

CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#44

\$7.00



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CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

JUNE 1993
(ISSUE #44)



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THIS MONTH, we welcome cartoonist Nancy Wilson to our contributing staff. Her cartoon **here in the (un)real world** appears on page 24.

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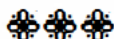
The much-maligned Congress of Representatives (COR) has renamed itself the Congress of Transgender Organizations (CTO), adopted statements of direction and purpose, and reaffirmed its reciprocal agreement with the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE).

The CTO, meeting at the IFGE convention in Philadelphia, approved as its statement of direction "unity through the exploration and acceptance of diverse gender lifestyles and expressions", and as its statement of purpose "to promote and encourage diverse representations of our community and to facilitate communications within our community and the community at large." It also voted to approve the previously approved reciprocal agreement with IFGE and provisionally accept the COR by-laws of September 1992.

A task group was also formed to address political concerns relating to the gender community. These were identified as a "hold-blameless" release form and the ETVC anti-defamation project.

Acknowledging that communications within the community are still a major concern, the CTO voted to establish a computer BBS service as part of an existing system. Discussions have already taken place with Cross Connection sysop Trish Anderson regarding this project.

The CTO also elected Alison Laing of Renaissance as its chairman, Linda Phillips of Eta Tau and Boulton & Park as vice chairman, and Annie Johnson of IXE as secretary, and unanimously endorsed the Bill of Gender Rights, introduced in 1991 by JoAnn Roberts.

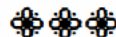


The organizers of the annual "California Dreamin'" weekend have announced the recipients of its newly created "Alicia Lichy Award".

The award, honoring the late gender businesswoman and activist, was presented at the May 1 banquet to Danielle Alexis of J.M.P.G. and to Neutral Corner of San Diego (Calif.). "Dreamin'" spokeswoman Joan Goodnight indicated the award would be given each year to "the individual and group that have exhibited or demonstrated outstanding dedication to the Southern California community ... in loving memory of Alicia and her unselfish contributions."

Lichy, who died of complications from a cerebral hemorrhage last December, owned the boutique bearing her name near Los Angeles, was publisher

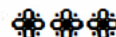
of the newspaper *TV Girl Talk*, and founded the Feminine Image support group.



Contrary to published reports, Empathy Press, the Seattle (Wash.)-based publisher of crossdressing fiction, has not ceased operations.

Although reports appeared in several gender community publications -- including **Cross-Talk** -- that Empathy had gone out of business, owner Cathy Slavik has continued publishing, having released more than a dozen new titles within the past several weeks.

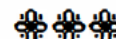
Research into the events leading to the erroneous report revealed that Empathy had changed telephone numbers and the previous number did not have a referral recording to the new number. Slavik maintains that all of Empathy's customers had been provided with the new number; however, at least one Los Angeles area boutique reported that they had thought the business had folded, until a shipment arrived in late April of all new titles.



The schedule for the second annual International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy has been released by conference organizer Phyllis Randolph Frye.

The conference, designed for both attorneys and non-attorneys, will concentrate primarily on the issues of employment, health, the military, imprisonment, family law, insurance, and personal identification. Also on the schedule are discussions on an international gender bill of rights and education in transgender issues law.

In addition, several noted keynote speakers will address the conference, which will take place in Houston August 26 through 29. The State Bar of Texas has awarded the event with 12 hours of minimum continuing legal education credit, with similar credit available by advance arrangement to jurisdictions in other states.



Gender community professor and psychologist Donald A. Brown, Ph.D., died of a stroke and heart failure February 14 at his Canton Township, Mich., home.

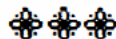
Brown, 65, was director of counseling and assistant professor of education at the University of Michigan Dearborn from 1972 until his retirement in 1989. He was also a therapist at a Dearborn

mental health clinic and maintained a private practice specializing in problems of sexual identity. During his graduate work, he worked at the Kinsey Institute for Sex, Gender, and Reproduction at Indiana University.

He is survived by wife Roberta, daughters Mary and Laura, and a sister. Services were held February 17 in Canton Township.

Memorial contributions in Dr. Brown's name may

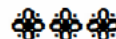
be made to the University of Michigan Medical Center for Cardiological Research, 301 E. Liberty St., Suite 300, Ann Arbor MI 48104.



A new support group for those dealing with gender identity and full-time transition has been formed in the Palm Springs area.

Although the group has named itself Transsexuals of Palm Springs (TS/PS), it is designed for all gender dysphoric individuals in transition, according to founder Ayme Michelle Kantz, who says their weekly rap groups and monthly mixers may be attended by transgenderists as well. Kantz says TS/PS does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, and is working with several local helping professionals to provide additional support to their patients' therapy.

TS/PS can be reached at 68-769 First St. #109, Cathedral City CA 92234.




A new alliance is being formed by eight gender community organizations in the northeast quarter of the U.S., with the intent of fostering better communication.

The new alliance -- which has not yet been named -- held its first meeting April 17, with members of the Alpha Omega, Nu Phi Chi, and Sigma Nu Rho chapters of Tri-Ess, CrossPort, Crystal Club, Erie Sisters and Transpitt in attendance. Also joining the alliance was the Canadian Crossdressers Club of Toronto (Ont.).

Two members from each organization will act as representatives, but each group would have only one vote. Meetings are planned either quarterly or semi-annually, with alliance membership cards to be eventually distributed to all members of the participating groups. A fact sheet of current events in the region is planned for regular distribution through the groups' newsletters.

A name will be chosen for the alliance at its July meeting from a list of suggestions being gathered from the participating organizations' membership.

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THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN



by KAREN ANN



KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

— *Kymerleigh Richards*

There is a serious source of pollution within the publishing world that is hurting the gender community's chances for understanding and acceptance by mainstream society.

The source of this pollution is, collectively, the so-called "contact" publications, ostensibly aimed at crossdressers and transsexuals, but actually catering to an audience wholly outside of our community.

If you have never read one of these publications, you have been fortunate enough to miss the ads that appear in each issue. Many of the photographs border on pornography: Exposed genitals, buttocks facing the camera, skimpy outfits leaving extremely little to the imagination. The wording of these ads aren't much better: At best cloaked in euphemisms, at worst graphically descriptive.

Misuse (read that corruption) of terminology runs rampant both in the ads and what little "serious" editorial content is included. The term "transsexual", as used here, becomes nothing more than a synonym for "she-male"; that is, a male who has had hormonally- or surgically-enhanced breasts in order to have sex with other men as a man. And "transvestite" thus becomes a word essentially meaning someone who crossdresses only for erotic purposes (and probably to have sex with other men as well). It is obvious that those who use such terms, defined in these ways, are not true members of the gender community, and for "contact" magazines to encourage such use wind up exploiting the entire community.

These publications also exploit those who advertise in them. While they purport to serve the gender community, the majority of their sales are not in our community's businesses (in fact, at one well-known boutique here in the Los Angeles area, sales of "contact" magazines has been steadily **declining** over the past several months). These magazines are primarily marketed in adult bookstores, which leads me to speculate that most of their readership are voyeurs who purchase such magazines for the purpose of fulfilling their fantasies. I wonder how many of those who advertise in these magazines realize this?

Granted, in many areas of the country, adult bookstores are the only outlets available for members of the gender community to acquire any type of publication relating to our community. But that does not change my *(continued, next page)*

COGITO ERGO FEM

-- Anne

What is the meaning of life?

Does God exist?

Why do I crossdress?

The three most profound questions of *homo sapiens*. The answers, in order, are: I don't know, but I don't like the alternative. Yes. Read on, it's the theme of this column.

Let me rephrase the question. Instead of asking, "Why do I crossdress?", let me ask, "What is my brain/mind trying to accomplish in having me crossdress?" If we accept the definition of sex as being a physiological trait, and gender a psychological trait, we must then accept that gender is a brain function and sex a structural one. Since the brain controls the body, it is fair to assume that the mind has a great deal of power over the body, and what it does.

So, what is my mind trying to accomplish in having me crossdress? The mind does not like things to be untidy. It does not like being feminine while the body it inhabits is male (or vice versa). Thus, what the mind is doing is attempting to reconcile the gender/sex schism present in transgendered crossdressers. But the mind cannot actually turn a male body into a female one. Since it cannot actually create its perceived proper body, it creates a symbolic one. The psyche asks us to put on the clothing of its gender role and we do, thus creating a symbolically unified person, whether man or woman depends on where we start.

Think a minute. Does this apply to transvestites or transsexuals? Can it apply to both? Yes: It is not a question of whether or not we create the symbolically unified self, but to what degree we create it. I can put on a chemise and go to bed, or I can spend hours shaving my body, putting on makeup, wig and evening gown. I can live full time as a woman, or I can have hormone therapy and SRS. They are only a matter of degree. As we travel towards the TS end of the spectrum, the actions to create the symbolic whole become deeper and more permanent. Hormone therapy creates symbols of the gender role, while SRS removes the greatest symbol of the schism.

Think another minute. Is there a simpler explanation? No. "It feels good," you say? Yes, but that is not an explanation, it is merely a report of a sensory or emotional state. Why does it feel good? Because the psyche has for the moment found a resolution for the conflict it was experiencing due

to the mind/body schism. Yes, it does feel good. And it applies to the occasional crossdresser, the transgenderist, and the transsexual. It is a question of degree.

Renee Richards has said that SRS was a second rate solution to questions of gender identity. If a M2F TS goes into SRS expecting to be transformed from male to female she may be disappointed; however, if that same TS goes into SRS with the understanding that the result will not be a female body, but instead a limited representation of one, perhaps it is not such a bad option after all.

As you can see, I am entering a second thesis for this column. If I accept the thesis that I crossdress to create a symbolic unity between mind and body, the question next becomes: How far do I take it? The answer is: It depends. It depends on other goals in life. If I wish to reproduce, pass my genes on, then SRS is out of the question, at least until I have fathered children. There are other issues which impact the decision as to how far to pursue this symbolic unity. Finding the answer to that question means taking off the blinders and looking beyond gender identity issues. I am who I am regardless of what I wear, but crossdressing is not an issue of what one wears, but what it means to

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... continued

conviction that corrupting terminology for the purpose of selling more magazines destroys our efforts as a community to gain better acceptance by the masses. Haven't we had enough trouble convincing society that we don't crossdress solely for the purpose of having homosexual sex?

One of the publishers of this type of magazine (who shall go nameless, since they also advertise their more legitimate gender community business in **Cross-Talk**) has recently begun publication of a full-color magazine of this genre, and stated in their first issue that their intent was to "legitimize" crossdressing by showing it in a favorable light and broadening distribution into the mainstream. Unfortunately, this new magazine not only is guilty of many of the same sins I've already outlined, it includes artwork displaying exposed male genitals while crossdressed. Further, the publisher's idea of broadening mainstream distribution is to include liquor stores (you remember them, where a lot of *Hustler*, *Penthouse*, and other graphically erotic magazines are sold?).

Granted, these publishers will never have a problem selling their magazines through adult bookstores and liquor stores. But we will continue to have a problem with public acceptance so long as they continue to have such cheap success.

wear what one wears.

I think too many people get caught up in gender identity issues and ignore other issues, then make bad decisions about how far to carry the symbolic unity. If you are screwed up in other areas, no matter how far you go in attempting to achieve that symbolic unity you will still be screwed up and thus unhappy. This is when SRS is a bad procedure. I saw a fellow on one of the daytime talk shows who had undergone SRS and then decided that he wanted his penis back. This fellow had wasted two years of therapy, having decided that he was a TS and giving his therapist the standard answers. Had he used those two years to straighten himself out he'd be a happier man, he'd still be able to reproduce, and his parents wouldn't owe thousands of dollars on a second mortgage on their house.

The answer to "How far do I take it?" is this. Given that one has gotten their emotional house in order, one takes the symbolism as far as one needs, no more, no less. If that means putting on a slip once a year or having the good Doctor Biber work his magic so be it. Just make sure you're not kidding yourself.

[Anne [REDACTED] can be contacted at P.O. Box 1251, Beverly Hills, CA 90213.]



VOX POPULI ... Letters to the editor

Re: National Publication Review (Apr. '93): I came upon the review of our book *Every Girl's Companion -- Make-Up & Beauty*. I immediately noticed that the review was by the author of a competing book -- one who has an axe to grind with J.M.P.G. Before reading the review, I had to assume that it would be biased and certainly far from fair. I was not disappointed in that belief.

It shows a lack of integrity on the part of Ms. Roberts that she would even consider reviewing a competitor's publication, but doing it in the style displayed is unthinkable. She uses loaded words and makes misleading statements; certainly not an accurate review. She states that she is "... a stickler for proper grammar, punctuation and spelling." Roberts then goes on to inaccurately quote advertising for the book.

Roberts seems to think that the book should have gone directly into makeup application without any discussion of theory, products or applicators -- an interesting viewpoint. It seems more appropriate to me that a person should know something about the type of makeup available, its uses, its benefits and drawbacks, and the type of applicators needed

before digging into the first available container of makeup and spreading it onto their face.

I think I have spent enough words addressing this sadly inaccurate and misleading review but I would like to say something about the part you play as publisher in printing such a piece.

It is poor journalism and a disservice to your readers to print something like this under the guise of it being informative. This type of attack belongs in an opinion column, if anywhere. If you are looking to promote more controversy and ill will within the gender community, then this type of article should accomplish it. I am greatly disappointed that such material continues to be published.

I also suggest that you look up the meaning of the word foray.

--Danielle [REDACTED]

Publisher, Every Girl's Companion

[*JoAnn Roberts replies:*] It would seem that the primary objection is not my specific review comments, but that I was the reviewer. The implication is that I am not qualified to review this work because I publish a competing work. So, let me address this issue first. If this magazine wanted a technical review of a book on the workings of an internal combustion engine, would the publisher go to a golf-pro for the review? No, she'd ask someone with technical knowledge about internal combustion engines. Well, I happen to have technical knowledge about makeup application and I am an associate editor of **Cross-Talk**. Therefore, I wrote the review and I called it like I saw it.

Next, there is a common feeling in the gender community that if-you-can't-say-anything-nice-don't-say-anything-at-all. Sorry, I don't buy the silence routine. Keeping silent when you know something is wrong, or bad, or requires correction, is cowardly. Silence enables the perpetrator and perpetuates the error.

Then there is the assumption that since I did not like this publication, I therefore, do not personally like the author/publisher. That's an unwarranted and illogical conclusion. My comments were restricted solely to the publication and not the personality of the author/publisher. J.M.P.G. needs to grow a thicker skin if they intend to stay in the publishing business; not everyone is going to like everything you publish. Use the comments to make your products better. That's what I do.

Finally, I am pro-consumer. My business is based on giving people the highest possible quality products at the best price. I am also the only person in the community who regularly reviews products and publications aimed at the community. I feel strongly about novice and neophyte crossdressers wasting money on products that are over-priced and don't deliver what they claim. When I see such products, I call attention to them so that others will avoid them. I feel doubly incensed when such products are offered to the community by a sister. With regard to misquoting the advertising copy, readers are directed to the inside cover of *Crossdresser's Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (a J.M.P.G. publication), where they can judge for themselves if I misquoted anything. Meanwhile, I stand by my review.

[*Editor's Reply:*] I believe it is wholly appropriate for a book review to appear in a consumer-affairs column such as "The Shopping Maven", and wholly inappropriate to suggest it appear in the editorial section. Ms. [REDACTED]' charge of "poor journalism and a disservice" is totally unjustified.

