



News & views

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Vol. 12, No. 9 • September 1998 • \$5.00

A publication of the Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc.

TRANSGENDER
COMMUNITY

U.S. Reps Support TG Rights It's on the record!

In Washington, D.C. last week two members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) and Tom Lantos (D-CA), spoke out for human rights and employment non-discrimination for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. This could be the first mention in the Congressional Record of transgender people being citizens worthy of basic human rights.

On the House floor, Jerrold Nadler spoke in opposition to the Hefley Amendment, a Republican sponsored effort last week to override President Clinton's recent Executive Order barring discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation. Said Nadler, "It is imperative that we begin the process of expanding the promise of the Declaration of Independence to include the last unincorporated group—gays and lesbians and transgender people." Tom Lantos, co-chair of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, addressed the caucus regarding international human rights violations.

"This briefing represents the first time that

the U.S. Congress will address violations grounded in sexual identity... If a government denies human rights to one group, then it is possible for that government to deny rights to any other group... Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people in communities all around the world have been brutally punished both physically and mentally for exercising their fundamental human rights to freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom of belief."

Transactivists were heartened by these statements. Said one GenderPAC veteran, "We're actively lobbying Congress, building rapport with Congressional staffers. These trans-positive statements are the result of efforts by hundreds of local activists who attend our National Lobby Day in Washington every year, as well as the tireless work of early pioneers like Phyllis Frye and Jessica Xavier."



Games Discriminate Against TG's

There's a growing controversy over the Gay Games' policy on transgender athletes. The New York Times on August 1, 1998, covered the rift in a front-page article with the headline "Event Founded to Fight Bias is Accused of It." Gay, Lesbian and Transgender groups say the policy discriminates against transgender athletes and are moving to have it scrapped.

In order to participate in the summer games in Amsterdam, trans-athletes are required to provide documentation from their doctors and employers. The G, L & T groups maintain that the procedure unfairly stigmatizes the athletes since the policy applies only to transgender people.

In a letter to the event organizers, GenderPAC, along with the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), FTM International, The National Center for Lesbian Rights, and others, protested the policy and called on them to rescind the restrictive requirements for trans-athletes.

"After years of trivializing our issues, the mainstream media are finally 'getting it' that we are a legitimate political movement deserving of balanced, unsensational coverage," said Riki Anne Wilchins, Executive Director of GenderPAC. "This and the recent Time magazine article (July 20, 1998) are evidence that our movement's time has come."



Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: 302-376-1990 or email to: <sadeCD@aol.com>.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open at 8 pm all year 'round, Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Renaissance Lehigh Valley, PO Box 3624, Allentown, PA 18106. Meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955, or email to <RenLV@ren.org>.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) or send email to: <lsv@ezonline.com>.

Affiliates

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Orange County: Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <ppoc@aol.com>

Connecticut

Bridgeport/New Haven: connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046. Website: <www.gga.org>. Email: <crysgga@juno.com>.

Missouri

St. Louis Gender Foundation, P.O. Box 9433, St. Louis, MO 63117. Phone: 314-367-4128, email: <stlgf@aol.com>.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 2972, Princeton, NJ 08543-2972. Call 732-219-9094. Email: <vikkinmotg@aol.com>.

Western Central New Jersey: New Jersey Support, call Susan at 973-334-0416 or Dorothy at 215-744-4746 (weekends only). Write PO Box 0034, Montville, NJ 07045 for information. Email: Susanw@aol.com. Meetings are the first Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing.

New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), 561 Hudson Street, Box 45, New York, NY 10014. Call 201-794-1665, ext. 332. Email, <uravampire@mindspring.com>.

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 1311, Water Mill, NY 11976-1311. Phone 516-283-1333. email to <brenvee2@aol.com>.

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Write to P.O. Box 60354, Oklahoma City, OK 73146. Email to <cota@transfemme.com>, website: <www.transfemme.com/cota>

TRANSGENDER News & COMMUNITY Views

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Phone: 610-975-9119

WWW - <http://www.ren.org>

On AOL keyword: Renaissance

\$5.00 per issue, \$36 per year (12 issues). Previous year back issues are available for \$2 per copy plus \$0.52 postage and handling. Send check or M.O. to the above address, attention: Back Issues.

Editor-in-Chief - Angela Gardner

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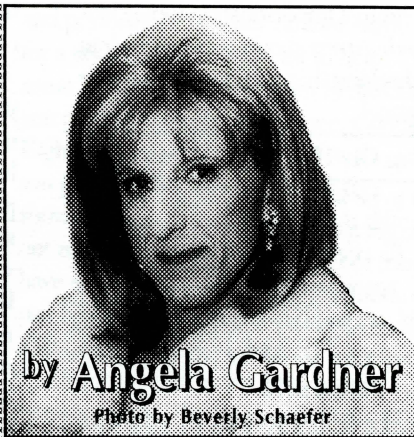
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News Beat & Reminder



It's good to get back in touch with your roots from time to time, and I don't mean the ones on your head. I took the opportunity to attend the newcomers orientation at the Greater Philadelphia Chapter's August meeting, and I have to say the experience took me back. There were eight newcomers in the room and as they told their stories I had a sense of *deja vu*. Some spoke of having the belief that they were the only people in the world who felt this way. Others talked about their need to tell loved ones of their transgendered nature, and the fear they have that their friends and family would abandon them. Another common theme was all of the years they spent fighting it and then, finally coming to accept that this is who they are. It was all the same things that I felt and heard others say lo those many years ago when I first went to a meeting of crossdressers. It's the bottom line reason why Renaissance was started in the first place - to give those people a place to come and meet others like themselves. Renaissance National provides this newsletter, our Background Papers, and Outreach Bulletins, as well as undertaking special projects to educate people about transgender issues, but the basic thing is to get transgendered people together so they learn they're not alone, how this one handled this situation, how that one dealt with that. When I looked around that newcomer's room I saw people with a renewed sense of hope and a new sense of belonging. It's good to remember now and then that that's why we do what we do for Renaissance.

And Now...

Alright, I got the warm, fuzzy, emotional stuff out of the way, and everyone is

a little choked up... send money! It takes a wad of cash to keep our organization in operation, and at this time of year we are running a little short. The recent change in the membership rules will start to even out our cash flow eventually, as more folks sign up in the middle of the year; but now the majority of members are set to have their memberships expire at the end of the year. That means renewals won't get started for a month or two, so in the meantime we're watching the bank account dwindle and counting our pennies. If you have some spare cash sitting around and are thinking of spending it on a new pair of shoes or something frivolous (OK, high heels aren't frivolous, they're kind of like air for girls like us. Leave the shoe budget alone) please think about sending it to Renaissance as a donation. Last year many of the members dug in and sent a little extra cash and that really helped us out. We would be grateful for your help again this year, so please send whatever amount you can spare. Several groups around the country have expressed interest in becoming chapters and if we have sufficient funds we can do a much better job of offering them support and guidance. Thank you for your support.

And now the entertaining bits.

Talk About A Poker Face

The en vogue treatment for wrinkles these days happens to be a deadly bacteria. You heard me right ladies, women all over the country are getting Botulinum Toxin A injected into their faces. Not just one shot, but about 12. (OK, it's a little needle, but still...) It seems that one of the lesser known wonders of modern medicine is that one of the most lethal

toxins this old rock we call a planet has produced is just what the doctor ordered for those of us who are vain, and desperately struggling to keep looking like we're under thirty. OK, maybe forty.

Botulinum Toxin A is the bacteria which causes Botulism in canned vegetables that didn't get processed correctly. It's also pretty good as a germ-warfare agent.

Hello, Mr. Hussein? Your Botulinum Toxin A is here. Where would you like it put? Where the UN don't look? Yes sir.

The commercial name for this nasty little brew is Botox. It was approved by the FDA in 1989 as a treatment for spastic eye muscles. *Doc! I got a terrible tic.* It certainly helped the eyesight of plastic surgeons and dermatologists who soon saw dollar signs in using it as a wrinkle treatment. How's a deadly bacteria stop wrinkles? Well girls, what causes wrinkles? Sure, the sun, and Botox won't help with those kind of wrinkles. It fixes the wrinkles you get from using your facial muscles too much... smiling, knitting your brow in concentration, excessive grimacing.

You get the picture. The skin wrinkles because the facial muscles crease it in the same spots over and over. The answer? Inject the deadly toxin. (Horror movie music here.) It paralyzes the muscles that make the wrinkles and viola! No more wrinkles. Also, no facial expression where the muscles are paralyzed.

The effects of Botox are so apparent to those in the know that those getting the treatments are called, "the zombies of Bergdorf's." (Shot of blank faced matrons walking through a black and white, upscale department store, "Must buy expensive outfit... charge it, charge it." Oh, the horror!) And you need the kind of disposable income that people who shop at Bergdorf's have in order to afford the treatments. They can cost \$1600 a visit in the Big Apple. That's for a treatment that wears off in four to six months. Being wrinkle free for the rest of your life *could* run into some serious money.

And, there are possible problems. Can you say "side effects?" If it's used around your mouth, and it's not applied just right, you could end up with a six month drool problem. Anybody know where I can get a deal on a drool cup?

News Beat...

I have a much cheaper alternative to Botox. Tighten up your wig. As a male (yes girls, it's true, sometimes I crossdress in men's clothes - the white cotton Jockey shorts make me feel so empowered) I have a few furrows in the old forehead. En femme and bewigged that space is much smoother. The reason? The tight headband of my wig cuts off the circulation in my forehead and after a few hours everything up there is numb. Yeah, it takes awhile for the pain to go away, but after that you're smooth and youthful. And oh, the tingling as the blood comes back when you take that baby off! So forget the toxic injections-tighten up your wigs for beauty. (Results may vary. Don't try this at home. Member FDIC.)

Disney... Again

I tell ya, there's *gotta* be a queen working over at Disney. Last month I mentioned the use of the word "crossdresser" in the film *Mulan*. This month they have announced a television movie (probably to be shown on *The Wonderful World...*) called *In Your Shoes*. The film stars **Vivica A. Fox, David Alan Grier** and **Rue McClanahan**. The plot concerns a pro quarterback dad and feminist mom who exchange personalities. Kind of like the old *Star Trek* episode that had Captain Kirk stuck in a woman's body while she took over the ship in his body. Or there's that movie where the mother and daughter switch bodies. This kind of body swapping has been going on in movies for years. Usually there's some kind of mad scientist or magic at work. In this case it's all thanks to the couple's meddling children and some old-fashioned New Orleans voodoo. Yeah, the kids put the gris gris on 'em... in a Disney way.

