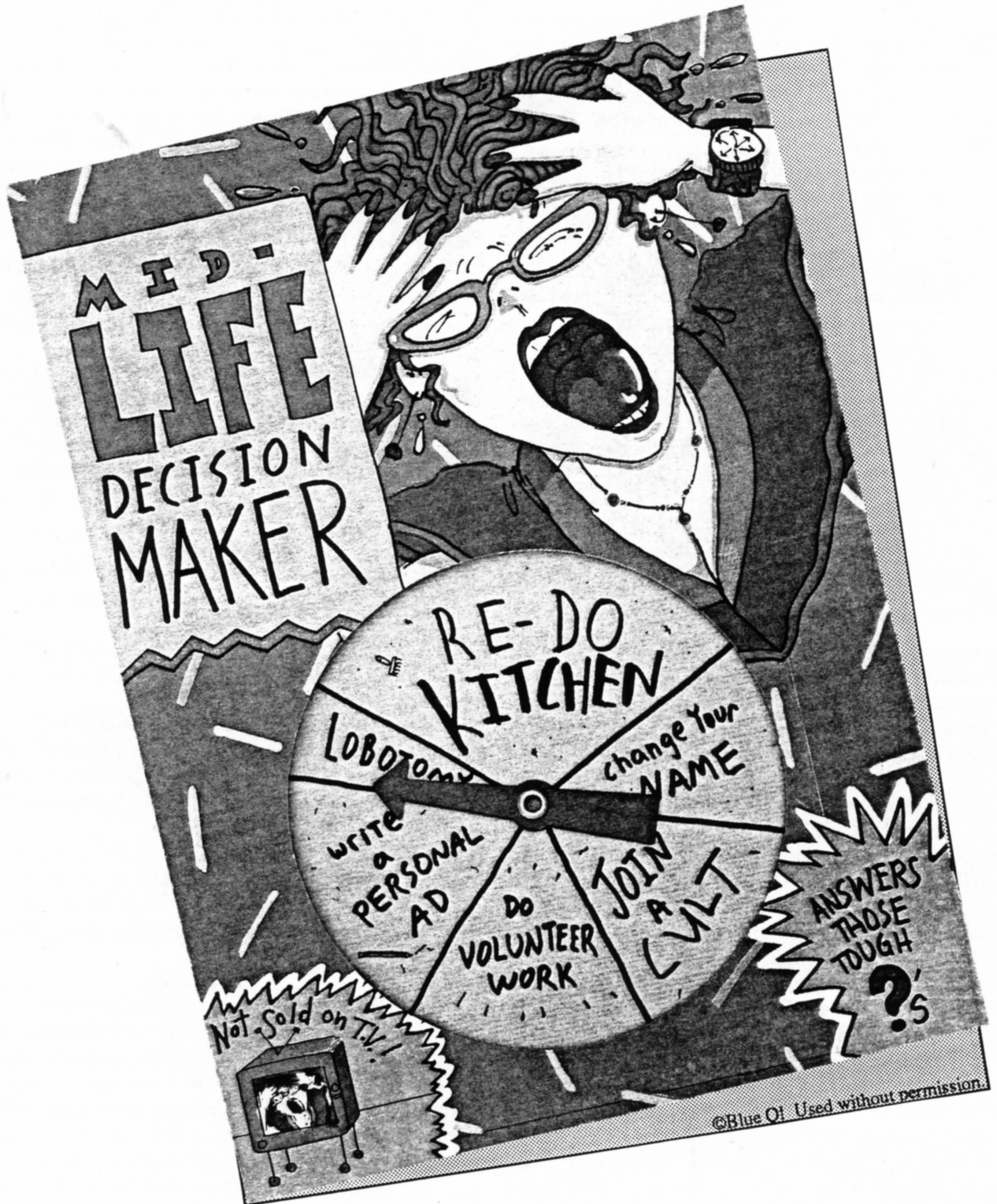


GenderFlex

Vol. III, Issue 16

A Polygenderous Publication

April/May 1993



Billie Jean Blabs

Dear Darlings,

Welcome to another anniversary showing of **GenderFlex**—the first edition of volume III (3). Oh yes indeed, we on staff here at corporate headquarters have an extra-special—although possibly routinely mundane—cracker-jackette show for your entertainment pleasure. But, before you settle in and greedily consume your new **GenderFlex**, walk to your front door, open it and holler: “Hey, I’ve got the new **GenderFlex**! The new **GenderFlex** is out!! Hey!! Hey!!! Hey!!!” Then close the door, walk to the phone and call alla yo! friends and tell ‘em: “Hey, I’ve got the new **GenderFlex**! The new **GenderFlex** is out!! Hey!! Hey!!! Hey!!!”

And now, a Word from our Sponsor:

Okay, if ya missed the last issue, send \$2 and I’ll fee-mail ya a copy. Send money, mo’ money, mo’ money, mo’ money!

We’re Back!

(Look, it’s early in the morning, okay? Actually, I’m taking a break from trying to answer letters, mail all kinds stuff, keep peace and harmony at home(s), eat, sleep, and alla that stuff, see? I just wanna write. I mean, a buncha ideas been swirling around and so I decided to take a break and let summa the stuff flow, only I couldn’t remember my idea for how I wuz gonna start this column. So that’s why the opening paragraphs came about: I hadda make ‘em up on the spot. At least they oughta be a little more palatable than what I deleted a few minutes ago—check this out—“Like an exploding fish-head on a dung heap; able to smack into tall buildings with a sickening sound; Look! Up in the air! Itza turd, itza stain, it’s, it’s, it’s **GenderFlex**!” (See? Isn’t the undeleted opening way more better than the deleted opening?) Oh-oh, I’m sidetracking again.)

Thank You...

might as well start with a coupla three or four items left out of last issue, beginning with the *San Francisco Bay Times*, a Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual newspaper published bi-weekly (2twice a month—ya can never figure what exactly “bi” means ‘cuz, like most everything else, it ain’t monolithic). *BT*, which is distributed in the SF Bay Area, has added a “Transgender” listing in its Personal Ads section and increased coverage of transgender dialogue throughout. In the December 3, 1992 issue, *BT* ran a cover showing six people randomly holding up signs that read: “BISEXUAL” “MAN” “TRANSGENDER” “FAG” “WOMAN” “DYKE”; and under that a caption: “DO NOT REMOVE LABELS UNDER PENALTY OF THE THOUGHT POLICE.” The cover story on page four was by Kate Bornstein, author, playwright and lesbian MTF transsexual. The letters section had eight letters responding to previous transgender issues/letters; another story dealt with transgender inclusion in the March On Washington (and the G/L/B “community”); and various other bits & pieces of transgender and drag news, shows, etc. The Dec. 17 issue featured an article on Transsexual Rights by Rachell Pollak, writer and designer, and a person whose “gender is not a matter of public debate”; an article, “Leslie Feinburg on Transgender Liberation” dealing with “passing women” (passing as men yet being women); fifteen letters responding to Kate Bornstein’s article; and some more transgender & drag pot pourri. Subsequent issues have included several bits & pieces of related stuff—hooray for the *Bay Times*!

And,

I wanna blab about the radio show Tyrrell and I blabbed on last month—one-o-the coolest part for me was when we were waiting (look at that— 5ive “w” words inna row; it just flows out like that sometimes) to go on the air. A woman who had led us to a waiting room asked me: “So, what is cross-dressing all about?” And so I told her the Truth: “It’s a second adolescence.” After the radio blab, Tyrrell and I had breakfast, visited Different Light Bookstore, tried to ignore a bellowing drunk who wanted to phuk us, and then I drove over to Dodders’ got my stuff and rolled down 16th Street trying to make a left turn before Van Ness. Couldn’t at Valencia. When the stoplight changed at Mission, the first car in line turned left, the next went forward and I made a left. Siren. Lights. Motorcycle patrol.

“What is it, officer?” Miss ETVC ‘92 asks brightly with a practiced smile.

“You made a left turn where it was posted no left turn.” The officer replies flatly.

“Gosh, I didn’t see the sign and the car before me turned left so I thought it was okay.” She chirps while trying to look confused.

He is official, brisk: “May I see your license, ma’am?”

“Here it is,” she says, smiling coyly.

Six minutes later officer Motorcycle Patrolman hands over a clipboard to get Miss ETVC ‘92’s autograph. “Sorry about the ticket,” he monotonely drones— “but have a nice day, anyway.”

Billie Jean brushes away a little wisp of black cloudiness, checks her make up in the silver-lining mirror, carefully observes every traffic regulation and rolls onward into the not-quite-as-bright sun shiny day.

