

◆ The Transgenderist ◆

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Trans Activists, HRC at Odds Over Ends

Reprinted from (Atlanta's) Etc., 13 December, 1996

Transgender activists are decidedly not pleased about statements by Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Political Director Daniel Zingale that new language covering transgendered people should not be added to the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA).

Speaking at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Creating Change Conference in early November, Zingale (who is leaving his HRC post to take over as AIDS Action Council executive director) said that to amend ENDA in any way would damage its chances of passage in the 105th Congress. The measure, which bars employment discrimination based on sexual orientation, missed passing the Senate in September by one vote.

This isn't the first time HRC has angered the transgender community over the issue. But in an article in the

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L.A. Culture

WHAT A DRAG

Is the decline and fall of gender upon us?
By Hillary Johnson

A few months ago I threw a party in Chinatown that involved much karaoke. I wore a red dress from Frederick's of Hollywood, high heels, and lots of rhinestones. The party was fabulous and so was I. My ex-boyfriend came; the next day he called and said, "I hope you aren't offended by this, but I think I've figured you out. The thing about you," he explained, "is that you're like a man pretending to be a woman. You act like you're in drag."

Far from being offended, I was flattered. First in my mind, of course, was the satisfaction of knowing I frightened him with my cojones. But when I thought more deeply about it, I had to agree that my take

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CD ROMS FOR GIRLS

New York Times

Dec. 12, 1995

By STEPHEN MANES

Computer software occasionally comes packaged with odd prizes and peripherals, but McKenzie & Co. must be the first to include a tube of lipstick, not to mention a pink-ribbon breast-cancer-awareness pin emblazoned with the name of a shoe company.

You also get an audio CD with tracks from the Strawberry Zots, Poet, Cool Notes, Tee Green and, on phantom track 20, the sounds of a ping-pong game. The program (about \$60) comes from Her Interactive, a new division of American Laser Games Inc., a company best known for arcade shoot-'em-ups demanding quickness with the trigger finger rather than the lipliner.

McKenzie & Co. is one of a handful of new computer games aimed at preadolescent girls, whose male classmates are presumably drooling over computerized mayhem, kick-boxing the stuffing out of their enemies and slathering them with buckets of Doomful gore.

The most violent thing about McKenzie & Co. is a section where the goal is to protect flowers by killing weeds.

The program runs only on Windows multimedia machines and comes on five CD-ROMs, four of which are named for hunky guys. The game is essentially an interactive movie in which the viewer, as the main character, aims to win her man. The scenes are

presented mostly from this character's viewpoint. Others address the viewer directly, and at appropriate moments she must choose from two or three responses.

None of this is new, but here it is refreshingly effective, in part because it focuses on emotions and omits the pumped-up macho rhetoric and overheated save-the-world story lines typically borrowed from action films.

The world here is the familiar sunny middle-class enclave of girls' genre fiction, where problems of the heart weigh heavy and others barely exist, but the writing, directing and multiethnic young actors are so energetic and charming that they often transcend the limitations of both genre and computer. We should all have friends as steadfast as loyal Samantha and romantic interests as understanding and attractive as Brandon.

Unfortunately, the program tosses in too much for its own good, forcing detours from the story just when things begin to get interesting.

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ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

**TGIC's Annual business meeting will take place on
Thursday, February 13, 1997 at 7:30**

- ◆ **The purpose of this meeting is to nominate new club officers and directors, review the financial status of the club, and make important decisions regarding the direction of the club for 1997.**
- ◆ **The smoking policy will surely be discussed and a decision will be made regarding smoking at club meetings.**
- ◆ **Also on the agenda is how the club can recruit new members in the most effective way.**
- ◆ **If you have ideas and suggestions on any topic, come to the meeting, bring the idea to the table and lets discuss it.**
- ◆ **Your input is needed and appreciated.**

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE

(CD Rom For Girls Continued from page 2)

In order to proceed with the romance, the user must master a series of video games that are mostly variants of the classic Tetris and Space Invaders, and one that did not work at all on my machine. Here they prove conclusively that humans are far more interesting than computers.

