

CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

#67

\$7.00



MAKING THE TRANSITION TO PRIME TIME TELEVISION
FIGHTING BATTLES OF PREJUDICE ALONGSIDE THE GAY COMMUNITY
WHY PROFESSIONALS DON'T UNDERSTAND US
THE BILLY TIPTON PHENOMENON: A FEMALE MAN
OBSERVATION IN GENDER ROLE DEVELOPMENT
PASSING IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER
ONE PERSON'S EXPERIENCE WITH HORMONES
NEWS ... INFORMATION ... COMMENTARY ... HUMOR



FROM SANDY THOMAS

CONTEMPORARY TV FICTION # 20 is "I DRESS, THEREFORE I AM." This double issue is by a new, talented author and is about a young man getting caught by his mother. To his surprise she offers to buy him a dress and more! I loved it!

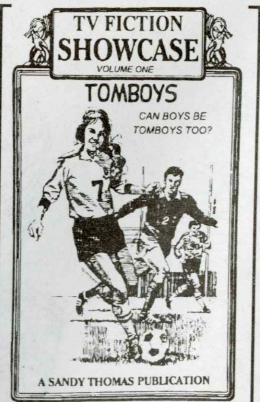
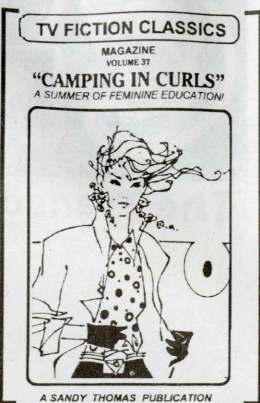
TV FICTION CLASSICS # 37 is "CAMPING IN CURLS." This double issue is about a family that sends their son to camp because he has feminine tendencies. The camp teaches him everything about being a girl! I mean everything!

Also new is the **SISSY MAID QUARTERLY # 3**. This is better than ever with articles on Gaffs, Panties, Ladies maids and fashion!

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CROSS-TALK

The Transgender Community News & Information Monthly

MAY 1995
(ISSUE #67)



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ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Linda Peacock, Virginia Prince, JoAnn Roberts, Paula Jordan Sinclair.
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TAKING THE NEXT STEP TOWARD EDUCATING THE MASSES



by Kimberleigh Richards
 Publisher & Managing Editor

We, as a community, have had a love/hate relationship with television. Since 1987, when a few brave members of the Tri-Ess Chi chapter ventured before the cameras to appear on *Donahue*, we have repeatedly allowed our lifestyle to be probed, questioned, and even attacked on the air in the name of getting information out to the many

"We have for many years wished in vain for a venue that both reached the masses and presented a factual discussion of the subject."

transgendered people who we knew were out there watching but who we didn't have any other way of reaching.

Through those countless appearances, we also implemented a public outreach program of sorts. Although there are undoubtedly many viewers of Sally, Phil, Jenny, Montel, Jerry, and their talk show colleagues who believe us to be a "bunch of weirdos" (and who could blame them, given some of the topics the shows have dreamt up and some of the guests they have booked to illustrate those topics), there are also undoubtedly many viewers who look beyond the hype and sensationalism and distill the truth about the transgendered from these programs.

Unfortunately, there are far more of the former type of viewer than the latter, and thus we have for many years wished in vain for a venue that both reached the masses and presented a factual discussion of the subject. While we have hoped for this, we have always known deep inside that this would never happen on the daytime talk shows: I found myself answering "yes" to the cover story of a recent issue of *TV Guide*, "Are Talk Shows Out Of Control?" and I suspect many in our community had a similar reaction.

Even as I called upon the producers of these talk shows back in *Cross-Talk* #39 to treat us with more respect, with more dignity, with less tabloid-style theatrics, I knew I was preaching to the choir and I knew that even as I sent copies of that editorial to those producers, nothing would change. They have nothing to lose by exploiting us and they have every ratings point to gain by doing so.

Having long ago given up on these purveyors of conflict --

when was the last time you saw a talk show about us that wasn't entitled "My Parents Don't Know I'm A Transgendered Person"? -- I am encouraged by the recent appearance of transsexual characters and storylines on episodes of two CBS prime-time series.

Last season, an entire episode of *Picket Fences* was based around the town's reactions to the revelation that a much-loved female teacher had been born male and had sex-reassignment surgery prior to moving there. The uproar and furor of some members of the community were countered by an equal number of residents who had a "live and let live" attitude, and

ultimately she was allowed to remain in her post despite the protests of the former element who had wanted her removed from her teaching position.

Several weeks ago, *Chicago Hope* had as a sub-plot the difficulty of a post-operative transsexual who wasn't sure how to tell her doctor boyfriend that she had undergone the surgery three years earlier. (The plot was complicated by the fact that her boyfriend had played hockey with her when they were both young boys.) When she finally mustered up the courage to tell him, his misplaced homophobia surfaced and -- despite a very accurate explanation of transsexualism from his colleague, who had performed the operation -- their relationship ultimately fell apart. (I was crying for her at the end.)

Both these shows have David E. Kelley as their executive producer, and I am heartened that he has chosen to take the subject and integrate it into the programs' storylines in a sympathetic manner. While he does create conflict and antagonism, he plays the unacceptance of some people against the enlightened nature of others to make the point that we are, after all, human beings first and transgendered second.

What is important to note here is that this is prime-time entertainment programming. No, it's not a documentary produced by CBS News, and some have criticized the decision to cast a genetic (and rather cute) female as the transsexual in *Chicago Hope*, but if the audience gets the message that we're not "a bunch of weirdos", these are minor complaints.

The fact is that we are presented in a (continued on page 8)



The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

The extensive (excessive?) coverage of the O.J. Simpson murder trial by supermarket tabloids -- as well as almost every other media outlet -- seems to have pushed sensational crossdressing stories from their pages with one exception. That was the claim by one tab that O.J.'s father was a drag queen and died from AIDS in San Francisco. (Ms. Sinclair apologizes to her readers for missing this scoop, but she has an near-aversion to all things O.J.) Anyway, the Simpson family has denied that the elder Simpson was a drag queen and that he died from AIDS. They admit, however, that he was gay.

The Simpson trial itself had a crossdressing moment last month. A burly man in drag was escorted out of the courtroom after he momentarily disrupted the trial by shouting at another man for "sitting on my dress" and "socking me in the face".

William Beckingham's outfit brought smiles to the faces of the jurors as two deputies lead him out. Beckingham was wearing a pink miniskirt, an opera-length strand of dime store pearls, a pink hair bow, and mismatched tennis shoes.

Earlier in the trial, Beckingham won admission to the courtroom through the daily lottery for seats. That time he was wearing a swimsuit, and that time he was ejected for loudly complaining that he had wet himself.

In more normal times, the confirmed report of a Hollywood celebrity's crossdressing would make the cover of the tabloid that uncovered the tale. But these are not normal times, and that is why the story of John Travolta's childhood crossdressing adventures were relegated to page 15 of the *Globe*.

A former neighbor from Tenafly, N.J. says that John was the baby of his family and was "absolutely coddled" by his mother and three older sisters. "They treated him more like a little girl than a little boy, even decking him out in their dresses," Eileen Fanning was quoted as saying.

Childhood friend, Larry Delaney, confirmed that "the girls would dress him up in the old clothes and do these little plays. They would do John up and treat him like a doll -- and put makeup on him too." Delaney added that Travolta had "more of an interest in the things that girls did."

As he got older, Travolta continued his interest in female impersonation. His eldest sister said that by the time he

was 11, he could do all the parts from the Broadway musical *Gypsy*, including Gypsy and Mamma Rose. In fact, John was so interested in showbiz that his nickname was Brenda Starr Eyes.

Actor Charles Busch credits his childhood with starting him on the path that has made him the theatre's leading drag playwrights and one of its leading actresses. Although he is currently starring in the play *You Should Be So Lucky* (his first non-drag role), his drag roots were acknowledged recently at the annual Women of the Theatre lunch in New York City.

Resplendent in a Chanel suit, Busch thanked all the actresses who inspired him to dress well.

Ms. Sinclair agrees that wearing just the right frock for the occasion is so important. That is why she was thrilled to see Lizzy Gardiner wearing an ankle-length gown made from 254 American Express Gold Cards when she accepted her Oscar for helping to design the costumes for *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* at the Academy Awards in March.

(The only other drag-related Oscar went to *Ed Wood* for makeup.)

The Gold Cards each carried Gardiner's name, and were provided by American Express because the company had a financial interest in the film. Even though the cards were invalid, the company asked for them back almost immediately afterwards. But Gardiner was not upset by having to surrender the gown that garnered her so much attention. Besides, she can't wear the dress again -- everyone has already seen it.

But her first choice of gowns wouldn't have been any more permanent. As her design partner and co-winner Tim Chappel noted, "we were going to make Lizzy's dress from seafood, but we didn't think it would last the evening." Chappel was no slouch either; he wore a long black skirt with his tuxedo jacket.

A man taking those kind of liberties with traditional feminine garb hardly raises an eyebrow in Hollywood. But they don't cotton to such things in Normal, Ill. Things there are, well, normal, and so school officials had no choice but to send Josh McElwee home when he showed up for classes at Chiddix Junior High School recently wearing a floral print sundress and a pair of black boots he had borrowed from his mother.

It seems that Josh is not gender dysphoric, but he is an experimenter. He got the idea of wearing a dress from a class exercise in which other ninth grade students dressed like natives of other countries to see what it would be like to look and be treated differently. Inspired by tales about crossdressing in Chicago, Josh and his friends talked about

earing dresses to school, and Josh accepted his buddies' dare.

"People really didn't care," Josh said, "except some of the seventh- and eighth-graders" and principal Ed Heineman who sent him home when he refused to change his clothes. "I think he was trying to make a statement," Josh's mother said of her son. But "I didn't think he'd really go through with it, to tell you the truth."

If Josh had picked something from the opening day of the fall ready-to-wear shows held in Paris, he probably wouldn't have gotten into any trouble. One fashion commentator noted that at four of the March *pret a porter* shows, "men's and women's clothes were shown side by side and were often indistinguishable." Ms. Sinclair is sorry to report that it's not that the men's clothes were not more feminine; it was because the women's clothes were more "tough, masculine, dangerous."

"It took only one season for the drag-queen dressing -- fishnet hose, fright makeup, stiletto heels, and corsets -- to go away," Amy Spindler commented in *The New York Times*. "As much as those clothes seemed a dare to would-be sexual harassers, the clothes on the runway now seem designed for the opposite effect -- to make a woman one of the guys." An example is Dries van Noten, who put women in various versions of tailored men's suits, softened only by a chiffon scarf or a silky shirt.

Whoever designed Patrick Swayze's, Wesley Snipes', and John Leguizamo's gowns for the film *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar* may have to wait a long time for an Oscar, even if he or she gets nominated. The release of the Steven Spielberg-produced movie has been pushed back from the original May 5 opening date. A spokesman for Amblin Entertainment said the film may hit theaters "later this summer, or maybe even the fall."

The official reason for postponing the release is the "heavy competition" all studios face during the summer months. But Ms. Sinclair thinks that because the film is about three drag queens who become stranded in small-town America and bears such a close a resemblance to *Priscilla*, the

producers are waiting for space to open up in the audience's memory.

Summer is the slow season for the legitimate theatre, but that is when the producers of a musical comedy version of *Victor/Victoria* choose to debut the production in Chicago before they take it to Broadway. As in the movie of the same name, Blake Edwards will direct his wife, Julie Andrews, in the title role. Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York co-star.

The musical will be at Chicago's Shubert Theatre from July 12 through August 6.

And speaking of the Windy City, the writers of the television show *Chicago Hope* recently showed considerable sensitivity regarding transsexuals.

The plot of a recent show centered around Billy and Annie, two romantically-involved characters. It seems that Billy was injured in a hockey game and went to the hospital for reconstructive surgery. Unbeknownst to Billy, his surgeon had performed Annie's sex-change three years earlier. As might be expected, the dramatic conflict centers around Annie's decision to "tell my boyfriend that I used to be a man."

When Annie finally decided to share her past with Billy, he became unglued, saying nothing could be as bad as learning "that you used to have a penis." Annie and the surgeon tried to make the point that the surgery was essential for Annie to live completely in the gender she knows to be truly hers. But Billy wasn't buying it. He called Annie a "thing" and a "mutant." His strong negative reaction prompted the surgeon to confide that while she first felt bad for Annie, she now pities Billy.

The story ends with Annie and Billy trying "to make it work." But Billy recoils from Annie's kiss. "I wish you hadn't told me," he says, and the couple parts.

The show broaches a subject that many viewers still "wish you hadn't told me." As such, it begins to break the silence and ignorance that surround transgender issues.

If you agree with Ms. Sinclair that such honest shows are important, share your opinion with the *Chicago Hope* producers: David E. Kelley Productions, P.O. Box 900, Beverly Hills CA 90213. Send a copy to Peter Tortorici, President, CBS Entertainment, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90036.

And while you have your pen in hand (naturally filled with black or blue-black ink), you may want to write Fidel Castro to thank him for taking a softer line with transvestites and homosexuals. Even though political opposition is still strictly forbidden, sexual minorities are enjoying a degree of freedom denied them since the 1959 revolution.

Jose Luis Valera, 29, is an example. In 1982 he was sentenced to six months in Havana's Combinado del Este prison simply for being gay. Now he is a tourist attraction or sorts, performing in drag in nightclubs that are not officially licensed but are certainly not totally underground. Jose Garcia, another drag entertainer, crossdresses nearly all the time, even at his mother's house. Even the traditionally conservative trade unions, strongly tied to the party, are hiring female impersonators to entertain their members. Finally, a female impersonator named Margot is one of the main characters of the most popular Cuban television show, *El Sabadazo*.

The result of this new spirit is that Valera has no desire to leave Cuba. He said that outside his homeland he probably wouldn't be as tolerated as he feels he is now in Cuba.

Toleration comes in the strangest of places. Just ask Krystine, a transsexual whose story was recently told in the *Casper Star-Tribune*. She was quoted as saying "Wyoming folks are tolerant." And, like Jose Luis, she sees no need to leave her home.

The Vancouver Hospital Gender Dysphoria Clinic encountered some the same live-and-let-live attitude when they looked into the problems of transsexual teachers continuing to work within their school systems. Michelle Lett of the clinic questioned nine school boards and local teachers associations as well as the British Columbia Teachers Federation. Four of the boards, six associations, and the BCTF responded very positively, and identified the obvious problems an individual transsexual teacher would face.

Of course, one reason for the tolerant mood is that Canada has more inclusive human rights laws than the United States.

Ms. Sinclair brings this festival of toleration to a close with two words: Newt Gingrich.

During his daily news conference on Capitol Hill, the speaker lambasted the idea that gays and lesbians should have protection from employment discrimination, and in the process he slurred the transgender community as well.

"I am not prepared to establish a federal law that allows you to sue your employer if you end up not having a job because of a disagreement that involves your personal behavior," Gingrich said. Then, thinking of what to his mind would be the worst possible example, he continued, "does that mean a transvestite should automatically have the right to work as a transvestite? I don't think so."

More bad news from the Hill. If the Senate Commerce Committee has its way, transvestites may not be able to share their feelings and opinions on the Internet or any

other similar computer link. In March the panel voted for changes in the nation's communications laws that would levy fines as high as \$100,000 and prison terms up to two years for anyone who transmits "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or indecent" material over computer systems like the Internet.

The proposal will have to clear many legislative hurdles before it becomes law, but its warm reception in the committee suggests that the measure has momentum despite vigorous opposition by Internet users. Experts have argued that policing cyberspace would be almost impossible.

Aside from the question of practicality is the question of which community standard will determine obscenity? Who will decide if a conversation is filthy or indecent?

Sen. Jim Exon (R-Neb.) says that his proposal to ban smut in cyberspace is not censorship but an earnest attempt to keep "kids from being able to pull up pornography on their machines."

The Republicans may have strange ideas about personal freedoms, but they were dead right about health care reform. Remember the horror stories they told about socialized medicine? Shelley Ball is an example of state-controlled medicine out of control.

As an inmate in a Alberta prison following a second degree murder conviction in 1978, William Ball petitioned

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authorities for help with his gender dysphoria. Ball recently told a newspaper reporter that a judge recommended sex reassignment surgery in 1979, and the surgery was performed at a university hospital in Edmonton and paid for by the provincial taxpayers. Yet the \$250,000 surgery (yes, that's what Ball claimed it cost) left her without any genitalia of any kind, neither penis nor vagina. But she claims she has a scrotum. **[Gosh, I hope this doesn't get on the Internet.]** Since her operation, Ball has been assigned to a women's prison. Yet, without sexual organs, she says she has no sexuality.

"I feel terrible," she said. "I'm not a whole person. We all have some sort of identity, some sense of our own sexuality. But I don't have that."

