

TSs win 2 cases

Firing transsexual jail guard violated Florida law protecting the handicapped

In what is being called the first ruling of its kind in the nation, the Florida Commission on Human Relations ruled that firing a Jacksonville transsexual who had worked as a correctional officer was handicap discrimination.

The commission voted 8 to 1 in February that Belinda Smith — formerly Lt. William Smith of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office — has a disability and that firing her violated the state's Human Rights Act of 1977. The law protects people because of their race, sex, religion, or handicap but has never before been applied to transsexualism.

"Under handicap law, this is the

first one," said attorney Sam Jacobson who represented Smith on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union. "I think it's a case that's going to make the world more comfortable for people with this trait."

"Transsexualism is a recognized disorder, and in my opinion ... we have to find it's a handicap," said Commissioner Judith Kavanaugh before voting for Smith.

But the Smith case — and the issue of transsexualism as a disability in Florida — is far from settled. Sheriff Jim McMillan is likely to appeal the commission's ruling, and the Florida state legislature is considering a measure that will ex-

clude transsexuals from disability protection.

Smith, a 14-year veteran, was fired from the department in 1985 after being observed dressed as a woman while off duty and telling superiors of plans to undergo a sex-change operation.

Smith first appealed her firing to the Civil Service Board and then to the human relations commission. Arguing in support of Smith's firing, attorneys representing the sheriff said that officers are subject to intense public scrutiny and that society would not tolerate a male jail guard dressing as a woman for

(continued on page 14)

Washington court finds Boeing failed to accommodate transsexual engineer

A Washington state appeals court ruled in February that the Boeing Co. acted improperly when it fired a transsexual employee in 1985 for wearing a pink pearl necklace in violation of an order to wear only unisex clothing to work while she awaited her sex-change operation.

The appeals court reversed a decision by a lower court that dismissed "Jane Doe's" discrimination suit against the giant aerospace company and said the company failed to make proper accommodations for Doe's handicap as required by state law.

The transsexual's real name was not used in court records.

The case now goes back to the King County Superior Court for trial on such matters as Doe's reinstatement and back pay.

After having worked for Boeing as an engineer for six years, Doe was diagnosed as gender dysphoric in 1984. She adopted a woman's name and changed her personnel records to reflect it. She also began electrolysis and hormone treatments. In 1985, she began the final steps toward her surgery and attempted to educate her supervisors and co-workers about the process involved. She provided information about her condition and needs, documented by her physician, psychia-

trist, and surgeon

Boeing had no policy for such cases, so it improvised one for Doe. She was told that she could not wear dresses, skirts, or frilly blouses to work until she became a woman. After a complaint about her using a woman's rest room, the company barred her from using women's restrooms and said she must wear only unisex clothing to the office so she would not cause a commotion when she entered the men's rest room. A supervisor was assigned to visit her daily to check on her wardrobe.

On Nov. 5, 1985, the supervisor

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Announcements...

Background Papers...

are available for \$1 each plus 30¢ postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-*Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing*, 2-*Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing*, 3-*PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others*, 4-*The Matter of Children*, 5-*An Annotated Bibliography*, 6-*Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View*, 7-*Understanding Transsexualism*, and 8-*AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics*.

Pen Pal Project

If you are willing to write letters to pen pals, please inform Maryann Kirkland or write to the main office, c/o Dept. PP.

Prisoner Project

A gift of only \$8 gives a transgendered inmate 12 issues of the *Renaissance News*. Please help provide this needed support to our sisters in prison.

Our chapters...

Greater Philadelphia

Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, Pa. Meetings start at 8:00 p.m. year round. For information, call (215) 946-TVTS, or write Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Michelle [REDACTED], chapter leader.

Lower Susquehanna Valley

Meets the first Saturday of the month at Cameron Cut Rate, Cameron and Market Streets, Harrisburg. Call (717) 780-1LSV for latest information, or write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Brenda Davidson, chapter leader.

South Jersey

Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc., 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 641-3782, or write Renaissance SJ, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Kara [REDACTED], chapter leader.

Our affiliates...

Groups wishing to become a Renaissance affiliate must pay a small annual fee for services normally afforded to chapters for free. Affiliates have no legal connection to Renaissance and remain autonomous. Services include unlimited access to reference publications and newsletter copy.

Write for details to Alison Laing, Co-Director of Outreach, Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

Our affiliated organizations are:

- Monmouth/Ocean Group, Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701
- AEGIS, Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033 (404) 939-0240

Events to note...

April

4th South Jersey Chapter meeting:
Electrolysis presentation by Jessica Porter & Barbara Suisino

4th Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting: Dinner meeting

15th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting: Roger Peo on gender issues and relationships

May

2nd South Jersey Chapter meeting: Mary Kaye makeup demo

2nd Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting: Herb Merchant with fragrance ideas

9th Renaissance 5th anniversary gala!

16th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting

June

6th South Jersey Chapter meeting: Group rap on relationships led by Frances Bilker

6th Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter meeting

20th Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting: first day of summer

Renaissance News

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P.O. Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA 19406

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Articles must be submitted for publication one month in advance.

Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing education and support to the gender community and the general public.

Good advice

Ann Landers tells father that his disapproval won't stop teenage son from wearing lingerie

Transgendered readers of Ann Landers' syndicated column may have been jealous recently when they read a letter from "John," the father of a 16-year-old boy who has been wearing his sister's "panties and other pieces of lingerie ever since he was 6."

John, from Mission Viejo, Calif., was upset at his son's crossdressing, but the boy's mother, sister, and girlfriend all thought it was okay. His mother even had offered to buy the boy his own lingerie.

"My wife is inclined to let Brent 'express himself,' as she puts it," the father wrote to Landers. "She is a psychologist and says that a great many more males like to wear lingerie than most people would believe. Furthermore, she sees nothing wrong with it and indicated that she might buy him his own panties

and bras so he wouldn't have to borrow his sister's."

John added that his 17-year-old daughter "has known about this for quite some time and says she doesn't mind as long as the panties are clean when he puts them back in her drawer."

And if that wasn't enough, John wrote, "Brent insists that he is not gay.... According to him, his girlfriend is aware of his interest in women's underattire, and she doesn't mind."

All this understanding was apparently too much for good old dad, and so he turned to Landers for help.

"Can you suggest anything I can do about this? I feel I am fighting a losing battle.... How does one cope with the situation when a psychologist approves of behavior that is

clearly abnormal. Please let them know that they are encouraging sick behavior."

"Your son's interest in wearing women's lingerie is pretty kinky, but he is not going to stop because his dad doesn't approve," Landers responded in a column published in late February. "Your wife, the psychologist, knows that counseling will not 'straighten him out.' However, Landers noted, the fact that Brent refers to himself as "Joanne" when he is dressed "opens up a whole new dimension."

