

THE TRANSGENDERIST - MAY/JUNE 1993

A Publication of Transgenderist's Independence Club, Albany, NY

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie [REDACTED]

You may notice that there are no more "topics for discussion" at our Thursday night meetings listed on our Calendar. This attempt to enliven our meetings has met with mixed success, sometimes eliciting a useful interchange, and sometimes forgotten. Then, we have had a few unadvertized spontaneous discussions, one on the differences between TVs and TSs being quite lively and arousing much debate. So, if there is something that particularly interests you, and you want to get the opinions of others, just come to the meetings and be prepared to talk for about 5 minutes to kick things off. If you give me a date and topic beforehand, I will announce it in the newsletter.

Sad to say, only one person signed up for our Dinner Party on April 17, so the affair was cancelled. I hope we can get a better response this month; those of you who may have been holding back for any reason, perhaps assuming that there will always be another opportunity, please show your interest by coming out before we have to call it quits. Our next party is scheduled for Saturday, May 15 at 8 pm, again at the Northway Inn. Be sure to get word to Joan H. by the end of our meeting on Thursday, May 13, which is when we will make a "go" or "no go" decision.

If you would like to have something more exciting to do in the Fall, please help Diane by responding to her questionnaire on the last page of *TGIC News - Apr/May*, and offer to help her make it happen. Only three have responded so far. If you would like to get out sooner, consider the *Tiffany Club Spring Fling* in Provincetown on June 1-7, at least for the weekend. I plan to be there all week. Or, how about joining the *Sunshine Club* for their *Weekend in the Country*, June 11-13 in Warren, VT - see below.

A number of members have submitted articles or letters for the newsletter in manuscript or typescript form. Most of them have now been printed or transcribed onto computer disk ready for future newsletters, and I am accumulating a stack of papers. *If you want your original hardcopy returned, please let me know soon.* Otherwise, I will throw it out. Future writers (*we will soon need more material!*) should indicate whether they want their hardcopy returned when they send it in. I have been returning diskcopy as soon as I have it on my computer, and will continue to do so.

Dues Reminder! If you see ***LAST*** printed on your mailing label, this means that your membership has expired and you will receive no further newsletters unless you pay your dues before the next mailing - see page 2 of *TGIC News - Feb/Mar*. If you owe dues, please send your payment with the membership renewal form on the last page of *TGIC News - Dec/Jan*.

Contents

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN - Winnie [REDACTED]	1
WEEKEND IN THE COUNTRY: The Sunshine Club	1
LETTER TO EDITOR - Fran [REDACTED]	2
COMING OUT CAPERS: PART IV - Laurie B.	2
A QUICK GUIDE TO WRITING TV FICTION - Paul	5
MY STORY - Tina A.	7
LETTER TO EDITOR - anon.	8
ANNOUNCEMENTS	9
TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP In Waltham, MA	9
CALENDAR	10

WEEKEND IN THE COUNTRY: The Sunshine Club

The *Sunshine Club* of Western Massachusetts has planned a *Country Weekend* in Warren, Vermont (in the Mad River Valley) for June 11-13. To start things off, there will be an informal buffet party on Friday evening. After breakfast at the inn on Saturday morning, the group will gather at Helene's home for socializing, with opportunities to go hiking in the Green

Mountains, shopping, sight-seeing, etc. Helene is a *Sunshine Club* member and a friend of *TGIC*. Lunch and supper will be at some fine restaurants in the area.

Sunday morning will be like Saturday, visiting Helene before returning home. The cost is \$25 per person, plus \$30 per person per night B&B at the inn. To register, send \$25 by check payable to the Sunshine Club before June 1 to:

Roberta [REDACTED]
P.O. Box 149
Hadley, MA 01035-0149

Tell Roberta you are a member of *TGIC*, and state your room preference (single or shared) so she can make your inn reservation (but you will pay the inn directly). She will send you directions and other details. Space is limited and priority given to *Sunshine Club* members, so contact her right away if you are interested.

