

TWENTY MINUTES

JUNE 1991

\$2.00



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*The 1991
Christine Jorgensen Award
Presented by the XX Club to
Reverend Clinton R. Jones
for love, compassion and
outstanding service in
the gender community.*

A SALUTE TO:

**REVEREND
CLINTON R. JONES**

by Becky Ann

Sometimes a very special person goes many years without the recognition he fully deserves. Those of us who have attended the XX Club have seen first hand the immense effort that Canon Jones has put into supporting its members. Now we formally recognize his efforts by presenting him with the 1991 *Christine Jorgensen Award*, the third such honor as given by the XX Club.

Canon Jones is the founder of the XX Club, the transsexual support group of New England and New York. In 1966, the Reverend Canon Clinton R. Jones completed his twenty-fifth anniversary as a priest in the Episcopal Church and

began a ministry in counseling persons of sexual variation. As this ministry developed, Reverend Jones counseled homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals. By 1972, he had counseled over 30 transsexuals and a need developed for these people to meet together to share feelings, ask questions and to help each other.

In this manner and under the guiding hand of Reverend Jones, the TORA Society (Transsexuals Organized for Rehabilitation and Aid) was born. By a group vote in 1974, the name was changed to the XX, or Trans-Sex Club (Twenty Club), and over the years evolved from an informal gathering and grew into the support group it is today. Reverend Jones retired as a Canon in 1986 but remains an active advisor to the club.

(Photo by Sonia)

PREVIOUS CHRISTINE JORGESEN AWARD WINNERS

- 1989 PHOEBE SMITH
Editor/Founder of
The Transsexual Voice
- 1990 SISTER MARY ELIZABETH
Co-founder of
J2CP Information Services

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TWENTY MINUTES

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THE STAFF

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Sonia

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Contributors: Veronica Jean Brown
Michelle Hunt, RN

Advisor: Rev. Clinton Jones

Start watching for the new Blake Edward's movie, "Switch", coming to a theater near you. "Switch" is about ad executive Steve Brooks who becomes his long-unsuspected 'half-sister' Amanda - blond tresses, stiletto heels and all. Steve is a male chauvinist womanizer who is murdered by one of his three former flames. Unfortunately, he's re-incarnated as a man trapped in the body of a woman. This sex-change comedy should be a must see among the gender community.

All the news that's print to fit.

This newsletter is funded entirely through subscriptions and the sales of educational materials. All written contributions welcome. A backlog of material may prevent the immediate publishing of submitted articles. *Twenty Minutes* is not responsible for the opinions expressed or accuracy of information provided by the writers of unsolicited or solicited materials. Parts of this newsletter may be reproduced provided source credit is given. *Twenty Minutes* was founded by Veronica Jean Brown.

XX CLUB CALENDAR

MEETINGS

Saturday, June 8

Saturday, June 22

Saturday, July 13

PICNIC

Saturday, July 27

Regular meetings of the XX Club are held the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 2 PM sharp to 5 PM.:

Christ Church Cathedral
45 Church Street
Hartford, CT 06103

(Located at the corner of Church and Main Streets in the downtown area across from G. Fox.) There is **NO SMOKING** allowed during the meetings, although smoking is permitted during breaks and after the meetings. The XX Club attempts to provide peer support and practical information about making the gender transition, as well as information about the Gender Identity Clinic of New England. Parents, siblings, spouses and significant others are also welcome to attend.

'Sex Trigger' gene found

NEW YORK (AP) - Scientists have created male mice from female embryos by injecting a gene into fertilized eggs, showing that the gene is the long-sought "sex trigger" that determines gender, a study says. The gene appears to work by regulating the activity of other genes. Previous studies also implicated it and its human counterpart in the process of determining sex.

In mammals, embryos develop as females unless they contain the Y chromosome, which is a string-like collection of genes. Scientists have been trying to discover what gene or genes on the Y chromosome triggers the process of making a male. The key event is the creation of testes rather than ovaries from a particular bit of tissue in the embryo. The new work used a gene called Sry. Scientists injected it into fertilized eggs, implanted them in mice and let some develop for two weeks. Most of the 158 embryos they tested were normal males or females.

TREASURER'S \$

REPORT

Balance - from April \$1805.42

INCOME:

Collections - meetings	73.90
Newsletter subscriptions	40.00
Brochures & Reprints	5.00
Savings interest	8.49
Total Income	\$ 127.39

EXPENSES:

Refreshments	62.50
Gift	84.78
Newsletter & brochures	108.28
Postage	54.00
Supplies	6.89
Bank Fee	.00
Total Expenses	\$ 316.53

Net Loss for May \$-189.14

Balance - end of May \$1616.28

The XX Club Summer Picnic will be held Saturday, July 27 at Straton Brook Park in Simsbury, CT. See next month's issue for the map. Congratulations to LaDrea who was elected the new XX Club Vice President to replace Lisa who resigned.

A Healing Meditation for the Whole Body

I now release any image I am holding of myself as imperfect or diseased in any way. I am God's perfect child and I know it.

God created me and God knows how to correct that which is presently distorted or unbalanced. God is healing me now. God is filling my heart with His perfect love. God is expressing through me as life, strength, and peace.

I give thanks for perfect health in body and mind. Health is my inheritance from my God and I accept it in gratitude and joy.

(Reprinted from *Very Practical Meditation* by Serene West, The Donning Company/Publishers, 1981)

Indians champs again

Beat Amerks for 7th Calder Cup title

Transsexuals and Employment...

Self Confidence

by Sonia

When I first made my transition, I was kind of paranoid. I thought that people were reading me right and left. I was constantly checking over my shoulder whenever I went out anywhere in public. I thought I was fairly comfortable with myself, but in reality I was bothered quite a bit. Part of this was simply due to the fact that so many people knew me, and there wasn't much difference between my male and female appearance. After five months living full time as a female, I was still lacking the self confidence that is so important to succeeding in transition. I didn't really admit to myself how badly I was doing mentally. It should be noted that in reality I was 'passing' just fine... it was all really just a thing in my head.

Every time I was rejected for a job, I couldn't help but to think that somewhere, I had slipped. I believed I had been read. In reality, it was just a highly competitive job market. When I finally did get hired at a local television station, the first thing I had to do was go around the station and introduce myself to over 100 strangers! By the time I had finished this task, I had made huge strides toward getting over my aversion to strangers. As I started going out on assignments as a news photog., I somehow gained the confidence to face crowds and even security guards and secret service. I think part of the problem was when I went anywhere people DID stare at me... but not because of my looks... because I was carrying a camera with the station logo. Somewhere in all of this, I also stopped looking over my shoulder when out in public in my off-time. I had found the confidence to start socializing and meeting people.

This is not to say that I am 100% cured and perfectly self-confident. I do have days where I feel like shit, but the difference is that I have stopped looking at myself as the boy I once was. I am now far enough along, both mentally and physically to see myself as a girl. I am no longer hyper-critical of myself; I can dress casual even in androgynous clothes and still feel like the woman I am. If I am concerned about my appearance, it's out of vanity... not paranoia.

