

# News & views

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# Renaissance

## Childhood & Family Dynamics of Crossdressers: Survey Summary

by Ricki Scott, Ph.D.

As both a crossdresser and one who has been trained in psychology, I have long been interested in the phenomenon of transvestism. Though there is a moderate but growing literature on the subject, few if any studies have focused primarily on the early childhood experiences of those men who crossdress as adults. This paper summarizes the results of a sample survey which I conducted among some 100 self-identified individuals with personal listings in a crossdresser's magazine.

### Basic Characteristics

The survey respondents are basically middle-age males, with an average age of 47 years. The majority, 65%, classify themselves as transvestites (crossdressers); some 19% consider themselves to be transgendered or borderline transvestite/transsexuals; and the remaining 16% identify themselves as transsexuals. The majority of the respondents report their sexual orientation as heterosexual, with 64% so classifying themselves. An additional 32% identify themselves as bisexual and the remaining 4% as homosexual.

### Sibling Position and Family Characteristics

One is immediately struck by the very large proportion of individuals who are firstborn, only children, or first sons. As Table 1 below indicates, fully 74%—nearly three quarters of the respondents—fall into one of these three categories. What is significant here is the potential for direct and continuing exposure to maternal, feminine influences and to the psychological and emotional presence of female family figures without the intervening influence of an older male sibling. Further, this pattern differs substantially from males in the U.S. population as a whole, as shown in the table below.

**Table 1. Sibling Position of Respondents Compared to National Sample Position**

	Survey Subjects (N=85)	National Sample <sup>o</sup> (N=26,963)
Eldest child with younger sibling(s)	40%	24%
Only child	19	7
Other	41	69
TOTAL	100%	100%

Chisquare = 35.58 with 2 d.f., p <.0001

Equally striking is the great contrast between the reported quality of the relationship of these boys to their fathers as opposed to that with their mothers. Along a continuum of a very weak or negative relationship to a very strong or positive relationship, the mothers rank very high and the fathers generally quite low. The table below contrasts the respondents' assessment of these childhood relationships. Fully 86% of the sample report a neutral to very positive childhood association with their mothers, while 68% report a neutral to very negative relationship with their fathers. Thus a substantial majority of respondents not only had a close proximity to female influences and role models by virtue of their sibling position in their family but also a generally distant, negative or problematic relationship with their fathers as seen in Table 2 (pg. 6).

The quality of the relationship with the mother varies significantly from a comparison group of non-crossdressing men, as seen in Table 3 (pg. 6)

please turn to page 6



## Chapter & Affiliate Information

### Chapters

#### Delaware

**Renaissance Delaware Chapter:** meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808 or call 302-995-1396.

#### New Jersey

**South Jersey/Shore Area:** Write Renaissance SJ, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Meets the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open at 7 p.m. Call 609-435-5401 for details.

#### Pennsylvania

**Greater Philadelphia area:** Write Renaissance GPC, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020-0530. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 p.m. all year 'round. Call 610-630-1437 for information.

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

### Affiliates

#### Georgia

The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244. Information resources.

#### Louisiana

The Gulf Area Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

#### New Jersey

Monmouth/Ocean Trans-Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

#### New York

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

#### Start Your Own

Would you like to start a group in your area? If so, we can help with our chapter/affiliate program. Write to the Director of Outreach, Chapter Development, Renaissance National, PO Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA 19406 or call 610-630-1437 and request our Community Outreach Bulletin No. 1.

# Renaissance News & Views

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public.



## Resources



### Background Papers:

Background Papers are \$1.25 each:

1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
4. The Matter of Children
5. Annotated Bibliography
6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
7. AIDS/ HIV Safety and Ethics.
8. Understanding Transsexualism

### Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

### Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

### TransParent Forum:

If you are transgendered and have children, that makes you a TransParent. If you'd like to network with other TransParents contact Elsa Larson, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, Pa., 17105, attention: TransParent.

### Events Calendar

#### June

- 4 Ren LSV
- 4 Ren So. Jersey
- 8 12th Annual Be All, Pbg., Pa.
- 18 Ren GPC - Cosmetics & skin care
- 24 Stonewall 25 Ball, NYC
- 26 Stonewall 25 march on the UN

#### July

- 2 Ren LSV
- 2 Ren So. Jers
- 6-10 SPICE-Chicago
- 16 Ren GPC - Native American TG Rituals w/Alison Laing
- 23 Ren Delaware

#### August

- 20 Ren GPC - Fashion & Style w/ JoAnn Roberts
- 21 Ren LSV-Annual Luau







# News Beat...

As with everything we do, the big question is, "What to wear?" Angela has the answer dahlings! For those of us who don't actually have anything to fill the cups in that daring two piece or that delightful tank suit, *Lands End* and *Gottex* swimwear have joined the ranks of manufacturers to make mastectomy suits. That's great when your breasts are really foam or silicone prostheses. The suits are cut high in the front so you don't have to work hard to create cleavage, it doesn't show. Soft cup bras built into the suits hold your silicone in place so well you could actually, (would you dare?) go swimming!

Prices range from \$56 to \$114 and I doubt if they'll go on sale very soon. For information on *Lands End* swimwear you can call them at 800-356-4444. Other lines that offer mastectomy suits include *Camp International*, *Harbor Casuals* and *Airway*. The *Harbor Casuals* mastectomy suits can be identified by their "M" tag. Suit up and move 'em out!

## NOT SO SWEET TRANSVESTITE

Britt Eklund, ex-wife of Peter Sellers, Lord Lichfield, Lou Adler, Rod Stewart and Stray Cats drummer Slim Jim Phantom, has written a book. I don't know how she had time to write anything with a schedule like that. Just think how much time she spent on wedding dress fittings and rehearsals

dinners. But, I digress. It seems the weighty tome that has spewed forth from Britt's word processor is not the usual sort of tell-all-bio book. It's called *Sweet Life* and it's a novel that Britt (with assistance from her manager) wrote by using stories she had heard in the worlds of rock and roll and film. Right. The plot as outlined in the clipping sent in by Billie Jaye West sounds an awful lot like Britt's life. Fictionalized of course.

Our heroine has been married to an aristocrat and widowed. On the rebound, she marries (this is the touchy part girls) a violent transvestite who has a diaper fetish. Actually, it seems to go down hill from there but all we care about is the transvestite bit. Where did she get an idea like that? Britt is quoted in the *Kuwait Times*, "I got the transvestite idea from an article about Mick Jagger describing how he liked to dress up in women's clothes at his parties." Well that's a far cry from a diaper, or as the British say, "nappie" fetish. Where did that come from? The article tells us that Rod liked to wear women's silk undies but was he the nappie lover? Was it Sellers or Slim Jim? Fortunately, we'll probably never know. At least as long as the American tabloid shows don't latch onto this story. *Hard Copy* would probably go through Rod's garbage looking for adult size diapers.

Don't waste any money on the book if it makes it to our shores. We don't need stereotypes like the one she presents and if we're lucky she'll find someone else to marry and won't write anymore.

## WHEN WEDDED BLISS IS ILLEGAL

Billie is so busy snipping and clipping, I'll bet her wife has no paper left to read. She sent along another clip from the *Kuwait Times* concerning a couple in England who are victims of the British law about the legal gender of transsexuals. The law states that no matter what you've done to your body your legal status remains the gender that you were born to. Pretty stupid huh? You bet. It's the law that Tula tried to fight and lost. She now lives here in the U.S. where a new woman can be a woman in the eyes of the law.

In any event, Janeen Newham and David Willis are victims of the same prehistoric thinking from the British lawmakers. They are both transexual and have both had sex reassignment surgery. After being lucky enough to find each other and fall in love they cannot get married. Not without walking down the aisle in the sex roles they left behind. Since David is still legally a woman he would have to be the wife and Janeen would have to be the husband in the blind eyes of the law. They are unwilling to do that so they continue to live in sin.

The couple have tried to get their local Minister of Parliament to change the law with no success so Janeen has written a letter to the Queen. (Not of Prussia, of England.) I don't know the Queen's legal address but maybe a raft of letters from transgendered people around the world flooding in to Buckingham Palace might get her attention. Then maybe David and

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Janeen could get married in the roles they have chosen.

**POWER PUMPS**

Dorothy's ruby slippers had the power to take her back to Kansas and now another pair of red shoes have brought an advertising campaign to a screeching halt. The Pirelli tire company has covered Europe with posters of Carl Lewis in a sprinter's crouch, running togs and red pumps with five inch heels. His legs really do look great.

It seems the picture is too controversial for the United States so the ad campaign will have to be changed for the poor Americans who might be threatened or offended by the image. My goodness yes! What might happen if the ignorant slob in the street were to begin questioning gender roles or appreciating the artful photography of Annie Liebowitz? Maybe we'd be headed toward a more tolerant and enlightened society. Can't have that. Jessica Brandon found the Lewis pic in the April 15 *Philadelphia Daily News*.

**KILLING THE URGE**

Ann Landers printed a letter back in March from a man who was so disgusted by his compulsion to crossdress that he would do anything to eliminate it. Anything but accept it. It seems this unlucky man had so much loathing for his desire to crossdress that he had done some reading and found as we all have, there is no "cure" for crossdressing. He was upset by what he called "psycho-babble about learning "to accept the

woman within." He actually said in his letter, "If there's 'a woman within' I want her dead." This is a seriously troubled man.