Further, I do not believe the review was worded in such a way as to constitute a personal attack on Ms. [REDACTED] (unless you read something between the lines that was not there). While the review might have better appeared in "National Publication Review", I doubt J.M.P.G.'s response would have been much different, as I would have written a similarly negative column had I been the reviewer instead of JoAnn.

Regarding the suggestion that I am trying to "promote controversy and ill will": If that were the case, I would not have printed Ms. [REDACTED]' letter, nor any of the other letters that have appeared here disagreeing with or critical of articles that have appeared in our pages. I say again: "Vox

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Populi" is a forum for all who have opinions -- pro or con -- on anything reported or discussed in these pages. By providing the means for all sides of an issue to be published, we create precisely the opposite of the aforementioned suggestion: We provide a forum for any potential controversy and ill will to be brought into the open for all to see and decide for themselves. This is the reason why we have published every single letter to the editor we have ever received.

Finally, *Webster's* defines foray as "a raid to get food, capture booty, or just pillage"; pillaging is defined as "to plunder"; and plunder's definition is "to commit robbery". If a reviewer feels a product is not worth the money, I consider the use of a word whose ultimate definition is robbery an appropriate term. Sorry, Danielle. -- KMR

Re: "Cogito Ergo Fem" (Apr. '93): Anne Blackwood suggests that she would have liked her employer's health insurance company to cover her SRS and counseling. She compares the need for SRS in some individuals to the need for open heart surgery in others. Ms. Blackwood concludes that because every case must be decided individually, "transsexualism certainly belongs in the DSM." Are we to assume by its omission from this conclusion that transvestism is now fine, fun, and hip? No -- it is still in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM). Regardless of how many caveats you tag on, emphasizing that these are disorders or adverse reactions to stress and not mental illnesses, the perception remains.

If stress does create or reveal these feelings of womanhood (as Ms. [REDACTED] suggests), then is it not possible that even mild, everyday emotional states such as depression, anxiety, or even plain old rejection should awaken the same feelings? Introductory psychiatry books suggest that everyone has homosexual feelings and tendencies at one time or another to a greater or lesser extent. If this were true for Ms. [REDACTED]'s "feelings of womanhood", might it account for the high percentage of the male U.S. population that consider themselves transvestites?

I think most of **Cross-Talk's** readers believe that they as TVs or TSs are not mentally ill and that the only problem they have is society's perception of them. So why, I ask, do we want to adorn ourselves

and our community with the connotations associated with being in the DSM?

If TV/TSism was really perceived as a mental disability or disorder then shouldn't it have been included in the federal Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) that went into effect last July? Congress, in its wisdom, excluded from coverage current drug users, compulsive gamblers, kleptomaniacs, and pyromaniacs; those with temporary disabilities such as normal pregnancy or a broken limb; homosexuals and bisexuals; transvestites, transsexuals, pedophiles, exhibitionists, voyeurists, and those with gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairment or other behavioral traits.

The latter might seem to suggest that an abnormal response to stress is an "other behavioral trait". Nevertheless, TV/TSism is perceived as degenerate behavior and is grouped right along with criminal behavior. Just because a phenomena is listed in the DSM does not mean it must, or will be covered by health insurance or be a legal disability under ADA. Likewise, in any future nationalized health insurance, being listed in the DSM does not assure that SRS -- or any treatment for genderal psychosomatic discontinuity -- will be covered. TV/TSism could just as easily be made illegal as the other mental "disorders" listed in the ADA.

Really, it comes down to the law, as in "there is no justice, there is only the law." Legislation is influenced by what the community holds to be moral, what it is willing to pay for and put up with. Every civilization and every individual has discriminated and perpetrated against those who were perceived as being, believing, or behaving differently. Our elected legislators enact laws and impose them on the majority, not themselves, because they hold that their views, beliefs, and prejudices are better than anybody else's. The lawmakers are, in turn, influenced by the perceptions, beliefs, and prejudices of their constituency.

Thus it would seem to me that the most important question before us is why the TV/TS community would want to perpetuate ignorance about itself by adorning itself with the label of mental illness bestowed by the mere inclusion of the terms in the DSM.

Has inclusion gained us coverage under the ADA? Has it or will it likely cause SRS and gender

dysphoria counselling to be included in any medical insurance plan or any national health plan? Has it caused the continuation of hormone therapy or professional counselling or even humane treatment for incarcerated members of the TV/TS community? Will it ever get us a free lunch?

No. No. No. No, because TV/TSism is politically and socially incorrect, and it will remain so until public opinion changes -- and public opinion is influenced in part by the stamp of mental illness put upon us by our continued presence in the DSM.

We could get a long way toward public acceptance if our community would facilitate the major studio release of a TV/TS movie, similar in artistry and realism to *The Crying Game*, and about what it's like to wake up one morning and find you have an uncontrollable desire to wear the clothing and adornments of the opposite sex. Certainly there are enough dedicated, emotionally involved people and enough wealth in the TV/TS community to bring this to fruition.

-- Ann [REDACTED]

Gaithersburg, MD

[Anne [REDACTED] replies:] My first response is, "Did she read the column I wrote?" I have never suggested that I think my health insurance should pay for my SRS and related counseling. I am, in fact, paying for counseling out of my own pocket and have no objections to that. I suggest she go back and carefully reread that column. I said that excluding transsexualism would virtually guarantee that no insurance company would pay for such services even in an instance where SRS could be life saving (suicide is not infrequent in the TV and TS communities).

Ms. [REDACTED] has also taken my comment about my own personal question regarding stress and whether it created a sense of womanhood or revealed the true womanly nature of my self and inappropriately extrapolated it to the communities at large, and into issues to which it does not belong.

Next, she has lumped homosexuals, transsexuals and transvestites together. I hope she read Lee Risemberg's article "Transsexuals are not Homosexuals" in issue #43.

Finally, what disturbed me most was that Ms. [REDACTED] seems to want things both ways. She doesn't want us included in the DSM (I think) because she perceives that being in it bestows a stigma to the communities, and yet she wants us to be **included**

in the ADA because we are disabled. What do you want, Ann?

I do not view either transvestism nor transsexualism as disabilities, and so cannot support the notion that they ought to be included in the ADA. Should our constitutional rights be protected along with gays', blacks', Asians', religious minorities'? You bet your ass! Inclusion in the ADA is **not** the way to do that. By the way, there's no such thing as a "free lunch".

ERRATA: My editorial in the last issue, was, I have been informed, based on rumors that were completely without foundation. I have been assured by Powder Puffs Of California's Joan Goodnight that there is no plan to merge Neutral Corner with their organization, and Marsha Anne [REDACTED] of *Petticoat Junction* reports that Boulton & Park Society is reorganizing as an international "umbrella" organization for open groups, much the same way as Tri-Ess unifies heterosexual CD-only groups. (A complete report will appear in next month's issue.)

I am, truthfully, relieved that my concerns were unfounded. However, I still stand by my opinion that "mega-groups" are a bad idea, and I hope that the community never attempts to create them. I am pleased to see that P.P.O.C., Neutral Corner, and Boulton & Park apparently share my view in this regard. -- KMR

Vox Populi is designed as the gender community's "town square" for the exchange of opinions and ideas. If you have a response to any editorial, news item, or article appearing in **Cross-Talk**, please feel free to contribute. Virtually all letters received will be published, subject to editing only for clarity, spelling/punctuation, and brevity. You may write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365; fax us at (818) 347-4190, or send e-mail to "Kym Richards" via the Cross Connection BBS at (818) 766-TVTS (766-8887).

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LOCALS
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SEATTLE

SAN FRANCISCO

One of the problems in writing this column every month is sifting through the debris left on Ms. [REDACTED]'s shores after the tide of news events has receded. Which items are important enough to earn a place in her column? Which are only flashy for the moment (like some drag queens she knows)? Like any journalist, she enjoys presenting a *scoop*, but worries that by the time the column appears on these pages, the news has become history. This first item causes none of these worries for it is history **and** news.

After more than a quarter century of languishing in a storage closet, the 1968 film *The Queens* has been released. This cinema verite documentary of the 1967 Miss All-American Camp Beauty Pageant enjoyed a brief but noteworthy release -- it was shown at the Cannes Film Festival and was hailed as one of the 10 best films of 1968 by critic Judith Crist. Now, it has been reissued.

The film shows 28 young men, sharing beauty tips and expressing opinions on everything from depilatories to draft boards. We see them practice their routines for the upcoming contest, and -- with appropriate drama -- we see Harlow parading down the runway wearing the crown. The film even includes a couple of sore losers screeching backstage that the contest was rigged. One of the losers is Crystal, who in twenty years will appear in *Paris Is Burning*.

The intervening quarter century provides some interesting context for *The Queens*. Another connection to *Paris Is Burning* is that the director of the vogue documentary was, in part, inspired by *The Queens*.

By the way, Harlow, who carried the title of Miss Philadelphia into the contest, has since had a sex-change, and until a few years ago was a minor celebrity in the city she and Ms. [REDACTED] call home. She has moved to San Francisco while Ms. [REDACTED] remains.

●●●

While we are strolling down Memory Lane, we'll drop in on Flip Wilson. More than a year ago (and in another publication), we reported that Wilson was thinking of making a comeback and reviving his Geraldine character. But that won't happen, the comedian now says.

"I don't think Geraldine will be back," he said. "She was the girl of my dreams, and she carried me longer than my mother did."

Wilson, who said he made wise investments and

doesn't need the money a comeback may produce, spends his time racing hot air balloons, and playing with his new granddaughter -- named Geraldine.

●●●

There may be some deep sociological meaning to the fact that Flip Wilson, an African-American man in a dress, could win widespread public acceptance in the 1970's as an over-the-top female caricature and that another African-American man in drag has received acceptance in the 1990's as an over-the-top female caricature. We are speaking, of course, of RuPaul Charles.

For 11 years, RuPaul made the circuit primarily in New York performing in drag. His 6-foot-5, size 10 frame platinum blond wig made him the perfect exotic showgirl. But with the success of his campy *Supermodel* video, he has been propelled to star status.

"My body is naturally shaped like a Barbie doll," he said. "Nothing surgical, no hormones or pharmaceuticals. Anybody can do it. It's all attitude." Part of that attitude extends to the open acknowledgement that he is a man. In a two-page layout in *Entertainment Weekly*, he proudly showed off his million-dollar tuck.

●●●

Jaye Davidson is another drag icon of the moment. A description of his appearance at the Academy Awards ceremonies won a first-paragraph mention in a *New York Times* article on Oscar fashions. They were all drab by previous year's standards, the *Times* concluded. Davidson's ensemble of a black dinner jacket without a shirt was called "the men's look for women, but on a man." Davidson may have had no choice in the outfit he wore. Before the Oscar show, he told an interviewer that he had run though the money he had earned from *The Crying Game* and may have had to borrow money to hire a dinner suit for the ceremony. Looks like he didn't borrow enough to rent the shirt as well.

According to another news report, Davidson tried to use the women's rest room at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, but was shoed away.

Maybe Davidson is beginning to believe his own publicity. Boy George, whose career is in comeback with a version of the movie's title song, said that he has known Davidson for years, and that the real Jaye didn't pose as a woman: "I've never seen Jaye in heels and a dress. But then he does blow the boundaries. He looks like a girl even without

makeup."

Ms. [REDACTED] suspects there is a feud brewing between the two British gender benders, as the tabloids would call the boys.

●●●

Davidson will have really made it when he appears in drag at a major designer's show.

Rumor has it that boys have long been posing as women on the runways. But only recently have these drag appearances been acknowledged. This year's star, of course, was RuPaul, who strutted for Kalinka. Her severe clothes look like they were made for drag queens anyway, or, as one fashion commentator said, "for the ones who can stand on staircases and issue proclamations about bumpy nights."

Betsey Johnson actually showed dresses for men. Featuring 70's retro, the models looked like Woodstock holdouts. But the dresses looked fresher on the men than on the women.

●●●

Of course the quote about bumpy nights was a direct reference to Bette Davis' line in *All About Eve*. Miss Davis has long been the target of female impersonators, and that line, along with "What a dump!" has been a staple of drag shows. But now there is a new twist in that genre -- men portraying women is serious (non-drag show) theatre. Two new shows have opened recently on the East Coast.

James Beaman took a natural talent for mimicking Lauren Bacall's voice and turned it into a one-man show entitled *Bacall: By Herself* and opened it in Boston. The show is a serious -- yet fun -- look at Bacall in the early 1980's.

"This kind of performance is the greatest disguise an actor can put on," Beaman said. "To become a woman, and be convincing, is a real challenge."

Will Stutts is keeping his female impersonation in the family. The second cousin of Tallulah Bankhead has brought his famous relative to life in a Philadelphia theatre.

Stutts spent most of his 25-year career as an actor writing and performing one-man shows. He has done Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, Noel Coward, and Edgar Allen Poe. He crossed the gender line to mark his silver anniversary in show business. "The big thing about this business is to be stimulated, to do something original, so I said, 'Let's go for broke.'"

●●●

Going for broke seems to have been the slogan of the transsexual known in court records as Jane Doe. She sued her former employer, Boeing, for firing her, she claimed, because she is transsexual. The Washington State Supreme Court recently ruled that the firing did not violate the state's laws.

Doe had claimed that the aircraft maker placed unfair restrictions on her, including a prohibition against wearing ultra-feminine clothing after she began her transition in 1985. She was also told that she could not use the women's restroom until she had her surgery even though she had adopted the social role of a woman. The company fired her after receiving several complaints about her excessively feminine clothing and use of the women's restroom.

The court ruled that the anti-discrimination law required an employer to make reasonable accommodations for an employee's abnormal condition, and that Boeing complied with the law.

●●●

Joanne [REDACTED] isn't sure if her bosses will fire her after learning that she is transsexual. Her bosses are the citizens of Arvada, Colo. [REDACTED] is a first-term member of the city council.

[REDACTED] was forced to reveal that she had a sex change in 1973 after a newspaper in nearby Denver was about to publish the information. While at first angry that she had to make her medical history public, she has since seen several benefits.

"It's as if I finally have a history and can face the world as a whole person after going through all

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those years of condemnation and embarrassment and complete degradation," she said. "This is really a serendipitous blessing, not only for me, but for masses of people suffering from this thing."

Since the disclosure, many have expressed support, including colleagues on the council.

"She's probably one of the most hard-working and committed city councilpersons in recent years," one said. "I think she's a very good councilperson and certainly should continue to serve."

That's [redacted]'s intention. Her term runs until 1995, and at that time she will decide whether to face reelection or run for mayor of the community of 89,000 residents.



Teresinha [redacted] of Lisbon, Portugal, wasn't lucky. When her secret was revealed, she was put on trial for fraud. For 18 years, [redacted] had told her neighbors that she was the decorated retired Army general Tito Anibal da Paixo [redacted].

[redacted]' undoing came at the hands of angry neighbors from whom she had borrowed money she failed to repay. He had promised to repay the loans when he received his military pension.

Her creditors checked for the general's service record and found none. They took the matter to police who discovered [redacted]' true gender when the ordered him to undergo a physical exam.

Five years ago, [redacted] married a retired nurse, Joaquina Costa, who by now had learned the truth. But when they married, [redacted] made her promise to live a chaste life.



