

CROSS-TALK



AUGUST 1990

(ISSUE #18)

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A TOTAL LACK OF SUPPORT

As much as I hate to start this column with a negative note, I must admit that the next-to-last paragraph of my July column turned out to be optimism of the highest caliber. As it happened, I was the only person from the Los Angeles area who traveled to Lompoc to attend the BBQ that Jaye and Carolyn hosted for us on June 23. However, we did have attendees from even farther away than Los Angeles, including a delegation from RGA in San Jose, and one sister (not dressed due to circumstances) and her wife who live in San Diego County! To all those who told me Lompoc was "too far to drive", let me say that you missed a good feed and that it is sad that you could not reciprocate the friendship that Jaye and Carolyn have shown by driving down to our area to be with us on numerous occasions. The good news is that Jaye and Sydra from Goleta will be joining forces with Lisa in Santa Barbara to plan more get-togethers for our Central Coast sisters. And when BBQ time rolls around next summer, I hope that we in Southern California will show stronger support for "Valley Girls North".

Meanwhile, we move forward with our activities here in L.A.: August 25 will be our "Too Good For Goodwill" party at Ayme [redacted], where you can bring all the clothes, shoes, and accessories that have been hanging in your closet, unworn, for too long. Trade with each other, make cash deals, whatever...! The evening will also include a presentation by Kathy of Katherine's Kreations on custom-made clothes and alterations. Call (818) 347-2206 or the "Cross-Talk" hotline to RSVP.

I am certain word has leaked out by now regarding some friction at last month's Tri-Ess Alpha meeting. Without making dirty laundry public, I would personally like to reassure those who are still hurt from past leadership of Alpha that I will be maintaining a personal relationship with the Chapter in my capacity as a member of the Tri-Ess Board of Directors, and I have Virginia's personal assurance that she will not attend Alpha meetings so long as I am monitoring their progress. I join interim leaders Sharon and Janyne in inviting any and all past members to whatever future meeting date fits your schedule, so that we can continue to heal old wounds.

A few notes about "Cross-Talk's" auxiliary publications: There is a notice elsewhere in these pages regarding a retooling of the "Yellow Pages". Please read it if your subscription has included this resource guide, and call me if you have any questions. "Best of Cross-Talk Volume 1" has been delayed due to continuing problems with the scanner in Napa. Again, if you have ordered it, you will receive it as soon as it is published.

I am now living full-time as Kymberleigh, so if you have cause to send me a check for something, please be certain to use the correct name so that the bank isn't driven crazier than this whole lifestyle of mine has caused them to be already!

♥, *Kymberleigh*

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TWO TVs MURDERED NEAR WILD ANIMAL PARK IN SAN DIEGO

("Update") -- Two male transvestites were fatally shot along Highway 78 about two miles east of the San Diego Wild Animal Park sometime early June 12. Rafael Sanchez-Ayala, 25, who went by the name "Blanca", was still alive and walking when people first saw him about 2 a.m. Later, he was spotted by a park ranger who called police. Paramedics found him semi-conscious and transported him to medical facilities in Escondido, where he died that afternoon of a gunshot wound to the head. A second victim was discovered, already dead of a gunshot wound, by a truck driver at about 6 a.m. The second victim has not been identified. San Diego Police are conducting a search for persons with information leading to the identity of the second victim, or having any information about the killings. A spokesperson said Sanchez-Ayala had addresses in Tijuana, San Diego, Escondido, and Oceanside.

PLAYING IT SAFE

by Lauren [redacted]
(from "Femme Mirror")

A very frightening experience just happened. I was sitting in my ground floor room, all dolled up and reading a book. The window was open; the blinds were closed. (I may be daring, but I'm not foolhardy.) I heard a noise at the window. Naturally, I looked over toward the window. I saw one of the lower slats was caught on the one just above it. This is a typical occurrence when the blinds are raised and lowered. However, these blinds are always lowered and closed. I keep them as opaque as I can get them on this particular window. This added up to an obvious conclusion: Someone was watching me through the window! My heart jumped from idle speed into at least overdrive. My breathing went right with it. I forced myself to stay calm and went right on reading. I was much too scared to shriek at the peeper: "Go Away!" or to get up and go close the window and the blind. Eventually a person came by and didn't say anything about strange people who peep into other's windows. A passing car's lights illuminated the window. No one was visible, there was no shadow. Finally, I got up, turned off the light, and walked to the window. As I turned, I could see the shadow of someone walking away from my window! The point is: What would a typical female have done? Would she have screamed and kept screaming until someone called the police? Would she have locked herself in the bedroom until daylight? Would she have yanked up the shade and confronted the peeper? Would she have opened the window in the first place? Most of us don't realize the dangers into which we put ourselves because we are accustomed to the protection being male gives us. There are male rape victims, yes. However, I would be willing to bet my computer female victims outnumber males at least three to one. I have read stories about TV's being physically assaulted in public and escaping rape or worse because of the increased ability to fight being male provided them. I can remember walking from a club to my car at 2AM during Fantasy Fair, with a femme friend, in the dark, and along a little used road. To a female, doing something like that sort would be an unacceptable risk, especially if she had no male escort. Neither of us thought anything about it, however. I doubt many of us have even thought about the possibilities of assault, rape, or serious injury... to say nothing of murder... when the criminal doesn't get what he expects to get! The root cause of this carelessness, as with so many other world ills, is the male Macho stereotype we absorbed during early childhood. While girls could admit to being targets of such crimes, and in doing so, deal with the fact in a rational and safe manner, those of us with exterior plumbing never seem to realize it is just as easy for us to be victims as well. This is especially true when we are dressed as the "weaker" sex. The normal safety evaluation process many females

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THE 6:00 T.U. NEWS

HIGH HEELS TRIP UP ATTACKER

("Weekly World News") -- A fleeing slasher was nabbed by pursuing cops when he tripped on his high-heeled shoes. 27-year-old Dwayne [REDACTED] was all dolled up in women's clothing when he slashed another man on a street in Springfield, Massachusetts. Two nearby cops gave chase when [REDACTED] took flight, catching him a few blocks away when [REDACTED] stumbled in his high heels. The crossdressing attacker was sentenced to 5 to 10 years on charges of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon.

PARTON'S LIMO DRIVER WAS A GIRL

("Star") -- Country music star Dolly Parton is being chauffeured around Hollywood by a 300-pound transsexual who had an operation eight years ago to change from a woman into a man. 44-year-old Jason (née Susan Ann) [REDACTED] says the buxom blonde singer shares his "secret" and got to know her a few years ago when she was in Southern California frequently taping her short-lived TV variety show. He says Dolly asks for him by name when she's in town. For her part, Parton says she finds nothing wrong with transgendered behavior, and admits, "If I were a man, I'd be a drag queen. I enjoy being a trashy dresser and I love gaudy things." [REDACTED] had the sex-change operation after she consulted a doctor about a severe weight problem and tests showed she had more male hormones than female.

KENNY ROGERS DEVELOPING BREASTS

("Star") -- Country music star Kenny Rogers' breasts are becoming fuller as an after-effect of liposuction to remove unwanted weight. Dr. Norman Martin, who performed the fat cell removal procedures on Rogers three years ago, says that weight added after the procedure settles in "areas of fat cells that are thin, like the chest." Martin also says that about 6 to 8 percent of women get fuller breasts after liposuction: "In men it's rare, but it can happen." In an attempt to reduce the after-effects, Rogers has changed his diet to include large quantities of high protein milkshakes to build muscle bulk instead of fat.

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SEX-CHANGE JOCKEY

("Sun") -- A former jockey will be galloping down the aisle soon now that surgery has changed him into a happy filly. Kevan [REDACTED], whose successful career as one of England's premier jockeys included more than 300 wins, has already had sex reassignment surgery, and is now undergoing electrolysis and awaiting an operation to remove her Adam's apple so her voice will be higher. [REDACTED], who now uses the first name Karen, says she feels "as though I've always been a woman", and was the butt of many jokes on the race course while still a man.

At 5-foot-3 and 110 pounds, she is already smaller than her fiancé, 35-year-old divorcee Malcolm Slater, who looks forward to the voice operation clearing up the remaining difficulty in their relationship: "Karen's OK until she opens her mouth and talks like a man." However, the prospective groom talks eagerly about the couple going to Greece to marry.

BOSS TELLS SECRETARY TO HAVE SRS

("Sun") -- A sexist supervisor in London told his very pregnant secretary that in order to keep her job she had to abort the baby and undergo a sex change operation.

Eric Chapin, who also told a mailroom clerk her gender was the only thing keeping her from advancement, is now facing court action from Britain's Equal Opportunities Commission. Says his secretary, Pamela Brown, "I'm very happy being a woman ... I don't think my husband would like being married to a man." Echoes co-worker Beverly Hinton: "It's not a man's world anymore and Mr. Chapin must be made aware of that fact."

THE REAL "AFRICAN QUEEN'S"

("Star") -- When young men in the Wodaabe tribe of northern Africa want to impress the young maidens of the tribe, they dress up ... like women. The old and honored tradition, the origin of which is lost in tribal history, calls for young warriors to dress in peacock finery, bedeck themselves with jewelry, and makeover their faces with colorful paints, before engaging in an elaborate ritual of pantomime, eye-rolling, and grinning ... all to catch the attention of the tribal beauties who tickle their fancy.

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A federal appeals court in Chicago has upheld a rural community's decision to bar police from wearing ear studs, even when off duty. In its ruling, the court found that the practice caused "an adverse impact on police discipline, esprit de corps and uniformity" in the 3,000 population town of Pentone, 45 miles south of Chicago. The officers called the studs "fashionable"; the court cited "public dissatisfaction", noting that even one of the officers' wives complained about the earrings. ("Update")

Quote of the Month: "I did my share of Tennessee Williams plays, and I never had any fun doing any of his guys. I love his women. Though nobody would ever let me play any of his women." -- Tom Selleck, talking about the start of his career. ("L.A. Times")

Do blondes really have more fun? Brunettes seem to think so. A national survey reported by "Glamour" magazine found that of natural brunettes who colored their hair, 42% chose a blonde shade, while nearly 70% of brunettes who didn't use hair color said they wished they were blonde. Natural blondes said they couldn't see what all the fuss was about ... only 10% felt they were more attractive to men than brunettes, and 17% actually felt their fair hair had been an obstacle to being taken seriously in their career.