Ann's answer offers him a solution that I find ironic. She consulted Dr. John Money and he recommended an endocrinologic solution; reduce the man's testosterone level. When his sex drive decreases his urge to dress will also wane. The ironic part is, if he takes female hormones to decrease his testosterone level, while he wouldn't be thinking about wearing women's clothes he'd actually be more feminized than he was while in the gripe of his hideous compulsion. Ain't life strange?

**COMPUTER FRAUD**

My friend Jayne sent me a page from the February 1994 issue of *Glamour* with a story about a computer-networker named Christian Sykes who decided to cross the gender line in cyberspace. He logged onto an interactive game under a female name and learned a lesson about how women are treated in our culture.

If the men weren't talking down to "her" they were hitting on "her." Sykes said, "It was nice to be the subject of all that attention but I wouldn't say it was easy being a woman."

The computer networks may offer the best crossdressed experiences for those of us who find the feminine role fascinating. You can tell people you are anybody and they have no way to tell any different. It's a lot easier to pass since you don't have to worry about your makeup, clothes or voice. It could be the perfect outlet for those who

long to interact socially in female roles but are afraid to go outside in a dress. If I could just get a modem, I wouldn't have to spend so much on makeup.

**FINAL FRIVOLITIES**

Kudos to the editor of the *LSV News*. Cierra Lang has put together a professional looking newsletter that has to be one of the best I've seen from a group the size of LSV. It's laid out well and it's full of good information. Think about joining LSV just to get your own copy of their newsletter. Keep up the good work Cierra.

Speaking of work, a new victim, aah... I mean volunteer has taken over the office manager portion of the Ren National Secretary's job. Elizabeth Jarrell will be checking the mail, sorting, and routing it to the right people, or answering it herself when need be. Former secretary Bonnie Allen will be easing out of the position this month and the Board will make a decision on who will get the job.

If Elizabeth doesn't complain too much about all the time she has to spend in the copy center for this job maybe she'll get the whole enchilada. Meanwhile, thanks for taking over the dirty work Liz and thanks to Bonnie for her service too.

Now, a relevant closing quote sent in by my pal Jayne and attributed to an anonymous source.

*"Too many people are ready to carry the stool when the piano needs to be moved."*

Good night Mrs. Calabash, where ever you are.



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## Survey...

**Table 2. Respondents' Perceptions of Parental Relationships During Childhood (n=85)**

Quality of Relationship	With Mother	With Father
Very Positive	45%	12%
Fairly Positive	31	20
Neutral	10	31
Fairly Negative	10	20
Very Negative	4	17
Total	100%	100%

**Table 3. Respondents' Perceptions of Parental Relationships During Childhood (N=85)**

Quality of Reported Relationship with Mother	Sample (N=85)	Comparison Group (N=44)
Very Positive	45%	71%
Fairly Positive	31	25
Neutral	10	2
Fairly Negative	0	0
Very Negative	4	2
TOTAL	100%	100%

t = 3.507, p = .0003

### Early Crossdressing Experiences

Respondents were asked to describe their first encounter with crossdressing they could recall and their age at the time. Nearly all the sample members (97 percent) reported that their first experience took place before puberty (which occurs generally around the age of 13); and one-half reported an initial exposure to some form of crossdressing by the age of seven.

The type and extent of these initial experiences varied considerably. Some were fleeting and partial, such as having one's nails polished or hair tied in ribbons by the mother, or trying on a mother's or sister's shoes, slip or panties in secret. Others involved being completely dressed by a mother, sister, or other female family member, often accompanied by wearing long hair styled as a girl's. (Indeed, a few of the sample reported being dressed more often as a girl than as boy until beginning school, usually at age 6.)

### Secret and Open Patterns

For those in the sample who crossdressed as children, the majority, 78 percent, did so in secret. Although some of these boys were "initiated" into crossdressing by women (like the painting of nails by a mother or playing "dressup" with a sister, girl playmates or a babysitter), family members were unaware of the respondents' crossdressing activities. These individuals make up the "secret" group. However, 22 percent of the sample members—those who comprise the "open" group—reported that their crossdressing was initiated early and openly encouraged by a mother, grandmother, sister or other female family member. Over half of

this open group were frequently dressed as girls at home during the day (when the father was not present) and often taken out in public crossdressed for shopping or social visits. Nearly half (44 percent) of the open group had long hair as young boys and wore it in feminine styles while crossdressed. Most of them had their long hair cut by age 6, usually at the father's initiative.

### The Attraction of Feminine Clothes

The great majority of the sample respondents, 78 percent, reported that certain items of clothing had been especially attractive to them as children. In general, this attraction seems to be related to those items associated with their first recalled crossdressing experiences. For example, those who first tried on slips or panties retained a special affinity for these items later on. As might be expected, various items of underwear (the quintessential feminine garb) led the list of especially attractive feminine items.

### Reactions to Childhood Crossdressing

The sample members were asked to describe their recollection of their feelings about being crossdressed as children. As the table below indicates, the majority reported positive emotions associated with their crossdressing: It brought enjoyment and happiness. A much smaller group reported negative feelings: They felt guilty, ashamed, even "crazy." Others expressed ambivalence: They enjoyed it but also felt strange or guilty. And a last group (most of whom identify as transsexuals) reported no particular feelings associated with crossdressing.

*continued on page 14*



# Guess Who's Had A Makeover?

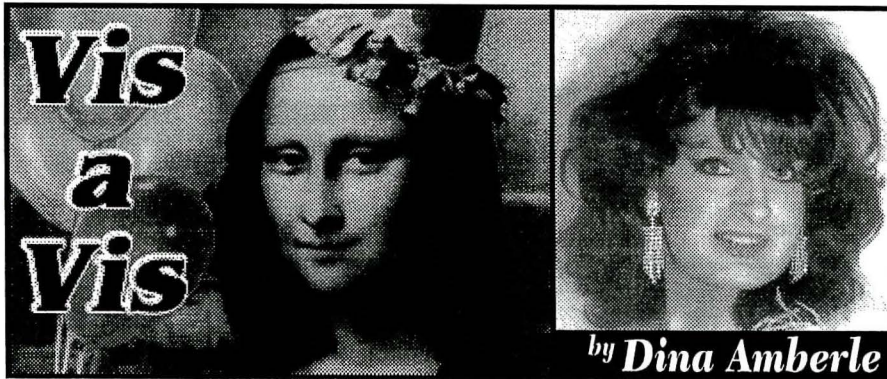


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*I must write June's column  
in May  
And I haven't a clue what to say  
So let us peruse  
The other groups' news  
And hope it includes  
Some platitudes  
Into which I can rip, trash,  
and make hay*

**COME OUT, COME OUT,  
WHEREVER YOU ARE**

To the ends of the earth I go to find nuggets for this column. First up is a nice little editorial written by Elaine Barrie in her *Nu-Scene International* newsletter published in Victoria, Australia. Elaine gets testy about crossdressers complaining, "Why won't society accept us?"

Elaine finds it irritating to hear closeted or semi-closeted CD's begging for acceptance from society. In her words, "You simply won't know if society will accept you or not unless you put it to the test. It is not society suffering from paranoia—it is YOU." And my favorite quote of the piece: "It is you who have put yourself [in the closet], not society."

Elaine's editorial was succinct and said a lot in a short space. It brought to mind some themes that I've written about previously in this column and elsewhere. It isn't easy to be different—even in a society that prides itself on its diverseness. And there are always some unique individuals who aren't afraid to be themselves—no matter how different they might be—and they may help break ground for the rest of us. But we can't always sit back and wait for someone else to lead

the way. If no one else steps forward we should do it ourselves—or stop bleating about the lack of acceptance.

And there are many different thresholds of 'acceptance.' 'Society' accepts men wearing earrings but that doesn't mean your circle of friends, family or employer will; society 'accepts' the image of leather clad motorcycle riders but that doesn't mean they won't get stared at in a public place; society accepts nuclear power plants and landfills but nobody wants one built next door to them. Society may be at about its peak of 'acceptance' for crossdressing right now as you read this. Will it ever be accepted without a second look or a few smirks in a shopping mall? Probably not. But unless you run into some misanthropes you're unlikely to get much worse reaction from the public at large.

But as Elaine Barrie said, "If you are desperate for acceptance—or even tolerance—bloody well do something about earning it and get out of that self-imposed closet."

**STONEWALL: THEN AND NOW**

Our very own *Renaissance News & Views* carried a point-counterpoint editorial last month about the plans for the 25th Anniversary of the Stonewall riots and the birth of the gay pride movement. The conflicting views on whether to support the official anniversary celebration in New York City on June 26 had to do with the fact that the committee in charge of the political agenda for the event chose not to mention Bisexuals, Drag or Transgendered people in the event's title.