In Case Anyone Thinks

(giggle) ya gotta pay to write for **GenderFlex** (referring to Maria Ferrari’s letter last issue), it’s not true— ya gotta pay to read it, see?

‘Cuz I said so, that’s why.

And another thing, in the last issue, [X] made a reference to the possibility that I am a “leader” in the “gender community”; not so. I consider myself a player in the world.

And, last issue we had a “Who Is Miss ETVC ‘93?” Contest with a \$500 prize. Shawna Rose (formerly Shawna Ladd) was the correct answer. And the winner is—... Billie Jean! (That’s great, but now I need contributors for the \$500 Endowment Fund.)

Gee Whiz

I hadda list of other things I left out but I can’t find it. Guess I’ll just go on, I can always make stuff up, ya know. Reality is always a good starting point for fiction or fantasy, anyway. All I have to do is get in touch with some reality and... whoops— hey! Look here— I ain’t got no reality!

But Really

Oh! Check this out— more on the endless stream of words, the structural building blocks of our culture (not necessarily the “cross-dressing, transgender culture,” of which it might be said: “There’s no there there” (kinda like a letter I received in which the writer wrote of “our community”: “Calling it a community is like calling Detroit a civilization”)— look, I didn’t descend too far into the depths of parenthetical asides and madness, did I?).

Anyway, within our larger culture “political correctness” in language is achieving new heights of spin-speak and, ready for this?— backlash. Actual discourse, so to speak (woof!). —Oh, dammitall to hell ‘n’ back, I just chipped a nail! Aw... now I snagged

my hose. This morning is sure turning to guano. Can't remember nothing, got an airhead echo— 'scuze me for a few days, will ya? Don't worry, my return will be seamless; you won't even know I've been gone, and maybe I'll be inspired by then. I figure I might as well finish alla piled up letters and sending out the fee-mail— Gawd-ess, sometimes drudgery seems like a welcome relief. That's the way life is sometimes, ain't it? Ya be all inspired and looking forward to some way cool stuff, and then, before ya can capitalize on the situation, ya gotta clean out the cat box or some other shitty little detail. Then ya gotta wash yer hands, get an attitude adjustment and...

CUT!

Okay, *Billie Jean Blabs*, take two.

Roll 'em!

In a *New York Times* article reprinted in *The Sacramento Bee*, writer Michiko Kakutani took a look at politically correct (PC) language in contemporary culture. Michiko writes: "As euphemism proliferates with the rise of political correctness, there is a spread of the sort of sloppy, abstract language that Orwell said is "designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give the appearance of solidity to pure wind." "Fat" becomes "big-boned" or "differently sized"; "stupid" becomes "exceptional"; "stoned" becomes "chemically inconvenienced."

"Wait a minute here! Aren't such phrases eerily reminiscent of the euphemisms coined by the government during Vietnam and Watergate? Remember how the military used to speak of "pacification," or how President Richard Nixon's press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, tried to get away with calling a lie an "inoperative statement"?

"Calling the homeless "the underhoused" doesn't give them a place to live; calling the poor "the economically marginalized doesn't help them pay the bills...."

Distracting Comment

And calling cross-dressing people "the transgendered" doesn't make their issue "gender", either. Nor does calling them "gender challenged" or "gender enhanced" define them.

Back to Michiko:

"Instead of allowing free discussion and debate to occur, many gung-ho advocates of politically correct language seem to think that simple suppression of a word or concept will magically make the problem disappear...."

"Of course the PC police aren't the only ones who want to proscribe what people should say or give them guidelines for how they may use an idea; Jesse Helms and his supporters are up to exactly the same thing when they propose to patrol the boundaries of the permissible in art. In each case, the would-be censor aspires to suppress what he or she finds as distasteful— all, of course, in the name of the public good.

"In the case of the politically correct, the prohibition of certain words, phrases and ideas is advanced in the cause of building a brave new world free of racism and hate, but this vision of harmony clashes with the very ideals of diversity and inclusion... and it's purchased at the cost of freedom of expression and freedom of speech."

Another Word from our Sponsor...

Which means of course, that if Billie Jean were to observe the "PC" rules of WHIMsical GenderLand, you wouldn't be reading **GenderFlex** (by the way, I told ya my return would be seamless; betcha can't even tell where I stopped and started (and check this out: it's been almost a two week gap), but enough of that (except: the free press ain't free)— just send money).

...and now Back to Our Program

Okay, that's the set up, no point in being too oblique— I'm ready to bitch, piss and moan (actually, I'm feeling a little tired, so I might just be cranky): This crap about labels and terms that flies through various GenderJournals is just about enough to make me puke. That and the people who insist their personal rationalization for why they do what they do applies to everybody (and if ya don't agree then you're wrong and have to conform). If I wasn't such a compassionate person, I believe I'd go onna bloody rampage the next time I read some asshole's version of "the one true way." Oh yes indeede, believe it, honey. Billie Jean would be quite The Bitch if she wasn't already endowed with Perfect Knowledge.

Hmmmf.

Take the issue of labels/terms— please (that wuzza Hennie Youngwomon joke). Last year a long-standing MTF former "transvestite" now "transgenderist" "cross-dresser" (who only wears women's clothes) sent out about forty-too-many "articles" stating "the community" should call itself "Bigendered"; the individuals "Bigenderists" or "Bigenderal." Okay, what kind of discussion did Bigender engender? Ridicule for the most part. And the most rabid ridiculer, in a simultaneously published "Counterpoint," started off their negative response with—

"The term 'bigender' [big-ender??? as in large posterior] is neither appropriate as an overall descriptive term for our community nor is it easily understood by inference for the rest of the population...."

So much for dialogue. Neither writer seemed capable of discussion, only oppositional arguments.

I myself got caught up in an attempt at dialogue with the same newsletter preceding "Bigender." I wrote a letter stating I supported the use of the term "Transgender" to mean a person living full-time in a gender role different than their anatomic sex classification without SRS. I suggested usurping that term from its specific meaning as originally coined and using it as an umbrella "catch-all" term (for "the community") left a void. I further asked what term would be used to *replace* transgender for people living full-time without surgery? My letter was published, I was pilloried for "semantics"; the question was *ignored*. I tried to continue establishing a dialogue but came to believe I was being used as a foil or target by a half-cocked pinhead.

(Continued on next page)

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Letters, submissions of artwork, photographs, articles, features or stories may be addressed to 3430 Balmoral Drive #10, Sacramento, CA 95821; however, no liability is assumed, no payment will be made, and—I may print whatever you send or give me. 3.5 diskettes (Mac or IBM) preferred.

Billie Jean Blabs— (Continued from page 3)

One of the other “significant” reasons why bigender was summarily rejected seemed to have been the *association probability* that it was too close to the “bi” word; you know, like in (gasp; be still my thumping heart) **bisexual**—

“...[T]he general public when hearing the term ‘bigenderal’ will without a doubt be confused with ‘bisexual’ which we in the community obviously do not need.”

But the real point was that the editor (who accepts the word “editress” even though it doesn’t exist because editor is a genderless term) has *taken the right to define* “the community” (even though it does not exist in this physical plane we dance in).

The same GenderJournal frequently excludes cross-dressing homo-sexual males from the definition of “cross-dresser” (as do many group newsletters) because they are not hetero-sexual even though they cross-dress. Are they not homo-sapiens with the same right to live? (Is this a subconscious manifestation of the Aryan Sisterhood? Ya think the Aryan Sisterhood cringes a little when they read “homo”-sapien? Probably get a new “personhood” label real soon, huh? Wouldn’t want people to think yer “homo”-anything now would ya?)

(Settle down, Billie Jean.)

(Maybe I should call ‘em (it?) the Aryan Sisterhood Society (ASS)! Yes-yes-yes.)

(No-no-no, Billie Jean— you’re losing it; now settle down, be calm, be nice; work through this; don’t give in to your infantile emotional reactions.)

(HEY, CRAM IT! SHUDDUP!! LISTEN TO THIS: How ‘bout the Aryan Sisterhood Society—Holy Order of Lady—like *En travesties* (ASS—HOLES)! Yowee!)

(Oh, Billie Jean—snff—you hurt my feelings.)

(I’m sorry. I really am— I forgot you were in denial.)

And how can it be that the proponents of “the gender community” exclude practitioners of gender alternative lifestyles such as bisexuals, gays and lesbians? Isn’t one of the major gender-specific roles sexual? Aren’t work roles another?

Isn’t the appearance of a person in a gender-specific guise just an image? If so, doesn’t the question become: What is the relationship of image to substance?