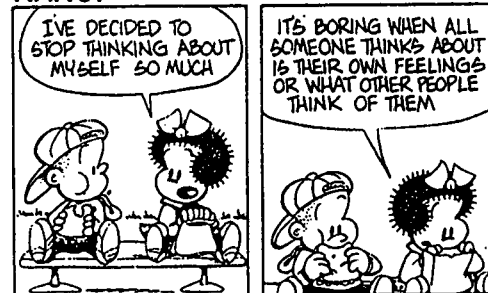
Way back when I was first learning about all of the requirements to attain SRS, one of the things that was mentioned, (in fact pointed out) by a post-op friend was the requirement that you not only live as a woman, but also hold a job as one. I believe the Benjamin standards even require that you do not work for yourself. I didn't really understand the point: why was it sooooo important to have a job? After all, plenty of genetic women are retired; some people are financially independent; and still others are self-employed. I figured that as long as you could afford to pay for your treatment, why worry about all of this junk?

Now that I have been working a job in my chosen roll, I can truly say it has been a tremendous boost to my self-confidence. Quite frankly, I was fooling myself to think that I was dealing with reality. I suppose the fact that I love my job does not hurt any, but the fact remains: if you get out there and fit in to the mainstream work force, you prove to yourself that you are successful - in a very real and concrete way.

One hang up that I had not gotten over was my height; I was always self-conscious about being 6 feet tall. I found that I was able to turn this liability into an asset. A six foot tall secretary might stand out a little, but at that height, a news photog. is at a distinct advantage! So now when someone comments about my height (for good or ill) I can smile and look them straight in the eye and say, "I'm a News Photog., and every extra foot helps." It is important, no matter what you do, to turn your liabilities into assets, and on the job you can really stand out if you use what you have creatively. I know a puppeteer who is a m-f post-op, she is well off because she can do boy puppets AND girl puppets equally well.

When you make the transition, it is not a test where you are expected to be perfectly self-confident and passable from the start. Rather, it is a growing period... a time for exploration and developing your own unique personality, and the basis and beginning of your stopping being a TS and becoming a woman. I can now really see the need for the job requirement because it was 'the straw that broke the camels back'. It has shown me that this path is the right decision for me. I believe very strongly that if SRS is not right for someone, the place where this will become very obvious would be in the work force. If you can't make it there, there is no way you are going to be happy in your new role. It is a different ball game between sitting around the house doing your nails, and actually going out into the world and making a living.

NANCY



HETEROSEXUAL MARRIAGE AFTER SEX REASSIGNMENT SURGERY

Presented at the
Ninth International Symposium on Gender Dysphoria

Minneapolis, Minnesota

September 12-16, 1985

by The Reverend Canon Clinton R. Jones, D.D.

too often statements are made that those persons who are gender dysphoric and who eventually follow the procedures which lead to sex reassignment surgery do not manage to lead productive, satisfactory and generally happy lives. Comments are expressed that such persons evidence feelings of regret, that they have difficulty establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships, that they fail to reach vocational goals or cannot earn a reasonable income, and in some instances become disillusioned and depressed that they take their own lives. It is because of these negative positions that this paper is intended to counter.

For particular reasons I have been in a special position to undertake this study. Since I have maintained a counseling ministry primarily focused on working with those who comprise our sexual minorities for more than twenty years, I have had close contact with many identifiable gender dysphoric persons. Early in these counseling relationships it became clear to me that a support group would prove not only helpful to the individuals involved but also to me as a counselor. This group soon evolved into the XX Club (trans-sex or what is familiarly called the "Twenty Club"). Eventually in 1972 the Gender Identity Clinic of New England was organized and I have been associated with it as an officer since its inception, presently serving as its coordinator. Through these two institutions, along with my one to one counseling, I have maintained close, long-term ties with many transsexual persons often following them from a first interview through to final surgery. Even beyond this many have continued a relationship with the XX Club as well as keeping in some counseling or personal relationship with me.

This paper has to do with marriage. When the first couple of which one was a post operative transsexual approached me with the hope that I might officiate at their marriage, I felt it necessary to discuss such an issue with my bishop who was my authority and without whose consent I would hesitate to grant such a request. Fortunately, he was a sympathetic, understanding person. His basic position rested on the facts that if such a couple could legally obtain a proper marriage license and if reputable surgeons and those in the fields of psychiatry and psychology considered that crossing gender was valid, he did not feel that the Church should take an opposing view. Therefore he was willing to support granting religious sanction to such coupling. With this permission I have solemnized five such marriages.

In preparing for this paper, I had to decide whether I would only include those couples who had legal and or religious approval. Recognizing the fact that in our

present society there is a growing acceptance of those who decide to live together as a couple without these sanctions, it did seem reasonable that it would be appropriate to evaluate such relationships. From both a religious and even legal standpoint, marriage is considered to be contractual in its intention and hopefully its fulfillment. There are some states in this country where "common law marriage" is recognized. Such marriages have not been formally sanctioned in the traditional manner either by Church or State, yet they have their own particular validity. If a marriage is conceived to be a contract willingly agreed upon and entered into by two heterosexual persons, then from a certain point of view the dynamics remain basically the same whether or not there has been legal and or religious formalities.

Since it seemed essential to prepare a questionnaire to be distributed, I sensed the wisdom of asking some couples along with two professional counselors to share in the devising of such an instrument. Each was asked to prepare in advance those questions which might be pertinent. In a conference setting these were discussed and further questions were proposed. It was my task to eventually structure the questionnaire which comprises sixty-one questions with space for "additional comments". First some statistical facts were important and then the questions fell into five basic categories; the couples own interpersonal relationship, their relationship to others, their individual vocational and work involvements, the sexual aspect of the relationship, and finally the financial. Respondents did not identify themselves by name; however the questionnaires were coded with the understanding that I would be the only person with knowledge of the coding. Identical questionnaires were to be filled out by each spouse working separately. In several instances the couples came to my office for a preliminary conference and then filled out the questionnaires afterwards. Where distance was involved, I had a telephone conference after which the forms were mailed. All forms mailed were returned.

To begin a report on this study, it will be important to set out a few statistics. The questionnaires were filled out by 12 couples - 10 of the husbands are female to male transsexuals, 2 are both transsexual. The length of the marriages are between 1 year and 15, the average being 5. The ages of the husbands ranged between 25 and 47 with an average of 38; the ages of the wives were between 22 and 53 giving an average of 41. The ages of the husbands at the time of marriage were between 20 and 44 - average 33 and the wives 18 to 47 - average 38. Six wives had been previously married and divorced. Their marriages had lasted between 3 and 23 years. Two husbands had been married for periods of 3 and 6 1/2 years, but it must be noted they were then in their genetic gender identity.

Before proceeding with the noting of other statistics, it is pertinent to point out that in adding figures there is not a consistent total of twelve since filling out the questionnaires, respondents would occasionally fail to provide information for some questions.

In the attempt to evaluate the interpersonal relationship between these husbands and wives it seemed important to determine at what point they may have first known each

other. Six couples entered into their relationship before the question of gender dysphoria surfaced openly; 2 met each other after the spouse was dealing with the identity crisis, and 4 couples met after the spouse had already completed sex reassignment surgery. The so-called "engagement period" lasted between 2 months in one instance and 12 years in another giving an average of 5.2 years. Ten of the couples lived together before marriage for periods between 1 month and 12 years or an average of 4.7 years.

When decisions were made about formal marriage both spouses (7 husbands and 6 wives) agreed that a marriage license was important to them. Asked how they viewed marriage, 10 couples said they saw it primarily as an interpersonal contract, one saw it as a social commitment, societally correct, and another as a status symbol. Six couples were married by a clergy person and 4 exchanged vows before a justice of the peace either in a judges chambers or a rented hall. For six couples the wedding was a social affair with family and friends; for 4 couples only two witnesses were in attendance.