McKenzie & Co. admirably allows more than one right answer in many social situations. Cutting classes, however, gets severe punishment, even though those "classes" amount to little more than the video games introduced by an actor who plays all five teachers, male and female, as flamboyant buffoons. All the objects of desire are handsome, and 10 bucks will buy two more; jug-eared nerds with adhesive-taped glasses never get to make the case for the future value on the romantic market of the high-technology stock options they are sure to have when they reach maturity.

The game's most advanced feature, alas, may be its commercialism. When pursuing Brett or Derrick palls, one may shop at a virtual mall whose merchants are among the game's sponsors. The screens on which various cosmetics can be tried out come courtesy of the lipstick manufacturer. The magazine on the desk is there because it has paid to be. This may be the beginning of the end for parents who are delighted to see their daughters gazing longingly at a computer instead of incessant TV commercials. Copyright NYTimes 1995

Brou Looks Like a Lady

by Chris Suellentrop, Jay Forman, Brett McCallon, & Brendan Greeley

Homecoming Drag Queen

It all began innocently enough, with a drink special. Word on the street was that drag queens could drink free at Lucky Cheng's each Tuesday. As aspiring young humorists, the idea of getting free hooch and a story simply by donning a dress seemed too good to refuse. Besides, we rationalized, as long as we were doing it in the name of comedy, we would be joining a long and noble drag tradition. Shakespeare's *As You Like It* comes to mind. So does "Bosom Buddies." As we were about to add the name BrouHaHa to the hallowed gallery of comic female impersonators, the question at the forefront of our minds was this: Would we be "The Kids In The Hall," or would we be Benny Hill? Benny's admirable penchant for using scantily clad women as a veil to thinly disguise his gross lack of humor notwithstanding, he makes one butt-ugly woman.

We considered our options. Brett donned curlers, a mud mask, a terrycloth robe, and combat boots, adopting the moniker "Large Marge." Brendan, in response to an unfulfilled childhood fantasy, garbed himself in the attire of a libidinous Catholic school girl, and was christened "Lolita." Chris and Jay sojourned to Albert Brown's salon/gender-o-whirl, where they were primed by a real-live drag queen. Four hours later, Chris emerged, his fair ashen hair elegantly coiffed high above his head. He dubbed himself "Ginger Snapp," a horsey coquette whose coy demeanor masked a legendary thirst for good times and cheap liquor. Jay had to

"We had become women, dammit. We knew the nuances of Control Top vs. Regular pantyhose."

be forcibly removed from the mirror with a spatula, so convincing was his transformation. Attired in a slinky red dress slit thigh-high and a brunette wig styled a la Marilyn Quayle, "Jasmine" was ready to spice up the sultry, tropical night. The four of us looked at ourselves in a curious mixture of bewilderment and delight. We had become women, dammit. We knew the nuances of Control Top vs. Regular pantyhose.

Appearances, however, can be deceiving. We knew our beauty was only skin deep. We hungered to be the most perfect reflection of the Female, embodying not only her physical charms but her intellectual

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(HOMECOMING DRAG QUEEN Continued from page 3)

and spiritual essence, as well. However, as Kent, our stylist, reminded us, there was one aspect of femininity we wished to avoid.

Kent: Here's what I can't stand about women: PMS. They're guaranteed to be bitchy at least once a month, and they stretch it out for three weeks. That leaves you one week when they're nice, and that's when they go shopping.

Our transformation was frighteningly convincing. Immediately, we felt our brains shrink and our driving skills decrease. Pushing these facts out of our flighty little heads, we descended into the shadowy vortex of New Orleans nightlife. Unfortunately, other fears assailed us. We were suddenly gripped with a paralyzing dread. What if we saw a family member in one of the bars we visited? Or worse, what if that family member were clad as we were? I tell you this, they'd have some explaining to do.