Meanwhile in Washington, a federal judge has endorsed a woman's request to portray a military

man. U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth ruled that the National Park Service was wrong when it prohibited Lauren Cook [redacted] from dressing as a Confederate soldier during Civil War reenactments on the Antietam National Battlefield Park.

While [redacted] fought her case for women's rights, the issue also prompted a lot of discussion about transvestism among the men whose hobby is dressing up in sometimes fancy costumes and pretending to be something they aren't.

"Contemporary females who dress the part of Civil War soldiers are reenactor transvestites," one Civil War buff wrote in a reenactor newsletter. "Transvestism is deviant behavior, psychoanalysts tell us, which is deeply rooted in homosexuality and self-hate."

But one reenactor wrote to say that he was an actual transvestite and urged his fellows to "open our minds and get on with business."

[redacted] said most of those who opposed her are a small faction of rednecks. She also noted that if beer-bellied, middle-aged men can pass muster posing as skinny 15-year-olds serving in the Civil War, why should women be barred from reenactments?

It is an historical fact that many women dressed as men and joined both the Confederate and Union armies.



While Ms. [redacted] conducts research into men whose choice of clothing would have best suited them for Union Gen. Joe Hooker's auxiliary corps, you can keep an eye out for contemporary crossdressing items. Send them to her in care of **Cross-Talk**. Be sure to note the name and date of publication.

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NEWS



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USING EYESHADOW TO ENHANCE YOUR EYES

by Valerie [REDACTED]

Remember when you used to see women with their eyelids caked with bright blue eyeshadow? Ugh!!! Well, we've come a long way, baby. Now we use earthtones to achieve a totally natural look.

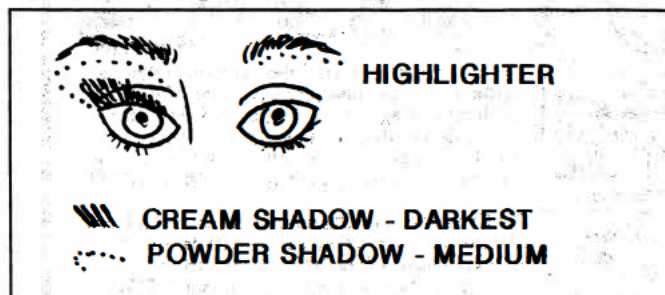
Most of the time we will be using powdered eyeshadow, so we need to create a moist base for it to adhere. As we discussed earlier, moisturizer is applied before foundation, especially around the eyes. This area is always thirsty for moisture, since the skin here does not produce enough natural oils.

If you're young, or you've had an eye lift, you can be a bit more creative with creme eyeshadow or foundation shading first, then apply powder shadow. If your eyelids sag, pull the skin taut with your fingertip while applying shadow.

Our main objective is to create large eyes ... the focal point of our face. If your eyes are close-set, the emphasis of color will be on the outer portion of the lid. Conversely, with wide-set eyes, the color is intensified at the inner portion.

Apply eyeliner first, as close to the lashes as possible. If you find it difficult to make a thin line, use creme eyeliner and a brush.

Use the tip of a sponge applicator and apply shadow over liner to diffuse the line. You can also use the tip to draw a **very** soft line from the outer corner of the lid up to the end of the eyebrow with a natural earthtone color. This will be your guide. Apply your colors from this line toward the center, using a darker color first and gradually shading to lighter. The diagram illustrates this.



The diagram also shows that a lighter color applied under the eyebrow and the center of the lid will give a more "wide open" look. A soft line of a darker color just above the eyelid crease will also make the eyes look larger.

Blush colors will help blend eyeshadow color, especially from the outer lid up through the temples into the hairline.

You probably love the beautiful colors of spring and summer. Pastel pinks, blues, yellows, electric purple, blue, green and pink. But you say you've had your colors done and you're an autumn or winter? Well, guess what? You can wear pastels or bright colors too! It all has to do with your skin tone.

Take a piece of silver material and a piece of gold material and hold them, one at a time, next to your face. If the silver seems to bring out pink tones in your skin and the gold makes you look green, then choose colors with blue tones. If the silver shows off freckles and red blotches but the gold gives you a warm glow, find colors with yellow/orange tones in them. Most colors can be found in blue or orange tones, even red and black.

Should you match your eyeshadow to your outfit? You can, but there is a technique to doing it. First, apply your shading and highlighting in the usual earth tones. If you want to add pastel blue or green, put a dot on the center of your eyelid. Pastel or pearlescent yellow, pink or off-white work best here, and also under the eyebrow arch. Bright colors should be applied at the lash base, above and below, at the outer corners of the eyes. You can either apply the brights over your eyeliner ... or you can try bright colored eyeliner pencils!

For evening, you can be more daring and apply these colors in the eyelid crease, blending into a triangular shape at the outer sides with the high part pointed toward the end of the eyebrow. As always, remember to blend colors into the earthtones.

One last summer makeup tip: If your face tends to perspire, using oil base colors will prevent them from smearing.

[Valerie [REDACTED] is a California licensed cosmetology instructor and owner of Hair To Wear Wigs in Torrance, California. You may write her with questions on makeup at 1716 Andreo Ave., Torrance 90501; or if you live in or plan to visit the Los Angeles area, you may call her at (310) 320-5015. Questions of general interest will be answered in this column.]

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CROSSDRESSERS' CLOSET

THE POINT SYSTEM

by Bev [REDACTED]

Just when you thought your look was "put together" the Designing Mod Squad pulled no punches! The Seventies are at LARGE! (No pun intended ...)

Bellbottom pants and sleeves, platform shoes, stripes in every direction and human fruit trees?! What to do???

Keep in mind we're not all Cinderellas; chunky platform shoes make the ankle look larger and enlarge the foot. Gratefully modified platforms are available. To check for safety (I'm not kidding ... just making sure that your crossdressing activities are s-s-safe!) flex the sole. If it doesn't bend, don't buy it!!!

Most T's have very slim hips and long legs and arms -- the perfect silhouette on which to drape bell bottom, pants and shirts, providing your torso is thin.

Crochet is the hottest fabric of the summer, the design being comfort, yet feminine and sexy. Undergarments -- such as a catsuit, leotard, body stocking or leggings and t-shirt -- should be of the same color or matched skin tone color for that nude underneath look. Crocheted fabrics add rich texture to any ensemble and would count for several points in **The 14 Point System**.

Understated, yet up-to-date style is what you're striving for. Simple shoes, one point each; Modified platforms, two points each; decorated or multi-colored, four points each. Each color in your ensemble counts a point ... add a point for small prints. Bows, buckles, baubles and beads; add a

point each. Hosiery: Flesh colored, one point; Contrasting color, two points. Handbags, one point. Earrings: One point each if small; add a point if large or dangling. Hats are one point if they're simple, add points for trim, bows, veils, etc. Nail polish is a point; if toenails are painted and showing add another point.

And so on and so forth. As for the large fruit prints, my personal opinion is they are extremely enlarging and demand too much attention. Keep the fruit on your plate!

Long skirts, oversized tank tops and sandals are more than acceptable for summer, not to mention designed for comfort. Not so comfortable but just as hot are blue jean short shorts and silk blouses in an array of matching colors. Want a long, lean, leggy look? Remember bright colors count for one point.

Before leaving on your next outing, stop and add up your points. If they total over 14, something must go!

[Bev [REDACTED] is the proprietor of Femme Development Services in Studio City, Calif. You may send her questions about fashion c/o Cross-Talk or by e-mail to "Bev" via the Cross Connection BBS. If you live in or plan to visit the Los Angeles area, you may call her at (818) 769-0983 to make an appointment for a personal consultation.]

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MS. BINTHAR DUNDAT: TIPS ON PASSING PASSING BACK

by Lynette

Are you too much into the feminine role? Do you have trouble getting back to everyday life? Then you may be suffering from "PASSING BACK" syndrome (not to be confused with "BACK PASSING" or the American "BUCK PASSING", as practiced at buck's turns). However, with these simple tips, you can find out for yourself.

TIP 1. As soon as you get to work, rush into the loo and then ask yourself, "Which one am I in?".

TIP 2. As you entered the loo, did you knock your head on the door jamb? If so, and you don't normally, then remove your high heels.

TIP 3. Look in the mirror. Is your hair different? Is it bouffant, down to your shoulders, a different color? Then remove your wig.

TIP 4. Spin around briskly. Do you feel a draft of air up your legs? If so, enter the cubicle and remove skirt. At this point you desperately need to get some pants. My only suggestion is to breathe in and out very quickly in short pants. Put them on and go back to the mirror.

TIP 5. Face the wall and throw yourself against it face-on. If it hurt, then you have passed a major hurdle. You did at least remember to remove your

bra last night.

TIP 6. Return to your desk. Try ringing "Dial-a-Prayer". Did you have difficulty? Then remove your false fingernails and proceed.

TIP 7. Rush up to your favorite female co-worker and plant a big kiss on her cheek. Step back. Are there red lip marks on her cheek? If so, return to the loo and remove makeup.

TIP 8. Place the fingers of your right hand against your cheek, just below your ear. Close your fist and pull. If you experience a sharp pain in your right ear, then quickly remove your earring. Repeat for the left ear.

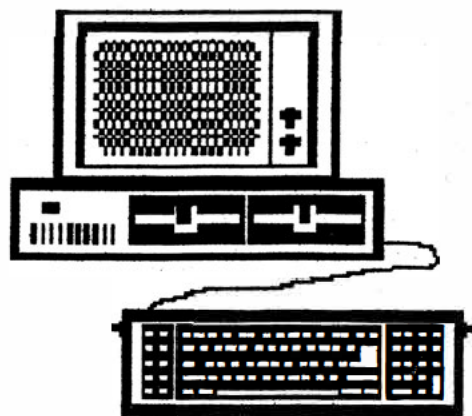
Well, there we are. My simple list should safely see you through "PASSING BACK".

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ABOUT HELPING PROFESSIONALS

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

The gender community is often ambivalent towards the helping professional. Some people think they have special insights which can provide answers to difficult life situations. Others believe they are insensitive those who wish instant happiness through hormones and/or surgery. They have been described as "gatekeepers" whose sole function is to control access to certain services.

At two recent professional conferences I had opportunities to discuss these perceptions with other professionals. I came to the realization that the fundamental issue is one of professional ethics. My dictionary defines ethics as "... the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions: medical ethics. Moral principles, as of an individual."

Throughout my education as a therapist, there has been a guiding principle: First, do no harm. The difficulty in applying this conviction is how to determine what might be harmful. It is crucial to protect and support my client but equally important to maintain my credibility and professional standards. As with all ethical/moral situations, there is no single answer. Some would call this situational ethics but I believe that there have to be some underlying standards that remain inviolate. Most of us have such standards in our lives: honesty, integrity and charity come to mind. Most often the reason someone goes to a clinician

is because some aspect of their life has become unmanageable. The client has the right to expect that the clinician has experience and training which can help in their situation. If the clinician does not have the training, it is his/her responsibility to either refer the client or get appropriate consultations.

Even when the clinician has the appropriate training, there can be a conflict between what the clinician believes to be in the best interest of the client and what the client thinks is best. I believe that it is the clinician's responsibility to communicate the reasons why a particular approach can be useful while not shutting out the client's reasoning. Honesty is crucial here. To be honest, it is important that clinicians clearly and consciously understand their own values so that they are not unintentionally imposed on the client.

For example, it has been suggested that transgendered people are a "special case" whose difficulties are caused by society's rigid rules. All that is needed is some hormones and surgery then everything will be all right. Suppose that were the case and further imagine that following such surgery the person's life was no better and might be worse. Who would be blamed? I believe that the professionals would be held accountable because they are expected to act in ways that prevent harm to their clients/patients.

What is the ethical clinician's responsibility? I believe it has two components: guidance coupled with restraint. In some ways, it is like a guide hired for a safari. The guide knows the territory and is supposed to keep his clients out of danger. For this to work, the client has to trust the guide. Without that, the client will ignore the guide's advice and perhaps get into serious trouble. Each safari is different, even when it covers the "same" terrain. The guide has to be flexible yet firm to get everyone safely home.

[You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445, Poughkeepsie NY 12603 or by phone at (914) [REDACTED] All communications are kept confidential. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. Others must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of such a reprint should be sent to Dr. Peo.]

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ARE WE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND?

by Cynthia Phillips

There is a catch phrase going around the gender community at present. It proclaims that when a wife encounters crossdressing in her husband, "some will accept it and some won't"; the ones who won't, can't.

Pretty pat sounding, isn't it? Is it accurate? In my experience, it does ring fairly true. Why is an unaccepting wife the way she is? What separates two basically similar women on this issue? The factors figuring in all this are the reason. **How was she told? What is her relationship with her husband? Does she have children?** These are just some of the important questions we need to know the answers to before we can understand each woman's situation. Notice no mention of the act of crossdressing is included in the questions.

Crossdressing plays little or no part in the lack of understanding of our mates. I have seen non-transgendered marriages fail when the reason was seemingly that the husband was an incurable sports nut or spent all of his time fishing. Many males seem to become consumed with projects or hobbies. I am not a bit enough fool to think of crossdressing as a hobby, and neither should you. However in our eyes, our husbands or partners seem to go about crossdressing with the same inexhaustible energy they expend on other more fleeting involvements. Here lies one of the problems many wives face. We tend to think since he has always been engaged in some type of all-consuming activity, the crossdressing is just one more time-eating hobby. We couldn't be more mistaken. Trust me, regardless of what he tells you or wants you to believe, this never goes away. He may, because of your disapproval, go back "underground," but it never leaves his mind for long. Chances are he was born this way and he will most assuredly die this way.

Being consumed with projects seems to be a male trait. Make no mistake, your husband or partner IS male. Actually, if he wasn't male, you would not have the situation you are in. If he were more female than male, (and there are males in the world like this, not gay, just feminine men) chances are quite good he would have no interest in crossdressing. (There is a good chance also that he would have no interest in you!)

When you have seen as many crossdressers go

about their transformations as I have, you begin to realize they go about it like men preparing for a ball game or hunting trip. The actions involved here have nothing to do with being feminine.

They have the singlemindedness that only males seem to enjoy. Everything must be just right! Their clothes must have the "right" label names (just like teenage children!). The wig has to look like _____ (name a certain actress or movie star). They worry over makeup, walk and actions. I am sure you get the picture. When a group of middle-aged women get dressed to go somewhere, comfort and practicality are the prime factors!

Does all this attempt at perfection get to you? I have had times when it certainly has driven me crazy! I have had many women ask me the age old question about all this - WHY? Why would a male try so hard to become something he is not? Because he is attempting to be that which he admires and desires. Don't make the mistake of thinking he may be gay. He is the basic opposite of the gay male; a man who loves women so much, he wants to appear as one. Gay males generally hate and fear women. The gay drag queens many of us are so familiar with, dress as women to parody them, not to emulate them as the transgendered male does.

Only a male could or would work so hard to catch this sort of brass ring. The satisfaction of appearing as the other gender. As an example, the other members of the gender community are female to male individuals, since these women want to be male, we have the same situation, albeit in reverse. They adopt the male characteristics of intensity and single-minded dedication to their goal.

