



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 10, No. 6 • June 1996

RENAISSANCE

NGLTF Opens Employment Doors For ICTLEP

Friday through Sunday, April 19-21, 1996, representatives of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP) attended, exhibited and presented at Out and Equal in the 90's, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's (NGLTF) 5th Annual Conference on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Workplace Issues.

"And bisexual and transgender" was a resonating theme throughout the three day conference," noted ICTLEP Executive Director, Phyllis Randolph Frye. She continued that since her plea from the podium at the NGLTF's "Creating Change" conference in Detroit in November of last year, the Task Force has adopted a policy of full inclusion for the bisexual and transgender segments of the community. "The Task Force is now the second national organization where I can attend a convention and not continually have to fight for recognition of my people," Frye said proudly. (The first was the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, NLGLA, sponsor of the biannual Lavender Law Conference. NLGLA's next Lavender Law is 24-27 October 1996, in New Orleans.)

ICTLEP was represented by Frye, Secretary-Director, Dee McKellar, Documentation Law Director, Melinda Whiteway, and by Insurance and Health Law Moderator, Lisa Middleton. Two hundred brochures on transgender law and employment policy, prepared specifically for the conference, were distributed to those attending, including Human Resources staffers from corporations which currently protect their lesbian, gay and bisexual employees from discrimination, and officers of lesbian, gay and bisexual business and employee groups.

"A common comment was something like, 'Well, we'd kind of sluffed you tg folks off in the past, but now that we've met you and read your handouts and heard your presentations, we are going to become active in transgender inclusion for our groups back home'," reported McKellar. She reminded many attendees that transgenders were an integral part of the 1969 Stonewall riots, and have been systematically and incorrectly ignored or written out of lesbian, gay and bisexual history. "We were there, and we are still here," she reminded many.

In addition, *Victory* magazine, for lesbian and

gay entrepreneurs, volunteered to change its masthead cover to read "for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender businesses." They will be doing interviews with successful transgender business people, including Middleton, an out and highly placed insurance executive in San Francisco.

On Saturday night, the ICTLEP representatives met with the Bay Area Transgender Law Association (BATLAW) and exchanged many ideas and much encouragement. Next to ICTLEP, BATLAW is the second out and open transgender legal organization in the world.

"Employment and law are the keys to our freedom," said Frye. With a job, she explained, all of the family and social and religious ostracism can be borne, with difficulty, but can be borne. This is why "employment policy" is in the ICTLEP name. "And having employment protection in law," she continued, "protects transgenders when social and political climates shift." Currently Directors from both ICTLEP and It's Time America (ITA) the transgender political action arm, continue to work with representatives of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) on transgender inclusion for the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) for introduction in 1997.

"The Task Force must be commended for its reaching out in love and support to the transgender community with this and future events," Frye added. She also noted that she expects many representatives from corporate America and from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender business associations to attend ICTLEP's 5th Conference this July 3-7 in Houston. In addition to the usual legal updates on employment, insurance and health, documentation and general rights areas of law as they relate to transgenders, the conference will include special outreach to transgender law outside of the United States; on the legal issues of the non-transsexual (e.g., the hetero crossdresser and the gay drag); on the female to male and the masculine appearing women's community; and on the legal needs of transgender people of color.

For information on the July conference, contact Dee McKellar at ICTLEP. <ictlep@aol.com>



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 pm all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) for location and meeting times.

Affiliates

California

Orange County: Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <p poc@aol.com>

Connecticut

Bridgeport/New Haven: connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 Call 908-219-9094. Email: vikkimmotg@aol.com

Titusville: Meetings are beginning on June 8th at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing. Call Terri Risley at 609-933-2233.

New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332.

Long Island: New York GIRL & Partners, PO Box 456, Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-5115 for info.

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 3015, Lake Ronkonkoma, NY 11779-0147.

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Rachel Rudnick, P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

Pennsylvania

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Northeastern Pa. Transgender Alliance, NEPTGA, meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955.

The new **New Jersey Support** group will start as a Renaissance project as part of fulfilling our commitment to bring a new NJ chapter to life, and it will take the next step by becoming a Renaissance Affiliate. First, it will be time for electing officers. If you are interested call Terri Risley and attend the meeting.

Renaissance News & Views

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WWW - <http://www.ren.org>

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Articles, opinion pieces, and letters to the editor are always welcome. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to our editorial office care of Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020-0530. Or use email to <bensalem@epcn.com>. Complimentary and irate letters to the editor may be sent to the same address.

Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, make your check or M.O., payable to Renaissance and send it to our National office. Your contributions will help us continue our efforts to provide education about transgender issues. Donations can also be made through your local United Way agency.

Local Calendar

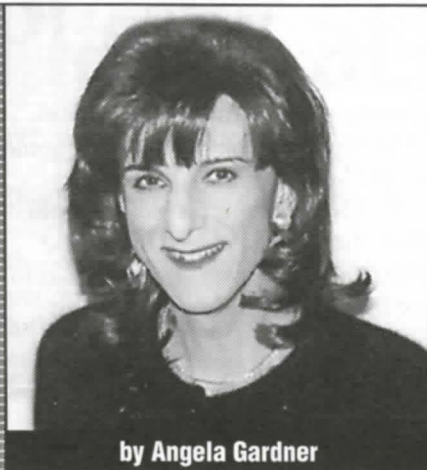
June

- 1 Ren. LSV meeting
- 8 New Jersey Support
- 8 Ren. Delaware
- 8 NEPTGA, Allentown, Pa.
- 15 Ren. GPC

July

- 6 Ren. LSV meeting
- 13 New Jersey Support
- 13 Ren. Delaware
- 13 NEPTGA, Allentown, Pa.
- 20 Ren. GPC

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

Well girls, I almost made it. One recent Sunday I decided to wear a fashion forward, New York City kind of outfit and when you dress for it there's only one place to show it off—New York, New York.

I put on my black tights, stacked heel patent Mary Janes, little black dress, denim jacket accessorized with a leopard print scarf and hit the New Jersey Turnpike for the Big Apple. Someone said that New York City is the world's biggest closet and I think that's true since nobody gives a six foot one red head a second look. (Well, a few looks at the gams from leg aficionados and a couple of inquiring gazes from German tourists.) That city is full of tall women who are fashion forward.

I lunched with a chum in the Village (a closet in a closet) and then headed uptown to shop. I walked all around the Rockefeller Center area and stopped at a couple of chi chi shops. Then, there it was... the **Fashion Cafe**, the home of haute, the hot bed of anorexic super models. I **had** to stop for a Martini. Unfortunately, I glanced at my Mona Lisa watch and found that my meter (they make you pay on Sundays in Midtown now!) was running out and Mona's big hand was too far around the dial to let me stop for a snort of chilled vodka. Darn. I was looking forward to careening down the turnpike in a vodka haze. (Seriously girls, don't drink and drive. Make your date take the wheel.)

Anyway, I guess I'll have to do the Fashion Cafe thing in a future trip. Soon! Now, here's the dish.

Johnson Keeps His Word

When **Don Johnson** first had a new series idea he promised network execs it would be trendy and modern with all the things an action packed cop show needs to succeed, like transvestites. Well, the show (*Nash Bridges*) was on a few times before he got around to featuring guys in dresses, but on April 19th he gave us what we wanted—**RuPaul** and a bevy of beauties. (Must have been about ten of them.) The girls were portraying "transgendered sex workers." Ooo! How politically correct. Anyway, it seems the TV hookers were being harassed and beaten up on one of their top money making streets. They did the sensible thing and went to the police, who didn't lock them up for soliciting but promised to help them out. One thing (looking through mug shots for the perp) leads to another (deciding that they need an undercover cop on the street) and RuPaul, who plays the den mother of the street queens, says the cops who volunteer for the duty just won't do. That includes the female detective, "You're too real."

Officer Cortez attracts Ru's gaze since he has nice slim hands and a good feminine build. He, of course, protests vehemently but is given the assignment. It's doubly tough on this poor macho boy (played glamorously by series regular Jamie P. Gomez) since his girlfriend has been kind of cold in bed lately. Now he finds himself in the station house men's room trying on hooker outfits and worrying

about his lip gloss. He disagrees angrily when Ru assures him that "This dress is you."

The funniest scene is when Cortez asks Nash Bridges for relationship advice while they use the urinals. Cortez is in full glam drag and Bridges has an amused look on his face.

The transgender sex worker plot is full of twists and turns and it's brought together with the other main plot in a clever and transgender friendly way. Cortez decides to keep his hooker outfit after the assignment ends but not for the reason you may think. I'll keep the good stuff quiet in case *Nash Bridges* lasts into reruns. Keep your heavily made up eyes open for a plot about a missing anti-armour missile launcher. Leave it to Don Johnson to tie together missiles and transvestites.

Wonder If he Wears A Cup, Or An "A" Cup?

How about that **Dennis Rodman**, huh girls? Here's one big time jock who's not afraid to show his feminine side. He attended a May fourth book signing in a feather boa and **Divine** like makeup. Dennis, cut down on the liner just a tad. But seriously, nobody in the sports world (Like I pay any attention to the sports world. My favorite sport is clearance sale bargain diving) has made a major deal out of Rodman's crossdressing, and he's been pretty up front about it, too. He's been quoted as saying, "To hang out in a gay bar or put on a sequined halter top makes me feel like a total person and not just a one-dimensional man." I suppose he doesn't get much name calling cause he plays a hell of a game of basketball. If he started to miss too many shots the sequined pump might be on the other foot.

The fashion editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* did a little name calling in a recent issue. He said, "Rodman is giving crossdressers a bad name." The writer, Roy Campbell, says Rodman dresses like a bad drag queen when he does show his femme side and he's "style clueless" no matter what gender he's expressing. I guess **Madonna** didn't like The Worm (Rodman's nick-

continued next page

News Beat...

name) for his fashion sense. Campbell recommends that Rodman tone down his makeup, "The makeup is supposed to give the illusion of being a woman, not a Halloween character." He could also take a tip from RuPaul and get a good corset. Then it's time for a designer shopping spree. Campbell touts leather catsuits from Thierry Mugler (don't ask me to pronounce that name) and sheer bodysuits from Jean Paul Gaultier teamed with skirts from Herve Leger. I really wish that Rodman would listen to Campbell's advice. Think of it... Dennis Rodman could be the first basketball player to endorse women's designer fashions instead of basketball shoes. It's a natural.

Rodman has said that he attributes his love of feminine finery to being raised with several sisters. Guess he just had to adapt to the hand me downs. Was that his older sister's feather boa he wore on *Saturday Night Live*? We'll have to ask his mom.

With guys like Rodman on the sports front, RuPaul in the entertainment world and **Howard Stern** as the Queen of all media it won't be long till we see a crossdressing president in the White House. Of course, maybe we already had one? Who's to say? I can hear it now, "I am not a crossdresser. That's J. Edgar's chemise."

I Shot Andy Warhol Hits The Theaters

It's finally out kids. A few years back, before Andy died in a completely non dramatic manner (the hospital screwed up) Andy was dramatically shot by a woman who wasn't really seeking her fifteen minutes of fame. She just wanted Andy dead. Her name was Valerie Solanas and she founded a group, of which she was the only member, called

SCUM—The Society for Cutting Up Men. In the loose manner of the Swinging Sixties she fell in with Andy and his wild Factory scene. She was actually introduced to the scene by one of Andy's male actresses, **Candy Dar-**

ling. Seems the three of them had a little bit of a thing, if you know what I mean. Valerie got over it and decided to waste the evil Andy. After he even let her appear in one of his films. Some people have no gratitude.

Candy Darling is played by **Stephen Dorf**, the lad who played the Beatle who died in *Backbeat*. I was anxious to see how well he did as the fabulous Candy so I rooted out the official *I Shot Andy Warhol* website, <http://www.filmzone.com/warhol/main.cgi>. (don't type that last dot into your browser. That's the end of my sentence.) Check it out. It's done in the wild Sixties pop art style with great photos of Dorf as Candy and you can download clips... if you've got a half hour or so to kill.

The May issue of *US* magazine had a photo layout of Dorf and I thought it might have a picture of him as Candy. No such luck. All the pictures are *exceedingly* macho. They're so macho I suspect Dorf did it to try and distance himself from the Candy character. One photo has him wearing a blonde wig slightly askew and sporting several days growth of beard. Some boys can be so threatened by panties and bras. Don't worry Stevie, we won't think you're a sissy. After all girls, he's dating *Clueless* star **Alicia Silverstone**. Cool? Like, totally! Two beautiful blondes.