Does your bra fit you properly? According to a spokesperson for J.C. Penney, a brassiere is properly sized and styled for your figure if it fits comfortably when fastened on the middle hook, if straps stay on your shoulders without slipping or digging into your skin, if it doesn't "ride up" in back when you stretch or reach, your bustline rests midway between your shoulders and elbows, and cups look round and natural. (NWGA newsletter)

Helpful Hints Dept.: If you want to look smaller, wear your clothes loose. Never wear things that "just fit". You will look larger. Also, never get rid of your shoulder pads ... they help hide the fact that you have broad shoulders. If your sleeve cuff buttons are too tight, re sew them with elastic thread to allow you a little more space. ("Cross Currents")

A transsexual student at the University of Alabama in Birmingham has won a seat in the school's student government association. Caitlin Kiernan (née Kenneth Wright) attributes her win to her visibility. She stands 6'4" and sometimes dresses as a woman for classes. Her campaign slogan: "The only transsexual to run". ("Renaissance News")

Although Barbie and Ken dolls have changed through the years, a Tampa, Florida woman was unprepared for what she found while shopping with her daughter in a "Toys R Us" store ... a Ken doll clad in a purple tank top and lace apron over a turquoise and purple skirt. Carina Guillot brought the crossdressed toy to the store management's attention, who found the package seal was intact. A spokesperson for Mattel said she had "no idea how this woman got the Ken doll" in Barbie's clothing. ("Daily News")

Responding to complaints from women everywhere about that "instrument of torture", the dress pump, six shoe manufacturers are now marketing "comfort" pumps, with

roomier toe space and stronger, ampler, cushioning. "USA Weekend" asked three of Radio City Music Hall's famed Rockettes to try a pair from each manufacturer, and found Easy Spirit's "Feather" (approx. \$70 a pair) to be the most comfortable. Stylish, too: It comes with a 2 1/2" heel and is made from good quality leather. Three other shoes, all with 2" heels, rated higher than 8 on a scale of 10: Calico's "Pillow" (\$52), Rockport's "Walking Pump" (\$100), and Naturalizer's "TownWalker" (\$65).

FRIENDSHIPS: MAKING THEM, KEEPING THEM

by Dina [redacted]
 (from "Renaissance News")

For most of us, making new friends is not an easy thing to do. This is especially true when we are the new person in an existing group and everyone else seems to know each other. It is easy to feel alone and intimidated by the others in the group. Perhaps many of us have heard that support groups are filled with little cliques of friends. For new members, or the shy members, this presents an intimidating barrier to making friends quickly ... or at all. Now, I think we have all been through this, both in our group outings and in general social settings. I can't help you become the social butterfly of the cocktail party circuit but I would like to help everyone break these barriers down. Think about it: why should anyone be intimidated by a man wearing a dress? Yet most of us have been reluctant to talk to someone else because of appearance, or because they were in a group, or felt like the odd woman out, at some point in our TG careers. And it's only human nature to feel that it's the other girl's fault that you aren't making friends. Making friends with new people takes effort. You need to make the effort yourself ... unless your personality and good looks are so magnetic that people beat a path to wherever you are. In a group like ours, where everyone's most vulnerable secret is exposed, what better common ground do we need to strike up friendships? And if snappy conversational gambits aren't your forte, complimenting or asking the other girl about her fashions or makeup or hairstyle never fails. Especially compliments! We are all inveterate compliment hounds. Even if you start slow and meet only a few people at each meeting, those people will know others and then you can join conversations with them and by geometric progression you will have a wide circle of friends. But you need to make a start, fight your bashfulness and don't be intimidated by looks or preconceived ideas about the other girl. I have never met a person I didn't like in our group. Yet, I have never spoken to many members for the same poor excuses I am trying to combat with this article. I just met a girl at one of our dance parties who I always felt was a little intimidating and standoffish. Not only was she not standoffish; she was very friendly, open, and leads an interesting life. It was my loss in not making her acquaintance months ago. And that brings me to another friend-related topic. Once you meet some of our members, you realize how diverse and interesting some of our lives are ... as if transgenderism wasn't enough! Have you ever thought of extending your support group acquaintances to your 'other' life? There's no law that says we should only see each other once a month, dressed en femme. Wouldn't it be nice to have a buddy who knew why you shaved your legs? or why your nails were so long? or what was so damn important about the third Saturday night of the month? If you have made friends, and as you make new friends, keep it in mind that we are nice people even when we're dressed as men. So I don't want to hear about how our community is cliquish anymore. Make an effort to meet new friends at each meeting or function. You'll be richer for it and so will your organization.

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A WIFE'S VIEWPOINT

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

This is my 50th column. As I look back over the topics I have written about in the past five years the most important were those that dealt with relationships. This month's column is based upon a conversation one of my faithful readers had with his wife about his crossdressing. To the best of his ability he recorded her exact words in his personal journal. He has graciously allowed me to use some of her words as the basis for this column.

The remarkable thing about this woman's feelings is that they are the same as those reported to me nearly 10 years ago when I did my study of wives of crossdressers. Her emotions are a composite of what I have heard many other women say and express far better than I could what many women feel about their partner's crossdressing.

"Had I known of your deep-down desire to be a woman before our marriage, I would not have married you. I am a very feminine person who is thankful she is a woman and takes delight in her feminine sexuality. Sexually I desire a man who rejoices in his masculinity, who loves me because I complete his masculine aspirations and not because he has a need to take over my femininity which belongs to me and not to him. You should know that I fantasize and dream about such a relationship.

"I must tell you that I feel deprived of such a relationship which is something I desire intensely. When we make love I must close my eyes and imagine my lover to be such a one as that because when I look at you I know you are wishing you could become me, that you are stealing my womanhood.

"I too love to wear beautiful feminine underclothes but I will never again do so when you are around because I have the feeling that it is my clothes you are desiring and not me. You have stolen these things from me and I can now only enjoy them when I am apart from you.

"I know that you can not help yourself. God knows you did not choose to be the way you are. Mostly you are tender toward me, considerate and loyal. You are hard-working, intelligent, thoughtful and have many admirable qualities. But because of your unfortunate unhappiness with your masculinity you are not the man I want. You think you are feminine and indeed there is a feminine side to you as there is to every human being but you are a very masculine person in your day-to-day living in spite of your wish to be a woman."

The sad part of this story is that both of these people have spent a lifetime with this obstacle blocking and frustrating their daily lives. Our sexuality is such an intimate part of ourselves that when its expression is inhibited there is a possibility for anguish and frustration.

[If you have subjects you would like Dr. Peo to write about, or wish to comment on this column, please write him at P.O. Box 4887, Poughkeepsie NY 12602, or call him at (914) [redacted]. All communications are confidential. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit newsletter, so long as Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version.]

A REASON OF BEING

by Wendi [redacted]

Many articles have been written about the psychological, biological, and environmental influences, as the explanation for cross-dressing. Some of you who have read these articles, no doubt have said, "this still doesn't explain why I AM!" And I know this to be true, because many sisters of our sorority have related this to me. I have truly brought peace to their hearts, mind and souls, through metaphysics, as a possible answer to why we crossdress. Metaphysics can be defined as the study of the finer forces of nature. Few TV/TS articles have been written on this subject and fewer have been published. What I wish you to understand through metaphysical science, is the reality of the inner-self and all its divisions. To some of you this is a complex subject. To explain this, so it may be comprehended easily, we will divide the inner-being into its three sections.

The first division is that of your lower-self. This region of your ego incorporates the outer-most layer of the physical brain, and the three lowest energy point centers (Chakras) of your electromagnetic form. The lower-self commands your sexual desires, your eating habits, and your emotional strengths and weaknesses. The lower-self is also the perpetrator of lust for power, material wealth and possessions. Here lies the center of every mental thought. It dominates your 'conscious' brainwave patterns, up to the time you sleep. Individuals who are sadly governed by the lower-self, without waking interactions of the middle-self, are generally the losers in life. They may be self centered, lacking in moral conduct and personal hygiene. These lost personalities are usually loud and ludicrous, with little self-respect. They're sexually promiscuous, and may sometimes be easily addicted to drugs and alcohol.

The second division is the middle-self. This area of your consciousness exist within the next two layers of your cerebrum matter. It is associated with the higher energy point centers. This middle-self governs the subconscious mind which regulates all bodily functions, that allows us to live. The middle-self attempts to guide the lower-self, and to harmonize with it. It (the middle-self) works its magic through dreams and when your mind (brain) is within the alpha and theta wave states of awareness. We who are at peace with ourselves, have united with the middle-self. This alliance may have been accomplished through a variety of methods ... like displaying love and compassion for others, which in return brings us inner well-being. Through a discipline of meditation, diet, good morals we may also harmonize with the middle-self. It blesses us with musical, poetic, and artistic talents through intuition and imagination. During meditation we may pierce the veil of the middle-self and receive illumination from it. You must experience a pure life with the unity of your lower and middle selves, before you can grasp the beauty and light of your potentially divine higher-self!

The higher-self is symbolized by the nimbus or halo. It may exist above your head on the edge of your aura. It may coexist with the crown chakra and the pineal

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LOOK!

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OPINIONS & COMMENTS

UP ON MY SOAPBOX

INCONSISTENT STANDARDS?

by Eileen [REDACTED]

MAYBE I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND. A comment from a friend, as often before, stirred my thoughts about the current state of care available to our dysphoric sisters.

Two cases were mentioned, illustrating the wide variance in the way that the so-called "standards of care" are applied.

The first involved a sister who seemed to breeze through the qualification procedure, even though, in the opinion of my friend, she was a marginal candidate. It seems that some of the helping professionals may be overly anxious to deliver as many TS patients as possible.

