

# OUTREACH



VOLUME VIII NUMBER II

SPRING 1984

## MY LIFE AS A WOMAN

by J. Thomas

I have lived now as a woman for almost nine months, a normal gestation period for most newborns. However one of the things that sets me apart from other women is the fact that my birth and entry into the world occurred in my fourth decade of life. You see, I was born a genetic male, and my prior life was as a man, rather than as a woman.

Transsexuals or gender dysphorics are persons that feel a compelling need to live as the other genetic sex. Often you hear or read of such a person feeling that "they are a woman trapped inside a man's body", that their physical form and psyche are in opposition; that the only way they can find happiness is to reconcile this great difference.

It is difficult to say what other transsexuals feel or may have experienced. The differences between transsexuals seems to me to be much greater than what we all share in common. Although a trained psychologist, I find it almost impossible to generalize from what I have experienced to what other transsexuals can expect to experience as they transition to the desired gender role.

However I can recount some of what was important in my own transition. What follows is a brief account of some of the stellar events that occurred along the way, as I transitioned to the gender role that I knew I was destined to live. My story is told as a series of anecdotes grouped as they relate to some of the principals that seemed to work for this woman.

*cont'd on pg 4*

## THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE CROSSDRESSER

Back in the Fabulous Fifties, looking temporarily ultra-feminine in a king-sized cartwheel black velvet hat, and (thanks to a smart fashion photographer) looking marginally beautiful, I graced the front cover of the leading American crossdressing magazine.

During the same month, the president of the giant American corporation for which I then worked, made the cover of Time Magazine!

Quite a few years later, I was on every United Kingdom breakfast table from the Shetlands to the Scillies, having made the front page of a 5,000,000-circulation Sunday paper. Fortunately our president had no answer to that because he had gone on to his great reward, and I was no longer working for a company.

I guess the message I was getting, and which I am now giving, is that being an extroverted crossdresser can be a great deal of fun, and less hard on the physical person than being in the Great Industrial Rat Race -- IF you can stay out of trouble with Society!

Life viewed from the other side of a dark mirror is very interesting! I hold to that opinion, notwithstanding my dictionary's gloomy definition of Crossdressing as "a morbid preoccupation with dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex"!

CROSSDRESSING CAN BE FUN! You like that line? Well, you can't have it. -- But let me explain how, why and where I have enjoyed life in that state -- and what Society tries to do to you if (being otherwise genetically determined by Nature) you elect to live out your social life in a woman's role.

*cont'd on pg 2*

Loneliness of CD

How can I treat this subject with lightness and with whimsy, while being suitably serious and without overstepping the frontiers of good taste? Admittedly in these days the frontiers are ill-marked, but they exist somewhere and must be respected. So I shall devise a way of staying within them, having no passport (nor wanting any) for the never-never Land of Porn.

I won't weary you with the usual cross-dressers' forgettable war stories. Invariably it is a long and highly stylized account of how they were first dressed as girls, usually (it would seem) under some degree of compulsion ..., or of a fond mother who had wished to be blessed with a daughter ..., or of a bored serving wench in the family home ..., or a stern and punitive butch aunt (a very popular explanation, this one!). And therefore, they claim, they were quite irretrievably hooked on frocks and frills and furbelows. Often blamed, too, are wickedly experimental older sisters, seducing young brothers into dresses which the poor lads are (forever after) wholly unable to resist.

In the light of my own experience, I find such tales entirely unconvincing. Certainly no one ever conned me into skirts; but even if they had, I am quite sure that an already built-in preference for being dressed as a little girl could have kept me in them. I believe these accounts are largely, if not entirely, fantasies, and that those who attribute their habitual crossdressing to the acts of others and to environmental influences, rather than to hereditary and self-induced ones, do violate the facts.

These fairy tales (no play on words is intended!) are a part of a general cross-dressing folk-lore. Next in that area usually comes the classic protestation that dressing and acting as a woman is NOT a manifestation of homosexuality. Now while it is true that very few crossdressers are active, card-carrying homosexuals, numerous crossdressers I have met and talked with in four continents have at some time of their development, indulged in (or would not have been unwilling to indulge in) thoughts and behavior which could hardly be classed

as as heterosexual. At the very least they would be considered highly effeminate!