Questioned about their present marriage relationship there was almost the unanimous response that they considered marriage to be a monogamous contract - only 1 couple indicated they believed in an "open" marriage. Asked if marriage had changed their life style drastically, 7 husbands and 5 wives said "yes". In terms of fulfillment 7 couples were positive, 2 were negative, and 3 felt that for the most part they felt fulfilled. On the question as to whether there had been periods of separation followed by reconciliation, 5 couples indicated that such had been true but they now felt that they had worked through their differences.

It was interesting to ask whether or not they would consider remarriage should divorce or death bring separation. In the case of divorce 4 husbands said "yes" and 6 "no" while only 1 wife said "yes", 5 "no" and 4 "possibly". If there were death of the partner then 5 husbands said they would remarry, 3 "no" and 4 "had a question mark". Three wives said "yes"; 6 "no" and 1 "possibly".

In terms of their mutuality 9 couples indicated they made their family decisions in a satisfactory mutual way whereas the other 3 said "usually", "sometimes" and "no". As to household duties, 11 couples indicated that they shared these; asked about frequent family arguments 8 couples said they avoided these, 3 said there were such occasions, while 1 couple said "not often". Ten couples felt they could discuss their problems calmly.

It appeared that none of the couples were involved in a marriage retreat and only 2 couples indicated that they had received premarital counseling. Seven couples indicated a willingness to attend a marriage retreat and 8 said they would be involved in marriage counseling if it seemed necessary.

Since a couple by marriage does not isolate itself from other relationships, it seemed important to discover how these couples relate to their parents, their in-laws, children by previous marriages, and their former and newly acquired friends. In terms of parents 10 husbands and 7

wives indicated they maintain good contact with their natural parents. One husband said there was minimum relationship, another noted that his parents were deceased. Three wives said they had no continuing relationship with parents. Five husbands reported warm relationship with in-laws but 3 were negative. Nine wives related well to in-laws. Two did not. Only one husband had a natural child who lives with the former spouse. Four wives had children by a previous marriage; 3 have their children living with them while one explained that her two children were now married but had never lived with her after her present marriage. Only one couple had their own child which was by artificial insemination.

Ten husbands indicated that they felt well accepted by former friends whereas only three wives had a similar response. Again 10 husbands were of the opinion that they were accepted by the spouses' friends whereas just 3 wives could respond positively.

Since the physical sexual aspect of marriage is important, this facet needed exploring. The question of homosexual contacts before marriage brought mixed responses. Four husbands said "yes"; 6 "no"; 5 wives said "yes" but 6 said "no". Here, however, some comment is necessary. Since several of the couples knew each other and became closely involved before a determination that one partner was gender dysphoric, it would seem as if their sexual contact could be identified as homosexual; in reality because one was actually of the opposite gender and eventually experienced sex reassignment surgery, their sexual conduct may more properly be conceived as being heterosexual rather than homosexual.

Inquiries into their present sexual relationships showed that 9 husbands and 7 wives said that they felt fulfilled. ten husbands reported experiencing orgasm and 11 wives did the same. As far as being satisfied with the frequency of sex 4 husbands said "yes", 6 said "no". On the wives' side, 8 said "yes", 1 "no". Husbands when asked about phalloplasty reported that none had attempted these procedures; however, all but 1 said they would like the surgery particularly if it can promise more success and satisfaction then they feel can happen at this time.

Vocation and work are important to the individuals in most every marriage. Since education is often significant in this regard, questions were asked about the couple's academic background. Two husbands attended high school but did not graduate, 3 graduated, 4 attended college for an average of 2 1/2 years, only 1 graduated from college with a bachelor's degree. Wives scored higher; 4 graduated from high school, 3 attended college for an average of 1 1/2 years, 2 had received bachelor degrees, and 2 had earned Master degrees.

On the employment issue 10 husbands are fully employed 2 are not - 9 wives work and earn; 1 does not and 1 explained that she had a private income. Nine of the working husbands said they were satisfied with their employment; on the other hand only 5 wives felt the same. Asked if they felt their vocations and work were more satisfying because of their marriage, 7 husbands were affirmative as well as 5 wives. Ten husbands believed that their wives were supportive of their work and vocation and 8 wives felt the

same. The majority of the couples felt that their vocations caused no problems in the marriage.

Finances can often cause difficulties for a married couple. How are these couples managing? Eight couples reported that they worked well together in this regard and in two instances the wife is the responsible person with the husband being agreeable and comfortable with the arrangement. In the matter of earning power - 5 wives earn the larger amount, 2 couples have even salaries, and 1 husband has the more substantial income. Although these facts indicate unevenness, the couples report that this is no cause for disharmony. Eight couples maintain joint checking and savings accounts. Only three couples own their own homes while the other nine rent; however, 6 of these couples contemplate owning a house or a condominium. Nine husbands maintain life insurance and 5 wives do the same.

Apologies for all these statistics. Surely reading them has been dull; however they do provide a framework for some conclusions. First of all it is my opinion that these twelve marriages are basically solid. The younger ones may have to weather a longer test of time but all of them appear to have strong supports.

There are some particular observations. The wives are generally older than the husbands and 6 of the wives had experienced previous marriage. The wives, for the most part, had fuller educational records and several of them had greater earning power which was not threatening to the husbands. It must be borne in mind that all of these husbands were genetic females before marriage; how much this fact contributes to the feelings and the communication which exists in these instances might be difficult to determine.

The stabilization these marriages evidence may rest in the fact that the length of the engagement period averaged over five years and their living together also nearly five years. In addition there was almost unanimous agreement about monogamy. Nearly all the couples seemed content with their physical sexual relationships. Also in almost all instances they shared household duties. Relationships with parents, in-laws, children by former marriages, as well as friends and associates with a few exceptions were comfortable and satisfying. On the questions of work and finances there was basic stability and sharing.

It is my deduction that although no marriage can be perfect, these unions set against the measures we can use to judge, exhibit a strong core and show promise of survival. As previously indicated, at the end of the questionnaires space was provided for "additional comments". Several personal testimonials were penned one which I quote: "I could not imagine that I feel this happy and complete. Most of my life I walked around feeling like two people not knowing why. I don't feel that way any more. I have a wonderful wife, happy home, and a loving, supportive family". I presume we might want to feel that these thoughts belong to a Hallmark Card; however can't we be at least a bit sentimental and say "Three Cheers!"

SMILE POWER

Michael R. Liebowitz, M.D.
author of *The Chemistry of Love*

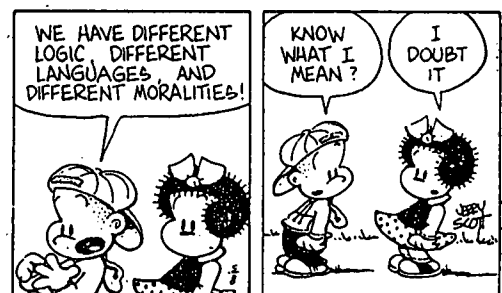
Ten seconds from now, you could be in a better mood. All you have to do, according to recent psychological experiments, is try one of these simple actions. Repeat a long e sound or the word *cheese* several times, or clench a pencil between your teeth for a moment or two. Volunteers who performed these tasks registered a significant improvement in mood. They felt happier and found jokes funnier. Why? Simply because these exercises force the mouth into a smile.

Faking the characteristic facial expression associated with a certain emotion - such as the raised eyebrows that signal surprise, the wide-eyed look of fear, the pout of displeasure - can create that feeling, according to a study by psychologists for the University of California Medical School in San Francisco. Force a frown and you will not only feel angry but your heart rate and breathing will also change to the distinctive pattern of rage.