I have conflicting feelings on this

issue. On the one hand, I have a hard time getting worked up over anything done by a committee. The only bigger waste of time than writing a manifesto like Stonewall's is to get exercised over what it actually says or doesn't say. The only thing anyone really remembers about the Declaration of Independence is that it got done at all and who signed it. The contents could have included a recipe for bouillabaisse anywhere after the first paragraph and no one nowadays would be able to tell you for certain if it did or didn't. So let's not get too excited about a committee-written document.

However, I do find the splinter group politicking that kept the Bi's, Drags, and the rest of us Queens out of the title disturbing. The very first Vis a Vis column I wrote last Fall dealt with the way supposedly liberal power blocs are taking up the cudgel of censorship against other groups or points-of-view with whom they disagree. And Stonewall 25 is a classic example of that disturbing trend. In this case, we have three dynamics working against inclusion of bisexual, drag and transgendered people from this call for Human Rights: 1) the gay community looks askance at bisexuality as a kind of fence sitting position that they feel is a cop-out against homosexuality; 2) there is also a feeling in the gay community that drag queens are a stereotype that does them no good in public relations; and 3) the lesbian movement seems militantly opposed to the concept of transgendered women, particularly those who call themselves transgendered lesbians. So the response from this enlightened group of 'human rights activists' is to exclude them from their event title

It's enough to make you sick to see the same sleazy, exclusionary, small-minded, power-happy political posturing from a committee born out of a movement that has been fighting sleazy, exclusionary, small-minded, power-happy majoritarians for the past 25 years. That's what a small taste of political power does to even those people who think they're rebels. Beware of revolutionaries with an agenda. "But if you want money for



people with minds that hate, all I can tell you is brother you have to wait." John Lennon sang that (also 25 years ago)—and it's still true today.

**BEHAVE, WILL YOU?**

*Reflections*, the newsletter from the San Diego-based Neutral Corner group carried an article titled "Profoundly Masculine Behaviors" by Lynette Tavener. In a previous article that I didn't see, she covered "Profoundly Feminine Behaviors" to help us identify certain telltale mannerisms or postures that help sell the feminine image. This installment on masculine behaviors was intended as a converse to that to help us stop doing things that tell the world we're men underneath all the outward trappings of femininity.

The most interesting behavior was the masculine impulse to size others up and down when looking at another person. Males do this rather openly and are often observed by others in the sizing up process. Females tend to do their sizing up in more discreet ways and are less observable in doing so. This is important when the male impulse to scope out another woman starts to take over while we're in drag. Women do look at other women—but not like that.

**READ IT AND WEEP**

I've started to get letters from people who either like or dislike something I've written in this column. No matter whether they agree or disagree with me, it's nice to know somebody out there is reading this screed each month.

Most of the material in this column is distilled from other newsletters and if you ever want to read the genuine article (so to speak) instead of trusting my slant on it, I can try to retrieve it for you from Fibber McGee's closet, I mean, the Renaissance Library.

That having been said, please don't take me up on the offer.

**IF I CAN MAKE IT THERE..**

New York City has two bars that cater to TV's and those who are interested in meeting TV's. One is Edelweiss on 11th Avenue and the other is Sally's II on 43rd Street. If you're looking for an uplifting transgendered experience you should probably look elsewhere, but if you are looking for something a little earthier, they can be fascinating places.

Sally's II is a dive. Broken down and dingy now, you can see that at one time it might have been a nice place; hard by Times Square, perhaps a spot to have drinks before or after a Broadway show. Now the clientele consists of a weird mix of she-males on the prowl, men looking for she-males on the prowl, and a handful of amateur crossdressers trying to have a good time amidst the decadence. The she-males—some stunningly beautiful, others who are caricatures of crazed hormone therapy—wear outfits so sleazy that they would make a Fredericks of Hollywood ensemble look like something from the House of Chanel.

Then there are the guys. One sauntered up to me and mumbled something. I thought he was telling me his name was B.J. I said my name. He

looked confused and I realized that he had asked me how much I charged for an intimacy that is also nicknamed B.J.

When I told my friend Samantha about the exchange, we were both shocked and had the same reaction: you mean you can charge for that?!

Edelweiss is a lot nicer than Sally's but has many of the same denizens. In the downstairs disco, you can dance on pedestals and swing from chains to showcase your, well, whatever. It must be an effective way to meet people because chain dancers turn over quickly. When both pedestals were empty, one wag quipped, "Two chains, no waiting."

When people find out you're from out of town, they usually ask if we have anything like Edelweiss down here in Philly. No, we don't have anything like it. We have better places—although I haven't found any that have chain dancing. Yet.



**HELP!!** The GPC is in need of volunteers to act as Greeters. Greeters are the hostesses who welcome members at the door and provide assistance to newcomers. Volunteers should be ladies who enjoy talking to others and meeting new people. The peak time begins at 8 PM and lasts until about 10 PM. If you are available when the doors open up at 8:00 or sometime during this period, please consider helping out.

People are needed to help with simple clean up jobs after the meetings or to bring refreshments. Even if you can't make every meeting or are only available part of the time, every little bit helps. Contact: Michelle Lynn, Dina Amberle, or any GPC board member in person, or call us 610-630-1437, or write us at Box 530, Bensalem PA, 19020.


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# Beware of the Religious Right

by Maryann Kirkland

Seeing all the publicity that crossliving has received in Hollywood's films of late, we might be tempted to be more at ease. Perhaps public tolerance or even acceptance is around the corner? Think again. We should not be surprised at a grass roots backlash against the 30 year trend of recognizing people's rights. Haven't you overheard people say "when is this rights crap going to stop?" It is high time that gender-issue people speak up for their born rights before the "Moral Majority" closes the door for good.

As you realize, the fight for rights and equal treatment under the law does not ever stop. Blacks and women have pursued this for over 100 years. This year on June 26 the Gay and Lesbian community celebrate 25 years of confronting the "system." But homosexuality has been with mankind for all of time and the contributions of gay artists, thinkers, scientists and composers are well-known. Yet, there is a primitive bias against being different. Different from what or who? All three of the groups just mentioned have been historically marginalized, discounted, and denigrated. Curiously enough all have been lumped together as "womanlike" and that is lower status than white, macho, WASP male. So now we know the historical standard of comparison for all time since Adam is MAN. The oldest and greatest scourge of life was to be born a woman. Even the "great" Sigmund Freud in this century said so, and so it must be. The second greatest sin, in the Western world at least was to be born

black or, with any color. If the world of "men" can be so cruel to humans who had no choice in their inferior status, what becomes of us—the sex and gender benders? To be "woman-like" places you at the top of the contempt list. Do we run for the closet?

The Religious Right movement today is the incorporation of this ancestral, patriarchal, "good olde boy" hate group. The women in this group reject the Feminist equality concept as the Devil's work and willingly buy into inferiority. They ask, "could the world have been that wrong for that long? YES!! At one time the world did not know anything of war, during the age of goddesses.

OK, who are these Religious Right people?. The demographics are as follows:

- More often rural & farm than big cities.
- Bible Belt states: Central and South Central
- White Supremists everywhere
- Religious Cult followers, i.e Fundamentalists
- Arch Conservatives: those that would canonize Rush Limbaugh

How will these fanatics hatch their evil plans? Simple, by exercising their rights and freedoms:

- They will get themselves elected to school boards.
- They will get themselves appointed to library committees
- They will become Town Fathers influencing Police and courts
- They may be active with the local

Chamber of Commerce

- They will have their hands on the local political pulse
- They will move their influence onto the State level
- They may be elected to federal office.
- They may vote on laws affecting your freedoms (like Jesse Helms).

Now do you get the picture? What can we do to protect some of the recognition and tolerance of difference that has begun to grow in the past thirty years? How can we thwart the schemes of the the religious right? The same way they plan our oppression. Get involved in the process of government. Become informed on the candidates at all levels. Exercise your right to vote. Write letters to the editor and join the Chamber of Commerce. By being invisible we leave ourselves open to domination by the religious right. The cry of "We're queer, we're here get used to it" is more than just a shock tactic. It is a statement that let's those who would drive anyone who is different back in the closet know that we will not go.

The recognition, acceptance and protection of being unique would be the high point of civilization. The recognition of diversity has been the message of great minds for two hundred years. That recognition will not prevail without our help. We, the transgendered must actively work for our own rights. Our continued existence is certain. Under what conditions that existence will go on in the future is up to us today.



## MGN Hosts Transgender Caucus

New York's Metropolitan Gender Alliance is hosting the Stonewall 25 Transgender Caucus on Saturday, June 25 at the International Action Center, 39 West 14th Street, Suite 206. The Caucus is an opportunity for transgender and transgender friendly organizations to meet, make plans for the

weekend and network.

The focus of the meeting will be political activism, inclusion, building awareness of the activities of the "Christian" right and strengthening relations with the lesbian, gay and bisexual components of the larger queer community. If you have any

items for the agenda they should be sent to Lynn E. Walker at Metropolitan Gender Network, 561 Hudson St., Box #45, New York, NY 10014.

The meeting will start at three PM and participants are asked to bring three dollars each to cover hall rental costs. For further information contact MGN at 201-794-1665, extension 332 or 718-461-9050.