Warhol's a Drag

People magazine jumped into the Warhol vortex by publishing a photo layout of what it called Andy in drag. Actually he was made up and wore several different wigs but no actual women's clothing. The photos were taken in 1981 by Christopher Makos and were inspired by Man Ray's photos of Marcel Duchamp as *his* femme alter ego. The photos were featured on the *People* website on April 28 and may still be out there. Search for *People* magazine and see if you can find them. They're very interesting. It makes you wonder how much faster drag in the BIG Apple would have caught on as an art form if Andy hadn't just promoted queens but came out as one himself. Guess we'll never be able to gaze into that alternate reality.

Just Like a Creep

Our favorite male actor in a dress would have to be **Adrian Pasdar**, the heroine of that charming British crossdressing flick, *Just Like a Woman*. Well, I don't know if it's creeping Dorfism or just the desire to play very different characters but Adrian is starring in a series for Fox-TV called *Profit*. Pasdar has the title role and boy his character slime. This guy has the conscience of a clam. While it's good to know Pasdar is still working but it's a pity he's gotta be such a creep. Oh well, I guess some girls find that kind of guy attractive... gee, maybe he'll buy me a drink at the Fashion Cafe... nah.

Last Minute Musing

Bille Jaye West is back! As she pointed out, she never went away, but as you may know—if you're a loyal reader—she's our Kuwait correspondent and while there was a run on guy-in-dresses-news there for awhile, lately the *Arab Times* hasn't had much in the transgendered news line. Finally Billie found two pieces of TG interest and passed them on via air mail express.

Those Saudis are more pious about crossdressing than the Christian Coalition. They jailed 20 Filipinos for throwing a "homosexual birthday party" with a beauty contest featuring men in dresses. Of course, the Saudis have a law that bans gatherings of more than five people so it didn't matter how they were dressed.

In India they elect their men in dresses. One Kali Hijra, one of the Indian Eunuchs is running for office in Patna, India. Her platform? "People believe in what I promise because they know as a eunuch I cannot be lured with wealth, women or sex." Well, I can see her not being lured by women and sex but those sarrees can get a tad expensive, wouldn't wealth still be a consideration? How about a pair of silk stockings? Good luck with your political aspirations Kali, and while you clean up the Indian Parliament see what you can do about their fashion sense. See ya next month kittens.



All Blues: Playin' at Pride Fest

by Helen Davis (Del. Chapter Leader)

I've known Terri Arnaldi for more than two years. Shortly after I met her, she told me she was thinking of starting a crossdressing blues band. I found the idea intriguing; a group of us girls in dresses and high heels playing the blues in both gay and straight clubs. It would be a fantastic way for us to do outreach without preaching or protesting. There was just one thing wrong, I didn't like the blues. I play the electric bass and I've thought of starting a jazz ensemble or a rhythm and blues band, but an all blues band, no way! But over the course of the past 2 years, I've gotten to know Terri a lot better and I've come to like her a lot, so when she approached me in April about the possibility of playing a gig with her at the Philadelphia Pridefest on May 5th, I told her "Sure, why not."

So over the next four weeks, we got together at Terri's North Philadelphia studio to play the blues. Me, I'm an amateur bass player. Terri, on the other hand, is a professional musician well known in the Philadelphia music scene. That became clear during our first practice in which she taught me the blues and I attempted to keep up. We attempted to recruit some of our CD friends who were also musicians, but for one reason or another, they all declined. So Terri came out to a few of her buddies in the music industry and they agreed to sit in with us.

Then after weeks and weeks of driv-

ing back and forth between Delaware and Philadelphia to practice, Pridefest finally arrived. I was surprised by the way I felt. I wasn't nervous at all, even though this would be my **first** public performance. We'll, maybe I was a little nervous, but I was more concerned with the way I looked than with how I would play; a true drag queen to the heart.

When Terri and I first took the stage, I think the people in the audience expected us to be a female impersonation act, lip synching to *Won't you come home Bill Bailey* or something like that, because when we started bringing up amps and guitars and setting up keyboards and drums, a buzz went through the audience. People were pointing, saying things like "What are they gonna do? Look they've got instruments..." and things of that nature. After tuning up and taking a quick sound check, it was time to play. Now—I was nervous. I was wearing a short navy blue dress with white polka dots, white nylons and white 5 inch stilettoes... and my legs were wobbling. Terri, wearing a silver turtleneck column dress, black & silver sparkling pantyhose and sensible silver pumps, was as cool as a cucumber. Playing in front of 300 or 400 people was nothing new to her. Before the MC could even introduce us, she grabbed the microphone and yelled out "How is everybody doing?!" Then the MC did introduce us and finally it was time to play.

I consider myself to be a very honest person, so I have to tell you the truth. Girls, we killed them. From our first number, *Goin' to Chicago* until we played the final note of our last song *Juanita*, which Terri wrote, the crowd was whooping and yelling back to us and dancing in the streets. I loved it! They did not expect this from us. We had caught them completely off guard. The only mistake I made came while we were playing our second song. I was thumping my way through a blues chord and looking at my fingers. Then I decided to look up at the crowd. Just as I did this 7 foot blond drag queen named Dora Jar came walking past. I was so shocked that I completely stopped playing. After that, I didn't look into the audience again. When our set was over, people from the audience came over to us and told us what a fantastic job we had done. The MC said he wanted Terri to appear on his radio talk show and the engineer told us that he could produce our entire show next time, with stage lights and everything, if we wanted him to. It was wonderful, I wouldn't have missed it for the world! When Terri first approached me back in 1994 with this idea, I didn't care too much for the blues, and when she asked me in April to play with her, I almost told her no. However, I am thankful that I said yes. Thanks to Terri, I now love the blues!



Mon. -Thur. - Fri.: 9:00 to 9:00 • Tue. - Wed. - Sat.: 9:00 to 5:30

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Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Breastforms And Didn't Know Who To Ask

How to measure for a bra.

They will do all of the measuring at the store, but it's better to go in with an idea of what you'd like so that you're not tempted to get forms that are too large (if passing is your goal).

Bras have two measurements: the bandwidth and cup size. To determine your bandwidth, simply put the tape measure around your ribs about an inch below your chest muscles. Hold the tape parallel with the floor, put your arms to your sides and take a medium-sized breath. The tape should be snug, but not tight. This is your bandwidth. The other measurement, cup size, is the difference between your bandwidth and the fullest part of your bust. It's designated by letters, so an A-cup is 1" more than your bandwidth, B=2", C=3", etc. For instance, a 36B has a bandwidth of 34 and is 36 inches around the fullest part of the cup. Once you have your bandwidth, you simply need to determine what size you'd like to be.

Reasons why it may be difficult to receive a professional fitting (Please read this!)

For women that have had breast cancer, the experience can be devastating, both physically and emotionally. The fitter I had explained that the loss of a breast is a very painful blow to a person's self-image and sense of femininity. Many women have a very hard time looking in a mirror after surgery. Many women also experience rejection from family, spouse or loved-ones (Does this sound familiar?)

Because of this, stores that sell breast forms and offer professional fittings offer an atmosphere that is very private, and also male-free. My fitter said some women may be very vocal about this privacy if it is "violated", and the store can suffer because of it (both financially because of lost business, and reputation in the post-surgery community.) If you wish to be professionally fitted for breast forms, it would be a

good idea to respect these wishes. (To promote more shops doing business in the TG community.) Call first and inquire whether a shop can help. Some stores will not do so (see above reasons), but many more stores are seeing the opportunity in the TG community and are very friendly and willing to help. Expect personal fittings to be arranged at low-traffic times or after-hours to lower the chances of conflict with other customers.

Manufacturers of Commercial Breast Forms

Forms and Accessories Key:

STri=Symmetric Triangle
ATri=Assymetric Triangle
STD= Symmetric Teardrop
ATD=Assymetric Teardrop
SHS= Symmetric Heartshape
TSh=Thin Shell
Attach=Attachable Form
Nipp=Attachable Nipple
Foam= Foam/cotton batting Form
Bra=Mastectomy Bras

Active, Inc.

Phone: 1-800-562-4290
Address: 125 Peekstok Rd.
Kalamazoo, Mi. 49001
Product Line: Stri, Atri, STD, ATD, SHS, TSh, Foam, Nipp, Bra (silicone forms are translucent and come in 3 shades: "light", "medium" & "dark" skin tones)

Airway

Phone: 1-800-543-0458
Address: 3960 Rosslyn Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45209
Product Line: Stri, STD, ATD, SHS, TSh, Foam, Bra

Almost U

Phone: 1-800-626-6007 (1-914-737-5976 in NY)
FAX: 1-914-739-8987
Address: P.O. Box 2032
Peekskill, NY 10566
Product Line: STD, ATD

Amoena Corporation (owned by Coloplast(Discrene) now)

Phone: 1-800-926-6362
Fax: 1-404-426-6332
Address: 1955 West Oak Circle,
Marietta, Georgia 30062
Product Line: Stri, ATri, STD, ATD, SHS, TSh, Attach(Stri, Atri), Foam,

Nipp, Bra (silicone forms come in three different skin tones.)

Camp International, Inc.

Phone: 1-517-787-1600
Address: P.O. Box 89,
Jackson, MI 49204-0089
Product Line: Stri, Atri, STD, TSh, Foam, Bra

Discrene (Coloplast, Inc.)

Phone: 1-800-237-4555
Address: 5610 W. Sligh Avenue
Suite 100-C, Tampa, FL 33634-4468
Product Line: Attach(STri), Nipp

Freeman Orthotics and Prosthetics

Phone: 1-800-253-2091
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Product Line: Stri, STD, ATD, TSh, Attach, Foam, Nipp, Bra
Nearly Me (owned by Spenco Medical Corp.)
Phone: 1-800-877-3626
Address: P.O. Box 2501
Waco, TX 76702-2501

Retailers/suppliers of breast forms

(Please note the [TG Friendly] mark after some retailers. These are companies that explicitly seek the business of the TG community. If this mark is not present, it is because the status is not known at this time.)

Best Value Products

[TG Friendly]
Phone: 1-215-782-9024
Fax: 1-215-782-9180
Address: P.O. Box 156, Dept. EM
Wyncote, PA 19095-0156
Email/Web: bvp@cpn.com, <http://www.cdspub.com/bvp11.html>
Product Line: Symmetric teardrop and symmetric heartshape silicone form with preformed and colored nipples.
Size&Price: B, C, D, DD. 396.15\$/pair. Optional adhesive&remover with form: 431.00/pair.

continued on page 14

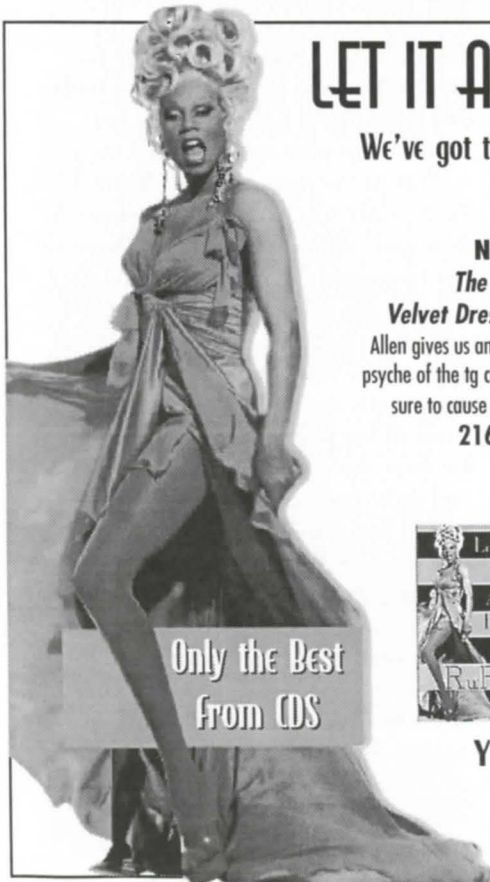


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NEW ARRIVAL!

