

TWENTY MINUTES

MARCH 1991

THE XX (Twenty) CLUB

\$2.00

WORLD'S FIRST SEX CHANGE GRANNY

GRANDPA DEREK SPALL is about to become the world's first sex-change GRANNY! At 62, he's just changed his name to Di-Ann, dresses in woman's clothing and is taking hormone treatments to complete the process.

"I've always felt I was a woman trapped in a man's body. Life was bloody awful as a man. I was married for 35 years. It was a role I played, but it was very difficult and unnatural," says Di-Ann.

"I'm really a SHE and I always have been. I used to dress as a woman, but only in my home. People thought I was a man, but in the end I wanted more and more to be a real woman."

"My wife married me hoping she could put me right - but it was a waste of time. We had a sex life but it was nothing to write home about."

Di-Ann and wife Olive split up six years ago when Olive could no longer cope with coming home to find her husband dressed up in flowery frocks and frilly undies. After the marriage breakup, Di-Ann began to live a woman's life full time.



DREAM COME TRUE: Di-Ann was already 85 percent female before docs agreed to sex-change surgery.

The retiree was examined by gender specialists at London's Charing Cross Hospital and found to be 85 percent woman. Doctors agreed to perform a sex-change operation to complete the transition from male to female.

"Life" since my switch to being a woman has been dramatically better. I look like a woman, with a beautiful complexion and a smooth face. Doctors gave me extensive hormone treatments and my breasts have developed well. The full sex-change operation will be a dream come true. Finally after all these years, I can be my TRUE self - a woman.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...Reprinted from the National Examiner, Jan. 1, 1991 issue.)

His ruse draws boos

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO (AP) - A 26-year-old man who angered parents and school officials when he enrolled in a high school as a girl and made the all-girl cheerleading squad was sentenced to two years' probation for unlawfully assuming a false name.

Charles Daugherty had been diagnosed earlier as having multiple personalities. He enrolled at Colorado High School as a junior under the name Cheyen Weatherly.

The ruse was detected after school officials became suspicious and began checking his records. Meanwhile, several football players had expressed interest in dating the newest member of the cheerleading squad, who performed in uniform and changed clothes in the women's locker room. Students were shocked when it was disclosed he was a male.

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Transsexual Support

TWENTY MINUTES

The XX (Twenty) Club, Inc.
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XX CLUB CALENDAR

MEETINGS

Saturday, Mar. 9

Saturday, Mar. 23

Saturday, Apr. 13

Saturday, Apr. 27

Regular meetings of the XX Club are held the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 2 PM sharp to 5 PM.:

Christ Church Cathedral
45 Church Street
Hartford, CT 06103

(Located at the corner of Church and Main Streets in the downtown area across from G. Fox.) There is **NO SMOKING** allowed during the meetings, although smoking is permitted during breaks and after the meetings. The XX Club attempts to provide peer support and practical information about making the gender transition, as well as information about the Gender Identity Clinic of New England. Parents, siblings, spouses and significant others are also welcome to attend.

TREASURER'S \$ REPORT

Balance - from January \$1761.34

INCOME:

Collections - meetings	13.25
Newsletter subscriptions	100.00
Brochures & Reprints	19.00
GF sales	6.00
Video sales	20.00
Donations	133.00
Savings interest	8.86
Total income	\$300.11

EXPENSES:

Refreshments	.00
Phone call	6.37
Newsletter & brochures	104.99
Postage	54.59
Supplies	12.15
Video Production	20.79
Bank Fee	1.70
Total Expenses	\$200.59

Net Income for February \$ 99.52

Balance - end of February \$1860.86

SPECIAL THANKS to Joe W. of Coventry, CT for a \$100 donation to the XX Club. This comes at a time when our expenses have gone up due to the increase in postage thanks to the US Post Office.

If you eat a live frog in the morning, nothing worse can happen to either of you for the rest of the day

All the news that's print to fit.

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SRS in the year 2025...



"This has sure become easier since genitals attached with VELCRO were invented."

Knowing When It's Time... to Get Out.

By Sonia

It must be said at this point that this article proposes only a theory based upon my observation of myself and others I have known. Although at first it may seem to be nothing more than another set of labels, and at that, self serving, it does serve a purpose. The whole thing came about as I was thinking about my own situation, where I had come from, and what the next steps in my transition should be. I felt that maybe in sharing this thought process with the readers of Twenty Minutes, some of you might just benefit from it.

Transsexuals are, by the nature of their situation, a transient group within the gender community. In that I mean that a major goal of most true transsexuals is to eventually blend into mainstream society, leaving the rest of the gender community (transvestites, transgenderists, and pre/post-op transsexuals) as but a memory. In the early stages, peer support for the gender dysphoric individual can be indispensable. However, eventual withdrawal from the support network becomes a positive step in realizing the dream of living one's life as closely as possible to that of a genetic female.

There are four stages within the support process. The amount of time spent at each level varies greatly depending upon the individual. Some will hang on for years at each step, helping others, and in return, receiving support from the community. Others breeze through the system, seemingly fading back into the woodwork even before fully emerging. The point at which these people attain SRS could be within any of the stages, but it is rare to see an individual who is post-op until stage three or four. Even the order in which these stages are reached is not set in stone. Any way you look at it though, all of us seem to roughly follow this pattern sooner or later.

STAGE ONE: Total community immersion-

This stage is typified by the individual who is usually just starting to emerge from the woodwork. They are often times confused as to whether they are gay, transvestite, transsexual, or somewhere in between. Many of these people are very surprised to find out that there are others out there like themselves. They may not even be aware of the labels of Transvestite, Transgendered, Transsexual, etc... simply knowing how they themselves feel. Stage one is characterized by a desire to talk to, see and read about anything and anyone within the whole spectrum of the gender community. (TV, TS, TG, Gay, etc...) It is a time when the individual is trying to find their place in the overall scheme of things.

STAGE TWO: Transition support-

Eventually, the transsexual will tire of the (whining.. fantasizing.. etc) within the gender community as a whole, and begin to concentrate upon only the aspects pertaining to the TS community (ie: themselves). To this person, the emphasis switches to the need for help with electrolysis, hormones, voice, surgery, etc... (TS needs) and the need to be around other transsexuals. These people are usually at or around the stage where they are starting to live full time or in their chosen rolls, and usually continue at this stage until they become very comfortable in this new roll.

STAGE THREE: Friendship/relationship-

By this stage, the TS no longer needs the 'gender community' if they are still attending support group meetings, it is mostly to help others. The kind of support they need is to have a few close friends who have been through the same thing (successful post-op's). There is a strong emphasis toward socialization with the 'real world' at this point. The individual is usually confident enough with their presentation to begin making friendships/relationships with people who know nothing of their transsexual past.