Since putting on a happy face can lift your mood temporarily, why stop with a smile? Instead, use your entire body to project positive messages to yourself and other people. A smile is not going to send your emotions soaring if it's overpowered by gloomy signals from your slumped shoulders, downcast eyes, and plodding walk. Other people take their cue from your cheerful posture and treat you better, which in turn makes you feel better. Conversely, the appearance of dejection can prompt others to focus only on your gloom, reinforcing bad feelings you already have.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...this article reprinted from *WOMAN*, July 1990 issue.)

NANCY



THE BRUSSELS CONNECTION

INITIAL INFORMATION ON:
SEX REASSIGNMENT SURGERY
IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUMCopyright (C) 1988
by Veronica Jean Brown

This article is dedicated to Michelle Hunt, R.N., who in the fall of 1985, opened the doors for American pre-op transsexuals, to the male-to-female surgery available in Belgium. We as a community, owe much to Ms. Hunt, for her efforts in finding and sharing this economical alternative to the SRS, for those Americans not able to afford the domestic medical costs.

This article does not imply an endorsement of Dr. Michel Seghers, or any other surgeon by the Gender Identity Clinic of New England, the XX Club, or its individual members. This information is common knowledge within some areas of the gender community. The XX Club, or its individual members, cannot be held responsible for the eventual outcome, whether positive or negative, of an individual's sex reassignment surgery. Every pre-op transsexual is ultimately responsible for the decision of having sex reassignment surgery and in choosing a surgeon.

Be discrete in sharing this information. If you are a M-F pre-op transsexual, who is ready (or soon will be) for the surgery, then use this information for your benefit. If you have not started hormone therapy and full time crossliving, or if you could not at this time, be approved for surgery at any gender identity clinic, do not impose your curiosity upon Docteur Seghers. It takes time and costs money for Docteur Seghers to answer inquiries from Americans. We recommend that you purchase \$5 or \$10 worth of international reply coupons from the post office, or send a \$10 traveler's check when you write.

Most of the information you will need to help you to explore this option is contained on these pages. If you need more information, write to the XX Club with your specific questions. Enclose a business size self addressed, stamped envelope.

The requirements for Docteur Seghers are the same as specified in the standards of care by the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association. He will need all of the pertinent information normally provided by any gender clinic and which should include two psychiatric (or one from a psychologist) evaluations and approvals for surgery. In addition, he will need the following:

1. A personal history of your transsexualism, written by you.
2. A letter from your physician stating your physical health and suitability for surgery.
3. A letter from the physician who pre-scribes your hormones, if different from #2.
4. Two recent photographs of yourself.
5. Photocopy of your name change document.
6. Blood test results for the AIDS virus (must be negative).

The exact format and content of the required information will be given to the patient by Docteur Seghers after preliminary contact has been made.

Docteur Michel Seghers is a renowned plastic surgeon in Europe, who received some of his medical education in Cincinnati, Ohio. He is also well known for his work in the reconstruction of hands and feet. Docteur Seghers has a pleasant and caring bedside manner, is fluent in four languages, including English and enjoys jogging.

Saint Joseph's Hospital is reflective of old world charm, is well stocked with modern medical equipment and staffed with courteous and cheerful personnel. Don't expect to be the pampered American, but instead to be treated as any European would be, in an adult, professional manner.

Docteur Seghers will give the patient a brief physical examination in his office and explain what will happen during the surgery. He will check to see if a skin graft is indicated, since a very short or atrophied penis may be insufficient for the formation of the vagina.

The surgical procedure is a single stage type and consists of a bilateral castration and subtotal penectomy, with the superficial tissues preserved for the performing of a vaginoplasty. The penile skin is used to line the neovagina and the base of both corpus cavernosum are preserved to make a clitoris. Scrotal skin is used to form the outer labia. Standard laser fusion surgery is used to attach the urinary sphincter to the urethra, which is shortened and repositioned for a female anatomy. If desired, a tracheal shave can be done two days after surgery for an additional cost.

The hospital stay after surgery is about six days. The labia drains are removed two days after surgery and the urinary catheter on the fifth day. The surgery will be checked by Docteur Seghers at his office seven days after surgery. The remaining stitches and internal packing are removed on or about the fourteenth day. This procedure is only possible, if the patient remains in Brussels for at least two weeks after the surgery.

The clitoris is enclosed and covered by skin and should become active about two months after surgery. The patient may notice a feeling similar to a penile erection. The clitoral tissues when stimulated, will swell to the size of a grape or small cherry. Many formally dormant nerve endings should now provide immense sexual pleasure during masturbation or in the case of sexual intercourse with a male partner, if he is skilled in such techniques.

As an American citizen, a U.S. passport is required to travel to Brussels. A passport can be obtained by making application at a U.S. passport office, or at any of the larger U.S. Post Offices in your area. A stamped (certified), long form copy of your birth certificate is required with the properly filled out application, the fee, a stamped (original) copy of your court ordered change of name document and two passport sized photos. To save time, you should provide all pertinent letters and copies of files from your doctors or gender clinic, to show proof that you are intending to have sex reassignment surgery. An alternative to this, is to have your doctor write a letter,

to be included with your passport application, stating that you are a gender dysphoric transsexual, who has been under treatment by such and such doctor(s), and who has received approval(s) by such and such doctor(s) for having sex reassignment surgery by Docteur Michel Seghers in Brussels. Verification of this information can be presented on demand. It is normal procedure that the United States State Department will issue to American male-to-female transsexuals traveling overseas, a passport with a female sex designation.

If you are hassled by the passport representative, or given unusual rules and conditions to follow, such as being told the passport won't be issued until three days before you are scheduled to depart, do not hesitate to contact the representative's superior. Better yet, have your counselor, therapist, doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist contact the superior at once. Most people get their passports in four weeks or less without any problems. But, there have been some cases where, because of personal prejudices, an attempt was made to delay the issue of a passport.

The following list of items was originally provided by Michelle Hunt in her Bruxelles Gender Congruity Service information sheet.

Bring one (40 pound max) suitcase, 1 carry on and a luggage cart. Pack enough practical clothes to last a week. Be sure to bring comfortable shoes, as the city sidewalks are cobblestone and not designed for high heels. An umbrella is a must! Bring your regular cosmetics, a voltage convertor and adapter plugs, if you have electrical items. Play the tourist role with your camera, as one hour film processing is available for Kodacolor films. Unless you are fluent in French, a French-English dictionary is a must. For use in the hospital, bring your own towels, face cloths, soap and toilet paper. American toilet paper is much softer than Belgian.

For medical items, bring two sixteen ounce bottles of hydrogen peroxide and 100 sterile 4 by 4 gauze sponges (pads). These will be needed to clean the urethral area post-surgically each time you urinate. You may bring your own maxi-pads, or purchase them there. These are needed to absorb the minor blood flow and protect your underwear after surgery. Bring a tube of K-Y lubricant for dilation by finger if you stay long enough to have the packing removed.

You should stop all hormones two weeks prior to surgery and resume about one week after. Consult your doctor for post-op hormone dosages, as your body will require less. Bring copies of all medical prescriptions for eyeglasses and medications, if you bring these items.

If possible, bring an additional \$500 to cover unexpected medical complications or for shopping. VISA, MasterCard and American Express are accepted in most shops.

You won't need a visa as it is stamped on your passport at Passport Controle upon entering the country. You need not stop in Customs for a baggage check unless stopped by an Inspector. Go through the green "nothing to declare" door directly to the exit.