Transgender Warriors by Leslie Fineberg
Feinberg chronicles tg people thruout time & across cultures, woven into a personal narrative
212 pages, \$28.50



Lettin It All Hang Out
Part autobiography and part How-To Manual.
228 pages, \$21.00



Gender Outlaw
Bornstein celebrates the power of claiming an identity without getting mired in identity politics.
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In last month's column I mentioned a case where the Salt Lake City Tri-Ess chapter ousted one of its members. Last week, I received a letter from one of the leaders of that group in which she detailed the reasons why they took such drastic action. Unfortunately for you, my readers, the reasons were well grounded and not at all the type of salacious gossip mongering I was hoping to report back to you.

You see, I remember a situation here at Renaissance when one of the members insisted on showing up at the meetings dressed in a black vinyl minidress, fishnet stocking and a studied dog collar and crawling around on all fours saying, "Spank me! Spank me!" Our leadership felt it necessary to take action to prevent that kind of behavior and issued an ultimatum to the individual in question.

And it worked. I don't do that at meetings anymore and now I'm a member in good standing with my own newsletter column. Speaking of which...

You're Such A Flirt

The *Transgenderist* newsletter of the TGIC group in Albany, New York reprinted an article about flirtation which originally appeared in the *New York Times*.

The article mentioned several serious scientific studies of human flirtation behaviors. Humans have certain sex-specific flirtation behaviors that can be identified as preludes to the mating process. "We still go through the ritual of courtship much like our mammalian ancestors," according to Dr. David Givens, one of the anthropologists who studies this sort of thing

in depth. "These (flirtation) gestures are subcortical, regulated by the more primitive part of our brain. They have nothing to do with the intellect, with our great neocortex."

Because we are a highly evolved species (supposedly), the basic behavioral functions of flirtation and courtship may be buried under our rationalizations about why we act a certain way. But at the core, it's all about attracting someone, judging them as suitable or not, then proceeding to the mating process. Especially in species where the presence of two parents appreciably enhances the survival of the offspring, this process is drawn out longer than in other species. The "coyness" ritual ("playing hard to get") of the female is really a test to see whether the male is likely to abandon her once the mating takes place. Conversely, the male, who has a lesser biological responsibility, will often read the simplest female interest as a sign that all signals are "go"—when in fact we know they most often are not. "There is a huge sex difference in how effective different tactics are," said Dr. David Buss, a psychologist and author on this subject.

For crossdressers, it is interesting to keep in mind some of our overtly feminine gestures and postures we affect as part of our own ritual are actually designed to attract male mating partners on a subconscious level. The oft-heard remark that "all the guys were giving me the eye" on the dance floor, or the walk to the ladies room, is not so far fetched given that "women... tend to promenade...both to scout and to be seen" by potential mates, as was found in Dr. Givens's studies. In a study by

Dr. Monica Moore of Webster University, she found that men are more likely to approach females who send flirtation signals—even more so than women who are rated as ore physically attractive. Something to keep in mind the next time you're out in public. It really is a jungle out there.

Strength of Character

Philadelphia Weekly is a mainstream newspaper distributed in and around downtown Philadelphia. Its cover story on April tenth, by Megan Breslin, was titled *A Question of Identity*. The lengthy article told the story of Rhonda, a graduating student at Bryn Mawr College, and the controversy that brewed during her time there as a student.

Rhonda (she preferred not to divulge her last name) is a person born with bilateral intersexuality, a condition in which one's gender status falls "between the sexes." After a troubled childhood and adolescence without professional care, she finally received appropriate medical treatment and forged an adult life as a female. In a remarkable story of inner strength and determination, she got herself to the point where she was admitted to exclusive Bryn Mawr College in her late thirties to pursue an undergrad degree.

Part of the reason for her interest in Bryn Mawr was what she hoped would be a more liberal atmosphere. Because her treatment did not begin until after puberty she still had some noticeable masculine features, although her total appearance was gender ambiguous. Apparently not ambiguous enough for some of her fellow students however because she was subjected to ostracism and quite open concerns that a transvestite had somehow crashed the women-only Bryn Mawr sorority.

The paranoia reached its peak when the administration's medical staff began investigating her background to determine just "what" she was. Only when her back was literally pushed against the wall did Rhonda consult an attorney and even then quietly told the administration to watch their step lest they forfeit their multimillion dollar endowment in a messy lawsuit.

After enduring the slings and arrows of outrageous illiberalism for her years there, Rhonda finally wrote and open letter to the college paper explaining to everyone just what her true story was. One can only wonder whether, and to what degree, some of her detractors felt shame for having slurred her behind her back after they read the tragic struggle of her life.

By the time you read this Rhonda will have graduated, with plans for law school. To be fair to everyone, Rhonda did have supporters before and during her worst times at Bryn Mawr. This excellent article (with other details too numerous to bring out in this forum) showed there are unsung—and unassuming—heroes right in our midst.

You Got Questions, We Got Answers

Fiesta! is the newsletter of the New Mexico chapter of Tri-Ess in Albuquerque and they published an article by a member named Vicki A. titled *What Are the Rules?*

Vicki wonders about the “rules of crossdressing.” It’s not readily apparent whether Vicki really believes there are a set of rules for crossdressers, but her questions are posed in such an earnest fashion that it seems likely that she believes there are some easily defined boundaries to keep us all from going hog wild.

A sample of some of her questions are: “Can I dress in a formal gown, business attire or causal wear? Can I pierce my ears? How feminine can my everyday attire become without pushing the envelope of acceptability?” You get the idea.

As a service not only to Vicki but also to other concerned crossdressers out there in Vis a Vis-land, I will answer a few of Vicki’s actual questions so we don’t have a bunch of loose cannons out there crossdressing however they damn well please. Shoot, baby.

“Am I allowed to wear panties under my everyday attire?” Yes, just make sure they’re clean in case you’re in an accident.

“If I can wear panties, can I wear pantyhose?” Hey, look, you’re a beginner. I said you can wear panties, but

don’t push it.

“Should my blouse be of ruffles and lace, or should it be of a more plain material?” I was afraid you were going to ask that one. Check back with me on that, hon.

“Can I grow my hair long so I don’t have to wear a wig?” Yes, but only if you don’t have to comb it from one side of your head to the other to cover male pattern baldness.

“How long can I let my hair grow and still have it considered acceptable?” Can we please move on, already?

Long enough that I can put it in a ponytail or wear it piled up on top?” You’re starting to get on my nerves.

“Is there a line where my crossdressing becomes perverted?” I’ll refer you to the anecdote above about vinyl miniskirts, fishnets and saying “spank me” at group meetings.

“Do I have to separate the two sides so that one is completely male and the other female, and can these two sides ever mix and mingle?” There are times when the two sides can mix and mingle but only under the care of trained professionals and an attendant with a tranquilizer gun.

“What are the rules for being a crossdresser?” If I told you now, you wouldn’t need to read my column every month, so dream on.

“And who made them up?” That would be me. (Diabolical laughter... Fade to black.)

How About A Quickie? Or Two?

The Sooner Belle newsletter of the COTA group in Oklahoma City had a front page article by Linda and Vanessa Kaye titled *Prisoner or Guard?*

Linda and Vanessa (husband and wife) tell the story of a picnic they had. They thought they had picked a secluded place when, viola!—Several thousand (or so it seemed) fellow picnickers appeared. When Vanessa (the crossdresser. Sorry.) told Linda she felt a little uncomfortable, Linda said they had “as much right to be here as anyone else.”

From that simple realization came an interesting thought. Nowadays,

families with any number of formerly “shameful” problems can only address them openly and their openness in acknowledging the problem becomes their strength. The public in turn has come to accept and encourage families working through difficult issues. Why not transgenderism? As the Kayes point out, “You, I, and our partners have a right to explore ourselves. We have nothing to be ashamed of.”

The Ingersoll Gender Center in Seattle, Washington published a letter from an unnamed European correspondent in their April newsletter. The writer referred to the recent studies looking for biological “proofs” that may account for gender and sexual orientation.

The writer says that should such a biological proof be found, she would rather not know for herself. If a person who truly felt transsexual was found not to have the biological makeup (of a TS), would she then be forced to “drop out” of the program? If someone had built a life for themselves in the opposite gender, and then found out the biological proof showed negative, would that person then be a “fraud?” There are a lot of questions in life that are better left unasked... Lest you get an answer you don’t like.

And from the April ‘96 *Gender Euphoria* newsletter of the Boulton & Park Society came this nugget: “We have a feeling that Dina Amberle over at the *Renaissance News & Views* could be a very funny writer but all she seems to want to do is trash various folks.” The really funny part is my picture atop the column. If you try reading it as well as looking at the picture you’ll find I don’t criticize individuals that often for the simple foibles of being human. (Hey I’m human.) *Vis a Vis* was conceived by its original writer, Brenda Davidson as a forum to scrutinize anyone or group in the TG community who might be making a mistake, as I see it. After all, I **do** make the rules. Just kidding girls!





GenderReflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**
M.S.W., Ph.D.

The TG Consumer: Rights & Expectations

You as a transgender individual are a consumer like any other. You have money to spend and needs to be met. Do you approach such interactions with an expectation of respect and appreciation for your business? Or does the memory of past transactions contaminated by ridicule and frustration inhibit you with regard to examining products for quality, and holding service providers to a standard of courtesy?

A satisfactory consumer interaction begins with the expectation of quality products and service. To the extent that you are informed about the product or service you seek, you will be able to express your expectation in an unambiguous manner. However, if you are hobbled by anxiety, fear of others' judgment, and personal insecurity, all the product information in the world will do you little good. You will be treated with the respect you show for yourself and will be presented with the products that the sales person has been instructed to "move."

And do not think that over-compensating for insecurity or developing an "attitude" to ward off insensitive treatment will be effective. By acting arrogant and demanding you are more likely to elicit the very behavior you are trying to avoid. Efforts to intimidate others breed resentment rather than respect and retaliation follows fast.

Given that you are able to present yourself confidently and are well-informed about your objective, you may still find the shopping experience an unpleasant one. You may be identified as TG by the service provider and either treated disrespectfully or denied service. No one will come to your rescue. This is where Assertiveness 101 will pay for itself. Inquire of the provider if your request was understood and offer to repeat it. If appropriate,

ask if it is the store's policy for personnel to whisper, giggle, point at or laugh at its customers. Offer to overlook the offense if the person will get on with serving you. If further disrespect occurs, request the person's name and that of the manager.

If you are denied service insist on being given a reason. If you are insulted by a derogatory term referring to your TG status such as "you people" (or worse) you have several options: Identify yourself with pride as TG, entitled to and able to pay for the requested product or service. If reconsideration does not occur state that you will file a complaint of discrimination with the Human Rights Organization of that County as well as with the professional association(s) monitoring the industry involved. It behooves any consumer to be prepared in such an event but it is incumbent upon you as a TG individual or anyone belonging to vulnerable minority group, to be explicitly armed with solid information about how to exercise your rights as a consumer.

If you choose not to identify yourself as a TG individual and the provider of services does not identify you as being of a minority status, you cannot raise the issue of discrimination. Then the best strategy is to behave as an aggrieved consumer who will relentlessly seek satisfaction at levels above the service person. Sources tell me that service providers would rather serve someone with 2 heads than have to explain to their boss why they have allowed a scene to occur. Implementing this strategy implies a willingness on your part to state your dissatisfaction audibly and unequivocally and perhaps draw attention to yourself.

The pursuit of professional services such as medical, psychological or legal

present a special challenge for the consumer. The challenge comes in the difficulty of evaluating the quality of services offered as well as in dealing with providers who are generally endowed with higher status than the consumers of their services. TG consumers often feel even more vulnerable than the average client because of the myths about the TGed that still pervade the thinking of professionals. The belief that TGism is a mental disorder and therefore one will be dealing with a deranged, delusional person puts many professionals off. There is also the belief that one's other clients will be discouraged if they observe TG individuals being served in the same setting. The best way to avoid approaching the uninformed professional, who is also incompetent to serve you, is to utilize a resource list compiled by your local TG community organizations or by national associations devoted to serving TG consumers and setting standards for competent professional care.

Being a consumer is a difficult business. But that's what it's all about. Business! As a consumer you have something of value. Respect your power but don't flaunt it. Hold yourself in high regard and you maximize the chance that others will. Be prepared to go to bat for your right to be served; you may be paving the way for another consumer more vulnerable than you.