These body switch movies, while a treat for the actors (who get to act like the other lead character while looking like themselves) aren't as satisfying for us transgendered types. I mean, we want to see David Alan Grier dressed like Pam Grier, not just acting like a woman while looking like a man. Oh sure, everybody learns wonderful lessons about gender and all that, but at least a good old fash-

ioned criminal impersonation movie like *Mr. Headmistress* shows us a guy in drag. Keep checking those TV listings for time and channel.

Jumping On The Band Wagon

Not to be left out is Warner Brothers. They've got a transgender sports film in the works, too. It's called *Juvanna Mann*, and it's about a flamboyant, Rodman-like, pro basketball player who gets kicked out of the NBA for life. What'cha gotta do to get that? Kill a coach?

The player (not yet cast... I wonder if a white girl around 5' 11" is tall enough?) really loves the game and will do anything to play again. Yep, he joins the WNBA and passes himself off as a female basketball player. **Wesley Snipes** would be great in this, but then again, he's still trying to shake off *To Wong Foo*. He's looking more than a little butch in that new vampire flick, *Blade*.

I can just see the hilarious shower room scenes now. Oh well, at least this one will give us a guy in a women's basketball uniform ... hey, that's just like a guy's basketball uniform. There better be a few off the court scenes. I suppose the owner of the women's team will probably be head over heels for his new player. It always happens in these flicks. (**Ed Asner's** character in *Ask Harriet* is just one example.) Perhaps we'll be treated to a romantic dinner scene in which the team owner makes like an octopus and the crossdressed player tries to avoid receiving a pass.

This could be good, or it could be really bad. Let's send plenty of happy crossdresser vibes toward Hollywood, and maybe it'll turn out OK.

A Little Foreign TG Film

Actually it's not a completely TG film. It's just that I haven't paid any attention to the other aspects of its plot. All I know is an old artist dies and his friends and relatives come to pay their last respects. They all have to take the train to get there, hence the title, *Those who Love Me Can Take The Train*. It's a long title and it's even longer in French, France being its country of origin. It's directed by **Patrice Chereau**. (I know a woman named Patrice, but this is a man. At least everything I've read tells me he's a man. It's so

hard to tell the players without a score-card.)

The TG part of the plot concerns a young woman coming to the funeral. This will be the first time most of these people have seen her as a woman. **Vivianne** is a pre-op TS. What manly, male sex symbol movie star plays Vivianne? Well, his name starts with a V, also. **Vincent Perez**, best known as the star of the second *Crow* movie, *The Crow: City of Angels*, signed on to play the transsexual character. I have surfed the Net till my computer crashed, and I haven't been able to find a picture of Vincent as Vivianne. I even spoke to his accountant in Los Angeles, but she wasn't too helpful. I will persevere, however, and as soon as the publicity photos are released I will get one in this column. The film has not yet been released in the States, but someday it may jump the pond. When it does, you'll hear about it here.

The exciting part about this picture for girls like us is the attitude Perez had about taking on the role. He said he wanted to do something as an actor that was the total opposite of himself. He has been talking to the director, who he has been associated with since the beginning of his career, about a project like this for years. When it happened, although he had doubts about his ability to play a female part, he lost himself in the role. In an interview for *The International Herald Tribune* he said, "It was a secret for a year. There was no Vincent on the set, just Vivianne." He expanded on that in an interview for the Internet's *Film Scouts*.

"The fun part of it was that when we started shooting, probably thanks a lot to my co-actors, there was no longer a Vincent. There was only a Vivianne. My name wasn't even on the call-sheets, Vivianne's was. I got into the character and then a few days later, something strange happened, total immersion, I just let go. So Vivianne began to exist in lieu of Vincent. Mostly because everyone around me believed that was the case."

Here's a regular guy, a heartthrob for women around the world, becoming immersed in a female character. He says later in the interview that for a long while after the shooting wrapped he would wake up feeling feminine, and find him-

News Beat...

self sleeping on his side, not his normal sleeping position, the position Vivianne slept in. If I can ever get an interview with Vincent Perez I have a lot of questions to ask. If anybody hears about a US release before I do, please let me know. Boy, immersing yourself in a female character and getting paid big bucks to do it. To paraphrase Dire Straits; That ain't workin'. Ya get your money for nothin' and be a chick for free.

Get My Good Side

But enough about famous actors, what have I been up to? Last month I journeyed to the Big Apple for a little birthday party for my old pal **Tina Lindsey**. We used to do the clubs in NYC back in the day, and when our party, which included fab NYC cabaret performer **Jerry Scott**, barged into the Oaks on Grove Street in lovely Greenwich Village, we proved that we can still cause a rumpus. Tina took over the piano for a couple of tunes, and Jerry accompanied other members of our party and then belted out a couple himself.

Speaking of belting... the hostess of the evening was the talented **Ruby Rims**. She did a number without the benefit of amplification, and she more than filled the room. As they say on Broadway, that girl's a belter. She also has a big heart. Every December she takes over another club in the Village, Eighty Eights, and puts together a show to benefit Teddycare, the Christmas Teddy Bear Drive for Hospitalized Children. She puts together a whole cast of talented impersonators

and performers and they do four nights for a good cause. If you want to help some kids, and see some men in dresses, you can't go wrong with this one. Contact Eighty Eights at 212-924-0088 as the season gets near and find out when the shows are scheduled. The talent is different each night since the performers all have other commitments. That means you can go all four nights and buy the kids a few bears. I'll see ya there.

Unfortunately, as we go to press I found out that The Oaks is closing and reopening as a jazz club. By the time you read this the old place will be history. Ruby will doing shows at Eighty Eights, beside the Teddycare event, so give them a call for her schedule.

Ex Gays Transgendered?

I happened to catch a segment of *60 Minutes* devoted to a cure for gayness called Exodus. According to these folks they can change a homosexual, who wants to change, into a straight person. This is accomplished through prayer, meetings, prayer meetings, more prayer, and other stuff that purports to be Christian. (I thought Christianity was supposed to be about loving everyone, but hey what do I know?)

Of course the whole concept is not only impossible, but offensive. It assumes that if a person is gay then that person is less than anyone else, that the gay person is something for their family to be ashamed of. The tragedy is that many times the person feels this way about themselves because the most important people in their lives - their parents - have told them that homosexuality is wrong, evil, perverted, etcetera.

What is wrong and evil is to discard someone who can't help being what they are, and who, in fact, has no reason to conform to standards of sexuality or gender that don't work for them.

There is a list I have seen that takes the questions commonly asked of homosexuals and substitutes "heterosexual" for "homosexual." It's pretty funny, and it shows how much of an attack questions like that can be. "Why can't you heterosexuals just stay in the closet?" "Why do you heterosexuals have to be so demonstrative in public?"

Of course, as transgendered people we get lumped in with homosexuals in the minds of bigots who think that we're doing this because we choose to, that we dress up like women just so they can insult us on the streets. The biggest argument that I can come up with for why transgendered behavior and homosexuality are not something you can choose, or something you can just give up, is the fact that we have to be who we are even if the majority of the world condemns us. We don't have a choice about our inner nature.

The Exodus people consider their efforts to change someone a success if that person gives up practicing homosexuality. Excuse me, but that's not becoming straight, that's becoming celibate. The man in charge of the program, John Polk, says he is a former gay person, and now he is married to a former lesbian and they have children. Congratulations. Having a family is good-but it doesn't prove his wife is any straighter than Ellen, or that he's any straighter than RuPaul. I mention RuPaul because *60 Minutes* showed pho-

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New Orleans Approves "Gender Identification" Ordinance

On July 1, 1998, the New Orleans City Council approved an ordinance protecting citizens from the crime of intimidation, and discrimination based upon "gender identification." The ordinance was approved by a vote of 5-1. It amends the city's existing intimidation ordinance and human rights ordinances pertaining to discrimination in public accommodations, employment, and real estate and housing, and adds "gender identification" to the previously protected classes of actual or perceived: race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin or ancestry, physical condition or disability, or sexual orientation.

The ordinance's definition of gender identification is intentionally broad, and protects a broad spectrum of citizens who may experience discrimination due to their gender identity, expressions, or characteristics. Gender identification is defined as the actual or perceived condition, status, or acts of:

(1) identifying emotionally or psychologically with the sex other than one's biological or legal sex at birth, whether or not there has been a physical change of the organs of sex,

(2): presenting and/or holding oneself out to the public as a member of the biological sex that was not one's biological or legal sex at birth,

(3): lawfully displaying physical characteristics and/or behavioral characteristics and/or expressions which are widely perceived as being more appropriate to the biological or legal sex other than one's biological or legal sex at birth, as when a male is perceived as feminine, or a female is perceived as masculine, and/or,

(4): being physically and/or behaviorally androgynous.

The ordinance protects everyone equally in the intimidation, public accommodations, and housing and real estate sections of the city's human rights code. The intimidation ordinance provides for enhanced penalties, and/or jail time for hate crimes.

As a preventive measure, it ensures that sensitivity training programs sponsored by the city, or city agencies, will include education regarding gender identification. The public accommodations section makes it

unlawful to discriminate against any person, either directly or indirectly, by refusing, withholding, or denying any services, advantages, facilities, or privileges offered by a public facility or place of public accommodation. It is unlawful to set different rates, charges, identification procedures, or to place any person in a separate section of the facilities or premises. Nothing in this law prohibits the provisions of separate bathroom, restroom, shower, or similar facilities for males or females.

Despite the fact that the ordinance specifically addresses concerns of employers, the employment section of the ordinance received substantial media attention, mostly inaccurate and sensational. The media uniformly characterized the ordinance as a "cross-dressing" ordinance which forced employers to allow cross-dressing in the workplace. The television stations did not show any footage of the City Council discussion which would have provided the public with accurate information. Radio talk shows focused on what the hosts considered to be improper provisions for crossdressing in the workplace. The media had a "field day" at the expense of the New Orleans gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community.

The employment section contains provisions which allow for an employer to establish and maintain gender specific dress codes. The ordinance also does not prohibit an employer from prohibiting "cross-dressing" while an employee is acting in the course and scope of his/her employment. It does, however, prohibit an employer from discriminating against a crossdresser for crossdressing activities which take place while an employee is engaged in activities outside of the course and scope of his/her employment. The employment section prohibits an employer from discriminating against transsexuals in the workplace. Individuals who are diagnosed with gender identity disorder, or a similar condition, may conform to the employer's dress code appropriate for persons of the gender with which he/she identifies. Transsexuals who are dressing in a manner consistent with their gender identi-

ty are not "cross-dressing." An employer may request documentation from a licensed medical doctor, or licensed mental health care professional.

