



Straightening Out The Facts

In November we had a reply to a Vis A Vis column from ETVC. This month it's time for a reply from Tri-Ess on a September Vis a Vis. This reply is more than a letter to the editor. It is a whole article.

Bashing The Pinata

*by Jane Ellen Fairfax
Chair, Tri-Ess Board of Directors
and your Renaissance sister.*

A fun activity at children's parties is bashing the pinata. The participant strikes with a stick at a decorated figure suspended high above her. If she connects solidly, the pinata will break and disgorge its cargo of candies and favors. Since the basher is first blindfolded and spun around, here efforts can result in some rather comical flailing.

If a gender journalist bashes a support group without making sure of her facts, she mentally blindfolds herself. She reaches conclusions as random as blows at the pinata. Such is the case with the unnamed author of the "Vis-a-Vis" column in the September issue of the Renaissance News. [Ed. Note: Our mistake. This was a printing error.] To back her blind-bashing, the writer indulged in some rather creative fact-finding. In some cases the facts are colored; in others they are omitted; in still others they are simply not true. Let's compare some of these statements with the truth:

Statement #1 - "The problem started for Megan when *they* [emphasis added] got the necessary unanimous vote to let transsexuals into their 'club'."

The truth - Jennifer, a respected

member of Alpha Omega, told the chapter she was going to explore her transsexual feelings and felt honor-bound to withdraw from the chapter. Without seeking input from Jennifer, Megan steamrolled through a chapter, grieving over the impending loss of a beloved member, her agenda to admit transsexuals as members. According to the Constitution of Alpha Omega, "... proposed amendment(s) will be slated for discussion at the next regular meeting with notification in the newsletter. After discussion, the proposed amendment(s) will be presented in the chapter newsletter within 30 days ..." Only then would the matter be voted on. In forcing an immediate vote on the members,

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New Officers For '94

It's that time again. The winds of political change have whooshed through Renaissance and the results of the chapter elections are in.

The biggest news comes from the LSV Chapter. In their first dual candidate election a genetic woman, (GG, Real Female, Born Woman!) has been elected Chapter Leader. **Linda** [redacted], the significant other of 1993 Chapter Leader, **Yvonne** [redacted] (who will join the increasing ranks of LSV Directors At Large ... ten and counting) beat **Shelbi Lyn** [redacted] in a landslide victory. Ms. [redacted] will be part of the 1994 team as an advisor. Linda wants to stress the needs of significant others during her term in office and she will be a welcome voice at National Board meetings.

Jennifer [redacted] will handle the Secretary duties next year and **Dawn G.** will be Treasurer. Helping to spend some of the LSV funds will be the new '94 Program Director, **Michelle** [redacted]

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter election brings another surprise, albeit not as big as LSV's. **Dina Amberle**, a former Chapter Leader of GPC, ran again for that position. Guess she has someone else in mind for the coveted, after meeting vacu-uming job that she mentions in her Vis A Vis column this month. Dina was unopposed in the November

(continued on page 5)

Chapters & Affiliates

New Jersey

South Jersey: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc. 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 435-5401 or write Renaissance SJ, PO Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Chapter leader - Terri [redacted]; Assistant Leader - Phil [redacted]

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Meets on third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, PA. Doors open at 8:00 p.m. Write to Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020 or call (215)630-1437. Chapter Leader - Maryann Kirkland

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at The Greens at Westgate in York, Pa. Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or call (717) 780-ILSV. Chapter Leader - Yvonne [redacted]

Affiliates

MOTG: Meets on the fourth Saturday of the month. For information contact Terry M., PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701

Metropolitan Gender Network: 561 Hudson Street, Box 45, New York, NY 10014 (201) 794-1665 Ext. 332.

American Educational Gender Information Services (AEGIS): Dallas Denny, PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 939-0244

Renaissance News

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Rachel and Beth Marshall

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

And, don't forget about...

Articles, opinion pieces and letters to the Editor are always welcome at the Renaissance News. Ideas for articles and opinion pieces should be sent to Renaissance News, P. O. Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020. Complimentary and irate letters to the Editor may be sent to the same address.

Significant Others who have article ideas or opinions they would like to share should send their ideas to Evelyn Kirkland, c/o Maryann Kirdland, P. O. Box 1242, Newtown, PA 18940.

Background Papers are available for \$1 each plus \$.25 postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing, 2-Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing, 3-PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others, 4-The Matter of Children, 5-An Annotated Bibliography, 6-Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View, 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics, and 9-Understanding Transsexuality.