Such effeminacy, whether you classify it as homosexual or not, is not really surprising. After all, the dedicated crossdresser's whole aim is to simulate, as far as his physical limitations and his cosmetic skills will allow, the appearance of a woman.

The point I'm making is that since CDs imitate women in every other way which is open to them, why should they (when considerations of security and aesthetics permit) stop short of imitating women's sexual activities?

Some do travel this road, but others (the great majority perhaps) when in their feminine role are just openly happy to accept little social courtesies from men, and otherwise to conduct themselves in as womanly a manner as possible.

con't on pg 8

THE OUTREACH NEWSLETTER IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HUMAN OUTREACH AND ACHIEVEMENT INSTITUTE. IT IS PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR AND SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE \$10 PER ANNUM.  
© 1984 ALL RIGHTS ARE RESERVED. OTHER PUBLICATIONS MAY QUOTE FROM OUR ARTICLES, PROVIDING THEY CITE OUTREACH NEWSLETTER AS THEIR SOURCE.

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute is a not-for-profit, educational corporation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It serves as a resource for helping professionals, crossdressers, androgynes and transsexuals.

The OUTREACH NEWSLETTER is edited by A. Kane, and all inquiries should be addressed to the Outreach Institute, Box 368 Kenmore Station, Boston MA 02215

## A PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT

by E. Burnham

"I thought Naomi and Eve were just great. It was a very informative night -- I really learned a lot about crossdressers. I used to think they were gross, but they were very nice people. I really enjoyed it..."

"I knew absolutely nothing about the life-style, and was surprised at the misconception I had regarding them..."

These are just two of the many reactions Naomi and I have received, following one of many presentations to college classes in the mid-west. Most of the students with whom we came in contact volunteered their reactions. 95% were generally favorable. Allow me to share our motivation and experiences with you.

As an Associate Member of CHIC in the Los Angeles area, I first became aware of the Club's very active Speakers Bureau, led by Lane. For many years now, there was hardly a week when CHIC speakers did not participate in several presentations before college classes, educational classes at hospitals, or the education of Police Departments.

Their diligent effort in reaching the public has surely contributed to a better understanding of our self-expression. In the case of the Police Departments, we prevented much personal anguish which might have resulted from an uninformed arrest.

On one of my business trips to L. A. I was invited to participate in a presentation before a Human Sexuality class at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa.

Oh, how my heart fluttered as Lane, Terri-Jo and I wore our heels through the throng of students crossing the college campus. I'm afraid we were dressed more for an afternoon matinee performance at the Symphony, rather than the casual dress of a campus. We earned some curious but admiring glances.

Following a brief personal introduction by our host professor, we took turns giving a brief synopsis of our life's history. This was followed by an open question-and-answer period. There was simply not enough time to accommodate everyone's interest, and our visit extended an hour past the normal class period.

I came away from this wonderful experience in an enormous high, determined to devote my further efforts to making a little dent into the massive ignorance closer to my home in the mid-west.

A trip to our community library produced a large collection of directories of universities and colleges, revealing the names of the heads of Departments teaching Human Sexuality, Psychology and Anthropology. We wrote letters to several of them, generally introducing ourselves as heterosexual transvestites, interesting in presenting our views to groups studying related subjects.

Another avenue of contact developed through a local counselor on human sexuality, friendly to our social contact groups, who is a member of a professional organization known as AAECT (American Association of Sex Education Counselors and Therapists).

Naomi and I were asked to participate in a panel presentation before members of AAECT at a local convention. Many of those attending were teachers of human sexuality subjects at various colleges, who later invited us to their campuses.

Without exception, we have been received with considerable courtesy, but with a high degree of initial curiosity and awkwardness. However, soon after we individually introduced ourselves (presented with much candor and humility) we experienced a melting of the audience's initial detachment, and the development of a warm relationship, not unlike that found during a sensitivity session.

The personal sense of accomplishment, acceptance and ego boost has been our greatest reward. As we attempt to further broaden our "experience", I encourage others to attempt similar presentations. The rewards are many.

cont'd on pg 8

## My Life as a Woman

## PART I

## A PHOENIX ROSE FROM THE ASHES

By society's standards I would be considered a heterosexual male. I grew up as a man, was educated and launched my professional career as a man. Along the way I married women twice and am the father to three children. The first marriage ended in divorce. My first wife was certain someone such as myself must be homosexual -- men just don't want to dress and behave as women unless they are homophiles.