The approval of the ordinance is a result of several years of efforts directed toward educating public officials. In November, 1995, the voters, in a general election revised the city charter which included, within the bill of rights section, the provision that "no law shall arbitrarily and capriciously or unreasonably discriminate against a person because of birth, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, culture, language, social origin, or political affiliations." The November 1995 action was the first time the City Of New Orleans officially recognized "gender identification" as a specific class. In June 1997, the City Council passed the intimidation ordinance which did not include "gender identification" as a class. Nancy Sharp, on June 25, 1997, filed a written complaint with the Human Relations Commission and outlined her concerns that transgender citizens were not protected by the "perceived sexual orientation" clause in the ordinance. The City Attorney subsequently provided an opinion confirming that transgendered people are not protected by the actual or perceived sexual orientation clause of the intimidation ordinance, and further stated that no laws in the city provided protections for transgender citizens.

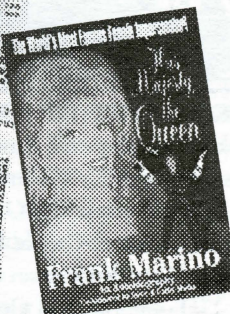
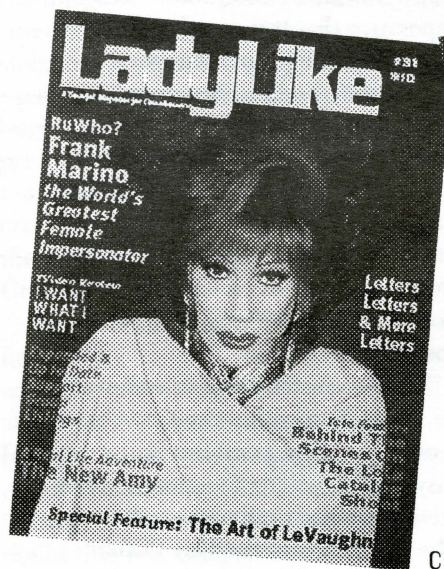
The Human Relations Commission then initiated work to explore ways to remedy the situation. This ordinance brings the city's human rights ordinances into compliance with the provisions of the revised city charter.

Enactment of this ordinance places New Orleans among the progressive cities which have enacted laws to protect transgender and gender variant citizens. New Orleans joins San Francisco, CA and Cambridge, MA in providing protections specifically for gender or gender identity. Santa Cruz, CA; Iowa City, IO; Pittsburgh, PA; Evanston, IL; Ypsilanti, MI and several other cities include protections for trans-

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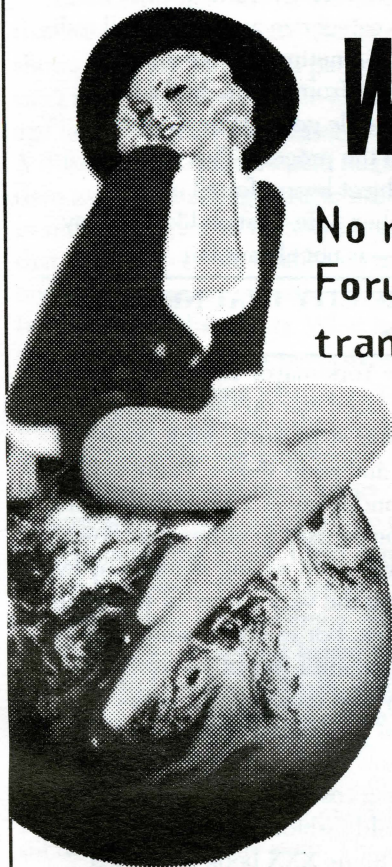
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WANTED: SENSE OF HUMOR

I picked this item off America Online's Transgender Community Forum in the section of TG News items. The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, and GenderPAC wrote a joint letter to the Ford Motor Company protesting a commercial in which two men make a bet and the loser must dress in women's clothing.

The letter drafted by the three organizations said in part, "Please realize that representations like [the commercial in question] trivialize our lives and identities and only make it harder for us to gain access to safety and equal rights... As you well know, these short spots leave an indelible impact on impressionable minds and we urge you to rethink the inherent message that this one has about transgender people."

Also running afoul of the transgender police was a comment made on the show "Politically Incorrect" by host Bill Maher. Commenting about a "transgender identified man," Maher laughingly dismissed him as a "confused lesbian."

The resulting letter sent off by GenderPac and GLAAD, was much longer than the throwaway joke it protested. It stated in part: "We can appreciate [another guest's comment] that a transperson electing not to have surgery or hormones sounded like a lazy transsexual. This is different than Maher's invalidating his gender identity altogether. Mr. Maher's comments cement the impression that we are silly, deviant, or just weird. As you are no doubt aware, transpeople face real problems and real discrimination, as

the eight transmurdurers in recent years remind us."

Maybe even more harmful than being viewed by some misguided individuals as deviants is being viewed by many normal-minded people as having no sense of humor. Is it really necessary for these groups supposedly operating on our behalf to fire off letters of protest at the most inconsequential imagined slights against us?

Another thing that I found annoying and counterproductive in the second letter was the use of the coined term "transmurdurers" to describe the killing of transgender people. The use of made-up terminology for real-life tragedy is even more trivializing than an offhanded humorous remark.

Maybe I should write a letter...

AMSTERDAM, WE HAVE A PROBLEM

Another fascinating tidbit posted on AOL's TCF was one datelined from Amsterdam, on 8/6/98. It brought to light a couple of controversies that arose during the Gay Games that were being staged in The Netherlands' metropolis. (See story on page 1.)

The local organizers of the Games have banned mixed sex couples from competing in the ballroom dance competitions. A lesbian schoolteacher and her gay male dance partner were not to be allowed onto the floor. The goal of the event "is as a kind of international showcase for gay athletes, men dancing with men, women with women."

Therefore it isn't so much the individual's sexual orientation that counts but rather with whom they choose to

dance. And it had better not be a person of the opposite sex, even if they are queer enough to change a nine dollar bill into threes.

Another controversy bubbled up when the organizers called for athletes who have changed their sex to provide proof of "completed gender transition." They cited that it was imperative that transgender athletes be put into the proper category "so that men—whether born or created—do not compete unfairly against women." GenderPac protested this ruling, calling it "ironic" that the Gay Games were founded to help gay athletes "compete openly, now another group is being forced back into the closet or face a barrage of stigmatizing obstacles."

The two instances of intramural discrimination within the Gay Games should, perhaps, point out that it isn't easy to do anything in a purely democratic, non-discriminatory fashion. The organizers of the Gay Games drew lines in the sand to categorize and classify the athletes, the same way the larger society draws lines in the sand to categorize and classify all individuals. Sometimes order must be marshaled from chaos. And sometimes people get hurt or shunted aside in the process. This might be a good object lesson for all of us to remember. Life—much like the Gay Games—is not always fair.

IN THE CITY THAT NEVER PEEPS

New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani has declared war on the Big Apple's numerous strip clubs, adult bookstores, and peep shows. There is a move underway as I write this to force these businesses to either shut down or comply with zoning regulations by changing the very nature of the establishments. For example, some strip clubs that until recently featured the scantily clad dancers that define the modern go-go joint or gentlemen's club, now have their dancers in less revealing costumes more reminiscent of the old-fashioned bird-cage style of go-go. Some XXX book and video

stores are now also stocking mainstream merchandise, which they display in the windows and front of the stores to disguise the adult nature of the business and comply with zoning regs.

Mr. Giuliani has won kudos for doing a remarkable job in changing the image of New York by attacking "quality of life" nuisances and petty violations such as the windshield squeegee pests, graffiti artists, litterbugs, and the like. Meantime, as the presence of the police has become more visible in the community, major crimes have also plummeted, leading the media to trumpet a renaissance in Gotham.

The revitalization of 42nd Street near Times Square, which at one time was chockablock with XXX movie theaters and live peep shows, no doubt had a lot to do with broadening the effort to harass the rest of the adult industry in the city. There seems little doubt that Mr. Giuliani would be perfectly happy to rid the city of the adult businesses completely.

Although it may not be fair to say that New York is "famous" for its peep shows, they are as much a part of the city's image as its multitude of brokerage houses and advertising agencies. A dissenter to Giuliani's plan might dare say he is making a tragic mistake in reducing a part of the city's image that gives it a certain vitality, no matter whether you agree with, or patronize, those establishments. What is New York City without peep shows?

And politics being what it is, mayors and civic leaders of other cities around the globe are jumping on the bandwagon to recast their towns against type by eliminating some of the elements that made them famous in the first place. For instance: Boston's mayor is proposing a "zero tolerance" policy against baked bean factories in the city limits. In Paris, the politicians are calling for restrictions on sidewalk cafes and accordion music. The governor of Oklahoma is proposing the dismantling of unsightly oil derricks across the state. The city council of Baltimore is taking an

increasingly harsh stance against purveyors of hard shell crabs. There is a serious proposal on the boards in Venice to drain those canals and do away once and for all with the gondola industry. And right here in Philadelphia, our tighter licensing and inspections bureaucracy is already working because you can hardly find a soft pretzel vendor on downtown streets. Now this is progress, my fellow citizens. Let's keep up the good work.

A NATION OF SLOBS

Take a look at the people you see on the streets, your neighbors, maybe your family members, maybe even yourself. Especially in these summer months, you will notice that many people dress like slobs. This is not a new phenomenon, but rather a slow degeneration of style that probably started in the counterculture of the 60's and has now reached wide currency with otherwise normal folk.

The genesis for this essay was the sight of a man in the lobby of the Atlantic City Hilton Casino hotel. He scuffed through the reception area in a tank shirt, baggy shorts, and flip flops. And he didn't look at all out of place because this is the type of casual wear we have become accustomed to seeing, not only in resorts (although at one time, people tried to look nice in resorts) but in any social setting with the possible exceptions of church weddings and funerals. And the phenomenon is not limited to the male of the species. Women have taken to dressing in horrific "casual" outfits as well.

Now that the 70's are twenty-odd years behind us, we can look back and laugh at the peacock fashions of those days. But on closer examination and comparison with today's taste in everyday sportswear, the 70's can look like the golden age of fashion. Would Tony Manero and his Brooklyn buddies be caught dead swinging down to the disco in baggy shorts and sport sandals?