The other was regarding a sister she'd known (let's call her "B") who had recently obtained SRS. It appears that Ms. B finally achieved her goal only because she could no longer function as a male. The implication being that she may have deliberately injured herself in order to force the issue.

Why is it that a person should have to resort to such drastic measures in order to get the blessing of the medical community? I'm not saying that we should necessarily have "surgery-on-demand", but, the way things are, getting approval for SRS seems to be a virtual lottery. If, in their search for help, a person happens to hit the right sequence of people, they slide right on through the system. Others find themselves frustrated at every approach, shuck-and-jive'd by elitists who are CERTAIN that they know what's best for the rest of us.

I do believe that the medical community does have an obligation to be sure that anyone getting SRS is doing so with fully informed consent. Perhaps even requiring some evidence that the candidate will be able to function successfully in the new role is appropriate. However, all too often, the criteria used to evaluate this capability conform to an ideal which is unrealistic even for genetic females.

Most importantly, the medical community has an obligation to present a CONSISTENT measure of what constitutes an eligible candidate.

Yes, SRS is a procedure which requires a most thorough consideration on the part of the applicant. No, as a matter of fact, it isn't something I, personally, would recommend to ANYONE. In my view, the ideal solution would be to fix SOCIETY, such that no person

(CONTINUED, PAGE 13)

VOX POPULI

WHY?

by Denise [REDACTED]

(Coordinator, the connecticut View)

When TVs meet, one of the first things they do is ask the question, "Why do you dress?". This is usually followed up with, "When, how, where how many times" and other similar questions. And of course the dialogue takes off and continues for hours and hours.

Like any therapeutic session, these things have to be discussed until one hears the answers that he likes. But, because of the nature of TVism, I personally don't believe there are any answers. We can conjecture, suppose, hint, suggest and rationalize and even definitively state why one thinks they dress. But we have no facts, we can't be sure.

For this reason, I always try to instill in others that once we stop asking "why" and start enjoying who we are, will we truly be satisfied and content with who we are. One of my favorite analogies is that we as people, are so individually different from each other as if we were all standing on a billion step ladder. Each of us has our own rung, yet no two share the same rung.

Once we realize that we are totally different from everyone else on that ladder, yet more similar to those on the closest rungs, and more dissimilar to those on the farthest rungs, the more sensible things start to

TAG, YOU'RE IT ...

DEFINING HANDICAPS

by Anne [REDACTED]

I was listening to the radio today and a Congressman was presenting his view on a bill regarding the handicapped and I thought about the Americans With Disabilities Act and removing TVs and TSs from protection against discrimination on the basis of being ... or not being, as the case may be ... handicapped.

Are we handicapped? Are we limited in what we can do and accomplish in life by a physical or mental condition? Or are we limited by social attitudes and tabus? And what the hell difference does it make?

A paraplegic's legs don't work. An amputee is missing a limb or two or four. The deaf can't hear, the blind can't see, and the retarded can't think (too well).

Are these people handicapped? Obviously. The schizophrenic is out of touch with reality, and that seems to be a genuine handicap. So, what's our problem?

You tell me, what's our problem? We can't live openly the way we want to, we can't be who we want to be.

Well, gee, that is a problem, but is it a handicap?

Lots of people can't be what they want to be, but that doesn't make them handicapped. Can we equate social prejudice, and discrimination with disability? You already know what I think: No.

Now, I'm not saying that anyone has the right to discriminate against us, quite the contrary. On the other hand, I'm not one for going where I'm not wanted either. But to classify ourselves as handicapped in order to get some additional protection against discrimination ... well, it has ramifications. If we are to fight for social acceptance, if we are to be seen as just another variation on humanity, if we are to be able to say that we are more than ordinary men because we are also women to some degree, how can we say we are less than ordinary man? We can't have it both ways. Being transvestite is either a bonus or a deficit, it can't be both.

Sure, there was a time in my life when I viewed being a transvestite something akin to having the black plague. And sure, it's not always easy being a transvestite. But it's not always easy being a genius (which of course I am), nor being beautiful, nor talented, nor anything else on which society puts a premium. But just because life is sometimes difficult, that doesn't make us handicapped.

If you want to wallow in self pity, fine. I don't want

(CONTINUED, PAGE 13)

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND YOUR OWN COMMENTARIES
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sound.

By asking the question "Why we dress?" to those on the ladder, we know we will get a different answer from every person, as they are on a different rung.

Possibly if we ask enough people the same question, we might find someone who is standing on a rung just one higher or one lower than the one we are on. And their story might sound familiar, yet, it will be different. So, why do we continually search for the answer? Why after 30 years of dressing, do we find TVs obsessed with "the whys, hows, and wherefores"? I honestly would think they would tire of their quest for their HOLY GRAIL, as they haven't realized that they will never find their answer.

Do we know people like this? Of course we all do. And do you consider them interesting? Can you talk to them on the same subject for more than 10 minutes? Are they really interesting people?

Or would you rather sit with a person who totally accepts himself for what he is? He doesn't label himself anything, he's just happy being "her". The confidence of this person is reflected in a smile, a

(CONTINUED, PAGE 14)

FAITH AND GENDER

by Sharon
(from IXE newsletter)

[There have been many, many concerns expressed, by crossdressers across the country, relative to religion and the crossdresser. In particular, there are concerns about the book of Deuteronomy, and conflicts between this Book and the philosophies of Jesus Christ, as expressed in the Books of the New Testament.]

The author of the following article attended the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, and served as a pastor in the United Church of Christ. She was born into the Episcopal Church in the south, with a family that was largely Southern Baptist. Later, Sharon joined the Presbyterian Church and served as a deacon. Upon entering the seminary, she joined the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ. She left the pastorate and the seminary when she was divorced, and "came out" at that time.]

We come from many different religious backgrounds and faiths. From A to Z, we have agnostics to followers of the teachings of Zoraster. The thoughts and reflections presented in this article will, I hope, apply to all people in the community. However, my bias is Christian, in that I was raised in the Christian tradition and attended a Christian seminary. Also, I live in a country where the Judeo-Christian tradition has informed the making of our laws and many of our social standards.

Faith is universal. Some people define faith as "belief in something". I find this definition too restricting, as not all people believe in something. Belief in something is an intellectual effort, and therefore not part of the human condition. I use the words faith and hope somewhat interchangeably. Hope is universal. For example, Alcoholics Anonymous offers the hope that things will get better if the participants do not drink. Later, based on this hope, the participants "come to believe in" a higher power. Based first on hope, their faith becomes defined then as belief in something. Hope thus precedes belief in something, and is a more basic condition. How do we move from hope to belief? In theology, this is called "epistemology" ... "how do we know what we claim to know?" Here is where the gender community runs head on into many in the Christian, Jewish and Moslem traditions. In A.A., things do get better for those who are alcoholic and do not drink. The alcoholic listens to the stories of other recovering alcoholics. The alcoholic moves from hope to belief in something, based on an experience of fulfilled hope, and informed by the experience of others. The alcoholic knows what he or she knows because it has worked for them and for others.

Many of us have experienced guilt associated with our cross-gender needs and identity. This guilt often comes from a sexuality that may differ from the norm, the disappointment expressed by families and friends whose expectations we may fail to meet, and to some extent condemnation from the Church and the religious community. It is easy to lose hope. Since the source of this guilt is often religious, either self-imposed or imposed on us by religious others, religious questions often arise: How do we know what we know? How do we know there is a God, and if there is, how do we know what God wants? How do we know what our relationship with God is or should be? The answers are the same for all people and all of the questions. We simply don't know, no one knows with concrete certainty. For many of us, we chose to believe because we have hope, but when our beliefs contradict our hope, the thing that needs re-examination is the content of the belief, not the existence of hope.

I want to focus my thoughts on the Judeo-Christian tradition. Jews and Christians are informed by the scriptures; the scriptures help shape hope into a belief in "something". There was a time when I shared the belief (not the faith) that the scripture were God's instructions to us about how we must live and relate in order to make God happy or pleased, or in orthodox Christian terminology, how to live in a righteous relationship with God and others. Simply stated, when I lived with the scriptures as a rule book, I couldn't then live with myself, and I lost

hope. My greatest single conflict with the religious community has come from those whose "epistemology" is based on the revelation of God in the Scriptures. They know what they know because it is written in such and such a book, chapter and verse. It is clearly written in Deuteronomy that God hates men who dress in feminine attire. I prayed to be changed, I went through deliverance, I confessed and asked for forgiveness for my feelings and actions, I purged and repented of my sin. I also lost hope. Things did not get better, they got worse. I was forced to think about my source of knowledge.

I have always had a sense of other presence. Because it is my tradition, not because I "know", I call this presence Christ, and define or think about Christ as the presence of God in my life. As with the alcoholic, I tend to know the things that I experience. From my experience, my hope (faith) is changed to belief. I have experienced, not read about, this sense of other presence that I call Christ. I began to think about this presence, to look at things the way they are for me, not the way that they "should" be according to the writings.

First, I realized that I didn't ask for Christ, that this presence has always been there with me. Through all of the stages of my life, I have known this Christ presence. At times, there was a greater sense of closeness, as when camping in Kentucky I stood atop a mountain and looked down on the birds as they flew, smelled the evergreens and observed the panorama of colored flowers that littered the hills and valleys. I had a close sense of presence in my car, driving and singing along with the choruses of Handel's Messiah. I had a close sense of presence one day as I dressed for a meeting, and I asked Christ about my appearance. There was a sense of loving approval, and perhaps the suggestion that my own hair would look better than a wig. I felt loved, valued and accepted, not judged or hated as Deuteronomy suggested that I would be. I began to rethink my beliefs about the scriptures in light of my experience. I saw where Paul had written that: "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither the present or the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything in all of creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ" (Rom 8:39). All of the sudden, I realized that Paul was writing about his experience of faith, and that Paul and I shared the hope and the knowledge of that sense of presence and love and support. I wondered, what if the scriptures were not God's rules? What if the scriptures had been written by men and women about their experience of faith? Certainly these men and women would have written in a social context, bringing to their writing their own bias about appropriate and proper behavior. I turned back now to the scriptures.