My second marriage was more successful. Having been burnt once I did not enter into another relationship without first informing my prospective mate that I felt as I did. Sally and I were married for almost 20 years, during which we raised a marvelous son and shared many wonderful experiences. Our relationship was certainly affected by the way I felt, but Sally understood her mate. She considered me first a person, the one she loved, and she was able to deal with my lifestyle (even though she wished it might have been otherwise). Together we had a productive life.

Sally died of breast cancer after a valiant battle the last nine years of her life. When she died I was at a loss. The one person that had known and understood me was gone, and I was alone. Fate can be a strange bedfellow. When Sally was dying I realized that this marvelous lady would not continue to share my life. I knew that I would be alone. All my friends would be trying to help - to provide support. But they would not know how I really felt. How could they really help me when they did not know the real problem?

Sally spent her last days at home. We were able to establish a hospice and see that she received the best care in the surrounds that she loved. That meant having nursing care in

our home. Sally and I discussed how we would handle having nurses living with us 24 hours a day. She knew the imposition that would present to my lifestyle. We decided that we would become more open with regard to how I felt. We would no longer keep my lifestyle a deep dark secret.

I can still remember the first encounter with Susan, the intelligent nurse-manager assigned to Sally's case by the Visiting Nurses Association. She had met Jay on three prior occasions, and Sally had told her of my problem while I was at work. They decided that the nurses who would be caring for Sally would be initially informed that I was a transsexual. Those nurses who couldn't handle it by professionals who could be more comfortable in the situation.

The first time that Susan met the real me was quite an experience! At that time I lived a great part of my life as a woman -- working as a man, but spending most of my free time as Jayne. Typically I would be Jay on those occasions when it was important to be the husband.

One day Susan came on her usual visit. At that time Sally hadn't told me she had talked with Susan. I was dressed as Jayne. In such situations I would stay with Sally until her visitor arrived. When they reached our door (and I knew Sally would be OK) I would leave by the back door and returning after the visitor had left. But as I started out Sally said "You don't have to leave; I told Susan about you -- she knows about Jayne."

So Jayne went to the door. Even though Susan had met Jay three times, she had never met Jayne. "Hello Susan," I smiled. "Hello, ..." she started, but then stared at me in a disconcerted way, "...I don't think we have ever met." "Oh, I thought Sally had told you -- I'm Jayne." Susan's face broke into a smile of final recognition. "My God, you're gorgeous!"

cont'd on pg 7

LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH A  
F-M TRANSEXUAL

by A. Crevoi

*(The following piece is from a woman in love with a "new man". It tells of her concerns, frustrations, problems and joy in her relationship with Jan.)*

I was so pleased to have "caught" your appearance on "The Morning Exchange Program" in Cleveland on April 17th. Although I feel I should apologize for the Puritanical ignorance displayed by many Cleveland citizens, I was extremely impressed by your responses -- you are so dynamic and a credit to Outreach.

Perhaps I am so open to the notion of gender alternatives because of my own lifestyle -- I hope you can offer me your views, or refer me to someone who could help me.

I have truly loved but one person during the last 15 of my 27 years -- Jan is a woman only physically. For some almost spiritual reason, I have always related to Jan as her being a man. This is what I see. It's as if I see her soul's desired masculine projection, instead of what the world sees as her physical body. Jan is just now beginning the long hard road toward altering her present sex to become a biological male.

I would like to tell you more of my situation. As a person involved in such a complex relationship I feel there is no outlet for me to have a one-on-one conversation with someone else in my position. I am a woman in love with a person who is mentally rejecting her body in order to become the man (s)he desires to be. Jan seems to have selected this path in life and I have chosen her/him as my partner because of the deep love I have always felt for him. Life has been made impossible by a society that feels totally threatened by non-conformists.

Let me explain that we are not homosexual. I am rarely understood, if ever, when I explain that I am not attracted to women -- not in the least. I simply love Jan, and always have, as the man we both believe him to be. (Before Jan, I was always attracted

to men.) I share in Jan's excessive pain in the many situations that confront "her" in daily life. Even when being seated in a restaurant and being ushered to our seats, and we hear "Is this alright ladies?", I don't have to see Jan's face to feel her pain -- I already know.