And what is the fascination with sandals, especially for men? There is nothing more disgusting than to be

seated in a restaurant (even a fast food or pizza joint) and have some clod sit nearby and flex his naked, disgusting toes, and expose the dirty soles of his feet while you are trying to scarf down your Big Mac. The same level of disgust applies in the case of loose tank shirts that expose armpit hair and put the saggy flesh of the untuned male breast on display. On the distaff side, women have now taken to wearing "sandals" that could easily be mistaken for bathroom slippers. Okay, it's all about personal freedom and the need to be cool and relaxed. But in a public setting it's gross and should be reconsidered, if for no other reason than common decency for your fellow man. Of course, nowadays, that is as old fashioned as Tony Manero's white disco suit.

A couple of years ago, I criticized an item written by a middle aged crossdresser who waxed nostalgic for the good old days when women always wore skirts or dresses and high heels. I thought that viewpoint relied too heavily on old foggery. Now look at me. I'm taking aim at the cherished modern notion of dressing like a slob in public. Somebody get Kevorkian on the phone.

HERE I SIT ON THE CUTTING EDGE

In last month's column I did a piece on the war of words in the Butch lesbian/FTM community. Now, I see that well known gay writer Michelangelo Signorile wrote a feature article on the same subject in "OUT" magazine's August issue. I saw a synopsis of the article on AOL's Transgender Community Forum (which has been a godsend for me in a month without my usual fix of TV support group newsletters).

To briefly revisit the controversy, some Butch women are staking their turf against the "encroachment" of the FTM transsexuals. As have many MTF transgender folk, some women have decided that there is no one true path that must lead from "butchness"



Gender Reflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**
M.S.W., Ph.D.

A Prison Within A Prison

Recently I was engaged by the Federal Public Defender as an expert witness to evaluate Rita, an individual found guilty of committing 3 bank robberies.

The Public Defender hoped to plead extenuating circumstances in an effort to avoid a long mandatory sentence for a third "violent" crime. Because Rita is a self-identified male-to-female, pre-op transsexual, a gender specialist was sought. I met with Rita in a federal detention center one lovely, sunny day but the room in which we met gave no hint of the weather. I was not allowed to give my client a candy bar I'd brought.

Rita is a tall, heavy-set, African American with cropped, gray hair wearing the regulation orange jump suit. Despite her appearance and dress she radiated feminine charm. I learned she was 55 years old, grew up in an intact family, and was tormented and discrimi-

nated against through her childhood and adolescence for her feminine behavior and interests. She was unaware of the phenomenon of transsexualism, and thought she was gay for many years.

She remained at home just long enough to graduate from high school and then struck out on her own, joining a community of drag queens. She had hoped to pursue a career as a beautician, but could never amass enough money to enter school. She worked the streets, used drugs and committed several petty crimes as well as some significant felonies, spending the succeeding years in and out of jail.

Throughout this period, she dreamed of obtaining a sex change operation. Each of her bank robberies was motivated by the hope of getting the necessary funds; but she was caught each time in the course of her escape, netting only a heftier sentence than the time before. This

time she was facing a 12 year sentence, a prospect that left her feeling hopeless about ever realizing her dream of SRS.

My task was to write a report identifying any circumstances that might speak to a reduction of the sentence. In consultation with a colleague, the poem, "Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes came to mind.

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink
like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over-
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

The poem gave me the basis of my argument, that a dream deferred indefinitely can contribute to irresponsible, anti-social behavior and a dream denied, can be the destruction of a human being.

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New Orleans...

gendered individuals within their definition of sexual orientation. The state of Minnesota provides protections for transgendered people within its definition of sexual orientation.

The New Orleans gay and lesbian community and political organizations played an important and central role in helping to pass the local ordinance. The local gay and lesbian community has been substantially more progressive than the Human Rights Campaign, the largest national gay and lesbian political organization, in working with the transgender community. They recognize that laws protecting gender identity, expressions, and characteristics offer protections for many gays and lesbians. The section of the "gender identification" ordi-

nance which pertains to "lawfully displaying physical characteristics and/or behavioral characteristics and/or expressions which are widely perceived as being more appropriate to the biological or legal sex other than one's biological or legal sex at birth, as when a male is perceived as feminine or a female is perceived as masculine" provide important protections to many gays and lesbians who are not adequately protected by laws that apply on the sole basis of "sexual orientation." As Chris Daigle, chair of LAGPAC, recently stated, "This law protects all men who do not live up to a 6' 4" John Wayne prototype of masculinity and women whose feminine qualities and attributes don't compare to Helen of Troy. This allows all of us to live without fear and to be responsible and productive members of society, regardless of who we are, or who we are perceived to be."

The local gay and lesbian community also recognizes that their efforts and support assisted many heterosexual cross-dressers to obtain equal rights. Many organizations and individuals within the city worked together to support the ordinance. Indeed, an effort of this magnitude could only occur with contributions from many organizations and individuals. The Gulf Gender Alliance extends its appreciation to Mayor Marc Morial, all supporting City Council members, Members of the Human Relations Commission and Advisory Committee, LAGPAC, the MAC, PFLAG, and to all of our many friends, allies, and supporters.

Renaissance congratulates the Gulf Gender Alliance and its partners in achieving this wonderful legislation. If they can do it, this goal can be accomplished by other organizations.



My Son, The Crossdresser

By Lisen Stromberg

My son is a cross-dresser. Most mornings he gets up, puts on a hand-me-down dress stolen from his sister, wraps an old white pillowcase around his head with a ribbon (his "long blond hair") and prances around singing, "The hills are alive with the sound of music." My son is 3 and a half years old.

At the toy store, he does not want Batman. "I want a Batgirl doll," he cries. When he begs to play with his friend Margo, it is not because he likes her better than his best friends Billy and Andrew; she just has more to offer-like an extensive collection of Barbie dolls and a whole wardrobe of little clothes he can dress them in.

He loves preschool-partly for the teachers, somewhat for the other children, but mostly for its wonderful selection of tutus, fancy party shoes and pretend jewelry. His grandmother (my mother) received the shock of her life when she went to pick him up one day and he was wearing a blue tutu with beaded gold slippers. The other mothers laugh and tell me he is such a thespian. The teacher tells my husband and me that he is "highly in touch with his feminine side."

If we only had to worry about preschool, life would be fine-but his grandparents (on both sides), his aunts and uncles, his baby sitter and just about everybody else are up in arms. "Boys should be playing baseball, not Barbie," my mother-in-law exclaims. "I was so embarrassed," complains my mother after the harrowing tutu incident. "He keeps taking my daughter's Cinderella slippers!" my neighbor told my other neighbor who told me.

The older siblings of his friends have called him an oddball, a weirdo and generally not normal. Adults tend to be more subtle with questions like: "So when do you think he will grow out of it?" or "How does your husband feel about it?"

I have tried to explain to each of them that my son approaches life with a unique flair. While he loves soccer, he often plays it wearing a silk cape that flutters in the wind when he runs. Playing with his cars takes on new dimensions when he acts out both the "damsel in distress" and the "sheriff to the rescue" role, alternating hats to represent each character.

My husband can't wait for Little League to start because he sees a little slugger in our son who can already hit the ball out of our relatively large backyard. Our son also can't wait to play baseball, but for a different reason: He says that cleats "are just like tap shoes."

Thankfully his preschool teacher has assured us that he is simply "evolved." "I wish all of my children were as well-balanced as your little boy," she told us at our first parent-teacher conference. "I love the way he plays cowboys and Indians wearing his favorite ballet slippers." She credits our "nonjudgmental and accepting parenting" for his creative expression.

Frankly, I was a little relieved. So he is not a weirdo - he is "evolved." I wish I could take credit for this, but it is all his own creation. Interestingly, no one seems the least bit disturbed about our friend (I will call her Gillian). At 5 and a half years old, she refuses to wear dresses, plays T-ball and soccer and is proving quite skilled at climbing trees.

She has more cuts and bruises as a result of roughhousing with her older brothers than my husband claims he ever received playing varsity college football. Gillian, I am told, is a Tomboy. "Isn't she cute," a friend exclaimed to me when we were at Gillian's house for a Sunday barbecue. (My son was inside watching "Pocahontas" with two girls.) And my son is not cute when he dresses up and reenacts the glass slipper scene from Cinderella?

If Gillian is a tomboy because she

likes to do boylike things, what then is my son who likes to do girl-like things - a janegirl? As far as I can tell there is no equivalent in the English language (at least there is not one in my Webster's Dictionary). More important, there is no acceptable behavioral equivalent.

I have begun to ask myself what is normal? My son loves trucks, cars and trains. He plays for hours with his Brio train set while wearing his sister's striped dress. He is very affectionate and will frequently tell his friends he loves them with a hug. Last fall, during those terrible twos, he was accused of being a bully because he bit a girl at the playground.

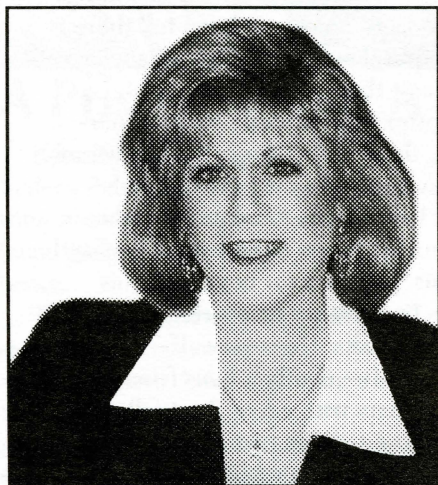
How can a child go from bully to sissy in a mere nine months?

I am coming to realize that while our sex-role stereotypes have expanded for girls, they have not for boys; there seems to be no acceptable cross-gender equivalent. A gay friend of mine claims all of the uproar is a homophobic response to my son's actions. "I remember loving to dress up and put on makeup, too," my friend tells me with a knowing glance. He is only 3 and a half years old, I remind my friend, a little early to be defining his sexual preferences.

The feminist revolution appears to have successfully helped foster an environment that makes it "cool" to be a girl. Much research is being done to ensure that girls are encouraged to excel in math and science, overcome the repression of adolescence and, with luck, one day be more than tokens on boards of directors across the land. I am thrilled. Trust me; I have a 1-year-old daughter. I want her to understand and respect her power, her opportunity, her femaleness. But what about my son? I would like him to be able to respect his power, his opportunity and his maleness even as

Hot • Buzz

Jo Ann Roberts • Cyber Queen



"Americans tend to put too high a price on unanimity . . . as if there were something dangerous and illegitimate about honest differences of opinion honestly expressed by honest men."

