details from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.

April 20-23, 1995: "California Dreamin'", Burbank CA, sponsored by Powder Puffs Of California and hosted in conjunction with the Southern California Transgender Support Network (PPOC, Born Free, Neutral Corner, CHIC, Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, and Ladies' Knight Out). Details from P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda CA 92686.

May 17-21, 1995: "Esprit '95", Port Angeles WA, sponsored by Emerald City, NWGA, and Cornbury Society. Details from P.O. Box 873, Kirkland WA 98083-0873.

May 18-21, 1995: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information by phone: (610) 640-9449; via Internet: cdspub@omni.voicenet.com.

September 14-17, 1995: "Paradise in the Poconos". See May 18-21 listing.

(Please send information on national gender community events to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365. Listings must be accompanied by a written authorization by an officer of the sponsoring organization or be listed in their group newsletter. Information will not be accepted via fax or e-mail.)

INFORMATION HIGHWAY ... continued from previous page

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 713-668-7176, *nuchat*, Houston TX
 713-684-5900, *neosoft*, Houston TX
 714-635-2863, *dhw68k*, Anaheim CA
 714-821-9671, *alphacm*, Cypress CA
 714-842-5851, *conexch*, Santa Ana CA
 714-894-2246, *stanton*, Irvine CA
 716-634-6552, *exuco1*, Buffalo NY
 718-252-6720, *intercom*, NYC
 718-729-5018, *dorsai*, NYC
 719-520-1700, *cns*, Colorado Springs CO
 719-632-4111, *oldcolo*, Colorado Springs CO
 801-539-0900, *xmission*, Salt Lake City UT
 803-271-0688, *melanie*, Greenville SC
 804-627-1828, *wyvern*, Norfolk VA
 812-333-0450, *sir-alan*, Bloomington IN
 812-476-7564, *aquila*, Evansville IN
 814-353-0566, *cpumagic*, Bellefonte PA
 815-874-3998, *maynard*, Rockford IL
 818-287-5115, *abode*, El Monte CA
 818-367-2142, *quake*, Sylmar CA

818-793-9108, *kitana*, Pasadena CA
 818-997-7500, *amazing*, Los Angeles CA
 900-468-7727, *uunet*, Falls Church VA
 904-456-2003, *amaranth*, Pensacola FL
 906-228-4399, *lopez*, Marquette MI
 908-937-9481, *digex*, New Brunswick NJ
 916-649-0161, *sactoh0*, Sacramento CA
 916-923-5013, *rgm*, Sacramento CA
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 +64-4-389-5478, *actrix*, Wellington NZ



HOTLINES

These hotlines are run by non-profit organizations, and may not be answered "live" at all times as a result. Listings followed by % are for groups known to be sexually-oriented; listings followed by # are for primarily TS-oriented groups; listings followed by @ are for heterosexual TV/CDs only. Most other listings are for "open" (both TV/CD and TS) groups. While we make every effort to keep this listing updated, phone numbers may change without notice. If you find an incorrect listing, please let us know!

NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:
 CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
 Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
 Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 657-4344
 Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 570-7389
 East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
 Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 388-7022 %
 Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
 Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
 Gender Talk North, New Hampshire: (603) 924-8828
 Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
 Images, Hartford: (203) 779-9708
 Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9858
 Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
 Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118 @
 Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 433-4866 @
 Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050
 Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
 Reflections, Boston: (617) 323-6082
 Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (610) 630-1437
 Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
 Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 435-5401
 Sigma Nu Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Trenton: (609) 586-1351 @
 Silent Passage, Rhode Island: (401) 438-7417
 Tiffany Club, Boston: (617) 891-9325
 TransGender Educational Ass'n, Arlington: (301) 949-3822
 TransGenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
 Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 231-1181
 Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
 XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:
 American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
 Atlanta Gender Exploration: (404) 875-9846 #
 Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
 Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
 Eden Society, Pompano Beach: (305) 784-9316 #
 Fantasia, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
 GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
 Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
 Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 362-6335
 Louisville Gender Society: (812) 944-5570
 Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
 Montgomery Institute, Gainesville: (904) 332-6638 #
 M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
 Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
 Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
 Phoenix, Asheville: (704) 259-9428
 Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
 Sigma Epsilon Chapter Tri-Ess, Atlanta: (404) 552-4415 @
 Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 527-1012
 Tennessee Vals, Nashville: (615) 664-6883
 Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 222-6796