# Wig Care Tips

by Sandie Reiger,  
Cross Illusions Network

Nothing improves your appearance like a natural looking, well cared for wig. Taking it out of the bag or box and plopping it on your head is just not good enough. Here are some wig care tips that will add a lot to your glamour.

Synthetic wigs should be washed in cool water and wig shampoo. Wig shampoo not only cleans, it conditions the fiber so the shine, curl pattern and elastic will last longer. Washing a synthetic wig in Woolite is not a good idea. Woolite will dull the fiber and cause the ends to frizz. Other things to avoid when washing your wig are conditioning or cream shampoos. They will leave a film on the fiber and cause dulling as well as loss of curl pattern.

So, get out the wig shampoo and let the wig soak in it. If there is heavy makeup on the inside use a terry cloth towel to gently rub the makeup off.

Swish the wig in the suds. Do not rub or scrub. Rinse the wig thoroughly in cool water and then lay it on a dry towel and pat out the excess water. Spray it lightly with wig conditioner and fluff through the hair. (This is especially good for wigs that have started to become frizzy or dry looking. After conditioning, **TURN THE WIG WRONG SIDE OUT!** You can hang it or place it on a dry towel. Let it completely dry **WRONG** side out! It is important to keep the ends in. If it is left to dry with the right side out, water collects on the ends causing the curl pattern to straighten.

After it's completely dry, fluff the wig. Light, short strokes with a wire brush give the best results on a straight hair style. A pick works best on any style that has a curl pattern. Heavy brushing tends to "pack" fiber instead of creating the "airy" look that the hairstyle was meant to have. Consider

"airy" to mean that volume and high hair we tend to favor.

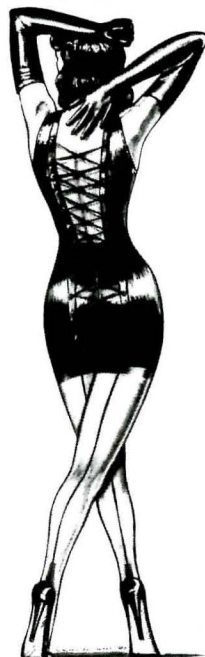
Styrofoam heads are not the best way to display your wig. Styrofoam tends to stretch the elastic and absorb perspiration odors. Wigs should be kept on a stand. If not a wig saver stand then a tall bottle or can may be used. This will allow air to circulate so the wig can air out. Keep your wig in a cool, dry place away from direct heat. Some of the less than ideal places TVs store wigs are the bottom of the closet, in a box in the attic or "somewhere" in the garage.

Finally, never use any form of direct heat, (i.e. blow dryer, curling iron) on synthetic hair. It will melt. If you need to use hair spray use only wig spray. Most other sprays will leave a white film on the fiber and it will not wash out properly. Happy hair!



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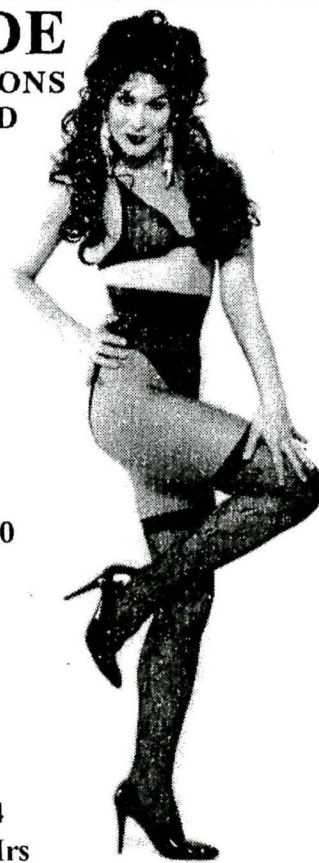
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# Hot • Buzz

JoAnn Roberts

*“Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber.”*

Plato



If this is June, then the APA was here in May and the long-awaited and much discussed *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition* is on the streets. The DSM-IV has been extensively revised and as soon as I can get my hands on a copy I'll let you know what it says about transgendered behaviors... However, there has been much attention focused on gender-identity disorders in children of late. Some of the research indicates that if a child receives therapy early enough feelings of gender dysphoria can be avoided later in life. Some patterns were noted in children with gender dysphoria. Most of the boys came from families where the mother was hostile toward men and the father was physically or emotionally absent. The boy gets a message that being male is not valued. Girls with gender dysphoria, on the other hand, came from families with a violent or abusive father and mothers who were severely depressed or emotionally preoccupied. One 5-year-old girl wanted a gun and penis to protect herself... The success of the treatment is time sensitive according to one therapist. Treated early (at age 4 or 5) and evaluated three years later, most children no longer exhibit cross-gender fantasies. In a follow up study of 50 early-treatment children, only 5 persisted with feelings of transsexualism. If treatment is delayed until age 9 or 10, success is much less certain, and beyond age 12, it is expected that a child will identify as a transsexual later in life... Now this is an interesting premise because it seems to contradict the popular notion that gender dysphoria and transsexualism are biologically rooted, not psychological and it sure puts a dent in the oft-repeated argument that reassignment surgery should be treated like the correction of a birth-defect.



Whatever the cause, those transsexuals (and others!) hoping for modest breast development through the action of female hormones might want to look at a new product from Sara Lee. No, she's not putting estrogen in the cheesecake. The pastry lady's holding company owns Sara Lee Intimates and they're bringing the Wonderbra to the United States from Europe. It's a long and complicated story but it goes something like this. Playtex developed the Wonderbra and introduced it in Canada and later licensed it to Gossard in the U.K. where it's been manufactured for sometime. Sara Lee bought Playtex in 1991 and the license to Gossard expired, so Sara pulled the little wonder back under its own wing. Gossard, determined not to be busted out of the market, introduced their own version of the bra (patents have expired) called the Super-Uplift. So what is the big deal? Both bras seem to be able to create mountains out of molehills. They push the breasts together and up to create what has been called "awesome" cleavage. One of my *LadyLike* readers reports that a little tape and a Wonderbra has done what all else has failed to accomplish for her — boobs. According to reports from Saks, they sold \$18,000 worth of the Gossard model in *one day*. Gossard's Super-Uplift is on sale now at \$39.50, while Ms. Lee's Wonderbra debuted May 1 at \$23. Now those prices may seem high, but it's actually very inexpensive for nice cleavage. Have you priced breastforms lately?



The philosophy of many radical feminists seems to be: if you were born with a penis, you're evil. Lesbian comic, Lea Delaria cleared up some of the confusion thus: "It's not that I don't like penises — I just don't like them on men."



What is it with *Playboy*? (Yes, I still read *Playboy*, most of the real queens do.) For the last four months RuPaul has either been mentioned or shown in this bastion of male heterosexuality. Ms. Ru

either has a *very* good publicist or someone on the staff at *Playboy* likes the girlymen. I think it's a healthy sign of the acceptance of diversity. Check out this recent quote lifted from the pages of the magazine for men: "I wore a wig and a micromini. I was quite impressed with myself. It's actually a wonderful lesson if you're a man. Every man should try it. You don't realize the difference between a man and a woman until you try to be a woman." That was Michael Hutchence, lead singer of the rock group INXS. Michael missed the part about not realizing the difference until you've had another male mistake you for a woman and then treat you like an idiot or a piece of meat. *Then* you realize the difference.



I stress negotiation and compromise in my book *Coping With Crossdressing*, but I am often surprised that many couples don't understand those concepts. Often a woman feels that she's "lost" if she gives in to her partner's wishes, and many men think that they don't have to give something in return for getting their spouse to agree to "explore" crossdressing. And for some couples, negotiating for what you want never even enters their minds. Compromise only works when it's done freely.



Stonewall 25 happens this month and it is billed as the greatest Human Rights event ever. But, as we saw last month, there are factions that don't like the notion of including "transgender" in the march. I certainly can understand that point of view. There were no "transgendered" people at the original Stonewall riots. Hey, some of those folks are still around. Go talk to them. They don't identify as "transgender." They were drag queens and maybe some of them were (are) transsexuals, but the concept of "transgender" didn't exist 25 years ago. While I believe we should be included in the march and the list of demands, I also think it is extremely arrogant of some to claim Stonewall was



# Hot • BUZZ

## Queen of Prussia

a "transgender" event. If that's what has the organizing committee ticked-off, I don't blame 'em one bit. On the other hand, I think it's exclusive and hypocritical to call an event a march for Human Rights and leave us out in the cold.

• • • • •

As if the research about early treatment of gender dysphoria isn't enough to shake up the troops, now hear this. Estrogen may help prevent Alzheimer's disease. Recent research suggests that estrogen operates in brain cells throughout life to assure a certain level of enzymes and to maintain a dense mesh of connections between neurons. The research further suggests that when estrogen levels drop the connections diminish and the neurons die. The result of too many dead brain cells is Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is more likely to strike women than men and dropping estrogen levels may be the reason why. But why don't men seem as likely to develop the disease? Because, my dear, testosterone that crosses the blood-brain barrier gets converted to estrogen. Since a male's blood level testosterone isn't radically altered as men age, the brain always has a sufficient supply of estrogen. Isn't that special? All those people who've attributed powerful, assertive behavior to the indiscriminate action of testosterone were wrong. In fact, the research shows that estrogen begins its work on the architecture of the brain in the fetus and continues throughout life. Estrogen ain't just a "female" hormone anymore. It has been suggested that doctors with male patients exhibiting early stages of Alzheimer's might look at the hormone levels to see if there is a testosterone deficit. So, all you post-op MtF transsexuals should plan on estrogen therapy for a long, long time.