STAGE FOUR: Out of the community-

Although they may still have some friends who are transsexuals, the

person at this stage is finished with the transition. They no longer keep any ties with the community. The friendships that they do keep with other transsexuals is no longer based upon a shared background of transsexualism, but upon the same basis as any 'normal' friendship. (compatible personalities, mutual respect, Etc...)

As was stated before, this article is something that I wrote in the hope that others might benefit from thinking about where they are in their lives, and where they plan to go. Each person has their own path to follow, but the one thing of which I can be sure is that it's very helpful to step back and put things into perspective. I know that the formulation of this theory helped me to learn quite a bit about my self and my own goals.

Top 10 Signals... That You've Completed the Transition

by Sonia & Becky

- 10- You begin to resent it when old men call you 'honey'
- 9- You actually go out to movies to SEE the movie
- 8- Your credit cards, driver's license and your passport all finally have the same name on them
- 7- The machine spits out your card and prints you a receipt... (Ed. Note: This was accidentally swapped with #7 of 'Top 10 Signals that You've Completed Your ATM Transaction' We apologize for any grievous mental confusion caused by this mix-up. We would also like for it to be known that those responsible have been fired.)
- 6- Wear flannel nightgowns and socks because they are more comfy
- 5- Your lover's brother calls you 'baby'
- 4- You are not hired because they want the best MAN for the job
- 3- You can get the cop at the donut shop to smile back at you
- 2- You give away your trowel, and sell off all of your stock in Mary Kay
- 1- You know when it's double coupon day at the local supermarket

(This Top 10 column was based upon a submission by Barbara & Sher Hatcher. Please note that the Top 10 columns are the sole responsibility of Sonia. Unsolicited submissions may be used in whole or part at the discretion of the editor. Appropriate credit will be given.)

A paper presented at the
10th International Symposium on Gender Dysphoria
Amsterdam, The Netherlands, June 9-12, 1987

Theological Questions Pastoral Responses Regarding Gender Dysphoria

The Reverend Canon Clinton. R. Jones, D.D.
Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford, CT

At the beginning of this paper, I am convinced that I must admit that what I wish to say can be properly construed as an apologia which Webster defines as "a defense of one's opinion, position, or actions". Surely this is not to be confused with being an apology which has the overtones of being regretful or even expressing a sense of guilt, for in all honesty, none of these feelings exist. I open my remarks with this point because I began my counseling ministry with gender dysphoric persons in the mid-sixties, was one of the persons who was instrumental in the formation of the Gender Identity Clinic of New England in the early seventies and have remained with the Clinic throughout the years eventually assuming the role of Clinic Coordinator. For more than twenty years I have monitored a support group for transsexual persons who have met consistently on bi-monthly schedule.

As might be expected, such involvement was not and has not been without critics. I suspect that all gathered at this symposium will have encountered skepticism and even open criticism for being professionally involved in this work and serving this particular clientele whether as surgeons, psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, or from other disciplines. As an ordained member of the Church, I have had, as might be expected, my intentions and efforts brought into question. Up to this point at least, I have managed to survive. And since I have had the opportunity to lecture quite extensively both within and without the Church, I hope I have been able to provide some reasonable education which I would hope has produced understanding and hopefully more tolerance and acceptance. Often, however, the questions raised have been theological and Biblical; it is because of this response that it seemed pertinent to address the issue which is the focus of this paper.

In such a distinguished assemblage as this, I suspect I do not need to explain what theology is all about; yet at the same time, it may be helpful to deal with the root meaning of the word. "Theos" is the Greek word for God...and the ending has to do with what we call logic. A simple definition is: "the study of God and God's relation to the world."

Before I proceed any further, I need to say that as I approach this subject, I well realize I am actually dealing with faith - that which a person holds to be true in his or her own conceptions of life and which may also provide that foundation on which his or her value system may rest. Please note that I said "a person", or individual. Obviously there are those for whom God is not a reality, there are many who cannot accept the God of the Hebrews - nor the God that Christians believe was in Christ (there

may be well such persons present) and this of course is their privilege, but accept it or not, a large majority of us in the helping professions, both in the United States and in many countries represented here this week, are functioning in a society which has reasonably strong roots in the Judeo-Christian heritage.

Over the years in relating to counselees and surely in the lecturing I do, basic theological/ethical questions are raised. Strangely enough, I have discovered that many persons who have considered themselves to be gender dysphoric have begun their first probing with me simply on the basis that I am ordained in the Church. One of the first things they may need to resolve in their minds is whether they should do what they want to do. They may wonder whether they are challenging God's will, and whether they might face some eventual condemnation. It has been interesting that often times counselees will be more honest with a religious counselor than with others. For instance, in my sessions with homosexuals, some of whom have been in therapy for extensive periods of time, I have discovered they may have never discussed their true feelings previously. Recently when I interviewed a person for our clinic and asked for the date of birth, I was given it, but was told not to tell others in the clinic because he had dropped off a few years! When I questioned this, the person said, "But I just couldn't lie to you!"

What theological questions are raised? For many who are gender dysphoric the question is, "If God is Creator, if this Creator, as the Bible says, created persons as male or female, what about me?" In this regard many who are religiously oriented will question what is done to help persons move from one gender identity into another. I am convinced we need to make some response. It is my belief that God is Creator; however I also feel strongly that the creation is filled with variants. These variants are in all nature: the plant world, lower animals, even, if you will in the minerals (after all, a diamond is a variant in the world of coal!) This being true, why shouldn't there be variants in the human species? There are. No two individuals are the same, there are physical differences such as hermaphrodites and those who have chromosomal anomalies. It is my opinion that we do not have the formal or final answers as to why persons are gender dysphoric, but since we seem to recognize this condition as reality, I have to believe this is an identity which may very well be of the creative system.

As one reads the Creation narrative in the book of Genesis (which I hasten to indicate I can hardly accept as literal), at the end of each Creative day, there is the phrase "God saw that it was good". Therefore, there is this basic acceptance that whatever God has created is good. Theologically speaking, Creation, of course, is not merely a one-time matter but, rather a constant, continuing process. That, then, which God still creates is good. The important point which emerges here in my mind, and this is where the pastoral response emerges, is to help those who are gender dysphoric to know that their being is good. There may be those who will disagree with me and perhaps violently, however I feel convinced that persons who are gender dysphoric do not willingly, consciously choose this identity. Again I say this from a pastoral point of view, because I feel that the long, tortuous, wrenching passage

from one gender identity to another is so traumatic and can be so full of pain that I cannot see how anyone, unless they are truly masochistic, would really want to follow through. From my vantage point, I feel that the last thing such persons need to be told is that they have flaunted God's will, that they have tampered with his creation, and they may even face serious judgement because they wish to do or have done what they did.

