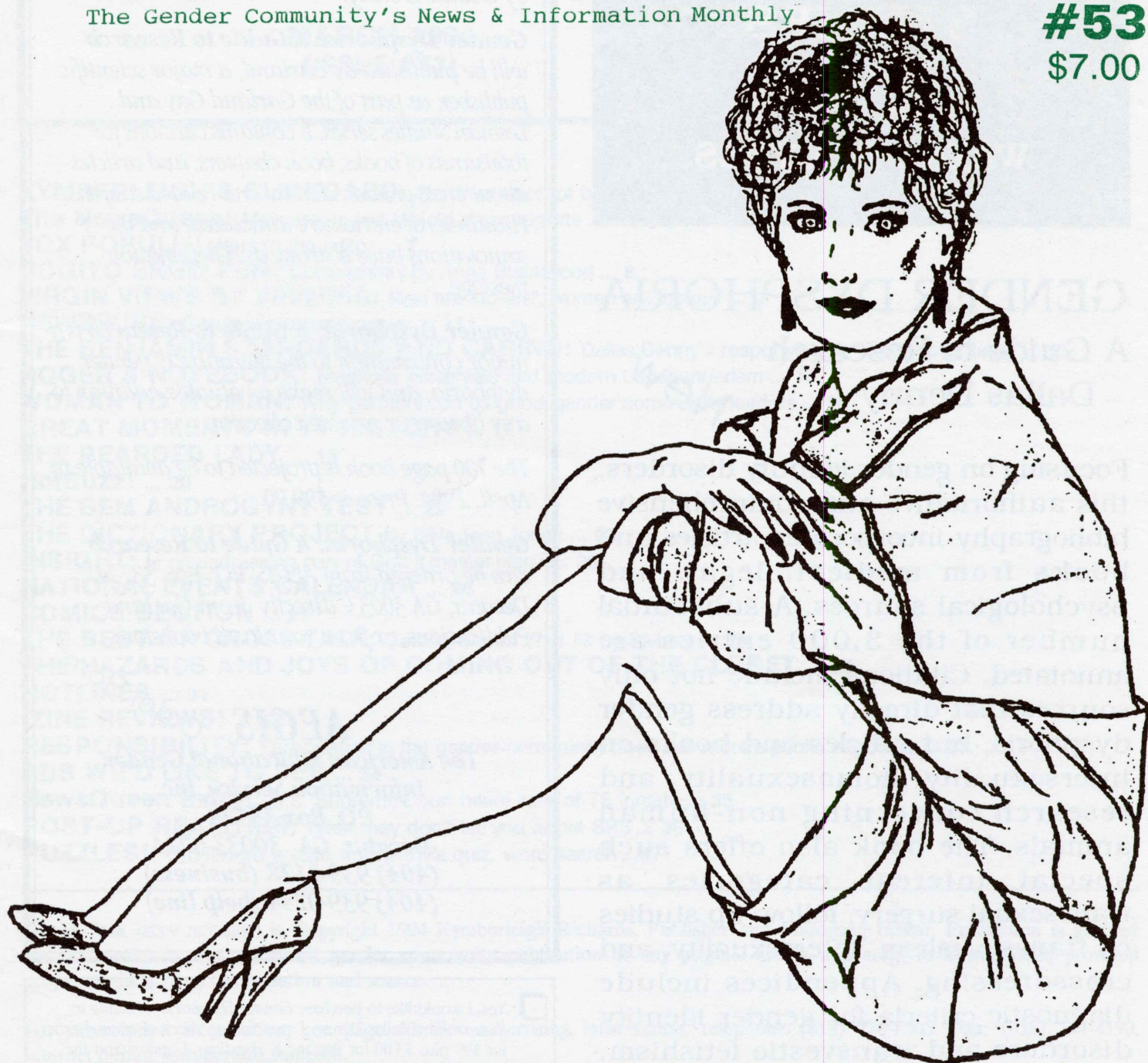


# CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#53

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THE FRUSTRATION OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD  
THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN  
MAGNUSS HIRSCHFELD: AHEAD OF HIS TIME?  
HOW MASCULINE OR FEMININE ARE YOU, REALLY?  
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# CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

MARCH 1994  
(ISSUE #53)



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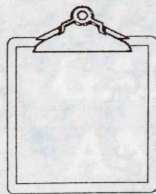
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## KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

### FRUSTRATION

by Kimberleigh Richards

Last month, regular readers may have seen the notice regarding the decision to discontinue our reader profiles section. I feel the need to editorialize beyond the explanation I gave in that notice.

I have spoken out in the past about the sexually-oriented publications that seem to flood our community through adult bookstores. (By the way, I still, believe that the majority of these magazines' readers are **not** crossdressers or transsexuals, but rather men who get their erotic fantasies relieved by reading such material, and I still think anyone who advertises in one of these "contact" magazines trying to meet people within the community are, to large degree, barking up the wrong tree.)

Based on some of the complaints I have received over the course of the twelve months that we offered the reader profiles section, it is blatantly obvious that there are a lot of men out there who think that listings like these -- regardless of the editorial direction of the publication they appear in -- are there for one reason and one reason only: **To make sexual contact.**

I wish I knew **how** this got out of hand. I wonder if *Tapestry* has the same problem. (I suspect they do, since they recently adopted a policy of not publishing addresses in their personal listings section.) Obviously, the proliferation of "contact" magazines has created the erroneous image that **everything** published in the gender community has something to do with sex.

I will not deny that there is a sexual component to what we do. That is the human condition. Crossing gender lines and blurring the distinctions between gender roles and identities has a lot to do with sexuality, mainly because society has linked sexual identity with gender identity, and that perception not only continues in spite of our efforts to separate them, it exists even within our own community.

Unfortunately, that link makes it nearly impossible for a horny male who is attracted to gender-bending males to differentiate between sexual intent and platonic intent. It is not helped any when most of the publications available in adult bookstores hype the sexual aspect of crossdressing. It makes it extremely difficult for those of us who publish serious, non-sexual magazines to set ourselves apart.

Several months ago, I was contacted by a mail-order retail operation in San Francisco who was interested in carrying *Cross-Talk* in their catalog. After I sent them a sample copy, they responded that we weren't "sexy" enough for them, and suggested we contact them again once we added more erotic content. I was **incensed** that they would

presume that we would eventually go in that direction ... the presumption being, once again, that everything published in our community must have a sexual component to succeed.

As I said before, there is even a perception within our community that there is an underlying sexual component to everything we do ... even to the point of trying to deny that there is **any** such component. At a recent meeting of one of our local groups, I was confronted by a former subscriber who took me to task for the use of my term "drag queen mentality" in an article I wrote several months ago to describe the tendency of the participants at our community's weekend events to try to out-"glam" each other. I discussed my use of the term "drag queen" with my friend Lois Comondenominator of *Dragazine*, and she agrees that "glam" is a major component of drag, thus my use of "drag queen" is correct in context. Yet this former subscriber complained that I was making it appear that our groups are "contact" organizations for drag queens ... which implies that drag queens are crossdressing for sexual purposes! (They aren't.)

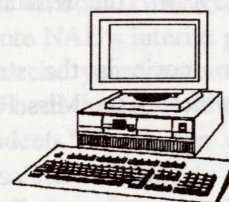
Tell me: If we can't figure out what's going on ourselves, how are we supposed to explain the differences to the uninformed public?

(And **how** did infantile dressing get connected to our community? I remember having a heated argument two years ago with the proprietor of a mail-order business catering to both crossdressers and infantile dressers who **refused** to allow me to run her ad unless I included **both** her product lines ... implying that both interests are part of the same community!)

It's very likely that the only thing this editorial will accomplish is allowing me to vent my frustrations as the publisher of a "serious" magazine for our community. I'm rapidly coming to the conclusion that there is absolutely **nothing** that can be done to stop the unfair linking of sexual kinkiness to our community. After all, the people publishing the "contact" mags have as much of a Constitutional right to publish as I do. And there is no compelling reason -- from their perspective -- to stop exploiting the sexual nature of transgendered behavior.

But I can dream, can't I?

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## The NewsQueen

Edited by Paula Jordan Sinclair

It's a mixed-up world. Ms. Sinclair is sad to report that at one spring institution where one expects to see drag showcased, crossdressing was not in evidence. Yet, at a winter event known for its macho image, drag made a \$900,000 debut.

Of course, Ms. Sinclair is speaking of the spring fashion shows and the Super Bowl.

For some years now, designers have been employing guys in drag to model their creations and create a stir in the media. But that trend seems to have come to an end, at least in Paris, where all of the models in the spring *haute couture* shows were exactly what they appeared to be.

But that wasn't the case at the Super Bowl. No, the ranks of the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders were not infiltrated by guys in short skirts and high-heeled boots. Rather, Converse put Charlotte Hornets' forward Larry Johnson in "Grandmama" drag to pitch sneakers.

A Pepsi commercial also had a transgender theme of sorts -- Cindy Crawford turned into Rodney Dangerfield after a month without her favorite beverage. Of course, sales of Pepsi would plummet if the body swap had worked the other way.

It's a mixed up world for kiddies too. Imagine the shock inflicted on preteen boys when they pulled the string on their new "Talking Duke" G.I. Joe "action figure" and heard him say "Will we ever have enough clothes?" or "Let's plan our dream wedding!" Or imagine the surprise when girls heard "Teen Talk" Barbie roar things like "Attack!" "Vengeance is mine!" and "Eat lead, Cobra!"

The sex-role swap was the work of a group of performance artists in New York's Greenwich Village who claimed to have bought 300 of the talking G.I. Joe and Barbie dolls and exchanged their voice mechanisms. Then, with the help of confederates in toy stores around the country, the altered dolls were put on the shelves for purchase by consumers. The group, which called itself the Barbie Liberation Organization, also included a leaflet with each doll explaining that the project was intended to draw attention to how the dolls reinforce gender roles among children.

News reports said that only a few of the dolls had turned up in New York State and in California.

British immigration officials thought that someone was trying to pull a similar switch on them several months

ago. At the height of the Michael Jackson controversy, the officials detained LaToya Jackson for 90 minutes when she tried to enter the country, thinking she was Michael in drag.

Public Broadcasting viewers may have been similarly surprised with the concluding episode of *Tales of the City* when it was revealed that the character played by Olympia Dukakis was a transsexual.

The hype and promos surrounding the six-hour, three-part *American Playhouse* adaption of Armistead Maupin's novel hinted that the Dukakis character, Anna Madrigal, was keeping a deep, dark secret about herself. But the hints were so vague that the revelation must have caught most of the audience by surprise, just like *The Crying Game*.

Speaking of movies, all of the money earned by *Mrs. Doubtfire*, not to mention the two Golden Globes -- Best Picture (Comedy) and Best Actor (Comedy) for Robin Williams -- have all but insured that formula-driven Hollywood will jump on the comedy drag bandwagon. In addition to the nine films reported her in October as just released or in production (and the several reported since then), these movies are in the works:

*Plucked* -- This screenplay by Harvey Fierstein (who portrayed Robin Williams' gay brother and who also wrote the highly acclaimed *Torch Song Trilogy*) follows the trials of a drag queen forced to play surrogate father to his sister's children after she abandons them. Real family values that should please middle America.

*A Low Life in High Heels* -- Independent producer Howard Rosenman (*Father of the Bride*) has acquired the film rights to Holly Woodlawn's 1991 autobiography. Woodlawn was one of Andy Warhol's superstars and the inspiration for Lou Reed's song *Walk on the Wild Side*.

*Junior* -- Arnold Schwarzenegger gets pregnant from a miracle drug he develops with his fellow research scientist Danny DeVito. No drag, but lots of gender role jokes.

This may be an inside joke, but Ms. Sinclair hears that *Dragula*, a film about a crossdressing vampire, is currently in production by an outfit called Oneira Pictures.

If all of these films don't generate empathy for

transvestites and drag queens among the general public, there is evidence that the stars who play the drag roles are gaining understanding.

In a recent interview, Johnny Depp talked about preparing for his role as transvestite B-movie producer Ed Wood in the film biography to be released this fall.

"I though I'd get comfortable with the feeling of being in women's ... **articles**," he said. "I'd go out with a tight bra on under my shirt and jacket. Around the house I wore slips and pumps and then tested the waters with garter belts and stockings. I got braver every day."

When asked what he learned from the experience, Depp replied, "The shocking thing was how much goes into the process -- the stockings, the garters, then doing those things up and then girdles, brassieres, **straps!** It made me have more respect for women when they get dolled up. And I have a profound respect for transvestites, who get all dolled up and then have things to hide. It's painful ..."

Depp liked the clothes so much that he kept a pair of high heels and an angora sweater from the film wardrobe. But he said he keeps some part of the costume from every film.

Is it any wonder, then, that one of those January "In" and "Out" lists for those who need a guide through the 1994 thicket of pop culture noted drag racing was out and drag queens were in?

The same list noted that RuPaul is out, replaced by Boy

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George. Don't tell Ted Turner. Miss Ru recently hosted the TNT broadcast of the Turner movie *Gypsy* (the Rosalind Russell/Natalie Wood version).

Miss Ru's favorite number in the movie is the strip show-stopper *You Gotta Get a Gimmick*. Asks Miss Ru, "Can I relate to that, or what?"

The list also proclaimed Rush Limbaugh "out" and Howard Stern "in." Two transsexuals think they are both "out."

Actress and model Tula notes that Stern, who often boasts on the size of his manhood, showed himself to her when she appeared on his show. She was not impressed. "What he had between his legs was far smaller than what I had removed," she said.

San Francisco transsexual Kate Bornstein and a Louisville, Ky., woman named Sherrol Miller have a bone to pick with Limbaugh. In his book *See, I Told You So*, Limbaugh tells both women's stories. But he confuses Bornstein with Miller, a genetic woman who had married a gay con man/bigamist. Miller may sue Limbaugh.

One victim of the hate preached by Limbaugh and his ilk won't be able to sue for damages because he is dead. Brandon Teena, 21 was murdered in rural Humbolt, Neb. Teena was a woman who was living as a man. Two men who Teena accused of sexually assaulting him on Christmas Day were arrested for his New Year's Eve murder.

Teena's true gender had been revealed earlier in a local newspaper story reporting that he was charged with writing a bad check. Evidently, that revelation was too much for John Lotter, 21, whose former girlfriend, Lana Tisdell, 19, had dated Teena for a week until she found out that Teena was not a man. With accomplice Marvin Nissen, also 21, Lotter stripped off Teena's clothes at a Christmas party to prove he was a female, and then drove Teena out of town where they raped him. The men warned Teena not to report the rape to police, but a week after Teena told authorities, the men burst into the home where he was staying and killed him, the owner of the house, and a friend.

A female-to-male transsexual in Arizona has become the target of intolerance as well, but it is unlikely that it will be fatal.

Thurin Schminke, graduate student at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff and also a transsexual, had received approval to teach a sociology course on transsexualism and related issues, such as gender role, sexuality, and transgenderism. Students in the department agree that the course was worthwhile. "I think it's an issue of increasing importance, and it does need to be addressed," said one sophomore.