Does image define substance? According to the mindset of the definers of “GenderLand” image does indeed seem to define substance; at the same time, substance does not define image.

In other words, if I wear a beard and a dress, clean house, do the laundry, cook dinner for my husband who supports me, and am sexual with him, I’m a “parody of women” not a “cross-dresser” or “transgenderist” nor do I have a “place” in “the gender community.” Yet if I work all day to support my wife who cleans house, does the laundry, cooks dinner, and when I come home, I change to living in women’s clothes and am sexual with my wife, I am a “cross-dresser” or “transgenderist” and I have a “place” in “the gender community.” Excuse me, but isn’t the second example, in terms of work and sex roles, the least “gender alternative”?

And what to do about the numerous people, both male and female, who like wearing “cross-gender” clothing but have no desire to emulate any gender role other than they’ve been socialized in? On the one hand it’s the clothing only that admits one into the

mythical world of “cross-gender living”; on the other, it’s not the clothes at all.

What it is, what it seems to be, is conformance to certain rules by certain rulers. Myopic, tunnel vision rulers who at every opportunity to expand their vision, simply pass a new law disallowing an expanded vision. And quickly, too— because if the rabble got wind that the world was bigger than their ruler allowed them to see (for their own protection of course), the rabble would walk away from the ruler of rules.

An interesting development within the “cross-dressing phenomena” is the growing segment of “gender-benders.” Especially the “Club Kids.” Guised in indeterminate fashions, these revelers of all-night scenes break the Big Rule. The Big Rule? That there can only be two genders.

Ya know wut? If I were a pinhead WHIM “transgenderist,” I’d be quaking in my heels over this because the more people that say the hell with these vestimentary and behavior codes, the less gender-specific things will be. Then, mono-genderists will be seen more and more as pinhead sickos, and there will be no more “Queendoms” to conquer and dominate.

Here’s the best part though: Queer Nation has usurped “transgender” from the WHIMs (and from the media usage); now I can’t wait to see how the WHIMs squirm and sweat over the “theft” of “their” term. I do hope they don’t get too trampled by the marching, charging, hob-nailed boots of Transgender Nation (tee-hee).

And, even though my inner child felt slapped around a little, and felt excluded, some months later I did send another letter trying to address gender-polarity and male-bashing in response to the editor’s editorials on the detrimental effects of “rumor, innuendo, half-truths and gossip”; and “bitching or communicating”; and “building community”:

“23 October 1992

[*A Monthly Rag*]

Dear Editor,

[Blah, blah, blah]....

“My concern has to do with the effect your writing and editorial direction has on people who may have an overwhelming desire to *want* to believe femininity is superior to masculinity rather than recognize the artificial social construction of both. The best point you suggested (June) was advocating of a ‘...reduction in gender polarity...’

“In several recent (and past) issues of [your newsletter] blatant sexism has remained unchecked— specifically the general categorization of males as [expletive deleted] (certainly a regional characterization), with attendant ‘innuendo’ to the inferiority, stupidity and lack of awareness, seemingly inherent in males. To me the term as used sounds very much like ‘nigger,’ an inherently obvious inferior sub-species reference to African-Americans or other minorities. In the periodic installments of [one of your regular writers, she] defines her male-man self as ‘ET’ (for evil twin). Another swipe at males as second-class citizens, seemingly only because of being born with male genitalia and attendant

(Continued on page 6)

Do We Know This Word, Boys & Girls?

©1993 by Veronica Smith

Oh Billie Jean, you missed a good one. Juana and I attended the Marjorie Garber lecture at the Black Oak Bookstore January 29. I'd just finished *Vested Interests* and really wanted to hear her.

It was so weird! I'd forgotten how different Berkeley is. At a lecture like this in San Francisco, you'd have gotten lots of fun people, members of the gender community, and all sorts of alternative types. And yeah, you'd get a few serious academics, but in Berkeley!: The majority were frumpy-professor types with grizzled beards, shaggy hair (suggesting a hippie-esq history that very few of these guys probably really had), pipes stuck in the pockets of their corduroy or tweed jackets, heavy wool socks in their Birkenstocks— all of them with arms akimbo, grimly trying to come to grips with (to them) the seemingly undecipherable phenomenon of transvestism. Juana and I had to keep from giggling whenever we heard another of them have so much trouble pronouncing "Transvestite." I kept picturing Mr. Rogers at a blackboard asking, "Do we know this word, boys and girls?"

One real load of a guy asked something like this: "Tell me, Dr. Garber, how would Derrida suggest that the, uh, uh, *transvestite* fit within paradigmatic shifts; and could you compare how Foucault would say, no, not definitively 'say,' but, rather, *imply* that this person, or rather, this *signifier*, fits within the epistemological structures as such structures undergo manipulations, or rather, periodic rephrasing by the intelligentsia?"

To her credit (and why her book was so good) Marjorie has such a wide range of knowledge, and such a respect for her subject, that she easily handled questions like that with both intelligence and humor. I enjoyed it but after two hours, I felt worn out.



A coupla couples: Veronica & Juana; Francis & Roxanna.

A Pome Thing

©1993 by Vivian Vixen

One interesting fact is that the instrument of my imagined suicide, when I imagine it, is a knife of the same size, shape, and heft as the one I would use to cut out my mother's heart.

The imagined suicide (as opposed to the real one which would be done with an indirect technique, a speeding car into a bridge abutment, perhaps, but certainly not razors, knives or pills) is done with a knife-blow to the heart that first pierces it so my lifeblood spills out, and then with a twist of the wrist the last vestige of the ghost of a spirit is excised from the stilling vessel. (All this as I collapse in a bloody lifeless heap. Yeah, right!)

It is a contradictory implement: it must be delicately sharp to perform the precise incisions to remove the core of her being with dignity and respect, nay honor, but it must also have a surface of such texture, irregularities, little sniggling catches, as to inflict pain of unimaginable, undeniable, total, absolute severity. Perhaps the smith I once knew who used to make the special tools Armenians used to pick the pockets of the Turks could do it.

(I brought the doll tonight
with two pins to pierce through the terror,
the armor-clad fright:
Fight and Flight
I brought the doll tonight.)

I was going to write a poem to bring tonight— it was going to be about bringing the doll tonight, and two pins, one named Fight, and one named Flight, words that I didn't know were options because they were hidden behind the towering wall of terror. But I really think I will tell you about my mom. Because tonight, here, I am going to cut her heart out.

First I will cut the flesh away from her ribs, like this. Yes. Now, will you help me out here? Just pull this back on this side, and over here like that. Very good. I was going to cut through the ribs with a hack-saw blade I had in the kitchen, but this hammer and chisel will do a better job. Listen to that knock-knock-knocking as the mallet hits the chisel! Oh, yes. Now, would you hold the ribs back on this side, please? — You can put that bar under them. That's it. Thank you. And could you get the ones on the other side, please? Just the same. Thanks. Now I'll cut around it to get it free—ah—here it comes. Excuse me, I want to put it right here on the table.

What do you think is in it? Anything? I want you all to take a look at this magnificent magnifying glass. With this I will be able to see if there is anything in there, anything at all. This lens is so powerful you can see anything big enough not to be nothing. Seeing if there's anything inside, anything at all, is the whole point. That's why I'm doing this.

I was going to write a poem to bring and share tonight. A poem about bringing the doll, and two pins, one named Fight, one named Flight, words I didn't know were options because they were hidden behind the terrific wall of terror.

I was going to bring a poem tonight, but I didn't.

Billie Jean Blabs and blabs—(Continued from page 4)

social conditioning—why else would [her] 'twin' be evil? There have been numerous other 'gossip' wordings in [your newsletter] (as well as other publications) that 'maleness' is inferior (based on rumor, hearsay, half-truths, and innuendo) to 'femaleness.' I am reacting to the effect this has on maintaining and increasing 'gender polarity' (another binary inference that there are only two 'effects,' in this case positive or negative polarity). Further, the consistent interchanging of male for masculine and female for femininity contained in [your newsletter] does (I feel and believe), virtually nothing to reduce binary gender polarity. I suggest that *male-related* and *female-related* would do much to expand the separation of sex (biology) from gender (culture); and that phrases such as *male-woman* likewise have the potential to expand the understanding that things are not as simple as they may have seemed when we were all told *what* to think rather than *how* to think. Many of your writers seem to display a long-term insistence that because they don't want to be a stereotypical male ('man'), the logical decision is to wanna be a female (choice of one or the other). It is my opinion that this perpetuates the artificial binary social constructs of gender, as well as perpetuating limited cognitive abilities. My concern with the usage of these terms has to do with distinctions, my intent is to suggest a consistent foundational approach, my hope is that my concerns are not interpreted as linguistic hair-splitting. My comment on limited cognitive abilities comes from my belief that blurring distinctions does nothing to prevent mental atrophy; whereas coming to an understanding of distinctions, and coming to understand paradoxes such as male-woman (or female-man), exercises the mind, leads to expanded consciousness and increases cognitive abilities.