Pen Pal Program: If you would like to be a pen pal contact Maryann Kirkland at P. O. Box 1242, Newtown, PA 18940. Attn: Dept. PP.

If you are a transgendered person with children and would like to network with other transparents, contact Elsa [redacted] at: Transparent, C/O Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

For TS information and peer counseling in South Jersey call Kelly Harris at 609 641-3782.

Events Calendar

Renaissance GP

Renaissance LSV

Renaissance South Jersey

MOTG

Dec. 4: Christmas Party Dec. 4: Meeting, 8:00 p.m. December: Elections Dec. 4: JoAnn Roberts
Jan. 22: Alison Laing
Feb. 26: Dr. Roger Peo

Chapters wishing to have their programs listed should get them to the Newsletter at least one month in advance. Two is better.

ROGER'S NOTEBOOK (#75)

by Roger E. Peo, Ph. D.

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

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

Throughout my education as a therapist, there has been a guiding principle: First, do no harm. The difficulty in applying this conviction is how to determine what might be harmful. It is crucial to protect and support my client but equally important to maintain my credibility and professional standards. As with all ethical/moral situations, there is

no single answer. Some would call this situational ethics but I believe that there have to be some underlying standards that remain inviolate. Most of us have such standards in our lives: honesty, integrity and charity come to mind.

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

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

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

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



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You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445; Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential.

This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. Others must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of such a reprint should be sent to Dr. Peo.

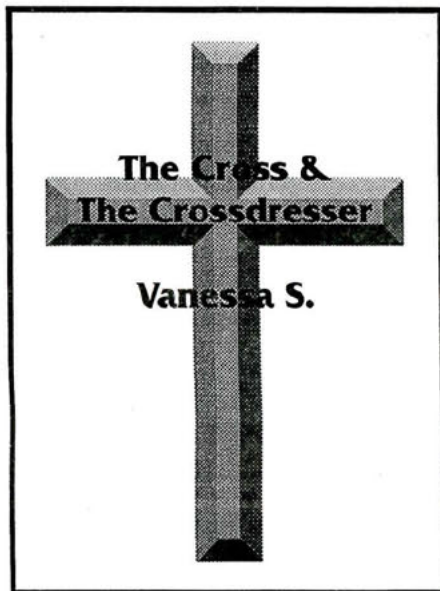


New from CDS

Sacred Cows Make the Best Hamburger — A collection of 39 of the best essays and editorials by JoAnn Roberts from the pages of *LadyLike*, *Femme*, *ITS* and *Renaissance News*. You'll find out why JoAnn is one of the most respected writers in the TV/TS community. 100 pages for \$12.00 postpaid. Pa. residents add 6% sales tax.

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(Elections - continued from page 1)

election so that means she gets the job. About the sweeping up ... one word: delegate.

Also unopposed for the Secretary's desk was Delaware beauty **Diane [REDACTED]**. **Joanne [REDACTED]** continues as Treasurer, **Michelle [REDACTED]** will keep coming up with meeting programs as Program Director, (she refuses to organize another Holiday Party though) and **Maryann Kirkland** assumes the Outreach position.

Flash! This item just in! South Jersey Chapter taken over in bloodless coup by Delaware invaders. Actually, the South Jersey Chapter has elected **Jackie [REDACTED]** and **Audrey Jayne [REDACTED]** as co-Chapter Leaders. Stepping down are '93 co-leaders, **Terri [REDACTED]** and **Phil [REDACTED]**.

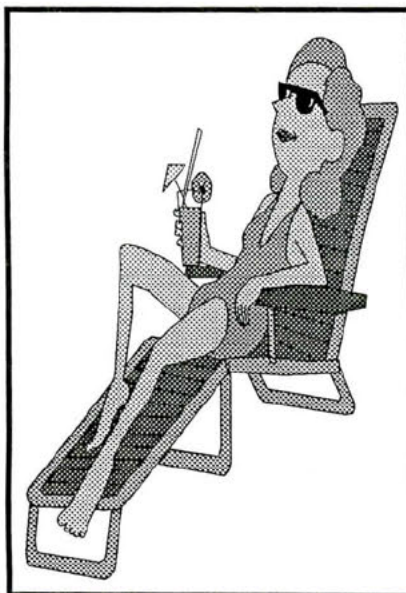
Beth [REDACTED] will continue to count South Jersey's cash as Treasurer and **Linda [REDACTED]** will keep on taking the minutes as Secretary.