"What is involved here is far more complicated than mere crossdressing.... It appears that your son enjoys thinking of himself as a woman." Landers urged counseling to help Brent "deal more successfully with a world that does not view his behavior as normal. Good luck"

Meanwhile, Cosmo columnist gives coinciding advice to a crossdresser's confused girlfriend

"I'm becoming increasingly alarmed by my boyfriend's bizarre interest in crossdressing," a distraught woman wrote to *Cosmopolitan* magazine advice columnist Irma Kurtz last month.

"The first time I noticed this behavior was when he put on my hot pink G-string bikini (both parts) and asked me if I would have sex that way," the woman explained. "I just shook my head and ran out of the room. I was so upset and shocked that I isolated myself from him the rest of the day."

"The second time was worse. I walked in on him unexpectedly in my mother's room, and he was dressed in her chiffon and lace nightie, with a stack of porno magazines surrounding him. I just shut the door and walked away—and he didn't try to follow me to explain

himself. In fact, we've never spoken about it."

"Does his dressing up mean he's homosexual? What's going on here, and what can I do to stop it?"

Kurtz began her response by stating the obvious: "It doesn't pay to punish people for doing what they can't help doing... by isolating yourself from him and not talking about what you witnessed, you showed disapproval and anger — but not understanding. And understanding is what your boyfriend requires because his sexual behavior is a part of him...."

She went on to explain that "many men find women's clothes, especially silky underwear, very sexy against their skin — we do too, don't we?" She explained that transvestites are "not necessarily homosexuals. On the contrary, many transvestites

have happy and fulfilling relationships with women who understand their desires and even help satisfy them."

Kurtz noted that therapy might be helpful for the boyfriend if he is unhappy about his crossdressing or if it is "part of a greater desire to be a woman." But "therapy will not change his urges... it will only make him happy and able to function within his own framework."

Kurtz says the woman has two choices. One, "it's up to you to see if you can include (crossdressing) in your sex life together. As long as that is not the only way he wants to make love, what harm will it do? In exchange, you could come up with a little fantasy of your own to try out on him."

The second choice? "If you find
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Come one, come all!

Renaissance 5th anniversary party set for Sat., May 9, in Center City

Renaissance invites you to attend a celebration of our fifth anniversary on Saturday night, May 9, at the Holiday Inn, 18th and Market Streets, Center City Philadelphia.

The evening features a VIP Reception with guest of honor Richard F. Docter, Ph.D., from 8 to 9 p.m. in the Thomas Eakins Room. This will be followed by a buffet dinner at 9 p.m. in the Benjamin Ballroom with dancing until 2 a.m. Music and entertainment provided by The Fun Dept.

Richard Docter received his Ph.D. from Stanford University and since 1966 has been Professor of Psychology at California State University, Northridge. He is also a clinical psychologist specializing in gender concerns. His work includes both counseling and research. Data

collected during the 1980s resulted in publication of his book *Transvestites and Transsexuals; Toward a Theory of Cross Gender Behavior* (Plenum Press, 1988).

Docter is now conducting the National Gender Project, an ongoing research project dealing with the causes and development of transvestism and transsexualism. The objectives are to better understand the various expressions of these behaviors, study their causes, and describe their long-term development.

Unlike most other studies, this effort involves a long-term approach. Research participants are requested to contribute information at various stages of their lives. It is anticipated that this will yield a more complete picture of the transvestite and

transsexual individual than has previously been available.

Admission for the event is \$35 per person for dinner and dancing with a cash bar. Tickets for dinner, dancing, and the VIP reception — featuring hors d'oeuvres and an open bar — are \$60 per person.

All spaces will be sold in advance by mail. Your reservation and check made out to Renaissance must be received by April 30. No tickets will be sent; your name will be on a list at the door. To order tickets, use the coupon enclosed with this newsletter, or write to the national office.

Parking is available in a garage connected directly to the hotel. Attendees wishing to reserve rooms at the hotel may contact the Holiday Inn at 215 561-7500.

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Since she was 17 years old, Charlotte White has been living true to herself

by Whitney [REDACTED]

⇒ *This is the second half of an interview with Charlotte White*

WB: When did you begin living as a woman?

CW: Around age 15 it was experimental, the usual Halloween prank. I liked the attention I got as a female, and then I knew, this can be done. Then I got exposed to other transpersons, which would take us back to Bunny Blocker. She was a chef in her day life, but at night she was Miss Bunny, and she was also a parent. Back then it was unheard of, you just didn't have that. She had a son and a husband. I was just fascinated by it. Then later, at age 17, I began living full time.

My first job was as a barmaid. This was in an all-straight environment. I worked there for a long time. While working there I won the honor of "Most Popular Barmaid" in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Delaware over all genetic females. They knew I was a transgirl, and still I won their votes.

WB: What year was that?

CW: In the early 70s. Actually, I won it twice.

WB: Did you think that you wouldn't win because you are transgendered?

CW: I wanted to win, but also was realistic and said to myself "probably not." But to be nominated was also an honor. That was a sign of acceptance. Very few people gave me any negative responses. I was judged on popularity.

WB: When did you know you were Charlotte?

CW: I would say about 17 or 18.

WB: How did your family respond?

CW: I left home right after high school. I didn't contact them for seven years because I didn't think they cared. What reunited us was a friend's passing away. It made me realize if anything happened to me,

I would want my mother and family to know. My father took it better than my mother.

WB: When you went back home, do you think because you look so convincing as a female it helped any with your father's acceptance?

CW: You're always going to be your parents' child no matter what. I don't care how gorgeous or feminine you look, it's not important to them. It may help your self-esteem, but no, I don't think it matters if you look more feminine to your family.

WB: Did you think the straight community accepted you because you look so much like a woman?

CW: I sold my personality, my looks had nothing to do with it, I had no money. My first wig, I made almost from nothing.

"I've accepted the fact that I'm a transperson and that (being read) is going to happen sometimes."

WB: But when you walk down the street Charlotte, many people just don't know, correct?

CW: The best of us get read. That's not the issue. There are days that they know. I don't focus hard on that. I've accepted the fact that I'm a transperson and that is going to happen sometimes.

WB: What are some of the professional and social problems you've faced being a black transgendered person?

CW: Professionally: being respected on the job for what I can do and not what I used to be. Socially: Conservative black gays can be hostile. They resent the freedom a transperson has to be themselves.

But perseverance shall win over all.

WB: Do black gay men understand that we are different?

CW: They are starting to. You can't get that respect by challenging one another, it only brings on retaliation.

WB: Do you still see people you knew as a child?

CW: Not many people. I've been myself for 23 years. I was 40 last April. I spent most of my life being who I felt I was. I knew what I wanted to do early on, and I did it. It was a big step. God kept me. It is a hard life to live this way on a 24 hour basis. I didn't like the idea of changing out of one set of clothes into another. I couldn't live a double life. Once you get that family acceptance, that makes it so much better.

WB: How about friends from school?