• • • • •

The HOT BUZZ on the newsstands is about 'Zines. These are short-run, small press publications that may last for one or two issues, or get published whenever the publisher feels like putting one out.

*Dragazine* is one of my 'faves. I got a look at another one recently titled *Holy Titclamps*. I wasn't so much impressed by the writing as by the extensive listings and reviews of other 'zines, including *Cross-Talk*, *Dragazine*, and (trumpet fanfare, please) *Renaissance News*. (Tapestry eatcher heart out!) Betcha' dint know we were a 'zine didja? I noted a few other 'zines that may be of interest to y'all: *Gendertrash* hails from Canada at Genderpress, Box 500-62, Church St. Toronto, Ont. M4Y-2E3 at \$4 a copy... *Girlfriend #1* is a dragzine with a collection of quotes from drag queens and lots of SF scene news, Box 191781, SF, CA 94119, 44 pages for \$4... *Girlymag #4* comes out of PO Box 151, Audubon, NJ 08106, 20 pages for \$1 plus 2 stamps... *The Nun*, newsletter of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, 8 pages for a dollar, write SPI, 584 Castro Street, Suite 392, SF, CA 04114... *Popcorn* is the complete drag scene guide to Atlanta, 48 pages for \$4, write 325 Edgewood, Atlanta, GA 31312... and finally, *The Official Drag Queen Handbook* is available from 1800 Market St., #73 San Francisco, CA 94102. No price.

• • • • •

Time to get out your writing sticks and talking paper, 'cause we're gonna write to our congress-persons. It would seem that in this age of "enlightenment," we still have a few cavemen in our midst and in Congress. Rep. Jon Doolittle (R-Ca.) has introduced an amendment to a federal school bill that would require all education courses in receipt of federal funds to satisfy 10 criteria in order to receive funding, including the criterion that they stress abstinence as the only contraceptive method 100% effective against pregnancy, AIDS/HIV, and STDs. The course material must also teach "honor and respect for heterosexual marriage." The Doolittle amendment conflicts with two current federal

laws that preclude the feds from proscribing state and local curriculum standards. Over 30 national organizations have signed a letter to Congress opposing the amendment. And, as if that weren't enough stupidity for one session, Rep. Melton Hancock (R-Mo.) proposed an amendment to the same funding bill that would prohibit local education agencies from receiving funds if they conduct programs that encouraged or supported homosexuality. That would include curricula that might portray gays, lesbians and bisexuals in any positive manner. (I presume that includes us too) So, kiddies, put your pen to paper and write your congress-person to express your opinion, pro or con. (I should think my opinion is obvious.) Any rep can be reached by addressing your letter as follows: Representative (Name), Washington, DC 20515. Do it now!

• • • • •

In the wake of the big drug bust locally, folks have been buzzin' quite a bit. Seems the erstwhile druggist was caught in "her" knickers. Yep, he's a cross-dresser. When the feds came knockin' at dawn, they found him in a teddy, allegedly attempting to destroy the evidence.

• • • • •

Saw this sign: "Lord, grant me the courage to change the things I can, the serenity to accept the things I can't, and the wisdom to hide the bodies of those I had to kill because they pissed me off."

• • • • •

I'll close on a somber and serious note: Dr. Roger Peo died at 7 AM, Thursday, April 7, just 10 weeks after being diagnosed with cancer. He was at home when he died. A memorial service was held April 17. Dr. Sheila Kirk delivered a eulogy on behalf of the community. Send condolences to Ms. Victoria Peo, PO Box 3445, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.

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## Survey...

**Table 4. Respondents' Emotional Reactions to Childhood Crossdressing (N=67)**

Category of Reaction	Percent Reporting
Positive	55%
Ambivalent	19
Neutral	12
Negative	14
TOTAL	100

### Reasons for Crossdressing

There is considerable ongoing debate as to the factors or experiences which lead to crossdressing in adult men. One explanation (the argument from "nature") suggests that genetic factors such as hormonal imbalances, chromosomal patterns, or perhaps a genetic predisposition, play a role. The popularity of this view, however, is waning in light of most recent medical research. Another explanation stresses the importance of environmental, family and social learning factors (the "nurture" argument).

Members of the sample were asked, in an open-ended question, what they thought was the main factor which had influenced their crossdressing. As the table below indicates, most members of the sample attributed their crossdressing to environmental or external factors such as family dynam-

ics. These dynamics include, for example, the dominant role of the mother, the remoteness of the father, or being surrounded by female extended family members; envy of or a special attraction to women in general, i.e., "gender envy"; the sensuality or eroticism provided by wearing female clothing; and the attention and happiness (affective factors) experienced while being crossdressed. Relatively few attribute their crossdressing to internal or genetic factors such as feeling they were men trapped in a woman's body or that "I was born with it."

These interpretations are consistent with the proportion of transvestites and transsexuals in the sample. Transvestites, who are largely heterosexual in preference, find stimulation, eroticism, and often anxiety reduction in dressing as women. Transsexuals feel that their gender is actually female and rarely derive sensual pleasure from



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**Survey...**

**Table 5. Respondents' Assessment of the Major Influence on Their Crossdressing (n=85)**

Category	Percent
Family dynamics/environment/gender envy	27%
Sensuality or erotic appeal of feminine items	22
Genetic or internal factors	21
Affective factors (happiness, attention, excitement)	6
Other	7
Don't know	7
TOTAL	100%

crossdressing; it is a "normal," appropriate behavior. This is borne out in the table below which compares the respondents self-identification and their sexual preference. The majority of both heterosexuals and bisexuals identify

themselves as transvestites, whereas all of the homosexuals identify themselves as transsexuals. The category "TV/TS" includes those identifying themselves as marginal TVs, a middle ground between transvestite and transsexual.

**Table 6. Sexual Preference of Respondents (n=80)**

Self-identification /Sexual Preference	TV	TV/TS	TS
Total Heterosexual (n=52)	75%	17	8
00% Bisexual (n=25)	56%	24	20
100% Homosexual (n=3)	0%	0	100
100% (p <.001)			

In interpreting these relationships, it is helpful to refer to the work by Richard Docter, *Transvestites and Transsexuals: Toward a Theory of Cross-Gender Behavior* (New York: Plenum Press, 1988). Docter's developmental model suggests two basic types of transsexualism—primary and secondary, a distinction accepted by most scholars in the field. Primary transsexualism has its roots in homosexual preference, whereas secondary transsexualism is seen as a developmental stage among those with a primarily heterosexual (or possibly bisexual) orientation.

Docter suggests that a large number of young boys are exposed to factors which lead to attraction to women's clothing, but most of them do not become crossdressers. However, those who do begin crossdressing encounter a unique set of social learning experiences and re-enforce-

ments and develop fetishistic, partial crossdressing during ages 8 to 18 or so. Many of these partial, fetishistic crossdressers go on later to crossdress completely and to develop a "feminine self," i.e., a cross-gender identity. Most are able to integrate their "feminine self" into their personalities and become fetishistic transvestites (the majority of our sample). Some, however, for a series of complex reasons not yet understood, have greater difficulty integrating their feminine self and become what Docter describes as "marginal" transvestites or transgendered individuals. These men may live occasionally (or for extended periods of time) as females, experiment with female hormones, and frequently experience gender dysphoria (dissatisfaction with their male gender). Of this latter group, some eventually become secondary transsexuals and may later seek sexual reassignment surgery.

Though Docter's developmental model is not universally accepted, it does provide a context within which to interpret the data from the sample group. We note, for example, that all those who express a homosexual preference in Table 6 identify themselves as transsexuals (they are the primary TS type). Those individuals who identify as heterosexual or bisexual and also as TS form the secondary transsexual group. Put another way, as the identity of the sample group moves from transvestite to borderline TV/TS to transsexual, there is an increasing tendency to identify as bisexual or homosexual and a decreasing tendency to identify as heterosexual.



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continued on page 17



# TS Rights Win In Court Ruling

Civil protections for transgendered people took a giant leap forward in Pennsylvania on April 29. On that date the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania, in an unprecedented move, handed down a ruling affirming the right of a transsexual in transition to "crossdress" on the job. The case at hand was *Northwest Pa. Training Partnership Consortium v. Unemployment Compensation Board of Review*, no. 2297 C.D., 1993.

In his Memorandum Opinion, Judge Pellegrini held that, "We have consistently recognized that a medical problem or illness may establish good cause for an employee's failure to comply with a work rule... transsexualism is a recognized medical condition for which there are established guidelines for treatment... which require Claimant to participate in a 'trial period' of cross-gendered living." The Court concluded that, "under these circumstances... Claimant's actions were medically necessitated and, as such, did not constitute willful misconduct."