"Science indicates that we Homo Sapiens consciously 'use' 2% to 5% of our brain capacity (95% to 98% sub- or unconscious). For me, the choice has always been 'will this make me bigger or smaller' in context of how much of my capacity can I consciously use. I have come to realize and know this approach and result often places me 'outside' the mainstream culture, which can be a lonely position. However, I can not 'stop' doing what I was born with the potential to become (intellectually eclectic and 'complicated')."

So, wanna guess the response? Nada, nothing, zilch: censorship by omission.

Fade to black...

Is your inner child ready to go on a rampage? Do you feel excluded, isolated and unfairly picked on? Are you depressed because no one will listen to you? Do you feel blamed, shamed and maimed? Welcome to the real world. Yes, the real world of dysfunctional living—you're normal! Congratulations. But, let me ask you a question: Are there some days when you feel connected, whole, intact?

If your answer is yes, there is help!

Introducing KRAMKO Products newest offering: PHUKUMOVER-II for relief of that connected feeling. Return to the comfort of normalcy, forget complications; rely upon your infantile programming to simple-mindedness. Don't delay, get some today.

Available over-the-counter, behind-your-back and in-your-face.

For the next 30 seconds this station will conduct a test of the Emergency Broadcast System— (Settle down, Billie Jean, you know how you can be when*! Billie Jean NO!! Don't do it. Please don't do it. Please, please*)

(GET THE HELL OUTA MY WAY SHITHEAD, I'M GONNA ASSERT MYSELF!!!)

(Quick! Get those pills put of her mouth!!)

(AARRGGg!!...ga..g.) —This concludes our test of the Emergency Broadcast System. If there had been a real emergency, you'd be dead.

Part Two

Hrummpf! So I picked up my new *Tapestry* (#63) and scanned the letters to see if they printed my letter about "building community." Nope. Nothing. In fact, most all the articles were transsexually oriented (as usual); and rah-rah-rah "community" (with no dissent). Oh my aching groinette—omitted again. Hey, I guess I, and people similar to me, don't exist. Cheez whiz, wut's the deal? Ya think it's all about money? Or just control? I mean, the point of my letter was that identifying "the community" should come before "building community." But I didn't send a check or anything.

Check it out yourself while I attempt an attitude adjustment on my inner child's boiling rage at being excluded one more time (gosh, ya think I'd be used to it by now):

Excerpts from a Blabbermouth

"6 November 1992

TV/TS Tapestry

Dear Editor,

"First, Thank You for publishing my opinion-article [issue #62]... Second, I found the inclusion of similar articles, with their diversity of voices, provided an interesting balance.

"However, I feel that two of the pieces, specifically Nancy Cole's 'In Search Of A Community' and Naomi Owen's 'Legal Briefs' column, contained elements of insidious discrimination. My intent in bringing up the following comments is to further dialog in the matter, and hopefully to stimulate others to add to the dialog.

"The issue is discrimination. The insidious quality is that the issue is elided (skipped over). This is what makes it so dangerous from my perspective. Naomi addresses the 'issue' of 'appropriate dress and conduct' as a response to a letter from a person who was 'deeply distressed by the behavior and appearance of some of the participants' at a weekend 'event.' In getting 'a few things off my chest' (I won't play with that, although I'm tempted), Naomi perpetuates a prejudice against those who are not 'like' her (as the letter writer did). At issue in this regard is what might be described as a cultural clash. As Americans we are all familiar with the

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Doreen Does The Boudoir

W O W

©1993 by Doreen

There it was, an ad for "Boudoir Photography" with a shot of a woman who looked very sexy with only a fan to cover her— and a lot left to the imagination.

I had seen these ads before and had fantasized what it would be like to do such a thing. And besides that, almost every time I would get dressed for a night out, I would have my picture taken with the hope it would come out better than last time. But I also knew that if I wanted a really good picture, it would most likely be by a pro— one who could somehow make me look sexy and feminine.

I called the number on impulse ("on impulse" has always been a lot of fun for me!). Carol answered the phone and I asked if they ever did cross-dressers? She said sure (they do males off hours so's not to scare the females). I asked a lot of questions about what to wear (seems I'm a little fixated on women's clothes?) and while I was rambling on about what type of dresses to bring, Carol said it was normally best to do lingerie (YES! that scanty, lacy, sheer stuff that we all love). She assured me that everything would be confidential, and that I would feel good about myself when I did it. I promised to call back.

With the idea on my mind quite a bit for the next few days, I finally set upon a date I could make for sure and called back. Carol suggested that I could come down and pay a deposit in cash to reserve a session time (I figured they'd definitely had experience with the TV crowd and our overt concern of anyone finding out we love skirts and pumps and...)— I gave her my credit card # and name.

While I've managed to build up a wardrobe of dresses, skirts and blouses over the years (3 of the last have been public (thanks ETVc (sorry Billie Jean but parenthesis ARE fun!)), and I can't remember how many years I've loved this stuff), I have mostly functional lingerie (the foundation building and reducing kind). So all of a sudden, I was in dire need of a bunch of lacy, satiny, sheer feminine bedroom attire. What to do?

Off to the familiar territory of my wife's lingerie drawers, where I ransacked looking for just the right chemise, teddy, and night gown for the session. I had told my wife of my intentions and she was okay with my pilfering, but then she just started laughing when I grabbed a needle and thread and started repairing a spaghetti strap on a gorgeous lace bralette of hers. (How come I've never seen fit to repair her lingerie before? It is quite the domestic thing to do.) I also visited a few department stores trying to find yet more lingerie for the event. Then it occurred to me that I probably wouldn't need 27 different outfits, but just in case— I'll have them.

In a follow up phone call I mention this to Carol, and she assured me they will help me pick the right outfits for the photos. (Can you tell I was really getting into all this?)

The big day arrived and that night I checked into a nearby

hotel, proceeded to shower, shave, and trim almost everything. I was told to come with freshly washed and dried hair, no make up, and to bring whatever I wanted to wear; they would be providing a wide variety of accessories (it's the accessories that count especially when the outfit weighs less than a Kleenex).

I started out the door in basic tight jeans and loose fitting sweater, looking as casual as a women can look, but decided that although no make-up was the marching order, I absolutely felt naked. I went back in, put on a light lipstick and instantly felt better.

The directions were flawless and I found WOW Photography in a small strip mall in Fremont next door to a beauty parlor still open. The sign on the door for WOW said "Closed." I couldn't see anyone inside although the lights were on. I pushed the door and it opened. Inside I heard three women talking, then one of the voices yelled: "Is that you Doreen?"

Carol introduced herself, quickly made me feel comfortable by asking, "Is that Redperfume I smell?" And then telling me she liked it! (I liked her already.) She gave me the mandatory form to fill out, which I did with the omission of my signature that would authorize them to use my before-and-after shots for advertising. I'd probably agree to the after shot but hey, who would believe it if they saw the before? (Why not go for the in-between shot?) While I waited, I browsed through the albums they have on a table in the front and was amazed at the remarkable differences in the before-and-after shots. I thought: "If they can make average looking women gorgeous, maybe I have a chance!"

Carol came back, told me to go in the bathroom, strip down to nothing so there wouldn't be any "bungee" marks on my body, and handed me a full length cotton-flannel robe. I got naked and put on the robe, which is of course comfortable but barely feminine, and went out front where I met Jennifer. She sat me in a barber chair (which is blocked off from the entrance to the shop by a partition), and asked me how I would like my hair and make-up. We decided on hot rollers for the hair, and a dramatic but sexy make up job with emphasis on the eyes. I offered my industrial grade *Dermablend* foundation for beard cover, but Jennifer told me she uses a theatrical foundation base.

While I was being made over, a couple came in to purchase her pictures (at that point I was in foundation only with a ton of rollers on my head). They both walked around the partition and saw me, but no sign of "OH my god!, its a man!" (I remember thinking, "I'm on the road to success!") While they were back in front looking at the albums, Jennifer and I shared a laugh while we eavesdropped on his macho remarks about some of the girls in the albums. (Maybe I *should* let them put my "after" in an album?)