Dad: I always had an inkling about you, Son. The apple doesn't fall far

"We had not entered the world of women; we had entered the world of homosexual men."

from the tree. You always were "Daddy's little girl." I'm proud of you, slugger. You look good.

Son (whimpering): The horror, the horror...

We dispelled these fears from our collective consciousness, and arrived downtown. Since we were early, Jasmine recommended that we drop by Good Friends, your average "working Joe" gay bar. There, we

would encounter a friend of hers named "Ed," a bearded guru who was to become our guide through the realm of Dungeons & Dragqueens. Like wide-eyed country girls visiting the big city for the first time, we approached the bar, hoping to gain some insight into the world we had entered.

Brou: Are there any stories you could tell us?

Bartender: Well, there was a ball-shaving during Mardi Gras last year...

Brou: What was the incentive in this loss of pubic hair?

Bartender: Money.

Brou: How much money?

Bartender: Ninety bucks.

Brou: Damn. I'd get my balls shaved for ninety bucks. Was a straight razor used?

Bartender: No. Disposable.

Brou: So he wanted a close, comfortable shave?

Bartender: I suppose.

Brou: Was a warm barber's towel applied to the scrotum afterward?

Bartender: No, they just rinsed it off and he went on his way.

Transgenderist Independence Club
PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604
(518) 436-4513 (live Thurs. 8-10 PM)

Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

TGIC Officers

- President Winnie [redacted]
- Vice President Joan [redacted]
- Secretary Joyce [redacted]
- Treasurer Winnie [redacted]
- Newsletter Editor Gina [redacted]

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Readers are invited to submit articles relevant to the Transgendered Community for consideration. You may bring or mail typed pages for publication to the TGIC clubroom. Format should follow that shown in the current newsletter. You may also e-mail the articles to Jeeena@AOL.COM. The article should be part of the body of the e-mail. If you must attach a file please save it in ASCII format.

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 - 10pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the local night spots after the meetings.

(Continued on page 5)

(HOMECOMING DRAG QUEEN *Continued*)

The truth reared its ugly head. We had not entered the world of women; we had entered the world of homosexual men. We were strangers in a strange land, trapped in a bazaar of unfamiliar sights and smells. A native approached.

Strange Gay Man: I just got divorced on August 24th, so now I'm having a wonderful time just being with men.

Brou: You just came out in August?

SGM: Well, while I was married I always had a boyfriend.

Brou: Did your wife know?

SGM: Sure. She had a girlfriend. We had two bedrooms. We'd have people over for hottub parties and they'd think we were roommates. We lived in California.

Brou: That's weird.

SGM: Maybe. But I'd never do drag. And you're straight?

Brou: That's correct.

SGM: Honestly, you're the best thing that's happened to me since I've been gay. I feel better about being gay after having met you.

Apparently, we had not understood the significance of the threshold we had crossed. While we were preparing for our excursion, we had calmed ourselves by thinking, "What's the big deal? I mean, E.T. did it." Appalling naïveté considering the impact we had on each establishment we visited. We had managed to shock the unshockable members of the New Orleans "community." Congratulating ourselves on this achievement, we returned to the

conversation with our newfound friend.

SGM: You know, when I just wanna fuck, I want to be with a woman. I just hate the female psyche.

Brou: You're attracted to women?

SGM: Sexually? Let me put it this way: If I could masturbate with a pussy, I would.

While the members of the "community" may be accustomed to this sort of talk, we were a bit taken aback. This, coupled with the fact that a large black man was growing increasingly jealous of our monopolization of his boyfriend, prompted us to leave. The drink special was about to begin. On our way out the door, the bartender informed us that "Glamour Shots" would be

"For me, it's more than just wearing women's clothes. I like the wigs; I love the makeup; I love the clothes."

sponsoring photo ops for drag queens from October 19th through the 23rd, in case we were interested. Flattered by his attention, we hastily penciled the dates into our daily planners. With a skip in our step, we headed to Lucky Cheng's. The bartender there was cute and engaging. (And an actual woman. We think.)

Brou: Do you get a lot of people who dress up just to drink for free?