●●●

Don't tell Sen. Exon, but at a recent conference for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered writers, a unnamed international transgender celebrity turned heads when she announced to a roomful of participants on a gender panel that "I am the only person in this room who needs both a prostate exam and a pap smear."

●●●

Of course, we were kidding about the problems associated with "socialized medicine," and we think Hillary Clinton got a bad rap with health care reform. Canada has an excellent health care system, and some of Ball's statements indicate more than a simple lack of credibility. (Ms. Sinclair is trying mightily to avoid the obvious pun.)

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Sweden is another example of a state subsidized health care system. According to a researcher at Umeaa University, seven out of ten sex change operations performed in Sweden are successful when measured by the patient's satisfaction and self-esteem.

Owe Bodlund attributes this high success rate to the tough examination process which is required before a sex change can be approved. It takes between five and ten years for a person to fully complete the change. Of the approximately fifty patients who apply for sex reassignment each year, only ten to fifteen are approved. A total of 250 operations have been performed in Sweden, and they are evenly split between MTF and FTM.

●●●

And speaking of FTMs, in March, Ms. Sinclair wondered about the veracity of an report she had seen concerning a Florida couple who began their relationship as lesbians. One of them allegedly underwent sex reassignment surgery (SRS), apparently making them heterosexuals. Then the second woman confronted her gender issues and also opted for SRS. As a result, the two now form a gay male couple.

A reader from Atlanta, Georgia used the Internet [Oops!] to confirm the item.

"If it is about Max and his beau, then it is true," Paulette Stevens writes. "The situation there is that Max is a post-op FTM and his significant other has also declared as a FTM. They lived together before Max transitioned, and still do, though I do not know how far along Max's significant other is with his reassignment. Plus, they live in Florida. So I suppose that confirms it."

Indeed it does. Thanks, Paulette.

●●●

This confusing situation sounds a little bit like the blurb Ms. Sinclair read on the back cover of a new book by someone named Minnie Bruce Pratt. The book is called *S/HE* and the blurb says that "when you live between opposites, you cannot escape the s/he who will follow you, who must either be wrestled with or embraced."

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Being a low-tech kind of girl (not to mention cautious), Ms. Sinclair prefers to receive clippings about crossdressing through the mail. You can send them to her in care of Cross-Talk. Please note the name and date of publication.

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VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN GLASS HOUSES HAVE THE BEST VIEW

by Virginia Prince

The trouble with being part of a minority is that, regardless of how many of you there are, there are never enough to enable the group to relax. As a result, minorities are always on the defensive, and since the best defense is said to be a good offense most minorities take up an offensive position ... and in the process some of them

"A victory on one little front by one minority is a victory for all in that it breaks down the barriers of prejudice and repression just that much more."

become offensive.

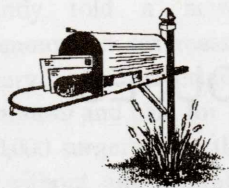
Heterosexual crossdressers are a minority, too. We have to defend ourselves not only from the majority but from being included in another minority ... the homophile group. It is only right and proper that we do this. A minority is not only a minority in numbers, it is a partially isolated group by misunderstanding and misinformation. Thus Jews in a largely gentile society, blacks in a predominantly white culture, homosexuals in a heterosexual environment, etc., all have to protect themselves not only from the greater numbers of the majority but from the more entrenched prejudices, discriminations, persecutions, and ignorance of the dominant majority. This rapidly engenders a set of countermeasures made up of explanations, justifications, rationalizations, etc., which solidify into a kind of defensive armor. It therefore happens that two minorities oftentimes find themselves not counterattacking the main opposition -- the majority -- but rather, each other, possibly in the hope of having a better chance to win over a smaller group, sometimes just from developing a sort of case-hardened attitude of antagonism.

Let us look at our own group. We are a minority ... one of a number in the sex/gender field. All the subgroups in this larger classification have a hard row to hoe because nowhere in human relations are ignorance and taboos more intensive and entrenched than in this field. Therefore it behooves all of these subgroups to understand that small-scale differences between them should be submerged in the greater battle against the ignorance and bigotry of the majority. They must realize that a victory on one little front by one minority is a victory for all in that it

breaks down the barriers of prejudice and repression just that much more. In our particular case, we are all of a mind to set the world right on the difference between crossdressing and homosexuality, and this is as it should be. However, contributing information and enlightenment on these facts should not be done with an air of superiority and condemnation. One who does so is very likely to find himself a victim of the statement "methinks thou protest too much", and is perhaps guilty of the very thing he denies so vehemently.

To be specific, there are many among us who are inclined to refer to homosexual persons as "g--d--- queers" or by some similar epithet. Gay persons have as much right to their way of life as we do. Generally, they do not understand crossdressing any more than normal persons understand them. Thus they need education about us, but is it not true that we equally need education about them? It so happens that the gay clan has been organized for some time, has had its own publications for a long time, has had and won many legal battles, carries on educational activities, and has seen novels and plays written about gay life. We are relative newcomers to the battle for understanding. Actually, we can stand to look more deeply at the battle the homophile element has been fighting and see what they have accomplished and the methods they have used. Ironic as it may seem, every battle they win is a battle for us as well as for them, because it breaks down restrictive barriers in society as a whole and because in the eyes of society we are in their camp anyway.

Let us therefore consider the last half of the title of my commentary. We "have the best view" in the world. We can look at the homophile from the point of view of the heterosexual ... and we ought to be in the forefront of those offering understanding and tolerance, because we are **not** in a position to throw stones and at the same time we are in a position of being on the side of the sex/gender minorities in the fight for survival and acceptance by the large ignorant mass of society in general. Thus we **do** have a better view than most, from our glass house, and we should make good use of it; a view for tolerance, understanding, assistance, and of common cause in a bigger battle. The Army and the Navy *(continued on next page)*



Vox Populi

Letters to the Editor

There were no letters to the editor submitted for publication this month.

Vox Populi is the transgender community's "town square" for the exchange of opinions and ideas. If you have a response to any editorial, news item, or article appearing in **Cross-Talk**, please feel free to contribute. We suggest keeping letters to 400 words (one page typewritten or 2000 characters ASCII). **Cross-Talk** reserves the right to publish only those portions of a letter specifically addressing the issue. Personal attacks will not be published.

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KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... continued from page 2

favorable light, and even though the ratings are not sky-high for Mr. Kelley's programs, they still represent a far greater number of viewers than the typical daytime talk show.

There have been some previous attempts to "humanize" transgendered behavior in prime-time (an episode of *Designing Women* featuring a crossdressed boyfriend, a scene in *ER* where a despondent TS jumped to her death from her hospital room window, and the pilot episode of *L.A. Law* with the transsexual secretary of the deceased law partner all come to mind), even though television history is littered with numerous sitcoms where male characters were put in drag for a cheap laugh and crossdressed killers frequented nearly every police drama that lasted longer than a season. But this is the first time, in my memory, that transgendered characters had scripts written around them that included factual information in the plot development and those characters were ultimately seen as perfectly normal people.

I believe we are seeing the first steps toward a new way to educate the masses. Abandoning the tabloid talk shows was inevitable once we started to become passe -- and thus had to be "weirded up" in order to attract any viewer interest -- but they were the only game in town for a long time and so we (barely) tolerated their corruption of the facts behind our "weirdness". Now, finding ourselves acceptable subjects for serious prime-time drama, we no

longer have to tolerate this mistreatment.

There are differences between the *Picket Fences* and *Chicago Hope* episodes and the examples I gave earlier. *Designing Women*, despite its including a scene where the boyfriend explains his crossdressing to de-stigmatize it, is still a situation comedy, and I suspect most viewers did not make the important distinction that it was **not** simply played for a laugh. *ER* did not make it clear that the despondent TS was not typical of transsexualism. The TS in *L.A. Law* still wound up being pictured as a "freak", especially since she made reference to frequenting gay bars (when was the last time you heard of a post-op TS hanging out in a gay bar?).

And while a case could be made for previous telecasts of *Second Serve* (the biographical TV-movie about Renee Richards) as the actual beginning of our prime-time respectability, that movie was made to air in ratings "sweeps weeks" and was appropriately hyped. No such hype accompanied the *Chicago Hope* episode, even though it **did** air during "sweeps".

I want to publicly commend David E. Kelley for his compassion and for his obvious unwillingness to play us as a throwaway in a cheap attempt for ratings. He is getting a copy of this editorial, along with a letter expressing my personal thanks for his approach, and I hope that those reading this will send similar accolades. His address is David E. Kelley Productions, P.O. Box 900, Beverly Hills CA 90213.

This can either be the beginning of change or a temporary detour from "business as usual" in the television industry. Whether or not we are actually welcome in the mainstream is, as always, in your hands.

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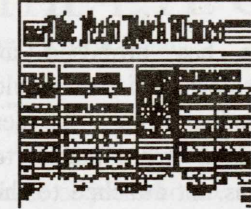
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VIRGIN VIEWS ... continued from previous page

may have their little differences, but they join together and do a good collective job when battle is joined with a common enemy. There are ways in which we can do this with the homophile group too.

Meanwhile, back at the glass house, use the stones to make a pathway towards understanding ... don't throw them at other houses.

[This column originally appeared in the FPE Femme Mirror #7, July 1962.]



Cross-Talk Newswire

News of the worldwide
transgender community

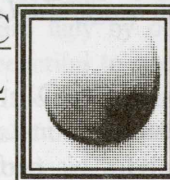
The dispute between the International Foundation for Gender Education and the organizers of the annual "California Dreamin'" weekend over the former's decision to stage their 1997 convention in Southern California has been resolved.

IFGE chairperson Linda Buten and Powder Puffs Of California president Patti Barton made an announcement at this year's "Dreamin'" that the two events will combine to hold "California Unity '97" in March of that year. The decision to combine was the result of discussion between IFGE's Yvonne Cook-Riley and PPOC's Joan Goodnight this past February during the International Congress on Gender, Cross Dressing and Sex Issues. There had been considerable concern within the Southern California transgender community that the IFGE event would have an adverse impact on the annual "Dreamin'" weekend, which has been held every spring since 1991.

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Goodnight called the agreement "an example of what can be accomplished for the community when differing parties sit down and discuss the issues with a spirit of mutual respect and communication," and publicly thanked Cook-Riley in the April/May issue of PPOC's newsletter *Girl Talk*.

OOO

IFGE founder Merissa Sherrill Lynn has announced her resignation as executive director of the organization. Citing increased pressure in the day-to-day work she has performed since founding the organization in 1985, Lynn tendered her resignation just before the March meeting of the IFGE board of directors. The board selected Alison Laing, a founding member of Renaissance Education Association and current chairperson of the Outreach Institute of Gender Studies board of directors, as Lynn's replacement.

Lynn says she intends to continue writing and speaking on behalf of the transgender community.

OOO

A proposal to convert IFGE to a membership-based organization was approved by the board of the directors at their March meeting.

The proposal, originally adopted in principle at the November board meeting ("Newswire", #63), will separate

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MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Tapestry subscriptions from voting rights. Previously, any subscriber to the magazine also participated in the election of the organization's board.

Basic membership dues have been set at \$25 per year, which will include a new quarterly newsletter and a 10% discount on IFGE books and videos. Additional higher levels of membership increase discounts on merchandise and include discounted registration fees on the annual convention.

Tapestry subscriptions will remain at \$40 per year, with no discounts for members.

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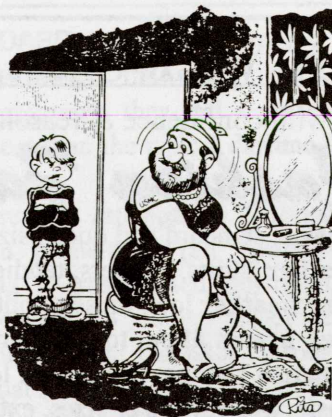
Recipients of the annual Virginia Prince Lifetime Service Award and 1995 Trinity Awards were honored at the Saturday evening banquet at IFGE "Atlanta Action" in March.

IFGE's Yvonne Cook-Riley received the clasped-hands Prince award for ten years of service as the organization's chief financial officer for both *Tapestry* and the annual "Coming Together-Working Together" convention. Recognized for their ongoing commitment of service to the community with Trinity Awards were AEGIS' Dallas Denny, FTM's James Green, IFGE's Laura Caldwell, Tri-Ess' and SPICE's Linda Peacock, ICTLEP's Sharon

NOW BACK IN PRINT!

HEY DAD ... DO I HAVE TO WATCH THE TV?

by Ricky Hunt



Cross-Talk's "Bearded Lady" offers a humorous, yet factual, discussion of crossdressing from the perspective of a teenager's father. Presented in a question and answer format for easy understanding of the issues involved.

Out of print for more than three years, it has been completely re-typeset and spiral bound for this reprint. **Cross-Talk** will donate \$1.00 to S.P.I.C.E., the Spouses/Partners International Conference for Education, for each copy sold.

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Ann Stuart, and transgendered author Leslie Feinberg.

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The Minnesota State Legislature has proposed an amendment to that state's welfare reform bill that would eliminate public assistance funding for "gender reassignment surgery". The amendment was attached to the House version of the bill, but was not attached to the Senate version, and at press time a conference committee from both houses was scheduled to meet to reach a compromise on the bill.

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The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force has announced its first ever Youth Leadership Training Institute, for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender young leaders ages 16 to 24.

The week-long intensive program will take place August 13 through 20 in Northern California, bringing together twenty youths from every region of the country for essential skills-building and community-organizing training to activists in order to provide them the opportunity to seize the tools they need to lead and to create change.

NGLTF will also hold its annual Creating Change Conference November 8 through 12 in Detroit, bringing together lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered leaders and provides them with an opportunity to learn new skills, network, and develop a deeper understanding of important issues.

Applications for both programs are available on-line in the NGLTF area of America OnLine's G/L Community Forum, by e-mail from rxnnglft@aol.com, or by faxing (202) 332-0207.

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Cross-Talk congratulates Martin Landau, recipient of the Best Supporting Oscar for his performance in *Ed Wood*, Rick Baker, Ve Neill and Yolanda Toussieng, recipients of the Academy Award for Best Achievement in Makeup, for *Ed Wood*, and Lizzy Gardiner and Tim Chappel, recipients of the Award for Best Achievement in Costume Design, for *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

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UPDATE: In last month's "Newswire" we announced the demise of the U.K. transgender organization Gender Dysphoria Trust and indicated that a full report would appear this month. The need for confirmation of editing by former GDT executive director Fran Springfield of her article makes it impossible for it to appear this month. We hope to publish her report next month.

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"Newswire" is compiled from items in transgender community newsletters, wire service reports, press releases, and the Internet. Press releases may be mailed to **Cross-Talk**, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365, e-mailed to kymmer@xconn.com, or faxed to (818) 347-4190.

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

by Victoria Lynn

The title of this article should be instantly familiar to those of you who are as old as the author. For those of you who are not, I will explain.

In the early 1960s (Yes, I am old enough to remember the early '60s but I don't remember them well...) a Syracuse University alumnus named Rod Serling gave us a landmark television series entitled *The Twilight Zone*. A particularly poignant episode was "The Eye of the Beholder." The story line revolved around a young woman whose face we can't see. The setting is a hospital and we can overhear doctors and nurses (whose faces we also can't see) discussing how unfortunate she is, everything has been tried, nothing seems to work, etc., etc. The impression you get is of someone who has undergone a great deal of plastic surgery to correct some type of horrid facial deformity. As the surgery has not been successful, she is to be sent away to some sort of home to live out her life in the company of others who have suffered the same fate. Needless to say, the young lady is heartbroken. The viewer is given every indication that she is, for lack of a better phrase, "uglier than sin."

In the closing seconds of the show, we are finally brought face-to-face with the poor girl only to learn that she is, by our standards, beautiful. The key phrase is "by our standards." When we see the doctors and nurses we understand that they are ugly by our standards and the lesson is that what is beautiful to one, may or may not be beautiful to another. It clearly illustrates the point that beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder.

What does this have to do with crossdressing? Have you noticed the increase in television shows that deal with crossdressing, transsexuals, and so forth? One thing that is obvious when I watch these is that the young ladies involved are for the most part, gorgeous!

The message that men get when they see "handsome" men on TV, is that they are the ideal to aspire to. The problem is that not all of us look like Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood, or Charles Boyer. Women face this same situation but it is increased by several orders of magnitude. If they don't look like Christie Brinkley or Cindy Crawford then they are second class citizens. We all have preconceived ideas of what we are supposed to look like and as a society, we spend billions of dollars a year to achieve "the look."