After an hour Jennifer had transformed me from a boring "before" to a lovely "after." I looked better than I ever had. My eyes were indeed dramatic, my hair was very full and fluffy, even the lipstick seemed to be the right color— which she achieved with a bright red base and a burgundy top coat which toned down the red and had a luscious look. Jennifer also did wonders with the blush and contour, which gave my

(Continued on next page)

face an oval appearance—a big departure from the very rectangular face I have.

Now that I looked great, it was on to the next room with all the photography equipment. I asked Carol if we could do the same pose as the ad (feather only, remember?) and she said, "Sure." I asked if I should wear a gaff, and Carol didn't know what that was. After a short explanation of biology, she just laughed. I went back, put on the gaff and returned.

Carol had me get up on a raised table covered with a faux lambswool cover, posed me crouched down on my knees, leaning forward with my elbows on my legs and head up. She gave me a feathered fan to hold in my mouth and made some minor adjustments so the fan would strategically cover all but my limbs and shoulders—CLICK! "Move the right elbow," CLICK! "Turn your head a little,"



CLICK! This was really getting to be fun!

Carol accompanies me to the changing room and we pick out a white with red polka dots chemise and matching short robe. Back to the table where I pose with my legs stretching forward, body leaning sideways with one arm on the table. A white feathered boa is added for effect—CLICK! Carol drops the robe off-shoulder and has me raise one knee, CLICK! Shows me my reflection in a mirror, has me lean my head back further, CLICK! We're laughing, CLICK! It's great, CLICK CLICK CLICK!

It's time for the lacy black little teddy with long train like piece hanging down the back and a black bikini panty. Carol gives me a pair of long dangling black earrings and sets up a new pose for me with a black boa this time—CLICK CLICK



CLICK!

The sheer harem outfit—laying on my stomach, legs in the air crossed at the ankle and feet pointed upward—CLICK CLICK CLICK!

The big finish—a gorgeous long green satin nightgown with floral trim and a matching bolero cover in the floral print. Both Jennifer and Carol comment on how beautiful it looks. Up on the table, laying sideways propped up on my arm. Carol is telling me, "Stomach in, bust out"—CLICK! "Move your head," CLICK!

After the final, in the dressing room getting back into street clothes (jeans and a sweater—girl-drag of course, didn't want to waste the beautiful make-up job that Jennifer had done), I decided to visit a womyn's bar. But first:

Fully dressed for the first time in two hours, I went back to the front part of the shop and told both those wonderful women that it had been a great experience, and they had been more supportive than I had expected. I left on a cloud.

I was still feeling pretty heady after driving to Walnut Creek and having a drink at JR's. As I was getting ready to leave there, a woman who had been checking me out introduced herself and said, "Doreen, you're beautiful!"

That night she was right.

Even though it's a little pricey, the whole experience was more than worth it to me (I carry the results everywhere I go). So, if you think it sounds like fun, give Carol and Jennifer a call at WOW Photography (510) 770-9055.



Billie Jean Blabs and blabs and blabs — (Continued from page 6)

clashing of different cultures, often inseparable from different ethnic backgrounds. In colonizing this country, the Colonial People clashed with the Original People— how different things might be today if the cultures had meshed rather than clashed. Instead of waging war, imagine waging peace. Imagine evolution based on diversity rather than obliteration of those who 'were not like us.'

"Naomi, who I respect and have enjoyed chatting with, as well as reading from, seems to slide too easily into the very thing she is 'disturbed, shocked and outraged by' in her 'Keynote Address' (same issue): that of 'sniping, griping, and complaining that has emerged from some segments of our community.' She further states 'I don't think any of us is so squeaky clean to be critical or insensitive to the thoughts and feelings of others.' And this is a very fine line, of which it is incredibly difficult to draw. But the line already appears to have been drawn, and it surrounds what looks like an image of 'acceptability' and 'conformance.'

"In citing 'non-conforming,' possibly 'naive,' or 'deliberately destructive' public presentation and behavior, Naomi in effect is defining that docility and servitude to authority will promote the greater good. The authority in this respect appears to be those who have taken the right to define themselves as The Authority. The Authority of what? GenderLand. One might say this is the nascent 'Gender Police,' or 'T-COPs.' Only there are no written laws, just an enforcement branch. (Read about Nancy Burkholder's experience at the Michigan Womyn's Festival.)

"Look, if we gender-explorers really believed in conformance, we would not appear in public cross-gendered at all.

"To exclude those who are 'not like us,' is the beginning of artificial boundaries whose logical consequence is war. Naomi speaks 'for the community'; I speak for myself. I am offended that White Heterosexual-Identified Males (WHIMs) continue to perpetuate sexism, racism, and genderism toward 'others.' The others in this case being, in fact, culturally different. I speak of gay males WHIMsically defined as drag queens; bisexual, erotically motivated transvestites (bi, gay, or het); cross-gendered sex workers; exhibitionist gender-explorers. I speak against the idea that in order to gain 'acceptance' one should modify their 'style' to 'change the way others see us.' This is not how people find and realize their inherent potential; not a way to grow individually— it is a social pressure to 'give up' individual empowerment; I am not advocating a free-for-all in 'shock value'— I ask people to consider the cultural differences are based in ignorance, and instead of clashing, try meshing.

"There is nothing the (minority) 'respectable elements' of the so-called gender community can do about "non-conforming" behaviors and attire of other (majority) segments. There will always be the exhibitionists,

the erotic fetishists, the sex-workers, the cross-dressers who do not use a full guise to try and 'pass' (there are many who do not even deal with the filter of 'gender' to 'justify' their attraction to cross-dressing). In my newsletter, I keep dropping clues as to how to differentiate between being of value to the culture-at-large as opposed to not being valuable— try performing valuable actions; talk is cheap (see Nancy Ledins' article 'Now Is The Time Of The Daughter'). It seems to me the singularly valuable public contribution 'cross-dressers' make is adding to the profit of hotels.

"I believe we have only begun to dialogue on what and who constitutes 'our community.' Until that dialog becomes inclusive of a broader spectrum of ethnic, cultural, sex, and sexual perspectives, it would seem premature to define 'community.' On the other hoof (let me just pull it out of my mouth and read it), since the so-called 'community' is already full of WHIMs, perhaps it would be preferable to 'tighten the screws' on the lid of that fascist coffin and be more explicit as to who is excluded. Allow me to push that a little farther along— how about this for a 'label': The Fraternal Order Of The Aryan Sisterhood?

"Whoa! Gee whiz, I kinda went off 'half-cocked' there for a minute, didn't I? Oh yes, indeedee, I did (I couldn't resist the pun— ha-ha, whoops, I mean, tee-hee).

"Anyway, I liked Naomi's remark 'Defining 'unacceptable' is not easy, however.' And to the point this issue is 'sensitive'— I agree, and I do not believe there is a simple answer (Goddess, when somebody tells me 'it's simple' I know whatever is coming is gonna be difficult)."

Public Service Message...

Shur izza long ledder, ain't it? Whadda brain drain. Geez, ya'd think I wuz writing a book, er something. Hey! I am writing a book. Yeah, no kidding. I dunno wut I'll call it yet— it's kinda partially realized and wholly unfinished, but I did complete chapter six; check it out:

Chapter Six

There is no doubt in my mind that there is doubt in my mind.

...Excerpts from a Blabbermouth Continued

"Scuse me while I sharpen my nails. There, that's better. Nancy Cole touched upon some of the same aspects of discrimination in her article, but the issue I want to raise is that of 'building' a community from top-down. GAL tried to do that last year and failed miserably—I believe—because of the heavy-handed pounding of 'followers' into submission. While Nancy isn't beating people up (yet), the philosophy is inherently flawed, and may be the reason that factionalization is the rule in GenderLand. She does define the beginnings of a solution: 'Exchange ideas, thoughts, and most important of all, accept the thoughts and ideas of those writing to you.' [I say:] The basis for all good and great communication is an art, the art of listening.

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Digging in the Dirt #2 (Inner Voices)

©1993 by Anna Maria Ferrari

I have a little white dog named Sam. She looks like the RCA Victor dog with a brown ring around one eye and one brown tipped ear. She's my baby and I love her a lot. I take pride in caring for her and she comes with me when I go most places. She runs and plays and has so much fun in general that she can make me cry from joy. About the only liberty I have taken with her is that I walk her without a leash. People have told me to keep her on a leash but I've felt like it would be robbing her fun. So I haven't listened. I have heard my inner voice tell me to leash her but I chose not to listen to it either.

We got up early the other day because I had school (which I just started again after 15 years off). I got dressed—basic stuff: pantyhose, jeans, silk shirt, leather jacket and a cute little Indiana Jones hat, and we went for a walk. Needless to say we looked fabulous, or at least I thought so, but this was apparently not clear to the animal world.