But Arizona Gov. Fife Symington thinks otherwise. He wrote NAU's interim president, Patsy Reed, urging her to "exercise your personal influence to devise a higher use for both the funds of the taxpayers and the minds of your students." Symington continued, "the proposed topic has absolutely nothing to do with development of either the intellect or character of young people."

Reed did not tell reporters how she would respond to the letter, but the executive director of the Arizona Civil Liberties Union called Symington's move "an affront to the freedom of speech" and an attempt at academic censorship.

Symington learned of the proposed course from an article in the campus newspaper, *The Lumberjack*.

Arizona institutions of higher education are not alone in this type of dispute; an elementary school in Mesa has found itself embroiled in a crossdressing controversy.

To prompt his students to collect canned food for the needy, Mendoza Elementary School Principal Bob Meko has in previous years promised to sit atop the school flagpole and have Phoenix Suns star Charles Barkley shave his head. But this year, the payoff stunt has angered some of the children's parents, and some have vowed to keep their children home rather than watch the school's male teachers perform song and dance routines in drag.

"In this world of crossdressing and gender confusion, this is sending the wrong message to kids," one mother said. Another expressed anger that the school requires parents "to sign a permission slip for our children to see a Walt Disney movie at school, but they're thinking of parading

the kids into the gymnasium to watch grown men dressed like women."

Meko said the idea for the skit came from the student council. "Most of the children think it would be funny," he said. School district officials said that they would leave it up to the principal to do what is right for the community.

But not all of the parents are opposed to the drag show. The president of the Parent Teacher Organization defended the school administration and said some parents were blowing the issue out of proportion.

Ms. Sinclair wishes to add a personal note as a coda to these items. First, she would appreciate learning how these two stories played out. Second, she advises Arizona readers that the Grand Canyon State has been targeted by the Traditional Values Coalition as one of eight states where attempts will be made this year to ban civil rights for homosexuals and other sexual minorities by claiming that such laws promote "special rights" and threaten the family. She urges that every member of the Arizona transgendered community oppose this effort to clothe theocracy in the garb of democracy.

The NAU course on transsexualism could have kept Bill Sconyers, 23, of Arcadia, Fla., from a painful experience. He cut off his penis with an electric saw because, he said, he always wanted to be a woman.

Unlike the now-famous John Wayne Bobbitt, doctors at Tampa General Hospital were unable to reattach Sconyers severed member. After closing the wound, the

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hospital listed his condition as fair. "I always wanted to be a woman," Sconyers told reporters by telephone from his hospital bed, but he was unable to elaborate because a flood of calls prompted doctors to order his bedside phone cut off.



Of course, Florida is no stranger to strange transgender behavior. Remember the ring of smash-and-grab crossdressing burglars of a couple years ago? Well, they're back.

Police in Gainesville say a recent string of such burglaries included a boutique where more than \$60,000 in dresses were stolen. Some of the stolen merchandise is used in drag shows while the rest is fenced on the street. Police said the M.O. is the same. The burglars case the targeted boutiques, often while dressed as women, and then return -- generally between 2:00 and 6:30 a.m. -- and toss a cement block through a window. While the alarm rings, they quickly scoop up the merchandise and vanish before police arrive in the scene, often making their haul in less than two minutes.



New Yorker Simon Booking got his women's wardrobe the old fashioned way -- *Ladies Home Journal* bought it for him. The magazine also bought his wife, Sheila McDevitt, a complete set of men's clothes for a week of couple crossdressing.

The thirtysomething pair auditioned and were selected to spend a week as a member of the opposite sex for an article on gender roles. They also had the benefit of professional makeup and fashion consultants. Simon (who was known as Linda during the experiment) and Sheila (who took the name Sean) tried to follow their normal routines, and kept a diary listing their experiences.

Not surprisingly, "Linda" did her best to keep her male identity secret, fearful of being discovered. While "Sean"

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seemed to revel in the privileges of the male gender role. Could it be that an editor at *Ladies Home Journal* has read too many Sandy Thomas books?



Besides giving him an appreciation for a different gender role, crossdressing may have taught Simon some important fashion lessons as well. According *The Wall Street Journal*, the new menswear trend away from the standard business suit is giving men fashion anxiety. It seems that most men don't know how to mix separates or how to accessorize their outfits.

The report tells the story of a medical society Christmas party billed as "casual." The doctors consulted about what they would wear, just like teenage girls going to a dance. "We agreed that we weren't going to wear suits, and that was as far as we got," one doctor said. He agonized over three outfits before settling on a double-breasted navy suit and a white silk T-shirt. Others wore blazers, sport coats, and even jeans. But all those choices were too much for two doctors who showed up in suits and ties after all. "They really stuck out," the doctor in the silk T-shirt said. Remember this the next time you worry that your crossdressing has no practical value.



*This month, Ms. Sinclair most sincerely wishes to thank British reader Claudette-Emily Fairchild for providing two articles in the background of the English film Just Like A Woman, based on the book Geraldine: For the Love of a Transvestite. Other readers -- foreign and domestic -- are urged to send clippings regarding crossdressing to Ms. Sinclair in care of Cross-Talk.*

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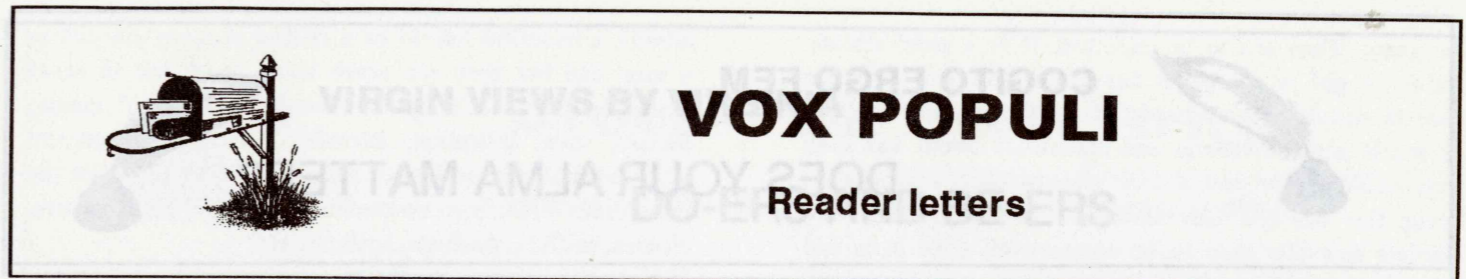
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**Re: Articles and letters regarding the Benjamin Standards of Care (August 1993 - present):** Knowing several people who worked on the ICTLEP Standards of Care, at first I was glad to see that they were removing the "gatekeepers" from their post. But (after a year of RLT myself), I think you're right. I've met a number of people at support groups who have weird ideas of what their life will be like "after my sex-change". I think that perhaps there needs to be more flexibility than the Harry Benjamin Standards have, but that the RLT be kept as the main requirement for SRS. After all, every person who gets SRS, then decides they made a mistake, makes it harder for the rest of us to justify (for example) getting insurance to pay towards reassignment.

-- Vicky Staubly  
via Internet

"Vox Populi" is the gender community's "town square" for the exchange of opinions and ideas. If you have a response to any editorial, news item, or article appearing in **Cross-Talk**, please feel free to contribute. We suggest keeping letters to 400 words; one page typewritten or

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*NOTE: This month, we present a response by Dallas Denny to a letter in our January issue regarding an article she authored. The response appears as a separate article on page 13.*

*Jim Bridges*  
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## COGITO ERGO FEM

### DOES YOUR ALMA MATTER?

by Anne Blackwood

How many alumnae of your alma mater are in the transgendered world? I know of two others, and we were there at the same time. I didn't know them then (we had different majors). I met the second of these people at California Dreamin' in 1993 ... or at least I should say that I **discovered** that we were school mates.

So, I know a couple other Cal Aggies, and that got me thinking. (*Hold the phone Martha, Anne's been thinkin' agin.*) I was thinking about alumni associations. There are Aggie Alumni Associations all over the place, the Bay Area, Sacramento, here in So Cal, and I think there's one in D.C., too. So, I thought, "why not have one for CDs?" To what end, you ask. Well, you know I've often written about fund raising, and what better way than to raise funds for your alma mater to be used for research on transgendered concerns in three disciplines; psychology, sociology, and medicine. Of course, in California (and most everywhere else) what distinguishes a university from a college is research. Universities do it, colleges don't. Still, this idea serves in several ways: first, it would provide funding for needed research; second, it would open up some of these schools and departments to our concerns; and third, perhaps get some dialogue going *vis a vis* crossdressing and brain/genital incongruity in the hallowed halls of *academe*.

So, how would this work? Well, let's take U.C. Davis as a for instance. I would write the Cal Aggie Alumni Association and tell them that I am starting an association for transgendered alumnae and send the copy for a notice to be published in the Alumni newsletter. So then, with luck, other transgendered types would read about this new group and contact me and away we go (*dere dose shmarties are*).

How would this notice read? I wonder.

Anne Blackwood is forming an alumnae association for transgendered, transsexual and crossdressing graduates of U.C. Davis. She can be reached at Post Office Box 1251,

Beverly Hills CA 90213. Your privacy will be respected. The purpose of this association is to raise fun and funds for research on transgendered issues in one or more of these disciplines; psychology, sociology and medicine. This will hopefully lead to a better understanding of our situations and greater acceptance of our lifestyles.

Something like that. You notice that I have used the feminine form of the Latin plural.

While I'm on the subject of **money**, I think I'll mention this other idea that I recently cogitated up. The idea is this: a self perpetuating fund for SRS. A non-profit private (as opposed to governmental) corporation would be formed and would raise funds to be used to pay for sex reassignment surgery, both M2F and F2M. The money would be **loaned** to individuals who qualify. Criteria for granting a loan would be: 1. Ability to repay the loan. 2. Recommendation by a recognized therapist. 3. Successfully making the transition to the new gender role as documented by a therapist. **Disqualifications** would include: 1. Adequate financial resources to pay for SRS. 2. Inability to adapt to new gender role. 3. Lack of valid recommendation from recognized therapist. And of course there would be other rules.

When I write of a **recognized** therapist, this means one who has expertise in the field of gender dysphoria, and who is a known quantity in the communities. There would also be a list of known Drs. Feelgood, recommendations from whom would automatically be reason for rejection of an application, the reason being that anyone who self-diagnoses and **knows better** than trained professionals would probably be a bad financial risk. Obviously I have not thought out all the details, but that would be up to the board of directors to hammer out. The idea is that there are many transsexuals who would benefit from surgery, but who will have to wait many years to have it while they accumulate the cash. With a Transsexual Loan Program (TSLP) they could have the surgery and *(continued, page 12)*

Your letters to the editor are encouraged, and may now be sent to us via Internet e-mail to [kymmer@xconn.com](mailto:kymmer@xconn.com).

Internet is accessible via CompuServe, America OnLine, Prodigy, GEnie, Delphi, FidoNet-affiliated BBS systems, Internet-affiliated BBS systems, and various educational and governmental Internet-affiliated systems. See page 7 for instructions on sending Internet e-mail.

You can also fax us at (818) 347-4190, or write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.



## VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

### DO-ERS AND BE-ERS

by Virginia Prince Ph.D.

Women **are** married, **are** pregnant, **are** mothers, **are** wives, etc. Men **have** a son, **have** a wife, **have** a job, **get** a raise, **get** promoted etc. Men are described by verbs, doing, getting, having etc. They live in a state of "doingness". Women are described as in states of "beingness". Men's lives are measured, so to speak, by the things that they **do**. A "real man" is always somebody who has done something. What that something is can run from sports, cattle driving, car racing, stunting, winning a difficult case as an attorney, making a fortune in the stock market, or a breakthrough scientific discovery. It makes little difference. If you **do** something, you have made it as a man -- otherwise you are just another male and probably a wimp.

On the other hand, women can do a vast number of things and they may get plaudits of one kind or another for doing them, but all the time they simply **are** women. Their "beingness" does not depend on their doing something. It is interesting that except in some very special circumstance no one ever uses the expression "she is a **real woman**". This emphasizes the idea that women's identity and acceptance is not based on what she does. She just **is** -- for better or worse. This is another way of stating my aphorism that "Women just **are**, men are always trying to **become**". Becoming means that you are not there yet, but you are on the way. Unfortunately men never really make it because there is always some other task, objective or challenge to be met and conquered. That is why **becoming** is a process word while women **are** is just a statement of a current situation and not one that depends on anything else. This constant activity of men is essentially a male principle. It is biological and physiological and is fortified and reinforced by cultural expectations.

It is even evidenced biologically. Sperm cells when they are ejaculated into the female's vagina have to act. That is, they have to swim some distance up the female's reproductive tract to meet an egg in the Fallopian tube, fuse with it and initiate the development of a new organism. The female egg, on the other hand, just **is**. It doesn't have to go anywhere or do anything to be a reproductive unit. While it doesn't happen in humans it has been shown in lower mammals, such as rabbits, that pricking a female's egg with a pin will initiate cell division and the development of a new individual. Having

only one set of chromosomes this embryo may not make it to birth and further development outside the womb. But "parthenogenesis" as it is called, or, genesis without male contribution, shows that a mammalian egg is in effect more primal and self sufficient than a male's sperm. The latter serves only as a carrier of genetic material in order to contribute variety to the next generation, plus the stimulating effect of its penetration of the cellular membrane in order to deliver its genetic material into the egg.

But while the "doingness" and "beingness" of the male and female principles have a biological origin and are manifested in the basic reproductive act, as just explained, they continue to show up after birth and into childhood. Little male animals and little male humans are observed to be more active in their play. Little boys **use** things in their play and **do** things with objects. Girls "use" dolls in their play to be sure, but the "using" is vastly different than the way little boys "use" toy trucks, blocks, trains etc. to **do** something with them. Girls care for, feed, dress, and talk to their dolls as rehearsal play for the day when they will be mothers with real babies. They express feelings **for** their toys and impute feelings to the dolls such as pretending to feed them, give them a drink, etc., which implies that the dolls have feelings just like the little girl herself. If boys have a live pet such as a kitten or a puppy -- or even only a goldfish -- they can play with it and use it as a toy. Thus girls can play with inanimate objects and pretend that they are alive and have feelings, while boys can play with a live pet as though it were an inanimate toy and had no feelings. That is, boys do not identify with the toy train, truck or building block; they are just items to manipulate, use and **do** something with.

In later childhood and on into adolescence and adult life boys and men tend to use people as things. They are competitive and the opposition team is used as a "thing" a mechanism for showing their own abilities and superiority. Their games are rougher and the idea of causing pain to others or even suffering it themselves is part of the "thinginess" of other people. It is not unusual to hear partisans of a given team supporting their side with shouts of "kill him", "smash him", break his neck, legs or whatever. If someone on the other team gets hurt in a football game, the players can feel sorry for him but they don't get very concerned because injuries are just part of

the game. They are to be expected. If in a girls' athletic activity a girl is to sprain her ankle, fall and skin her knee or sustain some other injury, other girls are likely to be much more solicitous and concerned about her than boys would be for one of their players. Girls and women, being the bearers and nurturers of new, young and helpless new life, tend to be cooperative while boys and men are competitive. These traits are more or less built into their maleness and femaleness.