What happens when this dilemma is applied to a crossdresser? A fellow who is perhaps six feet tall and weighs 200 pounds flips on the TV to watch *Donahue*. He is suddenly faced with a panel of crossdressers who all look like they just stepped off the cover of *Vogue!* What's

the poor guy to do? Most genetic women don't look that good! So here he is, on the one hand, society is trying to pound him into a Steven Seagal mold (which 99% of us don't fit). On the other hand, he has a feminine side which tries to pound herself into a mold that 99% of genetic women can't fit into. Ninety-nine point nine percent of us

You know the old saying ...
but what about passing
being in the eye of the
beholder?

crossdressers haven't got a chance. Instead of feeling good about his crossdressing, he now (consciously or subconsciously) feels as though he has to measure up to a crossdresser who spent a quarter of a million dollars on plastic surgery, makeup and clothes, not to mention the fact that he just finished a makeover by a Hollywood makeup artist. Not only is this an unrealistic ideal, it's an unattainable one!

How many of you know a TV who won't go to support group meetings because they don't think they will "pass"? What does that mean? It can be anything from looking "good" at a meeting, to passing at high noon on Park Avenue. But how many of us can do that?

The conclusion that we have to draw here is that regardless of what you look like, it's not fair to compare yourself to another who, for whatever reason, may appear more "female" than you do. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If you can look in the mirror and be pleased with what you see, then it is enough. If you can be realistic in your values and not compare yourself to some Madison Avenue ideal, then you are doing fine. Perhaps a new definition of "passing" is in order. Now it seems to mean not being spotted as a man. To hell with the other part.

So, ladies, enjoy the TV shows. Appreciate the beauty of the people who are involved in them, but make no comparisons. Rejoice in the fact that we as a group are getting some sort of positive publicity but don't think that you have to be a perfect size six before you can enjoy it. Go to meetings as a way of interacting with others who share your love for things feminine. Don't go in with the "am I good enough?" attitude. Of course you are good enough. You're better than good enough. You are who you are and that, ladies, is a little piece of perfection.

[Reprinted from The EON Accord, *Expressing Our Nature*, Syracuse NY.]

A COMMENTARY ON PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

by Anne Vitale, Ph.D.

Having been to several HBIGDA conferences over the years where I always felt like a lab specimen that has crept out from under a copy of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, I was looking forward to attending the International Congress on Gender, Cross Dressing and Sex Issues as a conference of my peers. As it turned out,

"With the exception of the transsexuals present, what I was experiencing was not really gender diversity but exposure to a hypermale world clothed in satin."

the conference was far more interesting and illuminating than I expected. Therapeutically, there was nothing new: Although I was glad to hear that the program at the University of Minnesota was finally catching on to the non-pathological approach to treating gender issues clients, nobody was doing anything that we in the Bay Area haven't been doing for the last ten years. However, I did learn a great deal about what everyone was calling "gender diversity".

Before I step up on my soapbox, I want to say that I think that gender diversity and its healthy open expression is essential to everyone's psychological well being. I also need to address what well may be a source for my personal biases. The social psychologists have a well tested theory of personal attitude called "cognitive dissonance". Essentially it states that, contrary to popular belief, the more a person suffers for something the more he or she will positively evaluate it. Apparently we need to find a way to justify having paid a high price for whatever it is we have bought into. Without getting into the details, the price I paid for changing my sex in the late '70s was as high as anyone has paid for anything. Needless to say, I value highly my privileged position in the world of women.

That said, back to the conference. After the first day of greeting old friends and meeting people I had only known through correspondence, I quickly began to feel a distinct sense of discomfort. At first I couldn't put my finger on it but slowly it was becoming clear; with the exception of the transsexuals present, what I was experiencing was not really gender diversity but exposure to a hypermale world clothed in satin. No, there were no cigars and there were

no party girls being chased naked through the halls, but there was plenty of testosterone (or its traces) and a very male way of looking and expressing only the surface of what it means to be a woman. I guess it is no coincidence that those who decide not to take transition through to sex reassignment surgery carefully preserve their strategic attachment to the male world.

Perhaps it was the high price I paid for admission or perhaps I've become something of a prude in my midlife, but I found the surface incursions into my female world by some to be offensive. In fact I was experiencing the same discomfort that wives of

some of my clients share with me when they see their husbands take on only the surface aspects of femaleness. Of course, most of my clients have only recently acknowledged that they even have a gender issue. They can rightfully claim that the clothes and make up are all they know of being female. However, the people at this conference were all pros. They all knew exactly what they were doing.

An element I did not expect to find was a clear anti-transsexual bias. Because this bias extended to both Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male transsexuals, I can only assume that the bias was against anyone who was not in the middle. Virginia Prince was especially vituperative against those who take crossliving to the point of having SRS. She even publicly admonished her co-honoree, Dr Stanley Biber, at the awards ceremony for performing SRS. Virginia certainly has a right to her opinion about the appropriateness of SRS for herself ... but by all means folks, let's keep SRS pro-choice. To me, embracing the concept of "gender diversity" implies the acceptance of the entire range of gender expression. That most certainly includes the extreme poles and people who aspire to those poles.

There were others there who were also out of control. I'm speaking here of therapists, anthropologists and sexologists with a prurient interest in transgendered people ... some of whom actually gave papers extolling those interest. They all made it seem like a very hip thing to be doing. As a therapist I live with the specter of suicide over the very issues these people found "interesting". Routinely, lives go "unlived", marriages and families are *(continued on page 14)*

LOVE IS NOT PERFECTION

by Linda Peacock

In today's world, we live surrounded by the angers and sorrows of others, as well that of our own. The media is filled with war, pain, political disagreement and strife, crime that is dominating all segments of our society, hunger, tragedy. How rare it is to read about or watch something that brings happiness, wonder, awe. If we look

"How easy it is to judge others, but how difficult it is to honestly judge ourselves. How easy to blame but how hard it is to be blameless."

beyond man's destructiveness, we can occasionally grasp the splendor of creation, of nature, but it is daily moving away from us as our society continues a downward spiral from values, beauty and peace.

If our world is so imperfect, then how about ourselves? How easy it is to judge others, but how difficult it is to honestly judge ourselves. How easy it is to blame but how hard it is to be blameless.

So it is with relationships. This is especially so in the world of transgendered relationships -- that of a transgendered man and his woman partner.

In the capacity of leader and peer support person in the gender community, and especially with women who are in a relationship with a transgendered man, I am sometimes struck speechless by the intensity of the pain I hear in the voices of those who call me. The aloneness, the fear, the unknown is devastating to these women -- and to the men who love them but cannot control their inner, gender voices. The inability of these couples to communicate is astounding in that it is so widespread. They can talk to me, they can talk to you, but they can't talk to each other. Or if they are able to talk, they are not able to listen!

This morning, the minister at our church talked about the "marriage" relationship he has with the church -- in that it is a give and take proposition, that he must not only learn to speak but to listen to what the church says to him.

As I listened to his sermon, my mind wandered in the direction of the love relationship of a committed partnership between woman and man. And especially to the relationship of woman and transgendered man.

There comes first a mutual attraction between woman and

man -- that certain something that catches your eye, that makes you want to know that person better. There comes a liking for that person, for the things he or she does, the emotions that person expresses. Then there comes love, and the passion, although often it is reversed -- the passion, and then the love. In the first part of love -- the

early moments, we are often blinded to the entire person -- we see only what we want to see. There is a form of denial in first love -- denial that this "perfect" being is completely human. This human, who has strange habits, who can feel anger, fear, intolerance, bigotry, seems, at first, to be the most perfect creature

ever created, and our life suddenly is so wonderful, we live in a dream world of perfect love.

However, love is not about perfection. No relationship is perfect, just as none of us are perfect. Instead, love is about perfecting the relationship -- seeing what it is about your partner that makes you want to live with them, to join your life with theirs. Love is the renewing, the building of that relationship, accepting all there is to that person, accepting their whole being.

Love is the nurturing of a fragile emotion, so that it becomes the strongest, most dominating emotion in each partner's life. This emotion of love must flow throughout the relationship, fertilizing its growth, providing the strength that is needed when outside influences threaten the relationship. It is the sun that lightens the morning, the stars that brighten the night. Love is the one key that can make two people find worth in sharing their lives, and the nurturing of it bonds them, creating a powerful force to face the adversities that life deals them.

In the transgendered relationship, the couple faces more adversities, simply because of the transgenderism of the man. He has been caught in a lifetime of guilt, fear, self-loathing -- a darkness that lives deeply within his soul. He is all that "society" says he must not be, and he feels unloved. Too often, transgendered men attempt to be what and who they are not, thus creating a facade, an escape. And, unfortunately, too often it is this facade that we women fall in love with. Oh, there are some special things about him that he can't hide -- the sensitivity, the sense of humor -- but there is often an innate sense of sadness which makes them even more attractive to us -- and we're

convinced that we, in our love, can erase that elusive sadness away.

He is thrilled with the love relationship with the woman, but fearful that revelation of his "terrible" secret will drive her from him and makes him keep it within himself. So, we, the woman, love and live with someone we don't know -- he is hiding an inner part of himself -- and he is cheating us by not sharing his "whole" with us.

Is there any doubt why many women react so angrily when they do find out their partner is transgendered -- that he wants to wear feminine clothing -- it is the anger that his love was not strong enough to trust us with his secret -- with his whole being. We have been cheated and we face a real loss. He is not who we thought he was, his love was not strong enough to include trust. Our own love for him seems a sham -- and far too often, we blame ourselves for his secret, when we are, in fact, blameless.

Again, I go back to the notion that love is not about perfection. Love is being willing to accept our partner entirely -- the good with the bad. Again, I say that love is the building of the relationship, and it is the renewing, nurturing factor that allows us to live together.

There can be happiness in living with a transgendered man -- but you have to be willing to work for it. The first thing is to understand that you are blameless -- he was transgendered long before you came along. The second thing is to realize your own self-worth and to accept yourself, the good and the bad. The third thing is to put your anger aside and have compassion. You cannot see his pain until your anger is let go; and he cannot see your pain until you let down your defense of righteous anger. It is at this point that communication can begin.

And communication leads to compassion and willingness to hear what he was so afraid to share. I am not saying that he was right to hide this part of himself, for I think he was wrong, and he wronged you in doing so. However, before you can begin to understand or accept or tolerate, you have to listen. You are angry because he didn't share all of himself with you, but is it fair to him to be angry at him for being who he is? Unfairness should not give birth to more unfairness.

He cannot control what his inner callings are; to ask him to deny his feelings is wrong. However, it is part of

communication to work together to find the limitations, to set the boundaries, to find the way that you can live together. If there is no love, there is no hope. A couple has got to have love, has got to have mutual respect in order to begin the nurturing, the rebuilding of their relationship. It is the love that gives it strength to work, to grow -- and just as each of us is imperfect, so is the relationship -- but the love binds it, strengthens it, gives it the chance to survive, and to be mutually satisfying to each partner.

[Linda Peacock is the Tri-Ess director of wives' and partners' concerns, an IFGE board member, and chair of the SPICE board of directors. She also publishes the quarterly newsletter for spouses and partners The Sweetheart Connection, and may be reached by mail at P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221, by e-mail to khmj27a@prodigy.com or by phone at (501) 227-8798.]

T NOTES ... continued from page 12

torn apart and careers lost. None of us can afford to take any of this lightly.

Conferences such as this sponsored by California State University at Northridge can make a valuable difference in the lives of the people in our community. It is our chance to both legitimize and take control of our lives from the non-transgendered medical model that currently defines what society is to consider normal gender role behavior. I'm afraid that we did not do ourselves proud this time.

There is talk of having another conference next year: I sincerely hope that the backers of such a conferences demand more professionalism from the participants, show more discretion in choice of speakers (they seemed to have accepted everyone who asked to present) and that the participants who speak of gender diversity honor their own philosophy.

[Copyright 1995 by Anne Vitale, Ph.D. Dr. Vitale is a psychotherapist specializing in gender related issues and is an associate of the D Street Counseling Group, 610 D Street, San Rafael CA 94901. She may be reached by telephone at (415)456-4452 or by Internet at annev@eworld.com. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Vitale's name and address appears with it. Other publications must obtain written permission from Dr. Vitale. A copy of any reprints must be sent to Dr. Vitale.]

DEFAULT ASSUMPTIONS ... or "The Billy Tipton Phenomenon"

by Jason Cromwell

As an anthropologist I am interested in how FTMs are perceived by society. What I see happening is what Douglas Hofstaeder calls "default assumptions." In a 1982 article in *Scientific American*, he defines "default assumptions" as something that holds true in the "simplest or most natural or most likely possible model" concerning any particular topic or subject. He goes on to state: "the critical thing about default assumptions is that they are made automatically, not as a result of consideration or elimination."

To some degree or another, we all make default assumptions. For example, a 1993 Seattle newspaper headline reads: "Police officer files complaint against co-worker. Sex harassment case involves 2 men." Without thinking about it most of us assume this case involves a female officer and two male officers. The first paragraph of the *Post-Intelligencer* article states: "A federal police officer in Keyport has filed a discrimination complaint accusing a fellow officer of sexual harassment. Both are men." It is not surprising that we make the assumption that sexual harassment cases involve females being harassed by males, because this is what is most familiar to us.

Now I'd like to provide some examples closer to home. A couple of weeks ago while flipping channels I caught a stand-up comic's act midway through her routine. Unfortunately I did not catch her name but I did catch something relevant to FTMs. Leading up to her punchline she talked about the differences between men and women. Then she said: "There's one thing men do that women don't. Men change sex. I mean, has anybody here in the audience ever heard of women becoming men?" The audience agreed they had never heard of this. Then she delivered her punchline: "Do you know why women don't become men? Because it would be a demotion." While there are several things going on here, I want to focus on two of them. First, although it is supposed to be a joke and humorous, it clearly points out our invisibility (I'll come back to this point later). Second, it is a default assumption that females do not become men. Related to this are three other default assumptions: (1) Females become men only to take advantage of male privileges; (2) depending on the author's perspective, females quit assuming male identities in the mid-nineteenth or mid-twentieth centuries; and, (3) females can't become men.

I'll illustrate these default assumptions via comments made to the press by the director of the 1993 movie *The Ballad of Little Jo*. Maggie Greenwald states: "I stumbled upon some information about the real Little Jo Monihan [sic], about whom almost nothing is known except that she lived


as a man and nobody had discovered the truth about her until she died." The default assumption here is that the truth is Monaghan was female and thus really a woman. Greenwald vividly reveals her default assumptions when she concludes in the interview: "Women discover themselves -- and this is so much a part of feminism -- that

If a female chooses to live as a man, society should not think of him as a woman in male drag.


they don't have to be fake men; to be strong; to be powerful ... Jo becomes a woman, not a man. She passes through a phase to survive, ultimately to be a woman." Now let me get this right: Monaghan lived as a man, no one knew otherwise until death, but "ultimately" was a woman.

Another default assumption is -- as Greenwald states -- "It would only be extreme incidents that would make a woman decide to live her life as a man." These "extreme incidents" always involve socio-economic explanations. In the case of Monaghan, an out-of-wedlock child was born and Monaghan was disowned by family. According to one male movie reviewer, Stefan Ulstein: "With no family to depend on, Josephine [note the use of Josephine instead of Little Jo], had to find either a husband or a pimp. Instead she decided to pass for a man and live on the edge of Western society." For those of us familiar with television's *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, who is not married and not a prostitute, the producers obviously forgot that a woman in the Old West had limited choices.

One article accompanying a review of *Little Jo* is headlined: "Women posing as men pursued better opportunities." Quoted in this article is Julie Wheelwright, author of *Amazons and Military Maids*, who states, "very often it was a pattern of women in working-class occupations who would take on male attributes to further their careers." Going back to *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* for a moment, I find it interesting that Dr. Quinn is clearly a feminine woman in a male occupation. I don't know if the television show is based on any real person but I do know that many females pursued so-called male careers without changing their sex. I call this default assumption "the Billy Tipton phenomenon." The same article even uses Tipton as an example of career opportunism when author Linda Lee says "in 1989, when


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Billy Tipton died in Spokane, it was revealed that the American jazz pianist and saxophonist -- who had married and was the father of three adopted children -- was in fact a woman. She apparently began appearing as a man to improve her chances of success as a musician."

Another default assumption is that females cannot be men. Concerning Billy Tipton and others, Lee stated "One look usually convinces viewers that these people were quite clearly women." Yet, no one in Billy Tipton's life knew him as anything but a man. Always, like in the headline mentioned above, females who live as men are considered to be "posing," or living "a charade," or "masquerading" as a man. In other words, we are not taken seriously. Excuses and rationalizations are made as to the "whys" of our lives. I'd like to share an insight my wife had about society's response to us:

People say they can understand a woman wanting to be a man because of the cultural privileges that males in our society have. But they can not understand a man wanting to become a woman. Therefore, a male who becomes a woman must have a real need and a condition that is treatable. A man who becomes a woman is a transgender and/or transsexual issue. A female who becomes a man is a socio-economic issue and feminists will rally to "her" cause and, in doing so, deny FTMs their reality.