We were playing on an abandoned lot, when out of the corner of my eye I saw a big dog running in our general direction, but I'm near-sighted and didn't really give it any thought. But it kept coming, and was appearing bigger as it got closer, so I thought I'd move Sam on. I turned to call to her but by that time she had seen the other dog and was going toward it sniffing the air and obviously wanting to play.

Bad move.

The other dog—by then clearly a Pit Bull/Labrador mix—ran up and bit her throat, picked her up in the air and proceeded to swing her around trying to kill her in your typical Pit Bull fashion—essentially trying to rip out her throat and bite her head off. Sam yelped once. I felt instantaneously responsible and ran to stop them. I had my pointy cowboy boots on so I started kicking it in the stomach—supposedly a softer section of it's anatomy. Fat chance, it felt nothing, and it was big, real big compared to me. All the strength I seemed to muster didn't matter a damn. I looked at Sam and knew in seconds she would definitely be dead, and suddenly I lost my mind. I jumped on the back of the incredibly vicious hound from hell, wrapped my legs around its torso and tried to pull it over with my body while sticking my gloved hands in its mouth, trying to pry it open. That had absolutely no effect—Pit Bulls lock their jaws and there is no way that this little person was gonna budge them, or for that matter, pull it off it's feet with my little wrestling leglock. I looked at Sam and she looked dead. I totally lost it at that point.

That's when I heard my inner voice tell me to go for it's eyes. I stuck my thumbs into it's eye sockets. I pushed until the joints of my thumbs disappeared in it's head. No apparent effect. I started wailing in a high, almost non-human voice and began biting it's head. A guy seeing this ran up and started screaming at me, asking who to call (he had definitely lost his mind just watching), but I was not capable of speech

at that time. I just howled and bit, howled and bit; my legs wrapped around the hound from hell, my thumbs pushing deeper into it's eyes. I heard something cracking which, I latter found out, was my right thumb. Suddenly the monster opened it's mouth for an instant and I got Sam out. She was totally limp and I thought she was dead.

I picked her up and with what strength I had left, started hobbling for home. We were covered from head to toe in mud. She had four big holes in her neck but fortunately was not bleeding profusely. Amazingly, she sat up in my arms. As we passed the bystander, he asked if we were all right. All I could say was: "I don't know."

We went home and I stumbled up the stairs, threw off my muddied jacket and boots and climbed into the shower with Sam. I turned the water on and we just sat there in shock, the mud running down our faces, I washed Sam off looking for additional wounds, and when we were somewhat cleaner, I got out, took off my ripped up clothes, threw on some fresh ones and took Sam to the Vet.

Later that night I saw the bystander fellow again, and he said it was amazing—the Monster was easily 150 lbs (I weigh 132) and it's head was bigger than mine. It could have easily killed me but didn't.

Why?

I didn't get scared until later, when I was in the shower again and I realized it could have bit off my face in one bite. But frankly, at the time, I was not thinking about my safety. I was not thinking at all.

In the "Lost Girls" we have a motto: No Fear. I take it seriously because I have oppressed myself with Terror most of my life. I talk it up to myself and use it as motivation to go into the world as a Gender person. But this—this was different, real different.

I place meaning on the individual episodes of my life to provide me with a conceptual framework for growth—so I asked my inner voice for some meaning and here's what I got. It was a test. I had inadvertently been jeopardizing the life of my child by letting it run free while under my "watchful" eye. I should have known that—the voice had told me many times. I just didn't listen. So the test was that Sam would die unless I risked my life to save her. I tell people that I feel like her mother—and it's true. Had I even thought about a response Sam would have died—immediate instinct was necessary. So, I guess I passed the test because Sam is alive today. But now she gets leashed when we go out.

It's this inner voice—it's completely crazy to not listen to it. I should have known that because it is what has guided me to the freedom—and joy of life—out here in the Gender Zone. But as for the leash, I had thought: "This is such a little liberty, surely I can handle it." I couldn't.

I have taken many liberties in my life and they have always had unforeseen price tags associated with them. When I was younger, a friend of mine told me that nothing is free. I didn't like the sound of that but I kinda kept it in the back of my mind and monitored my life to see if it was true. At some point I became willing to admit that, in fact, it was most

(Continued on next page)

definitely true for me. My inner voice concurs: Nothing is free. Every choice or lack of one has an implicit cost. Maybe it's money, more likely it's wear on your heart, loss of your hair, or the life of your kid. What ever it is, there is always a cost.

I had known my inner voice was talking to me but I turned my back on it and my baby almost died as a result. In fact, I'm convinced that she did die— she sure looked dead. The guy who saw it said we both could have been killed. It was like a "my life for her life thing"— and only because I instinctively followed the voice, both of us were spared.

The point of all this is not the fight or my stupidity, but that even under extreme duress an inner guidance was available to me if I chose to follow it. It saved our lives even when I had clearly jeopardized them. It is the same voice which tells me to be my transgender self—to not be scared of who I am; to face life bravely—to be Me. It leads me to freedom and joy each day. It brought me to the "Lost Girls" and continually teaches me the meaning of our motto. It is the means to freedom from my own oppression. It is life!

I have some questions for you: Do you have an inner voice? Do you listen to it? What does it say?

We'll talk again!

Marie

Billie Jean Blabs and blabs and blabs and blabs — (Continued from page 10)

However, Nancy also defines the War Of The Words (Genderbet soup) as '... a source of division, a division that separated rather than unified our Community.' So, on the one hoof, ya gotta listen, but on the other hoof, if ya listen there is no community unification (or 'building'). I suggest that if more effort was put into listening, the diversity of what 'the community' consists of would become clear enough to realize one person, or a few 'leaders' (self-appointed, of course) can not 'build' a community, but they could, with the help of many, many others, begin to form a web-like coalition of disparate elements— unity through diversity, not unity through uniformity.

"Nancy describes a binary construct of opposition where uncountable groups are defining who they are, as a 'pulling apart, and not a pulling together.' What is there to pull toward? Why come together (I know it's a pun, in fact it's a triple pun)? What goal would unify 'the Community'? There is no war, no overbearing legal issue, in fact, there doesn't appear to be any singular goal other than the goal of being 'unified' (is that like pouring liquid Jell-O into a mold and chilling it so it stays 'unified'?).

"The assumption '... there is no respected leadership to follow...' implies a hierarchical relationship: Leaders and followers. Nancy implores the 'national organizations,' because they are the 'fewest' and 'easiest to gather together' to get together— that seems sure

to piss off the 'most' and 'hardest to gather together,' don't it? And, who wants to be 'leader' and who wants to be 'follower'?

"I've already suggested that it may be premature to define 'Community'; let me add that I find it difficult—at best—to 'select' representation of said 'Community,' let alone 'decide and define' leaders and followers prior to some general agreement of 'Community' and representation of same."

Oh-oh

I probably blabbed too much for anyone to stay awake (won't get no money for that, neither); I frequently fall asleep in front of the TV, too, ya know. And, ya know what else? I gotta go get my frustrated inner child into a counseling session before I short circuit (*!*...)— and one more thing: Listen to Billie Jean, honey: Be careful, be aware—it's a real GenderJungle out there.



PHOTO CREDIT: Denise of David Swanson Photography

Luv,

Billie Jean

Cross-dressing By Numbers

© 1993 by Krystina DiEdoardo

"Clothes are the smallest thing among many small things."
—St. Joan of Arc

It took me until my junior year in college to make a startling discovery: my interest in cross-dressing had a lot in common with my inability to do math.

"What possible correlation could there be?" you, the somewhat skeptical reader might ask. "Well," I would easily answer, "both have made my life more interesting in a philosophical sense—as well as more expensive!"

To be honest, I wouldn't trade either gift for the world. Especially when my grasp of probabilities has made me able to predict, with *complete inaccuracy*, how people will react when I answer their questions such as: "Gee, what are these bottles of nail polish doing next to the *Drakkar Noir*?"

After three years "out," I now realize that everyone I worked so hard to keep from figuring out my more-than-casual interest in clearance sales at I. Magnin, had already figured out the "truth" years ago. It seems clear to me that our goal should not be to keep our lifestyle a secret (which seems to be an impossibility), but instead to "come out" in the most memorable way possible! I have three vignettes I want to share that illustrate what I call the failure of the DiEdoardo Probability Theorem:

ONE: A rainy night in the Midwest circa 1990. Cuddled up in bed with girlfriend. She asks: "So, what turns you on?"

I look to see that my clothes are still at the end of the bed where I left them, prime myself to make a flying leap toward them after I answer: "Well, er, ah—cross-dressing."