— J. William Fulbright

The **Human Rights Campaign** (HRC) continues to be of interest to our community. In the September issue of the *HRC Quarterly*, transactivist and FtM attorney **Shannon Minter** plays apologist for HRC with an article titled "How Transgender Issues Have Become a Part of HRC's Work." The article details how HRC has helped bring transgender awareness to **Hate Crimes** legislation in Congress. As a community, we should be very grateful for that, but it is a small favor when compared with the effect of being left out of the **Employment Non-Discrimination Act** (ENDA). Far more transgender people lose their jobs to ignorance and discrimination than lose their lives to hate crimes.

HRC has gone commercial. Seems they've opened a store and "education center" in **Provincetown, Mass.** I wonder if they have any transgender educational materials? Hey, here's an idea. If you're going to be in P'town for **Fantasia Fair** this year, why not take some tg educational material and drop it off at the HRC store. Better yet, just

stand outside and hand it out as people walk into the store. Yeah, that's the ticket!

The **CBS network** and the television show **Nash Bridges** deserve a pat on the back, and perhaps a letter of commendation from **GenderPAC**. In early August, an episode of the San Francisco-based cop show featured an undercover operation at a **transgendered beauty contest** as a secondary plot line. Two male police officers go undercover as drag contestants to catch a female serial killer. Seems this black widow poses as a transwoman to lure men who like their women with a little something extra, and then she kills them. **RuPaul** appeared as the contest coordinator and emcee. This is the second time this show has featured RuPaul as a transgendered character. Both times the writers seem to get it right and treat the subject with respect. In fact, one of the detectives in the series likes cross-dressing and had volunteered for the assignment. Apparently his superiors don't see this as a problem. But then, the locale is San Francisco. If not there, where?

In early August, three **transgendered attorneys** presented a workshop at the annual convention of the **American Bar Association** (ABA), in Toronto, Canada. (See article on page 17 of this issue.) The workshop was titled, "Transgender 101: A Primer for the Practitioner with a Transgender Client." Presenting the workshop were **Phyllis Frye, Sharon Stuart, and Melinda Whiteway**. It's this kind of outreach work with the basically straight world that we need more of. Congratulations and our thanks should go to these three courageous people.

The state of Minnesota and the city of Minneapolis lead the way again. There is hope yet. The **Metropolitan Community Church** (MCC) of the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul)

celebrated an incredible event. Twenty queer-haters and the **Rev. Phelps** from the **Westboro Baptist Church** of Topeka Kansas showed up to picket the church with signs stating "God Hates Fags." Phelps underestimated his position as 1000 supporters of the church showed up for a counter rally which included the state's **Attorney General, Skip Humphrey**, three gubernatorial candidates, state senators, and other government officials. An ecumenical group of representative from religious groups, Civil Rights organizations, GLBT organizations, heterosexual and homosexual groups, numbering over 100 all joined together in a spirit of unity. The bozos got the message and left town.

But, it could be worse. Two **MtF transsexuals** lost a long battle recently in the **European Court of Human Rights**. The court ruled that the British government had not breached the rights of **Kristina Sheffield** and **Rachel Horsham**, both 52, by denying them new birth certificates showing that they were female. The court also upheld, by 18 to 2, the Government's right to prevent Sheffield and Horsham from marrying men. But the judges **reprimanded** the British government for not reviewing its laws concerning transsexuals "given the increased social acceptance of transsexualism."

According to sources who know such things, **Nancy Nangeroni** is phasing out as the Executive Director of the **International Foundation for Gender Education**, while the board of directors is actively looking for a replacement. The timing has Nancy phasing out around October one, just 11 months after she took the job replacing **Alison Laing** who served for two years and replaced **Merissa Sherrill Lynn** after a 10 year stint. Nangeroni will continue to handle the IFGE web site. This is not going to be an easy position to fill

because of its high visibility and IFGE's long standing financial problems. If you're interested in the job, contact Alison Laing at IFGE, or by email at <a.l.@lng.com>. Meanwhile, another possibility is the **cancellation** of the **1999 IFGE Coming Together** convention. While a site has been selected (Orlando, Florida) and hotels bids are in-house, IFGE has no convention chair and there is no local organization to act as the host group. In addition, the 1999 theme was to be Family which is the theme of the **1998 Southern Comfort Conference** this month. The IFGE board will meet at Southern Comfort to decide whether or not to go ahead with the '99 conference. Stay tuned.

Onward to fashion news... I found a really great site that is a lot of fun. It has fashion questions from ten, twenty and thirty years ago. Go take a look at **Miss Abigail's Timewarp** at - <<http://www.kreative.net/timewarp/>>

If you've seen one **lingerie site** on the Internet, you've seen them all, right? I mean they get so repetitive with all the same items. Well, I found a site that offers some fresh new items as well as a snazzy look. Check out **Henry & June** at <<http://www.henryandjune.com/>>. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

If you've been waiting for this month to sign up for my **Paradise In The Poconos** weekend... Surprise! You waited too long! As I write this in August, we've got almost **140** people registered and by the time you read this we'll probably be **sold out**. But it won't hurt to call and check for last minute cancellations. Check the net at - <www.cdspub.com/Poco.html> or call 610-640-9449.

First it was **VPL** (visible panty line) which is a no-no. Now we have **VBS** which is okay. One of the latest fads is **Visible Bra Straps** where your bra straps show from under your top. (Hey, just watch **Buffy** on the WB network.) They're even making dresses and tank tops with lingerie straps rather than finished fabric. These are cased elastic straps with adjustable sliders and even

slip hooks. If you don't wear a bra, these tops let you fit right in with the trend, if you do wear a bra, you're twice as trendy with twice as many straps.

The buzz on shoes from some of the best designers is that **stilettos** are still in. There's not a clunky platform in sight at **Fortuna Valentino's** 16,000-square-foot shoes store on West Broadway, NYC. The shoes are inspired by a book Valentino received on chairs. "Chairs," she says, "are made from contrasting materials," and that's what she's doing with her shoes. For example, for Fall, she's pairing **beechwood stiletto heels** with **lizard, snake and crocodile**. Valentino's shoes sell for \$300 to \$1600.

If that's too rich for you, step down a bit to **Emanuel Ungaro's** new shoe collection that is decidedly **sexy and feminine**. Ungaro has **animal prints, ponyskin, strappy lace and beaded, all high heeled** and inspired by his Fall ready-to-wear collections at Needless Markup, Saks and Ungaro boutiques. His shoes sell for \$225 to \$265 a pair.

Whether flat or high, sabrina or stacked, the color of **shoes** for the Fall is **grey** (or gray, if you like). Grey is the color of the moment and shoes are popping up everywhere in shades like **grey flannel, grey tweed, and grey leather**. The thinking is that grey is softer than black but warmer than white, plus it heightens the impact of any color paired with it.

Cashing in on the current craze of **Mehndi**, semi-permanent body painting with henna, **Nicole Miller** has created henna-printed stockings for those who like the look but in short, day-long, doses. Mehndi paintings can last from 10 days to a month and have been seen on such well-known bodies as **Madonna, Liv Tyler, Demi Moore, Naomi Campbell, and Gwen Stefani** (lead singer of No Doubt). Ms. Miller's stockings sell for about **\$12** a pair.

A quick note. I mentioned a corset kit last issue and someone who is not online asked me for a street address. I am sorry to say that I've not been able to

get a street address and I've had no response from the email address I posted.

I am grateful to **Melissa Ann Tate** in Phoenix for this next bit of information. I have been recommending **Max Factor Active Protection** makeup for some time now. Melissa was not able to get that product locally and called the manufacturer, **Proctor and Gamble**. They told her that Max Factor no longer makes or sells Active Protection foundation. They recommend switching to their **Lasting Performance** foundation, even though it does not have a silicone base. If you call the consumer affairs division of P&G for Max Factor and their other cosmetics products at 410-785-3330 between 8 am and 5 pm EDT, they will tell you which shade of Lasting Performance matches the last shade you had of Active Performance. They also said that if they receive enough calls and/or letters, they may reconsider putting Active Performance back on the market and they will send you a coupon good wherever Max Factor is sold for a free, full size blush, powder, concealer, or foundation. Sounds like a deal to me. And, by the way, if you can't find the Max Factor, try **Maybelline True Illusion** or **Revlon ColorStay**.

The buzz on **eyeliner** is the decline of the **eye pencil**. Pencils have been disappearing from professional makeup artist's kits for some time, but the trend has now reached the average woman. The replacement is an **eyeliner brush** and **eyeshadow**. Pencils have oil in them so they eventually smear. Shadows stay put almost no matter what, and you don't get the gap between lashes and lid like you do with a pencil. Pencils are not likely to disappear completely since a pencil is still the best way to line the inner lid and many women will never give up using pencils. If you'd like to try brush lining look for **Bobbi Brown's** eye liner brush or **Stila's** version.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? Comments? Write me care of this publication or send email to the <CyberQueen@cdspub.com>.

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Vis A Vis...

to FTM transsexualism. There are many personal stopping points along the way, depending on the individual's feeling of where they want to be. The "third gender" spoken of by MTF transgender persons, is being mirrored on the other end of the spectrum by females who wish to live as masculine women.

Some quotes from the Signorile article are illuminating. A woman who

has lived as a butch lesbian for 18 years said, "Maybe there are young people who might feel pressure to become FTM. When I was younger, I used to think that in order to become a butch I needed a penis." In the same spirit was this quote by a Butch activist: "I got tired of seeing a lot of young lesbians coming out who were butch and who were feeling that they had to trans." And the quote that fits perfectly into the modern notion of "having it all" is this one from a 26 year old grad student: "I once thought I was a male trapped in a woman's

body. But now I don't feel that way. I can be a dyke and transgender and butch and a boy."

And why not, after all? Crossdressers have been saying for years that they can be straight and married and wear ladies underwear too. Nowadays anybody can be anything they want to be. Stake out a place for yourself, define it, give it a catchy name, and then write an article about it. It's a 90's thing.



My Son...

he explores his feminine side.

It's not just in my house that the days of "boys will be boys" are over. A few months ago, the Wall Street Journal ran an article that claimed prescriptions for Ritalin were at an all-time high and increasingly, boys are expected to be less rambunctious and more docile (that is, more girl-like). And a guest commentator on an NPR program about youth violence expressed concern that the rise in the births of boys would result in a coming "deluge of testosterone-laden young men" creating havoc in our society.

My mind reels: Is the conclusion that a 3-and-a-half-year-old should be more like a boy but a 12-year-old

should be more like a girl?

I have to admit, sometimes I am embarrassed by my son's behavior. His declaration to my father-in-law that he wants to be a ballet dancer when he grows up almost created a family feud. When the father of one of his preschool classmates unintentionally called him a girl (he was wearing the favorite blue tutu, mind you), I cringed just a little. And I am often confused about the messages I'm sending him.