Does this mean that we don't understand our mate because he is an incorrigible perfectionist striving to reach a goal he, in all probability, will never be able to reach? or is it because he wants to wear dresses sometimes? To women, clothes are just that, clothes. Most of us wear some makeup because society expects us to. We simply don't attach that life or death feeling if we are denied these experiences. My guess is that the woman who is unable to accept crossdressing in her husband, has other problems in her relationship. She may also be lacking in self-confidence, a very necessary ingredient when you are married to a crossdresser! In a solid relationship, with (continued, next page)

WHAT AM I?

by Ricky
Illustration by Rita

I'm confused. Well, more than I usually am, and that's a bad sign. I need Identity, I need a Label to pin my hopes and dreams to. I thought I was a Transvestite, but lately I have found out that is too clinical a word and I shouldn't use it. So I tried being a TV but the rabbit ears kept falling off my head and the satellite dish was just unbearable.

So I became a Crossdresser, but that didn't help because you can only be a real Crossdresser if you are on a television talk show. I tried Femmiphile for a while, but I'm large and blocky enough I was too often confused with a file cabinet. Dressing seemed to take forever when I was an Eonist, and I kept losing my balance when I was Bigendered. Is there such a thing as Trigendered? Might be more stable that way.

No doubt about it, I needed professional help. Fortunately, help was close at hand in the form of

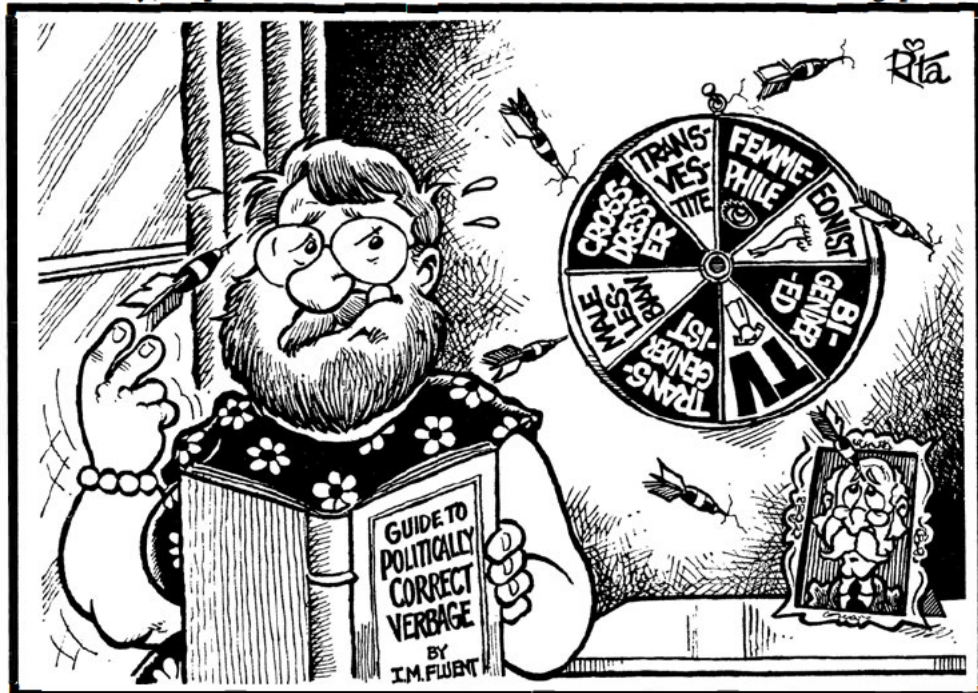
my wife. Being a physically handicapped individual from a family with a mentally handicapped member, and in training to be a social worker to boot, there are few people more qualified on this earth to sling labels, acronyms and jargon around. So I went down and found her at her desk, highlighter in hand, glaring at a textbook and muttering what sounded like arcane curses, but were actually statistical formulas from her probability class.

"Wife," I began, "I am in serious need. My fragile ego can not exist without having a single word to describe my complex need to express my femininity by donning a mop of horsehair, smearing goo on my face, attiring myself in foundation garments with no relation to my physiognomy and perching myself atop heels so high that only ballet training makes standing possible. In all your reading and research,

with your vast experience you must have the answer!"

Her mumbling stopped in mid-expression (mathematical expression, that is) and with an angelic look on her face she replied. "That's simple enough." Pulling a massive tome from the pile on the bookshelf, she opened it and said "Here it is. It says here that social workers are 'differently trained', my Down's syndrome relative is 'differently intellectual' and my bad leg makes me 'differently abled'. So you are, of course, 'differently dressed'." She turned back and began mumbling again and I beat a hasty retreat to my word processor.

How simple. How obvious. How official. So, there is no more need to devote pages and pages to



discussing what our community is to be called. When someone asks, just tell them you are differently dressed. No problem.

S.O. THERE ! ... continued

complete trust in one another, crossdressing is not a large problem. Once we understand the real implications of this, it tends to lose its threat.

Remember, regardless of what your mate wears, he is still a male. Still thinks like one. Understand all this and you will be one of the women who are able to accept your mate for what he is, crossdresser or

not. Once you understand, you will be able to be able to explore this phenomena together. Because he probably doesn't understand it any better than you!

[Cynthia Phillips is the publisher of Partners, a quarterly newsletter for crossdressing couples.]

YOUR ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

by Joan

Those who want to go to public places and not be detected have to learn how to fit in. Two factors, closely related, must be considered.

Attitude has to do with how comfortable you feel with yourself. It is very possible to spend hours selecting an outfit, dressing, doing makeup, and preening in general. When you are all done you are still not comfortable with yourself. There is always a reason.

My advice is to find out what the problem is before you venture out. There are many things that may cause this feeling. You might be wearing your favorite outfit, but you know in your heart it does not fit properly. My advice is no matter how much you love the outfit, **DON'T WEAR IT.**

The problem could be as small as you have the wrong type or color purse, shoes, jacket, or numerous other worrisome things. Your hair may not be just the way you like it. Whatever gives you the feeling that makes you uncomfortable should be searched out and dealt with. If you cannot pass your own inspection, you will never pass the inspection of others.

At all times you must be acutely aware of everything you do. Walking, sitting, gestures with your body, head, and hands are all things which must be studied from females. Make sure the person you are studying acts feminine. Many ladies act like truck drivers: They are not good subjects for you to learn from. Thank goodness many women prefer to be ladies.

I sometimes dress and go to the mall just to study the women. I will sit and watch them and I get very comfortable. Many of the women do not take care of themselves; in fact, it is a sin how they let themselves go. I am very much aware of the movements of all of the women who pass me. I select the ones I feel I should be watching and study them closely, and sometimes I will even follow the really feminine ladies for a while just to emulate them.

You never know when you will end up in tight quarters with a half dozen ladies. This could be in elevators, dressing rooms, restrooms, restaurants, or numerous other places. You must always be ready for what may happen. Ladies have a tendency to talk with other ladies especially in lines.

Learn to smile and nod your head gently. Sometimes they will stop talking and sometimes

they will continue. Just keep smiling and agreeing using head gestures. Act self-assured. Inspect what ever you are holding, check in your purse, look busy.

Dress for where you are going. If you are forty years old you do not wear a miniskirt and five-inch heels to a mall.

You must always dress to suit the situation you are going to be in. If it is going to be a mall or a movie a skirt and top is always in taste. Suits are good for dinners or lunches in the better restaurants. I don't have to suggest to anyone how to dress for a party -- everyone seems to know. Always dress tasteful, it's always in style.

Remember every movement you make must be deliberate. When you walk take small steps. Keep your head up. Smile at people who look at you -- don't ever look away. Never swing your arms close to your hips; ladies swing them out four to six inches.

When you go to sit be very sure of how you will do it before you reach the chair. Always keep your legs or ankles crossed while sitting. Getting up properly from your chair is almost as important as sitting down.

If you do not have a female to go out with, go alone. One crossdresser doing everything right has a good chance of getting by; two have no chance. The first time out is the most difficult, especially in the daytime. My advice is, if you do not have a female to go with, go with an experienced crossdresser just

Remember the word ATTITUDE; it can make you feel as good or better than most of the females around you.

to observe, but don't dress the first time. You are just going to get the feel of it. The more you do it the easier it becomes. I have been in no less than fifty malls around the country dressed, and so far have not had one serious problem. I could go on and on about this subject, but if you just remember the word **ATTITUDE**; it can make you feel as good or better than most of the females around you.

Another related topic is being prepared, which I will discuss in my next article.

[This article appeared in a slightly different form in the Serenity newsletter, Fort Lauderdale FL.]

GENDER ROLES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

by JoAnn Roberts

Civil Rights: Everyone wants theirs protected. Transgendered people are no different in that respect. We want preservation and protection for our Civil Right to present ourselves in whatever gender role is comfortable for us. Toward that end, the *Bill of Gender Rights* was created to clearly define of our gender rights. These are: The right to assume a gender role, the right to express a gender role, the right to control one's body with respect to gender role, and the right to sexual expression with respect to gender role.

The bill was created out of need based on a philosophy of law called "Legal Positivism." That is a school of constitutional interpretation that claims individual rights exist **if and only if** they are written into laws. This is why this country has spent so much time and effort creating civil rights legislation. We are not "guaranteed" the rights to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" *a priori*. Based on this principle then, it was necessary to write down our gender rights so we can work toward getting these rights protected by law.

Some people may argue that transvestites have no "right" to crossdress, yet we see people who don't own motorcycles wearing "motorcycle" jackets and people who don't own cows dressing like cowboys and cowgirls. Some people may argue that transsexuals have no "right" to reassignment surgery, yet people born with bad eyesight have their vision corrected routinely, and people with hair on their faces scrape it off daily.

No one, however, can logically argue that we don't have a "right" to assume a gender role because, in fact, society requires all of us to assume a gender role based on our anatomy so that it knows how to interact with us as individuals.

The terms man and masculine, woman and feminine, reflect gender roles and gender presentation, not physical, genetic or somatic sex.

Each of us is "assigned" a gender role at birth based on our anatomy at birth. We are then expected to develop that gender role within certain limits stereotyped by our anatomical sex. If we attempt to

deviate too far from these unspoken, unwritten stereotyped limits, we are usually met with severe disapproval by family, friends and society at large. Those of us who insist on rejecting this "assigned" gender role are likely to encounter severe emotional, physical and financial consequences.

Since "gender" is a social construct and not a biological given, the "right" to assume a gender role and express it may be viewed, in some instances, as "Protected Speech" under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. But that blanket does not cover all the issues for transgendered people.

Part of the problem is the common misconception, even among counseling professionals, that sex and gender are the same thing. **Nothing could be farther from reality.** It is not necessary for one to be a biological male to be accepted as a "man," nor is it required for someone to be a biological female

in order to be accepted as a "woman."

Another part of the problem is the popular misconception that transgendered behavior is a **sexual** dysfunction. Both transvestism and transsexualism are often referred to as "sexual" deviations. For example, the DSM-III-R correctly lists "transvestic fetishism" as a Paraphilia. However, many people, counseling

professionals included, easily transpose the two words to create the nonexistent category of "fetishistic transvestism" and then assume that all transvestic behavior is fetishistic, i.e. sexually deviant. This is an unwarranted and illogical conclusion.

Nevertheless, we are commonly characterized as a sexual minority group and there are many in this community who object to this characterization, arguing that transgendered behaviors are issues of gender role/identity, not sexual orientation.

Confusion of gender role with sex role is a common problem. Current American culture allows for modest variations in acceptable gender roles for males and females, but when any individual crosses the invisible boundary that separates "man" from "woman," those narrow stereotypical gender-limits are applied and used as the basis for

Part of the problem is the misconception, even among counseling professionals, that sex and gender are the same thing. **Nothing could be farther from reality.**

discrimination.

Finally, it is too often thought that laws which prohibit discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation will provide adequate protection for transgendered people. In fact, current laws which bar such discrimination do not protect the rights of all transgendered people. Discrimination based on gender role or gender presentation exists separate from sexual orientation issues, and transgendered people, especially transsexuals, deal with it daily.

Our community must organize itself to address the issue of gender-based discrimination. We should recommend that future legislation aimed at protecting the Civil Rights of any sexual minority be sensitive to gender related issues and include wording that prohibits discrimination on the basis of

It is too often thought that laws which prohibit discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation will provide adequate protection for transgendered people. In fact, current laws which bar such discrimination do not protect the rights of all transgendered people.

gender identification, as well.

It is my belief that focusing on gender issues in addition to sexual orientation issues as the basis for political action will benefit the largest group of people possible. We will be supporting gay/lesbian rights and women's rights while arguing for our own rights.

There is no time to waste. On the very first day of the new congressional session, H.R. 431 -- the Civil Rights Act of 1993, was introduced by a group of progressive representatives. The intent of the bill is to protect people on the basis of their **sexual orientation**. The operative wording in early drafts reads: "It shall be unlawful to discriminate against any person on account of that person's sexual orientation, actual or perceived."

Please note that this will not protect transgendered people unless we mobilize now to get suitable wording for protection of gender role/identity added to this bill.

Let's not get sandbagged as we did with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Write or call your

regional representatives in Congress and tell them you want gender identification protected and that you want them to support H.R. 431.

If you're too scared for that, at least support the International Conference on Transgender Law & Employment Policy. You'll find the details on the upcoming second annual conference in just about every newsletter and publication in the community, including here in the **Cross-Talk** calendar listings.

Finally, strongly urge all our organizations to get involved and I urge you all to get involved. We have a lot to lose and much to gain. If we blow this chance at securing our rights we will have no one to blame but ourselves.

GETTING NOTICED -- HOW TO PERSUADE CONGRESS

When writing letters, include your name and address. Cover one subject per letter. If you write about a bill, include the bill number. One page letters are best.

State your request (e.g. support for H.R. 431), and the reasons for your position. Request a reply; if you get a reply, write back with a "thank you" if they support, or restate your position if they oppose.

There is a generic address for Senators and

Congressmen: The Honorable _____, Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, or The Honorable _____, House Office Building, Washington DC 20515.

Personal visits are most effective when a vote is scheduled for an issue. Make a phone call if there isn't time to write or visit. If you call, you will likely speak to a "staffer;" your call will be tallied and forwarded to the Senator/Representative. Cover one subject per call. Be brief -- state your position and the action you want.

To get a copy of a bill, write the Senate Document Room, B04 Hart, Washington DC 20510, or the House Document Room, B18 House Annex 2, Washington DC 20515. If you don't know the Bill Number, use the title or describe it. Include a #10 self addressed envelope with your request.

Remember this: The best way to predict the future is to invent it yourself.

[This article was adapted from the text of Ms. Roberts' keynote address at this year's "California Dreamin'".]

MEN IN SKIRTS

by Mary Ann [REDACTED]

In my previous article, I described how I flew from California to Ohio, dressed as a man from the waist up, but wearing women's black stretch pants, nylons, and women's moccasins. People generally didn't notice, and everyone I spoke to was very friendly. I commented that maybe next time I'd try a skirt.

Well, next time came, and I decided to try it out. The experience was interesting, educational, and mostly fun!

I was in California for a meeting on a Friday. After work, I met some co-workers for a very nice dinner at company expense. By 9:30 I was headed back to the hotel, with a 10:00 flight back to Ohio the next morning. A perfect chance to try out the skirt. I had a lot of combinations I wanted to try, all from the waist down.