It is a default assumption when someone concludes that a female lived as a man for economic and social reasons. It is a default assumption when people conclude that Billy Tipton was posing as a man in order to be a musician.

I have many questions about the continuing response to Billy Tipton's life. If Billy was only impersonating a man in order to be a musician, why keep the secret from everyone after his career ended? Why, for that matter, keep it secret from closest friends and family at all? Why did Billy marry a woman? Why did he lie about his ability to have sex with her? Why lie about his genitals being crushed in an accident? Why did Billy, as *People* magazine reported in 1989, "always wear a t-shirt and belt with an [athletic] cup on the outside of his underwear"? Why did Billy adopt three children and be their father? Why do his adopted sons continue to insist that Billy was a man and their father? One of his sons, in that same issue of *People*, said, "He did a helluva job with us. He was my dad."



Billy Tipton at the Piano

I find it ironic that many lesbians would have rejected Billy while he was alive, yet claim him as a part of their history after his death. Does this mean that "anatomy is not destiny" while one is alive, but "anatomy is destiny" after death? It seems this must be the case. Why else would people begin to use female pronouns after Billy died and it was discovered his body was female?

I know that as an FTM many within our community would like to claim Billy as one of our own. We have so few role models, even though history is filled with females who lived and passed as men. Billy did not have surgery to alter his sex and he certainly lived during a time when it was available. However, this is true for many FTMs because the results are not very good and quite costly. Billy left no written explanation for the actions of his life. He left us instead with a life lived for over fifty years as a man. Does his life as a man have no meaning?

Billy Tipton's life speaks for itself. You don't spend fifty years of your life living in fear, not telling folks you love and live with, you don't go to extreme measures to make sure that no one knows what your body is or looks like, you don't die from a treatable medical condition, IF you are simply a woman living as a man so you can take advantage of male privileges. It is unfortunate Tipton left no written statement about the "whys" of his life.

Which, finally, brings me back to my earlier point about invisibility. We are invisible. When one of us is taken notice of we are discounted as "not real men" or "unreal men." At the end of a play called *TS/Crossing* these questions are asked: "What happens when Terry Smith dies? When his soul has left his body? Will you insist that he may have lived his life as a man, but he died a woman?" It seems from Billy Tipton we have the answers. But I insist that as I live I am a man. Because I chose not to have surgery, because I do not have a penis, does not mean that I am pretending. I am not posing, I am not masquerading, I am not living a charade. I am a man. Each of us can make the same declaration. It does not have to be a public statement. But somewhere in our private papers we can make a statement about the choices we have made, about the meaning of our lives. Defining who we are matters. If we do not define who we are, we do not exist. If we do not define who we (continued on page 23)



HotBuzz

by JoAnn Roberts

Any sufficiently advanced technology, to a primitive culture, is indistinguishable from magic.

-- Arthur C. Clarke



I've mentioned the Internet several time over the past months and my excursions into the depths of the net are getting longer and deeper. I've opened a CDS "storefront" on the World Wide Web which should be up and running by the time you read this. The CDS Home Page address is: <http://www.cdspub.com/Cat.html>. Surf on over and take a look. But, I've been thinking that every organization really needs to get, at a minimum, an e-mail account. E-mail is nearly instantaneous and information about events, news, and issues could be heard around the world within minutes of posting. I know many individuals associated with groups have e-mail. I regularly "talk" to Jane Ellen Fairfax, Kym Richards, Linda Peacock, Vanessa Kaye, Dallas Denny, and many others via e-mail. It is an ideal way to communicate. With enough groups on the net, it might be feasible to start an electronic newsletter that would automatically go out to every organization. Eventually, I expect every group to have a Web site where people will find the latest information and news about the group and its activities. *Fiat Electron!*

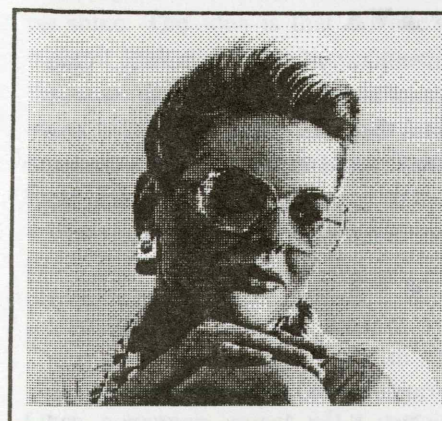


Well, enough tech-talk. The **HotBuzz** is about the International Congress on Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender Issues, held in Los Angeles at the end of February. By any measure, it was a tremendous success. About 300 people attended the confab. Of that number, I'd say a third were transgendered. Of those, about another third were presenters. Personally, I found the dialogue

between the two sides stimulation and worthwhile. Sure, there were some controversies. At one point, Martine Rothblatt, author of the new book *The Apartheid of Sex*, got into a shouting match with a transgendered physician over the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care. But this kind of difference of opinion goes on at just about every kind of meeting. Overall, I'd say the people who made the greatest impact of the conference were the FTM transsexuals. James Green was simply scintillating, as was Jason Cromwell. I had the pleasure of meeting Stephen Whittle, an FTM from Manchester, England, who teaches at the School of Law, Manchester Metropolitan University. What a neat guy! And, talk about plugged into to what's happening? We discussed the relevance to transsexuals of the recent divorce decree of an MTF transsexual in New Zealand. See, the court there granted her a divorce. In order to do that, they had to agree that her marriage was legal from the start. If that was true, then they had to recognize that post-op transsexuals have, indeed, "changed sex." Since New Zealand follows the same principles of law as Australia and England, this seemingly simple "divorce" decree has wide ranging ramifications for the legal status of transsexuals in those countries.



One of the highlights of the congress was the Saturday morning plenary session with Roger Gorski, Ph.D. Dr. Gorski has been researching the biology of gender differences, particularly with respect to sexual dimorphism (sex differences) in the brain. He made a remark in passing that many people may have missed which I think bears repeating. Dr. Gorski said that the male brain of primates (in this case monkeys) makes all of the hormones necessary to trigger ovulation were we able to successfully implant ovaries in a male. Now, couple that statement with the research discussed at Sunday's plenary session where Xia Zhao Ji, M.D., showed the results of his work implanting testes in FTM transsexuals and ovaries in MTF transsexuals. The testes survived nine months and the ovaries for a year. The implication is that it may be possible in the near future to implant ovaries and a uterus in MTF transsexuals who would want to get pregnant and

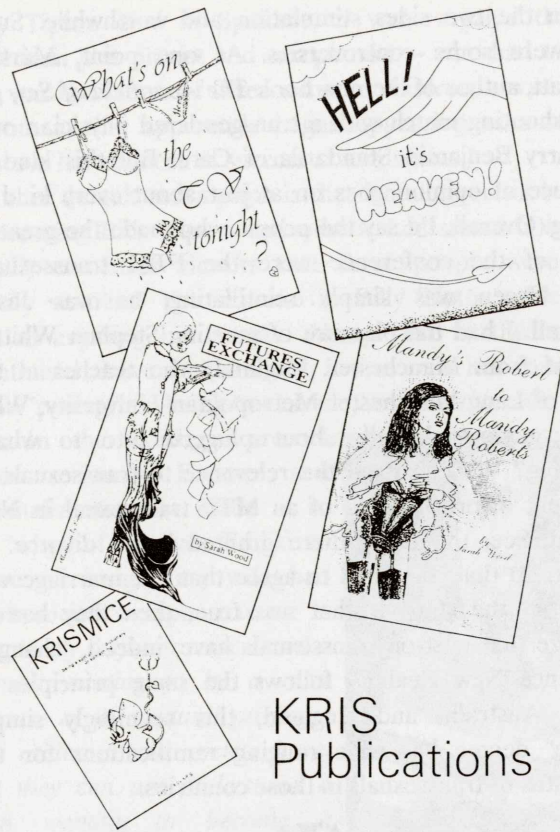


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"What's on the TV Tonight?" is a charming cartoon book depicting transvestites in a variety of amusing situations. Because it is the creation of a TV, none other than Christine-Jane Wilson, the editor of *The Glad Rag*, the book always laughs with, not at, transvestites. The author draws on her own experience, as well as her imagination, to produce cartoons showing the dreadfully embarrassing things that can happen to TVs, whether in social or family context. But it's not blishes all the way; some pages glow with the positive pindle a cross-dresser may feel when found out unexpectedly.
"Transvestites will identify with the author and find the book reassuring as well as amusing. Everyone will be touched by the sensitivity and delicacy with which Christine-Jane treats the difficulties of being a TV".

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Involved in investigative journalism, Robert — masquerading as Mandy — finds that circumstances make it impossible for him to revert to his male self. With mixed feelings, he faces the dilemma of having to live the rest of his life in the female role. Another absorbing story by Sarah Wood, illustrated by Emma.

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carry a baby to term, and that a functional penis and testicles may be transplantable to FTM transsexuals. Reminds me of *Steel Beach* (John Varley fans will recognize the reference).



Other **HotBuzz** at the congress was the rather loud whining and complaining from the organizers of the Texas "T" Party because the L.A. meet was held on the same weekend. It was much ado about nothing since reports from people attending the "T" say there were more people there than ever. I believe the "official" count was 340. (Yes, they keep score. Apparently "mine is bigger than yours" is important to them.) So, my prediction that the L.A. congress wouldn't impact the "T" was correct. What were they complaining about? No one "owns" the calendar.



And, speaking of calendar, mark Spring 1997 as the tentative date for the Second International Congress on Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender Issues. Several of the reps from transgender groups urged Dr. Vern Bullough, co-chair of the first Congress, to do it again, which he declined. But, both he and Dr. James Elias, Exec. Dir. of the Center for Sex Research at CSUN, said they would support and endorse a similar event at another site. Dr. Bullough even polled some of his colleagues for potential sites. An informal steering committee is talking to several academic institutions as potential hosts. Once there is agreement on the site, a date will be announced. Stay tuned.



On to fashion news ... I think this "reconstruction" of femininity is being taken too far. I sit here looking at the clothing ads in the fashion rags and all I can think of is: Yuck! A shapely suit or chemise is one thing, but overtly corseted clothing with froufrous and frills is a bit much. It's okay for a woman to want to look sensual and feel sexy, however, it is not okay to try to make her look like a marionette. Some of the waistlines are so nipped in it must be hard to breathe and impossible to eat or drink. Come on designers, get back to the real world!



The new femininity can make you sick, literally. One doctor has said that he treats as many as 25 patients a year for gastrointestinal distress because their pants are too tight. Imagine what a corset could do. Fruit of the Loom conducted a survey of 100 women and found that 82 percent said uncomfortable underwear ruins their day.



It's not just clothing. Eye makeup has taken on extreme looks. Most of the models in ads look like they've been in bar brawls or been date-raped. (And, no I am not making fun of date rape.) Jeez, if I didn't know any better, I'd

think most of the models were transvestites. (And, yes, I am making fun of the way some transvestites dress.)



If you want to see my idea of sexy and feminine, look for the recent ad for Florence Cromer. It's a simple ad with a sultry blonde in a cream colored leather suit. Both the blonde and the suit are knock-outs. Simple, yet elegant.



The recent trend in real world makeup is to combine and layer colors to add depth to the face. One such layering trick is to prime lips with a shocking fuchsia and then layer with burgundy or deep plum. The effect can be amazing. Makeup artist Kevyn Aucoin was able to create a perfect tomato-red by combining blotting a deep red base and then covering it with lemon-lime lip gloss. Cool! Similar tricks are performed with eye shadows, like iridescent blue over black, and gray and brown finished with a shimmery gold. The combinations are endless. Experiment and have fun!



The March issue of *Allure* has a "Trick of the Month" that we've known for years, thanks to makeup maven Jim Bridges. *Le Jim* taught me to use baby wipes to remove makeup a couple of years ago at FanFair. Well, guess what "trick" *Allure* came up with for March. Yeah, girl. That one. Tooooo slow.



Women of color are finding more and more cosmetics designed just for them, and that of course helps feminine transgendered people of color too. Lots of companies and adding shades of black to their product lines, and while anyone can use these products, they work best on African-ethnic skin. Check out Bobbi Brown's Black Berry lipstick and Navy eyeshadow, or L'Oreal's Sangria nail polish, and Dior's Precious Green eyeliner pencil (almost green-black).



The trend for foundation is away from the ultra-sophisticated matte face and toward sheen, bordering on shine. The idea is that no one's skin is matte so why make it look that way? Newer base makeups look dewy on the skin. But how can we take advantage of that since many of us need heavy coverage and those thick concealers must be set with powder. Try fusing the powder into the base with a solvent like water, witch hazel or alcohol. Take a wad of cotton and soak it with the solvent, then carefully press the soaked cotton into the face. The pressure plus solvent will fuse powder and base, restoring some of the natural shine to your skin.



Once a woman comes of a certain age, she has to be concerned with wrinkles. Foundation has a nasty habit of

accumulating in wrinkles which makes the even more noticeable. The newest foundations use silicone carriers and special pigment that claim to hold the makeup "above" the wrinkles so they are not so visible. Check out Revlon's Age Defying Makeup. Personally, I still like Max Factor's Active Protection best.



I've noticed another retro-trend: lining the inside lower eyelid with black. Didn't they tell us not to do that just a few years ago? If you wear contact lenses like I do, lining the inside lower lid is a sure fire way to goo up your lenses.



I caught a quick sound byte about a one day, throw away contact. You put in a new pair each day. The piece said they were expensive, about \$700 for a year's supply. Hell, that's not expensive. At just under \$2 a day, that's less than most smokers spend for cigarettes in a year. My nicotine habit runs almost \$900 a year. So, "expensive" is a relative term. If you wear contact, ask your optometrist or optician about throwaway contacts.



Here's a trend that won't last long: Gun-Moll Chic. Fueled by the success of Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, some designers want to make every woman look like Uma Thurman. Not.



Getting back to the femininity craze ... Getting into that retro-'40s suit may mean some serious dieting. I've done the majors -- Nutri-System and Jenny Craig -- and they work ... for a while. Then, bang, you've gained it back and spent a lot of money for what? I've found that the only real way to lose weight permanently is watch what you eat, especially fats, and exercise at least three times a week for twenty minutes. I lost eight pounds from just after Christmas to the end of February by doing just that and I'm going for another eight to ten the same way. But, there are some recent developments concerning how our bodies make and store fat. The latest **Buzz** on fat is Chromium Picolinate which can be purchased at any health food store. It is thought that the chromium helps the body metabolize fat more efficiently. Who knows, maybe it does work.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS IN GENDER ROLE DEVELOPMENT

by Rebecca Auge, Ph.D.

This article concerns the development of observational skills as they relate to gender role development and change. A view of some important processes in human behavior change is presented. Then a number of questions are suggested that may increase your understanding of the gendered world all humans, to one degree or the other, inhabit. I give this paper to some of my clients who are working on various gender issues, gender role flexibility, or gender role transition. Your observations and comments are welcome and can be sent to me by either snail mail or E-mail; my addresses appear at the end of this article.

A person in the process of changing a gender role gives up certain ways of behaving and replaces those old forms of action with new behavior. Learning to blend with other women or men requires that you learn to **become a good observer** of the various ways people appear and behave in different situations. Hence, **sharpening your observational skills**, especially seeing and listening, may prove very helpful as you modify your gender role. Observing the appearance and behavior of others will provide you with a variety of looks and behaviors from which you can construct and practice the person you wish to be. What you see and hear, in combination with your own creative talents, will enable you to put together a nearly endless variety of possibilities that you'll be able to test until you find something that feels comfortable and works for you. As you make progress your awareness of who you are and what you can do will deepen. You'll learn to creatively copy parts of what you see or hear and then put those parts together to compose something new.

In the beginning, keep things simple and uncomplicated, work on matching or approximating the basics. Go slow. Focus on blending with others who have your same general characteristics, for example, age, hair and eye color, height and weight, and so on. As you become more comfortable and confident in your chosen role you may wish to become more adventurous and experimental. Don't rush things, change a step at a time. You'll gradually develop a style that fits and feels comfortable. Remember the foundation for this change process is developing good **observational skills**. This will include learning to observe others and learning to observe yourself. Become a good observer of differences in verbal and facial expressions, hand and arm movements, body posture and walk. Observe people as you go through your daily activities, while watching television and films, listening to the radio, etc. Try observing the nonverbal behavior of television characters with the audio off or look away and turn the

video off and listen to the audio portion alone. Observe the behavior of people in airports and shopping malls. What differences in the behavior of women and men do you see or hear? How do the two genders handle similar situations?

A second part of learning to blend and feel comfortable in

Before you can pass as your chosen gender, you need to observe the people already in that gender for behavior clues.

your environment is learning to sift and sort the information obtained from observing. You'll want to separate your observations into those things that will work for you and those things that won't work or may even, alas, make your life more difficult. This sifting and sorting is not an easy task but rather something that only comes with practice and a willingness to experiment, evaluate, and make use of feedback from others.