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The Three Legged Stool... Of Crossdressing

by Lee Cashin

There are three sides to a crossdresser: sexual, social and spiritual. They are like the legs of a three legged stool. If all three legs are not straight, even and strong, the stool will topple.

Every crossdresser starts out using crossdressing as a sexual outlet. Most of us never lose the sexual enjoyment of being "dressed up," it permeates our entire existence. The sensuous experience of putting on a satin bra and panty set... or pulling on a pair of pantyhose and slipping into a pair of three inch heels... or placing a silk slip or camisole on your body and then making up your face... the sensuality and suggestiveness of the whole process never leaves us, nor do we want it to. Perhaps it's ninety percent of our psyche, or the thought process characteristic of each of us?

Where does it all start? How did we become crossdressers? Is it genetic or learned? Most of us don't care. We all have to go through passages, unpleasant, but necessary. Guilt, shame, fear, remorse, loss, breakups, etc. all tend to mold us into compassionate, gentle and understanding people. We get to where we are by learning to accept who and what we are.

Sexual outlets come from many directions for crossdressers. Some have understanding wives who accept them one hundred percent; some have wives who tolerate their "hobby;" some meet and have heterosexual relationships with sympathetic women and some of us enjoy being a woman and pleasing men in a hetero/homosexual liaison. (If you are being the woman it's "heterosexual.") Many, too shy to form relationships, rely on masturbatory fantasies for their sexual outlet. however, whatever the outlet, sex is always a major ingredient of a crossdresser's life. Does this make us "bad?" I don't think so. Is sex "bad?" I think not.

The social part of being a crossdresser is equally important. We need acceptance and understanding by our peers. We need comfort and love from the people we love, we need

them to understand and accept who we are. This isn't always easy. We do appear "strange" to most outside the crossdressing community.

Crossdressing is not **fully out**, yet. Like the homosexual movement that started some thirty years ago, it's now **our** turn. However, it may take an equal amount of time for full understanding... let alone acceptance.

Socializing, support groups, magazines, organizations and newsletters are all out there for us. They are making progress every day in bringing crossdressers together. These efforts are the first step in bringing our cause to the attention of society.

We are beautiful people that deserve to be recognized. That's a very subjective statement but permit me to elaborate. Without our crossdressing, acceptance and respect would be easily available from the overall community. Since we are crossdressers we must prove we are better people because of our crossdressing in order to win respect. Understanding both the male and female sides of our identities are what make us better people. It's up to us, through socializing, to make society aware of this fact.

Some of us "girls" have enough pioneering spirit to dress in public and "spread the word." We all admire these individuals but most of us are too shy to contribute in that way. However, we can... and should, help them behind the scenes.

If you're serious about crossdressing you should belong to a support group, subscribe to a transgender magazine or newsletter and join a national gender organization. they are all out there working for you. The more we get out, the faster we'll be accepted. Closets are no place to live!

The third, and perhaps most important side of a crossdresser is the spiritual side. Here we live with ourselves and our Higher Power... alone with the knowledge that we are good people deserving of love and respect. This side is not always easy to achieve. The pressure from the outside world is al-

ways with us.

Our self esteem is often affected by the lack of understanding of society and our peers. This forces many of us into closets of self reproach which in turn lowers our self esteem further. We must learn to live alone with who we are and seek comfort through our Higher Power. "*To thine own self be true.*" Loving yourself is the first step toward loving others. Crossdressers can never gain acceptance until we love others and understand their reluctance to accept us.

It has been my experience with crossdressers that they are compassionate, gentle, considerate and willing to help others. Are we different from mainstream society? No, except we wear dresses. Any "difference" comes from this experience of discovering the woman within us and allowing the expression of our innate femininity.

A crossdresser is like a marriage... you must work hard at it in order for it to be successful and blossom. Crossdressers have two sides that must be accepted and understood. We must never forget this because it's what makes us unique. The two sides make us "special." This special difference give us the ability to cope with problems ahead... blending into mainstream society while enjoying our rare qualities. it's coming, but we have to make it happen faster.

Keep the stool steady and straight. Don't let any of the three legs shorten. Keep your resolve, seek support from your "sisters" and, most of all, be proud to be a crossdresser.



South Jersey Chapter Rises Again As New Jersey Support.

The new support group that has risen from the ashes of the old SJ Chapter will have its first meeting on June 8th at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing. The meeting will start at 8PM and directions can be obtained from the National Office, 610-975-9119 or from Terri Risley, acting group leader at 609-933-2233 after 6PM. Ask for Tom.

Hot Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"Everybody knows most people in the world are stupid."

— The Refreshments "Bandido"

This is a short column this month. I've had two college graduations, my Pocono weekend, and an unexpected death in the immediate family to contend with. I apologize for the brevity. I'll be back to regular length next month.

Let me start by dispelling a rumor. I received a phone call from Marie, secretary to **Dr. Stanley Beiber**, noted gender reassignment surgeon from Trinidad, Colorado. Marie has been receiving many phone calls asking of Dr. Beiber had passed away. No one seems to know where the rumor got started, but she asked me to tell you all that reports of Dr. Beiber's demise have been "greatly exaggerated," as Mark Twain said. Dr. Beiber is alive and well and still operating. He hasn't even been sick of late.

Along the lines of rumor comes a note off the net that a text file is being circulated called SRSDOG.TXT that claims to describe, in detail, how to perform MtF gender reassignment surgery on dogs, with the idea that you can learn all about GRS at home. As my high school Latin teacher used to say, "How stupid can you are?" If you've seen this file or hear about it, it is a hoax. Be warned.

Hanging in there with the SRS theme... A survey of Chinese middle school students, ages 13 to 19, found that 44.2 percent of the female students wished that they were boys. Reasons given were boys had greater freedom in Chinese culture, teachers paid more attention to boys, and that boys had better prospects as adults. Although Chinese culture has changed drastically in the last 20 years, Chinese families still prefer boys.

John Travolta is a hot Hollywood property these days, but if his star wanes again, perhaps he can get a job in one of the **La Cage** shows. According to **Kym Sedgewick**, Travolta's co-star in the film *Phenomenon*, Travolta does "impeccable impressions" of **Barbara Stanwyck** and **Katherine Hepburn**.

There's support groups and then there's **Resourceful Women**. RW is a San Francisco-based support organization of a few hundred women of wealth. Says one member, "You're not going to be judged for your money." An off-shoot of RW is the Women's Donor Network whose 75 members have an average net-worth of \$11 million and who make charitable contributions totaling \$30 million annually, mostly for women's education and economic independence. "A fetishists dream come true," is how one friend described *Barb Wire* starring the mammillary-enhanced **Pamela Lee Anderson**. Corsets, fishnets and thigh-high boots everywhere. Even under limited release (less than 1000 theaters), the movie is raking in the dough. Just wait until it hits video.

On to fashion news... Want a little philosophy with your cosmetics? **Stila** cosmetics packs a *bon mot* with each of its products. For example, inside your face powder you might find, "It is never too late to be what you might have been." That by George Elliott.

There's money in them thar clothes. The stock market pundits are talking about the next set of red-hot IPOs (Initial Public Offering) and they ain't Internet stocks. No, it's big-name designers that have everyone's attention. Donna Karan is set for an IPO sometime this month and it's sure to be a winner. In the past year, Estée Lauder, Tommy Hilfinger and St. John Knits have blown the socks off other IPOs. You heard it here.

Bob Mackie is back into the "special occasion" dress market. Mackie took a side trip into less extravagant couture, but found that he wanted to return to his first and most successful love—beads. Mackie says his new line will be much less expensive than his previous creations with some dresses selling for as "little as \$700." Hey, Bob, ship me a dozen of those beaded numbers.

Joining **RuPaul** as a spokesperson for M•A•C cosmetics is the unlikely personage of one **k.d.lang**. I say "unlikely" not because lang is a lesbian, but because up to now her "look" has been fresh-faced and sans-makeup. I guess she's working on a new look.

A little commentary on friendship... Some people have expressed the opinion that **Alison Laing** and I have parted ways. Nothing could be further from the truth. Alison and I share the bond of having co-created Renaissance, the CTO, GPAC and we serve on 2 boards of directors together. Beyond the tg community, Alison and I and our families spend a great deal of time together in non-tg related activities. Alison is among my closest personal friends and nothing, not Renaissance, not IFGE could ever come between us. We've learned to agree to disagree on some tg issues and that's a lesson many in this community would be wise to learn. True friendship is precious and priceless.

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Ms. Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

Making Sense Of It All

On Being Visible (Part Two)

Last month I described my emergence from gender confusion into personal responsibility for my life as a whole. I now live full time as a woman, a lifestyle which happens to be my particular resolution for my gender confusion. One would think that being visible to oneself and to the world in general would be a simple matter, for we are talking about a life of honesty, of truthfulness, of being true to oneself. And yet, given the web of relationships and expectations, and the shoulds and should nots into which we are all born—in terms of which we function, such visibility, with all of its simple honesty, can be an extremely complex and difficult matter.

It is in terms of this complexity that I am reminded of a recent personal experience in which it was temporarily important to deemphasize my gender change. It was a large family gathering which I attended somewhat masculinized, at least from the neck down. I wore a shirt, tie, dark slacks, a navy blue blazer, and traditional leather loafers. But my face and hair did not really fit into the masculine image I was reluctantly trying to convey.

I was very uncomfortable from the outset, more than I had expected would be the case. I received quite a few stares and felt I was being avoided. Generally speaking, I had an androgynous appearance. My body was dressed for the occasion, but my head was resistant, both inside and out. I found myself retreating within myself, not wanting to talk to anyone. I finally began to doze at the table while everyone else was dancing. I was probably perceived as being distant and unapproachable, perhaps even arrogant. But actually I was dancing alone on the inside and wanting desperately to join the dance of life on the outside. Returning home when it was all over was

like returning from a very bad dream.

Looking back on this experience, I can see that I did not feel visible in terms of the person I really am: a woman. Even if I had looked completely masculine, I would still have felt extremely uncomfortable. For it was difficult, if not impossible, to participate when I did not feel fully alive and fully present. Even when someone did reach out to me, I felt too divided in my appearance to respond as a whole person. I am not denying the fact that I was born a male, but it seems, at least in my case, that I cannot serve two masters. I was cross-dressed in reverse, and it did not work. I had wanted to help my family, to give them less to deal with, by downplaying my gender change, but I did not really help them or myself. What was intended to be of temporary help to others left me temporarily invisible in terms of my true sense of self.

Being truly visible seems to happen from the inside out, no matter how much I try to camouflage it or even to deny it. A poem I wrote describes the sense of human wholeness and thus the true visibility to which I am committed and which makes difficult an occasional attempt to please others at the expense of my true sense of self, no matter how well intentioned I may be. The poem is called...

I Buried You:

*I buried you alive,
but you refused to die.
I buried you
before we really met,
before I recognized
your beauty,
your soul,
your hopes and dreams.
I buried you,
because I never knew
that God ordained
your presence on this earth,
that you were meant to be,
to be with me.
And so now I want
to resurrect your life,*

*to greet you with open arms,
to welcome you back
from the living dead.
Yes, your death has been
a living death, for all along
I have courted you secretly,
saying "Hello!" when no one,
except maybe God,
was looking or listening.*

*Perhaps now, somehow,
we can live and die
together, you and I,
living openly as one,
till God's work with us
is truly done.*



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[TG Friendly]

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Notes: One person reported great dissatisfaction with the customer service of this company

Fantasies in Lace

[TG Friendly]

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[TG Friendly]

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JC Penney Catalog

Phone: 1-800-222-6161

Address: P.O. Box 2056,

Milwaukee, WI. 53210-2056

Product Line: Call and ask for the Jodee Catalog[TA 009-0423 A] (this is not a JC Penney Catalog.) This is the full line of Jodee brand forms and accessories. The info is valid only in the U.S.

Mystique Intimates

Phone: Unknown

Address: N.W. 36th Street

Virginia Gardens, FL 33166

Product Line: Unknown

Take A Walk On The Wildside

[TG Friendly]

Phone: 1-416-921-6112

Address: 161 Gerrard Street East Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5A 2E4

Hours: Sun, Mon: CLOSED Tue-Fri 10AM - 7PM Sat 10AM - 11PM

Email: info@wildside.org

Web: <http://www.wildside.org>

Product Line: Airway Ultra Teardrop(style no. 1850, assymetrical): 400\$/pr (price is Canadian\$, tax exempt, 2 yr. guarantee) Sizes: 4-11 (approx. 36A through a 44DD) Notes: This is a boutique in Toronto that caters exclusively to the TG community.

