

LETTERS

Family Forum

If Graeme Sutherland (October *Letters*) construed my article in the May issue as an 'advertisement' for the TV/TS Group, and an invitation to all comers to join, I obviously did not put over my message at all well.

The Group does not *specialise* in this *joyful hobby*; it exists to help people who are having difficulty in coming to terms with their inner feelings. It is not too grand to describe it as a 'Specialised Samaritans' operation; indeed, our Helpline techniques originated from that excellent source.

Being a 'closet transvestite' is the most worrying, guilt-ridden, frightening and incredibly lonely thing in the world. Merely making contact with others brings tremendous relief. Despite any 'caustic comments' which have been made, or

might be made in the future, the nine Mensans who have established contact with the Group make my article worthwhile—I know that we have helped them.

The Group welcomes and encourages contact with those outside our little world, but it is *not* recruiting, seeking converts, or promoting transvestism as an alternative sport; it is seeking to help people in trouble. There are thousands; many more than there are Mensans—look at the "Problem Pages" in newspapers and magazines, it crops up with monotonous regularity. The progress made by the Group is reflected by the fact that nearly all of the 'Agony Aunts' now refer writers direct to us. Nor is our concern merely for the transvestite herself; it is also for the wife, mother, or other person who has discovered their 'perversion'. They are often terribly shocked by the discovery; a shock aggravated by the many misconceptions and prejudices about transvestism.

The Group holds very strong views on the protection of children. Our advice to the transvestite with a young family is always the same. "*Do NOT dress in front of the children!*" We are more painfully conscious than most how easily the mind of a small child can be confused; many of us have been suffering such confusion and agony of mind for a lifetime!

I must confess that I have never regarded this journal as a 'family magazine'. I thought that it was a forum for the highly intelligent. If such subjects cannot be discussed in these pages without hands

ng raised in horror, where then can they
more journals and serious daily news-
papers which contain no "material which
be read by a minor". They must be
different from the many journals and
papers which I have read, all of which
have featured serious articles on trans-
vestism (as one example, see *Woman*
magazine, December 1st 1984—or is that
not a family journal?) Do these 'pure'
publications which he cites not carry
reports on the child who is battered or
starved to death, terrorist bombings, rape
and murder of both children and adults,
riots, warfare and 'guerilla' activities? The
child can also see these even more
graphically portrayed on the television
news, often immediately following a
children's programme. If the reason for
this is that they are 'real life', I would
point out that transvestism is very real life
too!

Christine-Jane Wilson

c/o The Transvestit