Bartender: No, not really.

We patted ourselves on the backs for our ingenuity. While the primary rationalization for our eccentric behavior (free liquor)

was working out nicely, not a single drag queen who wasn't an employee showed up the entire night. Fortunately, the queens we were able to interview were cultured, well-spoken, and, God help us, kind of cute. We asked them if we were pretty.

Brou: Was there a moment when you knew you wanted to do drag?

Judy: I always knew I had a unique face, and I knew it would be fun. If I could wear the stuff that I'm wearing now and get away with it, I would. Make-up is a way to make anyone look more beautiful. I love my make-up. Make-up is just so much fun.

Brou: What about drag is so appealing?

Judy: Look at how women can dress; women can be glamorous. When can men be glamorous? I remember that I would get so jealous when I would go shoe shopping. For men it's like: black or brown? The women's are just, like, so great. The women's clothes are so much better.

Brou: Is the object of drag to look like a woman, or is it something else entirely?

Judy: For me, it's more than just wearing women's clothes. I like the wigs; I love the makeup; I love the clothes. I like the heels because the heels give you more posture. If I could just take off this bra, I'd be glad.

Brou: Do your parents know that you do this?

Judy: No.

Brou: Would they appreciate knowing this?

Judy: I doubt it. I'm from Alabama.

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(HOMECOMING DRAG Continued from page 5)

Suddenly, the alarming realization hit us: we were enjoying ourselves. At some point in the evening we had ceased to be college guys in search of free beer; we had been somehow transformed into a bunch of preening Holly-Golightlys. More than once during the night, Brett had to be assured that his robe didn't make him look fat, all the while vehemently denying that he in any way resembled Mindy Cohn. Chris checked his hair at least four hundred times and received a ten-minute foot-massage from Dan, our tuxedoed "dapper fellow and gentleman escort." Jay found himself gazing, narcissuslike, into his glass, and asking himself what his sign was. Brendan voiced the fear that he would suffer from "beer goggles," invite himself back to his place, and masturbate in front of a mirror. Soon, however, a combination of the friendliness of everyone we met that night and seriously alcohol-impaired judgment melted our apprehensions away. We turned our journalistic sights on the goateed backwaiter, evidently a queen in his own right.

Brou: What kind of drag do you do?
 Bearded Lady: There are different varieties of drag. The one that I like most is called "genderfuck." It's a legitimate category of drag. There's high glamour drag, there's camp drag, and there's genderfuck, where you're obviously a man, but you play with gender.

Brou: What type of music is best for a drag performance?
 BL: For genderfuck, I use speed metal.

Brou: That's something I would never have thought.

BL: What was really fun, I had a group of friends that did a number to "Thirty-Nine Lashes" from Jesus Christ Superstar. It was really lovely and bizarre.

Brou: Do your parents know you do drag?

BL: I don't think so, though I used to dress in my mother's clothes when I was a child.

Brou: Do your parents know you're gay?

BL: It's a long and involved

"Brendan voiced the fear that he would suffer from "beer goggles," invite himself back to his place, and masturbate in front of a mirror. "

story.

Brou: Are they okay with it?

BL: More and less. I'm from Mississippi, so we don't really talk about it.

Brett: I'm from Laurel, Mississippi.

BL: Laurel? That's where I'm from.

At this point, Brett and his hometown companion embarked on a discussion of the finer points of life in Laurel. The conversation soon wore thin, however, when it became clear that the only thing they held in common was the ostracization that haunts any Mississippi high-schooler who doesn't name his dog "Rebel." We moved on to "Peaches," our third and final interviewee.

Brou: What do you think of our outfits?

Peaches: You guys look great.

Brou: Any tips?

Peaches: Eyeliner.

Brou: Have you ever gone country line dancing?

Peaches: No.

Brou: What do you think of people who go country line dancing?

Peaches: I don't.

If we had stuck around Lucky Cheng's much longer, there was a good chance that our parents would come for Parents' Weekend and find us drunk in the gutter on Decatur, begging for frosted eyeshadow and drinks with umbrellas.