(CONTINUED, PAGE 18)



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CHOOSING THE RIGHT WIG

by Valerie [REDACTED]

Someone asked me recently if she could have her own hair styled, or if she should always wear a wig. The answer depends on how much hair you have and if the color is attractive. If it's just thin on top and thick in the back, a wiglet can be used over the thin area. If you have a lot of gray hair, it may not be as attractive on you as, say, a light brown with some blonde highlights. Instead of the high costs of trips to the beauty salon every six weeks, a wig can be worn. Here are some important factors in choosing the right one.

1. **FIT.** Is it too tight? It can be stretched to fit and there are some limited styles in large head sizes. If it's too loose, try adjusting the straps in back first, or have the cap made smaller by a professional. There are also petite wigs in limited styles.
2. **COLOR.** Notice the styles and colors women in your age range are wearing to get some ideas. It is usually best to stay close to your natural color. If you have a lot of gray hair you may have considered tinting or frosting, so be sure to try colors in the light brown or auburn shades, with some blonde highlights blended in. If there's a chance your own hair may creep out, choose a color that has the same base color as your hair. And for those times when being blonde is more fun, there are many pretty styles that have the darker "regrowth" at the base to really make it look natural.
3. **STYLE.** To pick the right style, you must consider your age, face shape, height, weight, neck length and size ... and your ability to take care of the wig. Long, straight hair is great for young, pretty girls, but gentle waves and curls are better for women over 30. Ask your wig professional if there's any special styling tips you need to know to keep it looking good. If you know you won't be fixing it, get an easy to care for style or find out about the shop's styling service. Remember that synthetic wigs melt when exposed to high heat, so stay away from the oven and never use a curling iron on your wig.
4. **QUALITY.** How often will you be wearing your wig? Are you going to use it everyday? What would be appropriate for your lifestyle? Synthetic hair is usually the easiest to care for and nice ones cost as low as \$75 to \$150. Synthetic and human hair blends are a bit more expensive but have a more lively, natural look. Human hair wigs start around \$200, and may require maintenance trips to the stylist. However, they can be permed or re-tinted if the color fades. The life of a synthetic wig is about 2 to 5 years, whereas human hair lasts at least 5 years. Use these guidelines for your best wig investment ... but for fantasy, ANYTHING GOES!

I am having a used wig sale this month at the shop. If you have some wigs that you don't wear anymore, but they are still in good condition (clean, look nice, decent quality), bring them in and I'll help you sell them.

[Valerie [REDACTED] is a California-licensed cosmetology instructor and owner of "Hair To Wear Wigs".]

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CLOTHING PERSONALITIES

by Carole [REDACTED]
(from "Beauty Handbook")

How would you describe the following: Cher, Carol Burnett, Liz Taylor? To me, Cher is dramatic; Carol Burnett, funny, down-to-earth; Sandy Duncan, a pixie; Liz Taylor, sexy. Whatever your reaction, don't you agree that each one is a type? Each season has its own personality, and can help you build your most flattering wardrobe. The Winter palette is sophisticated, striking, with clear colors and sharp contrasts. When shopping, think true, blue and vivid; sharp, clear, and icy. Winters tend to be dramatic and look best in sleek, fine lines in solid colors, with prints worn away from the face. Summer has a classic palette of pastels and soft neutrals; when shopping think blue, rose and soft. Elegant, classic clothes and soft prints best suit Summer's calm, gracious nature. Autumn's is a warm, friendly palette of muted or clear tones; when shopping think of golden undertones. Often informal by nature, Autumn's suit casual, sporty clothes ... in paisleys, plaids and casual, colorful prints. Spring colors are alive ... never muted or too dark. When shopping, think clear and warm (yellow and crisp). Crisp, colorful, yet feminine clothing suits the friendly, informal Spring woman. Of course, it's important to consider facial features, height and bone structure in addition to your season when selecting clothes. Study yourself from head to toe in a full-length mirror to determine your fashion type. Here are the basic types: The "Dramatic" type usually has dark or striking coloring, and angular features and body lines. Dramatics can wear extremes in fashion: straight lines; ultra billowy clothes; exotic colors; glittery weaves; bold, vivid prints; heavy brocades or metallics. If you're not tall, yet have dramatic features, then add a few dramatic accents. Examples of Dramatic types are Cher, Diana Ross, Barbra Streisand and Lauren Bacall.

(CONTINUED, PAGE 12)

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THE GENDER COMMUNITY: A POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISCUSSION

by Wendy Parker
(Part 2 of 10)

WHERE ARE WE GOING IN THE 1990'S?

The fact that you're able to read this today is testament to the fact that we do exist as a group in whatever numbers that one might care to debate. We may be extremely small in number or perhaps a vast, silent multitude. In either case, one thing is very clear: The fear, isolation, hiding in the closet, and self-loathing of recent years is not a viable alternative in a time where so many other social events of the last fifty years have actually led us to where we are today.

Where we are going in the Nineties depends largely on recognizing the need for public awareness about us in our many forms and assorted individual goals along the gender spectrum.

The key word toward advancing goals in our community is "involvement". This is a subject that Merissa Sherrill and Sister Mary Elizabeth, among others, have promoted for years. Merissa and a small staff at IFGE, along with a handful of other movers and shakers around the country, have struggled to keep the spirit of involvement alive.

Many of you in the Gender community came to the realization at some point in your life that your gender preference was more than just a passing fancy. You may have wrestled with this issue since you were five or ten years old through various purges, numerous breakups in relationships, self doubts, and depression. You probably know that this is an issue that won't go away. To quote a popular Broadway musical, "I am what I am!" We shouldn't lapse into a false sense of complacency, thinking that society will somehow avoid excluding us from the same forms of discrimination such as race, sex, and sexual preference. Only recently, the issue was brought before Congress in the form of Senate Bill 933 and Senate Amendment 722 to the "Americans with Disabilities" Act. If you weren't aware of this by now, it basically lumped transsexuals, transvestites, and gays along with child molesters, drug addicts, and compulsive sex offenders. The confusion that exists in the muddled thinking of small minded, unenlightened politicians confuses issues of free gender choice (which harms no one) with criminal elements of society that would violate someone else's civil rights. If an active campaign to educate the public is not made, we will all certainly pay the price for our complacency down the road.

The need for informed Gender community involvement, networking, and outreach has been catalyzed by the creation of the IFGE Congress of Representatives (which has never been more needed than it is today). In order to suppress seeds of possible bigotry and discrimination in the future, you have to become involved with the rights of all your sisters before you are locked out of your just rights in a democratic society. Senate Amendment 722 was snuck in at the last minute before passage with little or no debate in the U.S. Senate. Unbeknownst to other Senators, it was sent on to the House of Representatives where a House version of the amendment was also passed. Upon

learning of this situation, I and many others sent letters to numerous political representatives. I received elaborate, concerned and polite replies. When I made mention of this extremely important event to many sisters in our community, I was surprised to find an apathy toward the whole matter. I would remind all of you of the words of one early American patriot who said, "If we don't all hang together, we will certainly all hang separately".

One only has to look at the insidiously gradual discrimination of gays, Jews, and political dissenters in the Nazi Germany of the Thirties and the complacency of most as neighbors turned their eyes to avert seeing the truth. As friends and relatives were being rounded up, they were forced to wear pink triangles or Stars of David, and sent off to Nazi death camps. Bertrand Russell said that, "Those who are unaware of history are doomed to repeat it"; and political and social discrimination is very real today, even in a democratic society such as ours.

The time to make our existence as a community known is now; the time to make a statement as to who we are is now; the time to state our goals as a group is now; and the time is now because the questions of gender preference and gender issues are being catapulted into the limelight of public recognition through various media. This has given us an opportunity which we should not lose.

Talk shows like Donahue, Sally Jessy Raphael, Geraldo, and countless local television programs have created some public awareness. Films like "The World According to Garp", "Tootsie", "Yentl", and plays like "M. Butterfly" stimulated public curiosity. Even a recent issue of Newsweek brings this previously hidden subject out in the open and to lose this opportunity now would place our community back into the Dark Ages (and into a dark closet).

(This article is based upon Wendy's speech at this past spring's IFGE convention. Subsequent installments will appear in "Cross-Talk" each month.)

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EVENTS CALENDAR



VALLEY GIRLS EVENTS:

- Sat., Aug. 25 - "Too Good For Goodwill" clothes-swap party, at Ayme [redacted], including free consultations by Kathy of Katherine's Kreations. Please call (818) 347-2206 to RSVP as there will be limited space available.
- Sat., Sep. 22 - House Party at Mykee's house in the Hollywood Hills, 7 PM - ????. Call Kymberleigh at (818) 762-7659 or Mykee at (213) 654-7657 to RSVP and arrange carpools. Bring some refreshments to share, please!
- Sat., Sep. 29 - "Fifth Saturday" event, TBA.
- Sat., Oct. 27 - Halloween Party (tentative). Details and location TBA.
- Sat., Nov. 24 - House Party at Mykee's. See Sep. 22 listing for details.
- Every Sat. - Informal "after-hours" social at Sitton's, Tujunga & Magnolia in North Hollywood, starting at 2 AM.
- ("The Valley Girls" is a socially-oriented transgender group promoting friendship through socializing; in addition to scheduling our own events, we support the activities of other organizations throughout Southern California.)