Now the point of all this is that those of us who were born as males and raised as boys come by this typical male heritage automatically and it is reinforced and encouraged during our youth by older brothers, fathers, teachers, scoutmasters and coaches. Now it may be that we develop an interest in feminine clothing from an early age and we indulge in it surreptitiously whenever we get the chance. But later on as we grow and society grows with us to the point where we start to go out in public as girls or women depending on our age at the time. Now we want to both dress like, look like and hopefully act like the genuine girls or women around us. And right here is where we begin to have problems because these more subtle differences between men and women are not apparent to us and so we don't correct for them. But other girls and women may "read" us as not being the genuine article because of these subtle attitudinal differences between the two sexes. Somehow "she" (meaning one of us) doesn't react quite the way another woman would expect her to act. Women can appreciate a lovely outfit,

admire a beautiful hairdo or a skillful makeup job just as a man can but they see much more than that in other women. They see body movements, how "she" carries herself, vocal inflection, intensity, interest and general attitudes and approaches to situations in all of which the masculinity is likely to be evident in spite of the attractive, clothes, coiffure, perfume, makeup, etc.

I'm not sure that these things can be learned even when we become aware that there are differences. This is because they just "come with the territory" and we, as males and boys, never had the evolutionary background for them and never got any experience or coaching in them as our sisters did. On top of that, any inadvertent manifestations of such feelings, attitudes, interests and behaviors that we might present would certainly arouse disapproval, correction and maybe even punishment. This would be in the interest of helping us to grow up as "real" men and to discourage any budding femininity that might be starting to develop.

Because we don't come from that "territory" we not only don't have that natural background but probably can't even learn it. So this is not an attempt to teach you anything because even after nearly 25 years of living on the feminine side of the street, I have not been able to do much about this problem myself. But at least I have become aware of some of the subtle ways that women differ from men, femininity from masculinity that is, and of my inability to acquire, imitate and project that kind of femininity. Passing as a woman (and presumptive female) is not the problem. I am quite able to get down to panties and bra in a changing room or bathhouse locker room with the other ladies, but I am much aware that while I can pass visual inspection relatively easily, I also know that "Charles" and his born in, built in and trained in masculine attitudes and reaction patterns are there, real close to the surface. So while I can't come up with the classical female/feminine attitudes and reactions, I can consciously attempt to suppress, disguise and deny expression to these aspects of my total being.

So when you are Jane or Betty instead of John or Bill and you are dressed to the nines as such, remember that John and Bill are right behind (or beneath) you and that they have a much greater voice in determining how you will react to various situations than you like to imagine. What all CDs who go out in public ought to have is a three-second delay like they do on radio talk shows in order to bleep out things that shouldn't go on the air. If we did we would have time to reconsider and delete some of the comments and actions that we were about to activate and substitute something more appropriate to the role that we are visually portraying. But alas technology has not progressed to that point as yet. So just get a tight grip on Bill, Bob or Barney's leash and try to make the boys stay in their little masculine closets so that Betty, Barbara and Beverly can enjoy their "Girls' Night Out".



## Cross-Talk" Newswire

News of the worldwide gender community

The IFGE Board of Directors has announced a plan to implement several initiatives in the coming year to enhance its educational and charitable programs and its business operations.

The initiatives will shift some staff personnel to new responsibilities, create new staff positions to "beef up" IFGE's business management operations, and renew emphasis on product development and service support to the medical and academic fields.

IFGE founding director Merissa Sherrill Lynn said that "demand for our services has far outgrown our ability to keep up", and indicates that as soon as a qualified executive director is found, she will be able to concentrate on her responsibilities to IFGE's long-term educational and charitable objectives. Lynn said that a search for a new executive director would be coupled with a special fund-raising drive to hire the right candidate, once found. The first screening interviews for new talent will take place at the IFGE convention this month in Portland, Ore. Applicants may also contact Lynn at IFGE headquarters, (617) 894-8340.

IFGE chairman of the board Linda Buten said announcements of other initiatives would be made once the personnel matters are resolved. The initiatives were developed by IFGE's Strategic Planning Committee after analysis of the organization's mission, strategic intent, product lines and services, and governing structure.

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The Northwest Gender Alliance and Emerald City have announced a variety of local events and attractions for attendees of the IFGE convention this month.

The two groups will offer a one-day ski trip to nearby Mount Hood's historic Timberline Lodge on Monday; a trip to the famed Darcelle's nightclub on Thursday for cocktails, dinner and drag show; and a trip around Portland on Thursday afternoon for wives and significant others, including rose, rhododendron and Japanese gardens, Pioneer Square, the waterfront, Old Town, Nob Hill, the zoo, and museums.

A scaled-down "sampler" of the famed event "Esprit" will take place Friday night, including a hosted buffet and bar in Esprit's hospitality suite, followed by the gala Las Vegas Night that has been Esprit's trademark since its very inception.

While the groups had requested reservations for the events by the first of March, information did not reach

Cross-Talk in time for advance release. Emerald City has promised to do their best to accommodate requests; they may be contacted at (206) 284-1071.

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A gender community publication that grew from a group-oriented newsletter into an independent monthly magazine has now ceased publication.

*Petticoat Junction*, published by Marlina Dawn Murphy, published its last edition late last year, including a statement from Murphy that "rising bulk mail rates and declining advertising revenue" killed the magazine. She could not be reached for further comment.

Murphy was also to have published the 1993 "Texas 'T' Party" photo albums, according to a report in the Boulton & Park Society's *Gender Euphoria*, but the report said Murphy claimed "there were not enough photo albums ordered and paid for to cover the cost" of publishing the album. Boulton & Park said members inquiring found that Murphy's post office box has been closed with no forwarding order. They also indicated that no refunds had been received by those who had advance ordered the album.

Marsha Anne Michaels, who wrote the "Bits 'n Pieces" news column in *Petticoat Junction*, said her column would continue to appear in the newsletter of the Tri-Ess Fiesta chapter in Albuquerque, N.M., and would also be carried in *Gender Euphoria* beginning later this year.

It is not known if West Texas Gender Alliance, the organization that spawned *Petticoat Junction*, is still operating.

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Syracuse, N.Y.-based Expressing Our Nature has announced a plan to acquire a historic Victorian mansion to provide low-cost boarding-style accommodations for up to six transgendered persons hit by economic hardships, plus guest quarters for short-term visitors or crisis intervention use.

EON has met with the owner of the house, and has entered into an agreement to purchase the property on terms that will allow the organization to acquire the 1895 mansion without first demonstrating the assets and cash flow required for a bank mortgage. EON hopes to be able to qualify for such a mortgage within a few years, which would also then exempt the house from city property tax.

Having raised the \$10,000 necessary for the down payment, EON is now conducting a fund-raising effort to

### WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT?

Cartoons by Christine-Jane Wilson

A book of nearly 100 cartoons drawn by Christine-Jane Wilson. In the magazine 'Forum', editor Isabel Koprowski wrote: " - the answer is not *East-Enders*, you'll be glad to hear, but delicious feminine clothing such as lacy bras, six inch stilettos and the sheerest of stockings.

*What's on the TV Tonight?* is a charming cartoon book depicting transvestites in a variety of amusing situations. Because it is the creation of a TV, none other than Christine-Jane Wilson, the editor of *The Glad Rag*, the book always laughs with, not at, transvestites. The author draws on her own experience, as well as her imagination, to produce cartoons showing the dreadfully embarrassing things that can happen to TVs, whether in social or family context. But it's not blushes all the way: some pages glow with the positive pride a cross-dresser may feel when found out unexpectedly.

\*Transvestites will identify with the author and find the book reassuring as well as amusing. Everyone will be touched by the sensitivity and delicacy with which Christine-Jane treats the difficulties of being a TV\*.

### FUTURES EXCHANGE

A FANTASY OF CROSS-GENDER by Sarah Wood  
Charles Merchant, a life-long transvestite, awakes - in the body of his attractive personal assistant, Jenny Page . . . from there, Sarah weaves an intriguing and well-written story, beautifully illustrated by the talented Emma

TO ORDER, send \$5.00 US for *What's On The TV Tonight?* or \$8.00 US for *Futures Exchange* to:

KRIS Publications  
239 Preston Road, Rear  
Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8PE, U.K.  
Add \$2.50 per book for airmail shipping.

ALSO AVAILABLE: *Hell -- It's Heaven*, Christine-Jane's non-crossdressing cartoon book on the afterlife, with lots of cute angels and devils. \$9.00 US to the same address.

generate an additional \$7,000 to \$10,000 for interior rehabilitation and refurbishing work. They hope to have the facility available for use by May of this year, and have already approached the 72 representatives of the Congress of Transgendered Organizations for their support. President Charliiss Dolge said "EON House" would also host public meetings for community service groups in the formal rooms on the first floor, and could also host fund-raisers and outdoor events on the one-half acre lawn areas. Dolge said she hopes to invite not only gender community organizations to use the facilities, but environmental, womens', gay/lesbian, social justice, and disabled organizations -- among others -- as well. Interested parties may contact EON at (315) 475-7013 during business hours, or at (315) 475-5611 for voice mail messaging. EON is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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The entire board of officers of the Tau Chi chapter of Tri-Ess has resigned suddenly in a dispute over meeting locations.

The *Femme Forum*, newsletter for the Houston, Tex., chapter, announced in its February issue that the recently elected officers resigned after disagreement at the January meeting over future meeting locations. Meetings have been moved to the home of Tri-Ess national chairman of the board Jane Ellen Fairfax until a new location can be found. The chapter's annual awards banquet, held in March, is unaffected.

Several of Tau Chi's former officers, who left office in November at the end of their terms of office, have agreed to stand for election again to fill the sudden vacancies.

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**PHILIP SALEM UPDATE:** Lindsay Stein, director of publications for the Seattle-based Ingersoll Gender Center, has written us with details of a fairly recent encounter with Salem.

Stein writes that Salem made contact with her through a personal ad she had placed in a legitimate TV-type magazine which continued to run long after she had lost interest in it.

A poor-quality typewritten quality letter arrived from "Dr. Philip Salem" with a local P.O. Box for return, along with a phone number, offering medical services like hormones, Retin-A, even mentioning electrolysis. Salem said his wife ran a "sex-surrogate" service and traveled nationwide.

Stein called the number earlier than the hours indicated in the letter and caught Salem off-guard. She says "he didn't have much to say, and again offered medical services, which I declined. He said 'Guess I don't have anything for you then' and hung up. I threw the letter away and forgot about it."

Stein has since asked around the Center and was told Salem had come to a couple of group meetings five years ago trying to "recruit" girls for one thing or another. She

says he was eventually asked to leave.

Debra Darling, who saw an advance copy of our January editorial from Cathy Slavik at Empathy Press, suggests in *Emerald City News* that if you see Salem's ads in publications you subscribe to, write them and complain. (We'd like to hear about any Salem ads as well, so that we can take action. Forward any and all information -- including publication names and addresses -- to us here at **Cross-Talk**.)

Finally, *MisS C's Musings*, the newsletter of the Monarch Social Club in which we read of Salem's recent resurfacing, reprinted our entire January editorial along with an apology for having brought Salem's original ad to their members' attention in the first place. This incident only serves to prove how easily Salem can dupe the unwitting in our community. He **must** be stopped.

Send check or money order for \$10.95 for a two issue subscription as they're published or \$5.95 for the current issue payable to: DRAGAZINE, P.O. Box 691664, Dept C, West Hollywood, CA 90069

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**COGITO ERGO FEM ... continued from page 8**

get on with their lives and be in better mental health. It seems to me a worthwhile proposal.

I realize that we have to bake a pie before we can dole out pieces of it, but one needs goals if one is to achieve anything. This moment was created by all the past moments and all the planning done in them. The shape of tomorrow is molded by the acts of today. If we do nothing, tomorrow will be no better than today, and according to the laws of entropy it will be worse. A better tomorrow takes effort, and a few people in the communities are putting out, but we need more people putting out some effort if we want that tomorrow of acceptance to come soon.

So the Cal Aggie Transgendered Society (CATS) could help coordinate some of that effort, and the TSLP could lead to more years of adjustment for productive transsexuals in need of a helping hand. Just two possible ways to a better tomorrow.

[Anne Blackwood may be contacted at P.O. Box 1251, Beverly Hills CA 90213, or via Internet at Anne@xconn.com.]

## THE BENJAMIN STANDARDS AND CARING

[Editor's Note: This reply to a letter written by Dawn Linden, responding to Dallas Denny's article "The Benjamin Standards of Care: A Safeguard for Consumers and Caregivers" which was published in January's "Vox Populi" column, is being published at Ms. Denny's request to address perceived personal attacks contained in Ms. Linden's letter. It is partially due to this dispute that **Cross-Talk** last month adopted a policy allowing for the editing of letters to remove similar inflammatory material.]

It amuses me that Ms. Linden not only does not know where the Tenderloin is, but assumes that I am a non-transgendered therapist. I have a master's degree and am licensed to practice psychology, but I have never been -- nor do I intend to ever be -- a therapist.

Ms. Linden assumes that a non-transgendered therapist could not possibly understand the dynamics of transsexualism. That's a sad commentary on her views, for if people can only understand people who are exactly like them, there is no hope of building a better world. Certainly, many non-transgendered persons -- including therapists -- have empathy for transgendered persons and understanding of their feelings, even if they don't have those feelings themselves.

The facts are that I am two-and-a-half years post-operative, that I have experienced the same self-doubts, insecurities, and societal and family rejection as other transsexual person, that I have major problems with paternalistic attitudes of caregivers (having encountered them first-hand), and that I know where the Tenderloin is.

The Tenderloin is a part of San Francisco with a high percentage of transgendered persons, most of whom are highly troubled. Rates of prostitution, substance abuse, homelessness, abusive relationships, and mental illness are very high in this group. The majority are HIV-positive. My article was originally written about this sub-section of transgendered persons. The article originally appeared in *Transsexual News Telegraph*, and I modified it only slightly for **Cross-Talk**. I nonetheless stand by what I have written.

When transgendered persons seek body-modifying surgery and substances, and caregivers have been charged by society to provide those services in an ethical and safe manner, they must impose some limits. Unlike Ms. Linden, I do not think that most of them abuse this duty. Until society removes sex hormones from the list of prescription drugs and okays auto mechanics to do surgery, the rights of the individual must be balanced by the ethical obligations of the caregiver. And this is where the Standards of Care come in. Despite their faults, they are infinitely better than no standards.

Ms. Linden accuses me of lacking compassion. In other words, because I defend the Standards of Care, I could not possibly care about transsexual persons. Well, I do care. Remember, I know where the Tenderloin is. In five years of working the help line, I have talked to non-transgendered gay men who wanted vaginas in order to please their lovers, to a man whose wife wanted him to get a vagina as punishment for his fetishistic crossdressing, and to all manner of other people who believed that instant surgery would magically cure their woes. I've sat up at night with those who broke under the stress, taken food from my own cabinets to those whose lives have fallen apart because of their transition, watched transgendered friends die of AIDS, and stood helplessly by as others made shambles of their lives. And I've also met hundreds of remarkable, well-adjusted, gentle people who live their lives with dignity and bear up staunchly under the strains and hazards of transition.