Because of our unique situation, there is absolutely no one to relate to. We cannot maintain friendships based on lies, and there seems to be no one to discuss our feelings with. I have tried the professional psychologist route, but it's always been a dead end for me. I don't have a problem or psychological malfunction, SOCIETY DOES! I don't want to change my situation. Even after the terrible fights, stemming from all our frustrations, I know that I could not live without him. This world is simply no place for me to be without Jan. In the face of such obstacles as family dissatisfaction and general society's disgust, ours is a lonely, lonely life. Too often our irritation with long days spent in such a society takes a heavy toll in our relationship, and even in our mental and physical health.

I so want to be the right springboard for Jan. And while it is not important for Jan to have sexual surgery for my benefit (I cannot deal with seeing him in pain of any kind), it does seem essential to "him". (S)he feels as if (s)he could not continue to live unless the rest of society will accept his masculine life style. I am tired of a basically heterosexual and narrow minded society, forcing its way of life on us.

Jan has already contacted several specialists in the field, and all the authors of the classical transsexual books, but there is not one for the loved one of the transsexual. Can you help?

I am far from naive, but am weary over the pain directed at those with alternative life styles. It is just too hard to deal with the opposition from society without resorting to escape by drugs and other destructive paths. I am a firm believer in "whatever gets you through the night". I hurt for Jan -- I hurt for me.

cont'd on pg 7

## WE GET LETTERS

I watched the David Susskind Show on April 23rd on Educational Channel 36 in Milwaukee, discussing "Heterosexual Men Who Dress as Women". I found this immensely interesting and informative, and of great personal significance, as I am such a person.

I am interested in finding out if there is a support group in the Milwaukee area, similar to the TRI-ESS organization mentioned on the show. If it exists, please send information on how to contact them -- especially cross dressers who are married and have children.

Thank you sincerely,  
Rhonda Privers  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I learned of your organization while watching David Susskind's chat show recently. I am a young Briton at an American university, and am having a difficult to impossible time finding other cross-dressers. Could your organization be of some help?

What is the Outreach Institute, and what services are provided? Is there a social gathering aspect, or some system for meeting others with this common factor? I know of none in the Norwalk area but assume some exist in New York City.

Yours truly,  
G. P. Schaab, Norwalk, Conn.

I caught the recent Susskind show on cross-dressing. Thank you for appearing, and it was most enlightening. We taped it for our library, so will be able to share it with all our volunteers.

Cross-dressing is not a major focus for us but we do frequently get calls. Please send us information on the Institute, a phone contact, and general information including a list of other groups in the U. S.

Sincerely,  
Dennis Krell, Director  
GAY TALK Phone service

I recently had the wonderful opportunity to have seen you and your friends of truth on David Susskind's Show on PBC 2 here in Miami. I extend my praise to you for your wonderful work. It is about time that all those confined to guilt and shame by what is reality, come out into the open.

Please send me literature or other material describing your work and background and details regarding your next and coming programs, particularly the Fantasia Fair held in October of this year.

Sincerely,  
Frederic Evans, Bay Harbor, Fla.

★ ★ ★

## 1984 SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

## ABSTRACTS &amp; TAPES AVAILABLE

The Outreach Institute organized and presented a Symposium on GENDER ISSUES FOR THE '80's at the Joint National Meeting of AASECT & QUAD 'S', held in Boston.

Panel presenters included Dr. David McQuirter, Dr. Virginia Prince, Dr. Anne Bolin and Dr. Vern Bullough. The Symposium was moderated by Ari Kane, Director of the Outreach Institute. The program was well attended and very well received.

A booklet containing Abstracts of each presenter as well as two audio tapes of the presentations is being made available through the Institute. The costs for the Abstracts and the Tapes is \$18.95 and includes postage and handling. Please make payments (in US funds only) by bank check or postal money order, to the Outreach Institute. ★

## My Life as a Woman

Susan told me months later how much easier and genuine Jayne was to deal with. "There was just something that made me feel uncomfortable around Jay. Perhaps his great discomfort was showing through. Whatever it was, Jayne is an easier person to get to know."