Tanya Brown's Prosthesis

Emporium(TP Brown)

[TG Friendly]

Phone: None listed

Address: P.O. Box 257

Windsor, OH 44099

Product Line: Simone W19(foam): 32\$/PR Nearly Me III: 405\$/PR Natural Touch Classic: 390\$/PR

Natural Touch(symmetric teardrop and heartshape):367\$/PR

Traditional(symmetric teardrop and heartshape):294\$/PR So Soft: 285\$/PR

Casual: 90\$/PR Attachable Nipples: 19.50\$/PR Almost U teardrop silicone form: 215\$/PR Notes: Catalog/newsletter available for \$1. [This may be incorrect, I wrote asking for one and it was sent free. The newsletter is a very good resource on its own about breast forms and I recommend it for that alone.] Tanya is a member of Tri-Ess.

Please send any comments, ideas or corrections to bloo@eskimo.com



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The Little Mac That Could

Older CPUs Can Still Surf The Web

by Maryann Kirkland

After years of being intimidated by computers and their owners, I finally got my first personal computer. A ten year old MacPlus was sitting asleep in Lynn Walker's apartment. Once the pride of Apple Computer (One whole Mb of RAM), it now draws looks and sounds of contempt. Lynn explained to me that the "Plus" is the "community computer," passed along to needy gender folk. Being unemployed, I certainly am needy.

The components sat on the kitchen table. The wife and I looked at the sleeping Mac with a mixture of apprehension and puzzlement. A beige box with a 9 inch screen—you call this a computer? So began my learning curve. This Mac is the "junkier car" I never rebuilt in my teenage years. Curiously, Apple Computer affectionately refers to the Plus as their "Model T." Just like the car, it was made in great quantity and they run almost forever.

Since I was a genuine dummy about computers, I started by reading *Macintosh for Dummies*. This book opened my eyes to the present reality—I had neither instruction manuals nor software disks. Both are usually included when you buy a new Mac. However, this Mac had an external hard drive which contained meager system software. Life was possible yet.

I am indebted to our own Cyberqueen for helping me take my first tiny little cybersteps. Upgrades were needed before going online. ("Upgrade" is a high tech synonym for "money.") A memory upgrade (4Mb), \$200 and software upgrade (System 7.1, \$25) were installed. Next step—find a compatible modem. Today the task is trivial, but six months ago, it seemed as insurmountable as finding the Holy Grail. Do not skimp on the modem purchase—buy a complete package: software, manual, high speed, and fax ability. Also, once the online bug bites you, a dedicated phone line is worth the money.

Then the big day arrived, time to go online. I called up my only version of AOL from my hard drive. After many failed attempts, I was compelled to call AOL tech service. When I described my newly upgraded system to him, he said I had no business trying to log on, that AOL doesn't support older Mac models. Finally he did relent and furnished me with the modem string I needed. Many AOL users may appreciate why I refer to AOL as "Aggravation On Line."

Newbies can cut their teeth on these popular online services as there is very little thinking involved. Everything you need is presented to you as a menu and it's all only one click away! But, you pay by the hour to be pampered and entertained! Full service Internet providers (now thousands of them!) function in the background. For a flat monthly charge you have unlimited access to the Wired World.

Within one month's time, I was logged on to both AOL and CompuServe—an achievement, considering I could not use the flood of software floppies & CD-ROM disks available. The Catch-22 rule holds well in cyberspace—If you can get on the Internet, you can download tons of software. But first you must have the minimum basics to get there.

Minimum Hardware Requirements: Mac or IBM

A CPU with at least 4Mb RAM (8Mb preferred).

Hard Drive, either internal or external for software storage.

High density 3.5 inch floppy drive (1.44 Mb drive).

Keyboard, mouse, monitor (B&W fine, Color—better).

Modem: 14,400 bits/sec at least (\$100 new). 28,800 is better.

Microprocessor: Mac Plus (68000 or better) IBM: 386 or better (286 &

H.D should work).

System With Luxuries:

Color Monitor (256 colors min.)

A printer.

16Mb or more of RAM

Faster CPU (PowerPC, Pentium).

Endless Storage—Removable drives (Iomega, Syquest).

Cost:

System: Minimum features: \$500.

System: Luxury features: \$750/\$1000.

System: New & awesome: \$1500/\$4000.

As you can see, you can have some "luxury" features for just a few dollars more. Actually these features are very standard on many computers, but if you do not have them—they appear to be "luxuries."

Getting Started:

Becoming computer literate requires time, some money and a committed effort to learning. After you buy your computer system, you will most likely acquire "cyber-euphoria" which will rob you of sleep and human interaction. But having the system is the best reason for finding out what it can do. Become a "sponge." Soak up everything about your computer's capabilities.

Some Sources of Information:

Computer bookstores.

Discount bookstores: Used computers go with used books.

Computer trade magazines.

Computer dealers & repair shops.

Computer user groups.

Locate your local Cyberqueen or Cyberprincess.

Contact me either online <maryannk@philly.infi.net> or by snail mail care of Renaissance.

Summary:

This article was written to illustrate the inexpensive option of buying used computer systems to reach the Internet for less than \$500. The system I put together from sheer necessity is actually working below my stated minimums. It can be done.



Dear Doctor

Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.
Send questions to PO Box 530, Bensalem, Pa. 19020

Dear Dr. Bill,

I am a male to female transsexual and I am preparing to begin my transition. My wife has stood by me through the trying times of self discovery and exploration I have gone through. Now that I have decided to transition we are faced with one more question. Will we have to get divorced? She is willing to stay my spouse (the word we will use instead of "husband" or "wife") and I want her to continue to have all the legal benefits available to any other spouse. What can you tell us concerning the necessity of a divorce?

Judith

Dear Judith,

You bring up a very important and timely issue that others have also struggled with. While I am not a lawyer and cannot give legal advise, I would like to pose a series of questions that you will need to get clarification on within your own legal jurisdiction. It may be costly to see a lawyer, but in the long run it will be well worth it. Laws are different in different states, but they are often very precise and technical.

First, if you go for a legal name change, how will that affect your spouse's legal status regarding your marriage and spousal benefits?

Second, when you apply for a legal change of gender on all your legal documents, how will this affect your spouse's status regarding benefits?

Third, if you are still married when you have genital reassignment surgery, will your spouse have to sign documents releasing the surgeon from any future liability from her.

Fourth, what are the insurance laws of your state that could affect her spousal rights and benefits?

Fifth, how are your rights and benefits affected if anything happens to your spouse?

Sixth, what are the legal ramifications if you or your spouse decide to end your marriage following reassignment surgery? What happens if it is not a mutually agreeable divorce?

There are probably other questions that I have not thought about, so it is important that you look at all the consequences of not divorcing, but going for reassignment surgery. Both you and your spouse need protection from the legal complications of your situation.

Dear Dr. Bill,

As a crossdresser one of my greatest thrills is to be addressed as "miss", or, when out with a female companion, hear

a maitre de say, "This way ladies" as he leads us to our table. It seems to me that lately I have been hearing the lovely things I like to hear more often. I guess the question I have is, am I hearing this more often because of my greater skills at passing, or are the people I deal with in public becoming more aware and tolerant of transgendered people?

Elaine

Dear Elaine,

The answer to your question is probably "both" are true. The more proficient you become in crossdressing, the more likelihood you will be able to pass in public. I also believe that the more experience you have in public, the more confidence you build in yourself and this can also be a factor in passing. A lot of people are "read" because of their insecurity and demeanor, not because they are not passable. I also believe that in many areas, especially big cities, there is more tolerance of differences. One of the benefits of media publicity, talk shows and movies that explore the transgender phenomenon, is that the public is more tolerant of the behavior, especially if the stories have been sensitive, educational and full of positive human emotion. I think one still needs to be very careful, however, when in smaller towns and conservative areas of the country. There is also a lot of hostility and intolerance out there in our world.



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BOOK NOOK

Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul, by Leslie

Feinberg (hardbound, 212 pages) Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1996. **Reviewed by Ms. Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D., Renaissance National Librarian.**

Leslie Feinberg's *Transgender Warriors* is a serious voice of passion speaking logically to both the transgender community and the public at large. Her book passionately proclaims the right of all people everywhere "to define, determine, or change their sex in any way they choose - whether female, male, or any point on the spectrum between. And that includes the right to physical ambiguity and contradiction." She goes on to say: "My goal in this book is to fashion history, politics, and theory into a steely weapon with which to defend a very oppressed segment of the population." Feinberg is thus both a writer and an activist in the cause of overcoming transgender oppression.

As a writer, Feinberg builds a logical case for the above proclamation out of her extensive and fascinating historical research. But as she herself points out, "Transgender Warriors is not an exhaustive trans history, or even the history of the rise and development of the modern trans movement. Instead, it is a fresh look at sex and gender in

history and the interrelationships of class, nationality, race, and sexuality." Feinberg is quite eloquent and even inspiring in the further clarification of her overall purpose both as a writer and as an activist:

"Today, a great deal of "gender theory" is abstracted from human experience. But if theory is not the crystallized resin of experience, it ceases to be a guide to action. I offer history, politics, and theory that live and breathe because they are rooted in the experience of real people who fought flesh-and-blood battles for freedom. And my work is not solely devoted to chronicling the past, but is a component of my organizing to help shape the future.


This is the heart of my life's work. When I clenched my fists and shouted back at slurs aimed to strip me of my humanity, this was the certainty behind my anger. When I sputtered in pain at well-meaning individuals who told me, 'I just don't get what you are?' - this is what I meant. Today, *Transgender Warriors* is my answer. This is the core of my pride."

It is the passionate yet logical use of history, therefore, which rivets the reader's attention throughout the book. The author covers much historical ground to clarify and to support the contemporary struggle against trans-

gender oppression. She begins with her own personal struggle as a masculine female who discovers in the study of history the roots of her own gender difficulties as well as the roots of transgender oppression in general. Feinberg shows the reader evidence, both prehistoric and historic, for transgendered behavior, such as among native Americans and in Joan of Arc and RuPaul. She then shows the development of transgender intolerance, bigotry, and oppression as part of the change from matriarchal to patriarchal society, the rise of ruling classes, and the emergence of Christianity. We are next given the history of effort on the part of activists - transgender warriors - to combat injustices against the transgender community, such as the Stonewall Rebellion in New York City on June 28, 1969. She also shows the close connection between the struggle of women and the struggle of the transgendered for greater self-expression. It is in terms of this historical perspective as a whole that Feinberg sees the basis for making history, that is, for bringing about social change in the direction of greater freedom for the transgendered and for all the oppressed. I should add the book is well illustrated throughout, with a separate section devoted to even more pictures of contemporary transgender warriors. Each picture is clarified with a commentary. Overall, I find *Transgender Warriors* to be truly educational and even inspiring. I am better for having read it.

(This book is available in the Renaissance Bookstore at GPC meetings.)





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Letters to the Editor

An Offer JoAnn Can't Refuse...

Dear Ms. Roberts,

I am relatively new to the community. I have been associated with the Boulton and Park Society since 1991 and have attended five Texas T Party conventions. I read "Renaissance" and a number of other community newsletters from across the United States and I can not understand what it is you have against the "T" Party or the Phillips.

I work with the Phillips two to three days a week several months prior to the "T" and I am in charge of the Tag Sale. If in fact the Phillips were only making, let's say \$20,000 on the high side per gender event, I am surprised they work so cheap. I doubt you can find anyone to work such a thankless job for so little money. Two people working 40 hours a week for 50 weeks a year comes to \$5.00 an hour. There is no benefits or insurance, reimbursement for wear and tear on the office equipment or your vehicle. Now if you deduct from the \$20,000 the capital required for next year's event, the grants to various individuals the Boulton and Park Society makes each year, plus telephone, stamps and printing expenses, and I am sure I left something out that brings the \$5.00 an hour the Phillips's are working for to even less.

The Texas T Party is the least expen-

sive of any gender event around and the only event that gives a price break to couples. Also Cynthia works with the hotel to get the least expensive room rates available plus this year a very nice breakfast was included in the room rate. As far as I know, the "T" Party is the only gender event that gives complimentary registration and meals to Virginia Prince.