MIDWEST & VICINITY:
 Beta Gamma Chapter Tri-Ess, Minneapolis: (612) 870-8536 @
 Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
 Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
 Chicago Gender Society: (708) 749-1202
 City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minneapolis: (612) 229-3613
 Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
 Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 791-3947
 Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
 Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648

Gender Dysphoria Support, Kansas City: (816) 753-7816 #
 Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (812) 876-5635
 Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression: (612) 220-9072
 N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #
 Paradise Club, Cleveland: (216) 586-9292
 Quad-City Society for Sexuality Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
 St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 997-9897
 Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024
 Wichita Transgender Alliance: (316) 682-9131
SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:
 Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
 Alpha Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Salt Lake City: (801) 553-8141 @
 Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
 Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 980-7788
 CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
 Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 264-7103 @
 First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
 Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
 Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
 Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282
 Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 416-6632
 ReCast, Dallas: (214) 994-9314 #
 Second Image, Austin: (512) 515-5460
 TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #
 Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 347-8747 @
 Texas Ass'n. of Transsexuals, Houston: (713) 827-5913 #
 West Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:
 Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071
 Ingersoll Gender Center, Seattle: (206) 329-6651
 Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 646-2802
 Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
 Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
 Trans-Port, Portland: (503) 774-8463
 Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #
THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):
 Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
 Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #
 Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317
 Born Free, Riverside: (909) 278-0958
 CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @
 Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 937-8432
 Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
 FTM, Oakland: (510) 287-2646 #
 Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
 Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
 Powder Puffs Of California, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
 Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
 Sacramento Gender Association: (916) 482-7742
 Sigma Sigma Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lake Tahoe: (916) 544-2460 @
 Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
 Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

CANADA:
 Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
 Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
 F.A.T.E., Vancouver: (604) 254-9591
 Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (613) 749-5203
 Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661

[For a list of organizations outside North America that maintain hotline numbers, please send a self-addressed envelope and one IRC to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365 USA.]



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PRETTY AS YOU PLEASE



THE SISSY MAID ACADEMY



THE MAKEOVER



THE BOY WHO BLOSSOMED

With the addition of bust projection, they all real-ized that the beauty salon customers assumed Alex was a girl... that opened up his wardrobe options. Alex found himself wearing a pair of stretch, black stirrup pants with black suede slip-on shoes. On top, he had a bulky, electric blue pullover sweater which came down to his thighs. His hair was pulled back loosely below his neck with a matching blue "scrunchie." In short, he was wearing girl's clothes!

The head instructor gets our attention. She holds up some little flesh-toned garment in her hand. "This is a gaff," she announces, wiggling the rubbery thing. "You will be wearing one pretty much all your waking hours for the foreseeable future. And you will wear it at night, too. So the sooner you get used to it, the better. The instructors will pass one out to you in your proper size. And they will also show you how to put it on and wear it."

My husband, Robert, has a lovely, wavy mane. His hair is simple, yet he's learning to do a million things with it. He can wear it up, down, even half up and half down, any way he needs to. I prefer his hair down in an unrestrained curly bob. I also like him to wear bangs to emphasize his pretty eyes. Since it has grown out to beyond shoulder length, I make him take care of it himself. He's realized that being a girl requires a lot of grooming time.

"Indeed!" his aunt gleefully acknowledged. "But even more amazing... you could have your very own breasts!"

Shocked, Rene frantically clutched his flat, narrow chest. "B... but boys don't get breasts, Auntie!" he whined, trying to inform the obvious.

"But you're different, darling," she most lovingly assured. "A nice bosom would be divine on you!"