In addition, you may want to consult various books for specific information or even image specialists who work with color, style, cosmetics, walk and posture, and voice. However, after you learn what you can from observing people and their behavior you'll still need to regularly **practice what you've learned every day**. Approach change actively. In the early stages of transition this will mean **focusing on being aware of your behavior** and what is needed to blend comfortably, and then practicing it, and doing it again and again. If something you do doesn't work ... don't do it again. Do something different. In contrast, **promptly say good things to yourself as you have positive experiences**. Learn to regularly **give yourself compliments** as you make progress. This immediate personal recognition of your progress is very important and cannot be under emphasized. **Keep the critical remarks you make on your behavior to a minimum**. The variety of social situations you encounter will each require something somewhat different. Be flexible and **do new things**. Let go of any actions, thoughts, and feelings that block your progress.

This is the time to be playful, to pretend, to relax and experiment. Summon your acting skills and recall the playful, creative times of childhood. You'll find yourself becoming more flexible, innovative, and varied as time

and experience builds. Just as learning to ride a bicycle was once a very conscious, planned, step-by-step activity that eventually became fluid and automatic, so will the expression of your preferred gender role become.

SOME QUESTIONS YOU MAY ANSWER BY OBSERVING OTHERS:

What are the differences that distinguish the way men and woman walk? Do men and women of the same approximate size tend to walk about the same speed?

Do two women walking together tend to walk differently than a man and a woman walking together? If so, in what ways?

Is a woman's posture, body position, orientation, etc. different from that of a man while sitting at a table having coffee or a meal? When with a man? When with another woman? When alone?

Do men generally make more or less eye contact with the person they are talking to? Are there differences in eye contact when speaking as compared to listening? How about women?

Do women and men tend to smile equally frequently during casual conversation? While conducting business?

What are the differences in the ways women and men position their arms when sitting? How about their hands? And their legs?

How do men and women differ in the ways they tend to position their bodies in chairs or on sofas?

If pitch alone is not as important as some people might believe in differentiating a woman's from a man's voice then what speech characteristics are especially important?

Do women or men drivers tend to look around more while waiting at a stoplight in a car? Are there age, social class, or ethnic differences?

Are there differences between the ways men and women move their eyes and mouths during conversation?

Do women and men differ in the ways they stand and leave from a seated position? How about initiating a seated position?

If a woman touches her nose when with another person or during a conversation in what ways is she likely to do so? How does a man touch his nose?

What are some ways in which men and women use their hands to express themselves during conversations?

Are men or women more likely to touch their hair when in the presence of another? How does their touching differ?

Do women and men differ in the way they clap? Sneeze? Laugh? Cough?

How is a woman likely to hold a phone? Is it the same as a man?

Are there any differences in the way a woman walks when wearing slacks as compared to a skirt or dress?

Do women and men stand at a curb differently while waiting to cross the street?

When listening during a conversation are men as likely to nod their heads as women? When does a woman nod her

head? A man? How do head nods differ for the two genders?

How does a man wave good-bye? A woman? How do women and men say hello?

Are there differences in the ways men and women terminate phone conversations? Casual conversations? Business conversations? How about opening telephone conversations?

How do the ways a woman uses a tissue or handkerchief while in the presence of another person differ from that of a man?

Does a woman position her hands on the steering wheel the same as a man while driving a car? While at a stoplight?

Are women as inclined as men to place their hands in their pockets? Under what circumstances?

Estimate the percentage of women between the ages of 20 and 30 who wear miniskirts. Between 30 and 40? Between 40 and 50? Over 50? Answer the same question for people wearing shorts.

Is the behavior of a woman more like a man's in a formal business setting? How about a casual social situation with business associates, or at a party?

Are men or women more likely to lean forward while engaged in conversation?

What are some conversational strategies or devices by which women seek to build cooperation and community?

Do men generally have similar styles?

How do women and men differ in being verbally competitive? Are both genders likely to behave the same when competing, expressing differences in opinion, asking questions, etc.?

Are there differences in the frequency of statements of



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affirmation or denial as compared to the frequency of asking questions in the daily conversations of men and women?

Do women generally dress differently in various parts of the different communities in your area (e.g., in the Bay Area, San Francisco vs Palo Alto, Berkeley vs Concord, etc.)? How about men? What are the differences for different communities in your geographical area?

What are some age, social class, and ethnic differences in the ways women use cosmetics, style their hair, wear jewelry, etc.? Answer the same question for men.

What do the two genders do with their hands while standing and talking to another person? While just standing and looking or waiting?

Do women and men look differently when riding bicycles? How do women and men athletes look while riding bicycles? On the street? In competition?

Do the two genders differ in the ways they talk to children? Play with children? Discipline children? Teach children?

What can you learn about hairstyles, makeup, grooming, jewelry, various types of clothing, etc. from observing women and men models in newspaper, magazine, and television ads and catalogs for clothing? How do these various features of a person combine to produce an effect, generate feelings, etc.?

Notice the many different approaches women have in wearing jewelry and using makeup. How do you decide if a

woman is wearing too much makeup or jewelry? Are there times when a certain amount of jewelry is actually needed?

What are the differences between men and women in holding and drinking from a cup or glass? Are women as likely as men to drink directly from a soda or beer bottle in a restaurant? What kind of restaurant? What time of the day?

Do women and men differ in the way they eat popcorn, a hamburger, an apple, etc.?

How do hair styles and the length of hair for men and women tend to change over a person's life span?

What are some topics one is likely to find women discussing with each other in casual conversation? In a business conversation? When with men? Answer the same question for men, when together and when with women.

Are there differences between women and men in their tendency to look at other people who are walking toward them from the opposite direction while, for example, walking down a sidewalk or shopping mall?

How do women and men express disagreement? Anger? Happiness? Sadness? Joy?

Do men or women swing their arms more while walking?

Are there differences in pacing, speed, and rhythm in the ways women and men move through their daily activities?

What are some differences between the two genders in various forms of touching another person of: a) the same gender, and b) the opposite gender?

Is it true that women speak one way when with other women, another way when engaged in business or professional activities, a third way when with men socially, and still a fourth way when with children? Are there differences for men under similar conditions?

Observe the expressions communicated in the eyes of men and women in various advertisements for clothes, sports equipment, cars, cosmetics, and foods. Notice both expressions depicted in magazine and newspaper ads and television commercials. What differences do you see in warmth, power, softness, aggressiveness, attractiveness, intensity, and various other emotions as suggested by the appearance of peoples' eyes? Also, notice how the expression in a person's eyes and mouth combine to produce a certain look. In those cases involving action notice how the eyes, the brows, and the mouth work together to communicate different emotions and feelings. What other attributes of a person contribute to differences in facial expressions in the two genders?

Gender role behavior, like music, is a form of language and hence communication. As you sharpen your observational skills you'll learn some of the formal differences in gender roles that exist in this time and place. All women do not behave alike in the same or similar situations. The same, of course, is true for men. This raises an interesting question: What are the appearance and behavior characteristics that define a

particular gender role?

Expect your observations to elicit a variety of emotions and feelings. If you're not comfortable with what seems to be rather traditional gender roles you can formulate your own personal, androgynous mix of feminine and masculine behaviors that more comfortably defines who you are. The various possibilities are considerable. Eventually you'll decide what fits for you.

Practice your observational skills: Observe others and observe yourself. Be aware of how you walk, talk, and in general behave in different situations. Compare what you say and do to the behavior of other women and men in your area. Everyday pick a couple of the preceding questions to answer and see what you find. What other differences in gender role behavior, not suggested here, do you see as you observe the behavior of various men and women?

Sharpening your observational skills will provide you with information to construct a gender role that feels comfortable and works for you. Hence, you define your gender by the way you appear and behave. Your goal is to develop a presentation that helps rather than hurts you as you change.

You may find the following books interesting as well: *Femininity* by Susan Brownmiller; *Gender Blending: Confronting The Limits Of Duality* by Holly Devor; *Gender:*

An Ethnomethodological Approach by Suzanne Kessler and Wendy McKenna; *Language and Woman's Place* by Robin Lakoff; and two books by Deborah Tannen, *That's Not What I Meant! How Conversational Style Makes or Breaks Relationships* and *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*.

[Rebecca Auge, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist and may be contacted by Internet at rebeccaauge@aol.com or by mail at 3637 Grand Avenue Suite C, Oakland CA 94610. Her last article for Cross-Talk was "Passing Thoughts On Blending In" in issue #59. This article appeared in slightly different form via the Internet cd forum mailing list in November of last year.]

DEFAULT ASSUMPTIONS ... continued from page 16

we are, others will define us.

Having said this, I have one last concluding remark. Lee asks this question: Would there be any reason today -- with females wearing pants with impunity, serving as police officers and going off to war -- for a woman to pretend to be a man?" I have a simple answer: Some females are not women. We are not pretending to be men. We are men.

[Jason Cromwell is a former president of the board of directors of the Ingersoll Center, and may be contacted in care of same: 1812 E. Madison Ave. Suite 106, Seattle WA 98122-2843, or at titmouse@u.washington.edu via Internet. This article -- which is reprinted from the FTM Newsletter -- is based on a paper presented at the 1993 Southern Comfort Convention, and portions appeared in a letter to the editor of the Seattle Gay News in 1989.]

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






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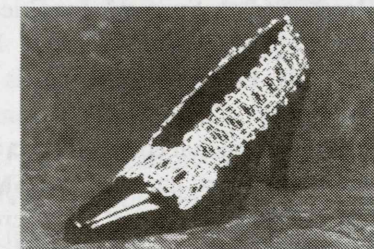
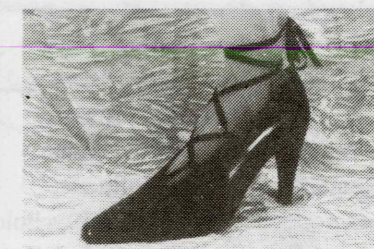
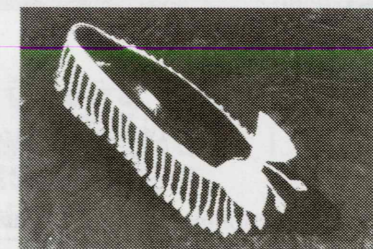
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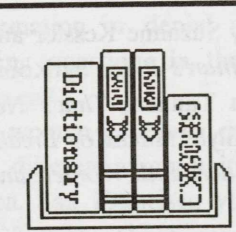
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Alternative Presses

by Kimberleigh Richards

I originally wanted a copy of *Gender Dysphoria: Interdisciplinary Approaches In Clinical Management* (Haworth Press, 1992) in order to read the results of my friend Richard Docter's ongoing research on crossdressing (he discusses the conclusions -- along with his colleague James Fleming -- of the 692 responses to his questionnaire of the early 1990s in the book).

What I found, once I had it in my hand, was that *Gender Dysphoria* is a treasure trove of facts and conclusions by several researchers who have studied crossdressing and transsexualism over the past several years.

Beginning with Ira Pauly's "Terminology and Classification of Gender Identity Disorders", which discusses the effort to remove all transgendered behaviors from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* through two contributions by Louis J.G. Gooren ("Hormone Treatment in Transsexuals" with Henk Asscheman and "The Influence

of Hormone Treatment on Psychological Functioning of Transsexuals with Peggy Cohen-Kettenis), "Regrets after Sex Reassignment Surgery" by Friedemann Pfafflin and "Clinical Management of Gender Dysphoria in Young Boys" by L.M. Lothstein, this book is a broad cross-section of the many variations of transgenderism and its associated professional concerns.

The book does not ignore the FTM community, either: "Female Gender Disorder" by Jeremy Baumbach and Louisa Turner offers some excellent insights into this often-overlooked segment of our community. The editors of the book, Walter O. Bockting and Eli Coleman, have included their own overview of the subject, "A Comprehensive Approach to the Treatment of Gender Dysphoria" as the last paper in this 155 page compilation.

Even as a non-professional observer of our community, I learned from this book (and confirmed several of my suspicions as well). Among other things, I discovered that most of the professional objections to removing "transsexualism" from *DSM-IV* were based upon the lack of a cross reference to the new preferred term, Gender

Identity Disorder and that a major side discussion of same concerned describing post-operative sexual orientation; that the apparent conflict in many areas between the Benjamin Standards of Care and the *DSM* has caused more confusion among helping professionals than previously thought; that many professionals attempt to use the term "gender dysphoria" as a catch-all phrase for all types of transgendered behavior (erroneously, according to Docter and Fleming); that less than 2% of post-operative MTF transsexuals regret having SRS, and that the percentage of FTMs with regrets is almost too low to be measured; the difference between **gender** dysphoria and **genital** dysphoria; and more about the causes of FTM gender dysphoria than I ever knew previously.

Gender Dysphoria is written for the professional community, and so many laypeople will find it dry and clinical, but for those who are interested in the "why" aspect of transgenderism, it is a well-organized overview of the subject.



Back around Christmastime (which should give you some idea of how backlogged I get with the "in" box for this column), I opened an envelope from upstate New York and a pile of wood shavings fell out. This was of no minor irritation to me, as I had just vacuumed the carpet the previous day, but I dumped the rest of the magazine over my wastebasket and retrieved both a cardboard cutout of a gerbil and a zine of the same name.

gerbil is billed as a "gay man's arts zine", and I presume it takes its name from a joke about a certain male actor that has been making the rounds for the past five years or so. Content-wise, it is a compilation of commentary, fiction, poetry, artwork, photos, and other material; appearance-wise, it does have a quality art zine feel to it.

Two items in the first issue are of interest to the transgender community: a somewhat cathartic narrative about a straight man's evening in a small suburb of Rochester crossdressed and an interview with two of Rochester's best known drag queen performers, Darienne and Veronica Lake. I was quite pleased to note that in the first, the introduction included the statement that "statistically more straight men are said to don female attire than gay men"; while semantically incorrect ("feminine" rather than "female", unless, of course, the clothes themselves are capable of having sex), to find this statement -- indeed, to find a narrative by a straight crossdresser -- in a gay-themed magazine could go a long way toward unifying our communities.

On the other hand, I wish the interview with the Lakes had omitted a segment where they talk about going into straight bars to pick up men, as I feel it does both the

transgender and the drag communities injustice. (I'd be interested in what kind of response the publishers got from the gay community over those remarks.)

The zine comes out quarterly; I found no references to the contents of upcoming issues, nor have I received the second issue, so I don't know if there will be continued transgender content. However, they will send a sample copy anywhere for \$3.00 (\$3.50 outside the U.S.) postage-paid, so the cost for you to check it out is pretty reasonable. You can also e-mail them at gerbilzine@aol.com (they claim *gerbil* is also available by e-mail, FTP, or on disk by hypertext, although I don't think it would work as well without the art zine layout and graphics) or write them at P.O. Box 10692, Rochester NY 14610.



One last comment before I sign off for the month: One of our incarcerated subscribers, Pat Earl, sent the first copy of her new zine and information on "World Anarchism through Crossdressing" in which she proposes the creation of a new world order through crossdressing and a reduction of world population and tension through "same gender sex". Before you dismiss all this by claiming Pat's been behind bars too long, I suggest you send her a couple of bucks to cover xeroxing and postage for a sample.

Address correspondence to Pat Earl 20149-148 C-1-12, P.O. Box 1000, Lewisburg PA 17837.

GENDER DYSPHORIA

Interdisciplinary Approaches in Clinical Management

Walter O. Bockting, Drs. Eli Coleman, PhD. editors

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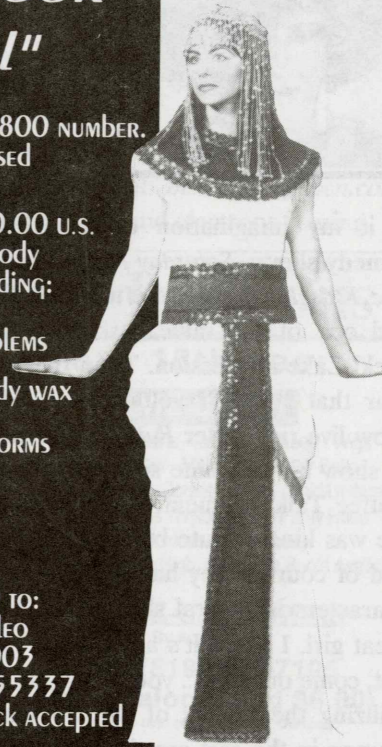
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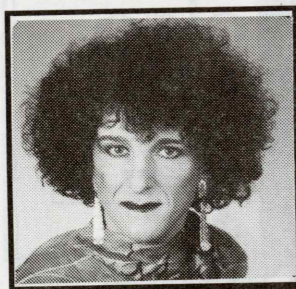
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The Diva Of Dish

by Angela Gardner



Is it my imagination or has that old chestnut among comedy shows, *Saturday Night Live*, been watching a lot of *The Kids In The Hall*? Just recently they did a show that had one of the male cast members doing a fairly good Ricki Lake impression. Then there was the show from last year that John Travolta hosted. He must have done the show live right after *Pulp Fiction* came out and in an effort to show his feminine side appeared in a "Linda Richmond Coffee Talk" segment as a Barbra Streisand impersonator. He was kind of cute but he kept losing his fake fingernails and of course, they had already been doing the mall chick characters in several shows and David Spade does make a great girl. I guess it's a last ditch attempt to save the show but, come on boys ... you're just off of a controversy over not utilizing the talents of the women in the cast. Now, the women in the cast are the men. (Place rimshot here.) And now -- the steamy sludge of script that worms its way out of my word processor, yes, the latest addition to the continuing ramblings of The Diva of Dish! (Is that any name for a column? I ask ya.)

