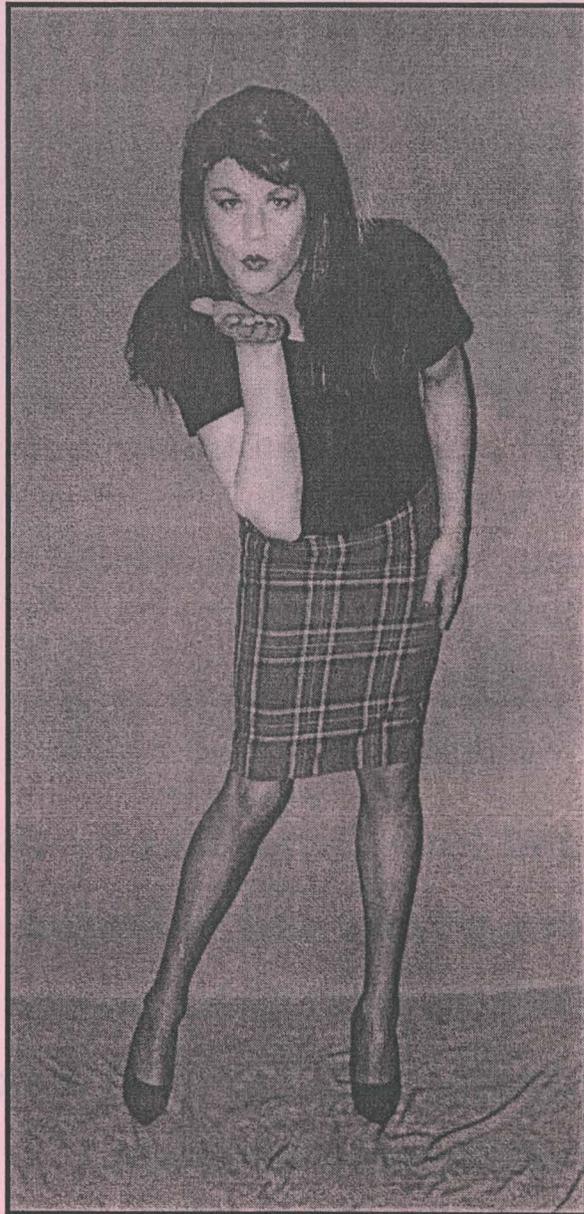
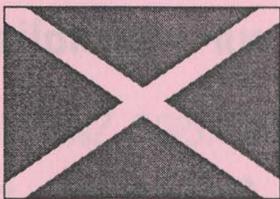


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the Tartan Skirt

Volume 7, Number 3
Summer 1999

The
Magazine
Of The
Scottish
Transgender
Community



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Editorial

Julia's lot (never mind the policeman's) is not a happy one!

You'll be relieved to know I've stopped throwing temper tantrums since my computer came back on line. Five tormented weeks I've had to resort to learning how to use three fingers to hold a pencil. I can't even begin to tell you what a nightmare it's been. Actually, the way my life has been going of late it feels as though fate has got it in for me. Take the time the photocopier gave me two fingers as I was trying to produce the first issue of this magazine, or my kitchen going up in smoke, or when the exterior of my car was remodelled by passing neanderthals, or my humiliation at having the only daffodils in the street that didn't have the energy to flower... the list goes on and on. But my resolve not to let life's little set-backs get me down had to be tested to the extreme when I fell foul of the law when doing my public spirited bit in going to the aid of someone who was being assaulted. It was the stuff nightmares and editorials are made of!

What happened was this. I'd been out with a party of friends when one of them became embroiled in an attempt to resolve, by means of physical violence, a grievance held against her by another girl who, by chance, was drinking (heavily) in the same venue. At this point I have to confess I wasn't the first to leap to my friend's defence - that recognition must go to the gentleman who was sitting next to her - but when he appeared to be in danger of being mortally injured by the flailing arms of a demented banshee I realised that, as I was the next closest to the action, I'd have to render some additional assistance. The eventual outcome was that when Northern Constabulary's brightest and best arrived on the scene, the girl claimed she had been attacked by

both of us and we were duly charged with assault without being given the opportunity to explain what happened.

"A likely story," I hear you say. "Such a thing couldn't possibly happen here". Well, as a result of his handling of the incident and the pressure I was subjected to over my name and sex, the next morning I made a formal complaint against the charging officer. This was eventually upheld, he was disciplined and the charges dropped - but not before I had experienced at first hand the reluctance of the system to listen to criticism. During the complaints procedure I was accompanied at all times and given support by my manager at Reach Out Highland, Jackie Redding. Some of you may have read her account of events in 'Gay Scotland'. For those who haven't, and those who find this all a bit hard to believe (myself included) I've reprinted it below.

So what was it all about? I don't believe we need look very hard for a plausible explanation. The grotesque mishandling of the Stephen Lawrence case has given rise to heightened public concern about the competence and even the honesty of the police. According to an article which appeared in January 30th's edition of 'The Week', nearly 50% of the 43 police forces in England and Wales have officers facing allegations of corruption or dishonesty, including charges of theft, drug trafficking, destroying evidence, and even armed robbery. Sir Paul Condon, the Met's commissioner, has admitted he might have as many 250 officers who are not just corrupt, but criminal. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) want procedures changed to make it



simpler to prosecute police officers.

So far, the Police Federation, the union which represents the rank and file, has vigorously opposed suggestions to do away with the current criminal standard of proof 'beyond reasonable doubt' and replace it with the civil 'on the balance of probabilities' standard. What this means is that an officer cannot be sacked just because there is evidence against him - management has to win a prosecution-style case before they can remove him from his job. This is why it is so difficult to take action.

Getting rid of the 'bad apples' might be hard enough but identifying them isn't particularly easy either. There were more than 45,000 complaints against the police last year. Yet for every 382 police officers against whom complaints were made, only one was disciplined! Protective practices make the dismissal of incompetent or corrupt officers almost impossible. Such officers are usually offered retirement, usually 'on health grounds', as in the Lawrence case.

The police force has always

been renowned for its 'canteen culture', a culture characterised by its rough macho image, sexist and racist attitudes and a strong sense of solidarity. Unlike the army, it does not have a separate group of officers specially trained to maintain standards and enforce discipline. Some believe that to be the root of the problem and the reason why police are failing to respond sensitively to the changing needs of a society becoming ever more diverse in its make up. Within the transgender community we constantly hear of the negative

reaction towards individuals who attempt to transition within the force and it will come as no surprise to many reading this that such prejudice can also be directed outwards, at you and me. In this country we give consent to the police to uphold the values commonly shared by society and while we may only receive tacit acceptance of our lifestyles, I feel certain society would not wish to see us unduly oppressed or abused. Equality in law has been seen by most right minded individuals as a core value underpinning our society

for the second half of this century. As we approach the millennium perhaps this would be a good time for the police to check in with these values, to learn how to deal with criticism, to acknowledge their shortcomings, to no longer be seen to protect individuals who get it wrong. Until this happens, I must join the ranks of those who grow more wary of the police and become less willing to trust them - a position I deeply regret.

News

New Hope in the Highlands

Up in the Highlands, police and the LGBT community still don't really trust each other. However, all that may be about to change. Jackie Redding of Reach Out Highland reports from the front line....

Relations between the Northern Constabulary and Reach Out Highland have ebbed and flowed. Last September, the murder of 62-year-old Eric Innes in Inverness led to tension between police and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Suspecting that Innes was gay, police kept watch on Reach Out headquarters and put some of its staff under surveillance. Despite these 'Starsky and Hutch' tactics, police finally thanked the LGBT community for helping them solve the crime. They assured us they had learned a lot.

Such good relations did not last long. On 15 December, Julia Gordon - a Reach Out volunteer and a well-known member of the transgender community - intervened to break up a fight between two women at Johnny Fox's, a nightclub in Inverness.

When police arrived, the officer charged Julia Gordon with assault. He refused to talk to any of the witnesses, and pressured Julia repeatedly over her name and her gender. Finally, Julia had no alternative but to say her birth sex was male - but she was legally registered under her female identity in Edinburgh.

The next day, I went with Julia to the police station to make a formal complaint on three counts. First, unwarranted pressure over her name. Second, unwarranted pressure over her sex. Third, the

complaint twice. Both times, he gave the same answer. "Usually, a complaint can be resolved by explaining police procedure." When it became clear that was not going to help, we were allowed to fill in a form.

bollocking. Under new procedure, he would receive 'counselling.'

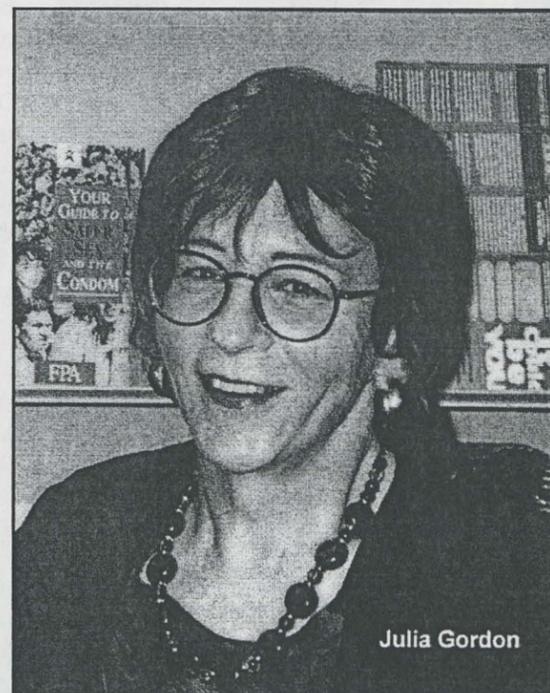
I reminded Chief Supt. McGhee of the murder investigation, and how his officers made a right hash of that as well. He said it was due to lack of training, and time was a problem. A couple of hours training, I said, might save an awful lot of time answering complaints.

The Chief Superintendent pointed out that Saturday nights are horribly busy for the police in Inverness. We pointed out that the 'assault' happened on a Tuesday - and if the officer was so busy, why did he spend his time asking questions that had nothing to do with the case?!

We sorted out our differences. The officer had his 'bollocking/counselling' session. On 15 January, all charges against Julia Gordon were dropped. Her second and third complaints were upheld. From now on, Reach Out Highland will do one hour of 'equal opportunities' training with all new recruits to Northern Constabulary - as well as an hour's training on HIV and hepatitis.

Of course, this latest case is one more example of how we need a Lesbian and Gay Liaison Officer. While Chief Supt. McGhee supports the idea, no male officer on his staff is willing to take on the job - for fear of being seen as gay.

So, did we win? Yes, a little. Eventually. As Chief Supt. McGhee says, "The fact that a senior police officer has met twice with Reach Out Highland is progress in itself." All credit to Julia for being brave and tough enough to stick it out. The training will be fun. And maybe - just maybe - one day we'll get our Liaison Officer.



Julia Gordon

officer's failure to hear evidence from people who saw what happened. We got off to a false start. The first officer we met could not deal with us, because the man we were complaining about was of equal rank.

Finally, we were interviewed by an inspector. He heard the

A few days later, we met with Chief Superintendent McGhee. He assured Julia he would talk to the Procurator Fiscal and it was unlikely that charges against her would go to court. He told us the officer would be dealt with as a case of 'misconduct.' In the old days, he would have got a

MARCH 1999

Transfiguration by Zab.

*It's happened to all of us -
we've seen the ideal dress
but it just doesn't fit!*

*Maybe the sleeves are too short,
the waist too high, or it cuts off
the circulation at the arms.*

*How often have you walked past
that (almost) perfect outfit and
just wished it would fit?*

*Well, Zab can make any dress
to your size and shape -
whatever the style.*



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I've chosen the day I received my referral for surgery as the place to start. As a private patient, I had been attending Dr Russel Reid, a well-known psychiatrist with an interest in gender identity disorders, and last June was told I could proceed to surgery. When I was sure the referral letter would have reached him, I contacted Dr Seghers, the Belgian surgeon I had chosen to operate on me, to determine what additional information he required. This amounted to a medical report from my GP, details of hormone therapy, an ECG (electro-cardiogram), a negative HIV test and two photographs, one full-length and one passport size. This last item, I discovered later, was attached to my admission card at the hospital, presumably to make sure the wrong person didn't get a surprise when they woke up.

Dr Seghers likes to meet his patients in advance of surgery, to discuss the procedure and to answer any questions. This consultation appointment is not absolutely necessary although it does save time when you enter hospital. I decided to go over to Brussels for just such a consultation, as it also gave me the opportunity to check out accommodation close to the Foundation Lambert Hospital and to Dr Seghers's office, which is separate from the hospital. My appointment was arranged for the beginning of August and when I met him I found Dr Seghers to be a very pleasant man with an extremely dry sense of humour. After we had discussed the procedure and I had been

THE BRUSSELS EXPERIENCE

My Account of Reassignment Surgery by Adele [REDACTED]

given a brief examination, he told me to lose five pounds in weight (one of his jokes). He also suggested that I start to stretch my penis for about ten minutes twice daily, aiming to stretch it as far as my navel. I referred to this as 'pre-surgical dilation', at which he had a little laugh. He confirmed the date for my surgery as 5th November and I left to make the journey back home.

On the afternoon of 4th November I checked into the hospital and was shown to my room. It was a pleasant twin room, not very different from an NHS private room, with television and en suite toilet - no bath or shower, although there were shower facilities across the corridor. When I had unpacked and changed, Dr Seghers came to see me to arrange more tests and collect his fee - £3,700 in American Express Travellers cheques, his preferred method of payment.

A chest x-ray and ECG were carried out elsewhere in the hospital in areas where other patients receive treatment and I was glad to be wearing a warm dressing gown and slippers, and I'd suggest you might prefer to keep your make-up on until you return to your room. On my return there were more blood samples taken for grouping, HIV and hormone levels and then the anaesthetist arrived to check my weight, my smoking habit and any allergies I suffered from. He then advised me I'd be woken at 6 a.m. the following morning to receive my pre-med before surgery at 7.30 a.m. Later that evening I was given an enema and told to take only liquids until midnight, and then nothing at all. I was given some sleeping pills about 9 p.m. and I settled down to sleep. Various thoughts went through my mind as I fell asleep, but each one was positive and I knew that I was taking the right course of action for me.

I can't really say much about

Thursday 5th November. After being woken up and given my pre-med, I remember nothing else until coming round in the recovery room about 3 p.m., and then being wheeled back to my own room. I slept off and on for the remainder of the day, not really aware of the ministrations of the nursing staff, although I did register the fact that another girl had moved into the room and I managed to take a couple of phone calls in bed. Hooked up to my intravenous drip (morphine), I then fell asleep.

From a copy of notes Dr Seghers gave me to give to my GP, I can reveal the following information about the operation itself.

A bilateral orchidectomy and sub-total penectomy form the basis of the surgery. The base of the penis, the corpus cavernosum, with a long portion of the dorsal neurovascular bundle, is used to construct a clitoris. The penile skin is lowered, attached to the pubis, enlarged with a long perineal flap and placed in a posterior position. This is filled with iodoform gauze and placed as a neo-vagina in a pre-rectal dissected space.

The labia majora are constructed from the remains of the scrotum and other tissue, sewn together and a new urinary opening made.

Two drains are inserted during the procedure and the urinary tract is catheterised.