Would you please come to the 9th Annual Texas "T" Party which again will be held in Dallas from March 11 to March 16. Then if you find something wrong with what we do, you can write about it first hand and not get second hand information from your news network. If you will come to the "T" I would like to treat you to the Wednesday night dinner on the town as we herd into the bus en femme and en masse. Who can resist a free dinner!

Yes, Cynthia and Linda Phillips were ready to quit because they were tired. We are hoping that word of mouth and the Internet will do more work for us this year. We personally talk to 75% of the attendees at least twice before the "T" even starts. There are a lot of scared crossdressers out there that need reassurance. They do not trust themselves and they certainly do not trust us. There is a lot more to putting on a gender event than lining up a hotel and arranging meals.

Please come to the next "T" and see where the money goes.

Sincerely, Bonnie B

Dear Bonnie,

Who can resist a free dinner? I can. I'm on a diet. All of the things you claim the Phillips do to make the "T" a great event are done by every organization

and/or person who puts on an event. However, my point was the "T" is presented to the community as an event sponsored by a not-for-profit organization which it is not. I think the "T" is a great event and recommend it to many people each year. But, please, don't pretend it's run on altruism.

Dear Eds, or Edwinas,

Congratulations on you're being online! However, I regret I won't be requesting (ordering or downloading anything from "ren." The reason is that on my server my email address is always followed conspicuously by my male name in parentheses. It's a standard rule. Mine is a non-commercial server. I suspect there are a lot of others out there (out here?) who are in the same position.

Love, Stella Bamvil

Dear Stella,

I have to point out three things: (1) It's totally up to you what appears after your email address when you send someone a message. (2) Your name only appears in *outgoing* messages. If you give someone your email address through snail mail or on a cocktail napkin, they won't learn your male name by sending you messages, unless you reply. (3) We would **never under any circumstances** reveal any information about any of our subscribers—for either the print or email editions. So, if you or anyone else would like the convenience of getting the text version of *News & Views* in their email box have no fears concerning security. We're on your side.



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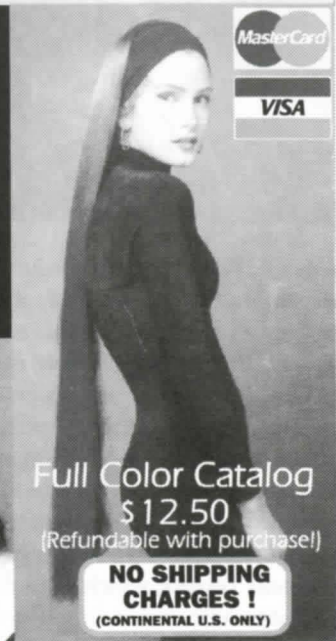
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May 4, 1996 proved to be an historic date in the Garden State, the date that three New Jersey "Gender Groups," Renaissance affiliate MOTG, Chi Delta Mu Tri-Ess, and Sigma Nu Rho Tri-Ess worked together to produce a stellar evening of entertainment, dinner, dancing, and informal social discourse. From the oversized Presidential Suite at the luxury Clarion Hotel and Towers, which served as a hospitality suite and changing area before and after dinner, to the friendly and professional hotel staff, the stage was set for this remarkable evening.

It was a celebration for the entire gender community, where husband and wife could dance together, freely express themselves, meet and exchange discourse with "drag queens," transsexuals, hermaphrodites, as well as admirers, both male and female. We even had a first time "public" cross-dresser who thanked us and others for making that "giant step" so easy. Labels? Who cared!

The vegetable crudité was adequate during the cocktail hour, as well as the

Dining With Babs

Starshine Over New Jersey: Prom Night

by Carol and Babs

salad that comprised the first course. The quality and portion size of the tender Chicken Française with steamed vegetables over wild rice was a pleasant surprise, as was the flexibility of the kitchen staff to accommodate some of the guests who requested special diet dishes—without prior notice. Our only complaint was the busboy kept taking our drinks away before we finished them! Voicing our complaint to the bartender resulted in free replacements! Dessert was a very tempting mocha cheesecake with a chocolate crust that taxed our will power...it also taxed Bab's waist cincher!

Music... Music... Music! Throughout the evening we danced to continuous music provided by DJ Karen Ward, who, whenever possible, filled our requests. Slow songs, Lindys, latin rhythms, a little disco, and yes, the *Electric Slide* too! Something for everyone to enjoy! Toward the end there were a lot of tired, but happy stockinged feet... everyone seemed to dance... no wallflowers!

The highlight of the evening was provided by our special entertainer, the reigning "Miss Drag New York City," the beautiful and talented songbird, Miss Victoria Weston. Impeccably attired in a classically inspired white gown with gold bars and trim on the bodice to tastefully, yet strongly, suggest décolletage, she made a stunning presence in her "bob" styled blonde wig. A sight suggesting the best

of Marilyn, Lana and Veronica Lake! Then she began to sing! We blinked and there was Judy Garland, then Helen O'Connell and Benny Goodman's band... a little country with Patsy Cline. The audience was transfixed as this midwestern "gal" gave us a glimpse of her unique background. We all enjoyed and related to her original lyrics and props used in her "junk food" song. Her finalé, an interpretation of Judy Garland's *Rock-a-Bye Your Baby* brought a spontaneous standing ovation from the audience... as well as for her encore, *Wind Beneath My Wings*. Outstanding! We've seen Victoria perform several times in NYC over the past few years and she gets better and better.. for both her stage presence and song, she gave her best to New Jersey!

In a novel, yet enthusiastically received twist, the Prom Queen was selected by an unbiased raffle. Marcia was given a large bouquet of roses, a cash prize, and became the object of an army of "envious" photographers. She looked "mahvelous!" For all of those guests who so wished, a professional photographer took snapshots in a reserved area of the ballroom.

NJ Prom Nite was conceived by Susan Lynette, the newly elected President of Chi Delta Mu. Susan not only organized the event, but also provided the lovely floral decorations as well! The problem will be how to make next year's affair even better!



Dermatologist...

twice daily. It probably works by an anti-androgen effect that turns down oil production and the production of free fatty acids in the follicle. This prescription medication should definitely be monitored by a dermatologist, because it can lower the blood pressure and cause accumulation of potassium, among other side effects.

You are doing well to use the Buf-

Puf. This removes excess oil and skin cells that cause obstruction of the follicles. A salicylic acid cleanser such as Sal-Ac is useful with the Buf-Puf.

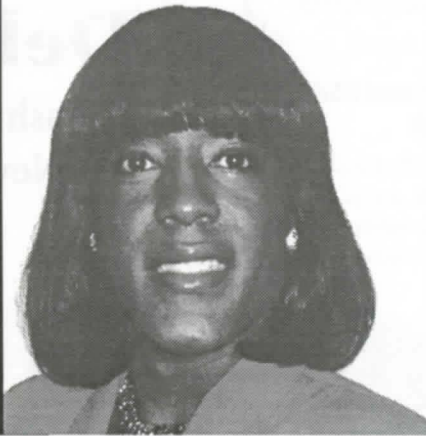
In treating acne, the dermatologist has access to an increasing number of beneficial products. One of my favorite regimens is Benzamycin with Retin-A. For patients with more sensitive skin, the erythromycin ointment, Akne-mycin, or topical clindamycin (Cleocin-T) solution are effective. Sulfacet-R is a drying lotion with a coloring agent that

can double as makeup in a pinch. It is certainly a good (and therapeutic) cover under makeup. The new topical azelaic acid (Azelex), seems to be as effective as Retin-A without the photosensitizing side effects. Water-base makeup is preferable to a moisturizing base, "moisture" usually means "oil." Most patients with acne have too much oil already. Medicine is making great strides to defeat this devilish disease, which has been a dermatological disaster at so many dances!



Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Greetings, girlfriends! Last month, I mentioned the slow, but eventual arrival of spring. This month, the weather theme, of a sort, continues. With summer right around the corner, I'm sure many of you are dying to hit the beach, resort or pool in your best looking swimsuit. If you've seen the pictures Angela displays in these pages each February, then I'm sure it makes you want to shimmy into your suit and strut your stuff. (Okay, Ange! I've plugged the Swimsuit feature! Do I get a raise?) But what if you don't have a suit and are unsure as to what kind to buy? Well, ladies, you're in luck, 'cause I have loads of juicy info to share that will help make your decision easier.

In late March, I was strolling through a local department store which had it's swimsuit collection prominently displayed. While ogling the gorgeous suits, I noticed a pamphlet at the register which lists all the different types of swimsuits one can buy, along with illustrations and descriptions of what they are. Grabbing one of these pamphlets, I thought this would make for a super cool, not to mention topical shopping column now that bikini season is near. While space prevents me from showing the illustrations, I will paint as best I can a mental picture of what each suit looks like while I give you the lowdown on them.

First, we have the Surplice, a style with fabric gathered across the bust on one side of the waist. This draws attention away from a large bust while the diagonal lines makes the waist look smaller. The Bandeau is a strapless suit ideal for sunning that works well for a

fuller busted figure. The Cumberbund style, where fabric is gathered dead center of the waist draws attention away from a large bust while giving the illusion of a small waistline. The Blouson, has a blouse like look which helps hide the midriff while maximizing a small bust or minimizing a large one. The Ruffled style, with anywhere from one to three tiers of ruffles, performs the same function as the Blouson.

The Tanksuit, a simple, uncomplicated, self explanatory style is best for those of you who might actually want to do some swimming. The Low Rise Bikini doesn't cover a thing. With its very low cut bottom, it leaves nothing to hide. If you have a paunch, or a rumor of one, don't even think about buying this type of suit, you'll just look silly. The other kind of two piece is the High Waist Bikini. The high, horizontal bottom of this style is good for hiding the tummy, still, it helps to have a flat stomach to make it or the Low Rise effective. Next is the Skater, a strapless one piece style with a skirt like bottom covering the thighs, while the Tunic/Sheath—a sort of minidress, covers both hips and thighs.

What style you choose is up to you, but here are some facts to consider when buying a swimsuit. According to the pamphlet—swimsuit sizes are different from dress sizes. To figure out your swimsuit size, take your dress size and go up one or two sizes. Case in point: if you wear a size 8 dress, you will be likely to wear a size 10 or 12 swimsuit. For most of us when it comes to swimsuits, the midriff and

waistline are a noticeable concern that can be addressed with a surplice, blouson or cummerbund. Detail on a top will add fullness to a small bust while dark colors seem to recede, thus creating a slimming effect for those of us with sizable hiplines and thighs.

Where to shop for a suit? Department stores are always a good bet because of the large selections and variety of suits. Almost every type of suit I've mentioned can be found at places like Penney's, and Sears, along with discount stores like Ross, Filene's Basement and Marshall's, just to name a few. But I urge you to shop now before all the best stuff is gone. And, of course, when it comes to shopping, don't be afraid to ask for help to make a swimsuit selection. There is also a magazine devoted to swimsuits and related wear. *Swimsuit USA* offers some excellent styles and various colors at remarkably good prices, nothing higher than sixty dollars.

Lastly, here's something you might find useful on your shopping excursions. I know this is a tad late to mention, but every Easter Sunday, it's a tradition for me to watch *The Ten Commandments*. It's one of my all-time favorite movies, and not just for the cheap thrills of watching Charlton Heston and the late, great Yul Brynner parade around in skirts. After I finished watching it this year, I was struck by a sudden and incredible inspiration that I will now share with all of you, my flock of loyal readers, something I proudly call: Jessica Brandon's Ten Commandments of Shopping. You'll find them on page 24.

Don't forget, I still need contributors for my column. Just send your tips, comments and opinions to me <treetop@voicenet.com>. And, for those of you who are wired to surf the web, check out the Renaissance homepage at <www.ren.org>, and you'll see yours truly there! In glorious color to boot! Way kewl, huh? Till next month, be smart, buy smart and look smart. Happy Shopping Sisters!





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Ask The Dermatologist

Dear Dermatologist,

I always seem to get little pieces of skin around my cuticles that peel back and sometimes get sore and red. I think they're called "hangnails?" They're annoying and they sure mess up the look of my nicely polished nails. This particularly seems to occur in the Winter. What causes this and how can I stop it?

Miss Shredding

Dear Shredding,

Hangnails are a manifestation of dry skin around the nail folds. Cold dry winter air is definitely an aggravating factor. (You might also notice that your nail plates are more brittle in winter.)