We decided to leave. As we traipsed down Bourbon, clutching each other in a drunken stupor, we couldn't help but think of the spectacle we presented to the stunned tourists. We were reinforcing the concept of New Orleans as a freak show writ large, a city where no matter where you turn, you might see a tipsy collegian hiking up his skirt and running after his friends, all the while hoping that his hose doesn't run. And we couldn't have felt prouder. We drove home to our beds, the sage words of one of our gender-switching friends resounding through our minds:

Brou: Why drag?

Bearded Lady: RuPaul said it best: "You're born naked. Everything else is drag." Marge, Ginger, Jasmine, and Lolita make pretty good girls, as girls go.

(Culture Reference Assistance: Mindy Cohn played Natalie on "The Facts Of Life." Blair was the femme one, Jo was the butch one, Tootie was the black one and Natalie ("Nat") was the, ah, woman of size.)

Lipstick Tip

(TRANSACTIVISTS Continued from page 1)

Advocate, December 10, HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch said it was unfair for activists to direct their rage at her organization, since the legislation was a product of a broad coalition involving a number of groups.

"This neatly allowed her to sidestep the fact that HRC does not currently support our inclusion in ENDA, that the coalition is primarily their creature and that they are primarily responsible for ENDA lobbying," retorted Transsexual Menace founder Riki Anne Wilchins.

Questioning HRC's "disingenuous" reasoning, Wilchins noted that when support for ENDA was still doubtful, transgender inclusion was risky, but that after a close vote, it is still considered a strategic mistake. "If it's raining, we can't be included because the weather's not too good. If it's sunny, we're not included because the weather might turn bad. If it's overcast, our timing's not good, and anyway, we shouldn't blame HRC for the weather,"

Wilchins quipped. "Apparently, there is no good time for inclusion."



Dear Bobbi: I'd like to wear lipstick, but I want it to look natural (no bright colors). Any suggestions on finding the right shade?

ANSWER: Generally, a lipstick that's one shade darker than your natural lip color will be the most flattering. But like skin tone, lip color varies from person to person.

Decide if your lips are more pink or more brown by looking at your face without makeup. Need help? Use your complexion as a guide: If your skin is naturally rosy, chances are your lips will look best in berry colors with a cool cast; if you're rosy but very fair, stick to pale, blue-based pinks and mauves. Barely-there browns do the trick if you've got an olive complexion, while deep, brown-based burgundies look best on darker skin. No matter what your skin tone, sheer formulas will look more natural than opaque mattes. Avoid shimmery metallics (they may be fun for special occasions, but they don't exactly say au naturel). *Seventeen Magazine*

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TRUE SPIRIT CONFERENCE

The Conference will take place February 22 - 23, 1997, at the Best Western Hotel in Laurel, Maryland (near Washington DC). Conference registrations are \$15.00 before January 1, 1997, and \$25.00 after. Deaf interpretation, child care, scholarships, and other services are available on a first come, first serve basis.

Conference registrations to: True Spirit Conference Registrations, 26-A Ridge Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770-1759. Make checks payable to the American Boyz. Hotel reservations at: 301-776-5300 ask for the True Spirit Conference to get the special room rate: \$65.00 for single or double occupancy.

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Shoot Me If You Must But First Give Me a Last Cigarette

To publish an article on recognizing differences in the January newsletter is totally negated by the several antismoking editorials published in the same newsletter.

An unbiased editor would present opposing viewpoints completely and without colorization. But they don't even belong in the newsletter, since it's supposed to be devoted to gender issues and related matters.

Since it's been made personal, I feel I must respond in a personal way.

While carefully following the "current smoking policy" as adopted at whatever board meeting, I am incensed at the organized opposition presented in the newsletter. This is not a place for editorializing or singling out those who have (supposedly) violated antismoking policies and practices, especially since these policies are non-gender-related policies and practices.