The labia majora are then temporarily sewn together from top to bottom to hold everything in place and gauze pads and a very large hospital style sanitary pad are positioned over the area* and held in place by nylon mesh hospital knickers.

* I noted that this procedure differs markedly from the practice of using a T-shaped bandage as in the UK and I found it very comfortable.

The first day following surgery I realised I was in line for a twice-daily injection of antibiotic until I was discharged - my behind was going to feel like a pin cushion. A bed bath felt refreshing and here I must advise anyone following me to bring their own towels with them since the hospital doesn't provide these, and Dr Seghers' instructions (two wash cloths), were a bit unclear. I received a rub with some ointment to prevent bed sores. I learned that Dr Seghers would visit me twice each day I was in hospital. He would change the dressing himself on each occasion and the nursing staff would change them at other times. I could expect to have them changed a total of at least four times a day. I was able to see down below and even though everything was sewn together it looked sort of normal, in spite of the extensive bruising at the top of both legs and up towards my waist. The drip was removed and I was on painkillers twice daily, not that I really seemed to need them, as the pain was hardly noticeable, just a slight twinge now and then.

On the second day after surgery Dr Seghers appeared in the late afternoon to remove a few stitches at the top of the vulva and the same at the bottom, and then he helped me to stand up for the first time. After some initial awkwardness getting in and out of bed, I felt pretty good on my feet. After he left I made my way to the smoking room for a much needed cigarette. It felt strange to be walking down the corridor for the first time as a woman, carrying my catheter bag. When I got there I discovered that sitting down meant perching on one cheek!

The third day following surgery was a day of routine dressing changes and antibiotic injections, but Dr Seghers came round in the evening to tell me that the next day he would remove the rest of the stitches holding my vulva closed and that the catheter bag would go, although the catheter itself would remain in place for a bit longer.

When the fourth day after surgery arrived, and Dr Seghers had removed

the remaining stitches, I examined the area using a hand mirror. Strangely enough, I felt no excitement, more a feeling of normality and anti-climax. I've discussed these feelings with other post-op girls and we all felt the same. For us, this was normal and as far as we were concerned, since we had always been female, to have female anatomy was no big deal. When the catheter bag was removed the catheter was plugged. For a few more days it would become necessary once more to stand while having a pee in order to let gravity drain my bladder. One of my visitors passed on a little tip about sitting down - pull two chairs together side by side leaving a gap in the middle so that you can rest each cheek on a different chair! This I did whenever I went to the smoking room. It effectively suspends the surgical area in mid-air so there's no pressure pushing upwards which makes sitting down so uncomfortable. As the day drew to a close I reflected on how well the healing process was going - I was complete and feeling right for the first time in my life. I was one very happy girl as I went to sleep.

The next day, the fifth following my operation, passed uneventfully. I had one more day to go.

As the sixth and final day of my stay in hospital dawned, I was glad this was to be the last time I received the painful antibiotic injection in my behind. Dr Seghers came to see me and, after a thorough examination, said I was fit enough to be discharged. I then got myself ready to leave and, although I didn't feel any discomfort, I thought it best to wear loose fitting clothing, especially around the waist. A slightly uncomfortable taxi ride - it felt like the driver had found all the bumps in the road - took me back to my apartment in the Hotel Armorial.

Seven days on I treated myself to a lie in. I didn't get out of bed til 7 am! I took it easy, potted about and went for a walk. That evening I had a take-away pizza which tasted so wonderful after the bland hospital diet.

The next day, the eighth following surgery, I had my appointment with Dr Seghers at his office. This was only a fifteen minute walk from my hotel and,

as it was such a nice day, I set off with plenty of time to spare. When I arrived we had a brief chat about how I was feeling and then it was up on the couch to have the catheter and packing removed. I was surprised at how painless this was and I understood why I had not been offered any painkillers. Dr Seghers resembled a magician as he produced what seemed like miles and miles of bandage from my neo-vagina, all the while entertaining me with his sense of humour. He then checked the sensitivity of my clitoris, which was an interesting experience. Another close examination of the surgical site and the removal of a few more stitches from the labia and then he introduced me to the joys of dilation. Dr Seghers supplies a double ended dilator graded at 22 mm and 25 mm. (This is a very small dilator. I would personally recommend acquiring a set of 25 mm and 30 mm stents, such as are produced by Intelligence Engineering. I now use a pair of stents as supplied by Mr Royle, the UK surgeon.) I was informed I would have to dilate for ten minutes four times daily for at least four weeks. When it was over, it was another slow walk back to the apartment.

Nine days on, I got up a little earlier in order to start dilating. Failure to adhere strictly to this would result in collapse of the muscle around the neo-vagina and make it impossible to have penetrative sex. I was also advised to wait at least three months before attempting intercourse so that adequate healing would have occurred. In time, the frequency of dilation could be reduced, although I would never be able to stop altogether, unless of course I was having regular and frequent intercourse with a partner.

The tenth day was to be my last full day in Brussels and as it dawned I went through the routine of dilating, showering and longing for the day I could soak in a bath. Until all the stitches were removed from the labia, I had to restrict myself to showering. I assumed that this was for reasons of hygiene, to ensure that the risk of infection was kept to a minimum. I would have at least another week to wait until the last of these were removed

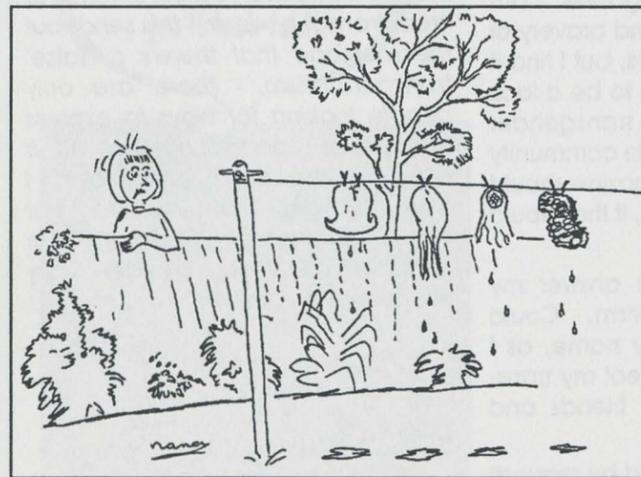
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How many wigs do *you* have stuffed away in the attic? I've got eight ... I think. Let me share with you what I've learned (at great expense, I may add) about buying and caring for wigs.

To start with, I won't even think of buying a wig unless I'm made up. I know this is difficult for some, but most wig places will be happy to let you apply a little 'slap' beforehand if you can't arrive dressed. Or, buy at one of the many trannie 'events' up and down the country. It's absolutely amazing the difference a little make up can make.

I don't adhere to the idea that you have to go for a wig that matches your own hair colour. What colour is Cher's hair, for goodness sake? What you may well find is that you have to change your foundation. Generally, this will need to be darker if you're going blonde.

When you get home, take it out of the box and slap it on your head, you'll have what I call 'the cow pat effect'. Try shaking it out and brushing it as large as it will go. *Now* put it on and begin to style. Hair should be a frame for the face, so try it large, small, high, etc. If you think you could do with even more height, try a



pad of tissue on the crown of your head under the wig. In a word, experiment. Pay attention to your hairline - try not to look as if you're auditioning for 'Planet of the Apes'!

After a couple of wild nights out your wig smells of cigarette smoke. You'll need to wash it - a BIG moment! You've got it just the way you want it, after all those hours in front of the mirror. You think "I'll never get it the same". Relax, it will be even better for a gentle wash. I've used washing up liquid, shampoo, etc - it doesn't seem to matter. In hand-hot water, wash and rinse well, with maybe a little conditioner in the final rinse. Shake and pat dry with a towel and hang it up to dry, then dry style as before. You *can* be vigorous with your styling. Use a comb (afro is good) or better still, your fingers. If you brush too much, it won't

last. Wigs can be like jeans, just as you get them the way you want them, they're finished!

I recommend you store your wig inside out in a plastic bag. I've tried wig stands, and found no benefit.

Modern wigs are wonderful - multi-coloured strands, permanent styling and light, open bases, making them more natural and comfortable than even just a few years ago.

Go into Boots and look at the myriad hair products on show. There is hair mascara for that special occasion (aren't they all), hairshine sprays, glitter, styling gels, waxes and mousses. Try them *all*. Here's that word again - EXPERIMENT!

If this all seems rather expensive, remember women can spend *much* more in one visit to the hairdresser than you will on a good wig and products. Silly girls!

Hair is a woman's crowning glory. Your wig will be your's.

Carolyn

Speak Out

THESE PAGES ARE YOURS TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS AND OPINIONS, YOUR ANGER OR FRUSTRATION, OR TO ASK FOR HELP!

Dear Editor,

May I thank Reach Out Highland for a fantastic night out on 12th February at the Valentine Ceilidh & Disco? As usual, the company was varied, interesting and very welcoming to everybody. Unfortunately, I was struck by the fact that the event was very poorly supported by the Highland T-community. There was yourself, one other local member with their partner, two wonderful girls from Edinburgh (one with her partner), Anne from Fife and myself from the Aberdeen Group. The other aspects of Reach Out seemed to be well represented. This was an ideal opportunity for people to do their own thing in a safe and friendly environment and yet hardly anybody from the local T-Group bothered to make the effort. If we do not support our own groups then how much longer will they be able to survive. I had a great time. Thanks to all staff and friends at Reach Out Highland.

Zara

[Glad you enjoyed the Ceilidh, Zara - I think everyone did. But to respond to your observation - it's not easy to confront new challenges until fear of the uncertainties they hold has been overcome. When a social event is organised I believe all that we can do is send out the invitation with the message 'if you feel able'. And when someone does come along for the first time I want to give them a big hug and say "well done", as I recognise the distance they've had to travel to get there. Perhaps as a consequence of

relating your own positive experience others might be encouraged to go for it next time round. Ed]

Dear Tartan Skirt,

I hope that you do not mind a gay man writing to you. I came across your magazine in Clone Zone in Glasgow, and it was the article on 'How to Love Yourself' which drew my attention. The same tips published in a T-magazine are just as important to gay men.

My real question is, can someone be transgender without having, or wanting to have, gender reassignment? When I was a lot younger I seriously considered gender reassignment but then decided that too much was at stake in my life.

Physically I am male, am attracted to men, but emotionally I consider myself female. Is this true transgenderism?

Having read the magazine, I am struck by the courage and bravery of all TGs. A cliché perhaps, but I find it to be true. There seems to be a lack of understanding of transgender issues within the gay male community and I feel that your magazine should have a wider readership, if that would be welcomed.

I hope that you can answer my question re transgenderism. Could you please withhold my name, as I am not yet ready to reveal my transgender feelings to my friends and family.

(Name withheld by request)



[Can I say I'm as pleased to get a letter from a gay man as much as from anyone else. But more than that, I'm especially pleased to get your letter because it tells me I've reached a bit further than maybe I'd hoped. You're right, the article in question is just as important to gay folk as to T-folk, but why stop there - I feel it's important to everybody. And why should your tuppenceworth have any less currency than anyone else? Is this about how we value ourselves?

Can someone be transgendered without "gender reassignment?" I believe we use gender as a means of saying something about ourselves in our interaction with others, and that this can be quite capable of adapting to changing needs by assuming new and interesting shapes. In this event, we "reassign" our own gender. This happens to lots of folk in lots of ways, lots of the time and the question of reassignment surgery doesn't arise. I don't believe it's helpful to think in terms of 'true' transgenderism - this sends out the message that there's a 'false' transgenderism - there are only people looking for ways to express themselves according to their reality, as they see it, at any time. I would suggest you listen to your inner feelings regarding your relationship with your gender - they will guide you best. Ed]

Dear Editor,

Some time ago I received a copy

of the Winter 98 Tartan Skirt via 3G. By that stage I had written to just about every group I could track down to get a copy of their publications. I was still hoping to stumble on something with a bit more substance and social awareness than I'd found to be the norm in tranny magazines. In that respect I was greatly cheered by finding Tartan Skirt - which I thought excellent, quite the best thing I have read that's published in the UK.

As someone who is both a tranny and a socialist, it was great to find someone like yourself putting together a magazine that doesn't fight shy of wider issues.

Since your knowledge of 'what's out there' is likely to be far more extensive than mine, I'd be particularly grateful for any leads or

suggestions you could give of any UK groups - apart from Press for Change - that have any sort of political orientation. (I'm familiar with several in the US but, as ever, we seem to lag somewhat behind in the activism stakes. Many thanks.

Dani

[Anyone know of the sort of organisation Dani's looking for? How about starting your own, Dani? - Ed.]

Dear Editor,

I have just discovered that there are moves afoot in Scotland to review the help on offer from the NHS for people with gender dysphoria, the idea behind it apparently is to provide a better service. What makes me so angry is the fact that

this, yet again, will exclude people like myself who are labelled as 'transvestite' just because I don't want hormones or surgery! I have suffered for years from intermittent depression and anxiety as I tried, unsuccessfully, to find a place in society. Don't we realise the harm we do when we call ourselves transvestites? When we do this we accept the medical definition that we wear women's clothes for sexual gratification. What absurdity! From now on I intend to present myself to my doctor as a transsexual - even though I don't think of myself as this. From what I can see it's an "all or nothing" situation that caters for the transsexual and ignores the needs of everyone else.

Paula

CAPTION COMPETITION

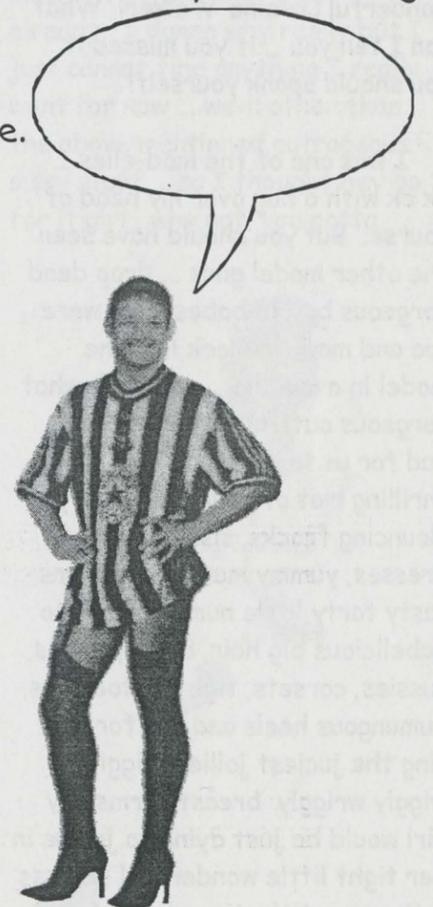
Win a year's subscription to the Tartan Skirt! Think of a funny or amusing caption for the photograph and send it in.

Closing date for entries: 30th July 1999

The winning entry will appear in the next issue of the magazine.

The winning (only) entry for the last caption competition was submitted by Jean from the Angus area. Congratulations, Jean. Any real woman who takes anything to do with us must have a highly developed sense of humour!

A little lippie and a Wonderbra and you'll look fab!



Tiffany's Tit-Bits

"...for those in pearls on the sea!"

Hi babes ... we-ll there we were mincing at the Minto ... the Scottish Tranny event of 1999... the Hide and Sleek Fash Bash introducing their new catalogue and web page and produced by the Queen of Kinghorn herself (*the place not her boyfriend ... though I have heard interesting rumours*), that Fairy-G of the TV, mother of two and auntie to many ... the wonderful Loraine [REDACTED] What can I tell you ... if you missed it you should spank yourself!