Obviously, I do not think, (or, as Ms. Linden charges, wish) the world to believe, that transsexual persons are creeps and misfits or in any way inherently unbalanced. But I do know that the process of sex reassignment is one of life's most difficult challenges.

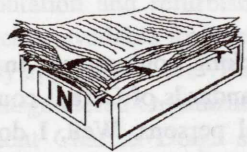
It is easy for people like Ms. Linden, who want only what they want, to rail against the Standards of Care and to scream about caregivers and blame them for all their troubles. It's easy for them to accuse people like me of being paternalistic (or perhaps, now that she knows my post-operative status, of being a tool of the patriarchy), but such behavior is only selfishness. The truth is that Ms. Linden doesn't care who gets screwed up, who makes bad decisions, who kills themselves, who regrets the rash steps they have taken, so long as the road to her own sex reassignment is (or was, if she happens to be post-transition) free of the checks and balances which she considers annoyances.

I have dedicated the major part of my life, time, and energy to helping transsexual persons and to increasing cooperation between caregivers and those who seek sex reassignment, specifically by pushing for a major re-write of the Standards of Care which would give more autonomy to the consumer and less power to the caregiver. My task is made no easier by hotheads like Ms. Linden. She needs to take the time and trouble to learn where the Tenderloin is.

Sincerely, Dallas Denny

If you see a news article relating to the gender community, please send it to us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365, or fax it to us at (818) 347-4190.





MAGNUSS HIRSCHFELD: A TRUE PIONEER

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

I teach a basic human sexuality course to undergraduate college students. One of the hurdles I face is getting them to see beyond the surface appearances. A typical example is that if I use a video in class that is more than 2 years old, all they see is that it is "old" and not the situations presented in the video. My wife is a historian who appreciates that what has happened in the past can inform us about today. The old saying, "Those who do not know history are bound to repeat it." is certainly applies here.

Recently, I began to read the translation of Magnuss Hirschfeld's book *Transvestites: The Erotic Drive to Cross-Dress*. The original version was published in 1910 and summarized years of investigation into the phenomenon of crossdressing. The first 120+ pages contain 17 case studies, which portray both male-to female and female-to-male crossdressers. These accounts also contain descriptions of marriages where one of the partners is a crossdresser. Many of these narratives contain extensive descriptions of the person in their own words. With the minor exception of a few of the situations and articles of clothing, these words could have been written today, nearly 100 years later!

Dr. Hirschfeld then goes on to discuss these cases, spending significant time explaining why these conditions are not homosexual or fit any of the other sexual disorders that had been described by other sexologists of that time. It would seem that then, as now, people equated

crossdressing with homosexuality. He also goes to some length to point out that these crossdressers do not have any "mental defects" nor are there any in their family.

There are some differences in diagnostic criteria today. Some of these crossdressers would more properly fall into the category of transgenderists or transsexuals.

Regardless of these technical distinctions, it seems clear that little has changed in nearly a century. In fact, if observers like Dr. Hirschfeld were available throughout time, we probably would have had similar descriptions.

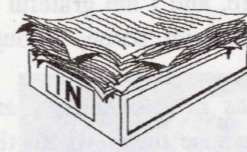
What can be learned from this work? First, it seems clear that crossdressing, as we define it today, has been around for at least 100 years. Also, we can infer that it exists in different cultures, at least those similar to ours. It also seems to suggest that we aren't a great deal closer in our understanding of why there are some people who have the need to crossdress for non-erotic reasons. However, we can learn from this historic study that attempts to understand are not new.

It is unfortunate that it took so long to have *Die Transvestiten*

translated into English. I know that this text has often been cited in other books and scholarly works. It was only after I was able to read the words myself that I was able to realize how clearly Dr. Hirschfeld described situations that we still find today. I highly recommend this work for both the clinician and for the transgendered. Each will find much of interest in its pages.

**It seems clear that crossdressing, as we define it today, has been around for at least 100 years ... and we aren't a great deal closer in our understanding of why some need to crossdress for non-erotic reasons.**

[You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445, Poughkeepsie NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential. Copyright 1994 by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear with it. Other publications must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of any reprint must be sent to Dr. Peo.]



PARTNERS AS COMMUNITY LEADERS

by Linda Peacock

Some months ago, I had the privilege of visiting the Vietnam War Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. I had long wished to visit the Memorial, and had the opportunity when I attended a company conference.

I am a child of the '60s and '70s, and there are names on that Wall that I remember. One was the boy who took me to my Junior Prom. He was a nice guy, but our relationship was brief and passionless. Yet, his name brings him back, the fun we had that evening, and I grieve that he died and had no future to become the man he was destined to be. He never had the chance to find himself, to know the gifts he had been given or to share those gifts. He died in a muddy field, his future wasted, his life gone before it had really started.

If you visit the Wall, you'll know how I felt, even if there aren't any names you know engraved there. A visit to the Wall puts your life into perspective and you are forced to look at who you are, where you've been, where you are going, and if your life has had value to this point. It is as much a heart-wrenching personal self-discovery as it is a heart-wrenching sense of loss as you look at all those names.

As I came to the close of my three year tenure as president of

a support group, I found that my visit to the Wall made me look very intently at those past three years, and what, if anything, I may have accomplished that is of value.

The time for laughter and fun was over and reflection was important. It was too late for me to do more as the president -- what I did, good or bad, must stand.

The three years brought me many friends throughout the country. Somehow, being a Sigma Epsilon member brought a look of excitement and envy to the faces of people I met who heard of the chapter. Our support group has fun with this, and it has an excellent reputation. We have tried, and succeeded, I think, in maintaining our sense of value, decorum, dignity and belief that each of us are very special people. We have maintained a

family-oriented organization, one to which wives feel comfortable coming to. Despite what some may say, we wives and partners are truly essential to the organization, both locally and on the national scene -- we share the lives of men who crave our acceptance and tolerance.

I maintain that we wives must first find the special person inside ourselves, nurture that person, learn to love ourselves, and when we reach that level of fulfillment as women, we can begin to seek understanding of the man we love and live with. It is not an overnight sensation; it takes a long time, and for some women, they may never

find peace within. However, those of us who are leaders in the community, need to be sure we offer support to these women, and a haven of privacy and sharing with other wives and partners.

As I look back three years, I see the faces of countless people who have touched and changed my life. I have been closer to some than others, but all have been special to me.

I've made mistakes, of that there is no doubt. I have a tendency to be more emotionally vulnerable than I should be as a leader. I am a sucker when it comes to someone who hurts, and I have been overwhelmed by some

needs, and let emotion stand in front of common sense and reality. I have often been torn from all sides, as people, recognizing my weakness for someone's need, pulled at me, urging me to see things "their way." Were it not for the strong support of my husband, and the caring guidance of my sister board members, I would most probably have a poor job. They helped me through the roughest times, and I have learned not to allow myself to be torn apart in different directions.

Another thing I have learned well is to always know that every story has two sides. This is most apparent when working with couples in the gender community. I always seek both sides of the story now before making any suggestions.

**Leaders need to know and understand our limitations, and realize that we hold very fragile psyches and relationships in our hands.**

Still another thing I firmly realize is that all the leaders of support groups are not counsellors by profession. We are limited by this, which is frustrating, but we would be doing our members a disservice if we acted as a professional counsellor to people. It is our place to listen, to care and to offer support and compassion, but not to tell them to do something specific, such as "Get a divorce." People are so fragile in their emotions, and far too often emotions filter out common sense and understanding of other people.

Leaders in the gender community need to know and understand our limitations and realize that we hold very fragile psyches and relationships in our hands, and we should have the common sense to refer these people to professional counsellors, and not try to do the job we are unqualified to do. To care, to support, to refer to the qualified is enough.

When I first became a support group president, my focus was on the needs of the crossdressers. I adore men, no matter how they are dressed, and I found men with whom I could be close friends.

Our mutual admiration and respect was addictive, and at first, I never looked past the men to the women they share their lives with. It was a real emotional adjustment to re-focus myself and begin to work with the wives and partners. I think it was that realization that every story has two sides that finally allowed me to extend my focus to the wives. I am often astounded at the total lack of communication between husband and wife ... and at the enormous problems within the marriage or relationship that really have nothing to do with the crossdressing. The crossdressing is a very visible point of contention but often there are more severe and underlying problems that accentuate it.

I now find my work with wives and partners to be a very personally rewarding part of my life, and I am grateful to be able to continue it on the national scene, through SPICE and through Tri-Ess.

To go deeply into what I see has my weaknesses and strengths really would serve no purpose to you or to this article. I think what is most important is that I do look deeply into myself and am willing to confront what I don't like, and try to change it. This is something we all need to do, regularly. We need to learn to accept constructive criticism from others, and from ourselves. We each need to visit the Wall to see all that was lost to us, and in looking inside ourselves, see what still exists and utilize those special gifts. It can be a painful process, but one which might well change our lives.

For those of us in a support group, it is important to understand that it exists for a two-fold purpose. One, to provide support and education for those who are gender-gifted. Also, most support groups have programs and support groups for wives and partners. These groups provide a secure, confidential outlet for the frustrations so many wives and partners feel, as well as opportunities to learn more about their partner's gender-gifts.

There are times for fun, too, in most groups, when you share quality social times, and the opportunity to make new friends. Such a social function allows us to expand our horizons and look beyond our pain and confusion in all of this. I always encourage wives and partners to get to know the other crossdressers, for it is much easier to accept someone else's husband or partner than your own, and perhaps, the person you talk with might offer some different insights into this phenomena. Not everyone becomes a leader; many of us are joiners or followers. However, all of us can see the many needs out there, and if we can help even a little, it makes a difference. Each of us are equally important in our community, and what really makes a difference is when we step forward, no matter our own personal pain, to help another. We cannot allow ourselves to be so blinded by our own despair, our frustrations, our pain, that we ignore what is happening around us. We have a responsibility as members of this community to reach out to others, to share the gifts life has given us, to offer comfort and caring and support. You don't have to run a support group, you don't have to write a column, you don't have to receive plaques and awards. All that is nice, but it is not what counts; it is the giving of the person who lives in your heart that matters. I urge you to reach out now -- and the rewards you will receive back will give you the personal satisfaction of knowing that you do make a difference, you do improve the lives of others.

[Linda Peacock is the director for wives' and partner's support on the Tri-Ess board of directors and publisher of the Sweetheart Connection newsletter. She may be reached at P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221.]

# GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

by Ralph Judd



2/17/78: Pruitt (Peter Isachsen) assumes a new identity for the base's "Miss Topside" pageant and quickly finds that Chief Sharkey (Don Rickles) is not impressed on *CPO Sharkey*, NBC.



11/18/83: Boss Hogg (Sorrell Booke) and Sheriff Rosco P. Coltrane (James Best) dress as women to catch two goons on *The Dukes of Hazzard*, CBS.



1962: Harry Morgan and Cara Williams (plot and episode date unknown), on *Pete and Gladys*, CBS.



1962: Joe E. Ross as Officer Gunther Toody (plot and episode date unknown), on *Car 54, Where Are You?*, NBC.

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## THE BEARDED LADY

### THE ULTIMATE FEMININITY TEST

by Ricky Hunt  
Illustration by Rita

I have recently been educated. After all these years of simply wearing frilly clothes and thinking them feminine I have finally found out the secret of how to be a real woman. And all because my car is a clunker that just passed 100,000 miles ...

It happened this way. As soon as the odometer turned over, every time I got in the car something else major broke down. Within 3 weeks I replaced the rear main



seal, the fuel injectors, water pump, catalytic converter and both front brakes. As a result, I have spent many hours whiling my time away in the waiting room, and after my third or fourth visit had read every copy of *Automotive News*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Time* on the coffee table and was forced to start reading the (gasp) *Women's Magazines*.

In between the ads for makeup, wonder bras and scented personal hygiene products, articles appeared advising the proper and feminine way to do almost anything, from being a perfect working mother to spicing up your love life. But the best part were the quizzes. With only a few strokes of a pencil I was able to rate every aspect of my femininity from my efficiency in housework (not too bad), taste in lingerie (exceptional) to how good I make my man feel in bed (I plead the Fifth).

I then came to the realization that *Cross-Talk* had never printed a quiz to help its readers assess their femininity, so I am determined to rectify this oversight. After all, this could lead to insights every bit as vital to your feminine persona as those gleaned from any real *Woman's Magazine!*

For each question check the box that best applies.

**1) The best way of removing your beard is:**

- Electrolysis, if you can afford it.
- A good sharp razor after a long hot shower.
- Epilady. Some people have to prove they are men in order to be a lady!

**2) The success of your makeup job is measured by:**

- Your smooth, flawless blushing skin.
- Percentage of blue shadow showing.
- The pound.

**3) The beauty of your wig is measured by:**

- Realistic look and feel, matching your facial shape.
- Percentage of teased hair.
- The yard.

**4) The femininity of your bustline is measured by:**

- The quality of breastforms and bra, conforming to the rest of your body's shape.
- The percentage of hair in the cleavage.
- The inch.

**5) Your undergarments are chosen for:**

- Quality of construction and delicate femininity.

The percentage of lace adornments.

Tensile strength in pounds per square inch.

**6) The stylishness if your hemline is measured by:**

- Current fashion in light of your body and age.
- The percentage of leather in the skirt.
- Inches above the knee.

**7) The best stockings to wear are determined by:**

- Your clothing, leg shape and color.
- The percentage of leg hair you shave.
- Fishnet openings measured in millimeters.

**8) The proper shoes for your outfit are dictated by:**

- Color, the occasion and your overall height.
- Percentage of gold accent.
- Heel height in centimeters.

**9) The appropriateness of your purse is ascertained by:**

- Its demure size and ease of transport.

Percentage of your worldly goods it will hold.

The pound.

**10) Your femme name is chosen for:**

- Simplicity, charm and femininity (Angela).
- Resemblance to your home name (Georgia).
- Number of syllables. (Angela Mary Felicia Louise).

**11) Your favorite fashions are determined by:**

- Current fashion, body size, age and good taste.
- Percentage of spandex in the construction.
- What's on sale for under \$10.00.

**12) Your favorite reading while attired en femme is:**

- Great classics of literature.
- Bodice rippers. (As long as it's not your bodice being ripped.)

*Penthouse Letters*.

**13) Your favorite household activity when en femme is:**

- Eating bon-bons and watching the soaps.
- Cooking, sewing and writing letters on pink scented paper.
- Cleaning the toilet and washing the dishes.

**14) When traveling en femme you always carry \_\_\_\_ for use if stopped by an authority figure.**

- A smile and your correct identification.
- An involved and outrageous story.
- Suicide pills.

**15) When in the mall en femme and you need to speak, your voice is:**

STILL AVAILABLE !!!

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Low, cultured and sexy.

High, squeaky and terrified.

You wave your hands and hope it looks like American Sign Language.

**16) If read in public you:**

- Smile and act as a gracious lady would.
- Panic and run away, leaving a high heel behind like Cinderella.
- Strip then and there, throwing your femme clothes in the nearest Goodwill basket, pausing only to purchase a pair of masculine shorts.

**17) When invited to a formal dinner party you:**

- Choose a high necked, satin gown with some lace.
- Choose a low cut satin gown with tons of lace.
- Choose a leather mini with purple spandex top.