Nestled on the corner of the Avenue Louise, the Aparthotel Wellington provides easy access to the business centre and shopping areas. The rooms have a kitchenette, dining corner, bathroom (with bidet), colour CATV and comfortable beds. The West End Grill on the ground floor can provide meals and a quaint Italian restaurant can be found across the street.

Aparthotel Wellington
Chausee de Vleurgat 150
1050 Bruxelles, Belgique
Phone: 648.53.30

The easiest way to get to Docteur Seghers' office or the hospital is by taxi. To get to Docteur Seghers' office on your own, take the #92 tram (trolley) on the Avenue Louise going to your right as you face the hotel up the street, to the Parc Bruxelles Metro (subway) station. Take the Metro to the Josephine Charlotta station. As you exit the station, turn left at the top of the stairs. Bear right at the fork in the road for the Avenue de Broqueville. Docteur Seghers's office will be on the left. To get to the hospital, walk down the Chausee de Vleurgat and cross the Avenue Louise to the park two blocks away. Take the #81 tram up the hill and get off at the stop in front of a large church across from the Avenue Jules Malou, on which is Saint Joseph's Hospital.

For those on a strict budget, try the Hotel Derby, which is within easy walking distance of Docteur Seghers' office and the Institut Saint Joseph. The rooms are representative of a class C hotel and have a bed, bath and small shower.

Hotel Derby
Avenue de Tervueren 24
1040 Bruxelles, Belgique
Phone: 733.08.19

Docteur Seghers' office: Turn left and walk to Montgomery Square (which is actually a circle). Bear left around the circle to Avenue de Broqueville. Docteur Seghers' office is on the right, not far from Montgomery Square.

Institut Saint Joseph: From the Derby, a taxi ride costs \$5 or takes fifteen minutes to walk. Cross the major intersection to the Rue des Celts. Follow the tram tracks through a small circle until you come to a large church. Across the street from the church is the Avenue Jules Malou.

Institut Saint Joseph
Avenue Jules Malou 56
1040 Bruxelles, Belgique

The devaluation of the dollar in overseas markets has led to a big increase in the cost of the Belgian sex reassignment surgery, but at \$3800, it still affords a tremendous savings over American prices.

The address to write to Docteur Seghers is:

Docteur Michel Seghers
Avenue de Broqueville 60
1200 Bruxelles, Belgique

(EDITOR'S NOTE...This article was originally one of the many brochures that have been sold through the XX Club.)

BRUSSELS

BELGIUM'S CAPITAL

by Becky Ann

Brussels is an international city and the capital of the Common Market and NATO. It is a mixture of both the Flemish (Dutch) and Walloon (French) cultures, but you will hear every language in Europe spoken here. It is a thoroughly modern city as high-rise office buildings dominate the skyline. The city has an impressive network of expressways, road tunnels and tram and subway systems. Within the city there are still corners of cobbled streets as the city's eventful and romantic past is still visible through its twentieth century veneer.

An area of interest is the Grand' Place, a market square since the 12th century that is enclosed by guild houses. The guild halls now boast first-floor taverns. You may wish to take in an F.I. (Female Impersonator) Show at Chez Flo's. Nearby is the modern downtown shopping district which contains a McDonald's and a Pizza Hut for those who are fast-food junkies. A few blocks away on the Rue de l'Etuve, is the original sculpture of the Mannekin Pis, Brussels' civic symbol. The city contains many fine restaurants, museums, parks, shopping malls and open markets.

When in Brussels for the surgery, arrive a few days early and stay a few extra days after you leave the hospital to enjoy all that the city has to offer. If this is the only European vacation you ever take, don't miss out on making it a most memorable one.

SRS IN MONTREAL

Compiled from *Passages and CrossCurrents*

To become a candidate for M-to-F reassignment with Dr. Menard of Montreal, a pre-op must supply recommendations from two psychiatrists plus an evaluation by an endocrinologist. A recent photo and a preliminary office visit (\$55 Canadian) are required. Results of blood tests, a chest X-ray, a recent AIDS test, and (if over 40) an EKG must also be provided.

Dr. Menard performs the procedure at a private hospital. Hospitalization is for five days and a further five-day post-operative stay in Montreal is necessary. There are many hotels and motels in the vicinity of the clinic. The cost is \$6,025 Canadian (about \$5,200 US) which includes hospital care, anesthesia and the surgery. (The \$55 fee for the first office visit is deductible from this total.) When the date of the operation is decided, a \$500 deposit must be sent. The balance (certified check only) is due one week before surgery is performed.

Dr. Menard uses the penile inversion technique, using the scrotum as needed. He says that he gets 3 1/2" to 4" of depth in the vagina which will be 4" to 6" after healing, given faithful dilation. Dr. Menard emphasizes that attitude is very important. People need a balanced life; surgery is just one step in a life-long process. He tries to be very selective in his choice of candidates.

Dr. Yvon Menard
1003 East Boulevard St. Joseph
Montreal, Ontario Canada H2J 1L2

**RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO
TWENTY MINUTES**

WE KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE !



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONUNDRUM

(Many years ago, I found this article published in the *International Journal of Archaeology and Antiquities*. Since I realized it's importance to the IS community, I have preserved it in a container of dry nitrogen located in a temperature and humidity controlled room in my home...unseen and unread...until now. I forwarded the hermetically sealed cylinder, under armed guard, to the editorial offices of *Twenty Minutes ONLY* after receiving assurances from Becky that the XX Club would be responsible for further preservation of this rare and unreplaceable manuscript. Realizing the trouble and expense that has gone into bringing you this article, I trust that you will be suitably awed, impressed and wowed.)

Michelle Hunt RN

Abdul Ben Phranclin had shown a singular fascination with the ancient civilizations whose ruins dotted the lands surrounding his boyhood home in a small town on the outskirts of Cairo. From the earliest time that Abdul could remember, he had dreamed of becoming an archaeologist. Abdul studied hard, and at 19 was one of the youngest persons to ever enter the program of Archaeological Studies at the University of Cairo. His rise through academia was rapid and, at the age of 28 graduated with a PH.D. in Archaeology and the offer to become assistant curator at the Museum of History in Cairo. With his future secure both financially and professionally, Abdul felt he was now in a position to research an enigma which had presented itself during an excavation he had worked on at the ancient site of Ur a few years previously.

For almost the entire summer. Abdul and a few other students, had been digging at the site of a small walled compound. Late one afternoon, while clearing dirt from one corner of what appeared to be the kitchen, Abdul found a small, almost perfectly preserved clay pot. On it was drawn the picture of a King sitting upon his throne, nothing unusual except the drawing depicted a person whose right side was dressed in the raiment of a king and clearly showed the high headpiece and staff of office, the kingly robes and robust sandals of leather. A sharp line passed down the figure from the top of the crown to the bottom of his robe. On the left side of the drawing was the image of a beautiful Queen. Her headgear was low and delicately carved, her robes appeared soft and wispy and on her left foot was a delicate sandal of gold. So narrow was the line separating the two halves it was difficult to see, and it appeared that the artist intended for an observer to easily determine the two images were in fact, one and the same person. Translated, a single inscription read "Thanks to our beloved King, Phen-Ormon". "What a curious piece", Abdul thought to himself, and then as the afternoon was almost over, he charted the artifact on his grid and quit working for the day.