I don't mind if he wants to wear lipstick to a birthday party-"Mom, you wear lipstick when you dress up!" he reminds me, but how do I protect him from the inevitable taunting that will occur as he ages?

I come back to my original question: what is normal? Sadly, my husband and I are learning all too early

that the constraints of normality are very narrow indeed. Happily, my son, who at the moment is pretending to be Belle from Beauty and the Beast, adorned with his favorite pearl necklace and earring ensemble I gave him for his birthday, does not yet know this. With luck and a little parental intervention, he won't for a very long time.

This article first appeared in SALON, an online magazine, at <www.salonmagazine.com>. An online version remains in the SALON archives. Reprinted with permission.



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Gender Variant Parent Survey

Denise Brogan is undertaking a survey of gender variant parents. Here are the details in her own words:

Are you a Parent? Does your "gender" deviate from someone's "norm"? If you are gender variant (and, really, how many of us aren't?) and a parent, please take a few minutes and respond to this request.

I am gathering stories from parents. This is a totally confidential project that I have undertaken in order to document how gender variant parents deal with (or are dealt with, in some cases!) being parents, and all the attendant things that surround it. As you share your story please consider some of the following questions, but please don't limit your response and/or discussion to these points, I am interested in hearing about your experiences, as you wish to share them.

For example, How do you self identify? (Transgendered, Feminine Man, Masculine Woman, Transsexual, Cross-dresser, Drag Queen, Drag King, FtM, MtF, etc.). How many children do you have? (A full survey of questions is included). Please fill it out and mail it to Denise.)

This is the first step in developing an information database and support network for gender-variant parents. At this point, I simply wish to understand the issues that parents have faced vis-a-vis their children and their gender variance.

From this information, working with appropriate professionals, I intend to develop a formal questionnaire and survey. I then intend to present the results of that more formal survey at major gender conferences. The first would likely be next year, probably the IFGE Conference.

I anticipate recruiting child psychologists, marriage counselors, attorneys, a panel of gender variant parents, kids with "out" parents, etc. to put on presentations and workshops that address the growing and complex needs of gender variant folk and their offspring.

Some of these folk, already well known leaders of our community, are in my database and have agreed to both the concept and their participation! I will also share the results with all survey participants and anyone else who requests it. From that effort, I hope to establish an awareness of the

issues and challenges facing those of us gender variant folk that are also struggling with raising children.

Eventually, I intend that this work form the foundation for a longer-term study of gender variant parents, optimally a "sanctioned" study (undertaken, for example, by a university) that will provide usable evidence as to the "fitness" of gender variant parents. I anticipate that this work will be similar to that which was conducted in the gay and lesbian communities in the late '70s and '80s.

I believe it will provide usable evidence that gender variant parents are not less fit, and their children not less "well-adapted," than any other parent or child.

If you know of a gender variant parent that has not responded to this preliminary survey, please pass the survey questions along to them in whatever format is appropriate. Please share, if you wish, your contact information so that you may be included in the more formal survey to follow. My contact information is on the enclosed survey sheet. Thank you very much for your participation.



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Ms. Lynda

Hormones and Their Complications

by Sheila Kirk, M.D.

Medical regimens for feminization vary the world over. This is acceptable and physicians who treat the Transgendered with a contragender therapy should be knowledgeable enough to adapt their treatment plan to the needs, and even desires, of their patients on an individual basis. Good medical practice with careful monitoring of the individual's overall health must accompany the hormonal reversal that takes place in the body.

The sex hormones, estrogen and progesterone are used in a variety of doses, singly and combined, in commercial and natural occurring preparations and frequently in conjunction with anti-androgens. Whatever the regimen, the physician must be facile and skilled to be able to move into different regimens to accomplish the optimal clinical changes with the utmost concern for preservation of good health. Watchfulness on the part of the physician, and cooperation on the part of the patient are paramount. This is a partnership that must work together at all times.

Cardiovascular complications

The medical literature does not contain many reports of heart disease and complications in cardiac health very often in Transpeople using hormones, particularly estrogen. But the potential is there, particularly for individuals over 50 years of age and most definitely for genetic males who smoke, have altered lipid profiles, have hypertension, are overweight and have family history of coronary

artery disease. The younger population fair quite well on a hormonal regimen. Their cardiac health is generally very sound and little disease is in place when medications are initiated. Nonetheless, controllable factors such as diet, exercise and smoking habits must be addressed and included in their health plans while using their hormones. Older individuals need more careful pre-hormonal evaluations. Base line cardiac studies must be done and repeated at regular intervals as indicated by the individual's health status.

While the medical studies were done some time ago, and the patients were elderly and not being treated as transgendered-but rather for prostate malignancy, their increase in cardiac morbidity and mortality was significant enough to prompt the researchers to stop that form of treatment to control the cancer. In current times, medications and dosages are different but very carefully formulated principles of evaluation and treatment must be adhered to by the physician, and understood and embraced by the patient. It should be clearly understood that some Transgendered patients could develop heart disease on a hormonal regimen.

Hypertension or Elevation in Blood Pressure

This is another complicating condition to be considered and managed very closely. An elevation in blood pressure already in place need not be a contraindication to an estrogen regimen, provided proper pre-hormone

evaluation is conducted and an appropriate treatment plan is in place. Hormones can be started-if the blood pressure is controlled as it was in the pre-hormonal period. The hormonal regimen can continue with proper monitoring. If the hypertension is aggravated and goes higher, the patient's hormone plan must be re-evaluated and redefined. If a potential for blood pressure elevation comes to light after initiating the hormone regimen, the hormone regimen must be interrupted and the patient must be evaluated carefully and completely before instituting it again.

This is not to say that hypertensive individuals cannot use a feminizing hormonal regimen (they can) but the blood pressure problem must be defined and treated. Both medical regimens, for blood pressure elevation and feminizing therapy, can be compatible but all factors must be considered and acceptable to maintaining good health. Why is hypertension such an important concern? Because, in time, blood pressure elevation leads to heart disease and stroke. All efforts must be taken to control such a condition to preserve life and to ensure its quality.

Phlebitis

This is not a common complication but it is a very serious one. Once in place, depending upon the degree of involvement, the individual is threatened with death because of blood clots to the lungs. Phlebitis is an

continued on page 19



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TG Attorneys Do Workshop at ABA Convention

On Monday, August 3rd, three openly transgendered attorneys presented a legal workshop at the American Bar Association (ABA) convention in Toronto, Canada. The workshop was entitled, "Transgender 101: A Primer for the Practitioner with a Transgender Client." Participants in the workshop were: Melinda Whiteway, Esq., Director of National Lesbian Gay Law Association and the International Conference (NLGLA) on Transgender Law and Employment Policy (ICTLEP), Phyllis Randolph Frye, Esq., Director of NLGLA and ICTLEP, and Sharon Stuart, Executive Director of ICTLEP.

Attorney Whiteway began the well attended workshop by explaining who transgendered people are, destroying stereotypes, handling surgical and non-surgical legal concerns, and telling her story as a post-surgical transgendered person. Attorney Frye continued with tips for the practitioner in the areas of document changes, employment considerations, office consultation, in-court presentation and cutting edge areas, and concluded by telling her story as a non-surgical transgendered individual. Ms. Stuart went through the "Gender Bill Of Rights," explained the new Legal Referral and Information Service, and told her story as being a bi-gendered individual.

Examples of the kind of information provided to the attending attorneys included issues like: "Your new or long established client announces to you that she or he is transgendered. Is your client

FTM or MTF, CD or TS, and if TS is she or he pre-op, non-op, or post-op? What do all of those abbreviations mean? What pronoun do you use? Can your initial phone calls and your body language cause you to lose your client, or lose your case, or can they be used by you to seize an advantage when you present your client to the opposing counsel, to the judge and then to the jury during voir dire? Is your strategy involving your transgendered client different from your routine strategy in your legal practice?"

Legal questions discussed included: Can an employer force a transgendered employee to use the restroom that is twelve flights down, in the office building's lobby or in another building? Can a crossdresser force an employer to accommodate sequins and five-inch heels at the office? If both women and men are currently in most branches of the military, can a non-homosexual, completed transsexual woman, or man, enter or remain in the military? Can a court correct a birth certificate without first having to coerce a person into completing genital surgery? In an originally legal, bi-genital marriage, where one spouse then completes transsexual alteration and both parties wish to remain married, which spouse do you set as the petitioner in your suit to retrieve denied benefits of that legal same-sex marriage? If a state or country will not alter a birth certificate even after genital surgery, can the now female-genitaled legal male force the state or country to allow her to marry a female-genitaled legal-female for a legal but same- genitaled marriage?

Is having a mother now as a father, or is having a grandfather now as a grandmother, in the best interest of the child or grandchild? If a TG person is jailed or imprisoned, is it legal for them to be punished in ways that are over and above the sentence imposed? Which jail do they go to?

Hundreds of such nuances permeate the many legal disciplines and will be litigated in the coming decade. Transgender 101 provided a good basic understanding of these cutting edge issues. The workshop was sponsored by the Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities (IRR) of the American Bar Association, and by the ABA affiliated organization, National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA). The IRR Section has a Committee on the Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men. The IRR Section is finalizing a report on family law issues for lesbians and gays and has agreed to list offered transgender footnotes as an initial way to get transgender into these arenas.

NLGLA is the only queer law organization officially affiliated with the ABA. As such the NLGLA has a voting representative, currently Mark Agrast, in the House of Delegates from which all ABA action flows. The NLGLA also sponsors the annual Lavender Law Conference which will be in Boston on October 15-17. This is the only annual law conference specifically on LGBT legal issues. This year it is also endorsed by the Transgender Law Conference (aka ICTLEP).



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Making Sense of It All

by Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

Just To Be

It's summer, that time of the year when many of us go on vacation. We all have different reasons for a vacation and different notions of what it should be. There may be a desire for a temporary change of pace and activity, perhaps an opportunity to rediscover oneself or to express oneself in some special way, or a chance to be with someone special. Whatever the reason and, depending to some extent upon one's financial situation, whatever duration and shape the vacation takes, it usually represents a change from one's daily routine.

It was during a recent vacation at a lakeside cabin in New England that I arose one morning at 5:00 AM to sit by the sun-lit and ripple-free water. The early morning calm made it hard for me to believe I was still in this world. And yet there I was, with the noise inside my head the only reminder of the urban hum I had left behind just a day or two before. To tell the truth, I was not used to sitting still in the midst of such outer stillness, but it felt good. It was only later that night, in the midst of a darkened stillness, that I began to write a poem in an attempt to capture what I had experienced that morning. The poem is called, "Just To Be:"

Give me my music
and give me my books
and give me a house
that sits by the sea.