CW: Miss Penny, who at the time was Eric Quenton, was the openly visible gay person in junior high school. That fascinated me, but I was afraid to befriend Penny because she was so flamboyant. She came to school in semi-drag, and in the evening would go to work as a beautician in drag. This was in junior high school. This also was the talk of the community. Later, our paths crossed and we became very good friends. I knew you could be a working transperson, which meant a lot to me. That was something positive; I saw Penny work. I knew then you could be anything you wanted to be. Unfortunately, she's no longer with us; she was murdered in the West Oak Lane area.

WB: Do you care what people think of Charlotte White.

CW: I care if I feel it's unjustified, and it is not true. The older I get, the more it bothers me.

WB: What do you do when you get bored?

CW: When I get bored, I dress up and go out. Turn heads!

THE **N** *Paula Jordan Sinclair* NEWSQUEEN™

Try as she might, Miss Sinclair cannot avoid tooting her own horn. In June of 1989, readers of this column learned what *Wall Street Journal* readers learned in January and *Philadelphia Inquirer* readers learned last month—that gangs of robbers have been stealing high-priced fashions from up-scale stores, police say, to outfit crossdressers at balls and pageants.

The *Inquirer* ran the story after one of the gangs pulled off a daring twilight robbery at the Toby Learner boutique in the 100 block of South 17th Street in Center City. The armed robbery occurred in early January, but it was not reported in the newspaper until March. Two well-dressed men and one person later identified as a transsexual entered the store near closing time. At gunpoint they tied up Learner and two employees and put them in the back of the store. They then took only the best items from the racks, netting an estimated \$25,000 in merchandise.

The trio was captured in Chevy Chase, Md., on Jan. 29 shortly after they tried to rob a Gianni Versace boutique. Once again, they tied up the store's employees and put them in a back room. But the robbers failed to notice that there was a telephone in the room. One of the employees slipped loose from his bonds and called police. The robbers fled, leaving behind their loot. They were later found hiding in the parking garage of the building and were captured by police. Authorities later said that one of the three, identified as Dana Dubose, 19, had undergone several stages of the sexual reassignment process.

Philadelphia police say that the three are implicated in several similar robberies in New York and New Jersey, while in Florida, where the crime spree is thought to have begun, police say they have received inquiries from Missouri about similar crimes.

The *Wall Street Journal* quoted authorities in Florida as saying that more than 100 transvestites may be involved in several dozen smash-and-grab burglaries each year. The paper also quoted Boca Raton Det. Guy Di Benedetto as saying the stealing shouldn't give all transgendered people a bad name. "These are criminals who just happen to be transvestites," he said.

Another measure of acceptance came from Sgt. Robert Smith of the Fort Lauderdale police department. Speaking of the culprits, he said, "if this were 20 years ago, they would stand out like a sore thumb. But in today's society, you know, it's become second nature to see all sorts of people out walking around."



Here's an update on another alleged criminal who just happens to be a crossdresser.

In an interview from his cell in Holmsburg prison, Shawn DeVearaux claimed that he killed his roommate Frank Griffin in January in self defense.

"I was scared to death that day," DeVearaux said. "Frank was drunk, and I saw he had a gun." DeVearaux had earlier told police that he and Griffin had quarreled for several days about money for rent. "He threatened to kill me," DeVearaux said.

However, police say that the gun was a starter pistol, and Griffin's friends say he did not drink.

DeVearaux remains in custody in lieu of \$200,000 bail on a charge of murder.



Sadly enough, transgendered people are also the victims of attempted murder.

Recently, a jury in New York City convicted Jason Drcelik, 18, of the brutal assault of a crossdressed man he picked up at a Manhattan bar frequented by transgendered persons and female impersonators. Neither the name of the victim nor

the name of the bar were revealed in the news report.

According to testimony presented at the trial, Drcelik, of Elmhurst, N.Y., met the victim at the club. The two talked for quite a while, and then Drcelik took the transvestite to his apartment. As the man was removing his date's clothing he discovered that she was really a man.

Drcelik ran into the kitchen, got a big knife, and started stabbing the guy in the face and chest," said Prosecutor James Hubert. "One wound slashed his cheek open from the corner of his mouth all the way up to his ear." The transvestite tried to escape, but Drcelik chased him into the apartment house hallway and continued to attack him. Neighbors called the police.

Drcelik claimed self-defense, but the jury deliberated only three hours before finding him guilty of attempted murder and first-degree assault.



The unnamed transvestite wasn't as lucky as another New Yorker in drag. She was killed while working as a prostitute. After he killed her, the murderer committed suicide by jumping from the fourth-floor window of his room.

Police say that Augustin Rosado, a 47-year-old Cuban immigrant, took the transgendered prostitute to his Bronx apartment. But when he found that the girl was really a guy, Rosado went berserk and started attacking her with a bar, a box cutter, a kitchen knife, and a screwdriver, all the while screaming at her for being a homosexual.



Sometimes people who abuse the transgendered don't have the decency to end their lives. Take the U.S. Supreme Court for example. In February, the high court rejected without comment Navy Petty Officer Virgilio Guerrero's appeal to his conviction of crossdressing while he

THE Paula Jordan Sinclair NEWSQUEEN™

was in his off-base apartment. (RN, Mar. '92)

Guerrero was hoping to have his U.S. Court of Military Appeals conviction reversed because, he claimed, the military code is too vague on the issue of crossdressing and because he wasn't given adequate notice that such behavior was prohibited.

The lower court said that a service member could crossdress privately in his home "with his curtains or drapes closed," but when he exposed others to this behavior, he brings discredit to the armed forces.

On one occasion, Guerrero dressed up for another sailor, and on another occasion a neighbor saw him in drag in his apartment.

♣ ♣ ♣

Crossdressing at the high school in Victoria, Tex., was scotched the old fashioned way; the principal just said no.

Bob Erskine was not amused when two boys showed up at school in January wearing what they said were kilts that a female student had made for them. "I know kilts," said Erskine who claims Scottish relatives. "Those weren't kilts, and the boys aren't Scots."

Jessica Adamson, who designed and made the skirts for her friends to wear to a school dance, said school administrators are "too narrow minded," adding (with a straight face no doubt) that the kilts conform to the school dress code.

♣ ♣ ♣

And it's not just school principals who get upset with men in skirts. Lesbian and gay political activists sometimes object too. The latest incident came at a gala fundraiser sponsored by IMPACT, the Illinois gay and lesbian political action committee.

The event featured a formal introduction of 70 political candidates and elected officials friendly to the lesbian and gay community. Absent from the list was Joan Jett Blakk, the nation's first drag queen candi-

date for president. When asked to explain Blakk's omission, an IMPACT official noted that while Blakk's name may appear on the ballot in some states, the formal presentation was only for Illinois candidates. The official had no comment when asked why Wisconsin candidates were included.

Gay activist Rick Garcia thinks he knows the reason. "Because she is a black drag queen, and in narrow minds, she is a potential embarrassment.... Are we so intoxicated by the opportunities to 'have influence,' that we fail to stand by our sisters and brothers on the margins?"