As stated at the outset of this paper, I am dealing to some extent with the nature of God. So far the statements are made that God is Creator - that being good, that which God has created is good. Response is now needed to another question asked so often. If there is agreement to these points, then why are we just learning that there are gender dysphoric persons? I would make three responses:

First, I strongly suspect that gender dysphoric persons have existed throughout the centuries. There is adequate support in history to sustain this. A sample illustration is found in a study of the Mohave Indians who occasionally had a boy in the tribe who evidenced dominant feminine characteristics both physical and psychological. The tribe would do as much as possible to orient this boy into a masculine identity but, failing this would then organize a tribal ceremony at which he would be dressed as a woman, given a female name and then be permitted to live with women and do the work they did. He might even become a sexual partner for men in the tribe.

Second, it does seem that God is always in the process of being revealed. If one traces the development of man's understanding of God, there is movement from a primitive Jahweh who was God of the storm, the volcano, and nature to what Christians call the most significant revelation in the being of the Incarnate Son, Jesus, the Christ. God's revelation, then, is process. I will go so far as to suspect that we still don't know what yet may be revealed.

Thirdly, I think I am sound ground when I say that God over the centuries has revealed Himself through human beings who are described in Scripture as "The Crown of Creation". Over these centuries we have been learning little by little the truth of Creation. At one time the earth was thought to be flat; it may have been revealed to Galileo that it was round even though he had some difficulty convincing others that this was true. As one reads the Old Testament, it was the prophets who are identified as being the vehicles through whom God was revealed. Why can we not believe that those who were pioneers in this field of gender dysphoria were, because of the advances in medicine, surgery, and psychological evaluation, also revealing a truth which long existed? Some might be considerably distressed sensing there were those of us who feel they were fulfilling this purpose; but we who believe may have to be allowed this privilege.

It is not my intention with this paper to discuss how various denominational or religious bodies or judicatories have reacted to this discipline. In fact it does appear that there have been very few formal pronouncements. Little has been written or published by theologians and no strong dictates pro or con seem to have been promulgated. Some significant religious bodies such as the (Roman) Catholic Theological Society of America in their study of human

sexuality have made reference to transsexualism but indicate that it is too early for any significant evaluation. There have been definitive stands taken by major denominations on homosexuality with varying positions which move from total acceptance to ridged rejection, but these same bodies have not dealt openly with the issue of gender dysphoria. However, although there are few formal positions taken, there is an undercurrent of apprehension especially in the area of actual physical/surgical intervention. The bottom line seems to focus on the issue of removing healthy organs and tissue. I am trying to avoid in this presentation the ethical/moral issues involved but instead stay in the realm of the theological.

Right or not, my conception of God is that "wholeness of person" is important. Wholeness in one sense of the word, can be thought of as integration. If the human is made as Biblical language states "in God's image" then it would seem that it was God's intention that human beings should experience wholeness, since surely the Divinity is One and is Whole. For a long time, ever since surgical procedures were possible, doctors have made decisions about hermaphroditic children and usually these decisions have involved surgery, perhaps even removal of healthy tissue. The intentions of the surgeon, in these instances, is to provide a sense of "wholeness" or "oneness" to this child. The question in my mind is simply this: Are the physical differences more valid than those which are psychological and emotional? As stated earlier, we are still dealing with mystery (as far as I see it) as to the true etiology of gender dysphoria. I suspect that there is some general agreement that there are few physical reasons involved. Experience tells us that a person who may seem to be the most masculine male may in reality be female and the most feminine female may in reality be a male. Put simply, the packaging often has little to do with the product! If our goal parallels God's goal of "wholeness" then it would seem as if we are not trespassing on God's will if we provide whatever therapies are necessary to bring completion, wholeness, oneness to a person who desperately needs it.

It is quite obvious to those gathered, I am sure, that I function out of a Christian framework. Obviously I have the highest regard for the Jewish roots and antecedents of this faith; however, I do also believe that God specifically revealed himself in Jesus of Nazareth. I also believe I can say that whether a person believes in the Incarnation or not, the evidence of an historical Jesus is basically well founded. The gospels relate many of his activities and show forth his various roles. One of these, of course, was his ministry of healing. He was hardly the first healer. All through the Old Testament and in many other religious systems there have been healers. Such being true, and if these healers are instruments of God, then it would seem that God is not happy about disease but is eager that it be replaced by health. This is why it is too difficult for me to believe that God has been the prime mover behind plagues or devastating diseases which cause pain, sorrow, and death. In this vein (as an aside), how can anyone say that AIDS is God's punishment?! If we will say God is good then how do we reconcile this to the fact that such a God would wish physical pain and emotional turmoil for anyone? In reverse, would God not want to hope for cure, for relief, for health?

Those of us who express care and concern for those who are gender dysphoric are surely fully aware of all that they bear as they undertake this trek from one gender to another. I hardly need to spell this out! Is not our purpose to dispel disease? The medical psychiatric profession was all too correct in identifying gender dysphoria as a disease - certainly such persons are "out of ease" with themselves and they need help to find their true health. If this may mean extensive counseling, infusion of hormones, and eventual surgical procedures, then I would say "So be it!" and even thank God that we now live in a world where such healing can take place.

As I move to conclusion, there is one attribute of God which has not been touched upon although it may have been implied in many of the points made. This is the attribute of love. I well recognize that as one reads some of the passages of the Old Testament one may question whether this true or not, but these writings have to be placed in their historic time and place. Actually, from a very early time, it became clear to Israel that God loved Israel - that they, the Jews, were chosen. However, many of the prophets tied love and righteousness together so that when there was disobedience it was necessary for punishment. The familiar phrase was "God loveth whom he chastiseth". However, as the revelation of God's nature became clearer, it also seemed to show more of God's love and far less God's wrath. The culmination came, as we Christians believe when "God so loved the world that he sent the only begotten son". Then this Jesus, exhibiting a life of love, made the final lover offering by giving his life to the cross. But then He bestowed this legacy of love upon those who would be his followers and apostles to a world in desperate need of this love. This love which moves out of the fountainhead of God, infuses man so that an eminent contemporary theologian, Norman Pittenger, can state so clearly: "Man is born to be a lover".