She looks deep into my eyes with a smile that begins at the back of her eyes and eventually migrates to her face: "No way! No way!!" She kisses me and pronounces: "You're perfect! Wanna try on some clothes?"

I lie back, convinced I've suffered a massive stroke and am now in some very bizarre afterlife where women who support transies live. I reach out and touch her. She's still there; she's real.

'Twas the start of a beautiful friendship (Bogey and Bacall had nothing on us, or "our" wardrobe)...

TWO: It's the Winter of '91 and I'm mall walking with my adopted (by me) sister, a nice Catholic female who had led a wonderfully normal life until I wandered into it. We are hitting all the after-Christmas sales and she's soooo happy I'm being soooo patient while she's shopping for clothes. (Tell me YOU haven't had this experience!) On our way out, I realize if I don't come clean I'm going to explode into a convulsion of giggles...

"Uh, Julie? There's something you should know... Umm, you don't ever have to worry about me being bored when we—uh, I mean, you—are shopping for clothes."

"Oh, I know," she says hugging me, "you're the best brother in the world!"

(What can I say? I did try to warn her.) "Julie listen: I'm a transvestite."

She stops, looks at me with the vain hope that I'm kidding, realizes I'm not, and says: "Okay."

We walked and talked for another hour, and she dealt with it extremely well. We got into her car and continued our conversation. Unfortunately, being afflicted with the Italian disease of not leaving well enough alone, I mentioned that I was drinking ten to twelve glasses of water a day.

"Why?" she asks while concentrating on the road.

"So I can get down to a size 10 or so by formal season."

I hear a WHACK! as her car hits the curb, jumps it and almost plows over a stop sign (good thing she didn't—it was a small town and didn't have many).

"Arrgh!" she screams. "I knew there was a reason we never went out!"

"What?" I ask, "That I'd steal your clothes?"

"Exactly!" she exclaims; "I mean, no, I mean..."

We collapsed into giggles, and the whole day had a happy ending—we ended up back at her apartment trading make up. Alas, she's a fair-skinned redhead and I'm an olive-brown brunette... sigh. However, we never wonder what to get each other for our birthdays.

THREE: San Francisco, Halloween weekend 1992... While flying up from Sandy Eggo, I kept gazing at the empty seat next to mine. It was supposed to have been occupied by the woman of my dreams (version 1992.3), but she found the concept of me in drag to be so repugnant that she could barely stand to even admit she knew me, let alone admit that she once cared for me. (Not all of my coming out experiences make funny stories, but I try to take them in context—she was probably a tortured brunette intellectual trapped in the body of a rich, airhead blonde... poor baby.)

Anyway, one of my best friends (we've been running around together since the second grade) lives in the SF area. That night, we had decided to have dinner at Hamburger Mary's in SOMA [South Of Market Area]. We are waiting for our food when Mike asks:

"So, why did Andrea bail?"

"Well Mike, ya see..." and I tell him, and I wait for the nuclear explosion (while thinking: 'Great, I've just lost my girlfriend and I'm about to lose one of my best friends; Christ, honesty sucks...'). But No! Once again the DiEdoardo Probability Theorem fails to operate!

"Cool!" he exclaims. "So, what do you look like when dressed?" And, "This Halloween is gonna be rad!"

And it was—as Elvira I had a terrific time in the Castro, and even met a delectable female named "Satan" (which seemed weirdly appropriate). Mike is now trying to use the photos he took of me dressing for an art project.

FOUR: So, if you can't add anything except rouge to foundation, if you can't subtract anything other than inches in a Victorian corset, if you can't multiply anything besides the number of black & red lingerie sets you own, or divide anything besides your limited closet space to hold all this stuff—take heart and be of good cheer!

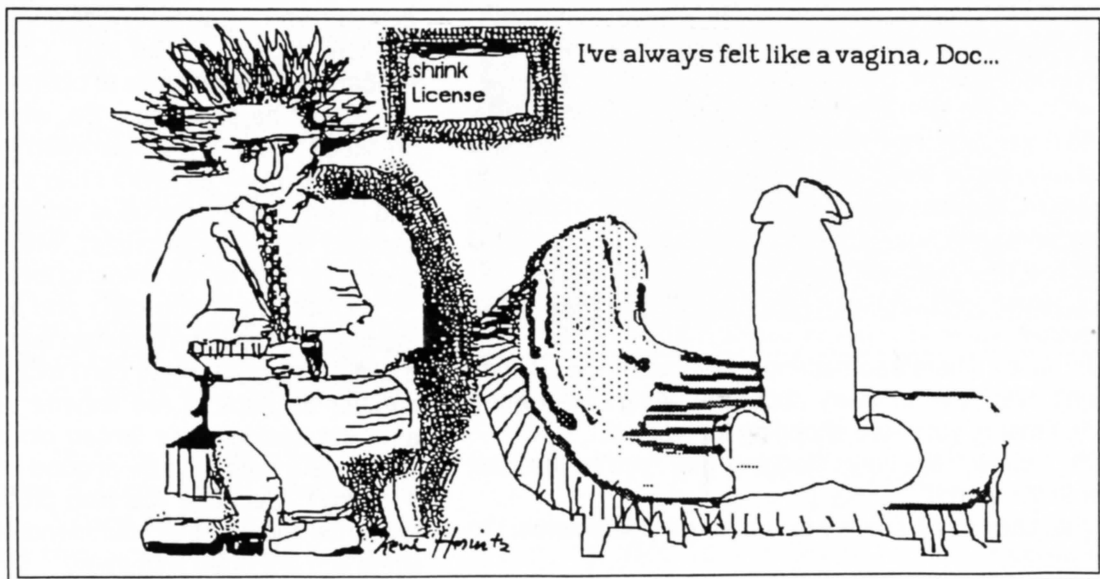
Why? Because you also probably can't calculate the tolerance and love that your friends and family can show you when you are open with them.



A WALL OF TVs: Summa the Lost Girls (Official & Honorary) with The (Official) Lost Boy on the multiple occasion of DVG's Feb. 2 social; an informal post-Cotillion cast & crew get together; and the Lost Boy's Birthday celebration (he got a tie). Top row, left to right: Francis, Tyrrell, Krystin, Robin, Krystel; Bottom row (L to R): Telzey, Bobbie, Jennifer, Janet, Cori, Alison, Michelle, Tonye.

© 1993 by Kevin Horwitz

Reprinted from issue #22 of the FTM Newsletter.
(Kevin has become FTM's Editor— Congratulations!
Now go to work, dude.)



Gender-Related Organizations

C.G.N.I.E., Inc. (Court of the Great Northwest Imperial Empire, Inc.) POB 160636, Sac, CA 95816. CGNIE was organized to raise funds for charities and continues to do so. Primarily part of the gay community, membership is open to anyone with an interest. Annual events include elections of Emperor & Empress, Grand Duke & Duchess with related campaign events culminating in Coronation and Grand Ducal Balls; and other Balls as selected by the Court. A variety of other events and fund raisers are scheduled by the reigning Court. Court Imperial (general meetings) held on first Tuesday of the month at Faces, 2000 K Street, Sac, CA, 7:30pm. No door charge. Annual dues—\$22 (or \$2 per month, April is free).

DVG (Diablo Valley Girls)—POB 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885. Phone (510) 849-4112. DVG is a non-sexual social club in the Concord/Walnut Creek area. Monthly socials held at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, CA on the first Tuesday and third Monday of each month, 8pm. No door charge. Monthly newsletter included with annual dues—\$10.

ETVC (Educational TV Channel)—POB 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Phone (Hotline) (510) 549-2665. ETVC is a non-sexual organization with the purpose of serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of "gender-challenged" people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends and professionals in the helping services. ETVC is the largest organization of this type in Northern California and provides a wide variety of support including: rap groups, a significant other support group, print & video libraries, outreach, education and lots of social activities, plus more. Theme socials the last Thursday of each month, Chez Mollet restaurant, 527 Bryant St., SF, \$3. members, \$5 non-members (certain event/themes may be higher priced). Newsletter every other month included with annual dues—\$20.

FTM (Female to Male) Group—5337 College Ave. #142, Oakland, CA 94618. FTM publishes a quarterly newsletter for female cross-dressers and FTM transsexuals. Support, social and informational meetings held monthly (information and social meetings open to non-FTMs; support is for FTMs only). Currently selling paperback copies off Lou Sullivan's *Information For The*

Female-To-Male Crossdresser And Transsexual, \$10.