Getting back to the first paragraph, whether the majority agree or not, promoting non-smoking is blatant editorializing, self serving and divisive. Why not put a sandwich sign in the front hall advertising your viewpoint and signed by its supporters. Is there a warning issued to all prospective members that crossdressing is okay but leave your tobacco at home? Maybe the club ought to consider it.

I'm quite sure that those in the anti-smoking faction (and I doubt that health, since these members patronize the local clubs [translation bars] after meetings without walking out in protest, is an issue) are also quick to subscribe to animal rights issues, vegetarian views, and other issues promulgated by members of society opposed to their special point of view. It's only because by numbers they feel in control that they do this. [This isn't about democracy or other philosophies opposed to democracy, merely an opinion, strike that, belief.]

I am not an accomplished debater, but I know when something is wrong, and what the non-smokers are doing is wrong on a variety of bases. They are saying, by their own admission, that the smokers are dividing the club. I don't think so. I think that personal dedicated zeal (pursuing your personal objectives regardless of the moral cost) is the divisive factor.

I don't do that. But I will support a policy established in a fair arena. And to date I haven't seen one. If we support transgendered folk who are of all persuasions (political, sexual, religious, etc.) then we must be consistent. Otherwise TGIC becomes very parochial, less universal and tiring. (The real world is tiring enough.) I am prepared to expect strong reaction to this essay but probably will not find this essay in the newsletter, unless butchered.) With renewed hope for "fresh air."

—Melodie [redacted] c 1977

(L.A. Culture Continued from page 1)

on femininity is indeed magnificently superficial -- all platinum locks, false eyelashes, lipstick, and patent leather. Which is not to say that these accoutrements aren't essential. Leave me naked on a desert island and I would turn into... well, I don't know exactly. I'd probably die the first week trying to pound some poisonous berries into lip rouge.

All this, yet I do not, as far as I can tell, have a "feminine" point of view when it comes to anything other than the standard wiles. Forming separate belief systems according to gender identity seems a useless and narrow-minded concept, I think, in situations that don't involve peeing.

A few days later I find myself having dinner at Tommy Tang's with my friends "Lady Foote-Locker" and "Tante Livonia." I knew these two when... when they were borrowing my dresses for a night out at Dragstrip 66, scarcely a year ago. It was a romp then, and still is, the only difference being that they have their own wigs and wardrobes now, and budding personae. I have a hunch that the recent drag craze has left behind more of a cultural wake than any of us suspect, and these two seasoned amateurs are just the pair for the night of soul-searching, gender-identity girl-talk I most desperately need.

Tante Livonia, a 29-year-old white boy most of the time, becomes, in corkscrew wig and hippie skirt, a dead ringer for a mulatto poetess with an MFA from Antioch. The formidable Lady Foote-Locker ordinarily strikes one as a 45-year-

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VACUUM CLEANER WANTED

Our vacuum cleaner is shot. If anyone can donate a used, but still functioning cleaner to the club please contact us or bring it the the club

(L.A. Culture Continued from page 8)

old Old Etonian à la Kim Philby, but dons a blond wig to become a vision in Chanel. "I always carry an air of upper-class nymphomania," she sniffs when complimented on her alter ego (or is it alter id?). I'm deliberately dressed down, too wise to compete.

We take a table and order a round of Eva Destructions ("Smoking Red Margarita, Double Sake!"). I explain about my ex-boyfriend and his curious notion that I'm like a man in drag. "I took it as a compliment," I confess.

"Is there something wrong with me?"

"Nothing's wrong with you," Lady Foote-Locker declares. "All drag is an avenue toward embracing qualities of power. It captures the most powerful aspects of women, the ones women themselves frequently fumble."

It would be easy for a biological woman to take offense at such a slight, but I realize that until I am able to airily declare that "I carry an aura of upper-class nymphomania" and carry it off, I am not yet all-powerful.

"Are drag queens feminists?" I ask.

"Not really. Drag puts you out of sympathy with the feminist agenda,"

Foote-Locker explains, "in that you want the attention. You expect your drinks to be paid for. You don't want convenient pockets in clothing. You don't want sensible shoes."