LETTER TO EDITOR - Fran [REDACTED]

Dear Friends,

Enclosed is my check to renew membership in *TGIC*. I look forward to another year of joining you at the Northway Inn or whenever I am able to do so. Your Newsletter of the past year has been well done, and I enjoy each issue. Please know I am aware of how much effort and work it is to keep up with these things and it seems that you have few hands to assist.

Regarding the article in the current *TGIC News* by Winnie on the "*Tri-Ess Chapter Formed*"... I am one of the officers, along with Sharon Ann [REDACTED], who was instrumental in establishing this local chapter of *Tri-Ess*. Regarding this I'd like to make a few comments to my sisters in *TGIC*.

The formation of another gender group in the Capital district may seem redundant. Some may believe it to be competitive when we know how difficult it is to recruit active members of an organization who attend

meetings and contribute in some way. I am confident that our reasons and purposes for forming *Lambda Chi Lambda* was to meet particular and specific needs of some of the gender people of our area. The primary motivation behind the formation of *LCL* is to meet human needs and my limited experience with *TGIC* tells me that this is part of our common cause.

I look forward to my relationship with *TCIC* and the friendship and support I have experienced during these past years. In turn, please know that my personal friendship and support and that of *Lambda Chi Lambda* is warmly extended to all in *TGIC*. Perhaps each in our own way, working together and discovering ways to be successful in our common cause, can complement each other's efforts. Though we may have a different focus in our efforts, basically I believe it is the same. Educating the public and assisting one another in feeling better about ourselves is what it seems to me we're all about.

I look forward to Winnie's suggestion that perhaps "we may arrange some joint meetings in the future". -- Fran

COMING OUT CAPERS: PART IV - Laurie B.

Forty-two years old, finally admitted to yourself that you're into crossdressing, and how do you tell Mama? Carefully, that's how!

Being almost six hours by car from Mother's place, the telephone offered a good cop-out from a face-to-face showdown. So I called, said a local theater was running a TV show (my mother had enjoyed the TV/TS shows in Manhattan years ago) and the patrons were invited to join in the festivities. I would be Elvira.

Mom (funny how we don't outgrow these things, Grandma is still Nana) said we shouldn't make fun of these people by mimicking them or mocking them. Very strongly worded. Was she defending their

lifestyle, or trying to dissuade me from tasting the fruits of femininity? More insecurity.

Months go by, still got to test the waters again. How about Sis, thirty-seven and difficult to shock with anything? Another phone call - much safer than standing there in front of them, you can't see the smirks and scowls, even if you can still hear.

Dial the phone, a familiar voice, sounds like my sister. I start to tell my story of a repressed, now released, love for girlie stuff, when something isn't right. Sounds like my sister, but giggles like her daughter. Oops! It *is* her daughter, with a fourteen year old voice that copies her mother! Luckily, I hadn't gotten to the sensitive stuff. This shakes me; should I ask for Marie, or claim that it's a wrong number? Too late, my niece is yelling out, "it's Uncle L". "Marie, please", I meekly ask.

As I sweated, Marie came to the phone. "Hi." "Bye," I thought, but managed to hang in there.

Think quick. So I told my sister "I had a secret, could she keep one, and never tell." "Sure." Sigh of relief. "No matter how odd or unnatural?" "Yup." The burden was lifted.

As nonchalantly as possible, "I have joined a transvestite club." Silence. More silence. Lots of silence. Time to run - or hang up first?

Hesitantly, words came through the receiver. "Transvestite? You mean you're going to have it cut off? What do you mean?"

Well, I explained transvestite versus transsexual, briefly. A big laugh of relief from my sister, "My brother dresses up!" Now we were communicating!

She next asked if I dressed outside, repeated four times. She was shocked. I had done the undo-able, I had unbalanced the reckless, adventuresome and "I've seen everything" half of my families' children.

Finishing up (she had to dress for work, no doubt imagining her brother struggling also with pantyhose and slippers), she promised to call in a few days.