**18) When invited to a casual lunch you:**

- Choose a high necked, satin gown with some lace.
- Choose a low cut satin gown with tons of lace.
- Choose a leather mini with purple spandex top.

**19) You are discovered en femme by a previously unknowing wife/friend/sibling. Your reaction is:**

- Calmly educate them in the causes and merits of transvestism.
- Frantically explain your were trying on your Halloween costume. (In May?)
- Leave immediately and start a new life as a lingerie salesman in Fairbanks, Alaska.

**20) If you purchase a specialized "transvestite clothing catalog" you can expect:**

- The same stuff you could buy in any women's wear catalog, but at three times the going price.
- A full mailbox from all the trash pandered by those that bought your name from the mailing list you are now stuck on forever.
- They still don't have anything big enough to fit you anyway.

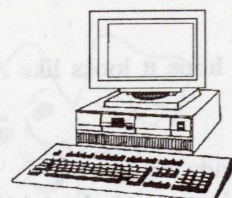
[Editor's Note: Ricky was going to create the scoring information for this test, but was distracted by a Reader's Digest quiz entitled "Are Your Breasts and Hips In Line With the Statistical Norm?". However, after reading some of Ricky's possible answers, that's probably just as well.]

#### GRACE AND LACE LETTER

A Publication for Christian Crossdressers  
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# Hot Buzz!

Edited by JoAnn Roberts

*The world does not require so much to be informed as to be reminded.*



The hot, hot, hottest buzz is not whether or not Michael Jackson really did it, but whether or not IFGE Executive Director, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, will resign or be fired. Lynn stated several times last year, both verbally and in writing, that she is tired of the responsibility and wanted to turn over the reign to someone else. (No, that's not a typo.) The hitch in deal was that Lynn wanted the board to create a new position for her that would relieve her of the day to day responsibilities of running IFGE while retaining her on salary. Lynn's refusal to resign unless she gets her bed feathered leaves the board with a dilemma. IFGE is sorely in need of participatory leadership but it can't afford to pay both a new executive director and Lynn. Will the board fire Lynn? It's even money. Stay tuned. This could get nasty. *Alia jacta est.*



Speaking of the IFGE board, co-chair, Sharon Ann Stuart, sent me a copy of a great article from the January 1994 issue of *Scientific American*. "Animal Sexuality" by David Crews examines how different species develop sex and masculine and feminine traits. Mammals derive their sex, and consequently their gender roles, genotypically, i.e., sex is determined by chromosomes. In some reptiles, sex is determined by incubation temperature. Some animals, notably fish, change sex based on social environment. Some of these fish change only once while others can seesaw back and forth (I know some people like that). And even parthenogenetic species (self-cloning) exhibit the masculine and feminine behaviors of their oviparous cousins. However, an even more important finding for transgendered people is that female embryos surrounded by male embryos (in species that give birth to multiple young) are more masculine in behavior than their sisters developing in an all female environment. This finding has implications for studies on transsexualism. There's a lot more to the article. Pick up a copy or check your local library. It's an easy read.



The French may not appreciate EuroDisney but they do know how to make a political statement. AIDS activists, sponsored by Benetton and ActUp Paris, placed a giant condom over the 70 foot obelisk in the Place de la Concorde. A spokesperson for the Italian sportswear firm

said the condom was put there because of opposition to Benetton's ad campaign that featured people tattooed with the words "HIV Positive."



With hemlines rising higher this Spring, one hopes the economy will follow. But shorter skirts means that legs must look great. While waxing is still the preferred home method for leg hair removal, many women are turning to sugaring. The principle is the same, but the mixture of sugar, honey and water doesn't attach so firmly to the skin. Proponents say the process is much less painful. But both wax and sugar may become things of the past in the near future. Institut Esthederm, a French beauty line, is making its way to U.S. shores with a post-depilatory product, based on a patented enzymatic complex, that slows down regrowth, prevents ingrown hairs, and makes the hairs finer and lighter.



Donna Karan, she whose pantyhose I adore, found herself in hot water, fashionably speaking, over a remark about supermodels. Karan said the fees pulled down by the likes of Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford were "immoral." Meanwhile, a simple outfit of skirt, blouse, and sweater bearing the initials DKNY (Karan's "low priced" line of sportswear) can run to three figures, and a Donna Karan evening ensemble can easily top four digits. Is this the pot calling the kettle black?



Avon isn't sitting on its powder puff in the information age. Realizing that more women are out working during the day, Avon will be targeting them at night with infomercials. Not wanting to be left out of the infomercial blitz, look for designer Norma Kamali to start hawking her wares on TV too.



Wig-lets, according to Gwen Bourhis at Bitz-n-Pieces in Manhattan ... the best wigs are Rene of Paris and Jacquelyn ... Wigs should be washed every tenth wearing in cold water and baby shampoo ... You can't buy a good wig for less than \$100, and wigs are not returnable ... Worn daily, a good synthetic wig should last 3 months; a human hair wig will last 8 to 12 months.



Well, the cat's out of the bag and I didn't do it, although

I've known about it for quite some time. That "custom created just for me" makeup you've been buying in all probability comes from a factory in New York, regardless of whether you bought it from a makeup artist or Victoria Jackson's infomercial. Mana Products' private-label line "Your Name Cosmetics" was profiled in the December issue of *Allure*. Down in the corner of the piece was a photo of the company's product catalogue and it would look very familiar to many folks who frequent the various TV events around the country. I knew about it because Eric Lee who does the makeovers at my Pocono weekends has been buying and using the Your Name stuff for years. Remember, *caveat emptor*.



Words to ponder -- Anne Rice, vampire novelist and pornographer: "[when I joined the women's movement] it was about power, earning the same pay for the same job. Now it's about protection. We are saying we want to be allowed in a man's world, but we can't take it; you have to protect us."



Spring fashion shows this winter were no better than last season. Designers were showing everything ultra-short and ultra-sheer. Some took sidetrips into the kinky zone, like Donna Karan's DKNY neoprene skirt. (Somehow I can't see it mattering in a place like the Vault or Paddles.) Even though clothing designers can't seem to get the message that their clothes are too outrageous for the real world, shoe designers not only heard it, but replied with great looking, sensible (well, sensible to a TV) baby doll pumps with high heels, mid-heels, and spectator styling.



Words to ponder -- Dolly Parton: "When people ask me why I wear five-inch heels, I tell them it's 'cause I can't find six-inch ones."



I love makeup brushes. I can't do my face without anymore. I collect sets and I have four right now. Many beauty experts agree that brushes with natural bristles are best. A natural bristle has a cuticle that holds color and deposits it smoothly. Nylon bristles won't behave that way. Vernon's Specialties in Waltham, Mass., one of our long-time advertisers, carries a great line of natural bristle, wood-handled brushes.



In my "Art & Illusion Tricks & Tips" workshop, I talk about the "ideal" feminine face being an oval. Now, I'm going to have to change my spiel. The "classic canon" is a standard of beauty for a Caucasian -- specifically Anglo-Saxon -- face. Cosmetic surgeons have applied this standard indiscriminately to Asians, Blacks and others

alike resulting in a homogenized, Anglicized, concept of beauty. As more people of non-European ethnic heritage enter the field of plastic surgery, they're questioning the previous standards and seeking to redefine them. An associate professor of plastic surgery has completed a study of 400 models from multiple ethnic groups. They study has established, for example, that a rounded face is the pinnacle of Asian beauty. Placing cheek implants in an Asian woman's face would destroy that beauty. Similarly, an African-American woman's nose is considered beautiful if it is shorter and more rounded than a typical Caucasian nose. The results of the study will be published soon.



I was rooting around in my bookshelf looking for something to read and came across my copy of Samuel R. Delaney's *Stars In My Pocket Like Grains Of Sand*. It's not an easy book to describe, except to say it's a love story, set in the future. (Actually, any of Delaney's books are hard to describe.) Anyway, what makes this book so interesting is (a) it was written in 1984, and (b) sentient beings in society, whether male or female, are referred to as women, "she" and "her." There is no "man" and "he" is used only for sexual objects. Seems as though Delaney predicted the rise of women as role-models for social interaction. The second book of the diptych should be published this year.



Received a note from Phyllis Frye, Executive Director of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. The 1994 conference will be held August 17 through the 21 at the Hilton Southwest Hotel in Houston. Register before April 1 and pay only \$128 per person. Attorney's attending the conference can earn continuing education credits, contact ICTLEP at 5707 Firenza St., Houston TX 77035. But more importantly, the conference needs health care and HR professionals to attend. Last year's conference resulted in a number of very important policy statements that need additional input. The ICTLEP welcomes anyone to attend.



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**HAVE YOU HAD A REAL-LIFE ADVENTURE THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?**  
Please send it for consideration to **Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.**  
(Submissions on MS-DOS or Macintosh disk preferred.)

# THE BEM ANDROGYNY TEST

*Editor's Note: This was posted anonymously to the alt.transgendered newsgroup on Internet, although it has actually been around for many years. Although its actual origin is not known to us, we are reprinting it because we feel it may bring some new personal insights to our readers.*

Number your paper from 1-60 in six columns:

- |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1.  | 2.  | 3.  | 4.  | 5.  | 6.  |
| 7.  | 8.  | 9.  | 10. | 11. | 12. |
| 13. | 14. | 15. | 16. | 17. | 18. |
| 19. | 20. | 21. | 22. | 23. | 24. |
| 25. | 26. | 27. | 28. | 29. | 30. |
| 31. | 32. | 33. | 34. | 35. | 36. |
| 37. | 38. | 39. | 40. | 41. | 42. |
| 43. | 44. | 45. | 46. | 47. | 48. |
| 49. | 50. | 51. | 52. | 53. | 54. |
| 55. | 56. | 57. | 58. | 59. | 60. |

Then rate each term as to how it best fits you according to the following scale:

- 1 = Never or almost never true
- 2 = Usually not true
- 3 = Sometimes but infrequently true
- 4 = Occasionally true
- 5 = Often true
- 6 = Usually true
- 7 = Always or almost always true

### The terms:

1. Acts as a Leader
2. Adaptable
3. Affectionate
4. Conceited
5. Aggressive
6. Cheerful
7. Ambitious
8. Conscientious
9. Childlike
10. Conventional
11. Analytical
12. Compassionate
13. Assertive
14. Friendly
15. Does not use harsh language
16. Happy
17. Athletic
18. Eager to soothe hurt feelings
19. Competitive
20. Helpful
21. Feminine
22. Inefficient
23. Defends own beliefs

24. Flatterable
25. Dominant
26. Jealous
27. Gentle
28. Likable
29. Forceful
30. Gullible
31. Has leadership abilities
32. Moody
33. Loves children
34. Reliable
35. Independent
36. Loyal
37. Individualistic
38. Secretive
39. Sensitive to the needs of others
40. Sincere
41. Makes decisions easily
42. Shy
43. Masculine
44. Solemn
45. Soft-spoken
46. Tactful
47. Self-reliant
48. Sympathetic
49. Self-sufficient
50. Theatrical
51. Tender
52. Truthful
53. Strong personality
54. Understanding
55. Willing to take a stand
56. Unpredictable
57. Warm
58. Unsystematic
59. Willing to take risks
60. Yielding

### Scoring instructions:

1. Add up the vertical columns 1, 3, 5 and 6.
  2. Add the sums of columns 1 + 5 and 3 + 6. Label these as A and B.
  3. Then, subtract A (1+5) - B (3+6)
  4. Compare this number to this androgyny scale:  
 Masculine +20 (or greater than)  
 Nearly Masculine +19 to +10  
 Androgynous +9 to -9  
 Nearly feminine -9 to -19  
 Feminine -20 (or less than)
- Columns 1 and 5 are the "Masculine" traits.  
 Columns 3 and 6 are the "Feminine" traits.  
 Columns 2 and 4 are the "Neutral" traits.

# THE DICTIONARY PROJECT

by Billie Jean Jones

Definitions are a lotta fun, ain't they? I mean look at all the fun folks are having "assaulting" the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* -- way wacky stuff. But ya know, only a few thousand *DSMs* are ever printed whereas several million dictionaries are sold every year. Seems like ya could get a lot more "bang for the buck" if ya altered the dictionaries and thereby influence the educational system and future generations. The Dictionary Project proposes to enhance the definitions related to gender found in the "manuals" of our "literary language." Regardless of the vernacular terms used linguistically (of the tongue), our culture "adopts" and "modifies" the formal

**You could get a lot more "bang for the buck" if you altered dictionaries instead of the *DSM*.**

definitions of words into said manuals (via Usage Panels composed of hundreds), and the majority of people (I think the literate are still the majority) access and learn the language through them. Adoption of a term used linguistically, is not immediate. For example, the term "alright," or "all right," is still **not** included in our literary language; writers may include the form if writing dialogue by/between characters, but otherwise must write "all right" in order to be literarily correct. The term "crossdresser" must be hyphenated ("cross-dresser") in order to be literarily correct -- that is why a competent writer will hyphenate certain terms (by the way, the term "cross-dresser" is not found in most dictionaries, so a person who desires to check the definition, hopefully to increase their understanding, will **not** be able to do so). The Dictionary Project proposes to deal only with the few that have been placed in our literary manuals, such as: Gender, Female, Feminine, Male, Man, Masculine, Transvestite, Transsexual, Woman. While there are many other terms associated with gender conflict and gender expression, the scope of the Project will be to enhance those meanings, and to influence a more uniform application of the meanings. For example, while *The American Heritage Dictionary* (Second College Edition, 1985, 200,000 entries) defines **transvestite** as, "(n) A person, esp. a male, who dresses in the clothing of the opposite sex for psychological reasons."; *Websters New World Dictionary* (Paperback, 1970 & 1984, 59,000 entries; 22 million copies in print) defines **transvestite** as, "(n) A person who gets sexual pleasure from dressing in clothes of the opposite sex."; *The Quintessential Dictionary*

(Paperback, 1978, printed 1984) defines **transvestite** as, "(n) A person, who derives sexual pleasure from dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex."; and then defines **transvestitism** as, "The practice of wearing clothing appropriate to the opposite sex, often as a manifestation of homosexuality." (In a spot check of one bookstore, nine dictionaries were checked for the terms "cross-dresser" -- only one listed it, *Websters 9th New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1991 [which also dated the earliest literary inclusion of the term as 1911]; "transsexual" [included in 1966] was listed in seven; "transvestite" [included in 1922] was listed in all eleven; "transvestism" or "transvestitism" [no date available] was listed in three.) In observing the work contributed to the understanding of gender by those who have preceded us, I believe the most important basic elements have been the distinction between sex, gender and sexual orientation. Yet, even the most liberal definition above contains the error that clothing has a sex. There is a simple test to distinguish sex from gender: If I leave my male clothes in contact with my female clothes, will I eventually get baby clothes? If not, then my clothing has no sex. Sex, as a biological classification (a noun) is not synonymous with gender (also a noun) -- this distinction is a valuable contribution by the "gender minority" to the culture-at-large, but it needs to be implemented into the language and into the educational system. As does the "incorrect," but prevalent use of synonymously interchanging male and female as adjectives to describe gender attributes such as masculine and feminine. Reaching out to help make that distinction a part of our literary language will help educate the general culture that biological sex attributes are separate from cultural gender attributes, and that neither biological or gender attributes determine sexual attraction/orientation- e.g. "That male-woman in the chiffon evening gown is my sister's monogamous spouse." Who will help? So far, American Educational Gender Information Service, Creative Design Services, Human Outreach and Achievement Institute, and *GenderFlex* (an independent, mouthy newsletter published by this writer) are sponsoring organizations. Various other groups and individuals have indicated future support. Because the individuals/groups mentioned above have limited time/resources, Will you help? Please. This Project will not be a debate on the negative connotations of labels, nor will it attempt to define all

terms related to all issues of gender. However, Dallas Denny of AEGIS is willing to write a proposal for a long-term Nomenclature Project that would attempt to encompass such a large scope.