I RU MY REPORTAGE: Okay, I'm not omniscient. I thought Ms. Charles would do the *Brady Bunch* guidance counselor gig in butch mode. Wrong! She did it in a cute little business suit and she said, "You better work." I wasn't that far off, though. It seems Mister Charles will make his debut in *A Mother's Prayer*, coming soon on the USA Network. It stars Linda Hamilton and RuPaul plays a preppie guy in tweeds.

HAS ANYBODY SEEN SHIRLEY? Of course not, silly. The *Shirley* show I told you about last month hasn't aired yet. I mention this just in case you thought I was nuts when it

didn't appear in April. I spoke with the show's producer and he informed me the crossdresser show will run in May during sweeps week. Well, if you've got a show about men in dresses and the women who love them, get the most bang for your buck and run it during a rating period. Makes sense to me.

FUNNY FELLOW IN A FROCK: Alison Laing handed me a copy of a story from an English paper about a lad named Eddie Izzard. It seems Mr. Izzard has been selling 'em out in the West End for simply months and months with a stream of consciousness comedy act. I'm not talking about some dinky little comedy clubs but real theaters with audiences in the 800 to 1000 person range. The really interesting thing about Eddie is, he's an openly transgendered man. (Oh boy, that's just like, "an openly gay man." Now we're makin' progress.)

Eddie is very off-hand about his crossdressing. Sometimes he does his act in "bloke" clothes, sometimes he wear a dress. He says "the funny thing about people going on about me wearing dresses is that I really don't consider myself to be a transvestite. People say I wear "women's clothes" but I don't, they're my clothes I'm wearing. Sure I wear dresses and makeup and stuff, but I'm simply wearing what I want to wear."

There is a photo of Eddie in the article and he doesn't look as if he's made a great effort to "pass" as a woman. His hair is short and his face looks manly, with some subtlety applied makeup, but the point is, here's a guy who has told all of England, "I like to wear dresses and makeup." And, instead of shunning him or reviling him, the British have made him a star. He has done straight acting roles in several plays and is now discussing a television series with the BBC. ("It's called *The Cows*. Great name isn't it? It's a surreal series about these cows who move into society after the general strike, gradually demanding the vote and full integration.")

He does have a problem with the label, "transvestite but heterosexual." He says, "That's what they're always using in the newspapers about me. I'm not "but" anything. I'm a transvestite who just happens to be heterosexual. I'd be happy to fancy men, but for some reason it just so happens

that I don't. I happen to fancy women."

I love the word "fancy." It's really a better way to say you are attracted to someone than, "Boy she get's me hot." Really, we Americans are so crude. Sorry, I transgressed for a moment. Eddie went on to say that one time he was performing for an audience of drag queens and when he said he was heterosexual one of the disbelieving ladies expressed her opinion in a crude (almost American way) by shouting "Liar!" at the stage. "That's the sort of thing you expect from some Nazi in the audience, not from a drag queen." Yes Eddie, intolerance and ignorance are everywhere, even among our own ranks. Give that queen a label maker. She can put them on everyone's forehead and then we'll know what we're dealing with. Of course, Eddie doesn't need a label. He's just wearing his own clothes. I think we all are, aren't we? Let's hope Eddie hops the pond and does some shows for us soon.

GOLDDIGGERS WITH A TG TWIST: Michelle Lynn handed me an article from the February issue of *Gentlemen's Quarterly* entitled "Golddiggers Of '95". The thrust of the article was that the art of golddigging (using your feminine wiles to pry cash, jewels and furs out of a sugar daddy) is still going strong in the 90s. It's an art that has survived bra burning, feminism and all the progress women have made in their quest for equality. In fact, the author, one Freda Garmaise, postulates that golddigging may be breaking new ground and perhaps transcending gender stereotypes.

After going over archetypal golddiggers from the movies, like Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell, she talks about real life practitioners like Pia Zadora, Marla Maples and her predecessor, Ivana. Having given us this background, the author postulates that since transvestite dancers are becoming mainstream attractions and many a sugar daddy has found his golddigger by haunting the backstage door, perhaps the trophy wife of the eighties may give way to the trophy TV of the nineties.

She says, "Will the corporate world, which took the trophy wife to its bosom and boardrooms, open the field to a wider range of candidates? Will it even put gender prejudice aside and open the field to transvestites, mindful of the fact that, for pure display, nothing could better attest to the might of the leveraged buyout than a six-six (in heels), jewel bedecked beauty?" Ms. Garmaise goes on to mention TG showgirls Peche Melba and Creme Brulee. They appear in a show called *Kaptain Banana* (evidently in the Big Apple) and she says "it would be nice if these two could enter the trophy wife stakes and take their place in a new society ... the sort of society we can only regret Divine is not here to lead in the manner of a Gilded Age dowager with a rope of pearls dropping over her stout monobosom to her ankles."

Well, anything's possible, and I for one think it's high time

girls like us were rewarded for our beauty and grace. Take us out an treat us right, you rich guys. Who knows, maybe it's inevitable. If all women decide they no longer want to be golddiggers, we may have to carry the art forward into the next century. An awesome burden but one I'm sure our lip gloss and blush will stand up to.

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HORMONES: ONE PERSON'S EXPERIENCE

by Phyllis Randolph Frye

I've heard so many myths and uncertainties about hormones that I decided to write about my personal experiences. These are mine only and are not intended to be advice of any kind.

My best memory is that I began hormones in early 1978; therefore, I have over fourteen years of experience. I began on Premarin, then went to Ogen and am now on Estinyl. I quit Premarin because it lowered my blood iron count and also caused me to have an unwelcome reaction to the cold -- skin hives. I quit Ogen because it simply became too expensive. I've been on Estinyl for over two years now and am pleased except for the recurring leg cramps.

As a transgenderist (or a non-op TS), I found that neither low dosages of Premarin nor of Ogen even got my testosterone level down to what a low dosage of Estinyl has done. I have never taken a large dosage. It never was necessary. Currently I have been on 0.5mg daily.

As to the electrolysis, which I completed about twelve years ago, any suppression of testosterone will do two things. One, is that hairs weakened by the needle will remain weakened and more vulnerable to the next treatment. Two, is that surrounding light hairs (peach fuzz), that would otherwise be stimulated in future years or by the electrolysis needle, will remain light. Yes, electrolysis will go faster because the treatment is not having to also overcome testosterone re-stimulation of the weakened hair or new stimulation of a nearby hair.

Even so, the single biggest factor is that your operator must use enough heat for a long enough time increment or else your operator is simply tweezing your face if using either insufficient heat or insufficient time.

As to muscle tone and body fat distribution, hormones will change things given enough time. The skeletal frame will remain, but the muscle mass will reduce. The skeleton is for the most part fixed and rigid by the time we come to terms with who we truly are. The larger muscles over the shoulders will diminish, but that does not mean that you will be a weakling. Indeed, many women who are proud of their bodies are strong.

Fat distribution in the face will also change. This was very interesting for me as I had a broad face and a wide nose.

For at least six years after the hormones began to alter my body, people said that I looked as though I was losing weight. All the while I was putting on weight, but my face was thinning out.

Yes, breasts will come (their size will be as to your family's genetic disposition), but even more of a pleasant

Hormones, hormones, and hormones. What can you really expect from them?

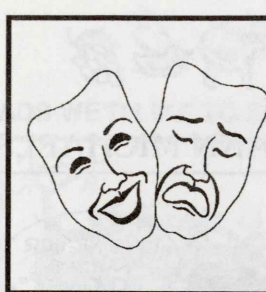
surprise will be the development of a tush or derriere. From the rear you will no longer look like a long haired guy in pants. However, the key is time. I repeat, the key is time, even with the low dosage that I take, everything did happen.

As to sex drive or libido, it too will drop. For me this was also an unexpected surprise. From about age nine or ten, I was constantly horny with a demanding libido that required release on a daily and sometimes thrice daily basis. Sex for me was a need, an appetite, almost a distracting obsession.

Now sex for me is a pleasure that I can usually access when it is convenient and desired: occasionally, rarely, it is a need. Yes, even a "non-op" who has been on hormones as long as I have can have sex. The details are personal and will remain so. But I will say that early during my initial transition, I was voluntarily sterilized via vasectomy. To do so made great sense as I did not want to sire another child (I have a terrific son by the way), as it would relieve my spouse from the associated risks of taking chemical birth control for many more years, and as it removed any later accusation against me of "rooster in the henhouse" when I used the restroom. Over the years, the hormones have caused an atrophy of the genitals, but as I stated above I can have sex and now sex for me is a pleasure that I can usually access when it is convenient and desired.

HAVE YOU HAD A REAL-LIFE ADVENTURE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?

Please send it for consideration to **Cross-Talk**,
P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.
(Submissions on MS-DOS or Macintosh disk preferred.)



The Bearded Lady

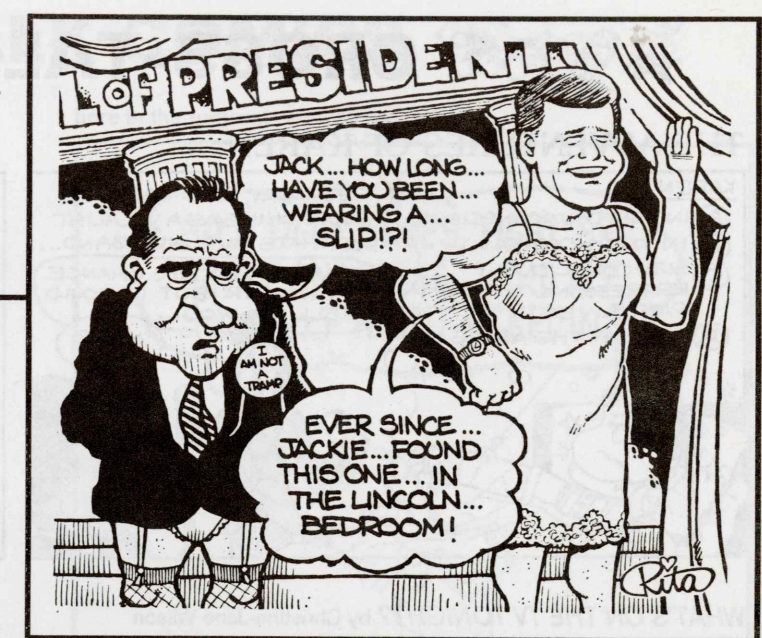
by Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita

There are several difficulties to be overcome in the design of self-crossdressing hardware. This paper will enumerate them and offer suggestions to remedy the problems.

1) **Determining the sex of the hardware.** Actually, determining the sex of the hardware is not a formidable task. The primary problem occurs because design engineers have no discernible knowledge of sex. After all, anyone who spends their day in front of a computer screen rotating images of some machine and eagerly punching in digits on their scientific calculator can hardly be expected to pay any attention to biology. Anything so messy and undefined isn't worth bothering with anyway. This is why engineers cannot function without technicians, who are worldly and can translate engineering abstractions into reality. Among mechanical devices it can be taken as given that bolts, rods, shafts, sprayers and pneumatic actuators are male in nature, while nuts, collars, vacuum devices, drains, and clamps are naturally female. In the electronic field things are more confusing, with circuit boards having primary male plugs but possessing numerous female sockets for the insertion of chips. This essentially dual nature of circuitry is fertile ground for gender confusion on the part of electronic hardware.

2) **Outward expression of cross gender tendencies in mechanical hardware.** This is a problem as most hardware is prevented by function and convention from dressing at all. However, adroit use of motion detectors and heat sensors to detect the presence of human beings will allow hidden springs and solenoids to deploy skirts, brassieres and pantyhose when no operator is present. Careful material selection and programming will allow these items to be quickly disguised as oil boots or other functional protective barriers if anyone should approach.

3) **Outward expression of cross gender tendencies in electronic equipment.** Modern programmable controllers have been an inestimable boon for gender conflicted electronics. With complete control of visual displays a modern computer can present any gender it wishes. Now that the series *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is over it can be safely revealed that the computer aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise was actually activated as Charles, but was able to convince Star Fleet and the entire crew of the Enterprise that it was female by skillful manipulation of vocal and visual output. The only one to catch on was Data, but as an enlightened android he didn't care anyway, and



please don't ask me to speculate on how Data dresses in private. I can only say that the incredible physical speed of an android is highly valuable when the door chime sounds.

4) **Fetishistic tendencies in mechanical hardware.** The author has noted a marked preference for rubber and plastic coverings on the part of many mechanical systems. Automotive engines and steering systems in particular adorn themselves with a confusing array of rubber clothing and accessories. Mechanics may try to tell you this is because of all the anti-pollution equipment required by the EPA, but we know better. And just what does a car do with all those belts and hoses when the engine isn't running?

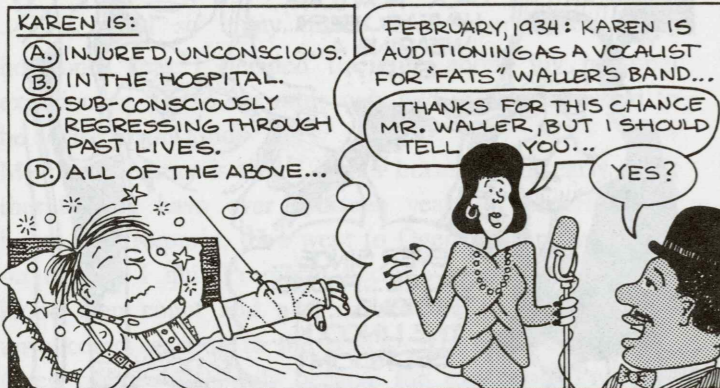
5) **Hardware and hormones.** The equipment used in pharmaceutical processing presents special problems. Constant bathing in shifting hormones causes wild swings in gender identity. Rather than reveal to its operators that it is simply the wrong time of the month, engineers invented Murphy to explain these seemingly random mood changes. Physical or psychological therapy could help, but as yet no company has extended its insurance program to production machinery.

6) **Non-industrial applications.** Perhaps the most famous application for crossdressing hardware can be found at Disney World. The publicity people will deny it, but some very strange things have happened in the animated Hall of the Presidents after the park closes, but a hint can be taken from the recent *Mad* magazine back cover depicting George Washington crossdressing the Delaware. You might also be fascinated by the ghosts in the haunted house (those spirits are **not** wearing pants) and the wardrobe at the Country Bear Jamboree. Design problems are minimal as these are totally automated exhibits, requiring no interaction with an operator who might catch on. Who's going to notice another wardrobe closet amongst all the machinery anyway?

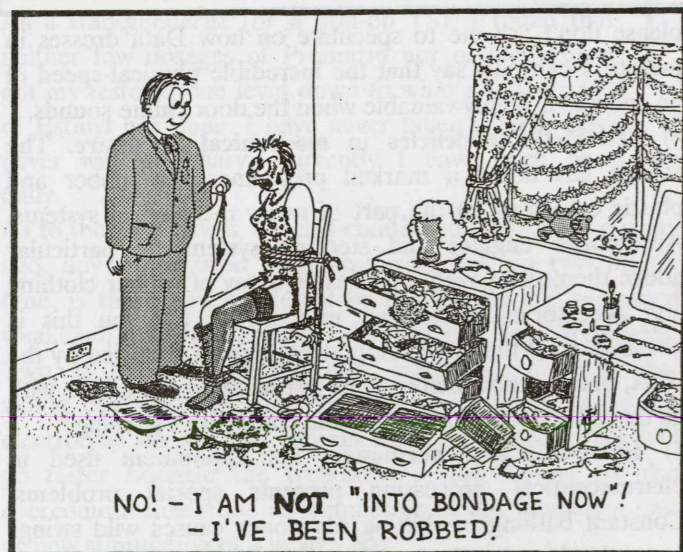


THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



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

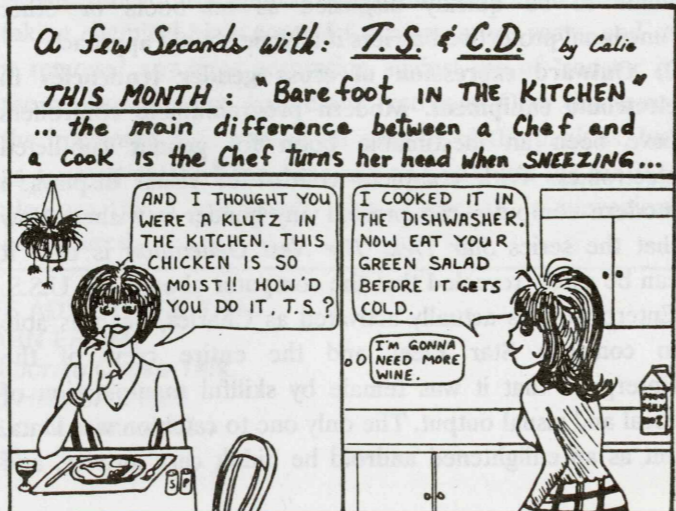


THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner



BE NICE TO THEM. THEY DONT GET OUT MUCH SINCE GARY LARSON RETIRED.

Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard



ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE by Karen Rusnak

here in the (un)real world by Nancy Wilson

Behind these closet doors
are wonders the real world
has never seen!
The Angorasaurus
The Braaceyourneckonyourhighheelsasaurus
and
The Transexual Rex!

CARTOONISTS!

We're still looking for a couple more comic features to fill the bottom half of this page ...
If you've got some talent for making transgendered people laugh at themselves, send us some of your stuff for consideration!

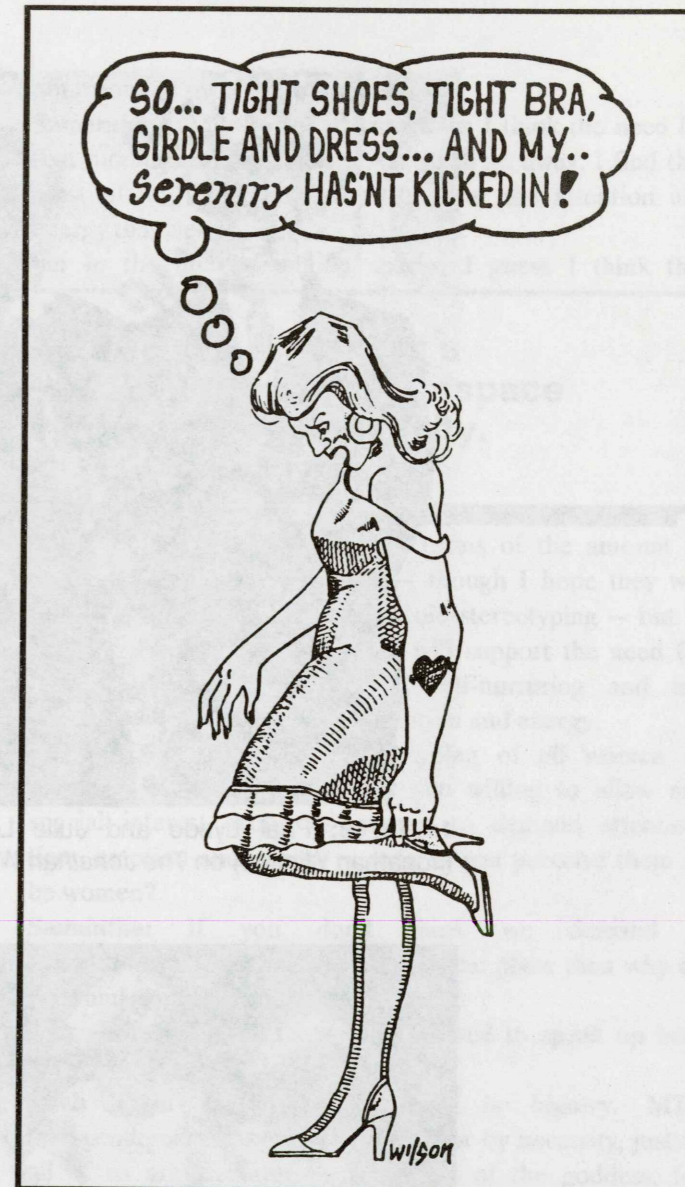
Kymerleigh Richards
Cross-Talk
P.O. Box 944
Woodland Hills CA 91365

THIS MONTH, to fill some space until someone takes us up on the above offer, we present a bonus cartoon in strip format by Nancy Wilson. We hope you enjoy it.
And if you're a cartoonist, send us something to consider filling this space regularly with!

"VANISHING CREME"



NOTE: The comics and cartoons appearing in this section are separately copyrighted by their creators, and may not be reproduced in any form without their permission.



GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd



11/13/68: Paul Lynde and Julie London trade barbs with Maude Frickert (Jonathan Winters) on *The Jonathan Winters Show*, CBS.



3/12/77: Shirley MacLaine (center) appears with members of Les Ballets Trockadero in the special *Shirley MacLaine: Where Do We Go From Here?*, CBS.

THE TRANSSEXUAL DYKE ISSUE

Part Four

Edited by Kymberleigh Richards

This is the concluding installment of last September's discussion on transsexual lesbianism from the Internet mailing list *sappho*, in the aftermath of several "TS dykes" being allowed to enter the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival for the first time in MWMF history.

The discussion is presented in "roundtable" format; that is, responses by a list participant to another's comments have been inserted to appear in proper context. Participants are identified only by first name, except where a last initial was necessary to further differentiate.

Comments which stray from the main topic were excluded; other edits were to correct spelling and to expand Internet "slang" into full definitions. Where a contributor preferred the term "womyn", it has been left intact.

Samantha: Many of us go through a period of trying to live up to some notion of what a woman is in our society that we have picked up and dreamed about all of our pre-transition lives. Unfortunately the shape of that woman is often a very sexist one, as we have not had the chance by experience to learn better. So many of us will go through a phase of trying hard to live up to some fantasy cheerleader or June Cleaver image that we have dreamed about from the time we were very young. Most of us do get over it and take a hard crash course in what it really means to be a woman in the world. Most of us take a *blitzkrieg* course in feminism and redefining what it means to be a womyn in the process. But we do go through this stage first quite often. Personally I never presumed to tell any womyn how she should present herself but I did go through a phase of always wearing dresses and skirts, makeup, etc., that is actually foreign to me, because I was trying too hard to shift myself closer to home and had weird ideas of where home was. It's funny. If you showed me my "soft butch" present self back then I would probably look on it as a failure to make it.

Fe: I am aware of somehow monitoring the amount of attention and energy that trans people demand. But at the same time it's maybe just a realistic response to living in a world which has had and indeed often still **does** have such lethal attitudes and actions against women.

Sandy: There are many groups at the Festival that demand a lot of attention: sober dykes, single women, disabled women, S/M dykes, and on and on. It sounds like you're singling out the "trans people" because you're thinking of them as men and then making generalizations about their behavior. Lots of these other groups can be just as

obnoxious as you expect from men.

Samantha: If you do see us as womyn I think the need for that monitoring or perceived need will go away. I find that most of us, if anything, don't ask for the attention and energy that we should.

Fe: In the queer coalition spaces, I guess I think that

The concluding installment of a roundtable discussion in cyberspace by lesbians about transsexuality.

transpeople are equal to me in terms of the amount of time and energy they demand -- though I hope they will want to gain an analysis of sex-role stereotyping -- but in women's space I hope that they will support the need for women to be self-caring and self-nurturing and not demand extra attention, time, emotion and energy.

Sandy: I object to this stereotyping of all women as nurturing and caring. And are you willing to allow any special interest group of women to demand attention, time, emotion and energy as long as you perceive them to be women?

Samantha: If you don't think we demand a disproportionate amount of time in one place then why do you think we do in the other?

Karen K.: Are only TS women allowed to speak up here for their rights to be included?

Chel: Plain and simple **bigotry is bigotry**. MTF transgendered are women by choice or by necessity, just as all of us are lesbians, by the grace of the goddess, for whatever reasons. If MWMF chooses to exclude women based on gynecological or genetic testing -- which is ludicrous at the best and probably illegal -- if certain separatists want to avoid MTFs, bisexuals, S/Ms and whatever, they can have their own space, but the common areas should be open to every woman. What if certain women were offended by differently abled people? After all, they want to have space free of anyone different from themselves. Women of color already have their own tents. Where will we go to see the diversity of our community when no one ever wants to see anyone not like themselves? We are all women in women's space no matter what we were born. This includes color, ability, sexual identity, or sexual orientation. Who is the ultimate determiner of what is a woman?

Why are so many women defending MWMF's bigotry? If you bar any one who is a woman, it is bigotry.

Debra: What I experience when I look at average woman is a longing to be what she is, that is a woman in both mind and body. I make this statement because I want to emphasize that regardless of the condition of my body, it does not accurately show who I am inside. For some, the physical "evidence" that was present at my birth presents an insurmountable barrier to understanding. For others it isn't.

Some women have a penis. Some men have a vagina. We try to correct the problem, or at least learn to live with it.

Michelle: Although I personally believe that gender is essentially a social construct, I don't think this has any real implications for how we treat or react to transgendered folks. Like it or not, and whatever the ultimate cause, our society is gendered and we're not going to be able to change that overnight. Gender dysphoria must often be extremely traumatic and we owe it to our fellow humans to open our arms and say "I accept you as you need to be accepted".

Marnie: If male and female are merely gender identifiers, a way for society to place a person in specified roles, then, for that person to be attracted to the same gender as themselves, be it, as female or male, they would be a homosexual, right? The fact that they are able to switch from one gender to another isn't the issue, is it? Isn't it that the body of the person feels attractions to the same and opposite sex? Therefore, the person's body is bigendered. This is so very complicated.

Kymerleigh: Remember that in Elizabethan times that men wore clothes we now associate with women. The roles are more arbitrary than you give them credit for and society drives the concepts of what is "masculine" or "feminine".

Woody: My question is, what makes us so uncomfortable? My lover is uncomfortable with it; she was raised as a boy and gets very offended when people call her "sir" and think she is a man. She is a woman, a lesbian, very intelligent and very strong, very comfortable with her body and self confident.

Caitlin: I figure it this way: Anyone who'd want to go through all that, just so they could end up taking a tumble on the societal power scale from: het male to dyke female -- heck, from male to female at a:l -- as far as I'm concerned, that's proof enough for me of being committed to one's female identity. I mean, why would one lie about that? To go to all that trouble ... the slings and arrows of outrageousness, if I might be permitted a badly-misplaced pun ... all for the sake of ending up with a more difficult life -- and don't we all know that that's true of any woman's life in this society, let alone a lesbian's -- speaks to me of a fairly evident sense of certainty about one's identity.

Robyn: Many transsexuals never tell anyone that they have had the operation and sometimes it works fine. But we always have to be afraid that someone will come along and

tell our friends or that we will make a slip. That leads to having to edit our personal history, which is not a way to make close friends. Close friends might catch inconsistencies.

Hillary: Does this mean that it's less acceptable to most folks to **have** the surgery than not? I would have thought just the opposite.

Robyn: No, what I meant was that post-op TS women sometimes blend into the landscape of women and never mention it again. But there is always the fear of being outed about being transsexual.

If you are asking me exactly why people can't handle it, I don't have much of an answer for you. I wish I knew. I mean, there are some who feel it violates their religious beliefs, there are some that think that if they are friendly toward us it will bring stigma upon them. I've had friends disassociate themselves from me because of rumors that we were sexually involved, at a time when I was celibate.

It is true that transsexuals in transition are rather self-involved at times. Some of this comes from the fact that many of us were very unconcerned about our lives before transition and when we finally come out of our shells and learn to love ourselves, we tend to go a bit overboard, I suppose. Some of it is because the transition is difficult and presents problems that seem to require self-involvement.

Erin O.: And those with teenage girls will tell you those raging hormones will tend to make a person self-absorbed too! Remember that getting used to a new set of hormones can be quite a trial.

Ariel: I've noticed that many of the TSs are trying to be involved in women's spaces. I've also noticed that it is usually in lesbian-dominated women's spaces. I've read discussions, on both sides, regarding acceptance and about the reasons why we should be accepting. My question is: Have many of the TSs tried to get acceptance in "straight" women's spaces, and what has been the overall outcome of those attempts?

Robyn: I have tried to gain acceptance in women spaces of several varieties. Not having any interest in men at all puts me at a disadvantage sometimes with my women friends who are, but otherwise I have gotten fairly good treatment. I'm not saying it hasn't been painful at times, because it has.

One specific example I can think of was Sister Circle at the Rainbow Gathering in July of 1993. As far as I could ascertain, the women there were predominantly het or bi. The first reaction to my request to join in was not very good and I ended up feeling very depressed. I went back the next night and did feel accepted, but not by everyone.

I have not had as much luck locally. I have expressed my interest in joining the University Women's Club on campus and have yet to be sent any information. I am apparently *persona non grata* there. On the other hand, I was temporary president of the local NOW chapter -- mostly non-lesbian -- over the summer.

I am joining the Association for Women in Mathematics and hope to become active in that organization.

I'm not sure if this has any relevance to your question.

Susan: I was at a presentation by the Ingersoll Gender center here in Seattle. One of the FTMs said that when he was perceived as a woman he liked men. After his sex change he still liked men. His wonderful quote is "they operated on my body, not my mind". That might explain why many MTFs end up lesbian ... they were always attracted to women.

Karen T.: One of my co-workers is a transsexual gay man, and I have had issues with him. He exhibits sexist behavior, and it really pisses me off. I find myself thinking he should know better. He was in a group with some other FTM transsexuals and was telling me about some of the meetings he went to. He was really obnoxious about the fact that he "looked" good, and that they didn't. He mocked the fact that some of the men in the group weren't sure how to "act" male; while he felt pissed because he did. I realized about a week ago that I'm so pissed off at him cause he is such a **guy**.

Woody: I have been in a transgender discussion group on the Net for a little while and the more I read, the more confused I get. Originally my only complaint was that I feel very uncomfortable in my body. That's it, that's all, no one **ever** mistakes me from a man. In fact, the more "masculine" my clothes the more people call me "ma'am". Perhaps its all the intensified "femininity" training I had while in the church cult I was a part of for five years.

I don't like macho bullsh*t, I have a phobia of men, and I feel uncomfortable in my body. No one ever thinks that I am "butch" in anyway. **Everyone** sees me as femme. So what

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am I ... who am I? A transgendered gay man who loves femme women? I love that gay man look and that's how I want to look, act and be seen, as a "nice" man. I don't want these female "parts". If it was simpler, less expensive, less scary, etc. etc. I would really want them out of me. That's it. That's all there is to it and so it's pretty strange.

I don't know if there really is a safe space anywhere.

Erin O.: I do a bit of girl drag or high femme in a man's three-piece suit -- I'm into this suit thing lately with my hair in a french twist and dark lipstick -- but I'm not very flamboyant. I've been accused of being elegant ... it's the french twist and black velvet. I also think that drag queens and drag kings are really special, but then I hang out in a drag community where the boys do boy-drag and girl-drag and dyke-drag and fag-drag and lots in-between, and then the girls do it all too! And I can't tell some people are the same when they change their wigs and clothes and I get teased about it ...

Liz: I sometimes feel sorry for men because they can't take makeup or leave it like women can -- men who aren't drag queens, anyhow. Actually, I **have** known men who wear very, very, very subtle makeup to enhance their appearance. The merest hint of liner, a whisper of blush ...

James: I feel that drag queens are all very dignified, elegant, and should be respected simply for being a drag queen. The fact that I am stereotyping these queens, means something about what I want to see. I feel so much compassion and empathy for a drag queen who is treated like a freak, like the bigot is missing on something so important, that s/he can't see how wonderful the queen is. I'm not sure why I feel this way, and I'm sure there are drag queens who are real bitches. I'm sure this has

◆ ALTERNATIVE ◆ LIFESTYLES DIRECTORY

Issue 2 is now available!! A comprehensive directory of hard-to-find publications from mild to wild, mainstream to taboo. Information includes name/address, telephone/fax, issue/ad cost and a review of contents. A must for the open minded adult or adult business owner including 800/900 information providers. More than 375 listings, 130 full-sized pages for just \$10 Plus \$3 Priority Mail Shipping US, \$14 Canada and \$16 Foreign via Air Mail. Send cash or money order (checks held until cleared) with signed statement stating you are over 21 to: Winter Publishing, PO Box 80667, So. Dartmouth, MA 02748.

something to do with why I feel so happy to see two men being affectionate, knowing they must be feeling very strongly about each other, to overcome society's pressures against male affection. A male married couple seems, to me, to be more precious than straight or even gay women couples. I know this isn't fair, but women, at least, are allowed to hold hands and hugs their female friends. I also know it isn't always true, but it's the romantic in me I guess.