Weeks go by, no calls. Had my sister been shaken to the quick? Was she succumbing to waves of disgust? Was she building up her used underwear as a CARE package?

Christmas Day, I call Mom. "I love you, you know", enters the conversation a few too many times. Something's up. Yes, Sis had blabbed. Mom knew. Silent fear.

My Mom threw in the TV stuff, at varied and short intervals. "She didn't care what I did", was the message that came through. Wasn't that a nice Xmas present. "No opinion" is better than condemnation.

Everything went so well, I thought. "Your brother-in-law says you're too tall to be a woman." Did I hear Mom right? "Your sister says your legs aren't good enough." Huh? "Very few guys like tall girls, although Sal is dating the La Nan sisters." Was my hearing going? Indifference is okay, acceptance would be great, but matter-of-fact inclusion in the general gossip pool???

Well, I guess everyone knows now, even my nieces and nephews. "Hey, Aunt L. is on the phone!" raced through my mind as the probable new exclamation when my niece answered the phone. My mother actually asked me to bring along my "new" clothes. My sister said my new hobby simplified her Christmas and birthday shopping for me, since they had run out of "male" type things. ("38B bra's and 40 panties, please").

Most crossdressers fear condemnation and exile, I was starting to fear social acceptance! Sometimes the world seems crazy, but this was topsy-turvy, like in those odd movies you see on TV every once in a blue moon. Things are so great you can't stand the atmosphere, cause they don't seem "natural". People are acting contrary to what you expect.

Closer to the home front, my wife's two daughters learned of my "need to crossdress", and thought it splendid. "They always thought I was special", both said. In fact, one daughter wanted to go shopping with me, especially for short skirts - she told me to lose weight by exercising, so I'd fit into the available lace tight sizes.

My mother's only self-conscious thought was that she had tried dresses on me when I was two, cause I looked so girlish (curls and soft skin) and she wondered what a daughter would have looked like. When Mom first heard, she thought back to that "dress-up" day in 1952, as a possible cause.

My sister thought I was finally coming to grips with repressed drives, originating with an unadventurous teen life, and being a youthful male in a female-dominated family.

Now that the family knows (my wife's mother "loves" my TV nature, as one of her acquaintances is contemplating "The Operation"), the last frontiers are work and "The Street". A fellow worker commented today that I must be well along the sex change route", after I asked for Christine Jorgenson's Bio for my birthday, in the office.

Wouldn't a world be nice in which men could wear dresses, nylons, earrings, and make-up to office work, and not be deemed insane (without my wig, I look sort of "butch"). There are women who dress like men, without frontal verbal assaults at work, or even snide behind-the-back commentary. Using the bathrooms might be touchy - but I've seen unisex lavatories in some municipal office buildings, if memory serves well.

In my particular case, the "conflict" between male clothes, male action for a living and a heart of varying gender feelings naturally results in some weird behavior, and a macabre sense of humor. What could be so much weirder about a dress and other female attire, compared to now? The key is how serious one is, I guess, because it can't be viewed as an outrageous stunt designed to create chaos in the workplace,

but the seriousness must be tempered with a lively sense of humor. People should view things as a natural course of action running through to the conclusion, perhaps in my case.

Back in reality, Laurie B. is a far way from gaining minority (female) employment status at work, and "The Street" looms as a far more immediate threat - in between home and work lurks physical threats. But it is fun to fantasize about getting into the middle of those female gossip rings, after all these years of wishing. And having full membership in the office women's Trenchcoat and Umbrella Walking-in-the-Rain Society, as a fully (leg) shaved participant - even though I frown on nylons, dresses, white socks and sneakers as a combination.

The TV-TS **Tapestry**

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A QUICK GUIDE TO WRITING TV FICTION - Paul

In my years of reading TV fiction, it has become obvious that there is a standard formula. While things like characterization and a "story arc" (the process in which the plot creates sensations and feelings in the characters, which produce thoughts and realizations, which then produce learning and growth) are often missed, there must be a plot.