In a separate but related matter, Robert Barnett, Secretary of the Pa. Department of Labor and Industry, ruled on 15 March 1994 in the matter of *Kristine W. Holt v. Northwest Pa. Training Partnership Consortium*, Governor's docket No. 123311. In his discussion of the case, Mr. Barnett stated, "Holt's treatment was different from that of all other employees and that difference had nothing to do with her performance, attitude or abilities... neither the causes used to justify Holt's dismissal nor the unique restrictions applied to her were reasonable or appropriate in light of the circumstances." The state found that NPTPC had violated the federal statutes under which they operate by disregarding their own merit-based personnel policies and it ordered Ms. Holt's reinstatement.

Ms. Holt, who represented herself in these actions, characterized the rulings as, "ground breaking. We have

now established, under case law, that transsexualism is a recognized medical condition, and the standard course of treatment demands 'crossdressing' on the job. The justification some employers have used to defend their discriminatory actions, i.e., the 'dress code' issue, has been eliminated. It can be argued, in effect, that a 'protected class' of transsexual persons has been created in Pennsylvania."

Northwest Training has not yet complied with the Department of Labor and Industry's order for reinstatement. Said Holt, "It is my understanding that [Northwest Training] wishes to appeal this administrative ruling to the Commonwealth Court. I feel confident that the court will affirm the Secretary's decision."

A third action is currently in fact-finding with the Pa. Human Relations Commission. The intention is to establish in the private sector the same protections that have been realized in the public sector (i.e., government and its subcontractors). These recent rulings give overwhelming support for the case set before the Commission.

To offset some of the legal expenses, a legal fund has been estab-

lished: The Kristine W. Holt Legal Fund, c/o Northwest Savings Bank, 13th and Liberty Streets, Franklin, PA 16323.



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## Survey...

There are some interesting and statistically significant relationships between one's self-identification and his perception of the quality of his childhood relationships with his parents. In general, the stronger and more positive the childhood relationship with the mother, the greater the tendency for the respondent to identify as a transvestite; the weaker or more negative the relationship with the mother, the greater the tendency to identify as transsexual.

### Comments

One is struck by the proportion of the respondents in the overt group (nearly a quarter of the overall sample), who were crossdressed as children by their mothers or other female family members and presented to the world as young girls. During the time most of the men in the sample were growing up, mainly during the 1940s and 1950s, the classic nuclear family model reigned—a working father and a mother/housewife at home with the children. Divorce was rare. One can speculate that some of these mothers may have been compensating for their disappointment at having had a boy rather than a girl and the solution was simply to turn the male child into a girl, at least for a while. Or perhaps their disappointment in their relationship with their spouse led them to transfer their need for intimacy and affection to their sons—overpowering them with their femininity. These pressures, as well as the remoteness from their father reported by so many of these men, may have stacked the cards, as it were, in favor of the feminine.

The findings of this study, combined with those of others, may help us better to understand the familial seed bed from which transvestism may flower. Beginning with birth order, one can speculate that those boys who are the first male child may be more at risk for the development of transvestic behavior than those lower down in the sibling hierarchy. Another contributing

factor is likely a much closer relationship with the mother than with the father, a phenomenon identified in this and most other non-clinical studies where the quality of parental relationships has been measured. Yet another may be the existence of a parental pattern where the father is perceived as ranking higher than normal on the "feminine" characteristics of dependency and affiliation, as several researchers have found.

To this constellation may be added a strong, perhaps overwhelming attachment to a first son by certain mothers. Here the psychodynamic work of Robert Stoller on transsexualism and gender disorders is especially relevant. Young boys, in contrast to young girls, must struggle to separate from the early symbiosis with the mother to establish their gender identity. Identification as a male, as being of the opposite sex from the mother, requires individuation and separation from her. "Depending on how and at what pace a mother allows her son to separate, this phase of merging with her will leave residual effects that may be expressed as disturbances in masculinity (Presentations of Gender, 1986, p.16)."

Stoller found that mothers of transsexuals fit a pattern in which the mothers were rejected by their own mothers and were initially close to their own fathers, but found that closeness interrupted sometime before puberty. They had a period of tomboy behavior, married somewhat distant and uninvolved men, and became passionately involved with their sons, merging with them intensively—too intensively to allow for normal individuation. The core gender identity of the transsexual, developed in the first year of so of life, remains female. An "excessively close and gratifying mother-infant symbiosis, undisturbed by father's presence, prevents a boy from adequately separating himself psychologically from his mother's female body and feminine behavior. The hypothesis predicts that the more intense these family dynamics, the more feminine the boy will be (Ibid. p. 25)."

Though Stoller's analysis is not

without its critics, it suggests that transsexuals may represent the far end of a continuum of disturbances in the process of a boy's normal gender development. Granted that a number of other factors, such as those outlined by Docter, likely guide the later stages of this development, perhaps nuclear transvestites, marginal transvestites, and transsexuals are not so much discrete syndromes but rather occupy clusters of behavior on a differentiated continuum from "normal" gender identity development at the one pole to transsexualism at the other.

Support for this notion is suggested by the data. Note that the comparison group reported a more positive relationship with their mothers than any sub-group of the sample. Among the sample subjects, one observes that the relative strength of the (already rather remote) paternal role is not significantly associated with the members' self identification, but that the relative strength of the relationship with the mother is quite significant. As one moves from nuclear through marginal transvestites to the transsexuals, the mean rating of the relationship with the mother significantly decreases. One interpretation of this trend is that the subjects' evaluations reflect increasing degrees of difficulty in their individuation from the mother. Such individuation is easiest for the comparison group, whose strong paternal relationships facilitate a less troubled individuation from maternal influences. Separation from the maternal image evidently becomes increasingly difficult for the nuclear and marginal transvestites and most problematic of all for the transsexuals. This interpretation, at least, offers the prospect of integrating the findings of this study and several of the other non-clinical studies reviewed above with the insights of a psycho-dynamic approach.

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# Dear Doctor

Dr. William R. Stayton answers your questions in a monthly column.

Dear Dr. Stayton,  
Is taking hormones okay?  
Debbie Lynn

Dear Debbie Lynn:

Hormones are powerful and dangerous if taken without medical supervision. Before taking hormones, answer the following questions:

First, why do you want to take hormones? If the answer is you are transsexual and in an approved process leading to gender reassignment, it is appropriate to start hormones when this issue has been worked with your therapist. If the answer is you are a transgenderist and, although you may never go for SRS, you would like to develop breasts and a feminized appearance, then it would be best to consult with a gender therapist to sort out the effects of such a decision before starting treatment. If you are doing it because you heard "it's the thing to do," then don't do it. This is the wrong reason. Invariably it will end up being a total disaster for you.

Second, if you decide on hormone therapy, who should you see? I recommend seeing an endocrinologist, who specializes in hormones. I prefer working with endocrinologists who are also familiar with the transgender community; they tend to be more understand-

ing and empathetic with the gender reassignment process.

Third, what are the things about your body that you should be aware of when taking hormones? While each person can react differently to hormones, there are some general things that occur. I'm speaking now about a male who takes estrogens. Increasing the dosage does not change the body faster nor increase breast size. These characteristics are in your genes. Look at the women related to you biologically and you will get a better sense of your potential development. As you begin to feminize, you will feel a difference in body mass and upper-body strength. Many taking hormones also report they have less interest in sex. This can be a blessing, especially for the M-t-F transsexual because often people who are turned-on to them are turned-on to pre-op transsexuals and not post-op women. I have seen many broken hearts as a result. After surgery, the new woman develops her sexual response cycle, and often gets back her interest and desire for sex.

Dear Dr. Stayton,  
I love to dress in women's clothing for sexual arousal. How can I tell my new girlfriend that I enjoy this?  
Tom T.

Dear Tom:

It is important for a healthy and on-going relationship that you tell your girlfriend. For an intimate relationship to make it over a period of time, openness, trust, and honesty are very important. If you are just dating and not sure of the future of the relationship, it is not as important, because you could scare her away.

On the other hand, when the relationship does deepen and trust is being built, it is important for her to know, so that she will not lose the trust. If a client of mine is going through this process, I often recommend that he bring his girlfriend in, so that I can explain transvestism in a most natural way. For example, everyone has sexual likes and dislikes. Some people like persons of a particular size, build, color, or hair style. Some people like wearing sexy clothes or participating in particular sexual activities. We all have differences in our preferences. This is natural. Your girlfriend needs to see that dressing in female clothing is a similar phenomenon. She also needs to know that she is the object of your sexual desires and this is an activity that you can both enjoy and enhance your sexual life together. If you treat it naturally and as fun, it will be easier for her to grow to accept it.

Dr. William R. Stayton is a clinical psychologist on the faculty of the Human Sexuality Program at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, in Philadelphia. He is also President-elect of the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists. If you have a question you would like answered by Dr. Stayton, send it to "Dear Doctor," c/o Renaissance, PO Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020.