I was one of the mod-elles ... ok ok with a bag over my head of course. But you should have seen the other model girls ... drop dead gorgeous boy to babes they were too and made me look like the model in a muddle ... and gosh what gorgeous outfits Hide and Sleek had for us to wear ... it was such a thrilling riot of frilly femininity, flouncing frocks, sissy delish dresses, yummy mummy uniforms, tasty tarty little numbers, bimbo babelicious big hair, bras, panties, sussies, corsets, tights, stockings, humungous heels and not forgetting the juciest jolliest jiggy wiggly wriggly breast forms any girl would be just dying to juggle in her tight little wonderbra! Yesssss ... it was a titivating night of

transvestite delight !!! So if you missed it spank yourself hard ... or do yourself a big big favour, call Hide and Sleek and demand a catalogue!

Oh but of course as you can imagine, back stage, with so many sultry sexy sissy model girls in the most gorgeous girlie gear, there just had to be petted pouted lips, gushing girlie tears and silly teenage tantrums ... er and that was all just me. The other girls, Louise de-Lite, Ruthie Wonder-waist, Karen QT-pie, Kelly Longlegs and Gina G-string ... took it all in their smoothest stride, looked truly wonderful and strutted their stuff like real Super Models!

The audience too was awash with dazzelegly beautiful TS, TV and real girls ... all in the most wonderful outfits ... too many to name, but I espied amongst the many our very own jet-setter editor Julia Gordon, Supreme Eileen from Inverness, the sensational Zara Strange, golden girl Martine Rose of Repartee, Ros Johnston the *Aphradisio Physio* and the lovely Elaine Davidson (*who'll give you a really sexy belly button stud*) of



Tropical Rainbow, Dixon Street, Glasgow ... she is in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's most pierced person .. 450 at the last count .. and she looks just wow! Oh and a very very special mention for "those in pearls on the sea" my fav cutie pie cheerleader, Miss Trudi Lorette who looked ravishing (*we-ll i thought so anyway babe*) and my pal Nicky who could not make the show! Gosh girls ... to mince my femme, especially as a "little girl" in the prettiest lemon party frock with absolutely lashings of delish frilly bits ... and that was just the panties ... lacy net petticoat, dummy and dolly accessories ... eeeeeek ... in front of such a stunning elegant crowd, I was much in need of a nappy change ... but had to settle for a cuppa of hot strong tea and a tasty Bakewell Tart lovely big lass she was too!!!

Now my biggest worry was what to wear pre and apres the show ... aaaargh always a nail-biter ... should I go outrageous, frilly, sissy, tarty, elegant, sexy ... oh help ... or just take lots of outfits and see how I felt ... we-ll for Fri night, I managed a party flashing short tight multi-coloured

stretchy sequinned dress with strappy black heels ... smart and sexy ... we-ll I hoped so! Then on the night of the Fash Bash ... eeeeeek ... I wore everything else ... my long slinky white dress, my long slinky black dress, big frilly pink ballgown a la "Barbie as bridesmaid" .. and of course, we-ll it is soooo sissy pretty ... my new pink ballet outfit .. er only for a quick flaunting wiggle and photo op I hasten to add! We-ll a girl needs a giggle and hey it just gets harder and harder to stand out from the crowd!

Aha ... pink tu-tu ... we-ll I just gotta tell u ... I went out with this guy recently who owns a chain of ballet wear shops. We-ll too good an op to miss really ... so I mentioned I'd love to have been a ballerina ... and we-ll the very next day he sent me a pink Parisienne ballerina outfit ... tu-tu, leotard, ballet tights and pretty little satin ballet shoes ... as a special little frilly femme p-pressie all for m-me!!! Oh yippee yummy mummy scrummy!!! It is truly just divine and makes me feel so girlish and pretty!!! Anyone for the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy ... YESSSSS MEEEEEEEEEEEE! ... mind you I would prob give myself a Nutcracker or two. Hey if like me u ever wanna really enjoy being a pretty ballerina just lemme know cos he is happy to help out any tranny girl in need of a pretty ballet outfit ... and as a tranny himself he hates the rip-offs we all suffer ... so he promises it will be at rock bottom prices! If you are interested just drop me an email to:

[REDACTED] or write to me c/o Tartan Skirt

and I promise to put you in touch with him. I can assure you all enquiries will be treated in total confidence.

And ... and .. oh I've just got to tell you ... the gorgeous frilly pink bridesmaids dress ... I saw it in this charity shop window ... it was just soooooo divine and looked so much like the one my Barbie doll wears ... I had to go in and check it out ... we-ll yes they had a size ten, fitted beautifully and was in fact a new dress ... and it was only £40. Well as you can imagine I bought it on the spot, scampered straight home, dug out my full bridal petti, pink alice band, white strappy high heels and pink lacy gloves and oh it was so pretty just soooo totally scrumptious to wear and swish around in ... makes me feel like a real fairy tale princess! But we-ll I .. oops I have now got three pink bridesmaids dresses ... which eek ... are I suppose three too many !!! Ho hum ... know of any girl looking for the "odd" bridesmaid to attend her wedding? I'm free!!! Hey tell u what since I got all these pretty bridesmaids dresses ... we should hire ourselves out ... rent-a-bridesmaid ... er ok I hear you honey ... ariht, yes ... you can be a sweet little flower girl if you insist! Actually I also really fancy a bridal gown too seen some wonderfully gorge. ones ... but ah me alas ... the ones I adore are soooooo awfully expensive for me to justify buying as a little treat from me to me! And hey let's get real, fat chance I have of ever getting to wear one in earnest ... and I reckon I'd look pretty silly in my wedding dress out clubbing!!! But we-ll bet you will be tempted

too when you see Gina G-string in her wedding dress in the Hide and Sleek catalogue! Hey don't suppose any of you girls owns a bridal wear shop ...?

I confess I am currently right into submissive girlish frillies as you no doubt guessed. We-ll ... I always have been, but I am now actively pursuing my all time fav hit list of dream dresses and femme outfits! So why all this interest in the outrageously frilly? Y'see I truly adore femme fashion.. we-ll you gotta really and my present favs are Miss Selfridge, New Look, Pilot ... oh and Morgan cos I love their micro-fibre range in the prettiest pastel pinks and whites. But generally the fashion just now all looks a bit samey .. I mean total bitch when nearly all the new ranges ain't much diff from what u got already. I dunno why really but I just cannot find anything I really want for now ... we-ll other than the above mentioned outrageous sissy stuff ...so I thought hey go for it girl, why not, you gotta





experiment right? I mean is it more PC, A-Ok to be dressed as a tarty tranny street walker, or laughably try and pass ourselves off as real women ... than to have a giggle and give people enjoyment prancing around as a frilly pink ballerina ... hmmm I dunno? But I do reckon that unless you are terminally shy, genuinely going to change sex or otherwise want to disappear unnoticed into the madding crowd as A.N. Other woman ... hell get on out there wear what u fancy and enjoy yourself!

Like many of you I am going through a very difficult decision making process just now so I would like to lend you what support I can. So ... over to Sister Tiffany of the Miraculous Contraception: Regarding the "being femme in public" bit, something in me compels me to live my life openly as female... but no matter how I try I know I do not, cannot and never will pass scrutiny as a woman, and that completely

destroys my frail confidence. So I have had to find an angle whereby I can be accepted ... and I have found if I can overcome my inherent shyness and be extroverted (which I learnt worked for me in male mode) ... amazingly most people ignore my feminine shortcomings and seem to be prepared to readily accept me as female! I am very aware I am my own biggest asset and my own worst enemy ... by which I mean people react depending how I act. When I am the confident bubbly fun nice daft girlie me ... I seldom get any hassle and in fact lotsa larfs and support and any probs or frowns I can giggle off ... but when I am depressed and lose that confidence and sense of fun, aaargh I am left, just me ... alone and palely loitering ... I feel they do not so readily accept me and even my closest friends I think only accept me as a clown, not as a real person and it just snowballs and I get all paranoid. So, girls, I reckon it is all up to us how we are perceived and how we perceive the degree to which we are accepted.

The other angle to try, in the bid for acceptance, is to be all serious sister about the tragedy of our lives ... that does work with those members of the public by their nature predetermined to be understanding of others. So there is a time and place for it, but ultimately it is dreadfully boring and wins few new friends or converts from those of a less charitable disposition! So ... my theory ... if someone is gonna make a joke about a guy in a frock (and lets be honest it can be dreadfully funny) ... I try and make it first or just grin and bear it and attempt a

witty come-back at my own expense. I find it potentially far more productive to be good humoured, relatively submissive and conciliatory, than always make my point and aggressively defend my civil liberties. And yes you will die a thousand deaths inside ... but we'll honey ... if that is the price to pay to be accepted as female then I for one have no choice but to pay it. You can be right and dead at the same time ... so be exceptionally prudent as to when and where you make your stand against "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"!

It is not how I would wish it but it seems to work ... if we can cope with people laughing at us and laugh with them and at ourselves ... I reckon we will do fine presenting ourselves as women in public ... and that way we will win them over, earn first their acceptance through good humour, then hopefully love and finally respect. Then with any luck they will see us for the qualities we have as people, regardless of our sex or the clothes we wear. To some extent that is how the ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians are attempting to gain acceptance and integration into society.

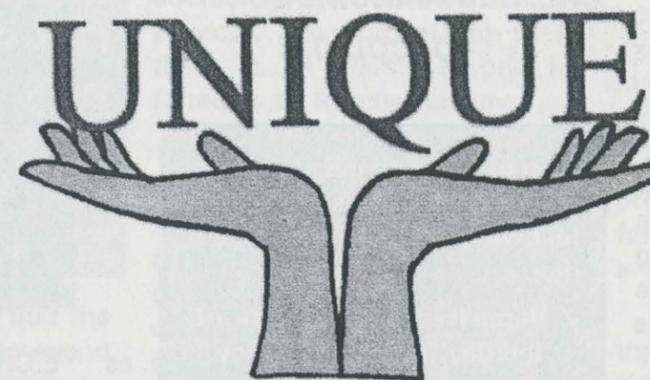
Gosh hon ... a whole three paras totally serious sister ... pass the smelling salts ... I've gone faint all of a sudden!

Kiss kiss .. oh mind the lippy .. mmmwha .. mmwha!!! Wiggling my pom-poms for you all, take care darlings,

Love
Tiffany x

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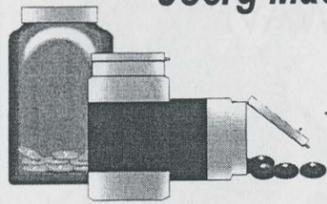
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JUST ANOTHER BOTTLE OF PROZAC?

Joerg MacTheàrlaich visits depression and takes a look at some alternative methods of coping.



There was a report recently in my local newspaper to the effect that more and more people in the Highlands are being prescribed anti-depressant drugs. The conclusion they arrived at was that doctors are becoming more aware of this illness and are prepared to help by prescribing medication. In the Central Belt of Scotland it is not unusual to go along to your G.P. feeling depressed and to leave the practice with a prescription for Prozac, even though you didn't ask for it.

Depression can have many underlying causes, such as uncertainty regarding the future (e.g. after losing your job), the loss of a loved one, low self-esteem, and so on. How it is best treated is the subject of ongoing debate. Some will argue that unhappiness has always been a feature of our lives and to be unhappy only proves you are alive, and only in romantic novels can people expect to be happy all the time. Others, however, are less inclined to accept their suffering if there is something that will help. But what exactly is depression?

The following information is taken from the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders:

In order to be diagnosed as clinically depressed the following criteria have to be met:

- ✓ depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day
- ✓ markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all or most activities, most of the day, nearly every day

Four of these symptoms must be present during the same period:

- ✓ significant weight-loss or gain or decrease or increase in appetite
- ✓ insomnia
- ✓ psychomotor agitation or retardation
- ✓ fatigue or loss of energy
- ✓ feelings of worthlessness or excessive/inappropriate guilt (with or without delusion)
- ✓ diminished ability to think or concentrate or indecisiveness
- ✓ recurrent thoughts of death or recurrent suicidal ideas with or without specific plans or a recent suicide attempt

There are several treatments within established clinical medicine, such as drug therapies, physical methods such



as E.C.T. (seldom used other than to treat severe depression with agitated or psychotic features), neurosurgery (rarely used) and psychological treatments (psychotherapy, counselling). All these therapies, except the latter, carry a risk of side effects, some serious.

Clinical therapies other than psychological programmes, tend to treat only the cause and not the symptom. With the NHS overstretched and G.P.'s finding it increasingly difficult to spend time talking to their patients, the opportunity to talk in depth about feelings is often denied. To be able to unburden one's problems to someone is often all it takes to alleviate some of the unhappiness. Instead, what often happens is that the patient goes to see the doctor and tells them that they are depressed. But instead of enquiring into the matter and possibly referring the person to counselling, many G.P.'s will simply prescribe Prozac.

Alternative therapies take the whole person into consideration before deciding on any particular

Happy Eating

A deficiency in Vitamin B, a result of poor nutrition, is often found to be implicated in a state of depression.

To avoid this:

- ✓ eat more wholefoods
- ✓ dramatically cut down on sugar, tea, coffee and alcohol
- ✓ increase your intake of Vitamin B complex, vitamin C, folic acid, calcium, potassium and magnesium.

remedy. The time alone that the practitioner is prepared to spend with a person before deciding on a particular course of treatment, can often help ease the stresses and strains.

Of the alternative therapies available, the following are generally considered beneficial for depression. They work by either bringing about an improvement in self-image, or by helping individuals to achieve a relaxed state of mind to better focus on understanding and coping with their feelings.

Aromatherapy

Jasmine, Neroli and Bergamot are uplifting, whereas Lavender calms and relaxes. Basil, Lemon Balm and Rose (*Rosa damascena*) have good anti-depressant effects. Put a few drops of the essential oil(s) (*never mix more than three essential oils*) into your batch, a handkerchief or an oilburner. *A word of caution: don't use Basil and Lavender oils when pregnant!*

Massage

Treat yourself to a relaxing massage. Whether it is done by a

friend, a partner, or a professional practitioner, this can usually make you feel better about yourself and your body.

Bach Flower Remedies

There are twenty six remedies developed by Dr. Edward Bach to address an individual's emotional aspects. In addition to these there is an additional one referred to as **Rescue remedy**.

The remedies are readily available from health food shops and Boots the Chemist. They are taken as a few drops in a glass of water. A comprehensive list of Bach Flower Remedies is given in List 1.

Herbalism

The herbal remedies mentioned here are considered to have a beneficial effect on depression and can be taken as an infusion (herbal teas). As a rule of thumb use 30g of dried

herb or 75g of fresh herb to 500 ml water.

It may take some time before the beneficial effects become apparent. This depends very much on the individual. For some, it can take up to six weeks before it starts to work. This is not unusual with prescribed drugs too; Prozac, for example has to be taken for a number of weeks before it has any effect.

You can also buy ready prepared remedies in capsule form if you do not wish to drink a lot of tea!

It should also be pointed out that herbal remedies can have side-effects. For instance, it is not advisable to use mugwort during pregnancy or, if breast-feeding, St. John's Wort can cause dermatitis when the skin is exposed to the sun.