Here are the five elements that are absolutely vital to classic TV fiction. By including them, you too can crank out a TV story!

1) Plausible Reason

There needs to be some reason that the character has to cross-dress. The main themes for this are listed below:

-Performance. The character is going to do some performing:

- a role in a play
- going to play a prank or a practical joke, such as an initiation
- in a talent show, lipsync contest or such
- going to a costume party
- dressing for Halloween

-Disguise. The character needs to have their identity hidden:

- to avoid danger, for example being hunted by mobsters
- to allow access to something, for example going undercover
- to replace someone, like a decoy or cover

-Punishment. The punishment occurs because the character has either done something:

- unmasculine, like running from a fight, and is shamed
- anti-feminine, like cheating, and is forced to "walk a mile" in the offended shoes.

-Learning/Expression. The character chooses to dress to learn and/or express something about themselves. For example, in *Tootsie*, he wants to prove acting ability. Dressing may be part of a ritual in a belief structure, like a rite of passage, or part of an experiment to see how the other half lives.

In creating a reason, it is useful to put the reasons together to form interesting compound reasons. In *"Some Like it Hot"*, the boys dress to get away from gangsters, but then perform. A band that can only get jobs dressed as girls are people who dress for access, but then perform. One may dress for Halloween, but then have to act as someone else in the office.

2) Supportive/Approval Force

It is important to remove the onus on cross-dressing by having someone approve of the activity in some way. In punishment, because responsibility for the dressing is taken by the punisher and not the punished, this is easy. In other cases an appropriate approval force can be found. In a story about a boy who replaces a cheerleader, the whole team may be behind him. In a story about a fraternity prank, a fraternity brother, or girlfriend may be supportive.

While the support force is usually a sex partner, it can be a figure that represents anyone in the family. An older woman may represent the mother, an older man in a lodge initiation the father, a roommate the brother, or a female co-worker the sister.

3) Magical Transformation

The transformation from the male to female appearance is the magical point in most stories, as it is difficult to make an effective transformation without some magic.

While some stories may use only everyday magic, like padding and makeup, many stories choose to use more fanciful creations. Pills or shots that grow breasts, magic spells that convert someone to female form or change souls between bodies, or elaborate

appliances such as functional glue-on vaginas, or high technology like machines that rearrange matter have all been used.

Whatever the magic of the transformation, it is an essential part of the story. The transformation is the point where the constraints of the male role are broken and the character is freed to new sensations. The character must believe in the magic, so the magician should be credible, like an ex-model, makeup artist, scientist, or witch.

4) New Sensations

Now that the transformation has occurred, the payoff of the story begins. The character, freed from the male role, starts experiencing things that are new, different and very sensual. This may range from silky smoothness, to an admiring (and possibly lustful) glance.

This focus on sensation is not unique. Most romance novels are very focused on sensation, like taking baths, or interesting clothing. In writing TV stories, you can get many tips from these novels that are written to make women feel feminine, as you try to help men feel similar things.

5) Tasks

The rest of the plot comes here. The character does some tasks that create new sensations and meet with approval. This may include a policeman walking down a dark street in high heels and feeling fear, or a band member playing in front of an audience. A mix of risk, excitement, fear and pleasure is required in any situation.

While in many novels the tasks are purely sexual at this point, any highly charged behavior will work. Passing as a princess at a ball, and dancing with handsome men, having to sit at a table across from the boss, ending up in the women's room at a male stripper show, or flying to Atlanta may all be situations that create powerful emotions in the character and therefore in the reader. The best stories are at their most emotional and sensational here.

Mixing in approval, from both the approval force and others who may not have approved, is very useful here. The policeman may get a hug from the victim and a commendation from the boss, or the musician may get a record deal, as well as go home with an attractive partner.

6) Resolution

This may be as simple as a line "...and he knew he was free" or as complex as a change in the life direction of the character. It may be a return to normal, with only a sly grin, or some guilt triggered by the events that occurred during the freedom.

You may choose to have the character make some breakthroughs about the limitations of the female role, or about the false limits that he has seen in the male role. This will complete the arc that you have begun at the beginning of the story.