OTHER LOS ANGELES AREA EVENTS:

- Sun., Aug. 5 - Miss California Continental Beauty Pageant, 8 PM, at the Mayflower Ballroom, 234 S. Hindry Ave., Inglewood. Call (213) 850-1673 for ticket information.
- Sat., Aug. 11 - "Decadence at the O.K. Corral", the coronation of the XVIII Imperial Court of the San Fernando Valley: 8 PM at the Beverly Garland Hotel in North Hollywood. Admission \$20 at the door.
- Sat., Aug. 11 - Marlayna & Melisa's "On The Scene" night at the Queen Mary, 10 PM - 2 AM. Theme: "Trashy Lingerie".
- Fri., Aug. 17 - "Girls' Night Out" dance party, 9 PM - 1 AM, 13201 Saticoy St., North Hollywood.
- Sun., Aug. 19 - Sunday Afternoon "Tea" Dance, 4 - 7 PM, at the Queen Mary. Admission \$2 at the door. Proceeds benefit Pioneer Home AIDS hospice.
- Sat., Aug. 25 - Marlayna & Melisa's "Fantasy Fashions" night at the Queen Mary, 10 PM - 2 AM.
- Sat., Sep. 15 - P.P.O.C.'s "Las Vegas Night". Call (714) 779-9013 for information.
- Fri., Nov. 9 - 21st Annual "Universal Ball", at the Mayflower Ballroom in Inglewood. Ticket information TBA.

NATIONAL EVENTS:

- Sept. 20-23: "Paradise in the Poconos" weekend: Write Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 1263, King of Prussia PA 19406 for information.
- Oct. 12-21: "Fantasia Fair": Write P.O. Box 11254, Lincolnia Station, Alexandria VA 22312 for details, or call Kymberleigh for a brochure.
- Nov. 1-4: "Fall Harvest Weekend and Moonshadow Ball": Write CAF, P.O. Box 4092, Overland Park KS for information.
- Nov. 14-18: Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme" national convention, Houston TX: Details TBA.

1991:

- Feb. 22-24: Third Annual "Texas 'T' Party", sponsored by Boulton & Park Society. Write P.O. Box 169652, San Antonio TX 78280, or call (512) 657-2540 for info.
- Apr. 8-14: I.F.G.E. "Coming Together" convention, Denver CO, sponsored by Gender Identity Center. Details TBA.
- May 1-5: "California Dreamin'" weekend, co-sponsored by "Cross-Talk" and P.P.O.C., at the Burbank Holiday Inn. Details TBA.

ON-GOING LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS:

- Androgyny meets every Tuesday. For details call (213) 467-8317.
- Pansocial Center workshop, rap and social is held on the first Saturday of each month. For directions, call (818) 989-3700 or (213) 873-3700.
- Powder Puffs Of California (P.P.O.C.) meets on the third Saturday of each month. The August 18 meeting will feature the "Miss P.P.O.C." contest. For details call (714) 779-9013.
- Tri-Ess Alpha Chapter meets on the first Saturday of each month. Call (818) 303-3858 for time and location.

LOCAL NIGHTCLUBS & BARS:

- "Queen Mary", 12449 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, is open every night except Mondays. A female impersonator revue is featured in the front lounge Wednesdays through Sundays. Socialize with the local TG community in the back bar.
- "Club 22", 4882 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, is open seven nights a week, catering to the lesbian community; however, crossdressers (in small groups) are well-received. Happy Hour 3-7pm daily; Live DJ Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights; Complimentary buffet Sunday afternoon & evening.
- "Peanuts", 7969 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, is open to crossdressers on Friday, Saturday, and Monday nights (featuring a drag revue on Fridays and Mondays). Live DJ all nights.
- "Palms", 8572 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, is a lesbian bar open to crossdressers seven nights a week.
- "Library", 2815 E. Main St., Ventura, is open to the gay, lesbian, and transgendered lifestyles on Saturdays, Sundays, and Thursdays. Live DJ.

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THE BEARDED LADY

NATIONAL PUBLICATION REVIEW

IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT BRA

by Ricky Hunt

I am a hi-tech person. I work and play with some of the latest computers and electronic equipment, have stereo speakers throughout all 13 rooms of the house, and can bore you for hours with torrents of jargon on just about any subject you care to name. When I don my feminine attire I have a fondness for synthetics, those modern wonders of the laboratories of some multinational chemical giant. Who else but those hi-tech wizards could turn a barrel of crude oil into nylons and rayons, silky smooth and feminine, modern and odorless. Be it the slight pressure of support hose on my legs or the caress of a long slip on my thighs, I am in love with those smooth molded and seamless undergarments.

But sometimes there arises a problem. Those silky smooth bras just don't seem to have the hugging power needed to support a pair of rather heavy inserts, and somehow it just isn't feminine to be dragging up on your bra off your belly all the time. To solve this dilemma I embarked on a search for a bra that would support my purchased assets firmly and in comfort. Since I use a pair of mastectomy inserts (aha, hi-tech again) what better place to look than at mastectomy bras. But alas they don't seem to be made in my abundant size, so it was off to the Tri-Ess Shopping Guide. I soon had written letters to every supplier of feminine undergarments from Lane Bryant to Omar the Tentmaker. Upon cleaning out the old P.O. box (under the glare of an annoyed postmaster) and carting away the resultant mass of circulars, catalogs and come-ons I began the Search For The Perfect Bra.

As I spent many hours gazing at scantily clad women, a not unpleasant pastime in itself, I happily compared band thickness, color, lacy adornment, fabric, strap placement and other factors and emerged with a scientific conclusion. Lane Bryant had a half price sale on Playtex 18 hour bras that looked pretty good, so they won hands down.

I soon received the goods and, lo and behold, it hugged right, supported well and left me with my hands free to do something besides adjust my bra. But it also did something else. It smelled. The darn thing was made of real, honest to goodness rubber; a heady, pungent odor that took me back through the years. There I stood once again before my mother's middle dresser drawer, happily extracting one of her bras to take away for my own use while the family was away for the day. It was a heavy duty, industrial strength garment, providing the kind of the support needed by Carrie Nation as she wielded her massive axe against a solid mahogany bar in a den of iniquity. Were it to be made of brass instead of the fruit of the rubber tree it would have not been out of place adorning a robust viking matron upon the stage of the Metropolitan Opera; circled in uncountable concentric rings of stitching running inexorably to the pointed center of the cup. I always had to fight the urge to paint a red circle in the center of that target, but common sense won out every time.

(CONTINUED, PAGE 19)



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NEW PUBLICATION ON RELIGION TRANSGENDERED FAIRYTALE FROM CDS SEQUEL TO DR. RUDD BOOK PLANNED

by Kymberleigh Richards,
Person Who Reads All the Mail

Lee Frances, who is newsletter editor of the Beta Chi Chapter of Tri-Ess, has started a second, independent newsletter for Christians who are concerned about the conflict set up between crossdressers and established Christianity. The first issue of "Grace and Lace" deals with some of the misapprehensions we embrace along this line of thought. Lee has stated that there will be no memberships, fees, or dues charged to receive the publication. (P.O. Box 68162, Jackson MS 39286)

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Our friend and advertiser Vernon Porter has just released a comprehensive list of the many different TV publications he carries. There are more than three dozen fiction titles listed, as well as magazines, newspapers, and videos. Those who are already on the catalog mailing list should have already received the brochure... I'm sure you can also get one if you send a stamped, self-addressed #10 envelope. (Vernon's Specialties, 386-CT Moody St., Waltham MA 02154)

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I'm happy to say that "Gender Expressions", as hoped, has kept its radical orientation. We received the Spring 1990 issue a few days after last month's column went to press, and I found that once again, Janet Lynn Christon and her staff have managed to say a lot of things that needed to be said. I especially appreciated her editorial on our public image; it should be required reading for all members of the TG community!

In addition, this first anniversary issue of GenX includes articles on the problems created by trying to fit people into statistically "average" stereotyped image, a reprint of the standard questionnaire used by most of the established gender programs around the U.S. (with well-deserved criticism), and an extremely angry farewell from an obviously disillusioned Jan Redbear. Check their ad elsewhere in this issue for subscription info.

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Creative Design Services has published a rather unique book titled "The Story of Fluff the Bunny", which explains transgendered behavior in fairytale form. The reader follows the title character in search of an answer to his internal conflicts. Not only could this book be useful in explaining TGism to children, it is also entertaining for adult readers as well. See CDS' ad for ordering information.

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The sequel to Dr. Peggy Rudd's "My Husband Wears My Clothes" is scheduled to be published September 1. Titled "Crossdressing With Dignity: The Case for Transcending Gender Lines", this book addresses the emotions that surface as crossdressers move out of the stereotypical gender roles of society. Dr. Rudd has based this book on the findings of a survey she conducted earlier this year to which over 800 crossdressers responded. (\$10.95 + \$1.50 postage and handling to PM Publishers, 1811 Crutchfield, Katy TX 77449)

<--->

The latest Sandy Thomas novel (Classics #18) is called "Near Miss", which answers the burning question: In a small town, where everyone knows everyone else's business, how does a mother change her son into her daughter without everyone knowing? The answer reveals a great deal about how attitude relates to passing, and how much people bury themselves in their own affairs to the exclusion of everything else around them. Use the order form elsewhere in "Cross-Talk", or send Sandy a stamped, self-addressed envelope for a complete list of available titles.

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'CROSS-TALK'
AND ASK THEM TO SUBSCRIBE!

S.O. THERE!

A DAUGHTER'S FEELINGS

by "Tee"
(from "Outreach")

My Dad, known to you as Diane, asked me to write a letter about our family. When I asked him what to say, he simply said "Say it like it is." Hmm, where do I start? I need to say that my parents were different than most of my friends' families in many ways. My mother, who passed away last year, was Catholic and my Dad is a Baptist ... a mixed marriage to start with. Our family values are built on three very strong beliefs: God, Family and Country. The one question Dad asked me to address is how his crossdressing has affected my brothers Ken, D.J., and I. I can only say that the parents we have had are the kind that other kids wish they had. If crossdressing made Dad the person he is, then I am all for it. I don't believe that my Dad has the same ideas as some of the people I have seen on TV where their kids call them "Auntie" when they are dressed. Dad would have a major problem with that and so would we. Being a crossdresser does not make Dad who he is. When Mom and Dad left home to go out, he never left the house dressed. He always dressed in the van so as to not run into anyone they might know. That was my mother's biggest fear. As for my friends, they are cool and would understand (I hope). If someone found out, I don't think they would intentionally try to hurt us directly or indirectly. We could bring friends home at any time without any fear of what we might find. I cannot remember seeing Dad only partly dressed. Maybe that is what made his feminine side so real and not ugly. He takes pride in who he is. We never saw him as Diane except at times when we all agreed that "she" should be there. It was only a few times a year and only for short periods. I must say, he did not mind if we poked a little fun at him. When we did, though, it was with respect, not to ridicule. You need a sense of humor if one is going to understand just how to accept that which is, at best, difficult. I am sixteen years old. At no time in my life has Dad's crossdressing ever interfered with our family life. Someday, I hope that all kids will have strong families just like ours. I can think of no higher honor or praise that we can give Mom and Dad than to make them as proud of us as we are of them.