Figuring it was Friday night, and if I was going to try something blatant this was the time, I changed into opaque suntan tights, the same pair of mocs, and a denim miniskirt. I've been letting the hair on my legs grow out in anticipation of summer, but the tights make my legs look shaved unless you look very closely in daylight. Above the waist I wore a red Buckeye t-shirt and my leather bomber jacket. My head was my regular male head, with short hair. Wearing a skirt with no purse makes it interesting finding a place for a wallet, car keys, and the like. Even though this was a jean-style skirt, it only had pockets in the front. I put my wallet in one pocket and my keys in the other. (In the stretch pants, I had no pockets, and had to use the jacket pockets.)

My first excursion was an errand. When in California, bring back wine. I figured it would be easier to shop tonight than in the morning.

I went down the elevator and through the lobby, nervously wondering if I was attracting attention. There were a few people in the lobby, all busy with other things, and nobody seemed to notice me. I went out the door and into the full, dark parking lot. As I was heading toward my rental car in the first row, a car pulled into the lot and stopped 50 feet behind me, shining its headlights right at me. Well, I figured, there's a gawker. I got into my car and headed off. The other car pulled into the space I had left, and then I realized: this car wanted my parking space more than it wanted to

ogle me.

I drove around until I found a grocery store, pulled into the parking lot and went in. At 10:00 PM the store wasn't crowded, but it wasn't empty either. Nobody seemed to pay any attention to me as I searched the wine section for four interesting bottles. Having found them, I went up to the checkout. Only one checkout open, with two people in front of me, and it's moving slowly. Nothing to do but stand there and wonder what people are thinking. As people lined up behind me, nobody seemed to be paying much attention, although a couple of people did seem to glance at me. Eventually I got to the front and paid for the wine. The cashier could not see me below the waist, and he called me sir. Since I wasn't trying to pass, this didn't matter to me at all. I took my bag of wine bottles and headed back to the car.

Getting back to the hotel, I left the wine in the car. I wanted to try the hotel bar on the way in. I

Nobody seemed to be paying much attention although a couple of people did seem to glance at me.

figured if anybody was going to react, it would be in there, and being a name brand hotel, it would be full of business travelers and not teenagers, so there wasn't much risk of getting beat up.

As I walked into the bar, I noticed a group of four couples sitting around some tables pulled together, and a few isolated men and couples off toward the corners. There was a bar proper, which was empty, and a barmaid behind the bar preparing things for the evening. I walked right past the large group and sat down at the bar, with my back to the group. I could hear them but not see them. They obviously saw me as I walked in, so I listened for their reaction. I was not disappointed.

Immediately one of the men loudly commented "That's disgusting." The women immediately lit into him. I heard comments about gender conditioning, how from birth girls are dressed in pink and boys in blue, and it goes on from there. The men knew when they had met their match, and mostly just agreed with the women. This conversation didn't last more than a minute or two, and they went on to other things.

The barmaid, who could not see me below the waist, was very nice and poured me a glass of wine. She then went on with her preparations, needing

help from two other employees who appeared on the other side of the bar. As I drank my drink, she came out several times, and must have seen my legs, but didn't say a word. In fact, she ignored me and my empty glass and the ten dollar bill I had set on the counter for a long time, so eventually I got bored, replaced the ten with a five and left. On the way out, one of the quiet drunks gave me a pretty blatant once-over, but said nothing. I went up to my room and retired for the night.

Next morning, I decided to try the "regular man in a skirt" look. I wore men's socks and sneakers, the same skirt, t-shirt and jacket. The hair on my legs was visible between the socks and skirt. Had it been shorts instead of the skirt, it would have been very ordinary.

I checked out of the hotel with no obvious notice of my attire. The phone bill was double what it should have been, and after some resistance, the hotel staff reduced it to the proper figure. Since they were behind the counter, they didn't see my legs, but as I was standing there for about fifteen minutes settling the bill, many other people saw and ignored them. A stood-up cabbie asked if I had called a cab. The time was uneventful.

My next stop was at a local coffee shop for breakfast. By now I was running kind of late, and I only had a half hour for breakfast. I had heard that a chain called Hobie's had amazingly good coffeecake. I parked in front, walked in and was seated quickly with no reaction. Nobody seemed to notice me, and once I was seated my legs weren't very visible. I took off my jacket and looked at the menu.

Ten minutes later, the waitress appeared. I let her know I had a plane to catch and had to leave in twenty minutes, and placed my order. Three minutes later I was amazed to see my perfectly cooked breakfast sitting in front of me. I dug in and enjoyed my breakfast. The waitress was very nice, getting a me refill on my orange juice and several on my coffee. But I don't think she saw my legs. When it came time to leave, I left a big tip (figuring that people might tell her afterwards, and since I'm an obvious ambassador of the gender community, I ought to try to leave a favorable impression) and went up to the cashier. Since there was a large crowd of people and I had exact change for the check, I left payment on the counter and left.

The next stop was returning the rental car at the airport. I told them I had a 10:00 flight and they

rushed me to the airport in my car. One of the male employees drove and I rode in the passenger seat. My attire was obvious to him. He didn't say a word, but I could tell he was a bit uncomfortable. This man, in his early twenties and with an earring in one ear, politely answered my questions as I tried to make small talk, but he didn't really want to talk. He dropped me and my luggage at the San Francisco terminal, thanked me politely, and drove off.

Having packed all my clothes, a few spares, and four wine bottles in my garment bag, plus carrying a large briefcase, I was pretty weighed down by all of my luggage. The garment bag was enormous. I lugged it through the airport and into the men's room to change, without anyone seeming to pay any attention.

At this point, I wanted a different look, and something warmer for the airplane. Changing with a garment bag in a bathroom stall is not a lot of fun, but I eventually got into a pair of opaque black

My attire was obvious to him. He didn't say a word, but I could tell he was a bit uncomfortable.

tights (which really did look like tights and not like stretch pants) with stretch pants over them to make the tights less obvious, and the skirt over those. The t-shirt and mocs stayed. I figured this way I could quickly lose either the stretch pants or the skirt if the situation warranted. I wasn't sure what situation I would encounter on the plane. I was hoping for an empty plane.

As it turned out, the plane was full. I lugged my garment bag back to my seat and tried to fit it into the overhead rack. It had gone easily on the way out, but the wine bottles made a big difference. I unfolded it so it could lay flat, but there wasn't a whole compartment free. The one over my seat had a few small items at the left, and the next one to the right was empty in the left half and full in the right. Since there was a divider, it wasn't going to go.

At this point, I was frustrated, tired, and grumpy. I thought for a minute and concluded that, other than checking the bag (which I didn't want to do) the small items on the left should be moved to the right compartment. I had no idea whose they were. I started to move them, and a man behind me got up and said "no". At this point I lost my cool, said "suit yourself", and crammed my whole garment bag

into the left compartment, squashing his stuff. He got a bit upset himself at this point, took his stuff out, and put it into the next compartment. He muttered "but you have so much luggage." I had a place for my bag, so I returned to my seat and sat down to try to cool off.

The United Boeing 767 has two seats at the left, an aisle, five seats in the middle, another aisle, and two seats on the right. I was in the right-hand aisle seat. Next to me was a pleasant young man in his twenties. I put my briefcase on my lap, mostly

With the full plane and a male sitting next to me, I was uncomfortable in the skirt and wanted to hide it.

covering the skirt, and tried to relax. Eventually I pulled out the newspaper, put it on my lap, and put the briefcase under the seat. With the full plane and a male sitting next to me, I was uncomfortable in the skirt and wanted to hide it. About this time I noticed a pair of garment bag racks in the front of my section, and wished I had put my bag there. Too late now. The man next to me was reading his book, which he continued to do for most of the flight. He also seemed uncomfortable with me and not very talkative.

The departure time arrived, and the captain made an announcement. It seemed they were ready to go except that their co-pilot had gotten stuck in Los Angeles. They would find a local co-pilot and take off as soon as possible. The entire plane grumbled, especially since the flight, to Chicago, would be late arriving and people might miss their connections or be very tight. The man next to me muttered "this is ridiculous" under his breath. I wondered if he meant the delay, me or both.

Half an hour later, the co-pilot arrived and we took off. I continued to read the newspaper, then lunch arrived and the tray covered my lap. Still no reaction from anyone on the plane, but I was fairly sure that the person next to me must have noticed. He continued to read his book.

Eventually, lunch was over, and they picked up the food. The moment of truth was here -- time to pick up the tray table. I lifted it up. Yawn. Nobody paid any attention, I sat there unnoticed. The movie came on, and I enjoyed it in the dark.

Toward the end of the flight, I had calmed down and was beginning to think of appearances. I had teased off one elderly gentleman who had to have seen what I was wearing, not to mention making

somewhat of a spectacle of myself to the other passengers. I figured an apology was in order, but he was seated several rows behind me on the other side of the aisle.

They announced we would be only twenty minutes late arriving into Chicago, and looking at my itinerary, I saw I had nearly an hour to make my connection. They asked people who were staying on the flight to please wait for those with tight connections to get off the plane first. I turned to the fellow next to me and asked if he had a tight

connection. He said no, but he had a wedding to get to and was in a hurry. I offered for him to go first, as I had an easier connection.

Suddenly, he relaxed. I had offered him a kindness, and he smiled and thanked me. He started to talk about the wedding he had to go to. Still no mention of the skirt, but I was a real person again.

As the people got up to deplane, I turned to the person behind me whose stuff I had smashed. I apologized to him. He smiled at me, patted me on the arm, and said "don't worry about it". I felt enormously better, but I had also learned a lesson. It is important to be especially nice to people when I'm a visible representative of the community, as they will tend to be initially uncomfortable and suspicious. Whatever impression they leave with will color their impressions of other transgendered persons they may encounter or hear about in the future. Should a son later turn out to be transgendered, do we want the parent's reaction to be "one of them smashed my hat" or "I met one on the airplane, and he let me go first to get to my wedding on time"?

I got off the plane in Chicago. My connection was in the next terminal, so I had to lug my garment bag and briefcase down the escalator, along the moving sidewalk, back up, and to my gate.

I made it a point to pay attention to how the midwesterners reacted to my choice of apparel. They were noticing, and not being as secretive about looking at me. I felt pretty uncomfortable, but I plowed on. As I got onto the moving sidewalk in the tunnel, I lugged my stuff onto the "standing" sidewalk and enjoyed a few minutes of rest. Even though I faced forward for the most part, I could tell people were looking at me. One airline pilot was very blatant, as he walked by on the other sidewalk, he craned around and checked me out from bottom to top. I figured that was enough.

At the halfway point in the tunnel, there is a break between the two moving sidewalks and an elevator to the surface. The elevator is hidden behind a privacy panel. I lugged my stuff behind the panel and pulled off the skirt, leaving the stretch pants, tights, and mocs. The t-shirt now went down to about my crotch. I stuffed the skirt into the garment bag, picked it up and continued to the other moving sidewalk.

Instantly, I felt a change. Suddenly, I was ordinary. Nobody paid any attention to a man in stretch pants. I lugged, bought souvenirs, and made it to the gate just in time to board the flight home.

This flight was empty and uneventful. While I sat next to another passenger, there was no notice or reaction. Arriving in Ohio, I stopped into a restroom and pulled on some jeans over the stretch pants. I needed them to face the cold outside!

I'm glad I tried this exercise. I learned a great deal. I learned that men are uncomfortable around men in skirts, but didn't really get a chance to see how women reacted. I found that California is very different from Chicago. I discovered that there is a

here in the (un)real world by Nancy



MOVING?

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heavy line between stretch pants and skirts, that the latter draws a lot of attention while the former tends to be ignored. I found that even if a crossdresser is read, most people will react by going out of their way to ignore her, rather than confront her. (Those who are afraid to venture out of the house dressed should consider this.) And most important, I learned that a smile and kindness to a stranger goes a long way toward relaxing them and leaving them with a favorable impression of transgendered persons.

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PERSPECTIVES ON "WHY" WE CROSSDRESS

by Barbara Jean

As crossdressers we have all experienced the dysphoria that goes along with being something other than what society considers to be normal. We learn to accept ourselves, we learn that our crossdressing is not something abnormal for us, and then we change the dysphoria to euphoria. However there are times when we fail to see the road clear, we go over the bridge and as a result of the overly euphoric condition we once again find a new and different type of dysphoria. We are males, and we lead normal male lives, but to do so we must keep a proper perspective, a proper balance on our crossdressing with our everyday male lives.

Why are we crossdressers? This is a question that we all ask ourselves, and I do not think we will ever find the answer to that question. There are a lot of theories, weak push, defective gene, petticoat punishment, the list goes on and on. For me I feel

Why are we crossdressers? I do not think we will ever find the answer to that question.

that the reason that I am a crossdresser is because God wanted me to be one. I believe that God has a purpose for everyone in life, and my being a crossdresser is a part of that purpose. I believe that my crossdressing is a gift from God, a gift to be thankful for and cherished. I also believe that it is a tool used by God to bring out and to help develop the feminine components to my personality, to help make a better more well rounded person out of me.

What is femininity? *Ladies Home Journal* once posed that question to its readers and they got about as many different answers as they did responses. We all have our own idea of what femininity is. To me femininity represents gentleness, it means being loving and kind, compassionate and concerned, caring and giving. To further attest to this end, in her book *How To Be A Woman Though Male*, Virginia Prince listed some traits that are considered to be masculine, and traits that are considered to be feminine. Let's look at them.

MASCULINE/FEMININE: Aggressive/
Passive; Dominant/ Receptive; Decisive and
Systematic/ Variable and Capricious; Blunt
and Forceful/ Indirect and Yielding,

Commanding and Direct/ Obedient and
Accepting; Dependable, Courageous and
Reliable/Dependent, Timid and Trusting;
Strong and Protective/ Weaker, Seeks
Protection; Leader/ Follower; Active and
Demanding/Patient and Enduring; Determined
and Stubborn/ Accommodating and
Changeable; Detached, Impersonal/
Compassionate, Involved; Practical and
Logical/ Emotional and Intuitive; Rough/
Gentle.

As one looks at the list, one can see that there are positive and negative traits to both, and some traits can be both positive and negative. Masculine traits such as strong and protective, dependable, reliable, practical are always positive traits that we should never lose sight of. But we should also integrate the positive feminine into our everyday lives, things like being patient and enduring, accommodating to the needs of others, compassionate, emotional, and gentle.

When we as crossdressers cross over the line from masculine to feminine, we not only try to look feminine, but we also try to emulate her in other ways as well, in voice, mannerism, and yes we do attempt to try and think like the woman thinks. As crossdressers we have no desire to be female, for there is nothing to be gained by a sex change, we do not wish to be a woman, but in our desire to gain her qualities, we wish to be **womanlike**.