Several years passed and Abdul was busy with his studies. Occasionally his thoughts would return to that small clay pot, and more than once he found himself pondering the meaning of the strange image of the King who was also Queen. As time would permit, Abdul would search through the libraries, looking for any references he could find of King Ormon. The clay pot had been carbon dated to approximately

3700 B.C., and research had indicated the King had ruled over the small kingdom of Mariposatania which is located in an area now covered by the waters of the Aswan High Dam, but at the time of Abdul's search, was still dry land.

One day, after Abdul had been with the Museum for almost a year, he happened to be walking past an exhibit from a recent dig near Tanis, when a small object caught his eye. It appeared to be an exact duplicate of the clay pot he had been pondering for years. On closer examination however, Abdul noticed a small map on the back side - opposite the drawing of the King, which appeared to show the sites of watering holes along a camel route. The inscription under this map translated "Our beloved King/Queen welcomes you". With great excitement, Abdul realized he could use the map as an overlay of the known caravan routes of that period, and at the end of the road should lie Mariposatania.

Although it would seem a simple matter to locate the ancient city, the 'map' was less than accurate by modern standards, and so it was almost another year before Abdul was able to determine with any accuracy, the approximate location of Mariposatania. Another year was to pass before funds were approved for the search, and yet another year was to pass before the archaeologist was to stand, finally, at the site of what he hoped would be the excavation that would answer his many questions, and perhaps would afford him a small amount of recognition for his years of painful research.

Abdul selected what he felt was a promising place to start. Almost immediately one of the diggers reported that he had struck something solid. Soon a low wall appeared, and then another followed shortly by the foundation of a house. Excitement was high in the camp, and Abdul was positively exuberant as he penned a communique back to the Museum. Soon more small clay pots were unearthed, some holding ashes which showed to be animal remains of some sort.

The dig continued for several months, and everywhere they looked, in every building, were more of the mysterious blue pots. Abdul was becoming rather dejected as he was not yet able to decipher their meaning or that of the mysterious monarch Phen-Ormon. Then finally, one day a worker excavating near the center of the city uncovered something that looked like an altar. It was a rectangular structure about 7 feet long. At each end were 2 holes, one at each corner, and appeared to be for hands and feet. "Obviously an altar where human sacrifice was offered", Abdul explained to the workers.

Abdul and the workers were so excited by the recent finds that Abdul ordered the excavating of the rest of the city stopped, and the workers shifted to this new site. Soon, new artifacts came to light, items not seen elsewhere during the dig. There were larger versions of the small blue pots, each with a rendering of the King but each with a different inscription which seemed to indicate that each vessel was used for something different. Soon, as an adjacent room was excavated, bronze tools were discovered and these seemed to be designed for cutting and sawing. "This society appears to have worshiped human sacrifice, and to have actually dismembered the poor victims" read one report. Another time Abdul wrote in his journal, "I have never know of a society or a culture that so worshipped the letting of blood".

Another room was unearthed which was adjacent to the room with the alter. This room had 4 high slabs of polished marble which had been finished so they were smooth on their tops which were about 4 feet above the floor. This particularly gruesome find caused Abdul to write in his journal, "We found a room today that appears to have been used as a place to lay out the dismembered bodies for some ghoulish purpose. What savages these people must have been".

Day after day the excavation continued, and day after day additional items of torture were found. There were many 'things' that appeared to be for cutting, a device that looked like two big spoons, joined at the middle and which Abdul felt certain were meant for crushing parts of the body, and there was a particularly heinous devise which appeared to have as it's only use, the spreading apart of a person's chest or abdominal cavity. "Probably used this while the person was still alive", Abdul concluded in his notes.

Finally, one day the big break that everyone had awaited came, the passageway to the King's tomb was uncovered. As the doorway was cleared of rubble, a life-size painting of the King emerged. Just as those on the clay pots, it showed both the King and the Queen as the same person.

Abdul quickly read the inscription on the doors, but as soon as he was convinced that no curse was placed upon those who were to enter the tomb, he took a shovel and broke the seal on the door.

Slowly the heavy doors creaked open on their bronze hinges. Before Abdul lay the bier of the Monarch. Just as the renderings on the clay pots had shown, the golden death mask was that of a very male appearing King, in his right hand the staff of office. On the left side of him, the now familiar female appearance, a beautiful woman holding in her left hand a comb and brush. At the feet of the body a small chest of gold, and next to it a scroll of papyrus. The rest of the burial room was Spartan by contrast. There were no vases of gold, or chests of precious stones. It was as though the Monarch was being honored as a treasure too precious to be contrasted by mere rare metals or jewels.

Slowly Abdul walked to the foot of the funeral bier. Gently he opened the lid of the golden box, and noted that it too contained ashes just as the countless clay jars his crew had uncovered over the past months.

Abdul closed the lid to the box and picked up the scroll. Gently he unrolled it, and as a hush fell over the group, he began to read out loud, translating directly from the hieroglyphics for the benefit of those assembled.

As I set my hand to this letter it is now in the twenty first year of the reign of our beloved King Phen-Ormon, by whose gifted and brilliant hand the suffering of thousands of people in this, the known universe, were brought to an end. Through his hand, those who, like him, were born into a male body even though they be female in mind and spirit, were able to find the wholeness and happiness so long denied them.

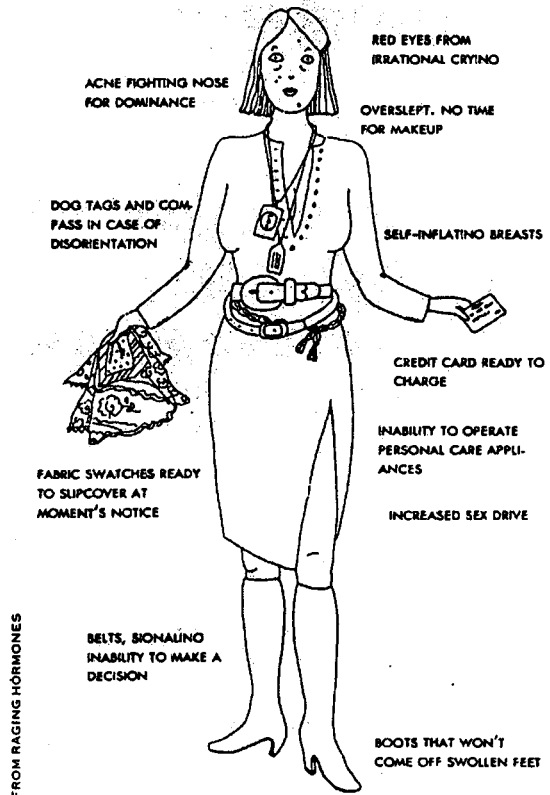
That I, Quicly Castratum, master physician, was able to perform the first of these many surgeries is not important. Once I had made the King a whole person, and taught him my craft, he was able to help many other.

The operation consisted of removing the male organs, these were later burned and placed in a small receptacle which was given to the person as a reminder of what they once were, and what they have now become.

Suddenly the truth of the entire excavation site became obvious to Abdul. This was not a center of human sacrifice and torture, no not at all...it was a HOSPITAL, and the alter was an OPERATING TABLE, the 4 'beds' the recovery room, and the implements of bronze were surgical tools. KING PHEN ORMON WAS A DOCTOR, and the only surgeries he performed were for the purpose of sex reassignment...his patients were all transsexuals.

So there you have it, the worlds first sex reassignment surgeries were done in Egypt over 5800 years ago. Unfortunately, Abdul died during World War I. The waters of the Aswan High Dam covered the excavation site of Mariposantania, and the few remaining clay pots were destroyed sometime during the London Blitz. But at least now you know the truth.