Although living through the death of a loved one is a terrible thing, I was able to prepare myself during those last months for what lay ahead. I began to allow myself to experience all that had been denied me. Importantly, I began to observe what was going on around me, with regard to how others perceived me, and how they reacted to this person who had changed gender.

Throughout this grief and loss, close friends now knew of the inner conflict I was dealing with. But these friends also had to deal with the loss of the Sally they had known, so there wasn't a flocking of attention -- but the support that did appear was genuine and honest. Sally's passing saw me committed and well on the way to the next chapter in my life. ★

FIRST IMPRESSIONS WERE  
EXTREMELY COMPELLING

FIRST IMPRESSIONS  
To be continued in the next issue

COMING IN THE NEXT  
ISSUE

- REPORT ON THE JOINT MEETING OF QUAD 'S' & AASECT IN BOSTON
- AN ALL DAY WORKSHOP FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY (AHP)
- THE 1984 PROGRAM AT FANTASIA FAIR, OCTOBER 12-21.
- REPORT ON THE OUTREACH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL REFERRAL NETWORK (OPERN)

## Love Relationship

I cannot explain to my parents, whom I love dearly, why their daughter does not get married, etc. They know marriage has been offered to me. I "appear" to be an attractive heterosexual female who is available. Hence I feel the need to withdraw from most social situations -- it's just too much for me to cope with.

Why is there only a handful of people who understand that it is society that has the hangups -- not the people choosing to live an alternative life style.

I had to write to you because I could not reach you by phone during the allotted "Question and Answer" segment of "Morning Exchange". Keep up your very important "mission". ★

## A CALL FOR ARTICLES

For subsequent issues, we invite our readership to submit articles, either professional or personal, about some aspect of the paraculture, to the editors.

The article should be at least two 8 1/2 x 11 doublespaced, typewritten pages in length. They should be received at least one month prior to the date of publication of the Newsletter. Dates of publication are April 30, July 31 and November 30.

The Editors reserve the right to edit all materials for publication, to conform with space requirements and standards of good taste.

Loneliness of CD

Perhaps the whole thing can be summarily disposed of by saying that confirmed cross-dressers often permit themselves homosexual thoughts and actions, but usually only as extensions of the act of dressing and behaving as women, and that in their normal male role such things have no appeal.

Next in crossdressing folk lore we come to the famous Guilt Complex. Most CDs are blighted with this during those early years when they are seriously worried about their peculiarity, and very often are convinced that they are the only unfortunate males on earth to be so afflicted. Of course now that there are helpful and enlightened CD clubs which operate openly, these worries do not last long.

Despite this, crossdressers are commonly and frenetically anxious to find some way of socially rationalizing their dressing as girls. One of the most frequent ploys is to stress that throughout history many famous and demonstrably virile males have been crossdressers too.

It is also stressed that CDs tend to indulge competently in sports and pastimes such as football, mountaineering, motor racing, tiger shooting and Russian Roulette. While all this may be true, it hardly explains and justifies dressing as a woman while still being, at heart, "one of the boys". ☆

To be continued in the next issue

A Public Relations Effort

Here are a few brief comments on the informal discussions with students. Generally women participants outnumber men by about a 2:1 ratio, and men rarely become actively involved in asking questions. The questions, while not profound, cover a wide range of facets. Typical questions were

- What do you think causes crossdressing?
- Is there a particular age at which crossdressing first develops?
- Can it be "cured"?
- How do you relate to your wife?
- Does your personality change when dressed?
- Do you tell your children?
- What do you do with your voice?
- Where do you buy your clothing?
- What percentage of CD's are gay?
- Are all CD's pre-op transsexuals?
- Are CD's from any specific socio-economic layer of society?
- Do you have any clubs or groups catering to CD's?
- What do you do at Fantasia Fair?

These are but a few examples -- the list is literally endless. I believe that if more of us availed ourselves of these opportunities to speak before professional groups we will achieve a measurable improvement in understanding. ☆

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ ARE YOU COMING TO ★

★ FANTASIA FAIR ★

★ OCT. 12 - 21 1984 ★

★ PROVINCETOWN MA ★

★ WRITE THE INSTITUTE FOR DETAILS ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★