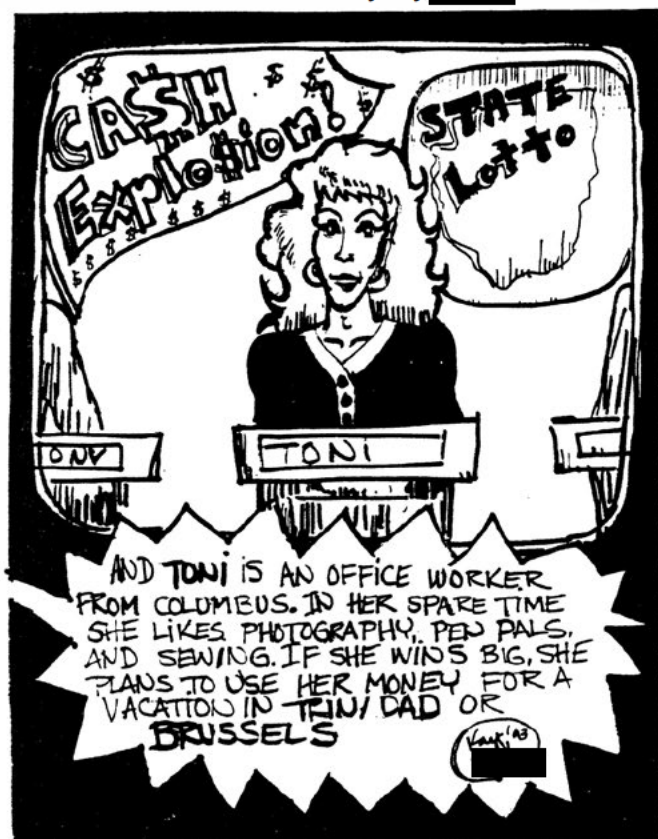
One word that you will see me use from time to time is the word "femmiphile." Yes it is an old word, one that has not been widely accepted by the gender community, but a beautiful and most descriptive word. Virginia Prince coined that word well over twenty years ago. She defined it as a person who had a strong and intense love for what our society considered to be feminine, and a strong desire to associate oneself with the feminine. A word that is so most descriptive of the crossdresser. If we have that strong and intense love for the feminine and that strong desire to associate ourselves with the feminine, then we have the desire to ourselves gain as much of the positive traits of the feminine.

For those of you who know me from my former column in *TV Girl Talk*, you know that I have been amongst homeless, amongst poor, and even at my current age, I know what it is like to be on fixed income, to be penalized for any attempt to get

ahead. Trials of life, and yet trial that I am most thankful for having seen. Trials that have opened my eyes to the plight of others. Would my eyes be opened were it not for my femme side? It would be speculative to say, but I doubt it. My femininity is what makes me care so much about others.

When asked why I crossdress, my answer is "I am not a man, nor do I wish to be this society's perception of the man. I am not a woman, and I have no wish to become one. I am a person, a combining of both the masculine and the feminine. I am dominant and aggressive, but I am also docile and submissive. I am a shoulder to lean on, but I am in need of a shoulder to lean on. I am a giver of love kindness and affection, and in need of the

THE PASSING SCENE by Kay [redacted]



same. I am a person.

It is with this perception that I am able to provide balance in my life. While Barbara's clothes are in the closet most of the time, she is with Jim all of the time. Barbara and Jim integrate, to help form the person that I am.

[Barbara Jean [redacted] is a former columnist from TV Girl Talk, and would appreciate your ideas for future articles. Write her at 1436 Brett Drive, Memphis TN 38127-9136.]

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THE SHOPPING MAVEN

by JoAnn Roberts

Service: 1-900-HIM-2-FEM (1-900-446-2336)

Cost: \$2 connect charge, \$1.99 per minute

Rating: A

I've seen the ads for the "900" telephone numbers aimed at crossdressers, but I've never been tempted to use one until just recently. I received information about HIM-2-FEM, a crossdresser telephone information service, and immediately called the number. The reason I called was their ad listed information about clubs/groups, events and publications. Now that was really different.

When the line connected, I was greeted with a recorded message that the number was out of service. Hmmmm? That's odd. I went through the literature again, got the office number of the lessor and spoke with Jerrie, the system manager. I was told the number was not yet in service but would be up within a day or so. "Yeah, sure!" I thought. Then Jerrie offered to set up a conference call and walk me through the system from the manager's "back door." OK, I'm game.

Within a few minutes, he was back on the line and I was listening to the introductory menu selection. There were several choices including listen to messages and leave a message, but I was most interested in the Bulletin Board. After selecting this option, I was then presented with more options to choose from; ads for products and services, event information and publications. Jerrie had already installed a lot of info gathered from a large variety of sources in the organized community. Other menu selections available on the system are "confessions," catalogs, "shop talk," and club/group information.

At any time, the listener can skip ahead on uninteresting messages or can jump back to any menu selection. Also, the system does not contain, nor accept, sexually explicit material. I liked that.

I'd heard enough. We dumped the conference line and went back to one on one. Jerrie and I spoke more about the system and how much effort had gone into its development. We're talking state-of-the-art software here and a sizable investment. Since the system is computer-based, updating the information should be relatively easy. As a potential advertiser, that's good for me because I can get almost instant exposure for my new publications. For a system user, that's good for them because they can get the most current information on groups, events, publications, services and the like, anywhere in the U.S. at any time. If I were to design a phone-mail/information system, I don't think it would be any different from this one.

So, if you're not "hooked-in" to one of the many TV/TS computer bulletin board systems that permit "instant" electronic mail and don't want to invest in a computer, here's an alternative system that's almost as good. All you need is a Touch-Tone telephone.

And, in case you were wondering, yes, Jerrie is one of us. Why else would anyone go to all this trouble and effort to create a really useful system for crossdressers?

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NATIONAL PUBLICATION REVIEW

by Kymberleigh Richards

For several months, my publishing colleagues in the gender community -- most notably **Cross-Talk** associate editor JoAnn Roberts and **LIFELines** editor Vickie Stone -- have been telling me to get a hold of an interesting 'zine published just over the hill from me in West Hollywood. That publication is *Dragazine*.

Well, a couple of months ago, I wrote to their P.O. Box and introduced myself and this magazine, and guess what? Publisher (and "Head Drag Queen") Lois Commondenominator had heard of us and was planning to make contact as well! Well, to make a long story short, I have the last three issues -- including their first with a four-color cover -- to review this month.

If you've never seen *Dragazine* before, you're in for a wild ride. As you might have guessed from the name (and Lois' title), this is a magazine by drag queens for drag queens. And it does capture the fun that encompasses the drag world. In the issues I have received, I have found interviews with drag porn star Karen LaRue, R & B drag star RuPaul, and Joan Rivers impersonator Larry Marino; a feature on San Francisco's outrageous Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence; photo layouts of the recent "Dragstrip 66" party and Santa Monica Blvd. on Halloween 1991; a feature consisting of quotes from the act of Randy Allen as Bette Davis; a review of Paula Jordan Sinclair's video "Ladylike Deportment"; and an on-going feature called "The Name Game" which lists some of the wonderfully tongue-in-cheek puns that drag queens often adopt as names (samples: Natalie Attired, Sue Perfishal, Minnie Mall, and Jean Ann Tonic -- not to mention the publisher's name!).

All in all, *Dragazine* celebrates all of the fun associate with the drag community, without any of the negativity that drives me crazy. (Read my editorial for clarification of that last remark.) As I write this, there may or may not be an ad for *Dragazine* elsewhere in this issue; Lois said she "had to wait for her nails to dry before she sent it (and what do you expect from a drag queen, anyway?)."

Read it. Enjoy it. Have fun with it.



Now that the dust has settled from JoAnn Roberts'

issues ago, I would like to address another of Danielle Alexis' publications -- in fact, the second oldest in her line. I am talking, of course, about *CrossDresser's Quarterly*.

CDQ has been unfairly chastised for its "inappropriate" content in the past, specifically some of the photographs in its centerfold. Obviously those who have criticized have not compared those photographs to the ones that appear in the so-called "transvestite contact" magazines, or they would realize that *CDQ's* centerfolds are actually in excellent taste. (I wonder if maybe the naysayers are reacting to the name "centerfold" and allowing that to color their thinking?)

Unfortunately, when it's not being attacked, *CDQ* is often taken for granted, which is a shame because Danielle Alexis frequently comes up with articles that have never been addressed elsewhere. As a case in point, the current issue (V3 #3) includes an article on the pros and cons of custom-made clothing and a photo feature on last summer's wedding of my friend Teri Lynn Clemons and her wife Virginia (which, since I was a member of the wedding party, also marks my first appearance in *CDQ*!) -- a feature which several other publications had promised to print photos of, but which only Danielle Alexis followed through on.

I will grant you that this magazine does not cover the full spectrum of the gender community, but it more than makes up for it with its choice of photographs and interview subjects (Marlayna Lacie of the Queen Mary's "On The Scene" parties was featured in this issue).

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PANSEXUALITY AND THE INTERSEXED

by Lee Risemberg
Director, Pansocial Center

I thought I knew all about human sexuality, but what are "pansexual" and "intersex"?

You are not alone in knowing what these two terms mean; you are likely to hear both mentioned in the same breath or at least in connection to each other. When you mention the word "intersex" you are referring to anatomical gender, whereas "pansexual" has to do with sexual orientation; in order to explain the latter I must first define the former. Anatomical gender has to do with the physical structure of an individual. Our society is "bipolar" in its thinking when it comes to categorizing human beings according to their anatomical gender. This basically means that only the two extremes are acceptable as possible, the

Our society is "bipolar" in its thinking when it comes to categorizing human beings according to their gender.

anatomical male and the anatomical female; this popular classification has to do primarily with the external genitalia, that is whether the individual in question has a vagina and breasts or a penis and testicles.

For most practical purposes this crude classification is adequate, but it leaves out of the picture as many as one in 250 individuals who are neither totally male nor totally female; and according to some it happens as often as one in 150. In a population such as that of the United States we are talking of at least one million people.

These individuals are known as the "intersexed", a group which includes the hermaphrodite as well as the pseudo-hermaphrodite. Hermaphrodites are extremely rare and share most of the external and some of the internal genitalia of the male and the female. A majority of the intersexed belong to the pseudo-hermaphroditic subgroup, who may have the general appearance of one gender but some of the external genitalia of the other. Typical examples are the individual who has an almost entirely female body but has a penis and testicles instead of a vagina, uterus and ovaries; they also

have very little body hair and, very likely, no facial hair. Another case would be that of a generally male body, with body and facial hair, but also with female breasts.

There are several theories about the causes for the development of the intersex, and there seems to be strong evidence of mosaic distribution of the sex chromosomes; that is, sex chromosomes may not be identical throughout the entire body, but some areas would contain male chromosomes and others female. Regardless of the causes for this difference, the intersex exists; but society makes it extremely difficult for them to function unless they remain closeted by passing as totally male or totally female.

When an intersexed child is born, the diagnosis is likely to be of a male, since the general appearance of boys and girls is similar except in the pubic area. The intersex usually leads a rather uneventful life until puberty, when the breasts begin to develop; at that time parents and doctors usually panic, and often large doses of male hormones are administered to arrest the development of the breasts. More likely than not, this takes place without consulting the youngster, a traumatic episode in the life of the intersex.

Even when nothing is done medically, the life of the intersex is by no means easy; the general reaction at schools is to stop the pubescent child from participating in physical education. The problem also arises of "what restroom or shower the youngster is going to use", and is usually resolved by having the youngster use only the staff's bathroom. This gives the youngster the feeling of being a freak, making it difficult to enter relationships later in life.

Now on to "pansexuality", which I call "a step beyond bisexuality". If we look at the definition of bisexuality ... the prefix "bi" meaning "two" ... the implication is that the bisexual has the potential to relate sexually to any of the two anatomical genders (males and females). A strictly bisexual individual, by definition, (continued, next page)



EVENTS CALENDAR

- June 9-13, 1993:** 11th Annual "Be All You Can Be" weekend, Chicago IL. Co-sponsored by Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Crossroads, Paradise Club, and TransPitt. Details from Naomi Owen, P.O. Box 342, Chicago IL 60690, or by calling (708) 364-9514.
- July 9 & 10, 1993:** "S.P.I.C.E. (Spouses/Partners International Conference for Education)", Dallas TX, sponsored by Tri-Ess' W.A.C.S. (Women Associated with Crossdressers). Details from P.O. Box 7241, Tallahassee FL 32314.
- August 26-29, 1993:** Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policies, Houston TX. Write Phyllis Randolph Frye, 5707 Firenza, Houston TX 77035 for information.
- September 16-19, 1993:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, sponsored by Creative Design Services. Information from CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406, or by calling (215) 640-9449.
- September 23-26, 1993:** Second Annual New Woman Conference, San Francisco CA. Information from NWC, P.O. Box 67, S. Berwick ME 03908, or by calling (206) 676-5870.
- October 28-31, 1993:** "Fall Harvest '93 Weekend", Kansas City MO, hosted by the five MAGGIE groups (Crossdressers And Friends, St. Louis Gender Foundation, Iowa Artistry, River City Gender Foundation, Wichita Gender Alliance). Details from Fall Harvest, P.O. Box 35061, Overland Park KS 66214-5061, or call (913) 649-8878.
- November 10-14, 1993:** Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", Burbank CA. Event open only to Tri-Ess members or heterosexual crossdressers. Host chapters: Alpha, Omega Chi, Tri-Chi. Details from Holiday En Femme, 1757-D W. Carson St. #306, Torrance CA 90501.
- February 25-27, 1994:** 6th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", San Antonio TX, sponsored by Boulton & Park Society. Information from P.O. Box 700042, San Antonio 78270.
- (Please send information on national gender community events to **Cross-Talk**, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.)

PANSEXUALITY & INTERSEXED ... continued

would not be able to handle a situation in which a potential sex partner looks female but has a penis and testicles instead of a vagina.

A "pansexual" male or female, on the other hand ... the prefix "pan" meaning "all" ... would have no problem entering an intimate situation with a male, a female, or an intersexed individual. The "pansexual" male or female has the potential to relate sexually and emotionally to any human being, regardless of the anatomical structure of the partner. At the time when I was struggling to discover my sexual orientation, there was no word to describe what I felt I was, so I had to coin the term "pansexual"; I thought I was the only such

person in the world. Since that time, though, wherever I have gone with my "Sexuality Myth-Information Workshop", I have invariably found a handful of people who would approach me to say that during the lecture they had come to the realization that they too were pansexual, and the word has slowly but surely been spreading.

[This article originally appeared in Cross-Talk #14 (1990), and is the second in a series of four articles on sexuality myths.]



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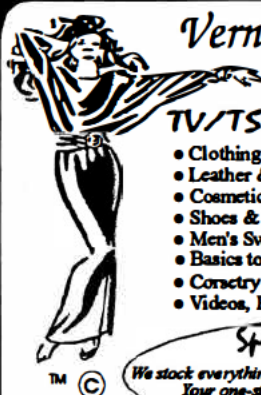
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"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves."

Those activists up in Syracuse, NY, EON Inc., Inc., don't take a back seat to anyone. Alla that city is buzzin' 'bout their latest project, an apartment building owned and operated by the transgender community for the transgender community. According to Angela Sheedy, the building has twenty-eight apartment units that they hope to rent out for about \$350 per month. EON Inc. is after a federally subsidized loan to cover the mortgage. Of course, EON would like to fill the building with people from our community. If you're lookin' for a place to live and you can wait about a year, write to Ann Harper, c/o EON Inc., 523 W. Onandaga St., Syracuse, NY 13204.

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Well, babies, the hot buzz is still about the IFGE convention held here in March, but some of the buzzin' is disquieting. For example, lotsa people are wonderin' why we haven't received a "Thank You" note from the head cheese in Waltham, or why she didn't show up at the charity benefit? Jeez Louise! That's gratitude!

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Gossip! Gossip! Gossip! -- The buzz from the IFGE board meeting was the rather abrupt departure of Nancy Cole, acting chair of the board. Not only did Cole resign as chair, she resigned from IFGE altogether. That act diminished IFGE in more ways than just reducing the board by one member. Cole is the latest in a long line of well-intentioned people who were chewed up by the IFGE juggernaut.