Field Guide to the Hormone Hostage



Raging Hormones

by Robin Sheets and Martha Williamson

One of the illustrations for their book on the perils of PMS

I DON'T LIKE TO SPREAD RUMORS, BUT WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO WITH THEM?

Top 10 Giveaways That You Have Had Boob Implants

By Sonia and Lila

- 10- Your breasts feel like 2 bags filled with rocks.
- 9- You walk hunched over from unaccustomed weight.
- 8- Your nipples are so hard (how hard are they?), you can hang a coat hanger on them... with the coat!
- 7- One of your boobs slipped around to your backside.
- 6- Your boobs stick out like the bumper on a "57" Buick.
- 5- Your IQ drops 10 points overnight.
- 4- The IQ of the men hitting on you drops 20 points overnight.
- 3- Your breasts are so firm they leave permanent indentations in your mattress.
- 2- Your nipples look suspiciously like the fill valve on a bicycle tire.
- 1- Upon close inspection, you find a U.P.C. symbol.

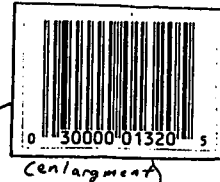
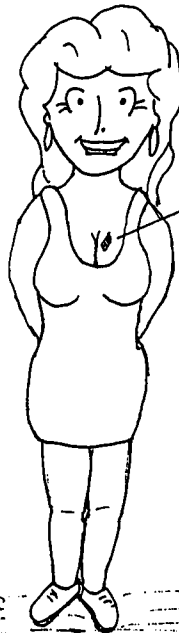


"And with your new penis, you'll get this owner's manual absolutely free!"

(EDITOR'S NOTE...Reprinted from the FTM Newsletter)

You Know they're Implants when...

It's a birth mark!



by Lila

VERONICA'S DRAG

by Veronica Jean Brown

Some of us may remember the many adventure films veteran actor Burt Lancaster has made. There certainly has not been a more masculine and manly type.

But in 1952, the release of the *Crimson Pirate*, an adventure film, spoofed and burlesqued many of the more serious buccaneer pictures that came before.

To 'buckle a swash' meant to buckle on a sword belt and holder with of course, the accompanying sword. Hence the term, a swash buckling, buccaneer, either a hero or anti-hero type.

In the plot, the stars Burt Lancaster and Nick Cravat attempt to save a Carribean island from the clutches of the royal pain in the you know what. The both masquerade as feminine wenches to gain entry to the heavily guarded city, an especially difficult trick since Nick Cravat's character sported a mustache and well trimmed beard.

But of course, once inside the city fortress, off come the dresses, the wigs, bright smiles and eye shadow. The swashes get buckled, on go the buccaneer boots, manly shirts open to the waist with rippling muscles showing and it's now a good swash buckling adventure to the end of the film as their friends get released and the woman Burt Lancaster loves is back in his arms.

Picture Walter Matthau in the 1978 flick, *House Calls*. Matthau plays a sexually active and overly aggressive widowed doctor, who bounces from bed to bed.

Upon waking one bright morning in a young woman's apartment, Dr. Matthau discovers to his dismay - that all of his clothes are gone. How does he get home with no clothes, wallet, money, or car keys?

Yep. He must resort to borrowing a few of the young woman's things to cover his hairy body and bony knees. A pretty picture it ain't. It seems that every generation has memories of great actors or celebrities that fade as quickly as the years pass. Such was the case of William Gillette, an American stage actor, who at the turn of the century, made a lot of money portraying Sherlock Holmes.

He made so much money in fact, that he was able to have built a massive stone castle overlooking the Connecticut river in the state of Connecticut. On his estate was also constructed a miniature steam engine that visitors and guests could ride about the property. His estate, known as Gillette Castle is open to the public today as a museum.

About the same time, another American stage actor, Julian Eltinge was making lots of money acting on the stage and impersonating women in vaudeville and on the stage. Eltinge was known as the greatest female impersonator of his day.

Eltinge began his career in minstrel shows produced by George M. Cohan, and during this time, drag became a prominent feature of vaudeville and music hall entertainment. Even the late great James Cagney got started as a "chorus girl" on the vaudeville stages.

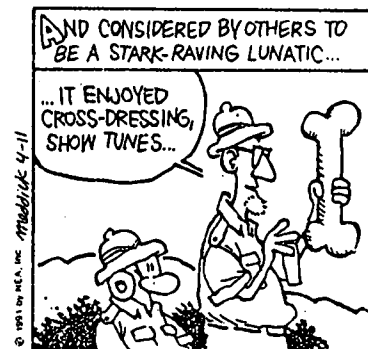
In 1917, Julian Eltinge made his first celluloid appearance in a film by Adolf Zukor. He starred in the wonderful comedy *The Countess Charming*. And of course, he had both the male and female leads.

A second 1917 film was called *The Widow's Might*, and like the first, the plot always has some machination whereby Eltinge could slip into something soft, silky, and more comfortable, although if one observes the military tight and binding corsets of the day, were the feminine outfits really all that comfortable?

Julian Eltinge enjoyed an immense popularity on the stage and his successes followed him to the stages of Hollywood.

In his last starring role in the 1925 film, *Madam Behave*, Eltinge played a mystery woman who consoles Ann Pennington, as the real female lead, in a scene before the double wedding fade-out. It must be tough to hug a woman when you're dressed as one yourself but have all those manly hormones flowing through your veins.

ROBOTMAN



**Take my advice—
I'm not using it!**

THE EDITORS STRIKE BACK

Dear Editor:

For many isolated TSs and newcomers to "the community", Twenty Minutes serves as a lifeline to the improbable pursuit of gender reassignment. It is a beacon in the quest for congruence and a conduit for much needed practical information. Recently, I've become concerned about some of the messages being conveyed by Twenty Minutes. Being a TS does not necessarily have to mean tittering and tee-heeing over every possible gender-bending innuendo (all of the non-Angel cartoons in recent issues). Nor does it necessarily mean coming out as a hostile misfit angrily demanding surgery, or as a lesbian (note the last two cover stories).

There are some of us who lead fairly ordinary lives and have no ax to grind with the various members of the gender community hierarchy. Often, I feel like an outcast; a minority within a minority. I am a M-F TS, closing in on middle age, and I have never been: 1) attracted to/intimately involved with/married to a woman 2) interested in TV/CD issues 3) turned down for TS-related medical services. I go to work every day, pay my bills, hang out with friends, and just go on about my business. My status as a TS is simply a non issue in my daily life.

It is possible to lead a relatively ordinary life as a woman without having to concern oneself with things like penal etiquette or un-learning male behaviors. There really are some of us who never assimilated into the originally assigned gender role in the first place and for whom the reassignment process is a liberating chrysalis, not a frustrated and unrealistic attempt to "change" gender.

I have become acquainted with a number of TSs out here in "the woodwork" over the years who feel extremely uncomfortable with and resentful of the wacky bunch who are often found at meetings and who frequently rant on the pages of Twenty Minutes. Frankly, I don't have much patience with those who continually bemoan the difficulty of getting through reassignment. It shouldn't come as a surprise that, on a practical level, changing gender is supremely challenging. I wholeheartedly believe that every medical and psychological or psychiatric practitioner should adhere to the Standards of Care, without exception. Unfortunately, that is not the case and too many maladjusted and/or psychotic individuals slip through the system and obtain SRS, only to cry foul after the fact or become even more demented. This only serves to make practitioners more reluctant to provide treatment, even to those who would truly benefit from it and it promotes a negative image of all gender dysphoric people.