That's it. The basic creativity comes in creating and assembling plot elements. Of course, the skills of the writer in creating vivid description, real characters and resonant subtexts, would be nice to have, but those are the skills that move genre fiction into great writing.

When you are finished with your story, submit it to TGIC. We'd love to see it in print; wouldn't you?

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MY STORY - Tina A.

*(Edited from letter written 2/18/92.
Tina now attends our meetings regularly)*

I am 50 years old with a lot of life experience to share. The photo-copied picture is from a drawing I made of myself which is, in turn, from a photo about 17 years ago. As you can see, I have artistic talent. I may offer a portrait service.



I stopped crossdressing about 16 years ago because I got "SAVED". That story is a whole saga unto itself which was the most torment filled, madness filled, disorienting experience I ever had and this is without revealing my transvestite nature to anyone. The madness was from very neurotic, wayward Fanatic Fundamentalists (of the "Born Again" type) and a yet deeper dimension in my religious experience which still leaves me baffled even though it's 12 years ago that I blew it all out of my life! My religious experience far outdoes my entire transvestite experience in weirdness, bizarre and disorienting madness!

Later in 1985 I got married. I told my wife Carole about being a transvestite and she accepted it. I was not crossdressing because of religious convictions. Our marriage lasted six years and we are now separated because of severe communication hassles having nothing to do with my crossdressing.

Back in the 60's I used to go out and about dressed. In 1966 I got arrested and sent to a psychiatrist who listened to my life story for six months and at the end of it said "You're all right." Tina stayed inside closed walls after that. I did join a local Albany group in 1975 and then the religious thing got me. After that it wasn't even closet but fantasy in my head with a couple of exceptions 'til now.

I am of course covering a tremendous amount of ground with involved, intense experiences in one short letter. Let's bring things up to the present.

I am living in Schenectady rebuilding a life for myself after recently leaving my wife. I am also recuperating from a very badly broken leg, having to jump out of the attic of a burning house. I am presently living on SSI. In addition to artistic talent, I am a performing folk musician. I plan on a routine in the person of Tina before an accepting audience. I sing and play guitar, flute, pennywhistle and fiddle.

My entire life has been and continues to be a journey of self discovery. I believe I pinned down the childhood experience in my life that makes me a transgender person. I've also learned a good deal about neurotic behavior in general, being an adult child of a dysfunctional family in a married situation. I do fine as a single person but not married.

Presently while on SSI and not working, I am putting music and art on the front burner. I will probably take full advantage of your membership, and I do definitely intend to get into the transgender community locally and make some friends. I have also contacted the Tri-Ess sorority.


I am presently sporting a bushy white beard which I will soon shave off. I haven't seen my bare chin in 12 years. It hasn't stopped me from cross-dressing. But it's high time Tina got some friends again.

LETTER TO EDITOR - anon.

I recently read the TGIC story about kinky sex, fantasy, etc. I find being temporarily

locked in someplace really kinky and exciting. I sometimes hang around places at their closing times, hoping to be temporarily locked in! Yay! Some places are really exciting if they have lots of doors with keyholes on both sides. Because this is so goody and weird, I can't tell you my name. It is so fun to fantasize attractive people in tight clothes as they are temporarily confined.

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TGIC PUBLICATIONS

Transgenderists Independence Club (TGIC), PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604, Phone (518) 436-4513, is a nonprofit, educational, social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

The Transgenderist

Bimonthly (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, Nov) to Members, Subscribers, prospective new members, friends, professionals, and exchange publications. Devoted to TGIC self-help and outreach to others, with original articles by Club members and local news of significant interest outside of our membership. Club business and other matters are limited to updates.

TGIC News

Bimonthly (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec) to Members, Subscribers and prospective new members. Devoted to TGIC business and inreach from others, containing Club business matters, local news of little interest outside of our membership, selected reprints and other outside items such as clippings and cartoons.