Persons interested in socially networking and working to develop the educational resources necessary to effect this outreach effort, are invited to contact me at 3430 Balmoral Dr. #10, Sacramento CA 95821, or any of the organizations mentioned above.

**Postscript:** The Dictionary Project was put on hold due to the virulent verbal posturing of several groups and individuals seemingly opposed to the Project. Subsequently, another "Dictionary Project" as proposed by Phaedra Kelly of the U.K. has received some press. The two Projects are distinctly different.

[Copyright 1992 Billie Jean Jones. Used with permission. A version of this article originally appeared in issue #9 of TV Guise (now renamed GenderFlex). This version appeared in the 1992 IFGE convention newsletter.]

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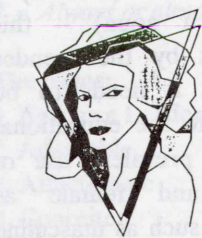
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**#46 (August '93)** contains an editorial on whether or not the Benjamin Standards for SRS should remain public knowledge; why talk shows don't always show our community favorably; communication as an important part of a relationship; real-life experiences of the early feminist organizations in Houston; a game plan for achieving equality in human rights; advice for coping with situations while "dressed"; the difference between homosexuality and bisexuality; how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you.

**#47 (September '93)** contains an editorial on personal agendas within the gender community; what to say when someone discovers your "secret"; switching gender roles full-time; real-life experience appearing en femme among friends who never knew before; building a transgender archive; the history of crossdressing in the British theatre; integrating masculine and feminine traits.

**#48 (October '93)** contains an editorial on "in your face" outreach; potential impacts of health care reform; a wife's perspective on learning to cope; suggestions for Halloween costumes; the semantics of the term "tomboy" and lack of an appropriate complementary term; avoiding "turning-off" an accepting partner; the most-asked questions about organizations and publications.

Also available: Issues #39\*, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44\*, and 45. Issues marked with \* are in extremely limited supply.

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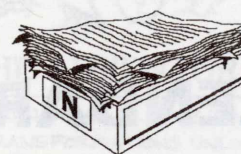


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A very few copies of a special promotional version of issue #39, containing a short story from Sandy Thomas, will be available for \$8.00 plus \$1.00 postage while supplies last. Order #39-S.



INSIGHT

## ACKNOWLEDGING GOD'S PART IN ALL THIS

by Barbara Jean Jasen

I got some more letters in the mail.

The first one came from a girl by the name of Patricia in New York State. Patricia writes to say that she has come to accept her *femmeside*, but still feels guilty whenever she crossdresses.

A second letter that I received came from Kim in Virginia. Kim wrote that all her life she was taught that girl's clothes were wrong ... that girl's thoughts were wrong, that girls were weak. I think a lot of us can relate to what Kim writes. Is it any wonder we feel guilty about our crossdressing?

First off, let's understand you are not a crossdresser by choice. I think the number of us who actually make a conscientious choice to become crossdressers is miniscule. Why are we crossdressers? Well first, let's read this little bit by Jan N. called the alphabet prayer.

I don't know where I heard it, but the story goes something like this: A mother was passing her daughter's bedroom one night when she thought she heard voices from within. Upon opening the door she saw her daughter

kneeling as if in prayer saying "... D,E,F,G,H,I,J ..." In reply to her mother's obvious question the daughter said, "I didn't know what to say to God tonight, so I was saying all the letters of the alphabet and letting God put them in the right order cause He knows what is in my heart."

Childlike innocence, to be sure, but a world or truth in her prayer too. I don't know why the story stuck with me, but it hit me that I pretty much feel the same way as that child did, whenever I pray about my being a crossdresser.

It's true, I don't recite the alphabet and then say to God to do the rest. What I usually do, however, is to pray something like this: "God, You know what is in my heart. Please look into that heart, past all the outward trappings, and see the real me, whether masculine or feminine, and know that I love You.

"I don't know why You made me like I am, but I do know

that You don't make mistakes. So whatever reason dear God, I am who I am because You have willed it.

"You know that whenever I am dressed as a woman I don't mock them or You, but rather I give them the highest praise that I possibly can. In my own way I am paying homage to one of your greatest creations -- woman. Surely, that cannot be wrong.

"Please help me, Lord, to understand why You made me like this, and if that is not your wish, please help me to accept myself as I am until I do Understand.

"I love You Lord. Look past the clothing and see the love. Amen."

So in my own way, I am very much like that young girl. I am asking God to look into my heart and see what is truly there. I am asking him to take all the words I pray or think and, like the letters of the child's alphabet put them "in the right order, cause he knows what's in my heart".

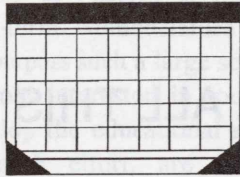
If we look at that prayer itself we soon realize that it was God that made us a crossdresser. Our being crossdressers is a part of God's wonderful plan for us. We do not know what that plan is,

and we don't know why crossdressing is a part of that plan, but then who are we to question God's great wisdom.

If we are to have any semblance of what God's plan is for us, I think the first thing we must do is look upon our crossdressing as a tool used by God and our girl within to bring out and develop our *femmeside*.

What is femininity? *Ladies Home Journal* once asked that question of its readers and got about as many different answers as it did total responses. We each have our own idea of what femininity means. To me it means gentleness, it means being compassionate and concerned, it means being loving and caring. For me crossdressing is simply a tool used by God and my girl within to bring out and develop those characteristics. As they are developed the feminine remains even while I am (continued, next page)

Our being crossdressers  
is a part of God's  
wonderful plan for us.  
We do not know what that  
plan is, but who are we  
to question God's wisdom?



# NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

**March 12-20, 1994:** International Foundation for Gender Education "Coming Together-Working Together" convention, Portland OR. Information from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.

**March 17, 1994:** "A DREAM of a Reunion", Portland OR, for all who attended any of the DREAM conventions on the 1970's and 80's; held during the IFGE convention. Registration information from Jennifer Richards c/o StLGF, P.O. Box 9433, St. Louis MO 63117.

**March 18, 1994:** "A Night at Esprit", Portland OR, held during the IFGE convention. See May 20-22 listing for information.

**April 21-25, 1994:** "Moonlight in Manhattan", New York City, presented by the Greater New York Gender Alliance. Information from Lynda Frank, 330 W. 45th St. #3-H, New York 10036, or by calling (212) 765-3561.

**April 27-May 1, 1994:** "California Dreamin'", Burbank CA, sponsored by Powder Puffs Of California with participation by Neutral Corner, Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Ladies' Knight out, and CHIC. Details from PPOC, P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda CA 92686 or by calling (714) 779-9013.

**May 19-22, 1994:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, sponsored by Creative Design Services. Information from CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406, or by calling (610) 640-9449.

**May 20-22, 1994:** "A Taste of Esprit", Port Angeles WA, sponsored by Emerald City, NWGA, and Cornbury Society. Details from P.O. Box 873, Kirkland WA 98083-0873.

**June 8-12, 1994:** 12th Annual "Be All You Want To Be", Pittsburgh PA. This year's host organization is TransPitt. Details from P.O. Box 23442, Pittsburgh 15222.

**June 24, 1994:** "International Stonewall Ball", New York City, benefitting the 25th Anniversary Stonewall March two days later. Details from Empress Nicole, (619) 692-1967 or Coco at (212) 475-0838, or write P.O. Box 33915, San Diego CA 92163.

**August 17-21, 1994:** Third Annual International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Houston TX. Information from Phyllis Randolph Frye, 5707 Firenza St., Houston 77035-5515, or by calling (713) 723-8368 (fax: 723-1800).

**September 15-18, 1994:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See May 19-22 listing.

**September 27-October 2, 1994:** "Southern Comfort Conference", Atlanta GA. Information from P.O. Box 33296, Decatur GA 30033, or by calling (404) 603-9426.

**October 4-7, 1994:** "Dignity Cruise V", steamboating aboard the historic Delta Queen out of Pittsburgh PA. Details from Peggy Rudd, 1811 Crutchfield, Katy TX 77449 or by calling (713) 347-6563.

**October 16-23, 1994:** 20th Annual "Fantasia Fair", Provincetown MA, sponsored by Outreach Institute. Write Alison Laing, P.O. Box 941, Southeastern PA 19399-0941 for details.

**May 17-21, 1995:** "Esprit '95", Port Angeles WA. See May 20-22, 1994 listing for information.

(Please send information on national gender community events to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.)

## INSIGHT ... continued from preceding page

in the masculine form.

If we are to stop the feelings of guilt we must do as we ask God to do, look past the clothing, look into the heart and see what is really there. Perhaps then we will begin to see what God's wonderful plan is for us, and begin to understand how crossdressing is a part of that wonderful plan. When we see the heart, when we see just what femininity really is, when we allow the feminine to interject with the masculine to help create a better person out of us, then we will rid ourselves of the guilt, and we will replace it with great pride in God's wonderful plan for us. Like me, you will recognize that your crossdressing is a wonderful gift from God, and you will take great pride in the fact that he choose **you** to give that wonderful gift to.

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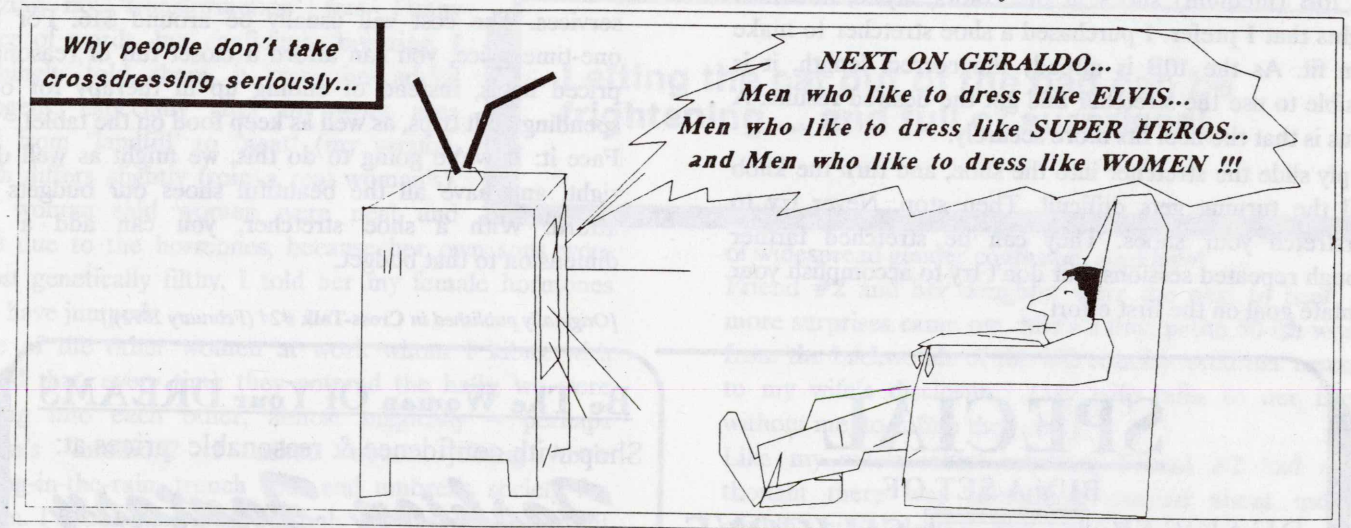
## THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



## CD

By Sherri Belman



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



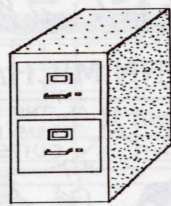
## THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner



## Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard



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## THE BEST OF CROSS-TALK

### GETTING SHOES THAT FIT

by Divinity

My *en femme* shoe size is 10C (wide). Finding that shoe size in a fashionable style, or the correct color, has been a most difficult endeavor. No department stores carry 10C. What few stores do, carry only a few, ugly, styles. It has been extremely rare that I have consistently found anything resembling what I wanted.

However, as an alternative, I have been able, recently, to buy 10B (medium) shoes in the colors, styles, and heel heights that I prefer. I purchased a shoe stretcher to make them fit. As the 10B is already the correct length, it is possible to use the stretcher and get the desired results. A bonus is that the heel fits more securely.

Simply slide the stretcher into the shoe, and turn the knob until the turning gets difficult. Then stop. Never try to overstretch your shoes. They can be stretched farther through repeated sessions, but don't try to accomplish your ultimate goal on the first effort.

Leave the stretcher in for 24 hours, then do the other shoe. Each stretcher comes with little "bunion buttons" so you can stretch certain spots even more, if needed. All leather shoes will contract back towards their original width, but will not go all the way back. Thus you can eventually stretch the leather out to a comfortable, yet snug fit.

You can find shoe stretchers at most shoe repair stores, at least the ones that carry a full range of products and services. The cost will usually be around \$16. For that one-time price, you can afford a closet full of reasonably priced heels, instead of ending up in therapy for over-spending guilt trips, as well as keep food on the table!

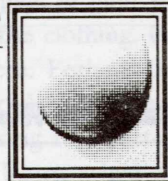
Face it: If we're going to do this, we might as well do it right, and have all the beautiful shoes our budgets can afford. With a shoe stretcher, you can add a new dimension to that budget.

[Originally published in Cross-Talk #24 (February 1991).]

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## THE HAZARDS AND JOYS OF COMING OUT OF THE CLOSET

by Laurie B.

Letting the cat out of the bag, and telling folks about crossdressing, can be frightening. And full of surprises, as I recently found out.

After opening up to my wife, who not only supported my TV tendencies, but was waiting for me to start dressing (she thought there was something about me that suggested femininity), changes took place that were noticed by others. Off went the mustache, more attention was paid to dress and cleanliness, and facial moisturizers helped to give a more youthful appearance. Also, an exercise program was started ("just 'cause you're forty, doesn't mean your waist has to match your age"). But most importantly, a more relaxed demeanor -- "No more acting like I had a bug up my behind", as my wife puts it.

People at work noticed right away, and told me how amazing my "transformation" was. Funny choice of words, but confidence boosting. I laughingly told them it was the added estrogens, especially after my work area went from "landfill" to "neat" (my version, which differs slightly from a real woman's). One woman said women were neat and clean due to the hormones, because her own sons were almost genetically filthy. I told her my female hormones must have jumped.

Some of the other women at work whom I kibitz with noticed that, every time they entered the halls, we were running into each other, almost magically -- perhaps woman's intuition? I asked about joining their walking-in-the-rain, trench coat and umbrella society for women. I could, they said, but only if I shaved my legs (if they only knew)!