DUAL DRIVER LICENSES? BAD IDEA!

by Carolyn [redacted]
(from ETVC newsletter)

One question that seems to surface from time to time is whether there is a way to have two driver's licenses, one male and one female. I'm not talking about exchanging your old one for a license with your femme name on it after you have filled out the change of name forms, but having two at the same time. It is physically possible to have two driver's licenses, but it is illegal in California and if you get caught you could be in serious trouble. The state vehicle code specifies that "no person shall have in his or her possession or otherwise under his or her control more than one driver's license." Having two is a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and up to a \$1000 fine, or both. It is also a separate misdemeanor to obtain a license with false information (such as claiming a lost license to get another one, or pretending not to have ever had one). Beyond all this, the Department of Motor Vehicles can refuse to renew your original license if you get caught trying to get another in a femme name. Giving false information also puts you in danger of being prosecuted for perjury, a felony. Offering false documents to be recorded in official records, in this case DMV files, also makes you guilty of a felony. State prison time is possible on conviction of these kinds of crimes. If you want to shop en femme, pay cash or show your one and only driver's license. If you get stopped by a police officer you had better have only one license. He has seen crossdressers before, unless he is an extremely green rookie, and won't care ... crossdressing is legal. It is important for all of us to put our crossdressing activities in perspective. If having a license as a woman is that important to you, then consider the legal step of changing your name on your license to a female name. Staying on the right side of the law means you will get to continue to enjoy your personal freedom, including your freedom to dress as you choose.

'CROSS-TALK' HOTLINE:
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FASHION NOTEBOOK

... CONTINUED

The "Natural" woman is tall and "athletic" with wide-set eyes and squarish jaw; she's friendly and informal. A mix-and-match wardrobe of all kinds of sportswear, boots and leather, skirts and sweaters, tailored suits, or unconstructed jackets is ideal for her. She wears nubby, natural and handwoven fabrics, tweeds, subtle plaids, checks, paisleys, large prints and solids well, but should avoid shiny fabrics. Typical Natural types are Farrah Fawcett, Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York and Katharine Hepburn. The "Gamine" is petite (but compact and well-proportioned, rather than delicate) with a pixie face, youthful appearance and a friendly, bubbly personality. She looks best in clean straight lines and natty details in clothing: contrasting buttons; patch pockets; ties or vests in proportion with her body; and crisp, rather than draped fabrics. Light weight fabrics with a matte finish create the snappy, well-pressed look that suits her. Sharp tweeds, small defined prints, evenly-spaced stripes, checks and small geometrics all work well. Examples of Gamines are Goldie Hawn, June Allyson and Judy Carne. Feminine clothes with gently curved lines and a crisply bouffant or softly draped silhouette best complement the curvy "Romantic" figure ... especially in soft, luxurious fabrics with a sheen. A romantic's striking coloring allows her to dress theatrically, as long as she doesn't overdo it. Exaggerated styles and sophisticated prints are fine, but they must be feminine. Liz Taylor, Jaclyn Smith, Marilyn Monroe, Zsa Zsa Gabor and Delta Burke are good examples.

Even, regular facial features, medium coloring and a well-proportioned body typify the "Classic" woman, who's always poised, well-groomed and elegant. She avoids extremes of fashion yet stays up-to-date in a conservative way, adopting the latest look after it's established. Her hallmarks are soft, straight lines and immaculately tailored clothes in fine cottons, middle-of-the-road prints (in small to medium designs in any evenly-repeating pattern). Fabrics may be shiny or matte, but not too heavy. For examples, think of Diahann Carroll, Betty Ford, Betsy Bloomingdale and Nancy Reagan.

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SOAPBOX

... CONTINUED

would be persecuted for displaying any mix of masculine and feminine inclinations. However, fixing a whole society is far more difficult than adjusting some of the individuals within it. Therefore, if our sisters are dying anyway ... due to repeated frustration of their quest to live as they feel they should ... what is the loss, if the medical community were to grant them what it is able? The current situation won't change until those affected demand a change ... and withhold their support (read that \$\$\$) to make it stick. It's another case of our Community needing to find out who are our real friends, and conducting our business with them.

Late breaking news: The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare is considering a ban on the manufacture, sale, and/or possession of shoes having heels higher than 1 1/4 inches. The rationale is that foot problems are not only costing the economy MILLIONS of dollars each year, but that people are getting cranky from having sore feet and taking it out on innocent bystanders, and even family members, through acts of VIOLENCE. Anything that will help reduce the level of violence in our society, they say, HAS to be a good idea. What do you think? Please send your comments to "Cross-Talk", P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91367. The September "Vox Populi" column will contain excerpts from responses received.

TAG

... CONTINUED

to hear about it. If you want to think of yourself as defective, fine. I happen to think that we are ... all else being equal ... extraordinary. Since there is no such thing as Utopia, just how should we obtain a guarantee against discrimination? Well, we already have the model. There are laws which ban discrimination on the basis of race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation. All we need to see happen is the addition of 'gender orientation' to the list. Of course 'all' implies simplicity, but not necessarily ease. As my acting teacher used to say (and probably still says), "Acting is simple. It's not easy, it's simple."

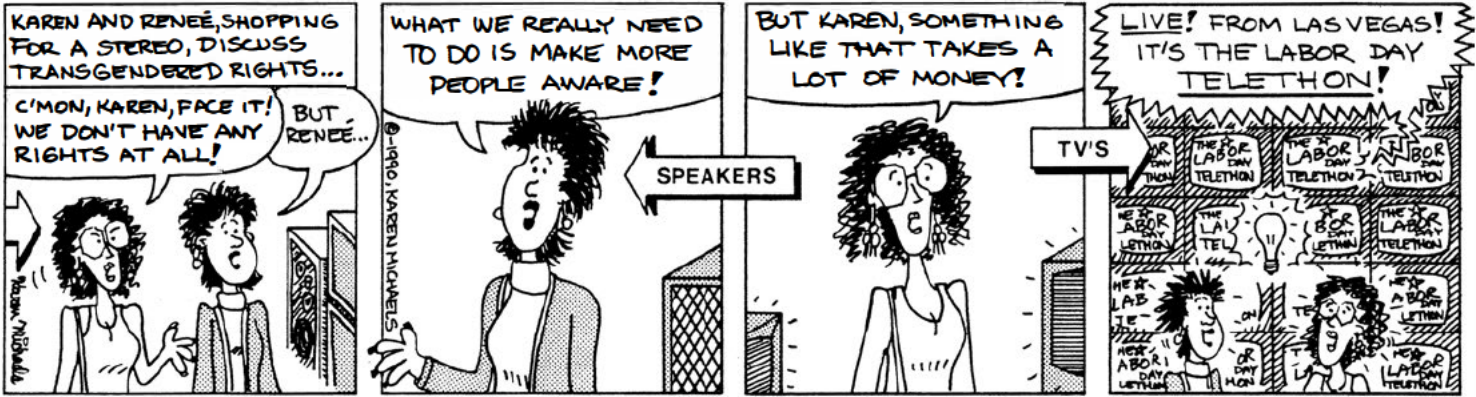
[Anne [REDACTED], founder of TAG (Transvestite Action Group) contacted at P.O. Box 1251, Beverly Hills CA 90213-1251.]

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THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



PLAYING IT SAFE

... CONTINUED.

use when in a potential danger situation, males don't use. The feeling of invulnerability which comes with being raised as a male is typically raised, makes it hard to look at things like dark streets and back roads, and yes, open ground floor windows and see them as potential danger areas. Let's start using our brains and some God given paranoia to see danger areas. Some tips:

- * Do check your car for unwanted passengers before you get in.
- * Don't leave windows and odors open at night.
- * Do keep your purse with you at all times.
- * Don't walk in unlighted areas unless you are escorted.
- * Do walk in a calm, confident manner at all times.
- * Don't rely on weapons of any sort except your wits.
- * Do watch where you are going. Pay attention to your surroundings.
- * Don't forget to lock doors when you leave... home, car or whatever.

If you get caught in a sticky situation:

- * Do remain calm.
- * Don't go crazy at the first sign of trouble.
- * Do try to talk your way out of anything!
- * Don't hesitate to give up your cash, your keys or credit cards.
- * Do act quickly and without warning if you have to act. Do so with all your power!
- * Don't panic. Use your brain. It's your best weapon when your life is on the line.

Use these hints. Read women's magazines for more hints of this sort. Train your self. Eyes open, keep watching everything, and be calm. This way you'll avoid 99% of the potential hazards out there. In a bad spot, you are your only hope! Stay alert. Stay poised. Don't panic! Don't do anything stupid. Be safe. Be happy. Be free.

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VOX POPULI

... CONTINUED

splash of colorful clothing, a daring outfit, or a makeup technique that others wish they could try but are afraid to. They don't speak of "whys" but of positive things. Things "she" would love to talk about. Where did you get those shoes? Have you tried that new nail polish? I love your earrings, where did you get them?

This is an all together person. A person who doesn't realize he is "dressed". He IS she. She truly enjoys that side of his personality without analyzing. And she's fun to be with.