I would like to believe that all of us within this specific discipline, whether we be Jew or Christian or of some other world religion or are committed humanists are "born lovers" and that our task has been to bring joy out of sorrow, wholeness out of brokenness and separation, health out of sickness, and peace out of turmoil and unrest.

I think I know of no other group of persons who need to know understanding, care, concern, compassion, and above all genuine love than those who bear the pain, the discomfort, even the terror of gender dysphoria than those so afflicted. Let us continue to do our work, to provide our ministries under whatever banner we wish to fly; as for me, I will do so under the God who made me, who loves me, and who, in His mercy, will receive me.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...This article previously appeared in the IFGE Tapestry.)

DO FUNDAMENTALISTS EAT DEVILSFOOD CAKE?

A Rose By Any Other Name...

By Sonia

(In order to avoid an awkward writing style, the pronouns in this article apply to the M-F TS. For those individuals 'going the other way', ie: F-M, just reverse the pronouns.)

There are two ways to deal with the name issue when you make your transition: Come up with a completely female name, and don't change your name until you go full time. Or pick a name that could go both ways, change it legally, and get everyone to start calling you by your new name. Start using the new name on all of your paperwork, and with your friends.

Each method has it's advantages and disadvantages. The first, while giving you your chosen name (and an unmistakably female one at that) insures that everyone who deals with you on any level, even on paper, will INSTANTLY note the change in gender. This increases the possibility of running into resistance when you go to change your paperwork.

When you use a transition name, you are (apparently) a boy changing his name to an androgynous name. Then, when you go to change your name to your chosen female name (presumably AFTER you go full time, or even after surgery), you will be a girl with an androgynous name changing to a different girl name. (You could even use this for your reason: you feel your name is too boyish) one other advantage is that people will be used to calling you by this 'either way name', so when you do make the transition, they will only have to deal with changing the pronouns. This will also lessen the chances of someone slipping up and calling you by your original 'boy name' later... the worst that will happen is that you will get called the transition name which is an 'either way' name anyway.

Here is a list of some good "two way names":

Robin/Robyn, Leslie, Joey, Bobby/Bobbi, Terry/Terri, Chris/Kris, Francis/Frances, Gene/Jean, Marian/Marrion, Jamie/Jamey, Derryl, Shawn/Sean/Shawn, Bo, Erin/Aaron, Randy/Randi, Angel, Kelly, Sandy, Ronnie/Roni, Dana, Tony/Toni, Renee, Pat

There are plenty more if you do not like these. In my own situation, I took a transition name which is still my legal name. I plan to take my final name (Sonia) sometime in the next year. I believe it necessary for me to take a new final name because I have had some problems with people still associating my name with the old person.

Choosing a new name is an important part of the transition as well as very personal decision. This new name will be a part of your life, at least until you go full time. Pick something that suits your personality and your lifestyle.

SORRY, CHARLIE

By Veronica Brown

Nestled on the Senne River is Brussels, the largest city and capital of Belgium. With tree lined boulevards, charming old European architecture and beautiful parks, it is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. Brussels is the headquarters of the European Economic Community and the country lives by foreign trade, exporting half of what is produced. As the average per capita income is nearly \$10,000, Belgium has one of the highest standards of living and some consumer items are expensive.

My housemate, Becky and I arrived in Brussels on December 6th. We were scheduled for sex reassignment surgery the following Tuesday. Michelle Hunt, RN, was the organizer of the Bruxelles Gender Congruity Service and met us at the airport. After checking into the American style hotel on the Chaussee Der Vleurgat, we set out to the sights of this charming city.

As part of the services, Michelle took us to lunch and dinner several times during the weekend and, when back at the hotel, we would go upstairs to visit 'Lori' and 'Monique', two American post-ops who had their surgeries done the week before. On Sunday morning, Becky walked to a nearby Catholic church while Monique and I walked over to Rick's American Restaurant on the Avenue Louise just around the corner from the hotel.

Rick's is one of the few restaurants in Brussels where familiar American food is available and English is spoken. The atmosphere is definitely European but posters of old Hollywood films decorated the walls. Monique and I were shown to one of the small tables in the back by the large window. A movie poster of the Bogart film Casablanca covered the small patch of wall to my right a few feet away. Seated next to us were two American businessmen who discussed plans and read from documents during breakfast.

Monique ordered the breakfast special and I had a tomato and mushroom omelet. After several days of dining in French restaurants, it was enjoyable to hear English spoken. To my right was a man, obviously American, and dining alone. Our food arrived and we started.

Monique is ten years younger than I, good looking and, like myself, dressed in the usual low key transsexual manner of a casual sweater and jeans. We wore little makeup and depended on our many hours of electrolysis and the hormonal body changes to project our feminine selves.

After observing us for a while, the gentleman to my right spoke to Monique. "Hi, you girls look like Americans. My name is Joseph Charles Taylor. Everyone calls me Charlie. My work takes me to Brussels and all over the West Coast. You girls here on holiday?"

I played the shy type and let Monique do the talking. I wanted to see how all this would develop. He was indeed an American and I noticed the hearty American breakfast slowly vanish from his plate. Charlie was a pleasant middle age type with dark hair, a neat mustache, a cute smile and a little pot. Beer I thought.

He had a copy of a science fiction magazine, one I considered juvenile and stopped reading years ago. I saw my chance and we discussed science fiction. I found my confidence and the three of us engaged in a lively, Sunday morning, late breakfast chat.

"I'm not doing anything today. Would you two ladies like a tour of Brussels? I've lived here for a few years and I know the city like my home town."

Monique looked at me and I read the message in her eyes. I nodded and she said, "Sure, why not? We'd love to."

"I did have plans with Becky and Michelle, but nothing important. Yes," I said.

Charlie was full of questions and we didn't have answers prepared. We told him about Lori being 'sick' in bed back at the hotel, something she ate the night before, we thought. And we mentioned Becky going to church and how we American girls were on holiday in Brussels, visiting our friend, Michelle. He seemed to accept our story. Neither of us expected to be picked up by an American at Rick's.

Part of the Real Life Test for any transsexual is to blend with society and learn to pass with a minimum of props like wigs, high heels and gobs of makeup, if the individual is so inclined. In one sense, Monique had done better than me. She was living and working as a female and no one knew her secret. I had cheated and made my gender transition on my job. I was a known transsexual. What amazed me about Monique was though she was nine days post-op, she acted so lively and mobile and was wearing jeans. I knew she had some discomfort but hid it well.

We left Rick's in Charlie's Mercedes and headed down Avenue Louise. Michelle had no need for a car since all of Brussels is easily accessible through the public trams, the underground Metro and the many taxis. A chance to see the city from a private car was a treat and Charlie knew Brussels well. He casually pointed out places of interest through the eyes of a longtime resident.