I.F.G.E. (International Foundation for Gender Education) POB 367, Wayland MA 01778. Perhaps the largest organization concerned with the CD/TV/TG/TS "Community." Publishers of *TV/TS Tapestry Journal*, and more.

RGA (Rainbow Gender Association) POB 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. RGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. Poker Socials, Rap Group, Computer Bulletin Board: (208) 248-4162 (300-2400 baud), plus more. General meetings twice a month (1st & 3rd Fridays at 8pm) at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. No dues or door charge; contributions accepted. Newsletter every other month for \$10 per year.

S.G.A. (Sacramento Gender Association) POB 215456, Sac, CA 95821-1456. Phone: (916) 482-7742. SGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. Social meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of the month at Joseph's Town & Country, 2062 Auburn Blvd., Sac, CA, 7pm if you want dinner, meeting follows, 8pm. \$2 door fee (\$4 non-members). SGA Executive Committee meeting (club business and planning) held the third Saturday, same location, 7:30pm, open to members and guests—free. Call SGA for current schedule of their significant others support group. Annual dues—\$20.

Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess)—POB 194, Tulare, CA 93275. Tri-Ess is primarily for heterosexual males who cross-dress, and their families. A variety of social and educational services are designed to foster self-acceptance and expression. Individual (local) chapters are located throughout the US and Canada (about \$20 a year each). Publishes the *Femme Mirror* four times a year which is included in annual (National) dues of \$35. Write for application & information.

Transgender Nation—Box 34, 3543 18th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110. Transgender Nation is a focus group within Queer Nation working specifically for transgender rights. Group meetings every Wednesday, 7:30pm at the Women's Building, 3543 18th St. (Meetings are at the same time as Queer Nation; QN's phone # is: (415) 985-7141.)

Support Organizations & Services

RGA Rap Group meets the second Friday of each month at the New Community of Faith Church in San Jose, from 8 to 10pm. Contact Martina at (408) 984-5619.

ETVC's Significant Others Support Group meets the second Thursday of each month, from 8 to 10pm. SOS meetings are open to people involved with a CD/TV/TG/TS person, but who are not one themselves. Write ETVC, or call Ginny at (415) 664-1499.

Pacific Center for Human Growth, 2712 Telegraph Ave, Berkeley, CA 94705 provides weekly peer-support meetings for Bisexual, Gay/Lesbian, TV/TS persons. Info: (510) 841-6224

W.A.C.S Newsletter [Women Associated with Cross-dressers Communication Network]: POB 17, Bulverde, TX 78163.

AEGIS (American Educational Gender Information Service) provides referrals and offers support to people with gender issues, as well as publishing several informational booklets and *Chrysalis*

Quarterly, an excellent gender-related magazine. For \$36 you can receive four issues of *CQ* plus 3 booklets. Mail to: POB 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724. Phone: (404) 939-0244. AEGIS is also affiliated with Renaissance Education Association, and has recently taken over J2CP's information distribution and publications function (J2CP Online BBS remains with Sister Mary Elizabeth).

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute (405 Western Avenue, Suite 345, South Portland, ME 04106. (207) 775 0858) sponsors a service for helping professionals (GAIN), dozens of Seminars and Workshops, Info Packets and Periodical Publications (some free), Fantasia Fair; and jointly with Theseus Counseling Services, HOPEFUL, a program for couples who've learned to live with cross-dressing but want more out of their relationship (Theseus: 233 Harvard St., Ste. 302, Brookline, MA 02146. (617) 277-4360.

For common emergencies, dial 911.

Special Thanks

to **Veronica Smith** for her "review" and the \$10! (repeat); to **Vivian Vixen** (Massachusetts) for her poem thang; to **Doreen** for doing the Boudoir WOW, and the \$20!! (another repeat offender); to **Anna Maria Ferrari** for her article; to **Krystina DiEdoardo** for her article and \$10!; to **Kevin Horwitz** of the FTM Newsletter for granting a reprint right to his cartoon; to **Francis & Roxanna** for their \$20! donation!; to **Shannon T.** of Montana for her \$25! order/donation!; to **Vera Rae H.** of Baltimore for her \$24 order of every \$2 back issue!; to **Boxholder** for the \$2 order; and to **Chris Moran** for the \$5 order, and the "sympathy" card used on the front cover. Special Thanx to **Kym Richards** of *Cross-Talk* for correcting my deranged prediction that "Dear Siblings" would be in issue #40, it will be in #41.

Gratuitious Filler

Back issues of **TV Gulse** (April, May & June '91) are still available by mail for one-fifty (\$1.50) each, postage paid; the July, August, September, October, November, Dec/Jan & Feb/Mar (91/92) issues are available for two bucks (\$2.00) each, postage paid. The April/May/June, July/August, Sept/Oct & Nov/Dec/Jan (92/93) and Feb/Mar '93 issues of **GenderFlex** are available for \$2 each. All postage paid will be first class USA only.

Contributions (articles, letters, etc.), and faith donations (cash preferred) will be gladly, joyously, gratefully accepted. Future issues will be mailed on a month-to-month basis for \$2.00 each, paid in advance (please include your address and make checks payable to Billie Jean Jones).

Upcoming (Mostly) Local Events

Mar 25— ETVC presents "A Magic Makeover Show" with Louise Carroll, owner of Continental Wig Salon. 8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. \$5, guests \$8.

Mar 26— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

Mar 27— SGA Monthly Social at JTC, 8pm (7pm if you want dinner). \$2 members, \$4 guests.

Mar 28— Empress XI Yvette and Empress XVIII Stacy present Monte Carlo Night at Faces, 20th & K St. Sac, 5pm \$5 buy in.

April 2— A Dinner (8-9:30pm) & Variety Show (10pm) at the Western, 2001 K St. Sac. to benefit Hope House & Fairy Godfather Fund, no cover.

April 2— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

April 6— CGNIE Court Imperial Pot Luck, 7:30pm at Faces (20th & K Sts., Sac.). Open to all, bring food, no charge.

April 6— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

April 8— ETVC's SOS meets 8pm, TBA, call (415) 664-1499.

April 9— Gender Discussion Group, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations okay.

April 11— FTM Informational Meeting, 2-5pm @ MCC Church, 150 Eureka St, San Francisco.

April 16— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

April 17— SGA Executive Committee Meeting, 7:30m at JTC. Open to all, no charge.

April 19— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

April 21— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

April 22— ETVC Couples, 8pm, Antioch, (415) 664-1499.

April 24— Sacramento Imperial Coronation presented by Emperor Paul and Empress Stacy, 7pm, \$20, Turn Verein Hall, 3349 J Street, Sac.

April 24— SGA Monthly Social at JTC, 8pm (7pm if you want dinner). \$2 members, \$4 guests.

April 25— March On Washington. Washington, DC.

April 28-May 2— "California Dreamin' '93" in Burbank, CA. \$185 (full event). California Dreamin' POB 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686. Host Hotel- \$73 per night (reg. by 4/14).

(The events may be attended in drag [dressed as a girl], drab [dressed as a boy] or blend [be laconic enough not to dress].)

April 29— ETVC presents "Prom Night." Relive the horrors of high (low?) school on your own terms. Diva DJ plus 3 categories for Prom Queen Contest: Elegant; Geeky & Bizarre, 8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. Members \$3, guests \$5.

April 30— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

May 4— CGNIE Court Imperial Meeting, 7:30pm at Faces (20th & K Sts., Sac.). Open to all, no charge

May 4— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

May 5— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

May 7— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

May 12-16— 4th annual "Espirit '93" in Port Angeles, Washington. \$135 before 4/17, \$150 after. Espirit '93 POB 873, Kirkland, WA 98083-0873. Host Hotel- \$60-85 per night.

May 13— ETVC's SOS Group meets at 7:30pm, TBA. Call (415) 664-1499.

May 15— SGA Executive Committee Meeting, 7:30m at JTC. Open to all, no charge.

May 17— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

May 19— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

May 21— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

May 20— ETVC Couples, 8pm, TBA, (415) 664-1499.

May 22— SGA Monthly Social at JTC, 8pm (7pm if you want dinner). \$2 members, \$4 guests.

May 27— ETVC's monthly social, 8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. Members \$3-5, guests \$5-8.

May 28— Pacific Center's TV/TS Mixed Rap, 8-9:50pm, 2712 Telegraph, Berkeley, donations requested.

Every Wednesday Night— ETVC "Hang-out Night" at the Chez Mollet; prizes, discount food & beverage.

Every Friday Night— Café Lambda, 1931 L Street, Sac. Smoke-free, alcohol-free— no door charge.

Every Sunday Night— Bisexual support Group at Pac. Center, 7 to 8:50 pm, donations accepted.