"I want that!" Livonia objects. "I want to go barefoot and wear no underwear and a flouncy skirt. And I don't want to shave my armpits!"

Lady Foote-Locker looks patient. "But surely you don't want a pocket?"

Livonia considers this. "I -- I don't want to have to need a pocket," she says somewhat awkwardly, reminding me of so many real women.

Real women like Hillary Clinton. A recent cover article in The New Republic by Camille Paglia called "Ice Queen, Drag Queen" notes derisively that "Hillary had to learn how to be a woman; it did not come easily or naturally. . . . She is the drag queen of modern politics, a bewitching symbol of professional women's sometimes confused search for identity in this era of unlimited options."

It pangs me to think of Hillary, excoriated for her hairdos as much as for her business dealings, and I think that the public's disinclination to separate the two is part of an overall feminization of our cultural world

view, the part of us that bucks at a Pat Buchanan's masculine determinism. I

see this same thing at work in my former boyfriend's realization that his ex is more than just a missing armful of warm girl -- for ultimately, whose identity is really being called into question here, mine or his? Our fascination with drag is more about looking in the mirror than it is about camp and spectacle, both for observer and observed.

"When people dress in drag, they discover who they are," Lady Foote-Locker says. "The escape once again becomes a confrontation with self-discovery." That this particular internal drama is played out in public seems an important step. As "bad" as a movie like *To Wong Foo* may be, it helps bring the political language of drag into the lexicon.

"If I were a man," I confess, "I'd be Philip Marlowe, which is who I really am, on some level -- or so I'd like to think. But I can't be, so I settle for being the blonde he describes walking into the bar. Those two characters are as close as I can come to describing myself. They're romantic dichotomy."

Lady Foote-Locker thinks for a moment, then quietly and seriously says, "To wear successful drag, you have to adopt a woman's schedule. What I mean is this: here I am at the height of my sexual attractiveness as a man, realizing that I'm an older woman. That was a shock."

This is one of the most breathtakingly empathetic statements I've ever heard. It addresses both the envy and the fear that drives the sexes together and apart, even as it describes the unlikely territory on which they might meet.

I get the sense, talking to Foote-Locker and Livonia (and my ex), that the decline and fall of gender is upon us, and it seems serendipitous that this sea change is coming about at a time when we've begun playing with stereotypes, as opposed to attacking them.

Lady Foote-Locker smiles at me benignly. "Also, drag is the only pleasurable form of self-consciousness."

Indeed. As wonderfully painful as self-awareness, perhaps. © 1996 by Buzz Inc. -- <http://www.buzzmag.com:80/ISSUE45/culture45.html>

LOCAL EVENTS

FEB 14- Drag Show at JD's
Playhouse, Central Ave,
Albany, NY

FEB 14- CUPID GAYLA-
Franklin Plaza, Troy, NY,
Semi-formal dinner/dance
with auction \$30 includes
dinner

FEB 28- JD'S PLAYHOUSE
ANNIVERSARY
DRAG SHOW -
Performers wanted!

MAR 8 Comic Lea Delaria at
PAGE HALL
SUNY CAMPUS

EARS WANTED!

Transgendered? Transgendered
friends?

Have you heard about:

>abuse by public
officials?

>discrimination?

>public
harassment?

>sexual harassment?

>assault or rape?

>remaining silent bothering
you?

>no help from conventional
sources?



Network with us: (518) 432-7092

E-mail: AlbGender@aol.com

Mail: P.O. Box 6307

Albany, NY 12206

ALBANY GENDER PROJECT
"Building respect - one person at a
time"

BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER

The International Foundation for Gender Education is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Basic membership is \$25 per year. Subscriptions to Transgender Tapestry are \$40. Brochures and forms are available in the TGIC Club Room. Call or write to:

IFGE (617) 899-2212

PO Box 229

Waltham, MA 02154-0229

The I.F.G.E. has now started, in cooperation with D B Associates, the publishing of a monthly version of Transgender Tapestry to be placed FREE on the internet. You can find this new version of the community's largest Publication at <http://www.tiac.net/users/dba/ifge/ifge.htm> This magazine will be updated every month and will also shortly carry the I.F.G.E.'s entire line of books and advertisers.