We saw the Royal Palace, the U.S. Embassy, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Saint Michel Cathedral and the Palace of Justice. And then we entered the Grand Place, that splendid open space surrounded by the tall, old Guild Houses, each adorned with gold leaf. Some of these buildings date back to 1698. I stood in the center of the square, imagining the untold numbers of people who stood there before. Brussels has been occupied by Spanish and French forces, and in this century, by Nazi troops. Cars are allowed in Grand Place but pedestrians have the right of way as is the rule throughout the city. Charlie had parked the Mercedes on a side street and we walked a short distance from the Grand Place down a narrow cobble stone street to the Manneken Pis, the famous statue of a little boy urinating.

The Manneken Pis is well known throughout the world and the original one stands behind an iron fence in a small triangular area cut out from the corner of a building. It isn't a fancy statue and doesn't lie on a modern thoroughfare. If you aren't observant, you'll walk right by and not notice it.

Around midnight, a dozen hours earlier, Michelle, Becky and I had stood before the statue, after leaving an enjoyable gourmet dinner and spectacular FI show at Chez Flo. Monique, Charlie and I returned to the car and drove northwest on Boulevard Anspach. As we approached North Station, I saw one of the entrances to City 2, the mall where Michelle had turned us loose on Saturday on our own for several hours.

Near North Station lay seemingly forgotten old buildings. Charlie turned down one street and said, "Look in the windows ladies. This is the area where the local prostitutes advertise their wares."

Monique said, "Have you ever done business here Charlie? I mean, we know how you men are - there are so many women here to choose from."

"No," Charlie said. "These women aren't my type. I don't think my wife would allow it."

"You're married?" I asked with exaggerated mock surprise. Charlie's pleasant, easy going manner put me at complete ease and the three of us had traded jokes for the past hour.

"Oh yes. The wife moved State-side last year. She missed the American way of life and her friends. I'll be going back next week."

Charlie headed the Mercedes to the south away from the city. We passed a spacious, beautiful park with a small lake, green grass and many people strolling, taking advantage from the warm sun. Along the road we saw two wrecked cars. Both drivers tried to occupy the same space at the intersection at the same time. The driver of one car was a Hindu or Pakistani woman. There was blood on one side of her beautiful face.

We rounded a curve and I saw a sign for Waterloo. "Want to see Waterloo? Do you girls have the time?" asked Charlie.

Monique wanted to go since Lori would be in bed all day. Not every post-op could recover as quickly as Monique. I had plans with Becky and Michelle to see the Grand Place and a Christmas bazaar.

"I'd love to see Waterloo. I didn't realize it was in Belgium. Could we go back to the hotel first? I must leave a note for Michelle and Becky."

"Ok. Tell you what. I'll drop you two at the hotel and meet you back there at 1 pm. I've got to go back to my hotel and call my office."

Monique turned to me in the back seat and gave a big grin.

Back in the hotel lobby, we tittered like school girls. I pressed the elevator button. "Do you think we're passing?"

Monique leaned against the wall. "I don't see any problem. The guy is definitely interested. Or he wouldn't be spending so much time with us."

"You think he's looking for sex?"

"Well not from me dearie. I still have some stitches and the packing down there. This body is going to heal allot more before I let any guy get near me."

"Monique dear, I've messed around with bi-sexual TV's a few times, just to get a little experience, but never with a straight guy. I couldn't take the risk. I'm scared. I've never been in this predicament before."

"Don't worry Veronica. You're doing alright."

"Well thanks...but I worry about my voice."

"Trust me, you're doing fine. Who knows, maybe Charlie is gay. But I doubt it. He is a lonesome American far from home."

I signed my name to the note just as Becky and Michelle arrived. "Hi guys. I won't be going out with you. Monique and I have a date with Charlie. He wants to show us Waterloo, in his Mercedes."

Michelle's eyes widened. "Where did you find him?"

"At Rick's. We got picked up during breakfast. Do you believe it?"

Becky said, "Got room for two more?" She looked at me and then Michelle.

"Well...it isn't a big car and we don't want to share. We found him. Go find your own guy."

"Go for it, girl," Michelle said. "You never know. You realize of course, this is all part of my program here. I arranged to have Charlie meet you two at Rick's. There is no extra charge for this."

"Sure you did, Michelle. Just like I'll change my mind for the surgery on Tuesday."

Becky was hurt that she wouldn't be joining in on our fun.

Charlie showed up promptly at 1 pm. Monique again took the front seat. She needed all the comfort possible and I needed the back seat for my camera gear. Charlie headed south out of the city. We passed the Waterloo sign we'd seen earlier and entered the countryside. The scenery was like nothing I was used to in Massachusetts.

After a short ride, I saw the sign for Waterloo, the site of Napoleon's defeat. The main street of the town was quiet with little Sunday traffic. Tidy shops lined the sidewalks on both sides of a wide road. I saw a familiar McDonald's sign ahead and when we reached it, Charlie turned right. Moments later, he turned left into a small gravel parking lot.

"This is it? I expected something fancy."

"This is it ladies. Waterloo is not a fancy town," said Charlie opening his door.

Monique got out of the Mercedes carefully. I hoped she wasn't overdoing it and that Charlie hadn't noticed anything wrong. We walked past a restaurant and turned left into a narrow path. A guard-house stood watch by the gate. No one was there.

I saw a huge grassy mound beyond the fence, roughly triangular in shape. We began the trek up the stairs. Monique stopped to rest at the halfway point. She told Charlie of a temporary back problem and he waited by her side. Being the forty year old kid I am, I ran up the remaining stairs and nearly collapsed at the top. A large statue of Napoleon astride a horse overlooked the peaceful, surrounding farmland. Low clouds, fog and brief moments of sun gave lend an eerie atmosphere to this grand monument. I shot photos with my old Minolta and the sun vanished. A snow squall pelted my face.

At the bottom of the monument, we passed a museum. "We'll leave guns to you men. My boyfriend is a wargamer and I get enough war and guns at home," I said.

I did have a male friend back home who was into war-gaming. This was my reason for knowing a bit about Napoleon. I didn't know how much of this stuff a woman should know.

The visit to Waterloo was over and we expected Charlie to return to Brussels but we continued through Braine L'Allude and into the province of Hainaut and the town of Charleroi. We were ten miles from the French boarder. Heading north, Charlie drove through several Belgian towns. We turned down a side street and stopped in front of a neatly kept, stone house.