She's pleasant, kind, thoughtful, delightful, and feminine. Some things men in drag can't seem to do. Oh yes, they have on a dress and a wig, but they sit like truck drivers, talk like sanitation workers, walk like football players and dress like rejects from the Salvation Army store. The refuse to shave their legs but insist on wearing sheer nylons with showing garter belts. They put on beautiful perfume but insist on smoking a pipe or smelly cigars. They wear nice jewelry, but wouldn't think of washing their finger nails. What rung of the ladder are they on?

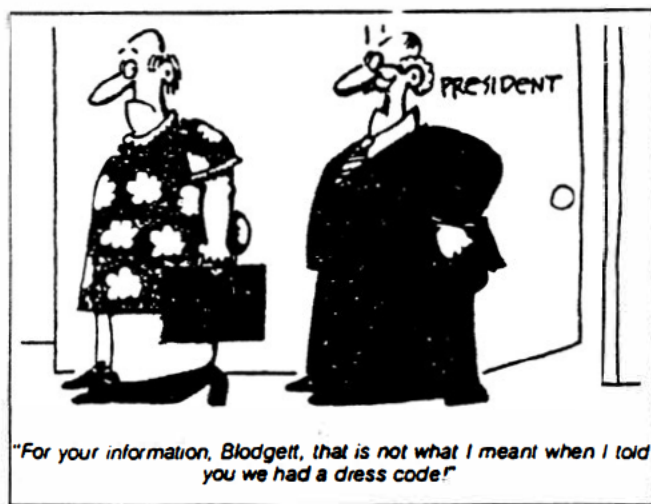
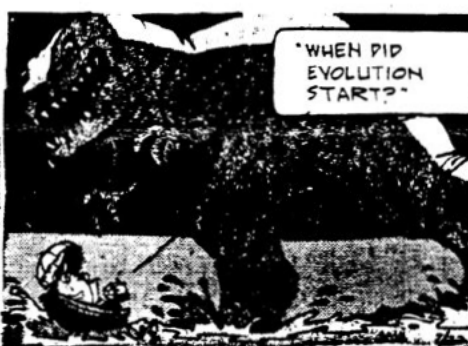
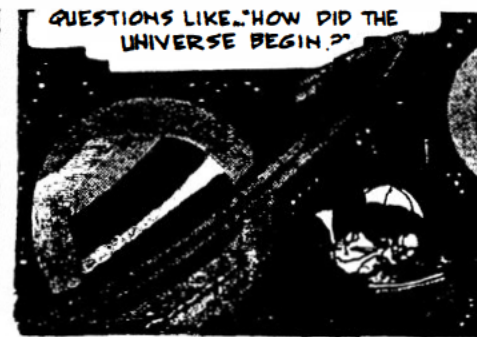
They have every right to be who they are, and be on their own rung. But does it sound like they have all their "whys"? Remember we have choices to continually wonder who and why we are, or just accept it and start having fun. I firmly believe those who strive to look their best and take pride in how they dress, apply their makeup and are aware of their feminine side are more happy with who they are and either have all their "whys" answered, or don't need to have them answered and are happy in who they are.

But I also believe that those who don't try, who don't care what they look like, who are abrasive and maintain their overt masculine side even when they are dressed as a woman, have much difficulty in getting the answers to "why". The easiest solution is to forget the "whys" and start accepting who you are. Once you are happy, you will start to notice that pink looks nice on you, that slacks are very stylish and hide legs that can't be shaven. Or that nail polish often brightens up a strong hand which shouldn't be apologized for because he makes a living as a car mechanic. But what's happening is that the person now accepts what he is, starts to work with his assets instead of just existing.

If we can only learn to ask the "whys, hows, and whens" for only 10 minutes, then drop the questions and start learning to love who we are, we might enjoy finding out we are a pretty girl who deserves to be happy. We might be fortunate and gain many fun filled years of frills, smells and love which would otherwise be wasted on questions which can't be answered.

Love yourself. Remember you choose what rung of that ladder you want to stand on.

COMICS



YELLOW PAGES UPDATE

BE YOUR OWN PHOTOGRAPHER PART TWO

As part of "Cross-Talk's" expansion into the national community, the "Yellow Pages" is being redesigned to become a totally regional resource guide. The new "Southern California Yellow Pages" will be published twice a year, in March and September. We are presently reconfirming all known resources in the Los Angeles metropolitan area; the September edition will contain only those resources that have appeared either in the April edition, or in the June and July issues of "Cross-Talk".

Subscribers with any existing version of the "Yellow Pages" will find it accurate through next spring, provided all updates were added. Those subscribers with a "*" code after their number (on the top line of the mailing label) will automatically receive the new edition of the "Yellow Pages" in September and March. Subscribers in Southern California will have the option of adding the new version to their subscription at their next renewal. The March 1991 edition will be made available to existing subscribers at a nominal cost. Additional questions may be directed to the "Cross-Talk" hotline at (818) 762-7659.

by Christie [redacted]
(from "Fiesta!" newsletter)

In Part 1 I listed some of the equipment that might prove helpful in shooting good portraits of our feminine sides.

Now it is time to get down to the fun part - taking beautiful portraits of your femme half.

One very helpful way to get started is to pull out any other photos you might have of yourself as a woman. Critique these mercilessly. If they are not too flattering - why? If something in these photos jars on the senses - what exactly is it? What are the good points?

I have found that making notations directly on the photo with a fine tip felt pen is a great aid in improving future portraits. Circle what you don't like, anything that doesn't seem just right. Nose looks too big, shoulders too broad, biceps too big, too much body hair, etc.

Then go through and find the good points. Pretty eyes, good smile, that wig works well with my face, nice legs, etc.

Now the trick is to simply accentuate the good points while experimenting in how you can eliminate, or at least reduce the emphasis on the bad points.

This critiquing should be an ongoing, continuous procedure. Scrutinize all your photos, from every photo session. In this way you are able to learn from your mistakes and eliminate them. With a little practice you will soon discover all sorts of tricks that will lead to better photos.

For example, someone with a large nose will find that a shot taken with you looking more or less directly at the camera will reduce its apparent size. Being blessed with a prominent proboscis, I learned early to avoid anything close to a profile shot. A little bit of dark contour makeup blended into the top of the nose will also help in giving the impression of smaller size. This trick works well on all sorts of problem areas. Remember that a slightly darker area will appear to recede, while a brighter area will be accented and seems to project.

Thus, with a little time and practice, one can reduce the appearance of not only large noses, but jutting chins, puffy cheeks, jowls, etc. Be careful not to overdo the contouring however!! Once this trick is perfected, it can be used anytime you get dolled up - it works just as well on the street as it does in front of a camera.

Another feature that torments most crossdressers is the problem of excessively large shoulders and upper arms. It is hard to project as a petite, sweet little thing when you are built like a fullback.

This problem can also be reduced in your photos. First, your choice of an outfit is very important. Avoid clothing that draws attention to your shoulders. Such items as tank tops, sleeveless blouses, strap dresses, etc, while being very nice to wear, just don't make it with big, brawny shoulders. Instead, look for outfits with soft flowing sleeves. The softness will camouflage your shoulders while at the same time projecting femininity. Shoulder pads built into blouses and dresses have become a hot fashion item in the last few years. This is perfect for us, as these pads very effectively hide large or broad shoulders. When taking your photo, avoid a full, face on view of the torso. A very seductive pose can be achieved by turning one arm toward the camera, then looking over the shoulder. Any position in which the shoulders are presented at an angle to the camera will help diminish their apparent size and width.

Large, hairy arms are a problem that can be solved simply by sticking to those dresses or blouses with long sleeves. Short of actually shaving your arms, there is not much you can do if you are excessively hirsute. Bleaching and trimming help, but if overdone can cause problems in your male role. Fortunately, there are a lot of really gorgeous fashions today that use long sleeves.

If you have hands like a pair of catcher's mitts, your best bet is to try to discretely keep them out of the picture. Be careful to maintain a natural position, though you want your hands out of the way, but you

(CONTINUED, PAGE 19)


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YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO "CROSS-TALK" ARE ALWAYS WELCOME, TOO!
SEE PAGE 18 FOR GUIDELINES.

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The whole idea started right before the Pioneer Home benefit at the Queen Mary at the end of June. Richard O'Rell, our very own pillar of humanitarianism who never seems to run out of energy to raise funds to keep the aforementioned AIDS hospice going, remarked to the editor of this little newsletter (Kymberleigh) that the one commodity Pioneer Home never has enough of is bleach.

You see, bleach is about the only cleaning product that kills the AIDS virus. So they wash everything ... from bed linens to eating utensils ... in the stuff. And that means they use a lot of it.

Well, that got Kym's brain running in high gear. How to keep a steady supply of such a simple, easy to

obtain, yet vital commodity going into Pioneer Home? The answer: Donate it, on a regular basis, in large quantity.

So, from now until the end of the year, for every new or renewed "Cross-Talk" subscription we receive, we'll donate a gallon of bleach to Pioneer Home. It's that simple: You get a monthly dose of news items, commentaries, articles from crossdressing groups around the country, "how-to" tips, cartoons, etc. And Pioneer Home will be able to spend less of their limited financial resources on bleach.

Seems to us that everybody wins on this deal ...