♣ ♣ ♣

One of Blakk's campaign promises was to change the FBI to the "Fashion Bureau of Investigation."

We're sure Blakk's FBI would approve of some of the newest menswear designs shown on New York's runways recently; a key influence this year is womenswear. David Feld of *The Chicago Tribune* wrote: "While feminine fashion has long appropriated items of men's clothing for inspiration, this year the reverse is true."

But calm yourselves, gentle readers. What Feld thinks are feminine influences is far different from what we hope they are. He continues; "Fabrics traditionally considered feminine - such as stretch fabrics, wool crepe, velvet, chiffon, and chamois - appeared on the runways and in showrooms. Sadly, these are used in clothes described as the 'most masculine' in years. The bodysuit is also making its way from womenswear to menswear." But, Feld notes, men may balk at wearing a shirt that snaps under the crotch. Not the men that we know.

♣ ♣ ♣

And if life wasn't unfair enough, comes news that men's neckties are the big fashion accessory this year for women!

The New York Times reports that

Ralph Lauren models wearing neckties with other items of men's apparel "looked very sexy."

♣ ♣ ♣

Men were also included in the hoopla about silicone gel breast implants. A factoid in *U.S. News & World Report* said that in 1990, 139 American men received breast implants. We suspect that the magazine was talking about the new implants to make chests more manly, not more voluptuous.

Male breast reduction surgery was also in the news. A significant number of men — perhaps as many as 10 percent — suffer from gynecomastia, or enlarged breasts. The condition can be caused by medication given for hypertension, a hormone problem, Klinefelter's syndrome (in which a male has two female chromosomes), or even smoking marijuana. The same year 139 men were getting their chests enlarged with silicone, well over 9,000 had breast reduction surgery at about \$3,500 a pop. Such a waste!

♣ ♣ ♣

Sometimes even temporary breast reduction is appropriate when dealing with stereotypes surrounding gender. Take the androgynous character "Pat" on *Saturday Night Live*. In real life it is Julia Sweeney, a buxom brunette who straps herself down in a most convincing manner.

♣ ♣ ♣

Finally, we have to set the record straight. Some time ago we reported that Flip Wilson had no interest in reviving his "Geraldine" character. Only weeks after we quoted him in that regard, the comedian appeared in his famous drag role in a television special hosted by Jaleel White who plays Steve Urkel on the series *Family Matters*.

Miss Sinclair continues to receive clippings regarding crossdressing from far afield, like Billie in Iowa and Anthony in California. But whether you are near or far, send clippings to her at the Renaissance office. Please note the name and date of publication.

The **FORUM** For Ideas

About Children

To tell or not to tell — that is the question

by Barbie B.

Most of us are blessed with children. I am doubly blessed for I have three children: a girl under 10 and two boys 7 and 8. I also have a very supportive wife.

For years I have been troubled with the question of telling the children of my other self or suffering the possibility of their finding out by accident. I have wondered what the cost would be to them, to us as a family, and to me.

To lay the groundwork, my wife and I had done some preliminary introductory mind games with the children. Once or twice, I allow my daughter to put her wig on me and everybody laughed. Another time I "reluctantly" tried on my wife's new earrings and choker for the kids. For Christmas my daughter got her first makeup kit which she wanted to try on Daddy; I allowed her to. When she got her first lipstick, the same thing happened. The boys got a big kick out of seeing their father made up so. In this way they have been exposed to bits and pieces of crossdressing as a game over a period of time.

Recently, my wife said to the children how much better Daddy looked when clean-shaven. She led

them to the idea of dressing for dinner and maneuvered them to come up with their own suggestion that Daddy should shower and shave and get dressed up when he got home from work. They thought about it all day and after school told her they wanted her help to put makeup on me, make me wear a skirt, blouse, and a wig.

Knowing full well what was to happen, I came home that evening to a house full of secrets, nay, a house full of giggly kids. With their mother's help, they had accumulated the necessary materials.

They begged and pleaded for me to cooperate, which I did, of course. Their mother patiently helped them as they piled makeup, perfume, and jewelry on me until my appearance was acceptable to them. My wife volunteered a skirt, blouse, and shoes. Although I am several sizes larger than she is, by some strange miracle they fit as if they were my own.

By themselves, and from their own ideas, they had created a female persona, and everybody was pleased. They were so happy with the results that now we dress Daddy up for dinner once or twice a month.

If they accidentally see me in

dragging out, their acceptance will no longer be a problem. It will be kept as a big family secret. They now have a new female friend who plays for and with them; this is a family thing.

This all led to an open discussion about men who dress as women, sex change operations, etc. When we go to the mall, they all look for things that will make Daddy look beautiful. With their own money they bought a (yuck!) red and black plaid blouse for Daddy to wear when he dresses up.

Some years ago when I was on the road as a salesman, I learned, "It's not what they need, it's what they want." The children don't need a crossdressing father, but they now want one. We've all been searching for a name for this new family member. I somehow think they will (on their own, of course) come up with "Barbie."

Works for me.

⇒ The Renaissance Background Papers number four, "The Matter of Children," and number six, "Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View," are available from the national office for \$1 each plus 30¢ postage for each pair ordered.

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The For Ideas
FORUM

But...

Just be sure to tell them everything

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

As a parent who told my preteen daughter about my transvestism as well as my homosexuality, and as an informal advisor to other parents who wished to make similar disclosures to their children, I am concerned by the technique outlined by Barbie, for I fear that unless she eventually tells her children that Daddy has liked dressing as a woman for many, many years, the children may assume some of the guilt and worry that Barbie has managed to shed.

Far fetched? Not when you look at children's tendency to blame themselves for things that happen to their parents. This is especially true when parents divorce. Counselors urge couples on the verge of splitting up to go out of their way to reassure young children that the break-up of the marriage was not caused by them.

By the same token, shouldn't a transvestite father tell his children that his desire to wear women's clothes originated *before* the children got the idea to play dress up with him? This sharing of complete information will be most important if the children are exposed to the pervasive negative feelings society

harbors regarding crossdressers. How horrible it would be if Barbie's children went through their childhood years worrying that they made their father the potential subject of scorn and ridicule.

The children also need to know that the urge to crossdress was, as health insurance companies say, a "preexisting condition" which their father has successfully lived with for many years and (with their love and understanding) will continue to live with, perhaps even more successfully. Second to their tendency to assume responsibility, children fear change. A new lifestyle — or an old lifestyle presented for the first time — portends that a dramatic change is in the offing. This places a heavy burden on children — a burden that can be prevented by frank and open discussions between parents and their children.