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# If You're Going To Be A Female, Please Don't Be An Airhead!

by E. Fenton

It's been nine months since my husband revealed he was a transvestite, and I'm fed up. Not with the fact that he likes to wear women's clothing; that's still a shock, but I'm coming to terms with it. No, what's riling me is, shall we say, a certain underlying attitude that he (and some of the other would-be gals who I've met) seem to have about what it means to be a woman. The last straw came tonight, when I found him curled up on the couch, reading *Cosmopolitan*. The requisite blond bimbo graced the cover, wearing a red leather bra, a drugged expression, and not much else. This issue had insightful articles like, "Confessions of Three Gigolos" "The Lowdown on the Top-less Bar Scene." My favorite piece, however, was "The Bear Truth: Life from Fuzzy Wuzys Point of View." It was (I am not making this up) a spread consisting of photos of an oh-so-cute little bear cub and his lovable parents. Enough already!

If I sound somewhat bilious, it's because I am. Let me calm down a bit and explain why I'm writing this. I am 39 years old, and about 2 decades ago, I made a decision to reject some of the feminine accouterments that I found, to dust off a phrase from the 60's, demeaning to women. I'm talking about heavy make-up, unnaturally curly hair, nails long enough to impact dexterity, shoes two sizes too small, starving oneself thin, and so on. (What a twisted piece of karma gave me a husband who

wears high heels is beyond me, but I can't help but see the humor in it.) I'm not saying I'm anything other than a product of my times, but the point is that I came to believe that while clothes make the man, they sure as heck don't make the woman. It really upsets me to see someone I love actively embracing the very aspects of femininity that I find trivial and silly, while at the same time making statements about "getting in touch with his female nature." Granted, I don't expect to find my husband poring over *The Second Sex*—but I'd be happy if he (and some of the rest of you CD ladies) would give a little more thought about what it means to be female. Femininity is a complex stew of attitudes, emotions, mannerisms, hormones, physique, mystique, strategies, actions and reactions—I can understand the fascination with it. You're going to have to study harder if you want to understand what makes us tick.

Now, I understand that to realize this fantasy, you have to put on lots of makeup, do your nails and hair, wear a dress, adopt exaggerated mannerisms, and so on. That's fine. But please don't tell me that doing so transforms you into a more feminine being. If you're going to say that (and perhaps not all CDs do,) then show me some evidence. Show me some compassion, some communications skills, a heightened sense of aesthetics, some emotional adroitness—something! If you can't, please don't claim to have crossed any gender boundaries; you're just a guy in a dress.

And, for God's sake, if you must emulate a woman, don't be a bimbo. Don't read *Cosmo* and prattle on at length about nail polish and stockings. If you do, please don't do it around me. I have other things to think about. Don't talk to me about the Imperial Court (a gender celebration) and then—as my husband made the grave mistake of doing—tell me my work for abortion rights is pointless.

I'm sorry to sound so hard-hearted. Perhaps I should show a little more compassion myself. But I'm writing this partly as an exercise in catharsis. Sometimes it's easier for me to write something down than to say it out loud. More importantly, though, I hope I can at least begin to express some of the frustrations many wives or girlfriends might be experiencing. I can only speak for myself, of course, but I have talked to a number of partners of transvestite men, and several of them have mentioned the same annoyance at men thinking they can enter "our turf." It's not that easy to articulate, but I feel you're mocking my gender by focusing your attention on aspects of appearance and manner that (some) men find attractive and (some) women find offensive. If your wife or girlfriend seems angry at you sometimes, perhaps this is part of the reason. You should talk about it. I hope that this article does more than allow me to vent my spleen. I hope it can help couples start talking about at least some of the issues (and

*continued on page 20*

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## Gender Education

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Held at the Wayne Counseling Center (where Renaissance Greater Phila. meets) with Dr. Lee Etscovitz, Director of Human Dimensions, an organization specializing in gender education. Dr. Etscovitz is also the Renaissance National Librarian and a former Professor of Human Behavior at Drexel University.

Further information, including fees and scheduling, is available upon request. Write: Human Dimensions, PO Box 471, Willow Grove, PA 19090. Or leave a private message at 215•657•1560.

Confidentiality Assured

## Airhead...

there are many) that are bothering transvestites' significant others. Perhaps it will initiate some discussions that will help some of us understand why you do what you do. I know that many S.O.'s, for one reason or another, don't attend discussion sessions or support groups, or even talk about these issues with their close friends. It must be very hard for these women, and it's up to you to try and dispel some of their frustration, anger and feelings of helplessness.

Here's a request. Perhaps some of you could write to this newsletter, giving your opinions on "what it means to be a woman." I, for one, would be interested in what you think, and I bet a lot of other women would be, too. Thank you for reading my tirade. I feel better already.

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## TASK FORCE SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

If you would like to help the Philadelphia Lesbian and Gay Task Force in their fight for full civil and human rights for gays and lesbians maybe you'd like to give them some of your time. The Task Force is in search of a team of skilled volunteers to support special projects and to provide administrative assistance. If you are interested in joining the Task Force team call Rita Adessa, 215-772-2000 for more information.

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## SHOPPING WITH JACKIE

by Jackie Thomas

Let's talk about diamonds. In every girl's heart there is love for a nice diamond. It seems it is the one thing that you can spend a lot of money on and not know anything about.

First and foremost, I don't advocate purchasing them for investment. Like all other things, there is retail and wholesale. Yes, the person selling it to you will make a profit. Go back the next day and try to sell it where you purchased it, and they will (if at all) offer you less than half what you paid for it. Now this doesn't mean that you are getting ripped off, it just means it's not a good investment. Like buying a car, TV or refrigerator, when it's used, it's worth less. But because diamonds increase in value over time, there may come a time when the diamond you buy is worth more than you paid for it.

Now, when I say a diamond, I'm talking about a stone a ¼ carat or larger. Smaller stones used in many pieces are just jewelry quality diamonds to enhance the piece. Look and shop for the best prices. You should know about single stones in the larger sizes, like those used in pendants, earrings, and engagement rings.

A carat is 100 points. Consider a carat a dollar made of 100 pennies. 50 points (or 50 cents) is ½, 25 points (or 25 cents) is a ¼, and 33 of either is ⅓ of a carat. A carat is a unit of weight, not size. Diamonds are weighted to determine their size. Three things determine the value of a diamond—quality, color and cut (which includes proportion). For this description, I am only talking about round stones. The other shapes, such as emerald cut, pear shaped, and marquis cut are another subject.

The GIA (Gemological Institute of America) has established a system of grading which is the industry standard. Almost all diamonds are graded by GIA standards. If a jeweler or salesman cannot tell you the GIA grade of a stone, leave. I sure would. I'd want a written warranty on the diamond I'm buying, not just someone telling me how pretty it looks. Here are the standards:

**Grade:** The highest quality diamond is flawless. Flawless, for our purposes, means that with the aid of a ten power diamondscope, no marks, flaws, cracks, or imperfections can be seen by a trained gemologist. As these things appear in the stone, the grading accounts for them by designating a specific quality. The other ratings are (Very-Very Slight 1) VVS1, then VVS2, VS1 (Very Slight 1), VS2, S1 (Slight 1), S2, I1 (Imperfect 1), I2, and junk.

**Color:** The highest grade for color is the letter "D." The letter D was selected to preclude the wheelers and dealers from having a "AAA" or A+, or something else that distracts from the intent of the color grade. What can you do with a "DDD"? (maybe bra size). But the "D" color is actually colorless. A fine, clear, transparent stone with no color hues apparent. As color decreases in quality it starts to pick up a yellow then a brown ugly hue. The Grades for color are D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K & L, for gem quality stones. Colors are sometimes grouped by three. For example, D, E & F are very close to each other and even different gemologists can disagree. GIA can determine the degree of difference. Most gemologists have a "color set" of diamonds, usually ⅓ of a carat or larger, having at least one of each of the groups represented. It is a very expensive tool since these stones are never sold and used solely for color grading. A jewelry appraiser should have a set or you should question how an appraisal can be done without them.

**Cut:** Cut is concerned with two things... the number of facets, and the proportion of the stone. A round brilliant cut diamond has 58 facets. The angles and placement of these facets is what creates the "fire" that is present in a beautiful diamond. Actually, the facets refract the light and break it down into its prismatic colors and reflect the colors back to your eye. If the diamond is not cut correctly, no fire. The other part of cut is proportion. A correctly proportioned round stone has a depth of 58% of the face up diameter. That means that a diamond 100 millimeters

wide should be 58 millimeters deep (we couldn't afford a stone that big). Remember 58%—that's the important number. A stone wide in diameter and shallow in depth is out of proportion. Usually, the cutter tries to retain as much of the raw diamond as possible. If you measure the diameter and depth of a stone and use a look-up table, you can approximate the weight. A stone with a shallow depth and a wide diameter might weigh 1 carat. However, if it was cut to the ideal proportion (remember that 58%), it might only weigh ¾ of a carat. The term for a stone that far out of proportion is a "swindled" diamond. This is okay for a diamond if you are paying the ¾ carat price that the stone should be, not the 1 carat that it looks like. Some less than honest folks might price the stone at the 1 carat price, and if you pay the 1 carat price, you've been "swindled."

I hope this not-all-inclusive primer will be of interest and help to you when you decide to purchase that expensive diamond either for yourself or your significant other. Let the buyer beware. I recommend a reputable jeweler for your purchase, and insist on a GIA appraisal of the stone. Don't look for fancy certificates, just the signature of the appraiser along with the name of the store you bought it from. This is like the title to a car... its your protection that you got what you paid for.