"My wife and I lived here. Our former landlord owns that big furniture store you saw back in town. See the house across the street? Some Arabs live there. They are allowed to stay in the country for three months at a time. And this is where they stay."

I had forgotten my nervousness hours ago. Charlie was a polite dear and took such pains to show us around the south of Belgium. Abruptly, we turned into another gravel parking lot.

"Ever see a 14th century castle," he asked, turning to the back seat to look at me. "This is the Castile de Beersel. I think you girls will enjoy it."

Charlie paid the man at the gate and we crossed the drawbridge and moat. Good, the dragon was not in sight. We explored the castle for almost an hour. The brochure told the points of interest and we found the dungeon and torture chamber. Monique took my picture while I lay on the torture table. I saw tie downs for limbs and rested my head in the appropriate hollow spot. How many humans had lost their lives in this room?

The exploration proved fascinating but Monique showed a little discomfort and was grateful for the rest at the Castile de Beersel Restaurant. We each had a Stella Artois beer, sitting at a rough wooden table near the fireplace. I didn't know how old the place was but the interior was dimly lit and reflected a time long ago. The decor

resembled something early American but was copied after an older style.

Charlie took a sip of his beer, "I'll be out of town Monday and Tuesday but I'm free Wednesday and Thursday night. I'd like to take you to dinner. I know some good places around Brussels and whatever your preferences are, I know you will be pleased."

"I'd love to," said Monique. She looked at me and before I could speak, she said, "...but Veronica can't make it."

Charlie smiled from across the table. "And why not? Do you have another date?"

"Well no. It's just that..."

Monique said, "She'll be out of town for a week or so."

"There's nothing wrong is there Veronica? I've enjoyed your company today and..."

"There's nothing wrong Charlie. It's a long story and I can't go into it. I think I'll be available next week. How about then?"

"I'm going back to the states on Friday, I'll be back in March."

I smiled at Monique, "I guess you have to carry on without me."

In twenty-four hours, I'd be entering the hospital with Becky. In forty hours, I'd be on the operating table, having my reassignment surgery. Michelle had promised us a Brussels vacation, but I hadn't expected anything like this.

Refreshed from the beer and the stop at the restaurant, we went with Charlie to the zoo. Children played among the flowers near the aviary and we roamed the spacious grounds in the late afternoon sun. The three of us walked arm in arm along the shrub and flower lined paths. Is this what being a woman is all about? I thought. I never enjoyed an experience like this before but I had to come three thousand miles to Europe to do it.

It was getting late and Charlie chose a modern highway back to Brussels. He stayed in the passing lane and soon we were doing ninety-five miles an hour. The Mercedes slipped along the road without a bump, sway or strain.

Charlie glided the Mercedes to a smooth stop in front of the hotel. Monique leaned over and gave Charlie a kiss on the cheek. I leaned over the front seat and did the same.

"Sorry Charlie. I wish I could have dinner with you on Wednesday. Thank you very much for a wonderful time today. I really enjoyed it."

"Oh yes, thank you Charlie, and I'll see you Wednesday night," Monique said.

"Is eight OK?"

"Oh, that's fine."

"See you then. Good-bye Veronica. Good-bye Monique."

We got out and the Mercedes nosed out into the traffic, reached the corner and turned left on the Avenue Louise. Becky and Michelle were visiting Lori and we related the events of the day.

On Tuesday morning, I had my surgery and returned back to the room at 10:45 am. It was Becky's turn. On Thursday, Michelle appeared for her usual morning visit and brought Lori and Monique along. I was two days post-op and had some pain and discomfort. But first on my mind was Charlie...and Wednesday night.

"Monique. Get over here and tell me all about Charlie," I demanded.

"Oh, let me tell you Veronica," said Lori grinning. "This little girl didn't get back to the room until 7 am this morning. I think she had fun last night."

"What? Come on, tell me more."

Monique came over to my bed. "Charlie took me to a fine restaurant and wine and dined me."

"Oh yes he did," said Michelle. "Charlie spent \$85 on dinner for two."

"Monique, tell me what happened!"

"We went back to his hotel, had some wine, listened to some music and then went to bed." Monique had an evil look in her eyes.

"And around 3 am, I told him."

"You told him you were post-op?"

"Yes. I wanted to know his socks off. And I did too."

"Did he ask about me? And why I couldn't come to dinner?"

"Oh yes. I told him the whole story. I told him we American girls had come to Brussels for our sex reassignment surgeries. He said, 'You mean when I took you two out on Sunday, Veronica was still a guy?' You should have seen his face, Veronica. It was priceless."

"You did this on purpose?"

"That's right," Monique said.

"But why? Charlie was a nice guy." I said.

"Charlie was a nice guy but he was out for a good time. And I wanted to give him the time of his life. I thought he needed to have his balloon pricked."

I dropped my head back into the pillow and laughed. We all laughed. Poor Charlie.

Somewhere in California or perhaps in Europe, is an American businessman. He used to think he knew the city of Brussels quite well. And maybe he did. One thing is for sure, the next time he's having Sunday morning breakfast at Rick's, and sees one or two American women dining alone, he may think twice or even three times about picking them up.

Sorry Charlie.

(EDITOR'S NOTE...This article reprinted from the GGA Phoenix Monthly-International, no longer published. And yes, this really happened!)

LOOK! UP IN THE SKY! IS IT A BIRD? NAH.
IS IT A PLANE? NAH. IT'S SUPERTRAN!



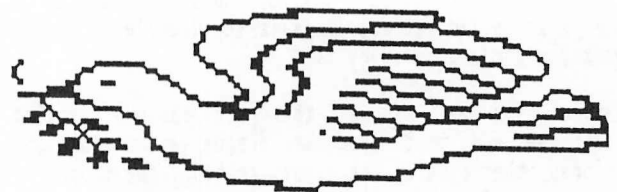
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DEATH IS NATURE'S
WAY OF TELLING US
TO SLOW DOWN

The XX Club An Issue On Support Groups

by Lila

What is a Transsexual? It is a person with the strong belief that one's gender is the opposite of their anatomical sex. I am a male-to-female TS as I believe myself to be a woman who unfortunately carries an ugly growth in her lower extremities. I am fully aware of my anatomy as there's no denying what I used to be. I fully intend to have this corrected in the near future.

I have been attending the XX Club for almost two years as this is where I seek my needs. Here I've seen people of all walks of life, most are quite confused of their sexuality. They have come to seek help to determine their correct choice on the long road through life. There are many who remain with the club, to share their experiences and to give advice to those contemplating surgery.