Give me a place
for peace and reflection,
the stillness of dawn,

a time meant for me.

Give me no more
than a time and a place
to hear my own heart
and to know I am free.

And when I return
to the clocks and the clatter
I will keep in my soul
what it means just to be.

My own notion of what constitutes a vacation is apparent in this poem. I obviously prefer a very peaceful situation with an opportunity to read and to listen to music in a place somewhat removed from the everyday demands of life. I guess one could stay home, take the phone off the hook, and not answer the door for a few days, but temporarily getting away from it all is somehow special—in other words—a real vacation.

But what makes a vacation especially meaningful to me is its transgender significance. One does not have to be transgendered, of course, to want to get away from the daily demands, from what I refer to as "the clocks and the clatter," in order to remind oneself of what it means "just to be." But it is the transgender experience which makes the clocks and the clatter and vacations especially significant for me, for it is not easy "just to be" as a transgendered person in a world which does not generally take kindly to gender change.

"Straight" men, generally speaking, seem to have a more difficult time with gender change, if it becomes known, than do women. Given this fact, the reference to "the clocks and the clatter" should probably read, "the jocks and the chatter." No one where I work five days a week knows of my gender history, nor do I ever want them to know. I just want to be a person, in this case a female person, doing my job and getting along with everyone. So I hope no one ever finds out about my transition. If they do, I might have to leave my job, but I would not want to keep moving around like a criminal who is trying to avoid prosecution.

Given the clocks and the clatter and the jocks and the chatter of daily life,

both at work and in society in general, the question emerges: where does one find the much needed self-belief and courage with which to face each day? Where does one find the strength day after day to deal with an underlying tension at work and even (maybe especially) at home? Is there some kind of faith or support that is available which can help a transgendered person "just to be" in the midst of it all? What does it take to keep alive the sense of self which can be found on a vacation, but which can be harder to retain, let alone find, during the daily routine with its various pressures?

My own courage and self-belief, and thus my sense of self, have been fostered by at least three major inputs, all three of which I have actively chosen for myself. The initial act of choosing was itself probably fostered by a fear of getting older and dying without having done anything about my gender wishes. So I proceeded to choose three activities, all of which are ongoing in varying degrees.

I first joined Renaissance. I joined eight years ago and have become very active in the organization. I have given of my time and money, and have received in return the opportunity to become involved in the ongoing effort to develop a better world for the transgendered. I have made friends, have learned a great deal about the intellectual, social, political, psychological, legal, physical, and medical issues which are part of the transgender struggle. I am part of an effort which includes me, but which is definitely larger than me. That inclusion is itself supportive as I struggle "just to be."

A second effort on my part as I searched for the inner freedom I needed to survive as a transgendered person was to consult a therapist or counselor. I spent two years in therapy as I struggled to accept what I had denied for so long, namely, my transgenderism. From time to time, as some inner need dictates, I will still consult a counselor for help in thinking through an issue, usually one which involves a threat to my self-belief. I do not consider myself to be psychologically fragile, but I also do not claim

to be impervious to self-doubt, especially in terms of my gender change.

A third way in which I strove to maintain my self-belief and to keep alive the courage I needed to face each day was my membership in a spiritual group which I continue to attend one full Saturday each month, twelve months a year. This group has nothing to do with transgenderism itself, but it does have to do with being oneself, regardless of who one is. A key aspect of this group is its belief in its members being able to sit still, to meditate, if you will. It is this sitting still which I find difficult to do but which, when practiced, helps me to find that stillness within myself that allows me to hear "what it means just to be."

Perhaps it was that stillness by the lake which resonated with my ongoing

spiritual quest in general and my gender quest in particular. That early morning calm ushering in the day continues to be part of the spirit with which I face each day with its clocks and clatter. I strive to keep alive an inner stillness in the midst of outer commotion. I strive to keep alive at the very center of my being the knowledge of who I am, even as my past sometimes haunts me, or someone in my presence fails to respect me as the whole person I know myself to be. That house by the sea is ultimately my inner house with its inner books of wisdom, and its inner music of the soul. Wherever I go I will always strive to keep my sense of self alive, if only by listening to an inner stillness which tells me, as if through a whispering tree, what it means "just to be."



News Beat...

tos of Polk in full drag. He admitted to being a drag queen prostitute. It makes me wonder.

There is so much confusion about who we are; is it possible Polk is a heterosexual crossdresser who felt that since he liked to dress up (he looked hot as a woman, too) he had to be homosexual to do that? Anything is possible. I wish Mr. Polk and his family all the best. But, if his business suits start to chaff and he begins to feel the lure of fishnets and 5 inch heels again, or if he finds his son trying on mommy's bra, they're always welcome at Renaissance, just like everyone else. See ya next month.



Hormones...

inflammation of the walls of our veins, and can involve the superficial or deep system of veins, or both, usually in the legs and lower abdomen. A number of factors can be responsible. Suffice it to say that it will mean that the feminization process will be halted immediately, and in some physician's view may never be started again.

There is a study now in progress at the Free University Hospital of Amsterdam that has a number of transgender patients who developed phlebitis on estrogen and now use a Transdermal system - a skin patch of estrogen that promotes passage of the

hormone through the skin. In their study of these patients no one has had recurrent phlebitis and all are progressing well with the Estroderm patch. Physical changes and laboratory determinations are acceptable to patient and researcher. The study suggests strongly that all patients with this complication could be continued in their feminization treatment plan with this mode of therapy along with an anti-androgen. They suggest also that all transgendered patients over 40 years of age should use the patch, even those with no history of phlebitis. This study needs more time and more patients to observe, but it is promising and places patients experiencing this very dangerous complica-

tion, who formerly were without a hope of going forward in this mode of therapy, back into a positive and progressive position. There are other potential complications to a feminization program due principally to the estrogen in it.

In my next column, other medical concerns will be discussed. Should you or your physician require additional information on the feminization process, feel free to contact me through the following means:

<e-mail: SheilaKirk@aol.com>

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The Ever Popular Make Me A Woman Pill

by **Angela Gardner**

Human beings love a quick fix. Wherever this need for instant gratification comes from, it leads to problems since most worthwhile goals take time to accomplish. Take impotence for example. Many times impotence can be directly related to a person's lifestyle, diet, and other factors that would take a lot of time and will power to alter. It's so much easier, and quicker, to pop a Viagra and get busy.

This kind of attitude is what keeps the quacks who prey on the transgendered community in business. There have always been snake oil salesmen and medicine shows, fly by night operations who offer potions and lotions that will take care of what ever your particular problem may be. Since they stopped traveling around in wagons a few years back, mail order has become a lucrative area for opportunists of this ilk.

As long as there have been publications for the transgendered there have been ads touting natural hormone pills without a prescription, creams and lotions that would grow breasts, and other scientifically challenged concoctions that promise to make you the woman you long to be.

It's this kind of atmosphere in the TG community that led Lee Brewster, owner of *Lee's Mardi Gras Boutique* in New York City, to tell me he often gets phone calls from men looking for "that pill you can take that makes you a woman." Let's stop right here and make it clear - there is no pill that

makes you a woman. Lee told me that story around ten years ago and unfortunately, it's still true. Now it's even more of a prevalent misapprehension due to the Internet.

There are websites put up by high tech snake oil salesmen that eschew the marvels of their "totally safe" "all natural" and high priced pills, creams and lotions. I came across one site that masquerades as a "gender clinic." They even say, "If you can't make it in to our clinic for evaluation you may order our products by mail." How handy. No need for a costly and embarrassing evaluation by a competent medical practitioner. Send us the money and we'll mail 'em to ya.

People love to think that they can make whatever change they long for: weight loss, cure for impotence, cure for baldness (I love the commercial I often hear hocking the "European" baldness cure that contains "no drugs." What's the active ingredient? Fairy dust?) or whatever they want to change but are too lazy to work at, by just taking a pill. Those who wish to modify their bodies must realize that the only thing that will accomplish significant change is sufficient doses of hormones.



Such doses should not be self-administered. See Dr. Sheila Kirk's article on hormones in this issue for more information. Dr. Kirk took time from her busy schedule to comment on the breast creams and lotions that are sold over the Internet and through various publications. She said, Topical

hormonal creams, either prescribed, or over the counter preparations, do not go very far in accomplishing the intended results... particularly for those who want to feminize. When applied locally, some small changes are evident, but not enough to justify the cost. The widespread beneficial effects that are accomplished by prescription medications administered in different ways are not possible through topical use."

So, remember, if you want to be a woman it may be possible ... if you are willing to spend a lot of time and money working at it. You will never become a woman by taking a pill you order from the back of a magazine or over the Net. The age-old admonition, "Let the buyer beware," still applies.



Do you have something that you'd like to share? **News & Views** is a two way process. If an article or opinion provokes a reaction in you, whether positive or negative, don't go unheard. Send your opinions and comments in a letter to the Editor. Send letters to: Editor, c/o Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087, or email to <Editor@ren.org>.

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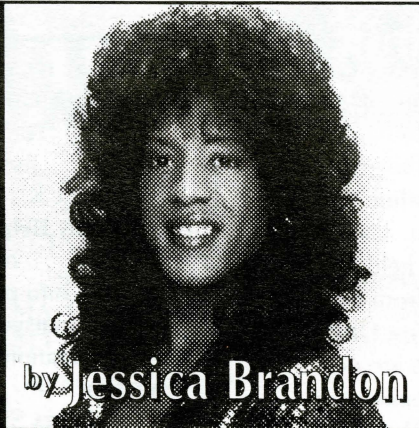
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Shopping With Jessica



Greetings, girlfriends! Holy Time Warp, Batman! Is it September already? Jeez Louise, it seems like only yesterday when we were welcoming the arrival of spring and summer after a pleasantly mild winter. But hey, I'm not complaining! With September here, that means it's time for FOOTBALL! Ahh, football, isn't that just the most beautiful world in the English language?

But I digress, the male in me never knows when to stay in his place. Anyhoo, it's time for the last installment in my beginner's guide to the wide, wonderful world of shopping as in this, the final, chapter I talk about wigs and coats. Starting with the former, I don't know how it is for any of you out there, but for me, I could be decked out in my most stunning outfit, made up to the nines, but until I put the hair on, I'm just a guy in a dress - nothing more. Your wig completes the illusion, the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly.

When choosing a wig, you have to consider several things: how it looks in proportion to the shape of your face, it's length, the style itself, and the color. Look for a style that will balance your features and add a natural look to your appearance. Length is important, too. Don't go for something either too long or too short. Color? Stick with one close to your male color. Stay away from colors that are too vibrant or too intense. Also avoid colors that aren't akin to your ethnic background.