See you next time. Jackie.

### Transgendered Fashion Sails The Delaware

Ship Shape II, a transgendered fashion show, to benefit the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Pride of the Delaware Valley, happens June 10 aboard the Olympia cruiser on Delaware Ave. in Philadelphia. The show, featuring 12 transgendered models, begins at 9 PM and continues to 1 AM. Entertainment is provided by the gay tap dancing group, Men On Tap, lesbian-singer Debra D'Alessandro, and Miss Gay Pride Joey Josephs. For more info, call the LGBTPDV at 215•564•3332.



# Green Queens: Environmentalism for the Transgendered Consumer

by Michelle Lynn

No doubt most of you in the Gender Community are already involved in some sort of local recycling program. But your efforts at being environmentally conscious do not have to end where your feminine self begins. This is our world too, and we are all a part of it regardless of our gender. Besides, the beauty of recycling and conserving resources is that it invariably saves you money as well, a definite plus for those of you who are maintaining a second wardrobe or starting a new life. There are recycling efforts underway you probably were never even aware of. Old brassieres are being recycled by cutting off the cups and using them as filter masks in automobile paint shops. Even old lipstick cases (unfortunately) get recycled by munitions factories as bullets. Here are just a few simple things you can do to help.

Renaissance has a member who collects old, unwanted wigs during meetings. These are then taken to a wig salon for restoration and donation to cancer patients who have suffered hair loss while undergoing radiation treatments. Your group can start its own program by contacting wig salons and beauticians who also work with chemotherapy patients. If you can't find anyone among your normal vendors, check the yellow pages under Wig or Beauty Salons or call the local office of The American Cancer Society.

Say that you make occasional mail order purchases and now you are being buried under a daily sea of junk mail. Crossdressers, especially, are often victims of junk mail because of their tendency to home purchase, thereby causing their names to be sold to a variety of mailing lists. Ask the mail order houses you deal with not to sell your name to others. You can get your name off mail lists and stop the deluge of unwanted junk mail. Write to: Direct Marketing Association, ATTN: Mail Preference Service P.O. Box 9008 Farmingdale, NY 11735 (Tel. 212-768-7277)

Include your name, address, and zip code and allow a few months to fully

take effect. Local fliers and some mail order houses require a direct mailing from you to stop; draft a form letter for this purpose.

You can recycle excess clothing by selling it through thrift stores, at bazaars, auctions, and flea markets, or by donations to charity drives (pause here to imagine a homeless person in a stunning sequined tank dress). Seriously, donations to charity are best if done in season (such as sweaters starting in late fall or shorts and light blouses in early summer). And don't forget male clothing as well, especially if you are in transition. However, don't use a charity as a garbage dump for worn out clothing no one would ever wear; instead convert all your unusable clothing into rags and reusable towels.

Your group can start its own clothing drive. The Midwest floods and the California earthquake have strained many local clothing banks, so contact Goodwill, the Salvation Army, St. Vincent De Paul Society, or a local charity. Finally, your group can encourage members who wish to sell clothes during a meeting or schedule a Vendor Night program where all members can sell their excess clothing and accessories to others. If you do a lot of your shopping by credit card you can have the best of both worlds, namely donating to a worthy environmental group using someone else's money. They're called "affinity cards" and with them every time you make a purchase your credit card company will donate a percentage to an organization you designate, such as the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, or Rainforest Action Network, at no extra cost to you. While the percentage is small, the overall result is great. The Sierra Club last year alone received a half million dollars in donations from affinity card purchases. Call your credit card company at its toll free number and ask for the office that issues affinity cards or check directly with the recipient group.

Auto clubs recommend old pantyhose as an emergency fan belt for your water pump. It can also be used as a lint trap for your dryer. The control top

panty can be separated and reused as a gaff or waist cincher in lieu of bulky foundation garments. Female impersonators often use old pantyhose as a hair net. Wigs are bobby pinned to the hose making the wig fit more securely.

Score one for those of you who prefer stockings and garters to pantyhose. When one leg develops a run, you can still save the second as a spare, doubling the life of the hose. Also try clear nail polish to stop a run from spreading. So-called "never-run" pantyhose are a myth; they last only slightly longer than regular hose, have a course dense feel and present different environmental problems for disposal.

Show some spunk! Take those beat up but comfortable high heels to be re-soled. Keep wet leather shoes away from artificial heat as this causes dry rot. Take off your right shoe when you drive to prevent wearing a hole in the back of the shoe. Eliminate these two common problems and you will add years to the life of your shoes.

Did you know that nail polish and nail polish remover are classified as hazardous waste products? Buy and use only what you need and give excess to a friend. Restore dried out nail polish with polish remover. And never, ever, pour nail polish or polish remover down the drain; it goes right back into lakes, oceans, and your own water supply.

Aerosol cans are extremely difficult and expensive to recycle. Instead, buy alternatives like "pump" style sprays.

Clothes hangers, being low grade steel, also recycle poorly. Give excess hangers to friends, dry cleaners, or thrift stores.

Department stores often use bulky package containers to discourage theft and look showy. Patronize outlet stores, thrift stores, and warehousing chains which do not have to over package; that's one reason they can sell to you at lower prices than department stores.

Keep the plastic bags that come with new clothes or dry cleaning to protect your own outfits, especially those that

*continued on next page.*



see limited or seasonal wear. Otherwise, turn them in with your plastic grocery bags at the local supermarket or nearest recycling center.

Consider handmade jewelry that recycles metal. But avoid endangered animal products such as ivory (elephants) or tortoise shell.

Animals are part of the environment as well and animal testing is a contentious issue. Critics accuse it of being cruel and inhumane while some companies maintain animal testing is still needed. However, non-medical animal testing of cosmetics and personal care products is especially controversial. Its critics charge that it causes needless animal suffering to support a "vanity products" industry that produces no life saving drugs or research. The Food and Drug Administration requires only innovative new ingredients to be animal tested and these are rare. A new shade of blush, for example, is simply a variation of previously used and tested ingredients. Actually, nearly every ingredient in cosmetics has already been animal tested during the last 40 years and critics assert further testing on animals is unnecessary. Consumer activism has drastically reduced animal testing of cosmetics by over 70% in the last decade. In the Draize test, solutions are placed in the eyes of a rabbit. Its death is considered a "failure," while deformity and/or blindness is usually considered a "success." The use of Draize has been cut nearly 85%. Companies who do not use animal testing on ingredients or products include: Avon, The Body Shop, Chanel, Christian Dior, Estee

Lauder, Clinique, Neutrogena, and Revlon (Almay, Ultima II).

Two other firms, Proctor & Gamble (Clarion, Cover Girl, Max Factor) and L'Oreal (also Gloria Vanderbilt, Ralph Lauren, Lancome) have agreed to reduce or eliminate their own animal testing and develop alternate testing methods. However, both firms circumvent this by contracting other companies who animal test ingredients for them. Companies still doing non-medical testing on animals include: Alberto-Culver\* (VO5, Consort Hair Spray, Mousse), Bristol-Myers Squibb (Clairol, Final Net, Keri Lotion), Gillette (Soft & Dry, White Rain), Helene Curtis\* (Finesse, Salon Selectives, Suave, Vibrance, Degree), 3M\* (Buf Puf), Playtex FP\* (Jhirmack), Reckitt & Coleman\* (Neet), Schering (Maybelline), Shiseido\*, and Unilever (Calvin Klein, Obsession, Elizabeth Arden, Pond's).

*[The \* indicates companies who as yet have made no significant efforts to either reduce the number of animals it tests or to find alternate testing methods.]*

Non-medical animal testing is still nowhere near elimination. To stay current, you can check a company's animal testing policy by calling toll free (the National 800 Listing of Companies is 800-555-1212). You can also obtain a complete list of companies and their products from The National Anti-Vivisection Society, 800-888-6287, or from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals by calling 301-770-PETA.

Support the recycling industry; it will only survive if it remains profitable.

When choosing between similar products, patronize those that use recycled paper, plastic, or glass for your home and group use. Look for "Made From Recycled Materials" (not "recyclable") or "Post Consumer Content", or judge by appearance; for example, recycled cardboard is gray, not white. To minimize waste, buy the economical large size or use refill containers when possible for things like shampoo, laundry detergent, hair spray, or moisturizers.

Many crossdressers overbuy things like cosmetics and clothing. Save your money. The smart shopper's motto is: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

And don't forget to recycle your Renaissance newsletters. Except for Angela Gardner's column, of course, thereby preserving a National Treasure. (Boy, the things you have to write just to get published!)

For further information I recommend *The Recycler's Guide or 50 Simple Ways to Save the Earth* By Earth Press. To find out how socially and ecologically responsible a particular company is behaving, check *Students Shopping For a Better World* by the non-profit Council on Economic Priorities. This is a pretty long list and no one expects you to do it all yourself. Focus on what you can do as you go about your everyday life. Heck, just be a smart, informed shopper and we all benefit. None of us lives in a vacuum and respect for your environment comes from respect for yourself.



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