To my dismay, we do have the occasional TV in attendance. Most come simply out of curiosity, never to return. Some with no interest in TS issues, come only to disrupt the meeting. There are those who believe that the XX Club is some kind of closed social club and criticize our ways. We are not a glorified transvestite club where GUYS get their jollies by dressing up in female clothing. We are not here to be chastised by any person who does not share in our beliefs. Those who do not take our club seriously shouldn't attend. Fortunately, such incidents are rare.

I'm not saying TV's are obnoxious as I do have TV friends with whom I get along with very well. We do not clash with each others beliefs nor do we ram issues down each others throats. The XX Club is meant to be a TRANSSEXUAL support group. Always has been and always will be.



"My support group told me to go to hell."

ANOTHER VICTIM
OF TOO MUCH

STRAW SURGERY

Orphan Annie

Lila

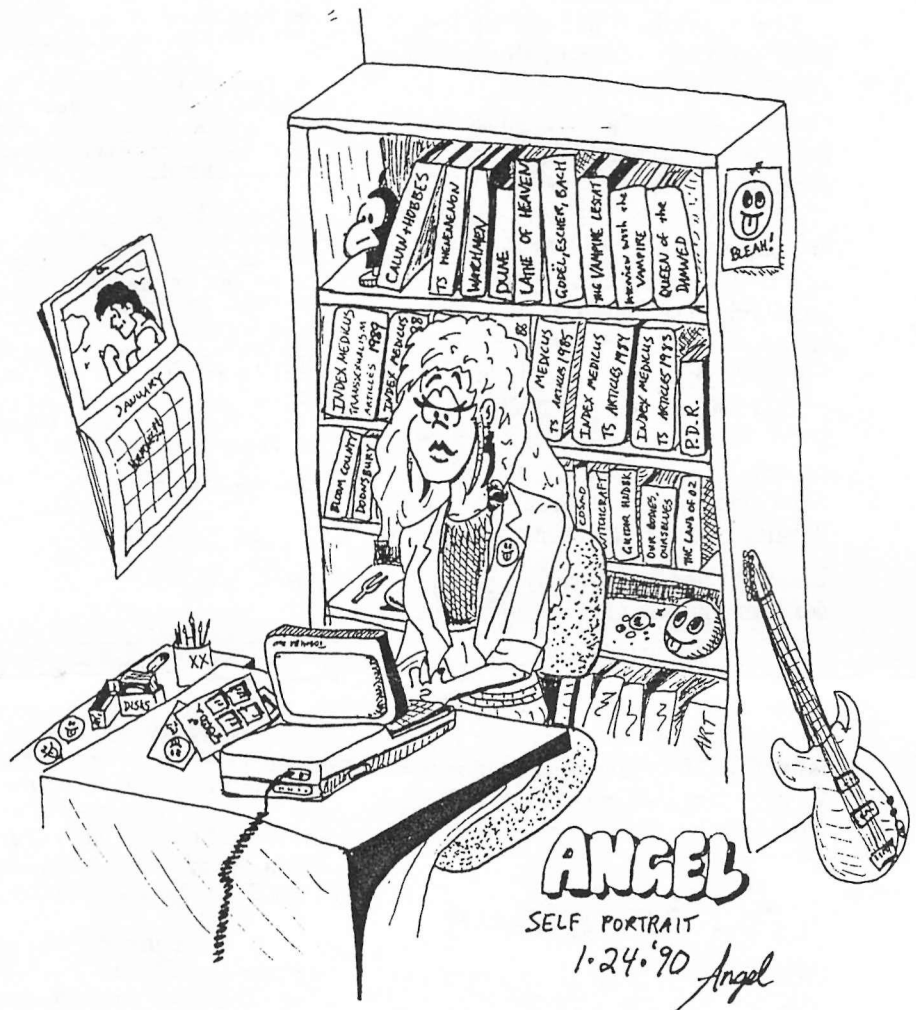


BEFORE



AFTER

(Straw Surgery is designed to make ones I.Q. near or equal to that of a genetic female.)



ANGEL

SELF PORTRAIT

1.24.90 Angel



Renaissance News Vol 5, No. 1

THE ^{JoAnn Roberts} **ICONOCLAST**™

TORONTO, CAN. — One wonders at times about the meaning of a "support" group...

Veronica Brown writing in the November issue of *Twenty Minutes* (The XX Club) takes issue with transsexual Sarah Luiz. Luiz, you may recall, had a much publicised battle with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, over payment for her hormone therapy and reassignment surgery. She has since settled with the medical insurer for an undisclosed amount of money and plans to have her surgery in Montreal.

Brown thinks that Luiz is a "cry-baby" and her pleas to the media simply a ploy to get attention. Brown claims that Luiz "got the goose that lays the golden egg and she's slowly strangling it for the rest of us."

Sounds to me like Brown is the cry-baby, although she denies it, because Luiz "beat the system" and received a settlement. Insurance carriers have been denying claims for reassignment surgery since the early 1980's. I received a job offer in 1986, well before Luiz's story became public, and the medical insurance package contained the plan details of four different carriers. Each carrier specifically excluded sex reassignment and cosmetic surgery from coverage.

As for Luiz's aspiration to become a model and an actress, let time tell. Who knows? Maybe there is another Meryl Streep or Sigourney Weaver trapped in that body along with Sarah.

Lamé

EXPRESSIONS

Vanessa Jane Black does it again in this month's issue of *YY Minutes*. Now that she has a vagina, we get to see how many ways she can prove her commitment to producing a quality, non-sexual magazine for the community is a realistic, achievable goal as she spends the rest of her life tastefully sneering at anyone who doesn't have a vagina and doesn't deserve one.

To The Editors
Twenty Minutes

I'd like to comment on the issue of "Surgery on Demand" as discussed in the January '91 issue of *Twenty Minutes*.

The comment I have relates to remarks by both Toni Lynn Pavlick and Sonia concerning abortion and sex reassignment surgery. It may seem ironic talking about abortion and male-to-female transsexuals in the same breath as the M-t-F TS will never have to deal with that issue. Or will they?

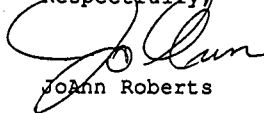
Genetic women who are Pro-Choice see the issue as one of control; does the state (or a spouse or a parent) have the right to control the reproductive process and, therefore, the body of a woman? If you are Anti-Choice and say "Yes" to that question, then what is to stop the state (or a spouse or a parent) from controlling the body of, let's say, a M-t-F transsexual?