Information about herbs used in the treatment of depression is given in List 2.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

This is a form of 'winter blues' particularly common in our climate.

It has its origins in insufficient sunlight stimulating the light-sensitive pineal gland (a small part of the brain which controls appetite, sleep, mood and sex drive). The outcome of this is an increase in the level of the hormone melatonin which causes many bodily functions to slow down or stop. The higher the level of melatonin, the slower and more tired we get. (Melatonin is responsible for making us want to go to sleep at night.)

Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder include depression, lethargy, feeling sleepy in the daytime, over-sleeping, over-eating, anxiety, irritability, withdrawing from people and loss of sex drive, with symptoms occurring regularly each winter.

The only permanent cure is to live within 30° of the equator, although treatments are available, such as phototherapy (light therapy), psychological treatments and relaxation techniques.

List 1 - BACH'S FLOWER REMEDIES

REMEDY	FOR
Agrimony	Worry hidden by a carefree mask, apparently jovial but suffering
Aspen	Vague, unknown, haunting apprehension and premonitions
Beech	Intolerant, critical, fussy
Centuary	Kind, quiet, gentle, anxious to serve
Cerator	Distrust of self and intuition, easily led and misguided
Cherry Plum	For the thought of losing control, of doing terrible things
Chestnut Bud	Failing to learn from life, repeating mistakes, lack of observation
Chicory	Demanding, self-pity, self-love, possessive, hurt and tearful
Clematis	Dreamers, drowsy, absent-minded
Crab Apple	Feeling unclean, self-disgust, small things out of proportion
Elm	Capable people with responsibility who falter, temporarily overwhelmed
Gentian	Discouragement, doubt, despondency
Gorse	Feeling hopeless, accepting the difficulty and pointlessness of trying
Heather	Longing for company, talkative, overconcern with self
Holly	Jealousy, envy, revenge, anger, suspicion
Honeysuckle	Living in memories
Hornbeam	Weary, unable to cope
Impatiens	Irritated by constraints, quick, tense, impatient
Larch	Expect failure, lack of confidence and will to succeed
Mimulus	Fear of particular things such as animals, height, pain, etc.
Mustard	Suddenly clouded by gloom for no apparent reason
Oak	Persevering, despite difficulties, strong, patient, never giving in
Olive	Exhausted, no more strength, require physical and mental renewal
Pine	Self-critical, self-reproach, assuming blame, apologetic
Red Chestnut	Worry for others, anticipating misfortune, projecting worry
Rock Rose	Feeling alarmed, intensely scared, horror, dread
Rock Water	Self-denial, stricture, rigidity, purist
Scleranthus	Cannot resolve two choices, indecision, alternating
Star of Bethlehem	For consolation and comfort in grief, after a fright or sudden alarm
Sweet Chestnut	Unendurable desolation
Vervain	Insistent, wilful, fervent, over-striving, stressed
Vine	Dominating, tyrannical, bullying, demands obedience
Walnut	Protection from outside influences, for change and stages of development
Water Violet	Withdrawn, aloof, proud, self-reliant, quiet grief
White Chestnut	Unresolved, circling thoughts, constant worry
Wild Oat	Lack of direction, unfulfilled, drifting
Wild Rose	Lack of interest, resignation, no love or point in life
Willow	Dissatisfied, bitter, resentful, feeling life is unfair and unjust
Rescue Remedy	For any sudden difficulty or crisis, accidents, and emergencies

PLANT (BOTANICAL NAME)	ACTION	PARTS USED
Basil (<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>)	anti-depressant	leaves (juice)
Borage (<i>Borago officinalis</i>)	adrenal stimulant	leaves
Damiana (<i>Turnera diffusa</i>)	stimulating nervine	aerial parts
Lemon Balm (<i>Melissa officinalis</i>)	anti-depressant	leaves
Mugwort (<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>)	stimulating nervine	aerial parts
Oats (<i>Avena sativa</i>)	anti-depressant	grains, straw
Rosemary (<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>)	anti-depressant	aerial parts
St. John's Wort (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>)	restorative tonic for the nervous system	aerial parts

List 2 - herbal remedies used in the treatment of depression

The following treatments require qualified practitioners:

Colour Therapy

Colour is known to affect your mood and behaviour. This form of treatment uses colours to help you in a therapeutic way.

Counselling, Psychotherapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapies

Counselling can help you to find ways of coping with the problems in your life, psychotherapy may assist in dealing with the past and Cognitive Behavioural therapies can encourage you to overcome

negative thinking, lack of motivation and to overcome behaviours which contribute to their low mood.

Expression Therapies

By utilising your creative energy, art, drama and music therapies help in enabling the expression of deeply buried feelings and emotions.

So perhaps it isn't always necessary to take some chemical from a bottle in order for you to feel better. But I'm sure the success of any therapy will depend to some extent on your own acceptance of what you are doing and why you are doing it.

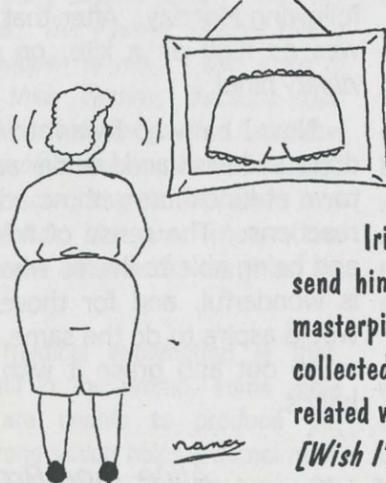
Treat yourself well and look after yourself carefully. If you won't do it, nobody will.

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The Complete Family Guide to Alternative Medicine, An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Natural Healing, Element, Dorset, 1996

The Complete Medicinal Herbal, A practical guide to medicinal herbs, with remedies for common ailments, Penelope Ody, Dorling Kindersley, London, 1993



Yes - but is it art?

Irish artist Paul Devlin has been placing ads in his local paper for women to send him their knickers. He claims he needs them to help him create his latest masterpiece entitled "I Would Never Throw My Knickers At You". So far he has collected over 50 pairs. He says this is only the first in what is to be a series of related works which will involve different items of ladies' underwear.

[Wish I'd thought of that! Ed]

Having your cake... and eating it!

Alice's adventures in Wonderland

Over the last few years I have suffered a crisis of identity that has threatened to reach danger point. Increased cross dressing has been accompanied by a desire to undertake the transition fully to living and working as a woman. How was I to accomplish this?

I saw the biggest hurdle being the built-in prejudice in the female dominated area of administrative work. This reverse discrimination showed itself in the frequency of rejections when I applied for situations under my male name, to the point where I decided to keep a record of the outcome of jobs I applied for using both names. The results confirmed my suspicions - I was getting an interview success rate three times greater as Alice than as Alistair!

Going to interviews gave rise to another dilemma - going dressed and having to confront the vexed



question of my demeanour. The first interview I attended in my female persona was a very nerve racking ordeal, although the people giving me the interview were very nice and did everything to put me at my ease. At this interview references from my existing employer and my other referee were not taken up. This was bound to change, as indeed it did a month later when, as Alice, I went along to another interview. This time references *were* required and at this point I told my employer I was transsexual and was applying for other jobs in my female name. There was no real surprise to hear this, as changes in my appearance, some subtle and some not so subtle - the dash of nail polish, the eye shadow, etc - had been noted at work.

The second interview was not quite as nerve racking, although as I sat in the reception area of the company waiting to be called, I still felt very apprehensive. The interview seemed to go well but the dreaded "Sorry" arrived later in a telephone call. This was the pattern for the next couple of months and the rate of being asked to come for an interview rose dramatically at the turn of the year until at the end it was running 6 to 1 in favour of Alice over Alistair. Wearing a skirt to the interview and being very honest about my situation did put people on the spot, however, and would invariably summon a response around equal opportunities. Yeah,



right.

Then along came the last, needless to say successful, interview. I had actually forgotten about this job. Before I got word about an interview, I had thought that since it was due to expire in three weeks' time, I had missed out on it. In point of fact, this was not the case. I did my research and prepared questions in advance and, in accordance with others I knew who had recently got a new job, I had my hair cut - in an overtly female style. I considered my dress code and decided on a trouser suit worn with a jacket. I returned home after the interview feeling it had gone well, but by late afternoon despondency was setting in ... and then the 'phone rang. I expected to hear "I'm sorry." Not this time - this was the one I was waiting for. "We'd like to offer you the post." Naturally, I accepted and arranged to come in the next day for a couple of hours and then start officially the following Monday. After that call I was as high as a kite, on cloud *ninety nine!*

Now I am who I want to be. I dress as I wish and wander around town at lunchtime with no adverse reactions. The sense of freedom and being able to live as who I am is wonderful, and for those who would aspire to do the same, I say reach out and grasp it with both hands.

Alice Jane XXXXXXXXXX

Whatever I feel...

'Boy or girl?' tends to be the first question asked when a baby is born. And a cursory look at the genitals usually provides the answer. But it's not that simple, says Zachary I Nataf.

"Whatever I feel, that's the way I am. I was born a girl, and that girl died one day and a boy was born. And the boy was born from that girl in me. I am proud of who I am. A lot of people actually envy us." Chi-Chi, who lives in a village in the Dominican Republic, is speaking to filmmaker Rolando Sanchez for his 1997 documentary Guevoto.

The film portrays the daily lives of Chi-Chi and Bonny, two 'pseudo-hermaphrodites', and the way in which their families, partners and other villagers respond to them.

They are not alone. A rare form of pseudo-hermaphroditism was first found among a group of villagers in the Dominican Republic in the early 1970s. Thirty-eight people were traced with the condition, coming from 23 extended families and spanning four generations.

Chi-Chi's mother has ten children. Three of those ten are girls, three of them are boys *"and four are of this special sort."* she says. *"I knew that this sort of thing existed before I had my own kids. But I never thought that it would happen to me... I told them to accept their destiny, because God knows what he's doing. And I said that real men often achieve less than those who were born as girls. And that's how it turned out. My sons who are real men haven't achieved as much as the others."*¹

The medical explanation is that, while still in the womb, some male babies are unable to produce the testosterone which helps external male genitals to develop. They are born with

a labia-like scrotum, a clitoris-like penis and undescended testes.

In the Dominican Republic many of these children were first assumed to be female and were brought up as such. But because they were genetically male, they began to develop male characteristics at puberty, including penis growth and descending testes. Villagers gave these children the local name guevedoche or *'balls at twelve'*.

For some scientists the phenomenon presented an ideal 'natural experiment' that would help them to prove once and for all that hormones are far more important than culture in the development of gender identity. A research team headed by Julliane Imperato-McGinley proposed that in a laissez-faire environment, with no medical or social intervention, the child would naturally develop a male gender identity at puberty, in spite of having been reared as female.²

Not everyone agreed with this rather simplistic approach, however. Ethnographer Gilbert Herdt pointed out the guevedoche were different and they knew it as they had compared their genitals with those of girls during public bathing. Villagers, who were familiar with the guevedoche over generations, accepted them as a *'third sex'* category, sometimes referring to them as machiembra (male-female).³

Furthermore, not all guevedoche wanted to adopt a male gender identity after puberty. In the documentary Guevoto, Bonny relates the case of Lorenza. *"She had more chances as a*

woman. Lots of men fell in love with her. She always wore women's clothes and had very long hair. She liked it when men fell in love with her. That's why she wanted to stay a woman and not become a man."

Here then is a community that recognizes the actual existence of 'third sex' people as part of human nature and creates corresponding gender roles to accommodate them. It's an attitude that enables Bonny to say: *"If I am like this, God will know why... If I feel good, why should I change things? This is how I grew up, why look for something else?"*

The law and the knife

Such an accepting approach to gender ambiguity has not been the pattern in most of the Western world. Far from it. Since the routine practice of correcting the ambiguous genitalia of intersexed children began in the US and Europe in the late 1950s, debates have raged about whether gender identity and roles are biologically determined or culturally determined.

The work of John Money and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University and Hospital, Maryland, has had a major impact on the treatment of intersex children, transsexuals and other sex-variant people. Money advised on the famous case of the identical twin boy who had been reassigned as a girl after he lost his penis in a circumcision accident at the age of seven months in 1963. The child underwent plastic surgery to make his genitals female-appearing and he was treated with

female hormones at adolescence.

Between 1973 and 1975 Money reported a completely favourable outcome and this became the key case in the following 20 years. The case influenced the treatment of boys born with 'too small' penises, and led to the recommendation that their penises and testes be removed and the boys be surgically reassigned as girls before the age of three 'to grow up as complete a female as possible'. In these cases quality of life was based on ideas of adequate heterosexual penetration. According to the Johns Hopkins team, the twin had subsequently been 'lost to follow-up'.

But this was not so. As it turned out, the twin did not feel or act like a girl and had discarded prescribed oestrogen pills when aged 12. She had refused additional surgery to deepen the vagina that surgeons had constructed for her at 17 months, despite repeated attempts to convince her she would never find a partner unless she had surgery and lived as female. At the age of 14 the twin refused to return to Johns Hopkins and persuaded local physicians to provide a mastectomy, phalloplasty and male hormones. He now lives as an adult man.⁴

Intersexuals, popularly referred to as 'hermaphrodites', are usually born with genitals somewhere between male and female - rarely with two complete sets as in myth. The number of such births is more common than most people realize, with the highest estimates in the US at four per cent of births.⁵

According to the Intersex Society of North America one in every 2,000 infants is born with ambiguous genitalia from about two-dozen causes. There are more than 2,000 surgeries performed in the US each year aimed at surgically assigning a sex to these intersex patients. The Intersex Society campaigns against what it sees as the unethical medical practice of performing cosmetic surgery on infants who cannot give consent. Doctors believe that quality of life is only possible for

individuals who conform to male or female sex and gender. But the founder of the Intersex Society, Cheryl Chase, believes that 'most people would be better off with no surgery'. Born with ambiguous genitalia herself she was raised as a boy until 18-months-old when physicians told her family that she was really a girl and removed her enlarged clitoris. At the age of eight she underwent an operation to remove what she later learned was the testicular part of her ovo-testes. She currently lives as a woman and, like many intersex individuals, is lesbian. The surgical excision and scar tissue has left her without clitoral sensation or orgasmic response. Says Ms Chase: "Genital mutilation' is a phrase that's easy for us to apply to somebody who belongs to a Third World culture, but any mutilating practice that's delivered by licensed medical practitioners in our world has an aura of scientific credibility."⁶

Her experience is shared by many intersexuals who as children underwent repeated unexplained examinations, surgery, pain and infection. This has gone on for four decades and in most cases the children have been 'lost to follow-up'. This means there has been no reliable medical data to assess the effects of surgery or to provide guidance for future practice.

Cosmetic genital surgery is used to 'normalize' the appearance of ambiguous genitalia. It is admitted by surgeons to be an attempt to alleviate a 'psychosocial emergency' rather than a medical one. Instead of offering intersex children and their families or friends counselling to support them in accepting difference, doctors whip up a crisis which they can then fix with available medical technology. Ambiguous genitals are referred to as 'deformed' before surgery and 'corrected' after. But the reported experience of intersexuals who went through this in childhood is a sense of having been 'intact' before surgery and mutilated after it.