I still remember my daughter's reaction to my telling her that I am gay; she began to cry. Her tears were not because she was offended by my loving other men, nor because she was ashamed of me. She cried, she later told me, because even in her youth she knew that "queers" and "faggots" are hated. She feared that I would be subjected

to that hate. She also feared that "now" that I am gay, things would change between us. I helped her overcome those fears by telling her that I have known I was gay since before she was born and had managed pretty well as a contributing member of society and as her father. None of that would change. "The only difference," I said, "is that now you know something about me that you didn't know before, and I wanted you to know so there wouldn't be any secrets between us."

The result of this *full* disclosure was that not only did she quickly adjust to my being gay, but when I told her a year later that I am also a transvestite, she reacted quite calmly. Of course, it didn't hurt that I have always taught her that just because some people are different than others doesn't mean they are less valuable.

So yes, by all means, use whatever technique works with your children to open them up to the idea that gender roles are rather artificial and confining for some people. But please tell them the whole story and spare them the guilt and worry *you* possibly experienced in your childhood.

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The **FORUM** For Ideas

Book Review

'Queen of the Night' tells how you can become a 'babe' in just eight chapters

Boobs, Boys, and High Heels or How to Get Dressed In Just Under Six Hours by Dianne Brill; Penguin Books.

reviewed by Angela Gardner

So you have a burning desire to be an international Queen of the Night? Well, here is the handbook you've been waiting for; *Boobs, Boys and High Heels — Or How to Get Dressed In Just Under Six Hours*. It's intrepid authoress is Dianne Brill, a self-confessed "babe" and "slash person." No, she isn't a feminist terrorist, but a feminine woman who has pursued several different careers, sometimes simultaneously. A model, clothing designer, actress, the Queen of New York night life, and possessor of "the body of the Nineties," she shares her secrets on how to become the babe of your dreams.

One chapter is devoted to how to meet "GGs." Sorry, girls, As used by Brill, "GG" stands for "great guys," not "genetic girls." Still, her tips for meeting people are just as applicable to one kind of GG as to the other. You'll learn such techniques as the "Danilo Wink" ("a subtle but potent technique" that Brill guarantees will snare the object of your desires), "The Blanket Flirt" (noth-

ing to do with bed, its flirting with everyone in a room when you enter), "The Knife Trick," "The Pocket Square Exchange," as well as the value of having the right props.

Of course, the book contains Brill's paeon to high heels — "your pedestals" which "transform any set of feet into sex symbols." They come in four babe grades: "high heels, higher heels, highest heels, and those speciality items, the at-home-use-only heels." But, as Brill says, it is not just enough to own high heels, you have to be able to babe-walk in them as well. She thoughtfully provides tips to give you the sexiest stride this side of a Paris catwalk.

Recently at a book signing appearance at Borders in Philadelphia ("Angela — you red-haired goddess you. You're a beauty vision!") Brill amplified her statement of intent contained in the book's introduction. "It is my sincere wish to share, sister to sister, the wealth of my experience.... I will give you, from my heart, the things I know most about and love: being a woman, a girl, and a babe in all kinds of situations." She added that her tips and ideas are only to be used as a way to build your own special brand

of babedom; you shouldn't try to be a Brill clone.

All of her tips are presented with humor and the book is usually found in the humor sections of most bookstores.

Our big sister Dianne has invited us to a slumber party. While we paint each others' toe nails and drink hot cocoa, she shares with us those girly things that most crossdressers long to be a part of. So be a part of it; get the book; follow the tips, and I'll meet you in New York. How many goddesses do you think the Big Apple can take?

⇒ Angela recently took Dianne's advice to heart and got herself a pair of 4 1/2 inch heels. But they nearly brought disaster. Crossing a street while perched atop the heels, she stepped too quickly to avoid getting hit by a bus and almost turned her ankle. However, witnesses report she was beautiful!

The Flikker Network bills itself as an "international" network for female-to-male gay or bisexual transsexuals. For more information, write to R.K. #634, Post Office Box 410-990, San Francisco, CA 94141-0990.

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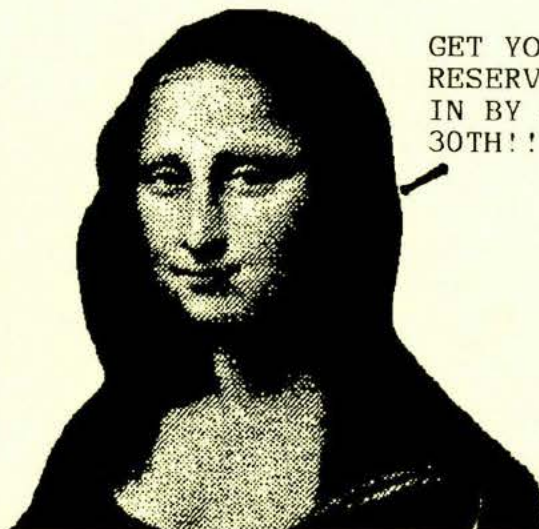
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The **For Ideas**
FORUM

Gifts from Tula and Renaissance make transgendered Turkish aide trip a reality

To the Editor:

Please convey my thanks and warmest regards to your board of directors and to your membership (for the \$100 donation to help the international transgendered community).

I have long had respect for Renaissance, which has broken much ground in the community with, among other things, your newsletter. Although it might not always appear so, I am grateful to you for handling in direct form the news I provide and for tolerating my not infrequent manic growling. Your willingness to put your money where your mouth is — including projects benefiting others — sets Renaissance far ahead of most groups to

date.

Funds are coming in from one group in the United Kingdom. Carolyn Cossey (Tula) has donated £100 (about \$175) and farmed out a television spot to me which earns about the same amount.

Preparations are underway, and I anticipate a flight to Istanbul before the close of February. I shall, thank you, be as careful as the job warrants I be. However, I shall be living on the streets with members of the community and taking equal risks with them. I intend to avoid having to prostitute myself, if possible, by finding some alternate legal means within their group by which I may earn my keep.

In anticipation of receiving the

funds you pledged, thank you very much. News will be with you as I get it, and I may make contact from Turkey during the job.

—Phaedra Kelly
International Gender
Transit Affinity
Isle of Wight, U.K.

⇒ *Individuals or other organizations wishing to contribute to Phaedra's efforts on behalf of transgendered people in Turkey, and perhaps later in South America, where well over 1,000 sexual minority persons have been murdered in the past decade, may send money to JoAnn Roberts in care of the Renaissance office. JoAnn will forward the funds to Phaedra.*

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The *For Ideas*
FORUM

Are we ignoring our private parts?

by Angela M.L. Pattatucci
Ph.D., D.E.

Next to birth itself, the most important event in life is probably the assignment of sex at birth. Depending on how this decision is made, a myriad of societal expectations and assumptions are imposed that ultimately determine a person's self-image and world view.

Although gender identity is fundamental to a person's identity, it is largely taken for granted. We do not wonder how we *became* female or male, we just *are* one or the other. Nevertheless, sexual identity is not merely an *either-or* decision, but represents a complex process that begins prior to birth and continues throughout life.

Current understanding in the research community suggests that what society generally terms "gender identity" actually encompasses four distinct but interconnected components: physiological, core gender, social-sex-role, and sexual.