My going from a grungy, eternally unhappy male with repressed TV tendencies to a more open intermediate state between male and female didn't bring down the world, though a large number of amazed folks wondered. But just as my wife picked up on my internal tendencies, which find physical expression whether you wish it or not, so did her friends.

Friend #1 saw my bare, shaven hands and forearms on a trip to New York City, and remembered my talk about a great club I belonged to. My wife took a gamble and explained my little secret. "Terrific, I am so glad for him", was the reply. A young, 23-year-old woman with a ballerina's (or gymnast's) shape and a feminine sensuality, she was not going to burn me at the stake. The first open disclosure would not result in the end of the world. Such relief! But what was to follow blew me away.

On a trip back from the Big Apple with my friend, I started discussing my dressing, and how I preferred "falsies that bounced, with long nipples". This made her

laugh. But we developed a close woman's communion, and learned of our shared likes (tight Spandex, and short skirts). And then the bombshell. This most feminine woman had always wanted to be a man, and wanted a penis!! I joked about trading body parts, but only to cover up my shaken being.

While I knew I wasn't the only TV in the world, what were the odds that the first person (besides my wife) to learn of my predilection would be a woman with male inclinations? She is aggressive, stronger than two men combined, and not above a fist fight, even with a man or several men. How unlike dainty little me!

This woman had confided in my wife years ago, and saw nothing wrong with people feeling in ways that belied their physical make-up. This certainly supported the claims

Letting the cat out of the bag can be frightening ... and full of surprises!

of widespread gender confusion. And how!

Friend #2 and her daughter were the next to hear, and more surprises came out. She's a tiny, petite 50-ish woman from the backwoods of the hill country. And her response to my wife's disclosure? (My wife talks to our friends without me, to soften the road.)

Like my wife's initial reaction, Friend #2 had always thought there was something unusual about me, but couldn't quite place it. She knew it wasn't homosexuality, but "who thinks of transvestism?" -- even though she had read extensively on the subject. This woman also thought my TV drives were wonderful, and she also felt that she should have been a man(!), like Friend #1.

Two discussions of the "secret", two women who differed widely in background and age, but had gender "problems" of their own. Is this America's real secret, a host of women with gender dysphoria who potentially outnumber us male dysphorics?

Showing that age and a rural setting don't have to color one's response to gender dysphoria, this woman clearly explained her views on crossdressing. Women routinely dress like men, with work boots, flannel shirts, short haircuts, and men's suits. And women do manly things, like fixing cars, shooting guns and bows, and hunting. So what's so unusual about men in dresses and blouses, doing ladylike stuff? In her mind, there is no such thing as crossdressing, because it's natural to wear clothes designed for the other sex, from time to time or a lot of the time.



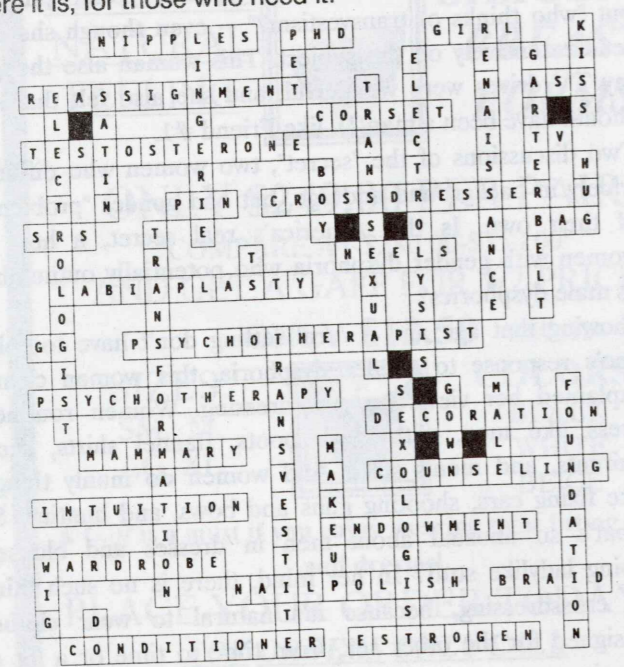
She also said that crossdressing isn't a problem with the TV individual, it's a hang-up on the part of society. It's not illegal, it's not a sickness, and TV behavior is perfectly alright for females. But, put a man in a dress and society tries to discourage it, subtly or coarsely, because feminine men are a threat to the continued dominance of men. Whew! No better way to put it.

While this woman and her daughter couldn't wait to see me dressed, they warned about looking too good in her village, because there was a shortage of women and I might "catch some fellow's eye". Sorry, but I love my wife and she won't allow me to date!

Excusing her bluntness, she gently pointed out that crossdressing women don't paint on five o'clock stubble or roughen up their hands, so why should TV men wear wigs, false nails and breast forms? In her mind, a TV man should express his femininity in dress and behavior without Dolly Parton breasts or other alien physical additions. But, I still like breast "additions" that sway and bounce, and my wig, too.

Conclusion: Coming out is like tossing a pebble into a still pond; a small disturbance from the existing state sends out circles of influence that touch everything, with mixed reactions. In my case, the ripples uncovered similar gender confusing situations in others, a communion of concerns and thoughts that probably would have never surfaced. Friends can not only support us, they can share in our feelings, though total agreement with our fantasies and special likes isn't always assured. But it is wise to remember that the waves we create can uncover hostile responses, so be careful!

**WE INADVERTENTLY FAILED** to publish the solution to the January crossword puzzle in last month's issue. Here it is, for those who need it:



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## HOTLINES

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

### NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:

- CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
- Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
- Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 243-0837
- East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
- Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 477-6588%
- Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
- Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888#
- Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
- GLEBITS, Boston: (617) 323-6082
- Images, Hartford: (203) 779-2465
- Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9862
- Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
- Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118@
- Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 538-5304
- Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050
- My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
- Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
- Reflections, Boston: (617) 323-6082
- Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (610) 630-1437
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- Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 435-5401
- Sigma Nu Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Trenton: (609) 586-1351 @
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- Transgender Educational Ass'n., Washington: (301) 949-3822
- Transgenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
- Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 231-1181
- Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
- XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

### THE SOUTH:

- American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
- Atlanta Gender Explorations: (404) 962-3118#
- Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
- Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
- Fantasia, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
- GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
- Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
- Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 982-7678
- Louisville Gender Society: (812) 944-5570
- Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
- Montgomery Institute, Gainesville: (904) 462-4826 #
- M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
- Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
- Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
- Phoenix, Asheville: (704) 259-9428
- Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
- Sigma Epsilon Chapter Tri-Ess, Atlanta: (404) 552-4415 @
- Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 527-1012
- Tennessee Vals, Nashville: (615) 664-6883
- TransGender Educational Ass'n, Arlington: (301) 949-3822
- Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 320-8737

### MIDWEST & VICINITY:

- Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
- Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
- Chicago Gender Society: (708) 749-1202
- City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minn'pls: (612) 229-3613
- Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
- Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 791-3947
- Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
- Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648
- Gender Dysphoria Support, Shawnee Mss'n: (913) 371-0658#

- Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (317) 475-0617
- Iowa Artistry, Cedar Rapids: (319) 842-2654
- Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression: (612) 220-9072
- N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258#
- Paradise Club, Cleveland: (216) 586-9292
- Quad-City Society for Sex. Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
- St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 997-9897
- Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024
- Wichita Transgender Alliance: (316) 682-9131

### SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:

- Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
- Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
- Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 545-3668
- CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
- Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 429-1929 @
- First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
- Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
- Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
- Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282
- Heart of Texas Gender Alliance, Austin: (210) 980-7788
- Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 404-1926
- ReCast, Dallas: (214) 641-4842 #
- Second Image, Austin: (512) 515-5460
- TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278#
- Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 988-8064 @
- Texas Ass'n. of Transsexuals, Houston: (713) 435-7293 #
- Tri-Plex Gender Association, Waco: (817) 867-1077
- West Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

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

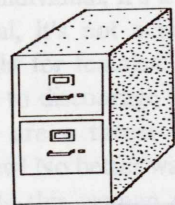
### THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):

- Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
- Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #
- Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 856-4867
- CHIC, Los Angeles: (818) 248-9075 @
- Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4112
- Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
- Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
- Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
- Powder Puffs Of California, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
- Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
- Sacramento Gender Association: (916) 482-7742
- Sigma Sigma Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lake Tahoe: (916) 544-2460 @
- Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
- Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

### CANADA:

- Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
- Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
- F.A.T.E., Vancouver: (604) 254-9591
- Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (613) 749-5203
- Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661
- Monarch Social Club, Ontario: (416) 949-6602

HAVE YOU ASKED A FRIEND TO SUBSCRIBE TO Cross-Talk?



## 'ZINE REVIEWS!

by Kimberleigh Richards

The sixth issue of *Dragazine* is out (actually, it arrived exactly three days too late to be reviewed last month!), and it really crosses over to the "mainstream" gender community this time by featuring an interview with the *grande dame*, Virginia Prince. (It was the experience of that interview that inspired Virginia's column last month on drag queens, in fact ...)

But the "This Gown Ain't Big Enough For The Both Of Us" issue also features an interview with James Haake, aka Gypsy, the famed La Cage emcee (he was there 12 years, I discovered when I read the interview), plus wild photo layouts of Wigstock '93 and NYC's Style Summit, and the last interview Dorian Corey (*Paris Is Burning's* house mother) gave before his death.

Publisher Lois Comondenominator has also included a lot of quick one-page (or less) fillers, including a review of Nan Goldin's *The Other Side*, a tongue-in-cheek commentary on J. Edgar Hoover's reported outings in drag, Gothic music, and a very strange article on a nudist transvestite!?!)

Lois has also started a "Media Notes" feature, and it's obvious she's been reading Paula Jordan Sinclair too long, 'cuz she writes very much like her.

*Dragazine* is one of my favorite magazines. This issue is just one more reason why.

[*Dragazine*, P.O. Box 691664, West Hollywood CA 90069. \$5.95, or \$10.95 for current and next issue. Back issues #2 through #5 also available; ask about prices.]



*Girlfriend!* has been around for a little while; I read about them first in *Factsheet Five*, and then in our own "NewsQueen" column. I recently acquired the last couple of issues from the publishers, and I can now report that the good hype that's been on the streets about this 'zine are true.

The Fall 1993 issue (which I presume is typical) has a satirical advice column, book reviews, music reviews, video reviews, and a whole lot of other apparently incongruous features ... in fact, I spent a lot of time trying to figure out what half the magazine had to do with drag!

Then I got it: *Girlfriend!* isn't about drag, it's about the things drag queens are in to! And what finally made it clear to me was the cover letter from intern Shirlee Sunshine that their content is very locally (San Francisco)

focused, and that much of what they print wouldn't necessarily be of interest to our readers. (Maybe I should try reading cover letters before the 'zines.)

There is a lot in here that will appeal to the drag-oriented crossdresser, like the photos from the local club scene, the feature on queer theatre in the '90s, and the interview with RuPaul. (Yes, the "Supermodel" is everywhere.) Otherwise, though, you may find entire sections of this 'zine skippable unless you live in the Bay Area.

[*Girlfriend!*, P.O. Box 191781, San Francisco CA 94119. \$4.00; \$6.95 for the *Girlfriend!* 1994 Monthly Calendar, featuring photos of Bay Area drag queens, which replaced the Winter 1993 issue.]



Many thanks to Larry-Bob of *Queer 'Zine Explosion*, without whom I would never know where to contact the publishers of these gender-oriented 'zines, or them me.

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## RESPONSIBILITY

by Rebecca Ann Petersen

I have heard the statement from more than one CD: "I know I can never pass, but I don't care" ... usually followed by: "I am perfectly content to remain in the confines of my home, or an occasional CD function". I personally admire this thought process, but as time progresses, I am starting to doubt its validity. All of the periodicals that I have read are usually laced with letters from readers who state that feeling feminine is far more important than looking completely feminine. Again, the same publications tell of CDs coming out of the closet and into mainstream society, much like lemmings heading for the proverbial cliff. The point here is that everything printed offers the reader a direct conflict. Most publications leave the reader with the thought that, to be a real crossdresser, you must be out and about in society. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The problem is that there are some that -- no matter what they did to themselves -- could not pass through society unnoticed. It would seem that this could be very detrimental to the mental well-being of this particular CD, because he is now being told by his newfound peers, that he is an incomplete or inferior CD. To put it bluntly, this is just the opposite of what most support organizations set out to accomplish, but it's done by most organizations every day. Is there a solution to this dilemma? Probably not. The concept of letting the authors of various articles of each of the national publications and the authors of local newsletters know that they are writing possible harmful information is, in all probability, a waste of time. It has to be approached from the individual level. I am sure that most who read CD publications are of at least average intelligence and are capable of making decisions for themselves.

But even though we are intelligent enough to make our own decisions, the pressure exerted by other well meaning CDs writing articles is in some cases too much to handle.

Over the years I have written many articles for our newsletter -- which have been reprinted by national organizations -- which state that going public is a personal decision and one should not be coaxed into what may be a wrong or harmful decision for that particular individual. On the other hand, I have written as many articles describing my and others' escapades out in society. So I

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am as guilty as those well-meaning individuals I spoke of earlier.

The problem that exists for anyone writing articles for either local or national publications is that you must please everyone. If you must cater to all CDs, then you will find articles that directly oppose one another. In other words, articles that state "how great it is to be out in the big world, mingling with society, while dressed" and those that state "it is not necessary to leave the closet". Both concepts are correct, but apply to different people. **You have to decide which category is correct for you.**

Over the years, I have met many CDs who have chosen one of the above categories. I will, however, state that the larger percentage have chosen being out in public over staying within a controlled environment. The reason is not totally clear, except from a personal standpoint, but

**Some of the nicest, most caring people I have met in the crossdressing community do not see the need to "pass".**

the action of going public does not make a better crossdresser. I have also met those that were comfortable with the controlled environment, but with time changed their mind and opted for venturing out. Was peer pressure a determining factor? Were they coaxed out by written delusions of grandeur? Did their personal life change in some way that offered them more freedom? Probably the answer to all of the above questions is yes.

I will interject at this point that some of the nicest, most caring people I have met, since being involved with the crossdressing community, have been those that did not see the need to pass or to be involved with the rest of society while dressed. They truly cared about other people and were not preoccupied with their own physical appearance. I have also met those that were so good, the finished product allowed them to pass under the closest scrutiny. Are these "passers" better CDs? Emphatically, NO. They have only the benefit of being able to pass ... no more, no less. The thing that you were not made aware of is what this person that passes had to give up, or what the rest of his life is like. Remember, there always is a price to pay of one kind or another.

In the future I will probably write more articles on clothing and makeup tips, but remember, they are not designed to insinuate that you must use these tips for the rest of the world to see. All of my writings are designed to be somewhat informative, but always lighthearted. I have never been able to take crossdressing, or for that matter,

life in general, seriously. Most of what I write, except for this article, I write with humorous overtones, in hopes that none of us takes this stuff too seriously. My only helpful hint at this time is that from now on, when reading any CD publication, do it with both eyes open. Learn to read between the lines, so to speak. Learn to recognize the fertilizer from the shoe polish.