And children were often lied to. A typical example is recounted by a

woman who, when her body began to change at the age of 12, was told that she needed surgery to remove her ovaries because she had cancer. What actually happened during the operation was her clitoris and newly descended testes were removed.

The adage that 'it is easier to dig a hole than build a pole' accounts for why most intersex individuals are made into girls. The standards which mark maleness allow penises as short as 2.5cm and femaleness allow clitorises only as large as 0.9 cm. Infants with appendages between 0.9 cm and 2.5 cm are, according to Suzanne Kessler, considered unacceptable and require surgical intervention. In some cases where parents haven't even noticed a problem doctors still insist on surgery. Baby girls as young as six weeks may be operated upon to deepen their vaginas, even though the surgery is not always successful and has to be repeated at various stages as they grow up.⁴

Some experts have their doubts. Dr Reiner, Assistant Professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University warns against placing too great an emphasis on the genitals, pointing out that, 'the brain is the most important sex organ in the body'.⁷

Telling the difference

So how do we determine someone's sex? It's actually far more complex than most people imagine. There are no absolutes in nature, only statistical probabilities. We all begin life with a common anatomy which then differentiates if there is a Y chromosome present. This activates the production of testosterone, appropriate receptors in the brain and the formation of testes. The other features which do not develop remain in the body in vestigial form.

Several factors can be taken into account in determining a person's biological sex. They include chromosomal sex (X and Y, for example); hormonal sex (oestrogen and test-

osterone); gonadal sex (ovaries and testes); genital sex (vagina and penis, for example); reproductive sex (sperm-carrying and inseminating; gestating and lactating); and other associated internal organs (like the uterus or the prostate).

These factors are not always consistent with each other. In fact science admits everyone falls somewhere along a continuum. But few people would know if they were 100-per-cent male or 100-per-cent female, chromosomally or hormonally, as there are not many cases in everyday practice in which this would be tested. Unless you want to take part in the Olympic Games, that is, in which case you would have to undergo a chromosome sex test, although this has been abandoned as unfair and unreliable by other sports bodies. The British Journal of Sports Medicine claims that one in 500 female athletes and about one in 500 male athletes would fail the chromosome gender test. This is because chromosome variations do not necessarily affect physical appearance. A test might determine an athlete is not a woman for the sake of competition, but that certainly does not make her a man in her everyday life. Other indicators of sex are subject to similar variations. Even the capacity to reproduce is not a clear indicator: some intersex people have had children. The so-called biological line between male and female is frankly quite fuzzy.

So much for sex. But sex is not gender. Sex is biological. Gender is social, cultural, psychological and historical. It is used to describe people and their roles in society, the jobs they do and the way they dress, how they are meant to behave.

A person's gender is usually assigned at birth, with a cursory look at the genitals. The 'boy' or 'girl' which is documented on the birth certificate affects almost everything else that happens to that child socially for the rest of his or her life.

The third gender

Responses to ambiguous genitals

vary from culture to culture. But in some societies that do not have access to surgery or whose world view is not mediated by biological 'facts' of science, there is more space for those who don't fit the norm. These children are accepted as a 'third sex' within the social order.

One of the most humane and enlightened approaches was observed in the 1930s among the Native American Navajo people. The Navajo recognized three physical categories: male, female and hermaphrodite or *nadle*. *Nadles* had a special status, specific tasks and clothing styles, and were often consulted for their wisdom and skills.

In India the hijra have a 2,500 year old history. Known contemporarily as a 'third gender' caste, hijra translates as *hermaphrodite* or *eunuch* or 'sacred erotic female-man'. They include intersex people, assigned both as male or female, but also attract to their community a wide range of transvestites, homosexual prostitutes and religious devotees of the Mother Goddess Bahuchara Mata.⁸

Elsewhere, in the Eastern highlands of Papua New Guinea, third-sex people are known as *kwolu-aatmwol* or 'female thing transforming into male thing'. Medically they are like the *guevedoche* in the Dominican Republic. Although in some instances they may be killed at birth, most *kwolu-aatmwol* are accepted as such and are partially raised in the direction of masculinity. They retain some female elements to their unique identity but this does not prevent them from becoming respected shamans or war leaders.

In most parts of the world, however, powerful taboos operate, underpinning fear and discrimination. Sexually

ambiguous bodies are threatening. Perhaps they elicit desire, possessing it might seem an erotic potential beyond those with ordinary genitals. Maybe the notion of sex or gender mutability provokes a kind of terror or gender vertigo.

Whatever the cause, medical professionals and others end up favouring drastic surgical remedies for



minor conditions that present nomedical or functional dangers.

But what about compassion and faith in the ability of the parents to cope with their own emotional pain and distress about their child's 'imperfection' and to nurture that child despite their difference? What about the rights of the child, especially the right of the child to decide their gender identity, if different from what the experts have designated it to be?

Challenging such rigidity is the Transgender Movement. This is a broad alliance of people who are inclined to cross the gender line. It includes cross-dressers and transvestites as well as intersex people and transsexuals - both those who have and have not had 'gender realignment' surgery.

Transsexuals whose gender identity is in conflict with their birth gender usually want to achieve a congruence of identity, role and anatomy by having sex-reassignment surgery. But increasingly transsexuals are taking the option

to be 'out' as transsexual and are deciding *against* surgery, without compromising their core gender identity. It's simple. Some men don't have penises and have vaginas, some woman have penises and don't have vaginas.

The trend toward gender non-conformity is growing and has come about partly as a result of anger at discrimination, stigmatization, lack of civil rights and a reluctance on the part of the authorities to pursue those who commit hate crimes against non-conformists.

As a transgendered man (female to male transsexual) I do not 'pass' as simply male but am 'out' in order to campaign for non-discrimination and Transgender Pride. I did not choose to be transsexual, nor did I change gender roles in protest against society's oppressive gender system. I did it to achieve an authenticity and outward expression of a deeply abiding sense of myself as a gendered being. During transition I became more fully and truly myself, suspending the symbolic hold society's rules had over my body in order to achieve it. The rigidity of the rules is what is not natural.

There are specific struggles, such as

trying to get legal recognition and legal rights in societies where one has to be either male or female. Attitudes are very fixed. In Britain, for example, even post-operative transsexuals are legally padlocked forever to the gender written on their birth certificates, even though this contravenes the European Charter on Human Rights. While in the US, gender non-conformists are still listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

But those who don't fit the rules are drawing encouragement from information about third-gender identities in other cultures. As this space expands, more transgender and intersex people are opting to live bi-gendered or hybrid gendered lives, choosing hermaphroditic bodies, through surgery, to match their core sense of who they are.

This expansion is not only an issue for intersex or transgender people. It liberates everyone from rigid and stereotypic ways of being masculine and feminine, mixing the best of all for everyone.

Perhaps it will help pave the way to greater gender equality - or better still, irrelevance.

Zachary I Nataf is a transgender activist, author of *Lesbians Talk Transgender* (Scarlet Press) and director of the International Transgender Film and Video Festival in London.

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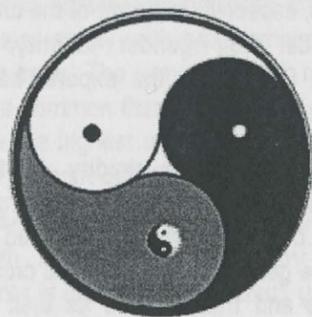
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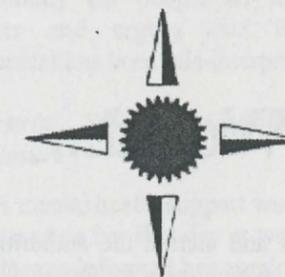
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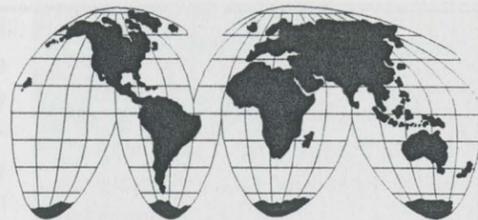
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NEWS

From Around The World...



ITALY

Penis Transplants Poised to Take Off!

A leading plastic surgeon in Rome is ready to carry out the world's first penis transplant. He has three patients anxiously awaiting the outcome of his application to health officials. Two are female to male transsexuals and one is a male to female transsexual who regrets having reassignment surgery. The donor organs would come from either living bodies or cadavers and it is not yet certain if a person who received a transplanted penis would be able to have an erection. "Plastic surgery always favours innovation and breaking new frontiers ... I just want to be sure that this type of surgery will benefit the patient," he said.

NEW ZEALAND

Transsexual Mayor Has Her Sights Set High

Georgina Beyer, 40, a former drag queen and transgender professional sex worker, was recently re-elected major of the rural town of Carterton, winning 90% of the votes cast. Beyer has now also confirmed that she has accepted an offer to stand for the Labour Party against New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister, Wyatt Creech, in election next year. Beyer, who attended a private boys school and served as a prefect, underwent reassignment surgery at age twenty four.

CHINA

Shanghai Police Arrest Drag Queens

Police in Shanghai pulled two drag performers off stage and arrested them after shocked patrons of the Guoling Dance Hall realised the singers were

really men and alerted the authorities. The club, which was celebrating its opening night, was shut down. The Xinmin Evening News said the dance hall was plunged into chaos when the performers "opened their red lips (and) the rough male sound came through the microphone."

THAILAND

Censorship Imposed on Film About Drag Queens

Thai police have banned the showing of a Singaporean film at Bangkok's first international film festival. Officials said "Bugis Street", which looks at the drag queens who populated Singapore's red light district in 1960, was pornographic. Director and screenwriter Ing Kanjanavanit commented to the Bangkok Post "It's ridiculous that Thailand has one of the most free presses in Asia, but Thai cinema is the most strictly censored in the world".

UNITED STATES

New York Pianist Begins New Life as a Woman

After performing professionally for more than a decade and winning a dozen major international concerto competitions, performing twice with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, pianist Sara Davis Buechner began her career over again as a woman following a sex change in September. Most classical soloists who are gay or lesbian remain closeted, Buechner explained, because they fear a negative reaction from conductors and orchestra management. "A transgender soloist is too hard for many people to understand."

Negligence and Malpractice Verdict Upheld In Washington

A Washington DC jury found the District of Columbia General Hospital guilty of negligence and malpractice leading to the death of Tyra Hunter in August 1995. Tyra died in the DC Hospital after being involved in a car accident. It had been alleged a hospital paramedic had ceased treating her at the scene of the accident when he discovered Tyra's male genitals. He then backed away and made joking remarks about Tyra, leaving her unattended for 5 - 7 minutes. It was also alleged that the Hospital's emergency room did not provide competent care. The jury found the city guilty of both allegations. A total of \$2,873,000 was awarded to Tyra's mother.

Maryland Rally for Assaulted Drag Queen

300 people attended a rally and candlelight vigil in Baltimore, Maryland, for Leonard "Lynn" Vines, nine days after he was assaulted and shot in an eastern Baltimore neighbourhood. Vines is recovering from six gunshot wounds to the chest, shoulder, arms and back after having been accosted on the street by a gathering of young men and women who taunted him, shouting "We don't allow no drag queen faggots in this neighbourhood". He tried to flee but was tripped and shot repeatedly. Suspect Paul Bishop, 20, as charged in a warrant with attempted first degree murder. Police Detective Jerry Weaver said the suspected motive was the victim's lifestyle.

JAPAN

Sex Change Operations Approved

Doctors in Japan performed their first legal sex change operation, removing the breasts, uterus and ovaries of a 30

year old woman (sic). In a second operation to be carried out in six months, doctors will construct male genitals. The ethics committee of Saitama Medical College, Tokyo, approved the sex change following the decision of the Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology last year that sex change operations should be permitted on the condition that patients undergo psychoanalysis and hormone therapy.

ARGENTINA

LGBT Demonstrators Lobby Prince Charles

On 9th March some 70 demonstrators turned up at the gates of the British Embassy in Buenos Aires with a petition for asylum because of renewed discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups. Prince Charles, who was staying at the Embassy, was making a royal visit to Argentina but was meeting elsewhere with President Carlos Menem at the time. According to a Reuters' report, a dozen of the demonstrators yanked open the gates of the residence, alarming the staff enough that they called the police. Baton wielding officers forced the group back from the gates, pushing some to the ground, while others screamed at them, "Murderers! Murderers!" According to a report from Britain's Press Association one transsexual was hospitalised following damage to one of her breast implants.

UNITED KINGDOM

Edinburgh Weddings

The Trinity Metropolitan Community Church in Edinburgh is the first in Scotland to offer religious blessings to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender couples. "We offer relationship blessings to couples irrespective of gender identification or sexuality". The Church is advertising its services on the Internet, claiming that some of the earliest recorded Christian marriages were between people of the same gender. It includes in its rites and

sacraments Holy Union and Holy Matrimony for people of the same gender and argues that the Old Testament has been mis-interpreted.

Industrial Tribunal Upholds Non-Disclosure

A mental health support worker was dismissed on her first day at work when a colleague informed her employed that she was transsexual. She won her case at an Industrial Tribunal, which awarded her damages of £67,000 for hurt feelings and lost wages. The employer had argued that the dismissal was because she was "dishonest" in failing to disclose transsexuality prior to employment, but the Tribunal found in favour of the employee on the grounds of Sex Discrimination.

Transsexual to Stand for Local Government

Christine Warbis, a freelance journalist, has been chosen by Sedgefield District Labour Party to stand in next May's local government elections. Ms Warbis was known as Christopher when she first moved to the former mining community of West Cornforth near Ferryhill, County Durham. A parish councillor for a number of years, she said "I have for 12 years been an integral part of the village. I made my change. I told everybody what I was going to do. I have been very open."

Laying Down the Law

The Crown Prosecution Service has had to admit that if a barrister was right for the job as a man, becoming a woman didn't make her any less qualified. The CPS reached a confidential settlement last November with transsexual barrister Susan Marshall, who had been offered a job with the Service as a man, only to have it withdrawn when she began her transition to living as a woman. A spokes-person for the CPS said that the Service recognised the distress caused to Ms Marshall by the withdrawal of employment at the time she had expressed an intention to undergo gender reassignment.

Health Authority to Cough Up

Three unnamed transsexuals have won a landmark battle to have gender reassignment surgery on the NHS. A High Court ruling overturns North West Lancashire Health Authority's decision not to pay for the £9,000 operations. But Mr Justice Hidden said the decision was "irrational and illegal" and had not considered "the proper treatment of a recognised illness". The three transsexuals were not identified in Court because the Judge ruled that the case was about a general principle rather than them as individuals.

Transsexual Who Stole Police Car Escapes Jail

Martin Smith, formerly known as Sarah, who has lived as a man for over three years and is currently awaiting a sex change, admitted stealing a police car last August because he 'wanted to be one of the boys'. 'Big Maza', as he is referred to by his friends, was given 120 hours' community service by Sheriff John McDonald at Stirling Sheriff Court. The former geriatric nurse, who admitted to being more than two and a half times the legal drink drive limit and without insurance, was also banned from driving for a year. The decision not to jail Smith has saved the Scottish Prison Service a major headache - it has never had to deal with a woman living as a man.