The worst thing you can do with a hangnail is peel it back. This causes a deeper injury to the skin, and possibly infection. You *may* clip it cautiously with a cuticle scissors, being careful not to break the skin.

There are several excellent ways to prevent hangnails. If the skin is not broken, a 12 percent lactic acid lotion (LacHydrin) worn overnight under Saran Wrap will normalize the integrity of the top layer, and hydrate the skin. Bag Balm and Vitamin E oil are also effective and, unlike LacHydrin, available without a prescription. Enjoy soft, feminine hands, Miss Shrednomore!

Dear Dermatologist,

I am in my 30's and still find myself getting pimples. Sometimes, usually when I have a date or other social function, I will develop a real doozy somewhere that all the world can see. (My chin line or right beside my nose are two of the commonest.) Nothing looks as unhip as a strapless dress, heels and angry red facial lump. (It's hard to even camouflage them with makeup.) I wash my face and I use a Buff Puff every day. How

can I stop these evil things? Also, I have heard it's dangerous to pop a pimple. Is this true?

Kathy

Dear Kathy,

Your question on manipulating pimples is one of the most significant in dermatology. My advice is simple: Don't do it! If you

are squeezing a hard, painful "undergrounder," you have little to gain. The pus is poorly organized, and the manipulation will cause even more swelling and pain. You may have a lot to lose. In breaking the skin, you may inoculate the area with Staph from your fingers, thus causing a local infection called an ecthyma. The center of the face is the worst possible area for this to happen. The bridge of the nose and the corners of the mouth form the "critical triangle" of the face. This area drains directly backward into the venous sinuses of the brain. Manipulation in this area may cause a retrograde flow of bacteria back into the brain, with possibly critical consequences such as blood clots or encephalitis.

So what do you do with these undergrounders? If you need a quick resolution, a dermatologist can inject the lesion with a tiny dose of corticosteroid. Hot compresses may cause the lesion to drain spontaneously. Antibiotics sometimes help, the most effective being minocycline, tetracycline, and erythromycin. Frequent application of Benzamycin, a gel containing erythromycin and 5% benzoyl peroxide, has both drying and antibacterial effects, both of which are beneficial.

If you frequently get these painful red nodular lesions, the potassium-sparing diuretic spironolactone has been helpful. The dose is 25 to 50mg

continued on page 20



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Jessica's Ten Commandments of Shopping

I

- I Thou shalt spend wisely and sensibly.**
- II Thou shalt buy quality, not quantity.**
- III Thou shalt buy clothing to match thine age.**
- IV Thou shalt not scrimp when it comes to shoes.**
- V Thou shalt save thy receipts.**

II

- VI Thou shalt not buy cosmetics at the drug store.**
- VII Thou shalt not buy wigs through mail order.**
- VIII Thou shalt look at all times for sales.**
- IX Thou shalt demand good customer service.**
- X Thou shalt remember: "Cash is queen! No matter how thou art dressed!"**

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Dear *Renaissance* Member,

Enclosed is a research survey put out by a student at the University of North Carolina. The student is attempting to find answers to many of the questions surrounding why we are the way we are . Please take some of your time and fill out the questionnaire. When you have answered everything please mail it to the Renaissance Office. The address is above. Please put the completed survey in the mail no later June 20, 1996. Don't put your name or address anywhere on the survey. The researcher does not want to know your identity. By having us mail all the completed forms to her you will be kept totally anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the form and as soon as the survey results are released you can read all about them in *Renaissance* News & Views.

Renaissance



UNCC H A R L O T T E

Social Influence and Happiness Questionnaire — 1996 —

Hilary H. Edwards, Investigator
University of North Carolina - Charlotte

Informed Consent Statement

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY:

This project is being conducted as part of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree from the Department of Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. It is designed to measure male transgender activity. Your participation is completely *voluntary*. You do not have to complete this survey. You may skip any question you do not wish to answer. Most of the questions are of a personal nature. You need to be aware that your responses are *totally anonymous*, they cannot be linked back to you. *Do Not* put your name or other identifying information anywhere on this questionnaire. Remember, your answers cannot be linked back to you and you can choose not to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation.

This questionnaire has received approval from the Human Subjects Committee at UNC-Charlotte. UNC-Charlotte is eager to ensure that all research participants are treated in a fair and respectful manner. If you have any concerns or questions about your treatment as a subject in this project, please contact:

David Test
Department of Teaching Specialties
UNC-Charlotte
Charlotte, NC 28223

If you have any questions regarding this survey please contact the investigator
Hilary H. Edwards
or the investigator's thesis committee chair
Dr. Larry Lance, Professor
c/o The Department of Sociology
UNC-Charlotte
9201 University City Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28223

Part 1

The following questions are for compiling a demographic background of the respondents. Please check the most appropriate answer or, when necessary, fill in the blanks as concisely as possible. Please note the word 'ACTIVITY' is used throughout this questionnaire. This term refers to any transgender activity in which you have ever been associated with (to include but not limited to):

- ♦ *Fetishistic Cross-dresser* - As the term is used in this questionnaire, refers to individuals who wear female clothing only to achieve sexual arousal. These individuals have a very low level of conviction to the female gender.
- ♦ *General Cross-dresser (or Transvestism)* - As the term is used in this questionnaire refers to individuals who wear female clothing to express their 'soft' (female) side, regardless of their sexual orientation. This type of activity usually does not prompt sexual arousal. these individuals have some female gender conviction but predominately identify with the male gender.
- ♦ *Transgenderism* - As the term is used in this questionnaire refers to individuals who prefer to blend their 'soft' (female) side and 'hard' (male) gender identities. This term is used to identify androgynous individuals. These individuals have neither predominately male or female gender convictions but strike a balance between the two.
- ♦ *Gender Dysphoric* - As it is used here, refers to individuals with strong female gender convictions but due to varying circumstances cannot or will not make the commitment to lifestyle changes as those who are transsexual.
- ♦ *Transsexualism* - As it is used here, are those individuals who have strong female gender convictions and have made an extreme effort to change their lifestyle to correspond with their dominate gender identity. In other words these individuals live life full time as females even if they have not had sex reassignment surgery.

Please answer the questions based on your specific type of activity.
 These items may be sensitive to some people. Your participation is TOTALLY VOLUNTARY.
 You may choose to discontinue participation at any point.

Keep in mind all responses are anonymous and cannot be linked back to the respondents.

1. Age _____

2. Race/Ethnic Identity:

- African-American
- Caucasian
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Other (please specify) _____

3. Marital Status:

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other

4. If married number of years: _____

5. If married, does your spouse know about your activity?

- Yes
- No

6. If you answered 'yes' to item 5, how did your spouse find out?

- You Told by accident
- She deduced Someone Else
- Other

7. If you answered 'yes' to item 5, how did your spouse's discovery affect your relationship?

- Strong Negative Affect
- Moderate Negative Affect
- Slight Negative Affect
- Strong Positive Affect
- Moderate Positive Affect
- Slight Positive Affect

8. If ever married, number of times? _____

9. Religious affiliation:

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Jewish
- Other
- None

10. Are you dressed **en femme** while responding to this questionnaire? Yes No

Please do not
write in this
area

1 2 3 4 5

(1) _____

 6 7

(2) _____

 8 9

(3) _____

 10 11

(4) _____

 12 13

(5) _____

 14 15

(6) _____

 16 17

(7) _____

 18 19

(8) _____

 20 21

(9) _____

 22 23

(10) _____

 24 25

Part 1 continued . . .

Please do not write in this area

11. Occupation: _____

(11) _____
26 27

12. Your Annual Income:

- Less than \$25, 000
- \$25,001- 50,000
- \$50,001- 100,000
- More than \$100,001

(12) _____
28 29

13. Highest level of education:

- High school diploma or less
- Some College
- 2 year degree
- 4 year degree
- Masters degree
- Ph.D. or equivalent
- Other (please specify) _____

(13) _____
30 31

14. What was your biological gender at birth?
(i.e. what sex was placed on your birth certificate)

- Male
- Female

(14) _____
32 33

15. At what age did you start your activity? _____

(15) _____
34 35

16. What do you consider to be your gender identity?

- Male (meaning more male than female aspects)
- Female (meaning more female than male aspects)
- Androgynous (meaning a blending of both male and female aspects)

(16) _____
36 37

17. Based on your physical gender at the present time, how would you classify your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual (meaning you are physically male/ sexually oriented towards females)
- Heterosexual except when en femme
- Homosexual (meaning you are physically male/ sexually oriented towards males or you are post operative female attracted to females)
- Bisexual (meaning regardless of your physical gender you are sexually attracted to both males and females)
- Asexual (meaning regardless of your physical gender you are not sexually attracted to males or females)

(17) _____
38 39

18. Have you ever been diagnosed by a medical doctor as having a physiological ailment or disorder which might promote your desire to participate in your transgender activity?
(i.e. a chromosomal defect or other medical finding)

- Yes
- No

(18) _____
40 41

19. Do you have any children?

- Yes
- No

20. If you answered 'yes' to item 19:
of daughters _____
of sons _____

(19) _____
42 43

(20) _____
44 45

46 47

Please continue to Part 2

Part 2

The following questions pertain to your behavior and attitudes toward your activity. Check the most appropriate box or fill in the blanks when necessary. Please note the term 'ACTIVITY' refers to your specific type of transgender behavior. Also, remember your answers cannot be linked back to you. These items may be considered sensitive to some people.

Your participation is TOTALLY VOLUNTARY.
 You may choose to discontinue participation at any point.
Your anonymity is assured.

21. Have you ever 'purged' of any transgender activity?

- Yes └───┬───┘
 No

22. If you answered 'yes' to item 21, # of times you have purged? _____

23. If you answered 'yes' to item 21, at what age did you first purge? _____

24. If you answered 'yes' to item 21, what do you feel was your main reason for purging? _____

25. If you answered 'yes' to item 21, how long was the longest purge period you have ever experienced? _____

26. If you answered 'yes' to item 21, what prompted you to start your activity again?
 Do not know
 Had a strong unexplainable desire I could not ignore
 Personal situations changed which made it easier to participate
 Other (please explain) _____

27. Do you think you will ever purge again?
 Yes
 No
 Unsure

28. Please briefly explain your answer to item 27.

29. If you could change the amount and/or type (please refer back to 'ACTIVITY' definitions in part 1 if necessary) of your current activity without any social conflicts would you:
 Keep your activity at its current amount and type
 Increase amount of your current activity but **not** change type of activity
 Change type of activity but **not** change amount of activity
 Change the type of activity and increase the amount of activity
 (i.e. you currently consider yourself a moderate cross-dresser but would like to become transsexual)
 Decrease the amount of your current activity but **not** change the type of activity
 Decrease the amount of your activity and change the type of activity
 (i.e. you are currently a moderate cross-dresser but would like to be able to purge permanently)
 Other (please explain) _____
30. If you were told of a new medication that would halt your desire for any type of transgender activity, would you take it?
 Yes No Unsure
31. If it were socially acceptable would you participate in your activity full time?
 Yes No
32. Number of years you have been participating in any transgender activity? _____

Do not write in this area

(21) _____
48 49

(22) _____
50 51

(23) _____
52 53

(24) _____
54 55

(25) _____
56 57

(26) _____
58 59

(27) _____
60 61

(28) _____
62 63

(29) _____
64 65

(30) _____
66 67

(31) _____
68 69

(32) _____
70 71

Part 3

The questions in this section ask you to think about your **CURRENT** transgender activity. When answering these questions please respond according to how you feel today regarding your transgender activity. All the questions in this section pertain to how **you think** people in certain areas of your life feel (or would feel if they knew) about your activity. Please mark the box which is most appropriate fill in the blank as concisely as possible when necessary.

These items may be sensitive to some people.
Your participation is **TOTALLY VOLUNTARY**.
You may choose to discontinue at any point.

Please remember all responses are anonymous and they cannot be linked back to you.