TGIC MEMBERSHIP DUES

General Member \$40/yr
Couples \$45/yr
Key Club / large closet \$40/mo
Key Club / small closet \$30/mo
Key Club / attic storage \$15/mo

All the above categories include a one-year subscription to both TGIC News and The Transgenderist, mailed First Class.

Subscriptions:

The Transgenderist, 6 issues: \$25
TGIC News, 6 issues: \$25
Single copies of either: \$5 each

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

POLICY: Short announcements and advertisements from Club Members are published free for two consecutive months (once each in TGIC News and The Transgenderist), unless cancelled by the originator or a specific request to continue is made.

GENDER-ORIENTED ART EXHIBITION

Dress Codes: The Art of Crossdressing

March 10 - May 30, 1993

Hours: Wed & Thur 12-9pm; Fri-Sun 12-5pm

Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)
955 Boylston Street, Boston, MA
(across from the Hynes Convention Center)
Phone (617) 266-5152

ICA is a world-class museum, the oldest institution dedicated to contemporary art. This special exhibition will feature visual art, video, film, performance, and educational programs. We are encouraged to attend and meet the public. Flyers with more information are available in the Club Room.

If you would like to visit this special exhibition as a group, please write or call TGIC as soon as possible, suggest a date, and we will try to organize carpools. The last weekend, May 29 or 30, just before the Memorial Day holiday, has been suggested by someone - does anyone else want to go then?

MILITARY LAW QUESTIONNAIRE

A number of our members have already completed and returned their forms - thank you all! If you have ever served in the armed forces, please participate in this study, even if you did not cross dress while in service. See the article in *TGIC News - Apr/May*. Copies of the questionnaire are available in the *Club Room* or will be *mailed upon request* to TGIC.

PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS CARDS

If you are a counselor or other professional or vendor willing to help or provide services to transgendered clients, please send us your business card (or other small ad) and we will place it in our newsletter *free*. Black print on a white background is preferred, because it copies better.

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING

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

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP In Waltham, MA

*Are you confused about your gender identity?
Do you have HIV or AIDS?
Do you need help getting your life together?
Is discrimination a problem?
Do you need help getting medical referrals or medication?
Do you have problems with family and/or friends?*

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, our monthly support group may provide the help you need to deal successfully with your transgender issues. Beginning 4/8/93, this group will meet the first Thursday of every month at the *IFGE Office at 123 Moody Street in Waltham, MA from 7-10 pm.*

Membership is limited to encourage participation and allow ample time for frank and open discussion of your concerns and those of other group members. A nominal fee of \$10 will be charged. For further information, contact:
Danielle or Melissa at (203) 963-7664
Or write to:

IMAGES

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266 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, New York 12054

CALENDAR

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

MAY 1993

May 6 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
May 13 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
May 15 Saturday, 8 pm
 Dinner Party, Northway Inn
May 20 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
May 27 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

JUNE 1993

June 3 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 10 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 17 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm
June 19 Saturday, 8 pm
 Dinner Party, Northway Inn
June 24 Thursday Meeting, 7:30 pm

MAJOR COMING EVENTS

Contact TGIC for more information. Some registration brochures are available in the Club Room

May 12-16 *Esprit 93*, Port Angeles, WA
May 20-23 *Paradise in the Poconos*
May 20-24 *Dignity Cruise to Bahamas*
June 1-7 *Tiffany Club Spring Fling*, Provincetown, MA
June 9-13 *Be All You Want To Be*, Chicago, IL
Jun 11-13 *Sunshine Club Weekend in the Country*, Warren, VT
July 9-11 *S.P.I.C.E. - Spouses / Partners International Conference for Education*, Dallas, TX
Aug 26-29 *Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy*, Houston, TX
Sep 16-19 *Paradise in the Poconos*
Oct 15-25 *Fantasia Fair*, Provincetown
Oct 28-31 *Fall Harvest Weekend*, Kansas City, MO

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For Proceedings from First Conference send \$40.00 (U.S. funds) and specify audio or written (for overseas add \$5.00)