Police Barred From Barring Transsexual Recruits

An employment tribunal ruled in March this year that West Yorkshire Police had contravened the Sex Discrimination Act by refusing to offer employment in the office of constable to a transsexual woman. The woman, who wishes to remain anonymous, said "I believe the police force should reflect the diversity of the community it serves. As a member of a minority group, I am sensitive to equality and prejudice. By nature, I have a tolerant attitude to gender, sexuality and ethnic culture, and I believe that my personal experiences would be a valuable resource in policing West Yorkshire's diverse communities". The Home Secretary has recently stressed the importance of minority groups in the police.

SHAPING

Ruth Stewart takes a look at our waists, hips, bums and tums!

As a cross dresser I strive to have that feminine shape. Because men and women are different shapes - men tend to have broader shoulders, longer arms, a woman's waist is higher, her hips wider - when a man puts on women's clothes he is likely to find they don't hang right. It can be a sharp learning curve to discover that women's clothes are not intended for men!

When I mix with the general public I aim to pass and therefore I try to assume a woman's shape, as far as possible. To help me achieve this there are several different types of foundation garments and corsets I can choose from.

The bodyshaper is designed to give light to firm control and has a gusset fastening. It can be underwired or not. The pantie corselette gives firm control, a gusset fastening and a moulded bra cup with the corselette offering the option of suspenders for securing stocking tops. Support briefs, especially if high waisted, and girdles will hold you in and help create a narrower looking waist, as will lightly boned longline bras.

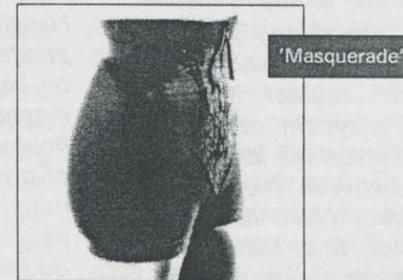
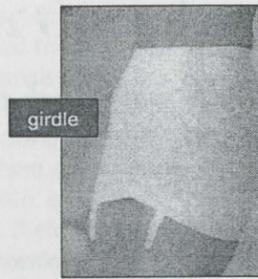
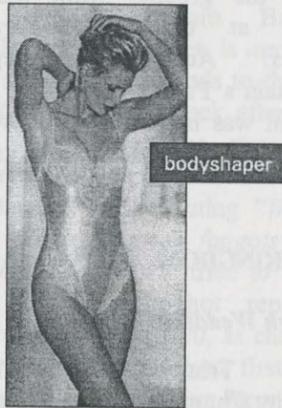
All the above are readily available from high street shops or, if you prefer, through mail order catalogues. As always, the latter offer you the opportunity to consider your purchase in the privacy of your own home and they will accept the return of the item for exchange or refund. Prices vary accordingly but you can expect to pay up to £60 for a good quality corselette.

A more traditional method of reducing the waist, and one which will also position this at the correct

level, is the use of laced boned corsets. While no longer as fashionable as they once were, there are still several companies manufacturing these. They are available in a range of sizes and styles, from a basic waist clincher to a full length laced corset with bra cups and detachable suspenders. A good fitting corset will reduce your waist by up to 4 inches. Again prices vary. A waist clincher can cost somewhere in the region of £55 to £60 while a full corset will set you back £80 to £100 or more. A new corset needs to be 'broken in' and can be really quite uncomfortable to wear to begin with. Never lace a corset too tightly at first - this should always be done gradually.

And what about reshaping your hips and bum? These tend to lack a certain fullness usually present in women. Some folk endeavour to improve on nature by purchasing slightly larger sized briefs or girdles and inserting shaped foam padding to enhance these areas.

I prefer to use a foundation garment called 'Masquerade' which is manufactured by Catherine Robertson and has padding inserted in all the right places to create that feminine shape. 'Masquerade' comes in sizes from 33" to 44" and is intended to be worn with tights or holdups, although a suspender belt can be worn over it for use with stockings. I find it helps to pull in my tum and flatten that male 'lump'. 'Serenity' is another padded foundation garment from Catherine Robertson which is specifically designed for use with stockings. This comes with six suspenders, three on each side. Each of these garments costs around £70.



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TWO JAPANESE SCIENTISTS HAVE DISCOVERED THAT WOMEN WHO WEAR MINI-SKIRTS (OR AT LEAST THE COLLEGE GIRLS WHO TOOK PART IN THE EXPERIMENT) ARE LIKELY TO DEVELOP SLIMMER LEGS THAN THOSE WHO OPT FOR A LONGER LINE - APARENTLY EXPOSING THE LEGS TO AIR PROMOTES MUSCLE TONE AND BURNS FAT.

ODDER STILL, THE SCIENTISTS WERE WOMEN!

Continuing Tales of Transgender in Myth and Legend...

Our Forgotten History

The Untold History of Queen Semiramis

Queen Sammuammāt reigned in Assyria c. 811–807 BC, through the abdication of her husband, Shamsiādad V.

Laura Darlene Lansberry

The Judeo-Christian View of Semiramis, born a Chaldean princess, is that she is the origin of all goddess worship. She is considered to have invented the first goddess religion and that all other goddess oriented religions stem from that invention. After all, the Old Testament, the Torah, starts creation with a male god and no place or mention of a prior goddess. Archaeologists, having discovered that goddess religions came long before the male gods, put the lie to these so-called sacred books. Indeed, it took many centuries for the self-righteous brutality inherent in Christianity to overcome and destroy the pagan religions.

Semiramis, 'Mother Of All The Goddesses', is a ridiculous fairytale conceived to preserve beliefs that would eliminate all vestiges of reality from history. Yes, Queen Sammuammāt did declare herself a goddess and she certainly employed male priestesses sometimes known as Gallae, incorporating them into positions of authority throughout her empire. This was what rulers, male or female, did in those distant times. They declared themselves divine! Male rulers declared themselves gods and female rulers declared themselves goddesses. There was nothing remarkable about Sammuammāt following in this tradition.

Come with us then into yesteryear. Be with us as we unravel a small part of the history that has been lost, eradicated, or altered by the monotheistic patriarchies.

"Queen Sammuammāt," began Archigalla, Themais, eunuch High Priestess of the Gallae "you always return to my embrace after your liaisons with men. Why is that? I cannot satisfy your lust!"

"True, Themais, but lust is of the flesh. You satisfy something deeper within me, something in my soul," answered the Queen who was sitting beside Themais on a velvet lounge. Sammuammāt slipped an arm around the shoulders of Themais and stroked her long tresses gently. "Could a mere man advise me in matters of state? You and my other Gallae are free from the struggle of ordinary people, but there is more. You are dedicated to your work and you are dedicated to truth, perhaps more than you are dedicated to me," Semiramis laughed and rolled over to mount Themais,

"But then you are dedicated to me. Is it not so?"

"My Lady," answered Themais, "if ever there was a female born to represent the Great Mother, you are she. I tremble in your presence with love and devotion. With trepidation I fear some day I might fail you. I know you would forgive me, my Lady, but I might not be able to forgive myself."

"Themais, my pretty, you are my master, my comfort, and my staff. With your counsel we have constructed a system of dikes and canals linked across our land, irrigating our crops between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Never have we been so prosperous. Since the day I called you to my service prosperity and abundance has followed. Nimrud and Ninevah are linked to each other and to the other cities of my empire by

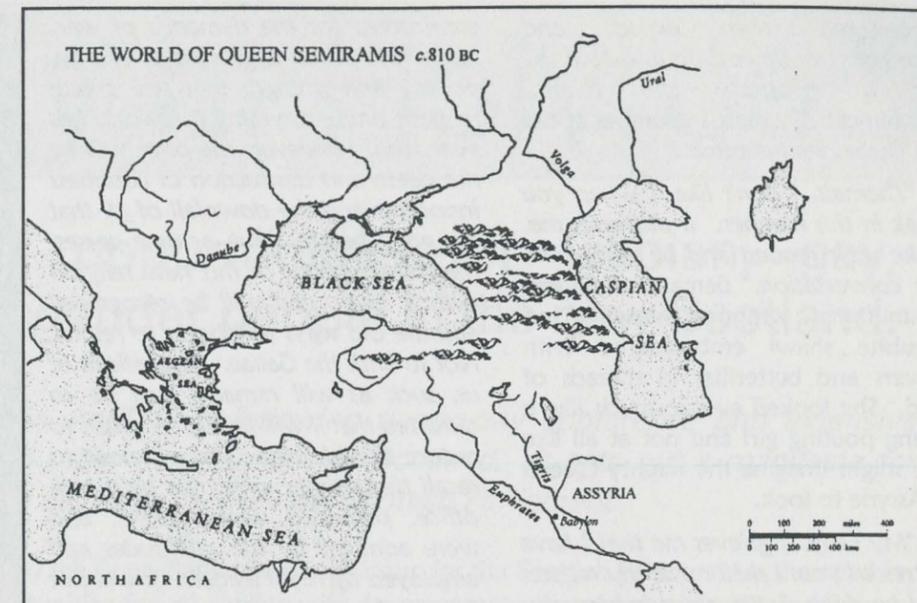
roads of your design. They bind our empire together. You, and your male priestesses, have overseen the building of a system of walls, towers, and gates that protect us from our enemies. On your advice and protected by your blessings we have conquered lands as far afield as India and have made allies to our west to the borders of Phrygia. Even now you direct work on the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, your priestesses putting the finishing touches on blue-enameled reliefs of bulls and dragons on Ishtar's Gate. When it's finished, it will be the greatest triumph of my reign," acclaimed Sammuammāt, rising from the velvet lounge to a standing position beside it. "I wonder, do I enough to repay you?"

"Dear Love," began Themais, Archigalla of the Gallae in Assyria, also rising to a standing position and

embracing the Queen, "you have employed us as civil servants, religious leaders, as the closest and most trusted of your palace staff and you have appointed us in positions of temporal power as well. We are grateful that you have hearkened to the old ways, the love of Kubaba, the Great Mother, and retained deference for her humble dogs. But there is one more boon I would ask of you."

"You may ask anything of me and I will grant it," replied the Great Queen, softly stroking Themais along her back and feeling the soft flesh covering her firm muscular structure. She marveled at the enigma of these exotic creatures, so devoted to truth and purity that they would cleave their manhood and take up life as priestesses of the Mother Goddess. Even their physical qualities were an enigma. Soft like women, but stronger than many of her best soldiers, they were far and away the brightest and most creative people in her kingdom. "Yes, ask me anything and I will grant it."

"You have already given so much that we have need of nothing more in this life," acclaimed the High Priestess. "However, I have dreamt of the future. A time is coming when we, the Gallae, will be forgotten, disparaged and abandoned. Even now the seeds of contempt are being planted by many of the barbarous religions. The Hebrews, scarcely a people today, will spread across the earth like a plague and their laws, made for their own people, will come to be binding on all people, even Gallae. Elias, their prophet, even now condemns Asherah and commands her name be stricken from history. In my dreams a new religion will grow from the foundation of the Hebrew religion. Forged from the myths of Attis, Adonis, and Mithras, it will be heinous. This new religion shall proclaim one wrathful and avenging male god and the wickedness of it shall be beyond imagining. It will descend on the earth like a great and evil dragon consuming any who fail to yield and bend knee. Even we will die, my Queen, your Gallae. Fearing us more than any other, this religion shall attempt not only to destroy us but to eliminate all memory of us. Memories of you, my Queen, will be held with scorn by



these savages, not only because you are a woman who wields power, but because of the men you love, including your son."

Themais paused to take a breath and Sammuammāt interrupted, "How can this be? Look at the wonders you create, the mystery that surrounds you and walks with you wherever you go. What you say is not possible. It is but a bad dream. As for my love of my son, who so feeble-minded would condemn an act so joyous? Who would dare make intimacy with a mother and a son an act of evil?"

"You can not comprehend the monstrous lengths to which this new religion will go to have absolute power over the minds of their followers and to eliminate all opposition," prophesied Themais, a forlorn look of deep sorrow shadowing her otherwise beautiful features.

"Will no one oppose them?" asked Queen Sammuammāt, perplexity in the tone of her voice.

"We shall oppose them!" stoutly affirmed Themais, "We have no choice. But we will lose. In the course of time they will overcome all religions devoted to the goddesses, in whatever form, replacing them with one dark and wrathful male god. To overcome us they will slander our sacred rites, rituals, and practices and, as freely as birds fly, they will lie about us. Our spiritual flagellations will be called acts of depraved madmen, our castrations will be called self-mutilation, and we

will be dismissed as eunuchs. Our taking up lives as women and priestesses will be ignored, forgotten, and we will be called abominations. They will say we sacrifice human life, even children, and that we eat the flesh of babies. Lies, small and large, to support what they believe to be a greater truth. They will stop at nothing to demonize us and, in the passage of time, they will even war among themselves, each sect attempting to become the one religion."

The Queen spoke, a look of horror on her face. "Surely, you are in error. This dream is but a dream, nothing more. Such a thing could never be. There are so many beliefs, a myriad of religions and countless goddesses and gods. I can't conceive of a time when this will not be so? Which of these beliefs can hold sway over the others? How could our goddesses and gods be forgotten?"

"Yes, it seems impossible now. But in my dream I see cities, states, and tribes coming together to form greater nations and these nations shall war upon each other, each attempting to rule over the other. In the process this one religion, with cunning and guile, will spread its message to the emperors, the kings, the queens, the rulers of every land. Some of these rulers will recognize that their people, united by a single religion, would be a stronger and more formidable force. Over time our ancient practices and our varied theologies will first be

discouraged, then exiled, and eventually outlawed, punishable by loss of property and death," pronounced Themais in somber tones that chilled Sammuramat.

"Themais, I don't like it when you speak in this manner. It distresses me. Make your request and be done with this conversation," demanded Queen Sammuramat, wrapping herself in an exquisite shawl embroidered with flowers and butterflies in threads of gold. She looked ever-so-much like a young pouting girl and not at all like one might imagine the mighty Queen of Assyria to look.

"My Lady, it grieves me that I have distressed you. I shall make my request and be done. Let our deeds here, our service to the empire and to you, be inscribed for all time, that we not be forgotten and neglected in the maelstrom to come. True, we shall come up in their own issue, spring from their own seed, but disconnected thus we shall doubt ourselves, lose sight of our own vision, and we shall need remembrance of a time when we were bold and proud." Themais looked deep into the dark beautiful eyes of the Queen and spoke once more, "Despite the petty wars and frequent squabbles with our neighbours, our time has been peaceful. Thousands of years of peace and quiet slows growth. What comes soon, comes with a vengeance, a whirlwind that will produce mighty engines of war and inventions

constructed for the demands of war. There will be an explosion of energy, power, and strength that will create marvels unlike anything the world has ever seen. However, the price will be the death and destruction of countless innocents and the downfall of all that has gone before. But, as time passes, the transgressions of this new religion with a single god will be recognized and the old ways will begin to return. Not so with the Gallae. Perceptions of us, such as will remain, shall be so distorted that it will take great effort to restore our identity. We will need to recall these times when we held high office, provided wise counsel, and were admired by the multitudes and employed by royal leaders. It will not be easy to preserve the records of our deeds against the defilement of those that come. I ask that you, my Queen, record what we have accomplished here and that we were an important part of your realm. It will bewilder the future, and confuse them, but it will speak to those who have eyes to see."

"It shall be done, my love. You have my promise," replied Sammuramat taking off her shawl and laying herself down on a nearby dais. "Now, come cuddle with me and let us dismiss these dreary thoughts from our minds."