How fortunate we are to have the capacity to go out and struggle and finagle to obtain a resolution to our gender dysphoria. While the social and legal constraints that we as TSs must deal with are unfair and unpleasant, they aren't nearly as restrictive or final as a wheelchair or a chronic or terminal disease. Sadly, so many TSs get caught up in oat-girling each other and trying to legitimize their fantasies, that they lose control of their lives. I believe we have an obligation to ourselves as well as to our sister TSs to be the very best we can be. Also, we need to let struggling newcomers and isolated sisters know that, despite the odds, it is possible to enjoy a healthy, happy and rewarding life.

While I can sympathize with the awkwardness and unpleasantness of attempting transition when it means extricating oneself from a marriage, facing the loss (or lack) of a career, or inhabiting an overly male physique, there are TSs for whom these are not issues. They are no less deserving of support and attention and should not be overlooked or dismissed as not needing any help or guidance. No doubt, many who read this are wondering why I don't just shut up and go away to enjoy my "normal" life. Nevertheless, for the few who might appreciate knowing that it is not mandatory to be hostile, bitter, or a misfit in order to make it through transition, I feel obliged to speak out.

One final note; why is it that the former editor writes most of the editorials in Twenty Minutes? According to the staff listings on the inside front page of every issue, Becky Ann is the editor, doesn't she have anything to say? With all due respect, it would be a most welcome change to read an issue that is not devoted primarily to Veronica Jean Brown.

Sincerely,
Norma L., Providence, RI

Dear Norma,

I feel personally attacked because I work very hard to ensure that Twenty Minutes contains educational, supportive and thought provoking articles, I also believe in keeping the personal attacks to a minimum. I wish all TSs were so "normal" and well adjusted because then I would not have to work so hard at educating and supporting and could concentrate on thought-provoking.

Sonia

Dear Norma L. (Ann O. Nymous, S. Tradiol),

If you are so opinionated, how about using your real name for a change. Education, support, controversy and humor have been and always will be a mainstay of this newsletter. To you and to Sister Mary Elizabeth and to JoAnn Roberts who have attached me for publishing Veronica's articles, I do so because I DO in fact agree with most of everything she writes. I even when I disagree, I defend her right to say what she has to say because I believe in the democratic right to free speech. I will not submit to communist style censorship of any kind. For those who were around when Veronica moved to Toronto, I only agreed to continue the newsletter because Veronica promised to continue submitting her scathing editorials. Without her support and that of many others who submit articles on a regular basis, Twenty Minutes wouldn't exist. As I stated in the first issue that I officially took over as editor - "I don't have to write nothing for Twenty Minutes if I don't want to. And you know what? I don't want to and that's the truth - phlisszztt!"

Becky Ann

COULD YOU PLEASE
CONTINUE THE PETTY
BICKERING? I FIND
IT MOST INTRIGUING

Dear Editor,

In regard to Fanny Burn's recent letter to Veronica and VJB's spirited reply, I must applaud Veronica for her forthright defense of her legal marriage arrangements. I, too, am a lesbian, in a loving and hopefully lifetime relationship. Unfortunately, as a US citizen, regardless as to how I came to be a lesbian, ever since they put the "F" on the driver's license and social security records, our chances of sharing the legal protection enjoyed by millions of heterosexual couples had been denied us. We, the sisters and brothers of the gay community, are striving hard in a variety of venues and jurisdictions to get and preserve basic rights to survivorship and non-interference. Veronica found a loop hole tossed by the narrow-minded who were trying to deny another group their rights, and jumped right through it. Bravo and congratulations. All I want to know about it is whether they will allow US Citizens to marry under the same laws and whether the marriage would be valid in the US? Fanny was wrong, of course, about the Tula "victory" - the ruling went against her...attackers should know their facts before striking.

In the "On Demand"/"Be in a Program" discussion, I tend to be on the side of the "On Demand" frustration, but letters like Maavais Plaisant's make one aware as to why programs exist. I am, by the way, following the Benjamin standards and am in the middle of the Life Experience. I have found the time, one of joy and discovery, of dimensions far wider than I could have expected. I did shop for psychiatrists and found one that was both versed in gender dysphoria and in counseling lesbians. Both my life mate, Sher, and I have met with him and he has a full understanding both of the depth of my commitments and our relationship. The experience can be all that you make it. I would suggest that a person may want to stay away from cookie cutter TS assembly lines and run from any one who makes positive references to June Cleaver in counseling you. Take control of your life, but look through the eyes of reality. The time to finality is long, and for the certain, seems like a pain, but the program is also there to protect the weak from themselves.

Barbara Hatcher
Asheville, NC

Dear Barbara,

Veronica and Paddy were able to get married through a loop hole in the Canadian laws as they live in Toronto. (Canadian law, as in all Commonwealth nations, does not recognize TSs by they chosen sex but by their birth sex.) Same-sex marriage is illegal in the United States. They are currently having their lawyers checking to see if the U.S. will recognize their Canadian marriage as legal should they later choose to move to the States. Also note, they did not get married for the sake of getting married, but so that Veronica would be able to stay in Canada as she is an American citizen. Certainly you have heard of immigration laws? Of course, it has helped to solidify their bond with each other by being legally married.

Becky Ann

Dear Becky:

I'm glad we're reestablishing contact ... and I hope The Gathering and the Twenty Club can once again start working hand-in-hand and enjoy "cross-pollinating" of ideas and activities. Since returning to "the fold" last September, I can now count on just about ten of us as a core group for the re-emerging Gathering. If we can duplicate our original experience of growing nearly five-fold within a year, I foresee a great future ... once again. We are finally working to establish a written Constitution and By-Laws, so that the matter of succession of leadership and continuance of the society will no longer be left to a single individual. I am editing Passages with the same fervor I had "of old" ... but hope to make it an even better publication.

In regards to publications, I liked everything about "Twenty Minutes: The Comic Book" except the cover. A bit too gross, not quite professional enough to match the rest of the content (especially the "Toni/Lila" cartoon). The very best part, of course, was the "Who's the Surgeon" take off on A & C. Terrific! Not only are you apparently doing well as Editor ... but as an individual in her own chosen gender role.

Jana Louise
Founder/Advisor
The Gathering
Washington Township, NJ

Dear Jana,

Welcome back to the gender community. Best wishes to you and the Gathering. Thanks for the kind words on our April issue. I put plenty of effort into the "Who's the Surgeon" article. So too, did our former cartoonist, Robin R., on the cover; it was very much in keeping with the comic image of the whole newsletter. As usual, we mixed in true stories with the made-up ones so that our readers have to guess as to which-is-which.

Becky Ann

BRING OUT YOUR FREAKS

By Andrea Roonie

Did you ever notice that when its sweeps week on the Donahue and Sally Jessy Raphael Shows that just when you think you've seen every pathetic case on television...it gets worse? In May these shows featured TS-lesbian couples. With the exception of Veronica and Paddy behaving in a respectable manner on Donahue, the other guests left much to be desired. Of note, Tala on Donahue is a non-op TS who maintains a heterosexual sex-life with Lisa, her lover, while claiming to be lesbian! On Sally were several self-proclaimed TS-lesbians who dressed and talked like men. One couple, Kelly and Chelsea, both pre-op TSs maintain a gay sex-life while claiming to be lesbians! I was totally turned off and depressed by these TSs representing our community to the general public. Who are these people, where do they come from and why are they on television???

In the next issue of Twenty Minutes, Veronica and Paddy give the inside story to their appearance on the Donahue Show.

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