33. How often do you participate in your activity currently?

- Daily
- At least once a week
- More than twice a week
- Less than once a month
- Other (please specify) _____

34. Do you participate in your activity publicly in your community?

(Community refers to a 35 mile radius of your primary residence)

- Yes →
- No

35. If you answered 'no' to item 34, please briefly explain why you choose not to.

36. Do you participate in your activity publicly in other cities or areas away from your primary residence?

- Yes
- No

37. What size community have you lived in the majority of the past 5 years?

- Less than 10,000
- 10,001-50,000
- 50,001-100,000
- 100,001 or more

38. How old were you when you began your current activity? _____

39. How long was it from the time you thought about your current activity to actually participating in your activity?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-11 months
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Do not write in this area

(33) _____
72 73

(34) _____
74 75

(35) _____
76 77

(36) _____
78 79

(37) _____
80 81

(38) _____
82 83

(39) _____
84 85

Part 3 continued . . .

Do not write in
this area

40. Has the amount of your current activity changed in the past 5 years?

- Decreased
 Increased
 Unchanged

41. If you indicated a change in the amount of your activity in item 40 please briefly explain how it has changed.

(40)
86 87

(41)
88 89

42. Have you ever considered changing the type of your current activity?

- Yes
 No

(42)
90 91

43. How happy are you with the amount and type of your current activity?

- Not at all
 Slightly Happy
 Moderately Happy
 More Happy than Not Happy
 Extremely Happy

44. If you responded 'not at all' or 'slightly happy' to item 43, please describe what it would take for your happiness level regarding your activity to increase?

(43)
92 93

(44)
94 95

45. If you expect your happiness with your activity to change in anyway over the next 5 years please explain why.

(45)
96 97

46. What type of transgender activity do you **currently** participate in?

- Fetishistic Cross-dresser* - As the term is used in this questionnaire, refers to individuals who wear female clothing only to achieve sexual arousal. These individuals have a very low level of conviction to the female gender.
 General Cross-dresser (or Transvestism) - As the term is used in this questionnaire refers to individuals who wear female clothing to express their 'soft' (female) side, regardless of their sexual orientation. This type of activity usually does not prompt sexual arousal. these individuals have some female gender conviction but predominately identify with the male gender.
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 Transsexualism - As it is used here, are those individuals who have strong female gender convictions and have made an extreme effort to change their lifestyle to correspond with their dominate gender identity. In other words these individuals live life full time as females even if they have not had sex reassignment surgery.
 Other (please specify) _____

(46)
98 99

47. If the above types of transgender activity were placed on a continuum ranging from lowest level of female gender conviction on the left to the highest level on the right, where would you place yourself on the continuum?

- 1 2 3 4 5 6

(47)
100 101

(48)
102 103

48. Has your type of transgendered activity ever changed?

- Yes
 No

49. If your activity has changed, at what age did you change? _____
50. How has it changed? _____

(49)
104 105

(50)
106 107

Part 3 continued . . .

Do not write in
this area

51. Do any family members know about your activity?

Yes

No →

52. If you answered 'no' to item 51,
do you think you will ever tell
anyone in your family?

Yes

No

53. Please explain your answer to item 52.

(51)
108 109

(52)
110 111

(53)
112 113

54. How much disapproval in regards to

your activity do you feel you face (or would face if they knew) from you family regarding
your activity?

None

Some

Moderate

Large amount

Extreme

(54)
114 115

55. How strongly is your transgender activity influenced by the pressure of social
disapproval?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Strongly

Very Strongly

(55)
116 117

56. How long have you been in a support or peer group for your activity? _____

57. How important is your group in regards to your happiness with your activity?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Very

Extremely

(57)
120 121

58. How stifled do you feel today in regards to your activity by family and close friends?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Strongly

Very Strongly

(58)
122 123

59. How stifled do you feel today in regards to your activity by the community in which you live?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Strongly

Very Strongly

(59)
124 125

60. How happy do you expect to be in the next 5 years in regards to your activity?

Not at all

Slightly

Moderately

Strongly

Very Strongly

(60)
126 127

Part 3 continued . . .

Do not write in
this area

61. How much disapproval in regards to your activity do you feel you face (or would face if they knew) from your boss/co-workers regarding your activity?

- None
- Some
- Moderate
- Large amount
- Extreme

(61) _____
128 129

62. Thinking back to when you first considered your current activity, has it made you as happy as you expected it would?

- Yes
- No

(62) _____
130 131

63. Do you feel social attitudes toward the type of activity you participate in have changed over the past 10 years?

- Yes, for the better
- Yes, they're worse
- No change

64. If you indicated in item 63 you believe society's attitudes have changed, has this change affected your decision on how you participate in your activity?

- Yes
- No

65. If you answered 'yes' to item 64, choose a response which closely reflects how this change has affected your activity.

- Positive Influence on my activity
- Negative Influence on my activity
- No Influence on my activity

(63) _____
132 133

(64) _____
134 135

(65) _____
136 137

66. How 'closeted' are you with your activity?

- Extremely closeted
- Very closeted
- Moderately closeted
- Slightly closeted
- Not at all closeted

(66) _____
138 139

(67) _____
140 141

67. At what point did you become comfortable with, or begin to like the thought of yourself having a female image?

- In early childhood
- Teen years after some experimentation with cross-dressing
- After many years of transgendered activity
- Have not yet become comfortable with the mental image of myself as a female

68. What type of transgender activity were you participating in when you became comfortable with or began to like the thought of yourself has having a female form?
(see types described in item 46 - write in answer here)

(68) _____
142 143

69. At what age did you become comfortable with the thought or mental image of yourself as female? _____

(69) _____
144 145

70. Are you now or have you ever been a member of another transgender organization?

- Yes No

(70) _____
146 147

71. How often do you attend your organizational meetings?

- Monthly Bi-monthly 4 times per year 1 time per year Never

(71) _____
148 149

Part 4

The questions in this section ask you to think about your past transgender activity. Past activity refers any activity you may have participated in in the prior to today. When answering these questions please reflect back to when you first began participating in any transgender activity and respond according to how you recall feeling at that time. All questions in this section pertain to how you think people in certain areas of your life have felt (or would have felt if they had known) about your 'activity. Please mark the box which is most appropriate or fill in the blank as concisely as possible when necessary.

These items may be sensitive to some people.

Your participation is **TOTALLY VOLUNTARY**.

You may choose to discontinue participation at any point.

Please remember all responses are anonymous and they cannot be linked back to you.

Do not write in
this area

72. What type of transgender activity did you begin actually participating in?

- Fetishistic Cross-dresser* - As the term is used in this questionnaire, refers to individuals who wear female clothing only to achieve sexual arousal. These individuals have a very low level of conviction to the female gender.
- General Cross-dresser (or Transvestism)* - As the term is used in this questionnaire refers to individuals who wear female clothing to express their 'soft' (female) side, regardless of their sexual orientation. This type of activity usually does not prompt sexual arousal. these individuals have some female gender conviction but predominately identify with the male gender.
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- Transsexualism* - As it is used here, are those individuals who have strong female gender convictions and have made an extreme effort to change their lifestyle to correspond with their dominate gender identity. In other words these individuals live life full time as females even if they have not had sex reassignment surgery.
- Other** (please specify) _____

(72) _____
150 151

73. Please indicate any activity you feel has applied to you in the past.

(Please mark in order of occurrence 1 for first, 2 for second, 3 for third, etc.)

- Fetishistic Cross-dresser* -
- General Cross-dresser (or Transvestism)*
- Transgenderism*
- Gender Dysphoric*
- Transsexualism*
- Came to like the thought of yourself as being female*
- Other** (please specify) _____

(73) _____
152 153

154 155

156 157

158

74. How long was it from the time you first thought about participating in any transgender activity to actually taking part in your first activity?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-11 months
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

(74) _____
159 160

75. When you first began your activity how often did you participate?

- Daily
- At least once a week
- More than twice a week
- Less than once a month
- Other (please specify) _____

(75) _____
161 162

Part 4 continued . . .

Do not write in
this area

76. How long did it take you to go from private participation to public participation of your activity?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-11 months
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

(76)
163 164

77. When you first began your activity how happy were you when you actually participated in it?

- Not at all
- Slightly Happy
- Moderately
- More happy than not happy
- Extremely Happy

(77)
165 166

78. When you first began your activity did you ever wish to become more extreme with the type of activity you were participating in? (For example, if you began by cross-dressing did you ever wish to become female permanently?)

- Yes
- No

(78)
167 168

79. When you first began your activity did you ever wish you could increase the amount of your activity to an extreme level? (For example, if you began by cross-dressing occasionally did you ever wish you could cross-dress everyday?)

- Yes
- No

(79)
169 170

80. When you first began your activity did you participate publicly at all in your community?

- Yes
- No

(80)
171 172

81. What size community did you live in when you first began your activity?

- Less than 10,000
- 10,001-50,000
- 50,001-100,000
- 100,001 or more

(81)
173 174

82. When you first began did any family member know about your activity?

- Yes
- No

(82)
175 176

83. How much disapproval did you feel you faced (or would have faced if they had known) from your family at the time?

- None at all
- Slight
- Moderate
- Great deal
- Extremely Happy

(83)
177 178

84. How long from when you first began your activity to when you joined a support or peer group?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-11 months
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

(84)
179 180

85. How does the amount of your past activity compare to the amount of your current activity?

- I participate now less than when I began
- I participate now more than when I began
- I participate now about the same as when I began

(85)
181 182

Part 4 continued . . .

Do not write in this area

86. How stifled do you think your early activity was because of your family?

- None at all
- Slight
- Moderate
- Great deal
- Extremely Happy

(86)
183 184

87. How stifled do you think your early activity was because of your community/ classmates or peers?

- None at all
- Slight
- Moderate
- Great deal
- Extremely Happy

(87)
185 186

88. How stifled do you think your early activity was because fellow workers/boss?

- None at all
- Slight
- Moderate
- Great deal
- Extremely Happy
- Does not apply

(88)
187 188

89. Back when you first thought about starting your activity, how happy were you?

- Not at all
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Very
- Extremely Happy

(89)
189 190

90. How happy did you think starting your activity would make you?

- Not at all
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Very
- Extremely Happy

(90)
191 192

91. Looking back at when you first started any transgender activity, did the actual participation make you as happy as you thought it would? In other words did it live up to your expectations?

- Yes
- No

(91)
193 194

92. If you answer 'no' to item 91, briefly why do you think it never lived up to your expectations?

(92)
195 196

(93)
197 198

93. Has your level of happiness changed since you began any activity?

- Yes, Increased Happiness
- No, same amount of happiness
- Yes, Decreased Happiness

94. If your happiness has changed please explain your answer to item 90.

(94)
199 200

Part 5

This section of questions pertains to your current and future behavior and preceptions regarding your transgender activity. Check the most appropriate box or fill in the blanks when necessary. These items may be considered sensitive to some people. Your participation is **TOTALLY VOLUNTARY**. you may choose to discontinue participation at any point. Also, please remember your answers cannot be linked back to you.

Responses are to be completely anonymous.

95. Do you expect the disapproval you experience (or feel you would experience if your employer knew) to affect your activity in the future?

- Yes
 No

96. If you answered 'yes' to item 95, how do you feel it will affect your activity.

- Slight positive affect Slight negative affect
 Strong positive affect Strong negative affect

97. How much community or peer disapproval do you expect to encounter in the future compared to what you currently experience?

- Less disapproval Same amount of disapproval More disapproval

98. Do you expect the type of activity you participate in to change in the future?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

99. If you answered 'yes' to item 98, what type of activity do you expect to participate in in the future?

100. Do you expect the amount of your activity to change in the future?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

101. If you answered 'yes' to item 100, how do you expect it to change?
 Expect to increase my activity
 Expect to decrease my activity

102. Do you expect your level of happiness regarding your activity to change in the future?

- Yes
 No
 Unsure

103. If you answered 'yes' to item 102, how do you expect your happiness to change?

- Slight increase Slight decrease
 Great deal more Great deal less

104. If you expect the disapproval you experience from family members to change in the future please explain.

- No, do not expect any change

105. Please use this space for expressing any additional comments you fel would be helpful in understanding your past and present perceptions and your future anticipations regarding your activity.

Do not write in this area

(95) _____
201 202

(96) _____
203 204

(97) _____
205 206

(98) _____
207 208

(99) _____
209 210

(100) _____
211 212

(101) _____
213 214

(102) _____
215 216

(103) _____
217 218

(104) _____
219 220

(105) _____
221 222

This concludes the questionnaire. Please double check to make sure you answered all questions. Remember **NOT** to sign your name or put any identifying information on this questionnaire. Please return this questionnaire to the participating organization which sent it to you.

Thank You For Your Valuable Cooperation