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OR JUST A
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OR SCENES?

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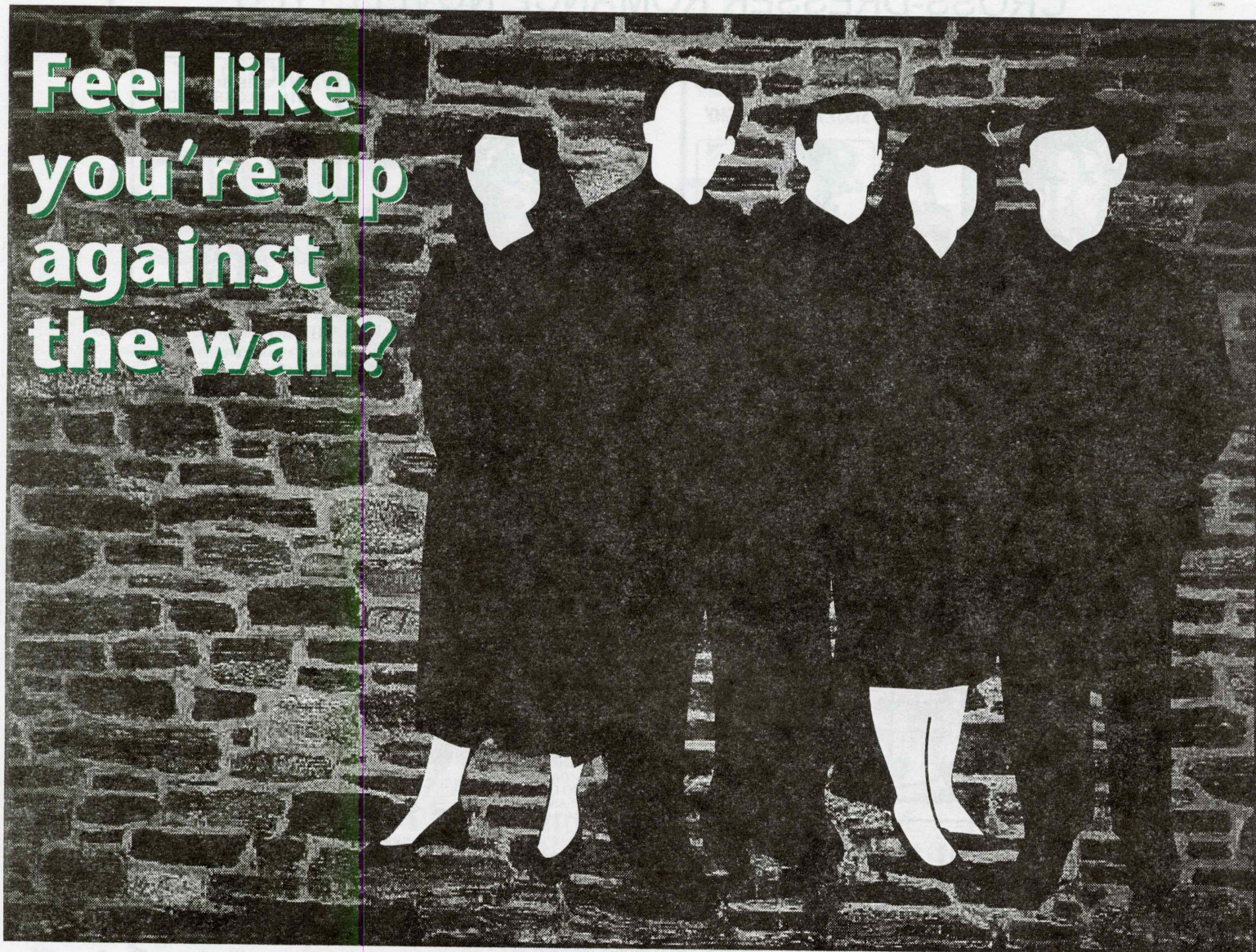
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