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Never let it be said that MTV isn't doing their part to bring transgendered behavior to the masses. Or rather, is it Aerosmith? Some time back, that band released a song, "Dude Looks Like A Lady", which is an obvious reference, but there wasn't any real crossdressing in the video. But, Aerosmith's latest tune, "Livin' On The Edge", features a crossdresser prominently.

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Layering is still the rage in the fashion scene and here's an item that combines the two great looks of leather with a fitted waistcoat -- the halter neck vest, a great piece for layering. Check it out at Wilson's Leather; about \$60 -- cheap!

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Are you confused, bunkie, when you look into your closet and can't find a thing to wear? The Queen

rarely has that problem, but if you do, perhaps this new book *Chic Simple* is for you. The book shows you how to achieve "that" look in bold graphic pages even a kid could read. In fact, it covers "His", "Hers" and "Kids" too. Credit card orders can call 800-426-9922 or write to Conde Nast Collection, P.O. Box 10214, Des Moines IA 50336. Price \$22, plus \$2.50 p&h.

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Wanna lose ten pounds in ten seconds? Cut off your ... (Oops, wrong story!). The folks at MiracleSuit claim you can look ten pounds thinner in one of their swimsuits because they use triple the Lycra of other manufacturers. MiracleSuits are used in many beauty pageants for precisely that reason. Cost is around \$90, but what price beauty, eh?

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Model Makeup Tricks -- from Helena Christensen: Eyeliner -- make the line as thin as possible; Under eye -- lighten under the eye with a light powder or even a white eyeshadow applied over your foundation; Mascara -- everybody uses Maybelline Great Lash mascara, the one in the pink and green tube.

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More makeup tips, this time from my hero: Rex of New York. For nighttime makeup you have to adjust for the softer lighting, so you can go with high-impact colors like deep red, pink and coral on lips and cheeks. For eyes, add a dot of glimmery shadow in the center of the lid.

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I know a lot of queens, TVs and TSs with tattoos. Some are attractive and feminine, but many were applied in the hope that the person would become a little more macho and fit in better. Mistake. There are ways to remove tattoos, including dermabrasion, chemical peels and cryosurgery, but the latest technique uses that scientific jack of all trades, the laser. Developed by the Candela Laser Corp. in Wayland, Mass., and approved by the FDA, the laser is said to be quicker and less painful than other techniques, although more expensive. Need a tattoo removed? Call Candela at 800-733-8550 for a referral in your area.

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Last month I mentioned the Estee Lauder CD 80 eyeshadows. Several magazines have featured full color fold-outs showing the complete range and

they're pretty fab at \$10 each. There are eight shades in ten families: Neutrals, Teals, Naturals (earthy tones), Browns, Pinks, Blues, Greens, Oranges, Corals & Violets.



Blue is buzzin' in the makeup world again, but not on eyelids this time. Would you believe blue lipliner? What is this, Dracula's makeup artist? No, according to NYC artist Craig Gadson, even a pale pink or beige lipliner is too much color for the pale, shimmery summer lip colors. So he uses Maybelline Sapphire Blue eyeliner pencil or Cover Girl Pro-Lining Eye Pencil in Sky Blue.



There's been much buzz about the glass ceiling and mismatched pay scales for women versus men. Well, there's one occupation where women make quite a bit more than the men; modeling. Yep, male models make about one-half to one-third what a female model makes. Can anyone blame Tula for becoming a model? Not this queen.



A true story: My seamsperson (well, that's what she calls herself!), Lorraine of "The Occasional Woman", has been going to a certain woman hairdresser in a certain salon locally. During a recent visit the woman asked my friend what she does for a living and my friend replied, "I sew." "Oh, what do you sew?" "Uh ... (what the hell) ... I sew clothes for crossdressers." Pregnant pause: "Honey, twenty years ago my name used to be Dominic!" ... Ya just never know these days.



Wrinkles away! After doctors have been prescribing Retin-A as a treatment for photoaged skin, Ortho Pharmaceutical, the manufacturer of Retin-A, has applied for approval of another retinoid, Renova, specifically as a treatment for wrinkles.



I really should have announced the annual MONAs last month, but I was a leetle bit busy. However, lest anyone say that I'm shirking my responsibility as the Harlan Ellison of the gender community, allow me to award a post-April MONA to the Outreach Institute for their recent letter touting the 1993 Fantasia Fair. Doesn't anyone in that office know how to use a word processor? For an

organization that claims to be the only "professional" among us, that letter was most unprofessional.



With unemployment still high, many transsexuals in transition are still looking for jobs. If you're a M2F and job hunting, here are a few *faux pas* to avoid, as noted by several human resource managers: Chipped nails indicate a lack of self-discipline; Nails too long signal "sexy", not "vice-president"; Bright shoes (like red) are perceived as frivolous; Cute bows or Mary Janes suggest immaturity; High heels or strappy pumps are too sexy for office work. Hey, some days you eat the bear; others the bear eats you.



Hey girlfriend, think it's only TVs and TSs taking 'mones? Uh uh, honey! According to various reports, between 250,000 and one million teenage boys are taking anabolic steroids "just to look good." Talk about walkin' time bombs! What is it about this culture that makes us hate who we are so much that we resort to drugs?



It's gonna take ... uh ... Chutzpah to pull off this fashion look -- sheer. Yes, sweeties, come this summer the real women will be wearing sheer everything. So, here's how it goes: layers. A few sheer layers add up to opaque, and sexy. For example, under a sheer skirt try tap pants (I always wondered what to wear those under).



Know why it's so easy for folks to shift genders? 'Cause contrary to popular belief, males and females are very much more alike than different. For example, it's always been said that women have more body fat than men. Not so, according to a new study at Yale University School of Medicine. Using sophisticated Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and careful measurements, the researchers concluded that males and females have the same percentage of muscle (26%) and fat (23%). It's just distributed differently. *Vive la difference!*



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GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

by Ralph W. Judd



4/27/90: Danny (Bob Saget, left) and Joey (David Coulier, right) resort to dressing as women in hopes of retrieving an old fraternity mascot from a sorority house on *Full House*, ABC.



7/25/78: Deputy Baker (Kene Holliday) escorts Chief Roy (Victor French), who is showing off his new frilly dress for a dance number at the annual Ladies Auxiliary benefit show on *Carter Country*, ABC.



2/16/93: Doug (Martin Mull) reluctantly goes along with Jackie's scheme to railroad Laura into marrying a bowling pro on *The Jackie Thomas Show*, ABC.



11/12/83: Arnold (Gary Coleman) notices the similarity in looks between his father's cousin Anna (Conrad Bain) and his dad (also played by Bain) on *Different Strokes*, NBC.

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Reprints from the newsletter of gender community organizations nationwide

PRESSURE EQUALS THE FORCE DIVIDED BY THE AREA

by Patricia [REDACTED]

Initially, this article was going to be filled with lovely metaphors and well orchestrated analogies, but the more I thought about it the more I became angry and hurt and less interested in sugarcoating the truth. If you have a weak heart perhaps you should stop here and read the article "My First Trip to the Mall."

Well, its nice to know someone stuck around. If you will permit me, I will adjust the soapbox, kick off my heels and pour a drink. Do you remember me? Three years ago I meekly attended my first Tri-Ess meeting, pink sweater and burgundy skirt, my 1970's Frederick's wig and a makeup job that looked like it was applied by a brick layer. I was overwhelmed to find six other crossdressers who welcomed me and understood what I was going through. Well, over the years I have shot the brick layer, decided that pink was not the only color I could wear, and got at least one new wig. But, as is often the case, the more you learn the more there is to learn -- and our community won't let you forget it. The other side about learning is that many times we don't like what we learn. This has certainly been the case recently.

QUESTION: Is it possible to measure peer pressure?

ANSWER: Yes, peer pressure can be measured by placing the subject in a vacuum, then measuring the amount of internal pressure his body exerts. This amount is subtracted from 100 (the maximum degree of peer pressure), and the result is the degree of peer pressure on the subject. If the measured peer pressure exceeds 60, it is a good idea to leave the subject in the vacuum for a year or so. (Taken from the December 1990 edition of *Omni*; author, Merry Morris).

I feel like I should be left in that vacuum for a decade or two. But I bet I wouldn't be alone. Our community exerts more peer pressure on an individual than most can tolerate. It starts with

shaving your legs and ends with a week-long trip in beautiful southern Colorado. We all succumb to it in the vain of learning from our peers. We start with the simple things like makeup, hair, passing in public and before you know it you have digested three months of female hormones and now only have to shave once a week. The funny thing is that it happens more than you know and it happens easier than you think. Yes, it's a clever scam, always focusing on the greener pastures of femininity, the glory and glitz of beauty and sensuality. And if perhaps, you don't immediately buy into the feminine mystique, someone is always right there to remind you that as a crossdresser you are reaping the benefits of living in a world that was pioneered by the famous transsexuals and transgenderists. (You should feel guilty here and rush to the phone to call your psychiatrist, endocrinologist, and book a room at the Best Western in Trinidad, Colorado.)

On the other side of the coin, our loved ones are watching with their mouths wide open. Where has his backbone gone? Why the sudden interest in SRS? What will happen to us if daddy becomes a girl? This is about the time you pipe up and say "Honey, why don't you come to a meeting with me and meet the other girls?" Yes, this is a guaranteed way to get your spouse involved. With a lawyer.

Peer Pressure is real. It's alive and well in all facets of our lives and especially in the gender community. The pressure ranges from a gentle nudge to downright discrimination. *Tapestry* #59 dedicated some 35 pages to telling the story of Merissa Sherrill Lynn and her wonderful stay at the Biber Bed and Breakfast. I have to ask the question, are we destined to SRS the moment we don our first pair of panties? Is this the Reefer Madness of the 50's ... Panty Madness?

Well, I'm an all-American crossdresser: white panties, blue bra and red hair, scotch in one hand and a purse in the other. Sometimes I feel very intimidated by the TSs and TGs. I get pretty upset by the way crossdressers are treated in this community -- it's like we really aren't a

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contributing factor. Well, this is just plain bull*!%. The hard cold facts are that there are more crossdressers than there are TSs and TGs. The TSs and TGs eventually leave the community to lead their lives yet the crossdressers are crossdressers for life. We continue to deal with gender issues throughout our lives. If anybody has picked a difficult road it is the crossdresser: he has to balance a family, relationships and gender issues much like juggling china plates. The peer pressure currently experienced in our community is enough to destroy this tedious juggling act.

So how do we, all-American crossdressers, deal with the situation? I believe the solution is a three step process. 1) A firm understanding of personal goals and dreams. 2) Real communications between yourself and your life partner. 3) Participation in a support group that understands and empathizes with issues you are concerned about.

PERSONAL GOALS

The difference between having personal goals and not is the difference between the rock in the river and the tree branch. The tree branch is easily caught up in the river's current, while the rock remains stable and moves only occasionally.

Deciding for yourself, totally for yourself, what you want and where you would like to be in both the immediate future and the long term future will provide the greatest shield against peer pressure. The easiest way to defeat external pressure is to create internal pressure greater than the external pressure. This is accomplished through the strength of personal conviction. Personal conviction can be attained by defining self goals and understanding self. This is the foundation upon which a strong self defense is built.

Keep in mind that we all live in a dynamic world. That is, goals and decisions made today may become invalid with time, so be prepared to revisit the goals issue whenever necessary.

LIFE PARTNER

I have chosen the term life partner to mean wife, girlfriend, significant other, or best friend. This is simply a convenient term to use in this discussion. The day to day problems and emotional upheavals which occur in our society will often allow one to forget their personal convictions. The emotion of a dear friend choosing the TS path may cause depression and internal questioning. Having an honest discussion with your life partner will ease

the momentary conflict.

Ideally, the communications with your life partner should be open and honest. This is not necessarily easy to achieve, but is essential to your relationship and personal mental health. This type of communications should be a constant goal in the relationship. She can help you weather the difficult times if for no other reason than she has so much invested. The closeness achieved from trying to attain this type of communication will build a stronger foundation and help the relationship.

She can hold you while you tremble in the anguish of self doubt. Her strength can become your strength during trying times. No doubt you have done the same for her. And if in fact the TS path is eventually your path, the foundation of your relationship will allow both of you to explore alternatives that might otherwise be excluded if the communications did not exist.

Your life partner is just that, a dear friend and lover that travels life's paths with you. Your strengths collectively are greater than the individual parts. You are for her and she is for you. She can be your greatest resource for strength in difficult times.

SUPPORT GROUPS

In our community there are many support groups and all of them attempt to expound some unique position. The plain facts are that two types of groups exist in this community: 1) open groups and 2) closed groups.

Open groups are a melting pot of the community with membership ranging from the occasional crossdresser to the post-op TS. While these groups can be a lot of fun they are usually concerned with issues that transcend the crossdresser. They can be a great place to meet new friends and gain some understanding of the TS world. They are not the best place to bring a life partner, or find one for that matter.

Closed groups have a more refined agenda. They deal specifically with the issues of a portion of the community. There are closed TS groups as well as crossdressing groups. Tri-Ess is the largest of the closed groups in existence today that deals strictly with the concerns of the heterosexual crossdresser.

Tri-Ess is a well established organization devoted to crossdressers and his family. We need to support the organization because it is the only group that truly cares about us. I thought a year ago that



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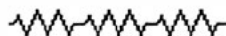
allowing TSs into Tri-Ess was a good idea, but today I have to reconsider that stance. There are a veritable plethora of organizations to support TSs yet only one organization supports crossdressers exclusively, and in Tri-Ess we are the recognized majority.

Participation in Tri-Ess can be very helpful when trying to deal with community peer pressure. To argue that Tri-Ess is free of peer pressure would be absurd, yet the pressure is to a different degree. Seldom is there a new thought, that is, if you are having difficulty with external pressure, rest assured that someone else has struggled with the same concerns. Tri-Ess presents the vehicle to facilitate discussions about those concerns and a path to self resolution. Furthermore, Tri-Ess is an excellent environment for your life partner. Through Tri-Ess she can meet other partners and discuss matters which are important to her.

CONCLUSION

Peer pressure and discrimination will continue to exist throughout time. While the texture may change, the intent remains the same, to suppress a portion of the population in one way or another. To hope that it will just go away is naive. Your best defense is to accept that it exists and find the tools that help you deal with the situation the best you can.

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CHANGING YOUR SEX?

by Nancy

There is something that has been bothering ... no make that **alarming** me, namely the number of people who both talk to me and write to me claiming they are transsexuals.

There appears to be a movement in the gender community that says it's O.K. to be a transsexual rather than be a crossdresser. I really don't know what some of these girls are thinking.

Have you thought this through thoroughly? I mean, **really** thoroughly? If so, here are a few questions.

Do you have a job? If so, will you have one after you have the sex change? If the answer is no, then how will you make a living? Did you know that on average women -- unfairly -- make much less money than men do? Are you prepared to lose the job you have and try to find employment as a woman? It's nice being a girl, but even a girl needs food, clothing and shelter.

What about relationships? So you've been heterosexual all your life. Do you somehow think that putting a vagina between your legs is somehow going to make you want to form a relationship with a man? If you happen to be gay, you already know that gay men prefer a man, NOT a woman.

Some of you girls are married. It's hard enough for the average wife to deal with a husband that expresses a feminine side, let alone one that wants to change his sex! She entered a relationship with reasonable expectations and finds she has been deceived. Of course, it is just about assured that

Jim Bridges

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such a relationship will fail, and not only is the wife hurt by this but ultimately the husband will be hurt as well.