Physiological identity refers to an individual biological sex, typically defined by subjective genital observation at birth. Whether accurate or not, the assigned biological sex is usually the primary label that humans internalize and project through life.

Core gender identity pertains to a central feeling of feeling "feminine" or "masculine." This can be quite

different from one's public presentation of gender. For example, I may feel "feminine" in certain situations, while more "masculine" in others. However, my physiological identity remains constant irrespective of circumstances. Gender dysphoria is a condition where core gender identity opposes physiological identity. This is typically corrected by gender reassignment, making the individual legally the sex opposite that which was assigned at birth, hence, the term "transgender."

The *social-sex-role identity* assigns one to a position somewhere on a spectrum of female/male behavior, and is largely established through arbitrarily-defined prevailing attitudes regarding what is "socially acceptable." Context is often an important determining factor. For example, cooking and sewing are stereotypically assigned as "appropriate" female social-sex-roles behaviors domestically, whereas commercially, a majority of the chefs and tailors are males.

In this society, numerous options are made available or unavailable based upon the initial assignment of sex at birth. Consequently, individuals face a constant dilemma of accepting or rejecting society's expectations and assumptions regarding "appropriate" social-sex-roles. Transvestism, the practice of adopting the dress and often the stere-

otypically-defined behavior of the opposite sex, is an example of rejecting social-sex-role boundaries. In Western culture, certain attire is deemed more appropriate for female and male social-sex-roles. This translates to rigidly defined boundaries for males and somewhat fluid boundaries for females.

I was once asked why there aren't any female crossdressers. I replied that our society abounds with them. We are literally everywhere. Society "sanctions" crossdressing by females but tends to exhibit hostility toward the similar practice in males. One explanation for this double standard is that males gain a sense of who they *are* by fearing and rejecting what they *are not*. Thus, a female adopting dress and behavior arbitrarily defined as male, is viewed as *aspiring* to that which is "familiar" and "admired." Conversely, a male even remotely appearing "feminine" is seen as *lowering* himself to that which is "feared" and "despised," thus incurring the misogyny that women face daily.

The fourth component, *sexual identity*, refers to sexual behavior/orientation, fantasies, and lifestyle. Kinsey and colleagues proposed use of a seven-point continuum to assess sexual orientation, with zero representing exclusive heterosexuality and six representing exclusive homosexuality. Today, sexual identity is viewed not only in terms of sexual behavior on the Kinsey continuum, but also in relation to erotic fantasies, emotional preferences (that may or may not include genital contact), erotic attraction, social preference, self-identification, and bisexual/homosexual/heterosexual lifestyles on similar seven-point scales.

Lending further complexity to
(continued on page 15)

Quote/unquote...

"There's somethig very sexy and intriguing about a stylish woman in men's clothing."

— Designer Ralph Lauren, whose spring collection featured lots of mens-wear styles for women, including wing collar shirts, ties, vests, and caps. The same, alas, will be still in store for men.

The **FORUM** For Ideas

Being 'bigendered' means changing your wardrobe *and* your outlook

To the Editor:

It was pleasing to me to read Virginia Prince's article (RN, Feb. '92) espousing the concept and terminology of bigenderism. Several years ago, I began referring to myself in those terms. In fact, I used it in discussions with Ms. Prince at the 1988 or '89 Fantasia Fair. At the time she did not seem impressed with that term.

In my personal ad in *Tapestry*, I mention that I take my gender shift seriously. What I mean by this is that it is more than just my "vestments" that change. To me, a shift to the feminine gender implies a change of behavior, i.e., speech, mannerisms, deportment, attitudes, and personal interactions. I am at the point where I can shift to the feminine gender *without a change to feminine apparel*. Although, I say in my workshops on feminine behavior, "You should not put wine in a paper bag or cheese in a bottle; we

should match our behavior to our apparel unless we really want to be gender benders."

While I am a proponent of the use of the term "bigenderist," I beseech those who use it to take the "genderist" aspect seriously and to please

not use it to describe transvestite (or "bivestial") behavior that is a shift to the clothing of the opposite sex without a significant change in gender.

—Alison Laing
Southeastern, Pa.

Passing

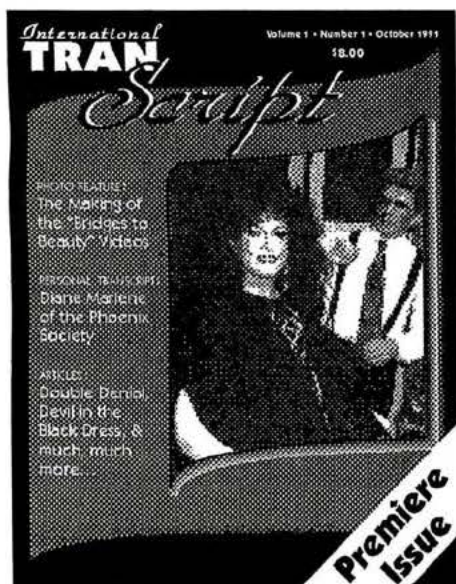
An art, a science,
"A beautiful obsession."
She peers into the crowded
mall,
Ready to perform.
She is ready to click
Among those racks and
glances.

Fear of being spotted
Much like the deer
Keeps her a moment
At the edge of these woods.

She smells a laugh, a look.
But then plunges.

The simple joy
Of high heels
And black dresses.
She later thinks
In a quieter moment,
How lonely the play;
But how sweet
And how righteous.

— Sheila



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Firing transsexual jail guard violated Florida law protecting the handicapped

(continued from page 1)

two years. They also argued that inmates, who would likely be less tolerant, might become violent.

Attorney Jacobson said that the same reasoning was used to justify discrimination against the first black and female correctional officers. The Civil Service Board rejected Jacobson's argument, but it was accepted by a human rights commission hearing officer. Firing Smith in anticipation of prejudice, the hearing officer wrote in her recommendation to the full commission, simply reinforces the prejudice.

While the commission said that Smith's firing was improper, it did

not order her reinstatement nor did it say if she was entitled to at least \$136,000 in back pay. The commission said it would not rule on those requests until attorneys for each side have another opportunity to work toward an agreement.

But those issues may be moot if the sheriff's anticipated appeal to the state's First District Court of Appeal is successful or if the legislature adopts a bill now before the House that would copy language in the federal Americans With Disabilities Act. That law specifically excludes transsexualism and transvestism from disability status.

Although the case is unresolved, Smith, 43, was elated at the com-

mission's vote in her favor and said she was looking forward to returning to her job with the Sheriff's Office.

"This is excellent," she said after the commission meeting. "This is as strong a ruling as we could have gotten in our favor. It shouldn't have taken so long, but all the hard work will be worth it."

"I guess I feel the need to fight it, not just for me but for everybody else," she said explaining why she had stuck with the legal battle that consumed more than six years of her life.