"As you wish, my Lady," answered the Archigalla striding across the floor and sliding down beside her with a playful smile on her lips. "As you wish, indeed."



EUROFANTASIA

Holland will be host country to the next Eurofantasia to be held in the Millennium, from 7th to 13th May. The decision has yet to be made exactly where, but it'll most likely be Amsterdam.

So just what is Eurofantasia? It's reckoned to be the biggest transgender event in Europe. A week of meeting like-minded people, having fun and making new friends. There are also talks, lectures and workshops on different topics of interest to the transgender community and arranged visits to places of interest.

Well, that's how I remember the Eurofantasia at Eboltoft in Denmark in 1994. I was one of three people from the UK, the others being Jane Mulvenna from England and Linda Marshall from Ireland. Yes, a real "Did you hear the one about the Scots T-person, the English T-person and the Irish T-person?" We met many others from Denmark, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Finland, France and Greece, and the USA was represented by Holly Cross.

In 2002 Eurofantasia is coming to the UK - to Manchester to be exact. The Beaumont Society will be sponsoring the event, as will Northern Concord and Trans-essex and I hope to keep you all updated with information and progress reports leading up to both events. Eurofantasia? I call it Eurofuntasia. Make an entry in your diary for Manchester in 2002 - See you there!

Ruth Stewart

Equality at Holyrood

Promoting equal opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the new Scotland.

This document was published in April 1999 following a one-day conference and extensive consultation involving LGBT and other communities in Scotland. It sets out a manifesto for equality which can and should be delivered by the new Scottish Parliament.

One of the four key principles adopted by the Consultative Steering Group for the Scottish Parliament is the need for the Parliament to promote equal opportunities for all. In line with developments elsewhere in the UK and Europe, the Scotland Act defines equal opportunities to include both sex and sexual orientation.

The Consultative Steering Group recommended the establishment of an Equal Opportunities Committee within the Scottish Parliament. The remit of this Committee should be to promote equal opportunities for all people, throughout Scottish society.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people still face daily discrimination in society. We also remain directly discriminated against by a number of laws which reflect the old idea that our sexual orientation and gender identity are flawed and to be discouraged. The Scottish Parliament has responsibility for most of these discriminatory laws. In particular, sexual offences law, and section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, directly discriminate against LGBT people, and the civil law fails to recognise our identities, partnerships and families.

The Scottish Parliament also has the power to encourage equal opportunities generally throughout its work. Much good practice has been developed in parts of Scotland in recent years to tackle discrimination against LGBT people, for example in the provision of local government and police services. The Scottish Parliament will be able to promote and encourage such good practice across the country.

Legislation prohibiting discrimination, for example in employment, remains reserved to Westminster. However, the Scottish Parliament will be able to make representations to Westminster calling for the extension of anti-discrimination legislation to protect people against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Scottish Parliament's purpose

Inequality of opportunity remains widespread in Scotland. Discrimination occurs on many grounds, including gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age and social origin. It should be a fundamental part of the Scottish Parliament's purpose to tackle inequality and social exclusion.

- The Scottish Parliament should adopt the equal opportunities measures proposed in the Consultative Steering Group report. An Equal Opportunities Committee and an Equality Unit should be established, and the explanatory memorandum of each Bill should set out its implications for equality of opportunity for all in Scotland.
- The remit of the Equal Opportunities Committee must be to tackle inequalities throughout Scottish society, not just within the Parliament itself. It must be proactive and consultative, with expert consultative sub-committees considering, for example, gender equality, race equality, disability equality, LGBT equality, age equality and poverty. A very effective model of good practice here is the Equality Committee of Glasgow City Council.

Fair treatment under the criminal law

And so, as it was requested, it came to be. Archaeologists and historians, influenced by the perspective of a world dominated by monotheistic patriarchy have puzzled over the accounts of Queen Sammuramat. Why did she employ so many "eunuchs" in her empire? These "mutilated men" were used in almost every high office whether religious or temporal. "It must have been because they work harder without the distractions of ordinary men," pronounce some historical researchers. Inconceivable to them that the Gallae are a blend of male and female, having special talents and gifts, even as males and females are different from each other.

And what of you, my sisters, what of you ...

At the time of writing, there is a higher age of consent for sex between men than for sex between a man and a woman, or between women. The criminal law discriminates in a number of other ways, for example, consensual adult sexual activity which takes place with a third adult present is completely legal for heterosexuals, but illegal for gay men. Furthermore, some police, prosecution authorities and courts still treat minor offences committed by two men or two women, for example, sexual activity in a secluded corner of a park, much more harshly than the same activity between a man and a woman.

- The Scottish Parliament should institute an immediate review of sex offences law, similar to that being conducted in England and Wales, with a remit to ensure that the law provides effective protection from sexual abuse and assault for all people, while removing the remaining discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The Scottish Parliament should promote non-discriminatory policing and prosecution policies.

Fair treatment for young people

Many young LGBT people have a miserable time. Homophobic bullying is widespread in our schools. No support structures exist for young LGBT people in most of Scotland. Teachers are inhibited from tackling homophobic bullying and from providing advice and support to young LGBT people, by section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, and by a lack of clear national policy in these areas. Personal and sex education compounds the problem in many schools by ignoring, marginalising and stigmatising LGBT identities.

- The Scottish Parliament should repeal 'Section 28' as a matter of urgency.
- National policy is needed explicitly to recognise and tackle homophobic bullying in schools. School curricula should be inclusive, non-discriminatory, and supportive of the diversity of pupils. Local authorities should recognise and support the particular needs of young LGBT people in their area, and Parliament should promote this recognition and support across Scotland.

Fair treatment by public bodies

Discrimination in society can extend to the operation of public bodies and services. This leads to a lack of trust in public services by members of the LGBT community, with the result, for example, that homophobic assaults go unreported to the police and the perpetrators are left free to attack again. Public bodies must address discrimination in their service provision, and further, they have an important role to play in tackling and redressing the effects of discrimination in society as a whole.

- The Scottish Parliament should use its equal opportunities promotion powers to encourage all public bodies, including local authorities, police and health services, to adopt effective non-discrimination policies which include sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Parliament should monitor the operation of these policies, and gather and promulgate best practice.
- A key element of national policy for all public bodies and services should be the need to understand and counter the effects of discrimination in society.

Fair treatment under the civil law

The civil law at present denies the identity, relationships and families of LGBT people. For example, in law, transsexual people remain the gender specified on their birth certificate, making it impossible to marry a partner of the opposite gender, and leading to other problems in the appropriate provision of services.

The law does not recognise committed same-gender partnerships, and such partnerships are denied the rights and responsibilities available to mixed-gender couples by registering a marriage. For example, a same-gender partner is not recognised as able to act for an incapacitated partner, and is discriminated against in inheritance law.

The law does not recognise that same-gender couples may co-parent. This means for example that if a mother shares the upbringing of her child with her female partner, that family relationship is not legally recognised, and were the mother to die, the co-parent would have no recognised responsibility for the child. Courts continue to discriminate against LGBT parents and their children in deciding matters such as access arrangements.

- The Scottish Parliament should legislate to allow transgender and transsexual people to register their gender identity for legal purposes. Parliament should introduce legislation to make the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage available to couples regardless of gender.
- Parliament should negotiate with Westminster for all such couples to have equal rights and responsibilities in reserved areas such as tax, benefits and immigration.
- Parliament should amend the legislation on joint fostering and adoption to remove the discrimination against same-gender couples.

Summary

To provide, protect and promote equal opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Scotland, the Scottish Parliament should ensure the following:

- Parliament should adopt the recommendations of the Consultative Steering Group concerning equal opportunities. The remit of the Parliamentary Equal Opportunities Committee should be to promote and protect equal opportunities for all people, throughout Scottish society. To be effective, the Committee should have specialist consultative sub-committees, including one considering LGBT equality.
- An immediate review of sexual offences law should ensure that the law effectively protects all people from abuse and assault, while removing the remaining discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 should be repealed immediately. Parliament should put in place national policy for schools to tackle homophobic bullying, to provide appropriate support for young LGBT people, and to end marginalisation and stigmatisation in the syllabus.
- Parliament should promote the adoption by all public bodies of effective equal opportunities policies and practices which include sexual orientation and gender identity. Parliament should monitor the operation of these policies and practices, and promote best practice across Scotland. National policy for public bodies should include the need to understand and counter the effects of discrimination in society.
- The gender identity of transgender and transsexual people should be recognised in law.
- Parliament should introduce legislation to make the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage available to couples regardless of gender.

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Equality Network campaigns to remove the inequalities facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the laws and institutions of Scotland

STOP PRESS!!

Fashion Show and Disco

at the Minto Hotel, Edinburgh on
Saturday 24th April 1999

a great success!

a report by Susan [redacted]...

Presented by Loraine [redacted] least that's what she said they were!) of *Hide and Sleek* fame and billed as a ground-breaking event for Scotland this event promised to be something that could not be missed. Word on the grapevine was that T-folk from all over Scotland would be making the effort to attend and knowing the venue from a previous visit at Christmas, I knew we would be assured of a warm welcome. After driving from Dundee, having picked up Wendy from Aberdeen on the way, we arrived outside the Minto Hotel to find a group of 'lads' standing in front. Discretion being the better part of valour - ok we were scared - I drove round the block and next time they had departed. I later learned that our apprehension was unfounded. The 'lads' were staying at the hotel, whilst on a stag night from Luton, of all places, and were game for a laugh in any case.

Once in the hotel I quickly caught up with others I knew and chatted away. Shortly after arriving I noticed Tiffany in a fetching pink tutu, yes she was on good form tonight! As numbers increased the disco started and eventually some of the 'girls' hit the dance floor. Hearing that our editor had been seen earlier, I looked out for her and eventually saw her and a friend from Inverness. During the course of the evening Julia was seen to quaff a mineral water or two (at

least that's what she said they were!)

Later, the buffet was served and this fortified us for the evening ahead. The big event was yet to come and around 10pm the Fashion Show got under way. What a show it was to be; both in terms of the garments on display and the catwalk models on which they were displayed. A tremendous amount of work by Loraine had gone into designing and making the items and the 'girls' did them justice in displaying the garments to their full glory.

The show comprised five presentations and a finale with brief interludes in-between.

These were catalogued as:

Day Wear - Is it dark enough?

Louise Brown Suit
Kelly Charcoal Suit
Tiffany Cami, Cardi and Mini
Ruth Black Skirt, Red Top
Karen Sage Skirt and Top

Lingerie - Have we hidden all the bits?

Louise Black Satin Negligee and Robe
Kelly Purple Velour Negligee and Satin Robe
Ruth White Bra Set with Robe
Karen Purple Corset with Robe
Gina Black Corset with Robe
Tiffany Black Bra Set with Robe

Fun Section - Even Trannies go to Fancy Dress!

Gina Schoolgirl - Big Lassie That!
Tiffany Little Girl - Aye Right!
Louise Maid - In Penicuik!
Karen Nurse - Not on my ward!
Ruth Miss Claus - Christ Help Santa!
Kelly School Marm - Please Miss, I need a wee wee!

Cocktail - A chance to wobble on your 5" stillies

Louise Black Ruched Chiffon - 'The Adultery Dress'
Kelly Black Crushed Velvet - no need to iron
Ruth Purple Crushed Velvet - Hey! It's not short and tight
Karen Navy Crochet - took ages to knit
Gina Sexy Red Satin - cleavage optional extra
Tiffany Pretty in Purple Lace - strop or not!

Shade Babes

Louise Stunning in Black Vinyl, but it's a rip-off
Kelly Black PVC Skirt and Basque
Ruth Silver Bra and Mini and tummy to die for
Karen Blue PVC Dress
Gina Puss in Boots with the Spiky Boobs
Tiffany Extendable Leather Belt

The Finale

The fashion show was well received and all too soon it was over. As a token of appreciation, Loraine was presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Her very own Louise made the presentation and a lingering kiss sealed the show.

A return was made to the other main activities of the evening, namely drinking, dancing and chatting. As midnight approached people started to drift away, ever mindful of the journey home. Of course, the author managed to hang on to the bitter end, then got

slightly lost in Edinburgh before hitting the motorway north. The outskirts of Dundee were a welcome sight around 2.45 am and we dropped our passenger at her car wishing her a safe journey for the remainder of her journey ever onwards to Aberdeen.

Needless to say a long lie in was called for on Sunday morning. It had been a great evening and I would encourage any reader who has not attended one of Loraine's functions to try and come along to the next one.

[Loraine's own 'behind the scenes' report of the Fashion Show will appear in the next Tartan Skirt complete with photographs - Ed.]

Welcome To Cheshire



Shirley and Christine offer overnight stays and meals at their cosy cottage in Northwich. Only 30 minutes from The Hollywood Showbar and just 6 miles off the M6 at junction 19. A friendly and totally safe atmosphere is assured for all.

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ELVIS LIVES!

Yet another sigh ting of Elvis Presley was made in the midwest town of Hacksville last month.

Lily Jonsen is convinced the person she bumped into as she wheeled her trolley round her local supermarket was indeed the King or, as she now believes him to be, the Queen!

Lily reckons Elvis had a sex change. "It was hard to mistake the way that pelvis moved as she disappeared amongst the frozen veg, but the blue suede shoes were what really did it for me!" she said.



The Beaumont Society



The Beaumont Society is a Nationwide based self-help group, for all those who crossdress, with many open social meetings, around the country.

It is a membership organisation, with it's own Magazine and newsletter.

For further details write to the following address, or telephone:

Beaumont Society
27 Old Gloucester Street
London WC1N 3XX

Information telephone no. 01582-[redacted]

MILLENNIUM MENU

Are you 'bugged' regarding how you are going to enjoy the much heralded millennium celebrations? Or are you like me and have a 'what's all the fuss' attitude to it all?

It would appear that many of the catering, entertainment and sundry service establishments are having problems as to how they are to staff the various venues, etc. The suggested costings and charges also appear to be horrendous, partly due to the expected wage demands of those prepared to work through this period. Now, are you thinking what I'm thinking? Ah - you are - good.

We trannies are ideally suited to fill some of those gaps and make a few bob into the bargain. Many of our merry band would - and do - pay for what they consider the privilege of being maids and waitresses, so why should we all not benefit from this ideal slot in the calendar, and be paid for our pleasure.

I suggest that all over the country the organisers among us gather small groups of willing 'girls' to be waitresses for this event and offer these groups to select outlets for a fee. We should not be greedy regarding the fees, as we do have a

significant 'add-on factor' in the satisfaction area which must be taken into account. However, it must be well organised and we have many girls who are well capable of this and ... we all must be on our best behaviour. I'm sure we can do a good job full of vim and vigour - not to mention Jif and Flash. We can of course have a variety of suitable uniforms and many of us already have a head start there. My maid's outfit is a mini - oh, you had guessed. For those who have yet to add this item to their wardrobe, then get cracking as we only have a few months left - well, twelve at the time of writing, but it soon goes. My preference would be to be a butlerette/hostess - or a purserette if it was a boat party - welcoming the guests, seating them and serving drinks and nibbles. I would wear a nice white top and black mini, or possibly a slinky cocktail number. If this was the case, then one of you can borrow my maid's outfit.

We should not let this opportunity go begging, as it could mean the difference between actually enjoying this happening, or staying in bed, which is probably what I will do otherwise.