Imagine this scenario: a young male (22 yrs. old) tells his parents (Fundamentalist Christians) that he is a transsexual and wants counseling and ultimately reassignment surgery. The parents, reacting based on their Fundamentalist beliefs, go to court and seek an injunction prohibiting their son from having surgery. They use as their argument the same argument that Pro-Life uses in its court cases: it is morally wrong to use surgical intervention to destroy something that God created. Could they get the injunction? It probably depends on the court venue, but it could happen.

Pavlick wants surgery on demand for transsexuals, yet she is Anti-Choice when it comes to abortion. That seems hypocritical to me. She wants to choose reassignment on demand for herself, but she also wants to stop a genetic women from choosing whether or not to bear a child.

The point is, however, that issues which don't seem to apply to transgendered people at first glance, may have much deeper ramifications upon closer examination. Pro-Choice, First Amendment (Freedom of Expression), and pornography court cases are relevant to both transvestites and transsexuals because they all attempt to undermine our right of self-determination and strip us of legal protection when we do make an informed choice. We need all the protection we can get and we must preserve our most basic rights - life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. If we don't pay attention to these issues, there may not even be an SRS procedure to demand.

Respectfully,



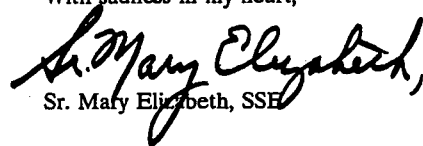
JoAnn Roberts

Dear Becky:

Veronica's recent rebuttal, as well as *Twenty Minutes* continuing support of her diatribe, was most disappointing. To set the record straight, Merrissa, Yvonne, and I discussed what it would take to bring me on-board with IFGE. I have offered input on the establishment of a West Coast office here, and it has been widely reported that I will be involved in the operation of the proposed office. A formal offer in writing via the board has NOT been made, however. To report hearsay information as fact is an injustice to all concerned.

It is sad that the one organization that was selected to give Christine Jorgensen Award has made such a mockery of her memory by publishing Veronica's continuing attacks. Christine would have never tolerated this, and I can no longer stand idly by. I am recommending to Christine's family that they rescind their authorization. Additionally, I am returning the Award bestowed upon me by the XX Club and *Twenty Minutes*. Christine's memory, and the meaning of the Award, has been tarnished beyond reason.

With sadness in my heart,



Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE

Dear Becky Ann:

Thank you for printing my introductory letter and the flyer for AEGIS' first brochure. I'm enjoying *Twenty Minutes*, and especially the stuff about Brussels, as I'm headed there myself in late spring. I'm glad you published a counterpoint argument to the "Surgery on Demand" article from *Gender Expressions* -- someone needed to! I have become radicalized enough to believe in hormones on demand, but I've seen too many gender looney tunes to ever think that surgery should be on a walk-in basis. My friend Rachel, who runs a BBS out of her home, has a theory that crossdressers some-times seize upon transsexualism, and especially surgery, as a fetish, much like they would upon panties or high heels. She'll be addressing just that in the premiere issue of *Chrysalis Quarterly*.

Best of luck,
Ms. Dallas Denny, Decatur, GA

To the Editor:

In response to Mauvais [redacted]'s letter in the February issue, I have been the unseen, the unheard and possibly the unnoticed for many years now. Yes, the mouse in the corner, watching, listening while fluffing and cleaning her fur in preparation of what is to come. I too am in a preoperative TS position and do not find that I carry the label "Transsexual" nearly as lightly as so many others seem to. I find this not to be a life change of want as much as it is one of necessity and the value of this accomplishment cannot be weighed by the amount of time that you spend sitting around in your pretty panties discussing the day that you might eventually be able to experience reassignment surgery.

"What would it be like to be a complete woman?", a rather common question for those who fantasize while sipping punch and munching down cookies. The real question should be "What has it been like to be a 5 ft. 6 in. 130 lb. female wedged into the body and life of a 6 ft. 4 in. 200 lb. male?" or the reverse. The experience of this scenario is most likely beyond imaginable conception for the average TV enjoying her cookies! This is one of being frightened for one's life and of being willing, from time to time, to sacrifice this life to end the anguish of the experience.

This is not a problem that just pops in to your life somewhere between conception and retirement, it's one that has always been there and has made itself manifest some time early early in your life and has brought with it a mass of confusion, frustration and pain. These feelings and emotions are not just for you to know and understand but also for those around you. They get to watch you go to pieces when the stress of the experience is often more than you can comprehend.

Times have changed, but change comes rather slow to some parts of this world and without an understanding as to why, many within this community must experience far greater miseries than those who are rejected for surgery because of their lack of compliance with the current criteria necessary for obtaining this service. For whatever the reason of the denial, understand this: "This is you, your

life, it's not a game of playing house and doing the dishes and just feeling cute". Reality should dictate a different message, one of wholeness, of coming together within one's very being, of completion to the misfortune of this congenital anomaly and the effect that it has had on your life and the one's that you love.

The guidelines for the progressive Transsexual have been set up by MAN (as in Manhind), based on the past experience of the many who have walked this path before you and the professionals that they have had to confront. The path has been arranged by God and if this is to be the path that you walk then you must be prepared to respect the guidelines that have been set up for you to help you succeed in your experience as you traverse this erratic plane of reality often referred to as "Life".

"Ok, Scottie, mission complete, beam me up!"

Dara R., Manchester, CT

Dear Becky Ann,

I was pleasantly surprised to receive the January issue of *Twenty Minutes* from you. I have been aware of the XK Club for many years but did not realize the extent of the support and information giving that you provide, especially via your newsletter. To put it briefly, I was quite impressed.

I found the articles in *Twenty Minutes* to be very informative. I especially enjoyed your presenting both sides of the issue on SRS. I found the article "A Visit to the Room with a View" to be most revealing in its sensitivity and openness. More heterosexuals should be exposed to this kind of self-revelation for a better understanding of transsexuals.

After reading your newsletter I am considering doing some research on Transsexualism, pre and post SRS. From my past experience, I have not been able to find much research information on TS's. I feel that this is an area that has been overlooked in the area of Human Sexuality. This may open an entirely new area of research and interest for me.

Sincerely,
Lois Spivak, Ph.D., New Haven, CT

CONFESSIONS OF AN UNROMANTIC MAN

by Jerry Seinfeld

"Men will always say they love women as a group, but somehow seem to be less fond of them as individuals. Women on the other hand, often appreciate the man they're with but almost never have anything nice to say about our sex as a group. There are more differences of course. Women keep their apartments nice and their cars a mess. Men keep their cars nice and their apartments a mess."

[Excerpted from REDBOOK February 1991 issue.]

Next month is the APRIL FOOL issue, need I say more.

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