"Discrimination is a crime against everyone," she said.

Washington court finds Boeing failed to accomodate transsexual engineer

(continued from page 1)

noted that Doe was wearing an unacceptable pink pearl necklace with her unisex ensemble, and she was fired for wearing feminine attire on that day.

The trial court agreed that Boeing had made reasonable accommodations for Doe's transsexual handicap by allowing her to wear unisex clothing prior to surgery. But the appeals court disagreed. It noted that Doe had proved she was a trans-

sexual and adequately demonstrated her need for special accommodations.

"The burden then shifted to Boeing to establish either that it did provide reasonable accommodation or that the accommodation requested by the employee was an undue burden on the company," the appeals court wrote. "Boeing did neither."

"I am extremely pleased and excited," Doe said in a statement

after the decision was announced. "It's been more than six years. I am now a major step closer to putting all this behind me and getting on with my life."

Shortly after the ruling was handed down, a Boeing spokesman said the company had not decided if it would appeal to the state Supreme Court.

Doe was represented by attorney Doug Honing of the American Civil Liberties Union.

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Are we ignoring our private parts?

(continued from page 12)

understanding identity formation is the fact that there are both *public* and *private* aspects to each of the four interconnected components — the public are fixed, while the private are fluid and uniquely individual. Unfortunately, public presentation of gender is emphasized in this society at the expense of the private; the way that individuals were viewed by others at birth (initial assignment of sex) is considered more pertinent to social inter-

action than how individuals view themselves now. So, each person, to some degree, lives a "closeted" life.

For example, a person with a female physiological identity, but having predominantly a male core gender and social-sex-role identities, who is attracted to males, would publicly be viewed a straight female. However, privately, she may view herself as a *gay male*.

It is clear that traditional concepts, applied to terms such as bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual,

transgender, transvestite, and yes, even female and male, are inadequate as they emphasize an individual's *public* aspects, defined by society, while tending to ignore the *private*, which are largely self-defined. Gender identity, then is much more than just an initial assignment to the female or male gender at birth, but represents a complex ongoing process of definition and redefinition throughout a person's life that can be compared to the development of language and culture. Similar to language, gender identity conveys meaning (both public and private) for a person. Like culture, gender identity is complex and variant. Thus, to know someone is to attempt to learn to speak their language and capture the richness and complexity of their culture. In this respect, how many people do we really know, including those with whom we live?

⇒ The author is a geneticist and sexologist, and currently is a guest researcher at the National Institutes of Health at Bethesda, Md. This article is reprinted with permission of The Washington Blade of Washington, D.C.



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Cosmo

(continued from page 3)

his sexual behavior repellent, tedious, or demanding, it is not your fault — no more than liking to wear women's underwear is his fault. You might, however, need to think about looking for a different partner."

⇒ We think both advice columnists deserve letters of thanks for their enlightened replies to concerned but ignorant people. Please write Ann Landers at Box 11562, Chicago, IL 60611-0562 and Irma Kurtz — as well as Editor Helen Gurley Brown — at Cosmopolitan, 224 West 57th St., New York, NY 10019. Our thanks goes to Lynda [redacted] of Aurora, Minn. for calling the Cosmo column to our attention.

PHILADELPHIA, PA. — I've got good news and bad news...

The good news (for some people) is: In early February, I decided to quit writing *Iconoclast* with this month's column. I felt that my purpose for making comments was completely misunderstood and unappreciated by the community at large. The only thing I seemed to accomplish was to make a certain select group of people very angry with me.

The bad news (for some people) is: I changed my mind. After talking to a lot of people and receiving quite a bit of mail recently about my candidacy for the board of the **International Foundation for Gender Education**, it appears that a lot of you do appreciate this column and see its purpose as useful. So, I'll keep hammering away at the stupid, silly things that some of us do and I'll keep trying to make you think about the important issues that affect us as a community.

Now, since this is April, that means it's time for the annual MONAs; Meaningless, Obscure, Nonsense Awards.

- "Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil..." Award: to **Emerald City** for their editorial ban on any form of criticism in their newsletter.

- "Weekly World News" Award: to the **Indiana Crossdresser's Society** for their fake "news" articles.

- "Greta Garbo - I Vant To Be Alone" Award: shared this year by **Janet Christon** and **Jana Thompson** for their brief appearances.

- "Sen. Joseph McCarthy" Award: to the **Gender Alternatives League (GAL)** for branding all who disagree with them as "enemies of the gender movement."

- "Gone and Quickly Forgotten" Award: to *Twenty Minutes*, the erstwhile, ersatz newsletter of the **Twenty (XX) Club**. The new newsletter is so superior, I doubt anyone misses the old one.

- "Donald Trump" Award: to

Charliss D. and Angela S. for their "leveraged" take-over of **EON**.

- "Best Example of a Waste of Time, Energy, Money, Ink and Paper" Award: to **GAL** for *The Genderist*. They can't even spell their own name, Genderest (sic), correctly.

Now, on with the real news.



CERRITOS, CALIF. — This kind of help, we don't need...

Because of my business, a lot of advertising opportunities cross my desk, including many new publications. Some are sincere efforts on behalf of the TV/TS community, while others are just sex-mags.

Such is the case with *TS Line*, a new publication from **JRD Assoc.** It is mostly sexually oriented personal ads from some obvious and some not-so-obvious transsexuals and transvestites. But, what really ticked me off was this: "...help us make it better. What can we do to make this the *best possible reflection of the TV/TS Gender Community?*" [emphasis mine].

How about ceasing publication? What this community doesn't need is another TV/TS sex magazine. If you feel the same way, why not write to JRD Assoc. at 6330 Lincoln Ave. #231, Cerritos, CA 90630.



TENNENT, N.J. — As if one bad apple weren't enough...

I also became aware of a similar new publication from **Tania Volen Inc.**, the people who publish *Transvestian* and *Feminine*.

TransForm is a bi-monthly (what a novel idea!) magazine that represents the TV scene in "fact, fiction, history and, yes, SEX," according to the introduction letter written by Tania herself. This new publication is really the *Transvestian* in magazine format. Most of the personals are the same ads that appear in their tabloids. How many ways can they repackage the same stuff?



ALIEF, TEX. — Doin' whatever it takes...

The Winter 1992 issue of *The Femme Mirror* (Tri-Ess National) attempted to deal with the issue of Secondary Transsexualism.

Secondary Transsexualism is a term coined by **Richard Docter, Ph.D.**, to describe transgendered males who seem to turn, late in life, from identifying as a crossdresser to a transsexual.

We're treated to several anecdotal stories and opinions about how so many transvestites seem to think that they *have to become* transsexuals and why they shouldn't.

We're also treated to some regurgitated theories like: "While these [open] groups can be a lot of fun, they are usually concerned with issues that transcend the crossdresser. They can be a great place to... gain some understanding of the TS world." (**Patricia Kennedy**) And this: "They [TVs] go to clinics to find out more about themselves, and next thing you know, they have been 'stamped' a TS, by a 'caring professional.'" (**Cynthia Phillips**) And my personal favorite: "...remember, the difference between a TS and a terrorist is that you can negotiate with a terrorist." (**Linda Phillips**).