Liz: There's maybe something profound here. Vanity vs. Pride? Vanity being attributed to women? The pleasure of being Looked At and subsequently Admired? I'm still pleased when I remember the moment at Wigstock this year when I, while lighting a cigarette, realized that one of the many photographers there was actually taking my picture. I'm female, about 5'3", was wearing black velvet leggings and black platform hi-top sneakers making me 5'5", a man's jacket and Ray-Ban sunglasses ... in short, pretty cool but I'd thought no competition to the many extravagant drag queens on parade ...

For that matter, I still remember sitting in the sculpture garden at the Museum Of Modern Art on a school field trip when I was about 17 and some stranger took my picture -- I even remember what I was wearing, platform shoes maybe, a pastely flowered dress and a very femmey straw hat.

Lisa: I've always been one who found drag shows pretty offensive in their glorification of female stereotypes. I

guess it's that same feeling which has made me uncomfortable when TS women go through what others have referred to as the "adolescent" phase. That was useful to know -- I went through a similar phase while trying for about ten years to impersonate my idea of a straight woman. We're all the victims of stereotypes.

Debra: I am reminded of something Kymberleigh posted in *alt.transgendered* once: "Look between your ears for who you are, not between your legs." To me, that is the only definition of myself that I consider relevant. It is the obsession with labels that has resulted in the torrential flood of senseless logic over gender.

Kym -- again in *alt.transgendered* -- also said: "The real answer to the man vs. woman, male vs. female, straight vs. lesbigay, genetic vs. transgendered, is to find where you feel you really belong and then be that person. The rest of the world will adjust more easily than you think once you're giving off the 'vibes' that you're comfortable with who you are ..."

Susan: I think that Kymberleigh is right on. I have a male friend who wears dresses to work sometimes. He's comfortable with himself and others seem to follow his lead. It takes some of us lots of work and many years to come to being really comfortable with who we are.

Woody: I come at things from an interesting perspective, as an ex-born again that has really had to stretch myself to understand things and not be afraid of things, such as Wicca, women with short hair, lesbians, transgendered,

etc. etc. Perhaps I see it in that light. As a born again I had "privilege" and I lost that "privilege" when I left and came out. I lost everything, but even I didn't lose as much as a transgendered person. I didn't lose my job for it ... I didn't become alienated from society for it.

What is male privilege? Is it the privilege to be forced not to ever cry or ever to let anyone see you cry? The privilege to hide your pain, even to the point of being viewed as cold and callous? Committing a violent suicide, committing violence against others, or dying of a heart attack? Society, I think sometimes, is to blame for "creating monsters" out of men. It used to be that lesbians were viewed as angry loud obnoxious feminists, separatist, etc. etc., so who would blame them for all the hurt that society put on them by arresting them, molesting them, committing them to mental institutions, etc., etc.? I wouldn't be surprised if there were some angry transsexuals out there, and we should understand their pain. No one likes being forced into a mold, any mold. So what did these TG women have the privilege of? Being beat up, being hated, being stared at, being forced to be in a body they hated and to dress and undress in front of men -- they are women, remember -- and to go to the bathroom in the men's room. Think about how scary that would be for some of us women. I never thought about it a lot before, but I'm beginning to realize that perhaps "male privileges" are not really "privileges" to

TGs. Perhaps even women have privilege. Privilege to be able to report a rape or sexual abuse without being laughed at. Privilege to cry in public and get support and hugs rather than being yelled at for being a cry baby and maybe beaten up.

Samantha: Even as a woman in the world I still question gender roles -- as opposed to identity -- much more strongly due to having experienced attempting to align myself with both sets and several variants at different times in my life. Gender roles as such are very obviously quite socially constructed to me and I take it as part of my job in life to learn to be myself as the woman I am and not as society defines a woman should be. As a lesbian I find that there are role and identity signals in that world that I am mostly happy with but occasionally they feel artificial ... like the whole butch/femme thing: I threw away my makeup when I understood the bill of goods Madison Avenue has sold women about never being good enough as we are and selling us overpriced and generally harmful remedies for that. So some people would see me without makeup, in pants and with short hair as being "butch". Then they would see the soft really sweet parts of me and consider me "femme". I confuse some lesbians and most straights as a result. The point is that I am not in one of those boxes or the other. While I have gender identity as a female as far as roles go I don't act (continued on page 39)

BACK ISSUES!

For the convenience of those who have only recently discovered **Cross-Talk** (and those who rejoin our readership after an absence), we have maintained a stock of most issues published in magazine format.

1995 issues are available at the regular cover price of **\$7.00**, including the following recent issues:

#64 (February): Personal growth and moving ahead; The four "whys" of crossdressing; When personal politics affect community politics; Part one of roundtable discussion of transsexualism by lesbians; Exploring sexuality in the context of shifting gender roles; Avoiding second-guessing your decisions; Review of *StarGate*.

#65 (March): Calling the transgender community by its logical name; Finding your true path amidst peer pressure; Suppressing behavior patterns that prevent your passing; Choosing methods of gender expression; Encountering the public's fear of transgenderism; Part two of lesbian TS roundtable; Review of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

#66 (April): Contrasting diplomacy and radicalism as means for change; Sexism in the TG community; Avoiding the "man in a dress" mentality; Successfully transitioning on the job; A 12-step program for pride; The side effects of transgender rights; Staying true to yourself.

Issue **#63 (January)** is also available.

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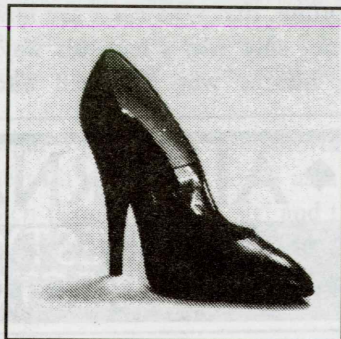
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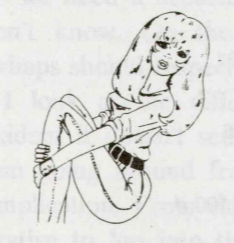
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HOTLINES

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

NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
 Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 439-9618 @
 Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 657-4344
 Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 570-7389
 East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
 Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 388-7022 %
 Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
 Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
 Gender Talk North, New Hampshire: (603) 924-8828
 Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
 Images, Hartford: (203) 779-9708
 Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9858
 Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
 Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118 @
 Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 283-1333 @
 Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050
 Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
 Reflections, Boston: (617) 323-6082
 Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (610) 630-1437
 Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
 Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 435-5401
 Sigma Nu Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Trenton: (609) 586-1351 @
 Silent Passage, Rhode Island: (401) 438-7417
 Tiffany Club, Boston: (617) 891-9325
 TransGender Educational Ass'n, Arlington: (301) 949-3822
 TransGenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
 Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 231-1181
 Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
 XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:

American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
 Atlanta Gender Exploration: (404) 875-9846 #
 Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
 Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
 Eden Society, Pompano Beach: (305) 784-9316 #
 Fantasia, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
 GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
 Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
 Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 362-6335
 Louisville Gender Society: (812) 944-5570
 Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
 Montgomery Institute, Gainesville: (904) 332-6638 #
 M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
 Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 523-2466 @
 Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
 Phoenix, Asheville: (704) 253-9882
 Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
 Sigma Epsilon Chapter Tri-Ess, Atlanta: (404) 552-4415 @
 Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 527-1012
 Tennessee Vals, Nashville: (615) 664-6883
 Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 222-6796

MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Beta Gamma Chapter Tri-Ess, Minneapolis: (612) 870-8536 @
 Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
 Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
 Chicago Gender Society: (708) 749-1202
 City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minneapolis: (612) 229-3613
 Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
 Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 791-3947
 Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
 Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 265-7488
 Gender Dysphoria Support, Kansas City: (816) 753-7816 #
 Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (812) 876-5635
 Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression: (612) 220-9072
 N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #
 Paradise Club, Cleveland: (216) 586-9292

Quad-City Society for Sexuality Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
 St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 997-9897
 Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024
 Wichita Transgender Alliance: (316) 682-9131

SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:

Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
 Alpha Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Salt Lake City: (801) 553-8141 @
 Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
 Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 980-7788
 CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
 First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
 Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
 Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 202-6466
 Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282
 Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 416-6632
 Metroplex CD Club, Dallas: (214) 264-7103 @
 Second Image, Austin: (512) 515-5460
 TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #
 Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 347-8747 @
 Texas Ass'n. of Transsexuals, Houston: (713) 827-5913 #
 West Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071
 Ingersoll Gender Center, Seattle: (206) 329-6651
 Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 646-2802
 Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
 Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
 Trans-Port, Portland: (503) 774-8463
 Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #

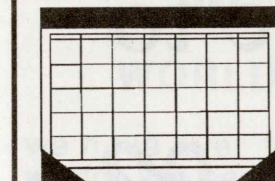
THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
 Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #
 Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317
 Androgyny-East, Riverside: (909) 360-5584
 Born Free, Riverside: (909) 278-0958
 CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @
 Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 937-8432
 Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
 FTM, Oakland: (510) 287-2646 #
 Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
 Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
 Powder Puffs Of California, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
 Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
 Sacramento Gender Association: (916) 482-7742
 Sigma Sigma Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lake Tahoe: (916) 544-2460 @
 Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
 Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

CANADA:

Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
 Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
 F.A.T.E., Vancouver: (604) 254-9591
 Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (819) 770-1945
 Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661
U.K./REP. OF IRELAND:
 Beaumont Society, London: 081-756-1782
 Belfast Butterfly, Rep. of Ireland: 849-469715
 Crosslynx, Glasgow: 041-221-8372
 FTM Network: 0161-432-1915 #
 Gender Dysphoria Trust, London: 032-364-1100 #
 GenTrust, London: 071-730-7453
 Grampian Gender Group, Scotland: 033-988-3695
 Liverbirds, Liverpool: 051-709-4745
 New TransEssex: 026-858-3761
 Scottish TV/TS Group, Edinburgh: 031-556-4049

[For a list of organizations in other countries that maintain hotline numbers, please send a pre-addressed envelope and one IRC to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.]



EVENTS CALENDAR

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

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

June 7-11, 1995: "Be-All '95", Cincinnati OH. This year's host organization is Cross-Port; other sponsoring organizations are Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Crossroads, Paradise Club, and Transpitt. Details from P.O. Box 54657, Cincinnati 45254 or by calling (513) 474-9557.

June 14-18, 1995: "Transgen 95: Your Jobs, Your Insurance and Health, Your Rights, and Your Documents", Houston TX, sponsored by the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy". Details from ICTLEP, 5707 Firenza, Houston 77035, or by telephone: (713) 723-8368.

July 26-30, 1995: "Spouse/Partner International Conference for Education (SPICE)", Memphis TN. Information from Linda Peacock, P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 24031, or by telephone: (501) 227-8798.

September 14-17, 1995: "Paradise in the Poconos". See May 18-21 listing.
October 15-22, 1995: 21st Annual "Fantasia Fair", Provincetown MA, sponsored by the Outreach Institute of Gender Studies. Registration information from Fan Fair, P.O. Box 941, Southeastern PA 19399-0941.

October 26-29, 1995: 6th Annual "Fall Harvest", St. Louis MO, sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by St. Louis Gender Foundation. Information from StLGF, P.O. Box 9433, St. Louis MO 63117.

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

TRANSEXUAL DYKE ISSUE ... continued from page 37

male or female. I simply am the woman I am and to hell with what I "should" do to be accepted. I think I would feel this way and bend gender roles even if I was not born TS. But back to the main point. Are we "real" women? Depends on what you mean. Are we like XX females? In some ways yes, in some ways no. Are all XX females alike? More so in some of the ways we aren't like them menstruation, some sex organs, XX chromosomes, socialization as females than us but they are not uniform. Do we need a separate category or sub-category for us? Don't know. On the one hand we are different and perhaps should respect and affirm that. On the other hand if I look at the difference as being simply a medical accident it doesn't seem like there is much to be gained from going around feeling proud of having suffered this complication. From that point of view it may be actually curative to "go into the closet" in the sense of trying to forget about this past as much as possible and just look at myself like any other woman and live that. I think probably a bit of both needs to be done. I'm not sure exactly how to do that in the proper balance yet.

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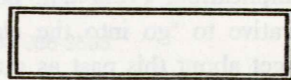
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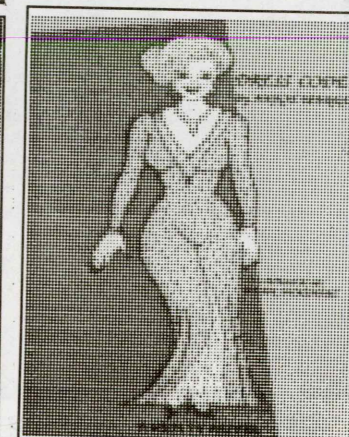
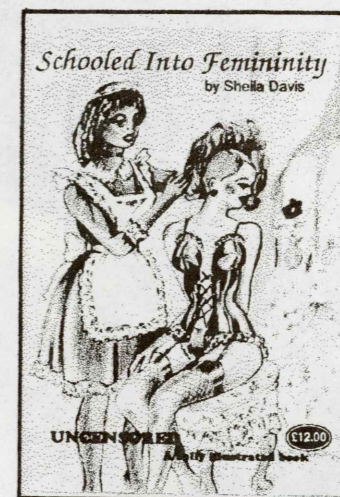
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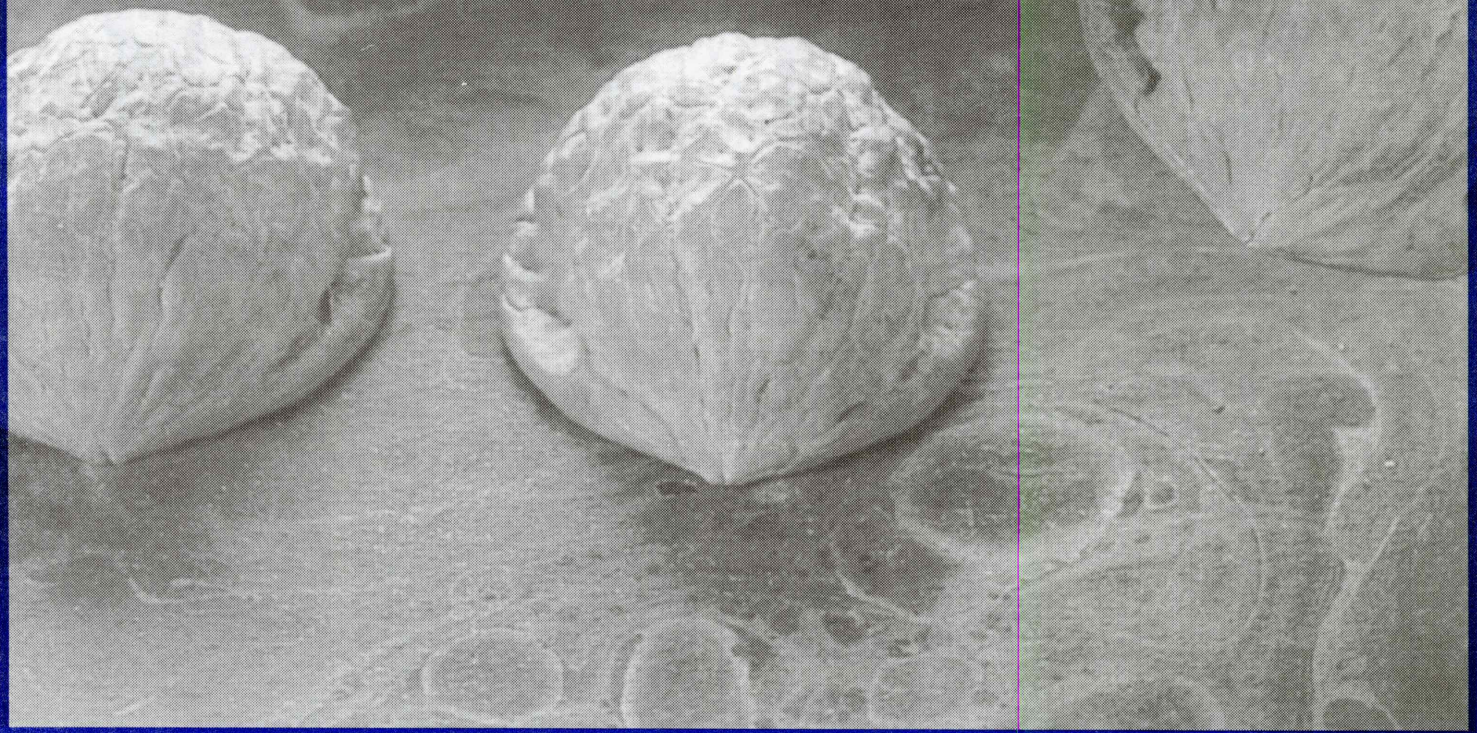
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