Just don't forget ... serve from the left and take away from the right and don't worry too much if you have to use spoon and fork technique if using silver service, as the punters will probably all be sozzled and not notice.

So come on girls - get organised - have some fun and earn some pennies into the bargain.

Colette



THE BRUSSELS EXPERIENCE

continued from page 6

by my own GP. I did, however, have a last appointment with Dr Seghers to have a few more stitches removed before a final examination. This done, I was given further instructions on caring for myself and then I was able to thank him for all his care and attention and for carrying out a very successful and satisfactory operation. I said goodbye and returned to my apartment to prepare for flying back to the UK next morning.

"Ain't bin the same cowpoke since a stuck ma pistol down the front o' ma pants an blew ma goddamn balls off!"



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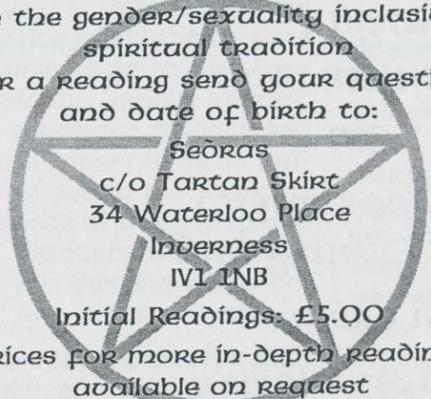
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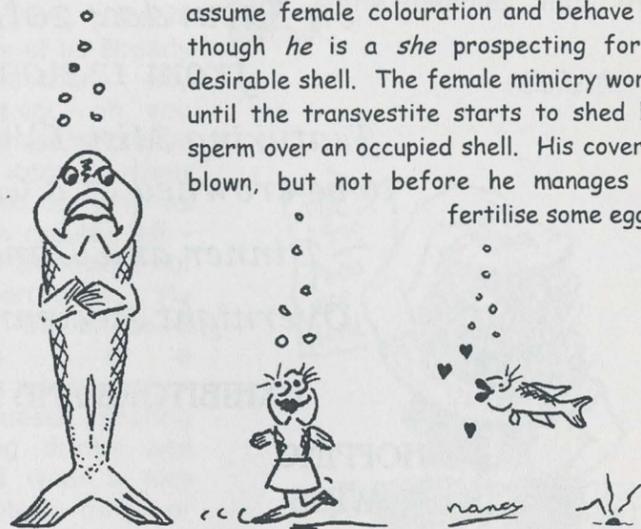
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THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON ...

The male *shell-carrying cichlid* can be a record 30 times the size of one of his mates. He has to be big and powerful to gather the shells needed for his females to curl up inside to brood their eggs. Males which are unsuccessful in establishing a harem remain small and only get the chance to breed when they band together to harass and distract the big male from his task of guarding his females. While the warrior male is seeing the others off, a small male can then cunningly assume female colouration and behave as though *he* is a *she* prospecting for a desirable shell. The female mimicry works until the transvestite starts to shed his sperm over an occupied shell. His cover is blown, but not before he manages to fertilise some eggs.



Amphias, on the other hand, are all born female and switch sex when the time is right. Only a few of the biggest females transform into males. They get the best of both worlds. As young females they avoid competition and regularly spawn - those that change into males have the added bonus of fathering the offspring of a group of females. The born again male amphias originally had a set of ovaries but now develop a pair of testes. So long as he attends to his harem of females, none will jump gender. Only when he disappears will the largest of his wives change sex and take his place!

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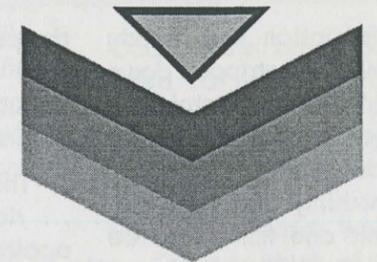
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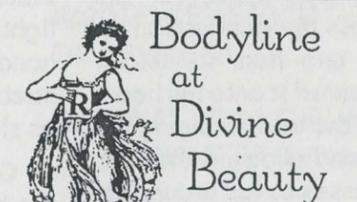


'Spend an hour - or stay the day
Fulfil your dreams in every way.
Eve and Lyn 'real girls' who care
Who make you up and do your hair
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From stocking tops to panty hose.'

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The Purple Nails

by Alexandrina

The transformation was nearly complete. David had stripped down to his bare skin, then painstakingly attired himself in female finery: black lace underwear (for he always wore a matching set of bra, suspender belt and knickers), red fishnet stockings with black lace tops, a figure-hugging long-sleeved fuchsia satin blouse, and his favourite skirt – a deep claret leather one, discreet, just above the knee.

The cosmetics had been applied carefully, for David always took a pride in his appearance; just a touch of rouge to the high temples, delicate eye shadow and lipstick in plum port to tone with the claret of the skirt.

Everything was ready for the final step across the gender barrier. He took the wig from its wicker cradle and lowered it onto his head, easing it from the back, bringing the front forward and allowing the soft, rich auburn tresses to curl around his neck. He looked up into the mirror and Dorothy smiled recognition. Once more the unseen boundary had been traversed.

Dorothy had several wigs but this shoulder-length in flame auburn was the one she wore for every special occasion, and tonight was to be a very special occasion.

The jewellery was modest ... apart from the earrings. Dorothy could never resist wearing large gilt hoops, and they sat well under the long hair. They were not hidden by the flowing fire.

Then the nails. She slid open the bottom drawer of her dressing table, removed a squat box in beige leather and from it selected

the purple set, so near to the plum port lipstick that no-one but a beautician would notice the subtle difference in shade.

The nails were long ... very long ... ridiculously long. They were applied with special adhesive strips, quite strong, but were not intended for a lady who must do anything. They were for the idle rich, the wealthy ladies who had no need to make meals and wash dishes.

I should have no need to wash dishes this evening, thought Dorothy as she let herself out of the flat, taking care to avoid putting any pressure on the nails. The cool of the evening was a balm of bliss after that steamy day in the drawing office. She rested her hand lightly on her shoulder-slung handbag, her long fingers and nails stretching across the velour surface, as she hailed a taxi.

Collette was waiting for her in the hotel foyer. *'Dorothy, you look ravishing. Are you hungry?'*

Dorothy shook her head. *'Not at all, darling. Let me repay the compliment. You are positively stunning this evening.'*

The girl laughed lightly and turned to show off her midnight blue cocktail dress. *'Do you like it, Dorothy? It was really a snip at £570.'*

Dorothy drew in breath sharply, but recovered quickly and smiled her approval of the acquisition.

They made small talk during most of the meal, but as they sipped their coffees, Dorothy looked around furtively, checking the other adjacent tables and

noting the location of the waiter. Her hands were concealed below the table. She brought one of them up and slid it across the tablecloth. Collette covered the small pieces which the hand deposited, then stealthily did the same with her own right hand.

The women drank from their cups again, then the strange process was repeated, this time with the left hands.

When the waiter returned the two elegant ladies were ready to leave. Collette said that she would pay the bill then, as she was taking a credit card from her handbag, a purple nail became detached from her middle finger.

'Careful, dear,' said Dorothy, *'or you may lose that.'*

Collette smiled and pressed the nail back in place. *'I'm always losing things,'* she said, giving the waiter a coy wink.

As they walked out of the dining room into the foyer, they looked at each other and smiled satisfaction. Everything had gone according to plan. They were just about to move towards the door when a tall balding man approached.

'Colin Davis, alias Collette Davell, I am placing you under arrest.'

Collette tossed her head. *'What is all this nonsense? I am Collette Davell – stop. Anyway, what are you charging me with?'*

The man smiled sardonically *'Never know when the game's up, do you, Collette? OK. You are charged with reset.'* He turned to Dorothy. *'I believe, madam that you are employed by Cartwright Electronics, and I am charging you with stealing their patents. This lady is your accomplice.'*

Dorothy too knew that the game was up. *'How did you know?'* she asked in a resigned tone.

The man twisted his mouth

again into a grimace. *'An investigating officer has to be on the ball and I spotted your mistake.'* He sneered down at Dorothy. *'You don't suit pink nails, madam. You gals ought to have got your act together.'*

Collette looked down at the purple nails on her fingertips, the nails which would have brought her a tidy sum if she had been able to pass them on. *'Well, better luck next time, Dorothy.'*

Chief Superintendent Mathers tapped his fingers on his chest, then stretched out to pick up one of the purple nails which were lying on the desk top. *'Well done, Bob. A most ingenious place to hide micro-*

film, eh? You would never think of looking under fingernails. Ten shots with all the secrets of Project X497.' He stood up and paced to the window. *'But how did you twig to the swap of the nails?'*

Bob Harper, Detective Sergeant in East Division, grinned with satisfaction. *'I've been trailing this guy for some weeks. The company was suspicious of him, so I was studying his movements very carefully.'*

'Sure, but he was in drag. That was even more ingenious.'

'Well, Chief, it didn't fool me. I noticed that the false nails had been switched.'

'An amazing piece of observation, Bob.' The Chief Superintendent came back to his desk and sat down again. *'I'll put in a commendation for you.'*

'Thank you, sir, that will be much appreciated.'

Outside the office Bob Harper chuckled to himself. When will some of those girls learn? He thought. The pink nails shrieked at the plum lipstick.

Still, that lipstick looked really nice. Come to think of it ... He frowned as he conjectured. Yep, I've got one just like that. I'll wear that one tonight. It'll go well with my purple evening dress. ■

The Tartan Skirt Directory...

Support Groups

CROSSLYNX TV/TS GROUP

Meetings are held in Glasgow on the second Wednesday of the month
Tel: 0141- [redacted] Monday, 7.30 - 9.30
or write to: CROSSLYNX

c/o SLGS
PO Box 38
Glasgow G2 2QF

GRAMPIAN GENDER GROUP

Meetings are held in Aberdeen on the third Saturday of the month
Contact: Gillian
Tel: 01224- [redacted]

Mondays and Tuesdays, 6.30 - 9.30 pm
or write to: Grampian Gender Group
PO Box 18201
Aberdeen AB21 9YF

HIGHLAND T-GROUP

Meetings are held in Inverness on the first Saturday of the month.
Contact: Julia Gordon
Tel: 01463- [redacted]
Fax: 01463- [redacted]
E-mail: [redacted]
or write to: Highland T-Group

c/o Reach Out Highland
34 Waterloo Place
Inverness IV1 1NB

SCOTTISH TV/TS GROUP

Meetings are held in Edinburgh on the last Saturday of the month
Contact: Agnes
Tel: 0131- [redacted]

WEST LOTHIAN TV/TS GROUP

Meetings are held in Livingston every second and last Saturday of the month
Contact: Donna
Tel: 01506- [redacted]
Monday - Thursday, 6 - 9 pm

Helplines and Support Organisations

BEAUMONT SOCIETY

Tel: 01582- [redacted]

BEAUMONT TRUST

Tel: 07000- [redacted] (10am - 10pm)

EQUALITY NETWORK

Tel: 07020- [redacted]

GENDER TRUST

Tel: 07000- [redacted] (10am - 10pm)

IMPOTENCE ASSOCIATION

Tel: 0181- [redacted]

NATIONAL AIDS HELPLINE

Tel: 0800- [redacted] (24 hour free service)

PRIDE SCOTLAND

Tel: 0131- [redacted]

RANK OUTSIDERS

National Helpline
Tel: 0171- [redacted] (Wednesday 7-9pm)
Scotland Coordinator
Tel: 01463- [redacted] / 0839- [redacted]

SAMARITANS

Tel: 0345- [redacted] (24 hours service)

SCOTTISH MARRIAGE COUNSELLING

Tel: 0131- [redacted] (Monday to Friday)
Tel: 0141- [redacted] (Wednesday)

WOMEN OF THE BEAUMONT SOCIETY

Tel: 01389- [redacted] (7 - 11pm)

NOTICE BOARD

URGENTLY REQUIRED! COVER GIRLS FOR THE TARTAN SKIRT

A year's free subscription to the magazine if you are chosen as a cover girl! The only stipulation: wear something tartan. Nothing too OTT please - this is a family publication! (Please enclose a SAE if you want your photograph returned to you.)

Sorry - The telephone number for Jean & Mike's Tranny friendly B'n'B should have been 01241- [redacted] in the last issue of the magazine!

In-depth articles wanted! also anecdotes, snippets and press cuttings. Highest prices paid (!)

My apologies if you were unlucky enough to have received a copy of the Spring Tartan Skirt with the pages in the wrong order. Let me know and I'll replace it.

Zara tells me the SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) will issue amended certificates upon receipt of supporting evidence of a change of name and the appropriate administration fee. In the case of Higher National Certificates or Higher National Diplomas, however, since these were issued before the SQA came into being, they can only provide you with a certified Statement in your new name which will detail your achievements. The fee for this is £18. Contact Linda Murray at Glasgow on 0141- [redacted] (direct line).

the Tartan Skirt personal listings...



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Box No. 001



Glasgow
Zoe (35), very convincing TV, looking to meet other TVs for friendship or adult fun. I enjoy going out or sharing dress up nights indoors. Correspondence also welcome. Can travel or accommodate. SAE please. Photo appreciated.
Box No 002



Glasgow
Donna, lady artist, seeks to correspond with and meet discreet bi-TV or gent to enjoy occasional fun times.
Box No. 003

TV adores directoire knickers, corsetry and silky apparel, wishes to meet others with same or similar interests
Box No. 004



Inverness
Katy, attractive TV would like to meet singles, couples and other TVs to help her dress up (or down!) in satin and lace. Daytime only. Can accommodate.
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Whether it's volunteering with one of our working groups, helping raise money or staffing our offices in Edinburgh or Glasgow. It takes all kinds of people with all levels of experience to make Pride Scotland a success. Contact us today to find out how you can be a part of it:

Keith Cowan, Human Resources Director
Pride Scotland

58a Broughton Street and 11 Dixon Street
Edinburgh EH1 3SA Glasgow G1 4AL
Tel/Fax: 0131 [redacted] Tel: 0141 [redacted]
Fax: 0141 [redacted]

The TARTAN SKIRT is the magazine of the Scottish Transgender Community brought to you through the efforts of members of the community and the support and encouragement of Reach Out Highland.

We are proud to acknowledge the generosity of all concerned who selflessly contribute to these pages giving freely of their time, expertise and experience.

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cover: Louise

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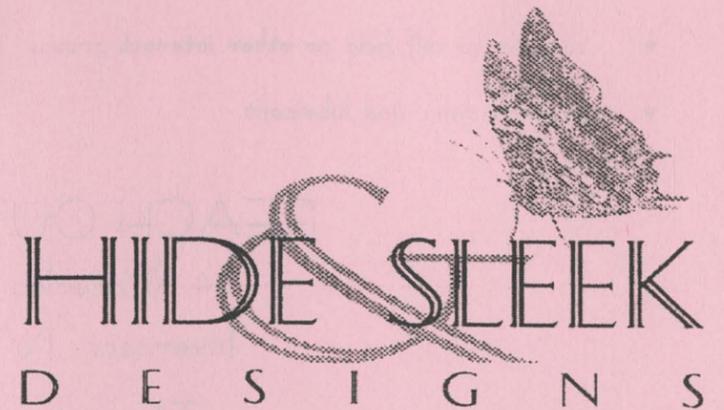
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*Sorry, I can't give you legs
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*And supply the boobs, corset and
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