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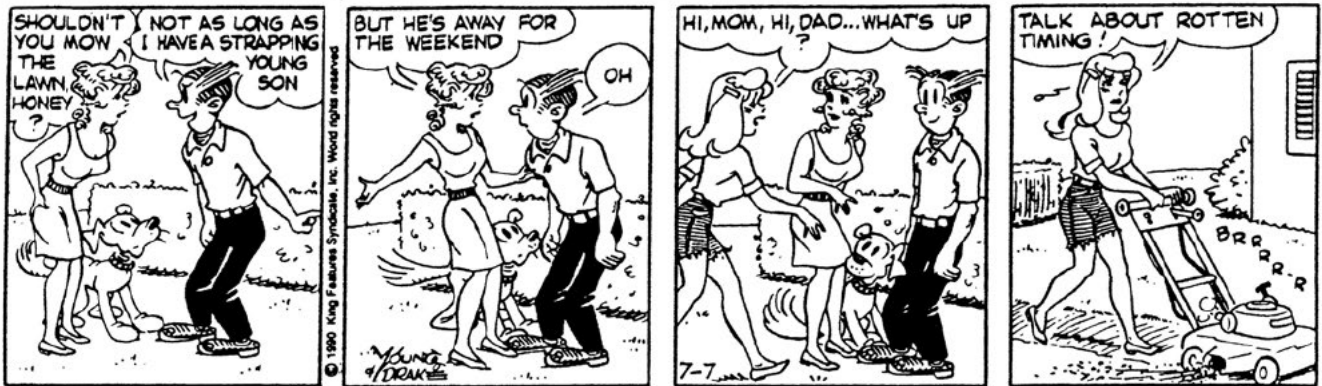
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BONUS CARTOON #2:

WHY THERE IS A RIGHT TIME AND A WRONG TIME TO REVEAL YOUR
TRANSGENDERED BEHAVIOR TO YOUR PARENTS



FAITH & GENDER

... CONTINUED

I realized that before there were the writings, Abraham knew God. I began to touch hearts with the authors of scripture, to share with them my hope in my social context. I struggled with Job who asked God "why me, what have I done wrong?" I felt Paul's concern as he wrote to the young churches and tried to get people to act responsibly and to get involved. I thought of my gender support group and of the church that I had pastored. I agonized with Jesus when he confronted the scribes and the pharisees as they defended their territory, and I felt his agony as he suffered because they knew the rules and the writings, and he knew God. It became necessary for me to proselytize and convert the unbelievers. Thoughts about judgement, salvation and heaven became irrelevant. I would be a fool to think that the presence which has been with me throughout all, would desert me after death, or that Christ, who has been loving and supportive in life, would be hateful and condemning after death. I thought about the gospel, a word which means good news. What was the good news, and for whom was the news good? My experience of presence was as available to me as to any other person, bird or tree. Again, a writer had recorded Jesus as saying that God cared for the birds or the air and the lilies of the field. I concurred. The good news must be good for all people, I concluded. It was good news that Christ was present, loving, supportive and caring. I didn't have to sell my faith, but from my hope which had now become a belief, I was compelled to share hope with others. With these thoughts in mind, what does God think about my crossdressing or yours? I don't concretely know what God wants. There are many who are made uncomfortable by our lifestyle, who will remind us of the words in Deuteronomy. The author of Deuteronomy was certainly a human who was made uncomfortable by crossdressers. Does this mean that God is uncomfortable? The good news is that God is with each of us, to the end and hopefully beyond. Rather than the judgement which is spoken of in the writings, I have felt the love and support of Christ. What does God want us to do? I touch hearts with the authors of scripture, I share their experience of faith. Many of these authors come to different conclusions about God and what constitutes righteous relationship. But, there is the common thread of hope becoming faith, being worked out in "fear and trembling" as Paul wrote of his journey. Actually, these men and women know no more about what God wanted from them, than I know about God wants from me. Read the book of Job, which is the oldest book in the Scriptures. Listen as Job cries to God "Why me, what have I done wrong?" Job's friends and relatives are more than willing to tell him all of the things that he has probably done wrong. In spite of Job's circumstances, he is never able to give up hope, to "curse God and die" as his wife recommends. Finally, in the story, God appears to Job (the Presence?) and seems hurt by Job for even asking the questions. God, in effect, asks Job how he could doubt, in light of all

that has been given to Job and to all people? "Where were you when I created the mountains, fed the deer that walk on them, caused the sea to fill and the fish to swim?" I go back to that mountain in Kentucky, now in women's tennies, slacks and a sweatshirt, with my hair permed, and I know that God is with me, and you, and the birds that swoop low over the tree tops. Christ likes my hair, and so do I. There is peace, and things are better. It is my hope that by sharing my reflections about faith, others may find peace as well. I think that God wants this. It will do little good to "Battle Bibles" with others or with yourself. If the Bible is God's rules, those of us who dress or who are gay are in sin and doing something hateful to God. The words are clear. If the scriptures are the writings of other men and women, just like you and me, who have thought about their faith, then belief can come from hope, as we meet people who are just like the families and friends that we know in our lives. There were religious fanatics (John the Baptist), there were people of compassion (Jesus), there were people whose sexual desires differed from the social norm (David). There were women (Ruth and Naomi) who felt loved and valued by God. This is not intended as systematic theology. I will be glad to speak to or receive letters from anyone who would like to discuss any of my reflections. Certainly there are unanswered questions. Who was Jesus, what is salvation, is there a heaven and hell, what is sin, how do we know what God wants if we don't see the scriptures as rules? All are legitimate questions and deserve consideration.

"CROSS-TALK" accepts articles for publication from both subscribers and non-subscribers. Please use the following guidelines when preparing your articles:
If you have an IBM compatible computer, we can accept either 3 1/2" diskettes or 5 1/4" disks (double-sided, double-density). Please convert text files to ASCII format before saving and use the file extension ".DOC" when naming the file.
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If you are using any other type of computer, word processor, or typewriter, please submit articles already printed out, scanner-ready (using a new ribbon if possible), double-spaced, with good contrast and without handwritten cross-outs or inserts. Handwritten articles are acceptable but should be submitted as far in advance of deadline as possible.

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REASON OF BEING

... CONTINUED

gland. A brief glimpse of this sacred-self, could spark you with many psychic abilities. Masters whom have molded the three selves into a perfect being, live within a serene state of rapture and bliss called Godhead. Even just the knowledge that the higher-self is within can give wonders of beauty and infinite wisdom. You can enhance your feminine identity if you sincerely reach for the higher-self.

If you are a transvestite or transsexual who is licentiously sexually active, I would tend to believe you crossdress due to biological or psychological influences, and are hopelessly caged within your lower-self. But, if you sense a spiritual affinity to your crossdressing, then it is almost certain that you are who you are, and do what you do, because of the middle-self. It is the conflict between the lower and middle-self, that is the cause of much of your confusion and despair. Unfortunately, the complexities do not end here. Your conflicting emotions may evolve from either side.

So that you may understand your struggling, I will give you a simple example:

If you feel a psychological root to your crossdressing and are confused, then your middle-self is attempting to inform the lower-self of this abnormality. Your middle-self is convinced that what the lower is doing is wrong and immoral. A union with the middle-self would not be enough for you to achieve mental peace. So you must receive wisdom and holy compassion from the sacred higher-self! Understand?

But if you feel your crossdressing is due to a metaphysical incursion, then it is the lower-self that will try to bring the middle-self out of its heaven and down to its level. It is actually jealous of your enlightened cross-gender essence, and wants to destroy that whimsy. The lower-self recognizes you are a man (or woman), and logically deduces that you cannot become a woman (or man) in this life span!

Nevertheless, in this case the middle-self usually wins

the battle. That is because it is drawn nearer to the higher-self, which is both masculine and feminine. The oversoul and spirit in the after-life is androgynous. So when you live on the threshold of Godhead, you are uncontrollably urged to experience the opposite sex! This is such a marvelous phenomenon of life, that I'm elevated in spirit as I write, just dreaming of all you angels I would love to know and cherish, guide and embrace.

A psychologist may seem to have all the answers, condensing your gender situation to influences from your childhood. Most of this cannot be confirmed. I laughed when I was told this because I've experienced, as a young boy, the urges to dress as girl, at the age of six! So because of this, I have searched all resources for the real answers to my question: Why Am I?

As a thirty-five year young mystic, I am aware, neither can my hypothesis be substantiated. It is the duty of each individual to decide for themselves what they perceive the truth to be concerning their cross-gender identity. If you are inclined to believe that your duality like ambitions have a spiritual foundation, then what I now write will not be that implausible. Within the higher-self exist the oversoul. This entity is the you that is immortal and has lived before. Within the ether of this oversoul are the Akashic records (biblical book of life). This is like the memory bytes of a computer, possessing all recorded events of your past-lives! It has been learned that it's possible for certain past-life personalities to breach those etheric barriers, via the higher-self, and then manifest within your body and life span. I know this may be very difficult to believe, but I sense some of you reading this, feel this could be the answer they have been seeking.

To all of you, my lovely friends, heed the messages from the inner-beings.

BEARDED LADY

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There were other wonders in that drawer. Garter belts, girdles and even corsets. They were much too large for me at that time, but I wore them anyway. I would spend hours on end enjoying the illicit thrill of those wonderful items of apparel. It was some time later that I found the old trunk in the attic with the outgrown clothes of my mother's past and was able to both wear something closer to my size and not have to worry about Mom missing something from her drawer. I was able to sleep in a bra if I was careful to hide it in the hamper before bedtime and then return to the bedroom in the dark so as not to be caught. Then there was the old green skirt in the attic, upon which I made my first attempt at sewing. It became one of the world's worst mini-skirts and it felt wonderful. Thanks to those barons of industry and wizards of science the world has changed and synthetics are the fabric of choice for the ILGWU, and I must admit that they look and feel more feminine than the cotton and rubber of my mother's underwear drawer. But it's strange, how hi-tech just doesn't have the staying power, or the aroma, of good old natural rubber. Seems I've come full circle.

OWN PHOTOGRAPHER

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don't want to look as if you are intentionally hiding them. This tends to draw the viewers eye subconsciously and they wind up with the feeling that something is not quite right with the photo.

If your hands are smaller and can be made to look feminine, use them, by all means! Pretty hands, or hands holding something, look natural and create a secondary point of interest which can spark up a portrait. The use of artificial fingernails can be a marvel for your hands. Long nails tend to create an image of long slim fingers. Try to stick with a color that is somewhat muted, as colors that are too bright or flashy attract too much attention. Unless you have the delicate hands of a concert pianist, most of us can't get away with too much scrutiny of our hands. Showing lots of nylon clad leg can make for a very alluring photo. If you are unable to, or decide not to shave your legs, simply wearing two pairs of hose will usually cover most traces of hair. Someone looking at your portrait will have no idea that this feminine little lady really has legs like a Neanderthal.

[This article first appeared in the newsletter of the Tiffany Society of Boston, and will be continued next month.]