What about children? If you have brought children into this world you have a responsibility to them. Crossdressing can be hidden, if you wish, but changing your sex can't. Are you prepared to deal with the fear, shame, and embarrassment that they will have to endure? Remember, society is not ready to embrace such things.

I have not even covered parents, brothers, sisters, and a hostess of others who will be affected by this. Even the greatest love has its limits, and all too often when a person decides to change their sex those limits are crossed. Be prepared to find yourself alone! Yes, there is some support from the gender community, but they will not be there when you go home at night and find that there is nobody waiting for you.

O.K., so you're willing to deal with all of this. What about after surgery? Do you enter into another relationship with someone and not tell them about yourself? If so, isn't this just another deceitful relationship? And if you do decide to be honest, how many men would opt to stay around? You will be competing with many genetic females out there ... and the same holds true if you would wish to enter into a lesbian relationship. They, too, have a host of genetic females to choose from.

Can you deal with society? If you should decide to go ahead with surgery, you will have to deal with

something beyond employment and relationships ... namely, society as a whole. Bear in mind that society does not take too kindly to either the transvestite or the transsexual. Surgery will not change their viewpoint one bit.

You will have to function in society in a gender that you were not born to. Reassignment surgery does not change the size of your hands, your voice, or the broad shoulders. So in all likelihood you will at some time be "read" and thought of as a man in women's clothing. Few -- very few -- will be able to avoid this.

Also, after surgery you will have to try to enter the world of the genetic woman. If you have not been able to unlearn all your masculine upbringing and if you do not pass 100% of the time, this will be difficult. So don't expect to have the genetic females in our culture welcome you with open arms into their world. Very few women will be comfortable sharing a restroom with someone they either know or suspect was once a man. Unlike the genetic female you will only be **starting** to learn things they have known from birth. How will you talk with them about things like pregnancy, periods, menstrual cramps, and a host of other things that you have not and never will experience? Even with 100% passing, you will at times be the odd one out.

O.K., you say, what does this mere crossdresser know about such things? I do know that there are far too many of us "mere" crossdressers claiming to be transsexuals. What I don't know is **WHY**. Do some of us justify our crossdressing by claiming to be transsexuals? Do some of us get so wrapped up in our feminine side that we forget we are men? Are we starting to think that being a mere crossdresser is something to be ashamed of? Are we forgetting that there are many alternatives besides sex reassignment?

The crossdresser has the opportunity to explore both worlds and will often be able to do so without losing everything. You can be every bit the woman you want to be without having your genitals removed. Womanhood does not exist between your legs ... it exists between your ears. You don't even have to put on any feminine apparel to demonstrate your softer side.

I did not write this to condemn nor condone any decisions you are making. What I really wanted to do was give you a little food for thought. Statistically speaking, there are far fewer TSs than TVs, so it only makes sense that our community would be comprised of far fewer transsexuals than we seem to have. I am well aware that some of you are taking short cuts by not following the standards of living as a woman for at least one year. And some have even used forged documents in order to get hormones and surgery. This is both frightening and alarming. If you are not careful -- **very careful** -- you could wind up being an untrue transsexual ... living in the body of the sex in which you don't belong.

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READER PROFILES

Anaheim, CA: Stephanie [redacted], 31: I am a cabinetmaker and photographer. Have not yet been to any events; I have just made my first trip out to a nightclub and I am looking to become more involved in the gender community. #1478

Bakersfield, CA: Chrys, employed in marketing, and consider myself a writer. I regularly write for trade publications and have had numerous pieces published in "Cross-Talk". I am currently working on an epic-fantasy (dragons, magic potions, etc.). I like long walks and long talks and would enjoy corresponding with those with similar interests. #1144 Chrystine [redacted], P.O. Box 60089, Bakersfield, CA 93386-0089

Palm Springs, CA: Ayme, 36, M2F TS, living and working as a woman for the last two years. Tall, attractive, feminine, sexy. Confident and comfortable in any social situation. Interests in Macintosh desktop publishing, music, dining and dancing. Seeks male or female friends. Try the desert lifestyle anytime! #1186

Redondo Beach, CA: Diva, looking for musicians to form a crossdressing rock/alternative band! #1201 D.P. [redacted], P.O. Box 207, Redondo Beach CA 90277

Santa Ana, CA: Susan, 45, in business part-time. Enjoy sports, reading, chess and war games. Always dressed at home. Interested in hearing from others; also would like to have a serious relationship with a woman who understands me. #1323

Santa Clarita, CA: Bonnie, 40+, love tennis, golf, shopping, cooking, being Bonnie. Been out in public three times dressed and love it. Mother dressed me as a girl when I was a young boy (she always wanted a girl). Will write to all. #1248 Bonnie [redacted], P.O. Box 801416, Santa Clarita CA 91380-1416

South Pasadena, CA: Christy, an educator and professionally involved with human diversity issues, especially the Berdache tradition. I'm going through my transformation, electrolysis, counseling and such, and am very interested in developing friendships with women, caring professionals and persons like myself for companionship and support. #1122 Christy [redacted], P.O. Box 3402, South Pasadena, CA 91031-6402

Van Nuys, CA: Melissa, 44, electronic tech (repair VCRs, stereos, etc.). My passions are music, dressing, shopping, good talkradio. Guitar player for the past 25 years. I love a good 12-step program, the whole gender community, the hell I plan to raise over the next 20 years. I love kids and dogs and I send money home. #1469

West Hollywood, CA: Michelle, 37, SWM, Bi, 5'11"/150 lbs. TV since 11 years old, attending CD clubs last two years. Writer. Other interests photography, film and cinema. Would enjoy meeting other 30-something TVs, possibly for social outings *en femme*. #1355

Yucca Valley, CA: Elizabeth, 54, currently residing in Southern California. Work as a Supply Specialist. Interests include painting and bicycling. I've been away from our lifestyle for a number of years, so my experience level is re-learning it all. Would love to attend some of the national events in the future. Relationships none, divorced. #1506

Avon, CT: Michelle [redacted], MWM, hetero, 5'10", 170 lbs., blue eyes, dark brown hair, '50s, very passable. Member Tiffany Club, co-founder of Connecticut Outreach Society (COS), participant P-Town outings, program chairlady of COS, director/founder of COS Couples Club. Wife is accepting and started COS wives support group. Interested in corresponding with and meeting other honest, caring, passable CDs or couples. Interests include theater, music (jazz, classical and oldies), travel, cross-country skiing, swimming, boating. #1457 Michelle [redacted], P.O. Box 679, Avon, CT 06001

Heyburn, ID: Patience Moiche, 41. I have been attending some of the monthly meetings of the Salt Lake City group and really enjoyed them. I have been a small business owner working with industry, but I have a dream of going back to school and getting into counselling. I am single, enjoy life, and love and appreciate the feminine person I really am. #1305

Aurora, MN: Lynda, SWM, mid-30s, craftsman in design and building equipment, 20 years of all types of mechanical maintenance. Loves photography, martial arts, reading and writing science fiction. Degree in Art. Spend about 50% of my time *en femme*. Would love to correspond with anyone wishing to receive mail from a caring person. #1329

Kansas City, MO: Barrie, married, age 46. Hobbies include photography, writing, playing several sports, collecting antiques. Go to movies, dinner, dancing, shopping as Barrie. Member of Tri-Ess, RCGA (Omaha), and Sigma Nu Rho. Travel in midwest. Love to hear from sisters. Let's exchange photos. I answer all correspondence. #1203 Barrie [redacted], P.O. Box 412948, Kansas City MO 64141

Roslyn Heights, NY: Jane, 34, married, Northern Italian. 5'7"/135 lbs. LIFE and Tri-Ess memberships (2 years). Also subscribe to *Renaissance News*. Interests: Travel, photography, sportscars, nature, skiing, gardening, music, dance, theater, swimming, art and earth sciences. Go out dressed day and night; dress flamboyantly as a guy when not working (Danskins, stirrups, parachute pants, jumpsuits, accessories). Travel throughout the US regularly. Lived in and love California, which I visit as often as possible. I am anxious to correspond with other TV sisters who would be interested in doing the same. #1348 J. [redacted], P.O. Box 484, Roslyn Heights NY 11577-0484

Trotwood, OH: Fran, senior citizen living in SW Ohio, retired. Interested in most outdoor sports, writing and photography. Out of the closet once, years ago, but now in a small community and spouse not supportive. #1489

Merry Point, VA: Samantha [redacted], 76 (going on 50), MWM, retired engineer. Interests: Amateur radio, Rotary, sailing, woodcarving. Attended "Holiday En Femme" in Chicago, "Coming Together" in Houston, "Southern Comfort", "Fall Harvest". Member of Virginia's Secret, DCEA, IFGE, Tri-Ess. Editor of "Secrets", newsletter for Virginia's Secret. Out of the closet since June 1991 and making up for lost time. #1416 T.W. [redacted], P.O. Box 73, Merry Point VA 22513

Seattle, WA: Rose C'est La Vie, neophyte CD, seeking friendship, guidance and amusement. Divorced, 40, and just now learning the art of dressing. Interests include art (read art history, collect Northwest art), baseball, literature and music. I am a lawyer, taking a landscaping class, and write short stories. #1521 J. [redacted], P.O. Box 2346, Seattle WA 98101

To respond to an ad without an address: Seal your correspondence in a stamped envelope and write the subscriber number IN PENCIL on the front. Then place the envelope(s) in a larger envelope and mail to "Cross-Talk", P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365. If you are a subscriber, please write your subscriber number with your address on the larger envelope and your forwarding will be free. Non-subscribers, please include \$1.00 per letter to be forwarded.

Subscribers are entitled to a free 50-word reader profile in this section. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for a profile form if you cannot locate the form you were sent previously.



HOTLINES

These hotlines are run by non-profit organizations, and may not be answered "live" at all times as a result. Listings followed by % are for groups known to be sexually-oriented; listings followed by # are for primarily TS-oriented groups; listings followed by @ are for heterosexual TV/CDs only. Most other listings are for "open" (both TV/CD and TS) groups. While we make every effort to keep this listing updated, phone numbers may change without notice. If you find an incorrect listing, please let us know!

NEW ENGLAND REGION:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
 Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
 Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 371-6292
 East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
 Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 477-6588 %
 Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
 Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
 Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
 Harriet Lane's TV Set, CT: (203) 237-1968
 Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
 Long Island Femme Expression: (718) 446-6753
 Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (201) 794-1665 ext 332
 My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
 Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
 Pink Flamingoes, Boston: (617) 536-5639
 Renaissance Education Ass'n.: (215) 630-1437
 Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (215) 946-8887
 Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
 Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 641-3782
 Rhode Island Society, Newport: (401) 847-1035
 Tiffany Club, Boston: (508) 358-2305
 Transgenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
 Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 781-0257
 Transsupport, Portland: (207) 676-5870
 Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
 XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:

American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
 Atlanta Gender Explorations: (404) 962-3118 #
 Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
 Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
 GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
 Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
 Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 982-7678 @
 Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
 M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
 Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
 Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
 Reality, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
 Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
 Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 685-9254
 Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 741-1187

MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
 Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
 Chicago Gender Society: (312) 434-5445
 City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minn'pls: (612) 229-3613
 Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
 Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 381-8887
 Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
 Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648
 Gender Dysphoria Support, Shawnee Mss'n: (913) 371-0658 #
 Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (317) 894-8109
 Iowa Artistry, Cedar Rapids: (319) 842-2654
 N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #

Quad-City Society for Sex. Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
 St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 567-8615
 Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024

SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAINREGION:

Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
 Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
 Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 545-3668
 CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
 Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 261-3253 @
 Eta Tau Chapter Tri-Ess, Austin: (210) 438-7604 @
 First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
 Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
 Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
 Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-3553
 Heart of Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381
 Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 404-1926
 ReCast, Dallas: (214) 641-4842 #
 Second Image, Austin: (512) 778-5460
 TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #
 Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 988-8064 @
 Tri-Plex Gender Association, Waco: (817) 867-1077

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071
 Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 774-8463
 Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
 Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
 Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #

THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
 American Transsexual Education Center: (213) 469-4709 #
 Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317
 CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @
 Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4112
 Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
 Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
 Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
 Powder Puffs of Orange County, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
 Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
 Sacramento Gender Association: (800) 585-7742
 Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
 Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

CANADA:

Canadian Crossdressers Club, Toronto: (416) 921-6112
 Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
 Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
 Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (613) 749-5203
 Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661
 Monarch Social Club, Ontario: (416) 949-6602

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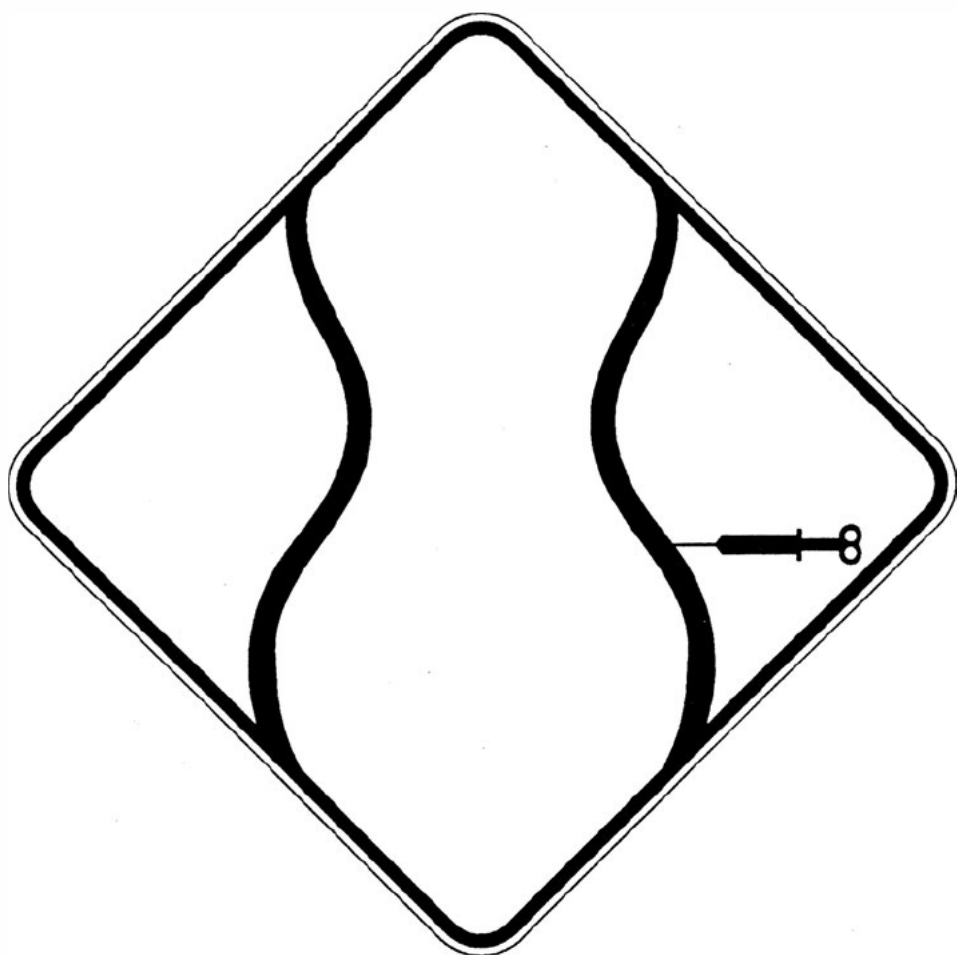
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