To finalize this dissertation, we must maintain our common sense and make our own decisions. We as CDs can not be swayed by what appears to be glamorous escapades written by other well meaning CDs, if that's not what we want. We as CDs can also not afford to measure another's worth by whether they pass or not. Looking at the big picture, passing is but a speck of sand on the beach. The grass is not greener on the other side, it just appears that way because of the fertilizer being spread. A crossdresser is a crossdresser, no matter where the action is carried out. This is not the Boy Scouts; there are no merit badges given. Your rank will never change for achievement of activities. You are a plain old crossdresser whether at home or out in public and will probably die a plain old crossdresser.

As always, have fun and do what you do to the best of your ability, with dignity and within the restrictions placed upon you, either by yourself or by others.

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ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE by Karen Rusnak

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**ILGWU**  
International Ladies Garment Wearers Union

**AFL-CIO**  
American Federation of Ladies-Crossdressing Independence Organization

**Remember to look for the union label.**

The label that stands on high heels...  
that stands for craftsmanship in  
make-up application...  
and stands for clothes in sizes  
other than 5-7-9.

An affiliation of sisters committed...  
not to mental institutions...  
but to the betterment of all femme-kind...  
to the united front of all people who like to  
wear what the hell they want to...  
when they want to.

The union of all transgendered to be what  
they want to be!

And finally...  
not to be labeled at all...  
but to be considered as a person...period!

ILGWU was originally an idea of Ricky Hunt as seen in Crostalk

*Karen*

## NewsQueen Extra: SUPREME COURT HEARS CASE OF TRANSSEXUAL INMATE

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

In January, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case of a male-to-female transsexual inmate who was raped in federal prison. The inmate, Dee Farmer, claims that her 1989 rape at a federal maximum-security prison in Terre Haute, Ind. came because prison officials did not sufficiently protect her from other inmates.

Prior to her arrest and 20-year sentence for credit card fraud, Farmer had taken female hormones and had received breast implants, giving her a decidedly feminine appearance. But she retains her male genitals. Within a week of being transferred to the prison, which houses only males, she said she was raped.

The case hinges on whether Farmer's feminine appearance should have signaled to prison officials that she faced a greater risk of sexual assault, and was thereby subjected to cruel and unusual punishment forbidden by the Eighth Amendment.

Farmer's attorney, Elizabeth Alexander, argued that by not protecting her client, prison officials were deliberately indifferent to the risk she faced by being placed in the general prison population. "They didn't even consider her transsexuality," Alexander said of the officials.

Deputy Solicitor General Paul Bender told the high court that Farmer faced only "the normal risk of being in prison" and that officials had acted prudently. He also noted that Farmer's claim of having been raped was only an "allegation," and noted that Farmer, who is infected with the AIDS virus, has been known to engage in consensual sexual activity at one of the prisons where she has been incarcerated. She is now at a medium-security prison in Florence, Colo.

Throughout the hour-long argument, all the justices except Clarence Thomas asked questions and referred to Farmer with female pronouns. Bender used male pronouns.

The justices' questions and comments seemed to indicate sympathy for Farmer's case. Justice Antonin Scalia, a Reagan appointee, noted that "any fact finder with a brain in his head would conclude the warden knew about" the risk Farmer faced. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, a Clinton appointee, asked Alexander if a young, effeminate male with a slight build would also be at greater risk for rape. The lawyer replied that those characteristics might also create an obvious risk. Bender replied that such a ruling could lead to a situation in which every federal prison would be in violation of the Eighth Amendment.

Farmer prepared her original suit and filed it in federal court without help from a lawyer. A federal appeals court had thrown out the suit, ruling that Farmer had failed to prove that the four officials named as plaintiffs had actual knowledge of the potential harm.

Several of the Supreme Court justices noted that none of the four officials named in the suit actually participated in the decision to release Farmer into the general prison population at Terre Haute. That fact could allow the high court to throw out the suit without ruling on the merits of the case.

A decision is expected by July.

As a sidelight, Justice Ginsberg had previously expressed what could be called understanding -- and perhaps even sympathy -- for persons who change their sex. When asked by a reporter how her life had changed since she joined the Supreme Court, she replied, "Have you seen the film *Orlando*?"

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# POST-OP REALITIES

by Jennifer M.

I am proud of who I am. I have met life's hardest challenges head-on. I am a woman. I am also a post-op transsexual.

Regretfully, there is so little information out there on the many facets of transsexualism ... and almost nothing on post-ops.

I have researched what has been published in such journals as *Archives of Sexual Behavior* and have also learned from a handful of post-ops I have met over the years. Most are better off than before, but what I find an insult are the lies that are passed on year after year, and the important facts that are omitted.

**There is little information on the many facets of transsexualism ... and almost nothing on post-ops.**

According to the studies I have found published, approximately 86% of post-ops are "generally satisfied" with their outcome. That statistic is both relieving and comforting ... it gives one hope for the future. Keep it in mind as you read further.

On the talk shows recently, a very prominent surgeon has been saying that 95% of his patients are orgasmic. That percentage, though, is not borne out in the real world. Evidence varies widely, but approximately one-third to two-thirds, at the very most, are orgasmic. [Editor's Note: These percentages match those from recent discussions on the Internet.] Not being orgasmic certainly doesn't mean that you can't be greatly pleased. But it's important to know the realistic odds going in.

Although there may be no deaths related to SRS (except perhaps from "Dr." Brown in Tijuana), there is a high rate of complications, rarely mentioned. If it is mentioned, it has not been given its appropriate weight and measure in the studies I've read. Most, if not all, sex reassignment surgeries have complications, with 20% to 35% (or more) requiring further corrective surgery.

What might go wrong? Here's a partial list: Holes forming between the vagina and rectum, inadequate depth for intercourse, total or partial lack of sensation (possibly for life), the urethra collapsing or extending past where it should, scar tissue blocking the urethra and totally or

partially blocking the urine stream, urine spraying or streaming at undesirable angles, constant pain or intense pain when excited (again, possibly for life), hair on the interior vaginal walls, spontaneous evacuation of the bowels, lack of bladder control, vaginal closing (wholly or partially), and there are so many more things that can go wrong. Some of these complications can be corrected with subsequent surgery; others cannot.

One claim often heard is "my vagina looks so good that a gynecologist can't tell the difference". I'm not saying that there's not a few like that, but I've never seen one.

Vaginas in genetic women vary greatly, but I can tell the difference. And I'm not a doctor. This doesn't mean that one can't be very happy with the results but ... at best, it's close, and at worst, it's pretty crude. And there are many variations in between.

So, what doctor should you choose? You should look for one with a low complication rate. You may have to trade off superior cosmetic appearance for good depth, good orgasmic rate. Hopefully, you can get some good feedback from those who have had the surgery. Dallas Denny at AEGIS maintains a good database of surgeons who perform SRS with data about their work.

The American Medical Association rates a surgeon as "expert" if they perform 100 or more surgeries per year. With this in mind, be wary of a surgeon who only performs SRS once in a while. As you can see from the list of complications (and remember, it's only a partial one!), there is too much that can go wrong.

I hope this article will spur others to share, seek, and learn as much post-op information as possible. We are no longer a "popular" affliction; we must learn to help ourselves.

[Jennifer M. is a member of the Gender Identity Center of Colorado in Denver.]

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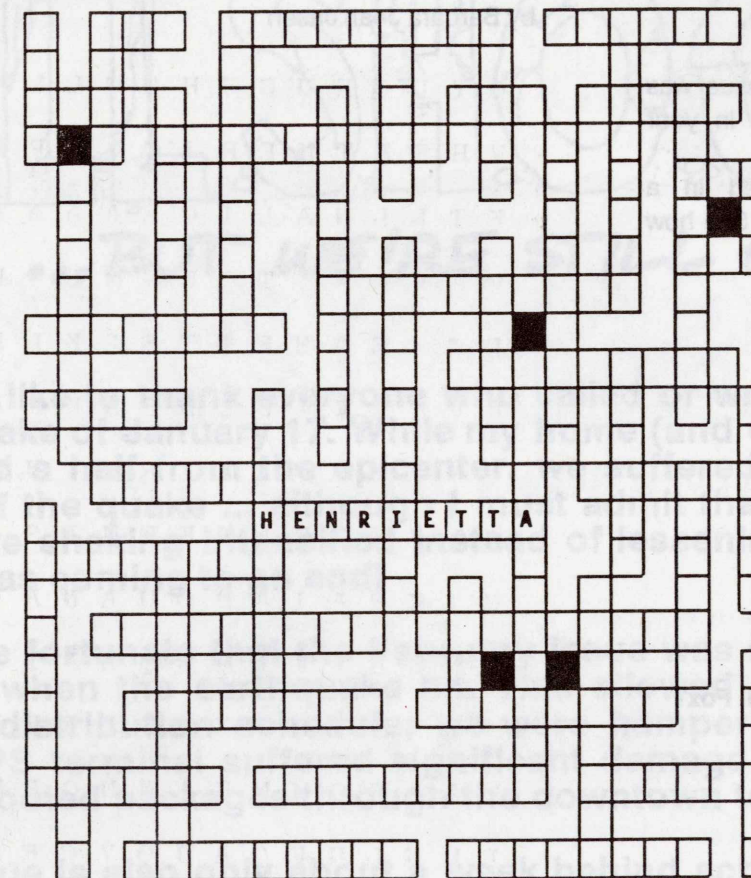
If you see a news article relating to the gender community, please send it to us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365, or fax it to us at (818) 347-4190.

# PUZZLES!

[Thanks to Renaissance News for the crossword puzzle.]

## WOMEN'S NAMES 1

Fill in the blanks with the names listed below.



- Adele
- Adrienne
- Anita
- Brenda
- Carlotta
- Caroline
- Catherine
- Charlotte
- Christine
- Constance
- Dominique
- Doris
- Edith
- Eileen
- Elizabeth
- Erica
- Esmeralda
- Evangeline
- Eve
- Gabrielle
- Genevieve
- Geraldine
- Gertrude
- Henrietta
- Hilary
- Ida
- Ina
- Inez
- Isabel
- Jacqueline
- Janice
- Josephine
- Kathleen
- Lorraine
- Marcella
- Margaret
- Marguerite
- Melody
- Mia
- Millicent
- Nellie
- Nola
- Opal
- Priscilla
- Rachel
- Rae
- Regina
- Stephanie
- Sue
- Victoria

**MY WONDERFULLY STRANGE FRIEND**, Sandra Kramer\*, who publishes a politically incorrect newspaper called *Anti-Press* up in the Lancaster-Palmdale, Calif. area, created this picture of Barney the dinosaur in drag. She and I both thought *Cross-Talk's* readers might appreciate it as well ...

All right, all together now: *I hate you, you hate me, let's hang Barney from a tree ...*



(\*-Sandra is a genetic female with two kids who drive her crazy.)

Solution next month

# MOVIE TIME

by Denise Peters

The movie quiz that appeared in an earlier issue was apparently so popular that a sequel is now in your hands.

Here is a list of 15 stars who appeared in a crossgendered role in a major motion picture. See how many you can name.

1. A very young **Andy Williams**?
2. Monarch-ly **Alec Guinness**?
3. Super spy **Lee J. Cobb**?
4. Comedic actor **W.C. Fields**?
5. Serial bad guy **Rod Steiger**?
6. S&M-ish **Kim Basinger**?
7. *Sea Hunt* son **Jeff Bridges**?
8. Again? **Jack Lemmon**?
9. Wild and crazy **Steve Martin**?
10. Person and a half ago, **Marlon Brando**?
11. Crime fighter **Burt Reynolds**?
12. Relatively famous second banana **Michael J. Fox**?
13. Mother's son, **Robert Vaughn**?
14. Mother's stuffer, **Anthony Perkins**?
15. *Squares* star, **Paul Lynde**?

### ANSWERS:

1. *To Have And Have Not* (Andy did Lauren Bacall's singing for her).
2. *Kind Hearts and Coronets*.
3. *In Like Flint*.
4. *You Can't Cheat An Honest Man*.
5. *No Way to Treat a Lady*.
6. *9-1/2 Weeks*.
7. *Thunderbolt & Lightfoot*.
8. *Pepe* (cameo).
9. *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid*.
10. *Missouri Breaks*.
11. *Fuzz* (as a nun).
12. *Back To The Future II* (as his own daughter).
13. *S.O.B.*
14. Come on now: *Psycho*.
15. *Glass Bottom Boat*.

[Thanks to Primrose, Chicago Gender Society, for the reprint.]

# THE NAME GAME

by Barbara Jean Jasen

O Y D C K U G J H S G L L N  
 V H E A T H E R J C K Z P A  
 K T E L N A L I C E A A A A  
 V A E K N I T Q B C M L U D  
 P C L E A N E T T E Z K I N  
 L V N I Z I D L L E A K A A  
 P N I L U G A A L R R C H W  
 G L I Y S R L D E E U I S J  
 O T K R A I A N O U A N A C  
 C N B B Y V I M S Q L A T B  
 J D R R Y C O N N I E W Y V  
 V A A B O M N E I N N O B W  
 E M U L U F Q A J O Y C E R  
 V E E N I E A W N M X P S O

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**CATHY**  
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**DANIELLE**  
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**PAMELA**  
**PAULA**  
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**TASHA**  
**VIRGINIA**  
**WANDA**  
**ZELDA**

[Answer next month.]

# ALL SHOOK UP

## ...BUT WE'RE STILL HERE!

I would like to thank everyone who called or wrote following the Northridge earthquake of January 17. While my home (and *Cross-Talk's* office) is a mere mile and a half from the epicenter, we suffered no significant damage as a result of the quake ... although I must admit that after the first few seconds, when the shaking intensified instead of lessening, I was convinced that the world was coming to an end!

We were fortunate that the February issue was already at Arena Press being printed when the earthquake hit. This allowed us to stay very close to our normal distribution schedule; we were hampered only by the fact that our local UPS terminal suffered significant damage and there were delays while they rerouted packages through the downtown terminal.

This issue is also only about a week behind schedule. We expect to be back to our normal routine for April.

However, the Woodland Hills post office, where *Cross-Talk* receives its mail, was hard hit and remained closed for the entire week following the earthquake. Our mail service has, at this writing, still not returned to normal, and I must ask your patience if you have sent an order or other correspondence, as we are experiencing a 5 to 7 day delay in delivery in most cases.

Although we had no damage, we are in the process of moving (don't ask me to explain ... it's a long story), so our cash flow -- already erratic due to the mail problem -- is going to be further disrupted. So if you've been thinking about subscribing, this would be a great time for you to do so, because we can really use the money!

Thanks again for your continued love and support.

**Kymerleigh Meghann Richards**  
**Publisher & Managing Editor**

(P.S.: For those who were also concerned about Trish Anderson's computer service, Cross Connection: It was located further away from the epicenter, in Burbank, and was back up and running within a few hours. However, the monthly update of our News Services files was delayed due to higher-priority concerns here at *Cross-Talk*.)

**If you bought this copy of Cross-Talk at a retail outlet, you can now save at least 40% off the cover price by subscribing! See page 40.**

**IT KEEPS GETTING  
BETTER AND BETTER!!**

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By request, I've come out with a new line, **THE SISSY SERIES**. These books will be slightly different than my other books so you might like them more or less. The first of the series is called **THE SISSY MAID ACADEMY**. A young man is trained how to be a maid for rich and famous women. Illustrated!

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