Quality is a must when it comes to buying a wig. The better the quality, the less chance of looking like you're

wearing a glorified mop head. There are two types of wigs to choose from: synthetic and human hair. Synthetics are manufactured with man made fibers that, in some cases, look and feel just like the real thing. Prices for these run anywhere from \$40.00 to \$200.00 for longer styles or top of the line brands like René of Paris, Paula Young or Henry Margu.

Human hair wigs, while made of the real McCoy, can be more of a hassle than they're worth. For starters, they're much more expensive than synthetics, the styles and colors might not be as plentiful and they have to be treated just like your real hair, meaning regular trips to salons to have them cared for. Plus, in damp or humid conditions, the set will fall like a bad stock on Wall Street just like real hair. However, if you're willing to put up with the trouble, the results are worth it.

When buying a wig, it's always best to purchase it in person and to try before you buy. It's impossible to determine if a particular style, length or color will work for you just by looking at it in a catalog or on a website. Go to wig shops that have large selections. That way you will have plenty of choices. Don't be afraid to tell the owner you want to try it on. Ten times out of ten, he or she will say yes, and it's not at all that big a deal.

Here's a worthwhile tip: If you happen to fall madly in love with an intricately styled wig you see in a catalog or on a website, and then buy it, I offer the following suggestion. Style your wig in a fashion you like, or as close to the illustration as you can get.

Granted, none of us are professional stylists, but give it a try. Once you do, take a picture of yourself in the just finished style and keep it on hand so you can recreate it for future outings.

In addition to the wig itself, you'll need supplies such as combs and brushes, both of which can be found in abundance at beauty supply stores. Wig stands are a must. There are the classic Styrofoam heads, and X-form stands - two pieces that lock into an X-shape to support a wig. Don't forget cleaning and conditioning supplies to keep your wig looking its very best. That way, YOU'LL look your very best when you're out and about and having fun.

Next... coats. In no time flat fall will be here, followed by winter. So, unless you live in California, Florida, Arizona or Hawaii, you're going to need a coat. There are many styles of coats to choose from. My favorite is a full-length leather coat which, depending on where you shop, can be affordable. Outlet stores are a good place to shop. I bought a leather coat at one for only \$150.00. If that is prohibitive, wool is an excellent second choice. Wool coats run anywhere from \$100.00 to \$120.00.

For rainy or less than frigid conditions, a trench coat is nice to have. At around \$100.00, you can find some that come with removable liners for wear practically all year 'round. As for jackets, nothing beats a sharp looking leather jacket to make you look sleek, and black is sensational. For windy weather in spring and autumn, add a windbreaker to your closet. Finally, you'll need gloves to go with your coats and jackets. Leather gloves are your best bet, aren't expensive (\$30.00), and will keep your hands warm.

Well, girls, that ends my primer on shopping for beginners. I hope everything I've mentioned over the past several months has been of use to you. In the months to come, I'll do follow up editions to keep you informed and knowledgeable. As always, my mailbox is open for your

continued on page 23

Organization Listing

• **Transgender Health Action Coalition (T-HAC):**

The Transgender Information and Peer Counseling Hotline is now helping to serve the needs of the greater Philadelphia Transgender community. The hotline operates every Monday and Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. Call: (215) 732-1207. Organizational meetings of the are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month from 8 to 9:30 p.m. on the fourth floor of the Washington West Offices, 1201 Locust St. Phila. PA. All are welcome to attend.

• **ActionAIDS:** Support groups and information for HIV+ people in the Philadelphia area. 215-981-0088 for general information. Sponsor Passages, a support group for gender variant people. Call 215-981-3349 for Passages information.

• **William Way Lesbian, Gay, Bi, TG Community Center:** Many programs and diversions for the LGBT community in Philadelphia. For info on upcoming events call 215-732-2220.

• **Community Alliance of Transsexuals (CATS):** TS support group that meets in Burlington County, New Jersey. 215-536-1209

• **The Attic:** Center for gay, lesbian, bisexual and TG youth ages 12 to 23 in Philadelphia. 215-545-4331.

• **Phila. TS Support Group:** 4 p. m. the first Saturday every month at 1201 Locust Street 215-483-7647.

TransEssex International is a British-based voluntary self-help network dedicated to serving the needs of Transvestites, Transsexuals, their families and friends.

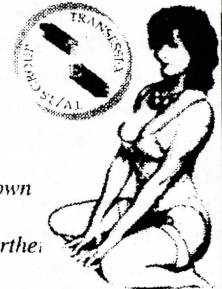
It hosts the UK's biggest monthly TV/TS group party, runs friendly HelpLine services and publishes a wealth of useful information.

For a full info-pack and sample copy of the world's best transgender magazine, send a sterling International Money Order for £10.00 to:
TransEssex International (RI), PO Box 3, Basildon, Essex SS14 1PT, United Kingdom.

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TG Community Calendar

LOCAL RENAISSANCE

CHAPTERS- SEPTEMBER

6: Lower Susquehanna Valley, New Jersey Support

13: Lehigh Valley, Delaware

20: Greater Philadelphia

27: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender

SEPTEMBER 1998

2-3: Sexuality and Gender in 20th Century Europe, Dr. Petra Bagley, or Dr. Helen Jones, Department of Languages, University of Central Lancashire, Preston PR1 2HE, <c.williams2@uclan.ac.uk>, <p.m.bagley@uclan.ac.uk>, h.l.jones@uclan.ac.uk; tel: 01772 - 893927 or 893126, fax: 01772 - 892919 or 892909

5: A.G.E. meeting (Ren. affiliate)

11-12: Creating Healthy Lives: A Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Women's Health Conference, University of Illinois at Chicago LCCP, Conference Planning Committee, 4753, N Broadway, STE 602, Chicago, IL 60640 <http://www.uic.edu/orgs/healthy_live/s/program>, <lccp@enteract.com>

18-20: The Third International Congress on Sex and Gender, Exeter College, Oxford University. Jan Cobb, PFC BM network, London, WC1N 3XX Tel: +44 (0) 1473 421385, fax: +44 (0) 1473 421386, or email to: <Cong.bool@pfc.org.uk>.

30-10/4: Southern Comfort Conference, Holiday Inn Atlanta Central, Atlanta, GA. Call (404) 633-6470, or write to SCC, P.O. Box 77591, Atlanta, GA 30357-1591, or email to <scatl@aol.com>.

OCTOBER 1998

3: A.G.E. meeting (Ren. affiliate)

15-17: Lavender Law Conference, Park Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA. Contact <LAVLAW98@aol.com>.

16-18: Colorado Gold Rush, GIC

of Colorado, 1455 Ammons St., Ste. 100, Lakewood, CO 80215-4993, 303-202-6466, <GICofColo@aol.com>

18-25: Fantasia Fair, Provincetown, MA. Contact Alison Laing, P.O. Box 473, Portsmouth, RI 02871-0473, phone: (401) 624-4317.

24: 4th Annual

Transgender/Transsexual health Empowerment Conference, Audre Lorde Project Inc., 85 South Oxford Street, Brooklyn NY 11217. For more info or input, please contact: Rosalyne Blumenstein Director GIP, 212-620-7310, E-mail: <rblumenstein@gaycenter.org> or Nguru, 718-596-0342, <alpinfo@alp.org>

NOVEMBER 1998

5-8: Paradise in the Poconos. Fantasy getaway weekend. Contact CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406, call (610) 640-9449, or email to <poco@cdspub.com>.

5-8: Fall Harvest 1998. Sponsored by City of Lakes Crossgendered Community in Minneapolis, MN at the Sheraton Metro Dome. For info, contact CLCC, P.O. Box 14844, Minneapolis, MN 55414. Call (612) 229-3613 or email to <CLCC@topcity.net>.

7: A.G.E. meeting (Ren. affiliate)

8-13: Dignity Cruise X and Holiday at Sea II. Miami to Key West and the Bahamas. Contact Cruises Inc.: Barbara Arendt at (800) 621-6699 or Mike Sinn at (800)818-7830.

11-15: Joint Meeting, The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality and American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Sex Therapists, "Sexuality and the Media: Hooray for Hollywood?", Westin Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles, CA write Joint AASECT/SSSS Meeting P.O. Box 240, Mount Vernon, IA 52314-0240, 319-895-6407, fax: 319-

895-6203

20-22: Riverside Gala Weekend at The Inn at Franklin on Liberty Street, Franklin, PA. For info, write to Erie Sisters, 1903 West 8th Street, Suite 261, Erie, PA 16505. Email: <rgw98@usachoice.net> or <esc@csonline.net, fax: 814-437-5996.

DECEMBER 1998

No events scheduled

JANUARY 1999

2: A.G.E. meeting (Ren. affiliate)

FEBRUARY 1999

6: A.G.E. meeting (Ren. affiliate)

MARCH 1999

3-16: Dignity Cruise XI on the Marco Polo from Sydney, Australia to Cairns. Contact Cruises Inc.: Barbara Arendt at (800) 621-6699 or Mike Sinn at (800) 818-7830.

If you know of any upcoming events of interest to the transgendered community, please contact the Editor with the pertinent information at the address on page two.



Shopping...

comments, tips and opinions at <treetop@voicenet.com>, or by snail mail to the Renaissance National office. (Address on page two.) Until next month, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Happy shopping, sisters!



Jay Ann

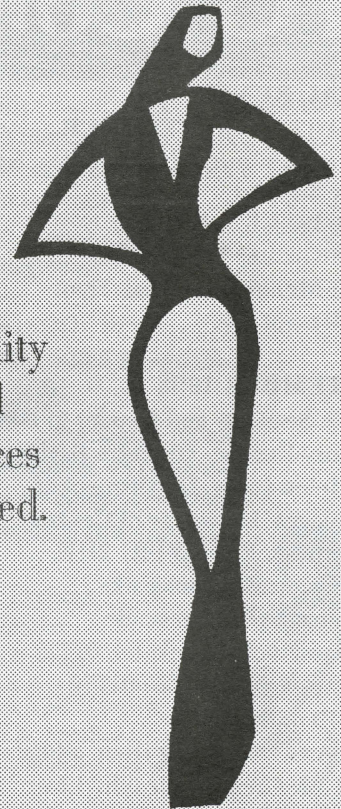
Intimates

A well-established boutique with a caring and professional atmosphere serving the TG community and offering a full line of intimate apparel and breast forms in all sizes. Quality is high and prices are competitive. Privacy and confidentiality assured.

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