One thing is for certain, however. Even with its "family orientation," Tri-Ess members are just as susceptible to the lure of transsexualism as any other transgendered person. Closed membership affords no special protection.

However, several Tri-Ess chapters, e.g., **Tau Chi**, in Houston, have instituted a program that might help ameliorate the situation. **Boys-R-Us** is a program that encourages crossdressers to get together, out of drag, and participate in male bonding activities. The idea is to feel good about yourself as a male and learn to enjoy your masculine side as much as you enjoy your feminine side. I have long thought that sec-

ondary transsexualism stems not from a dysphoria with sex role (as with primary transsexuals) but from a dysphoria with masculine gender roles and responsibilities.

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SAN ANTONIO, TEX. — More power to 'em...

Despite my rantings about silly rules and policies, the **Texas "T" Party** was a huge success, according to sources. (No, I didn't go.)

I spoke with several people, post-party, and the consensus was that a good time was had by all. Well almost all. A few of the vendors weren't all that happy with the accommodations, and there was a lot of competition. Few people spent money, according to one source.

By all accounts, the "T" can legitimately lay claim to the largest event in the country. Over 320 people were present for the banquet on Saturday night. See, even bad publicity is good publicity (Mae West).

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. — Taking both coasts by storm...

A belated congratulations to **Billie Jean Jones**, now the reigning **Miss ETV**.

Jones, who made a hit with P'town participants at **Fantasia Fair '91**, with her free-spirit, no bullshit attitude, wowed 'em during the competition at the ETV annual Cotillion. Give 'em Hell, Billie.

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SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — One more rung on the ladder...

The February issue of *Girl Talk* (**Powder Puffs of Orange County**) contained the text of a bill that was signed into law in October of 1991. The significance of the bill is that it amended existing Civil Rights legislation to include "gender" in the list of discriminatory classifications.

A similar bill is pending in Santa Cruz, Calif. that also includes gender in its classifications.

Finally, someone wised up and did it correctly.

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SAN JOSE, CALIF. — Unless that's the captain with the bad corns...

The Jan.-Feb. *Rainbow* (**Rainbow Gender Assoc.**) had an absolutely hysterical piece about a cross-dresser being read in a shopping mall. The article was written as a parody of the scenes in the movie *The Enemy Below*.

"Visual contact, Captain."

"Get me Jane's."

"Jane's what?"

"You know, Jane's Book of Cross-dresser Silhouettes."

"Target has considerable bulk, wobbles on her heels, and makeup is uneven. I'd say we're tracking a Tri-Ess type crossdresser."

And it goes on. Pretty funny stuff. And, don't get your pantyhose in a twist over the Tri-Ess remark. The article was first published in the *Femme Forum* of **Tau Chi**.

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ELYRIA, OH. — Big girls don't cry...

The newsletter from **Alpha-Omega Tri-Ess, la Femme Silhouette**, reprinted some interesting data from an article in their local paper. It seems that 62 percent of women wear a size 12 or large, 49 percent wear a size 14 or larger and 22 percent wear a size 16 or larger. So why can't I find clothes?

According to the article, about 60 to 70 percent of women are "special sizes," yet department stores seem to cater to sizes 6 to 12.

I just noticed that the 16-Plus shop is now 14-Plus. Oh my!

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LONG ISLAND, N.Y. — You can't keep a good idea down...

There is signs of mitosis at **LIFE** these days. The latest issue of *Life-lines* notes that several members of the executive board are in the process of forming an open membership group to be called **Liberty**.

I recall a discussion between a

former **LIFE** member, **Dale, Alison Laing** and myself at **Fantasia Fair 1990** about this same subject. Dale indicated that the **LIFE** board, at the time, was vehemently opposed to a second group.

Guess they saw the light. The regular **LIFE** meetings will remain closed, but **LIBERTY** will be open to all. However, **LIBERTY** meetings are not free (\$5 fee) and all monies collected goes to **LIFE**.

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BULVERDE, TEX. — Mixed metaphors...

It's a never ending battle. Virginia Prince, Merissa Lynn and many, many others (myself included) have tried to educate our sisters and the general public on the difference between sex and gender. You'd think that our sisters would have learned by now, but No!

Here's an example from *Cross Currents*, "The real 'problem' of crossdressing is that society has strangely assigned clothing 'gender' and determined exactly which garments are 'male', and more importantly (in our case!), which are 'female'!" (Sic) Ugh!

Some people will never learn and it looks like the editor doesn't know any better either. For punishment they should be made to read *Strunk & White* for where to place punctuation and quotation marks and *Venus Penises* for the difference between feminine and female.

There are no such things as "female" and "male" clothes. You can't hang "female" and "male" clothes in a closet and get "baby" clothes. Clothes are neuter, no sex. Get it!

My thanks to Virginia Prince for the "biology lesson" on clothing.

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NOTA BENE - The opinions expressed here are mine and mine alone. If you have a comment, positive or negative, write me at PO Box 61263, KofP, PA 19406-1263. I'd like to hear your thoughts.

Look out, Jenny Craig!

A smaller dress size may be in your future

By next year, tens of thousands of transvestites and transsexuals might be fitting into smaller-sized skirts, dresses, and blouses.

This "downsizing" won't be the result of crash diets or feverish exercise programs; it will be because clothing manufacturers are considering larger measurements for women's apparel, measurements that will result in many transvestites and transsexuals wearing smaller sizes.

The revision in measurements was proposed by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), a private organization in Philadelphia that sets product standards. The changes were put forward because women's bodies have changed over the last 50 years. The last major change in sizing standards was the result of data col-

lected on 15,000 women in the 1940's. Since then, clothing makers have created their own sizing methods, resulting in widespread size variations.

"For most women, the changes (in clothing sizes) will be good news," said Sirvart Mellian who oversees the sizing project for ASTM.

The changes will be good news for some men who wear women's clothes. For instance, over the past half century women's shoulders have become broader, their abdomens are larger and more rounded, and their arms have increased in circumference. The proposed sizing system will take these changes into account, resulting in clothes that provide a better fit for women — and men.

Manufacturers are not obliged to follow the ASTM standards, but

most do so voluntarily.

ASTM is also measuring 10,000 women over 55 to develop a system for sizing clothing for older people. Clothing designed for younger women always doesn't fit older women or older crossdressers. "We'd like to have a category of clothes for women 55 and older, just like we have for petites and juniors," Mellian said.

The next step would be to take the mystery out of converting inches to dress sizes. Mellian would like to see manufacturers put exact sizes in women's clothes, like the system of inches used for men's clothes. However, she noted that some makers would be reluctant to adopt this system out of fear that customers may not want to see a constant reminder of their waist measurements.

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