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked. (NYS Health Department) Albany Area: (518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

TGIC-On-line

All transgendered people are invited to join TGIC On-Line, a very informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC) an over 30 year old organization for TG people. TGIC meets every Thursday night at a private club room in Albany, and then many go out to several of the area clubs. Messages exchanged on TGIC-On-line focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Newburg. If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about TGIC, send an e mail message to:

tgic-request@hartebeest.com with any subject line and in the message body, the text: **JOIN TGIC STOP**

You will receive an automated acknowledgement (Journal) of your

request, which must be approved with the list moderator.

TGIC MEETINGS

(S)= Smoking, (NS) = No Smoking

February 6(S) MardiGras '97: Purple & Green & Gold

February 13 (NS) TGIC ELECTIONS AND BUSINESS MEETING

Lover Come Back: A Tribute To Torch Singers

February 20(S) Break My 'Art: More Makeup Please!

February 27 (NS) Banker's Hours: Suited For Success
Newsletter Night.

March 6(S) Coming Out At Last: Debutante Gala

March 13(NS) Bleeding For Fun: The Punk Spree

March 20(S)

March 27(NS) Shatner's Birthday: Bad Wigs & Girdles In Space!

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

February 22,23, 1997- American Boyz F2M- Contact Gary Bowen 410-392-3640 or

f2m-admin@tantalus.clark.net

March 11-16, 1997 - Texas T Party, P.O. Box 17 Bulverde, Texas 78163 (210) 980-7788 e-mail: **TXTPARTY@AOL.COM**

April 15-20, 1997 - California Unity. 11th Annual IFGE Conference. IFGE P.O. Box 229 Waltham, MA 02254 617-899-2212

June 19-22-1997 -

Second International Congress on Sex and Gender Issues- King of Prussia, PA. Guest Speaker: Kate Bornstein. Contact JoAnn Roberts, Ph.D., P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406
Phone: 610-640-9449

TRI-ESS MEETINGS IN SCHENECTADY

The Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter of Tri-Ess holds meetings in Schenectady. Contact TGIC for further information.

TGIC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 1997

At this time, all members please check your mailing label. In the top right corner is a summary of your membership status. The meanings of the code letters are:

MG - Member, General individual

MC - Member, Couple

MA - Member, special mailing

K0 - Key Club, no closet

K1-K5 - Key Club, closet #1 - #5

SS - Sample Subscription to new prospects.

Following your membership code letters, the date through which your dues are paid is indicated in year/month order. You may pay dues in advance at any time; when received, the date will be incremented by one year. We allow a four-month grace period. For the last issue, *LAST* will be printed on the mailing label in place of the date. Then, if dues are not received before the next newsletter is mailed, you will be dropped.

Dues remain at \$40 per year in 1997 (\$45 for couples). For those who may be short of cash at the time, we can offer a 6-month extension for \$20, or a 3-month extension for \$10. NOTE: For KEY CLUB members, the date indicates the month through which your rent has been paid. Please keep monthly payments up to date. We expect to revise and mail our optional Club Membership List next month. If you joined TGIC in 1996, you will be added under the category (include name, address and/or phone or not) that you gave on your membership application form. If you are an older member and wish to be added, deleted, or change your category, please inform us immediately. If *LAST* appears on your mailing label this month, you will be deleted unless dues are paid.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**JAN 96 JAN 97**

Current members	56	59
Potential members	13	19
Friends	9	8
Professionals	20	21
Clubs & magazines	41	41
TOTAL	139	148

During the past year, 17 previous members dropped out of the Club, but were replaced by 20 new members. Also, 55 prospective new members did not join the Club, and were dropped from our mailing list after receiving four issues of our newsletter. These statistics are typical of our experience for a number of years