In affiliate country, MOTG leader **Terry M.** tells us that the ruling dynasty remains in power with no leadership changes in the foreseeable future.

We've left a message on the Metropolitan Gender Network's voice mail system asking them to get us more info on their group so

we can enlighten our readers and I'm sure we'll be able to give you the facts soon.

The National Board of Directors has shuffled positions with 1993's co-Director of Membership, **Beth Marshal** ending up in the Managing Director's chair. **Alison Laing** exits as co-Director of Outreach to become a Director at Large. **Maryann Kirkland** steps in to share Outreach with **Angela Gardner**. **Elsa [REDACTED]** continues as Director of Membership and **Bonnie [REDACTED]** remains National Secretary. Other Directors at Large are **JoAnn Roberts** and **Susan [REDACTED]**.



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MC/VISA ACCEPTED



by Angela Gardner

Last month I opened my column with tales of my British vacation. This month I open with a note from Holly [redacted] of the IFGE. Holly is planning to attend EuroFantasia from April 30th to May 7th of 1994 and before and after the big event she is thinking of touring London and the Continent. She is looking for someone who would like to travel around Europe in a dress with her. Well, not both of you in the same dress. Each girl would have her own – you know what I mean.

If you would like to be Holly's traveling companion get in touch with her through the IFGE or drop me a note and I will give you her phone number.

MISS UNDERSTANDING

This is not the first note I received from Holly. Back at the beginning of the year I mentioned in this column that I was surprised at getting mail from the IFGE at my current address – with my male name. I have no idea how they got this information in their data base. I had once subscribed to the Tapestry but that was in my femme name and it was sent to a P.O. Box in Havertown. I can't remember ever giving them my real name and frankly I was amazed that I was getting things in

that name at my current address.

In June I received that first note from Holly. It came in the form of a Xeroxed memo type thingee and was titled, "How To Get Off Our Mailing List." It seemed to be aimed at crossdressers who have decided to quit their hobby, purge all the girlie stuff and cancel all that mail from IFGE.

I meant to get around to this long ago but one thing led to another and I just never got around to it til now. I have no problem being on the IFGE mailing list. Maybe what I wrote in that long ago column was unclear. (Sometimes there's a problem when I don't time the medication correctly.) They can send me things in any name they like, and I believe them when they say my name and address have been kept inviolate and sacrosanct. I just don't understand how they got my real name. To me, this mystery has to stand right up there with who built the Sphinx face on Mars, who's responsible for those crop circles, and how can there be all those cable channels and there's still nothing to watch?

They might want to save a little cash and take me off the list since, after all, I pick up the Renaissance mail and I get to open it all up and read it before I give it to the proper person.

No use in duplicating efforts in dissemination of Xeroxed memoranda. Now is there?

TIMELY REMINDERS

OK, now I'm gonna smack a Renaissance Chapter. Right around the beginning of the month of November I got a mailing from the LSV chapter. (It was in my proper femme name and arrived at my own, personal home address.) Inside the envelope that was stamped by the Post Office with the date 10/27/93 was my personal copy of the Lower Susquehanna News, Volume 5, Number 8, November 1993. Stuffed in there was a cute little brochure typethingee (today's word: thingee!) that I started to get excited about. A show! A party! A costume event! Actually, an outdated flyer for an event that happened October 30th. Come on girls, I was gonna write it

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up in the newsletter. I was gonna wear that thing I wore at Henri David's party again. (A girl's gotta get her moneys worth out of a costume these days.)

Why didn't you let me know about this stuff earlier? It sounded great. The flyer said it was, "A grand Halloween pre-party with a theme so unusual absolutely no one really understands it!" I don't understand why you even put it in the mail on October 27th. Is it a Post Office conspiracy? Were there disgruntled postal workers in the area? Let's have a bitter letter to the editor for next month's issue. I'll need that by December 18th. OK?

EYE ON THE MEDIA

Actually, it's eyes. The Renaissance News now brings you the distillation of media mention of cross-dressing as sent in by our Renaissance Irregulars. (A Sherlock Holmes reference. We're not saying there's anything odd about our correspondents.) From farthest afield comes the following item from the Kuwait Times sent in by our Kuwaiti correspondent, Billie.

The headline is "Transvestite Priest For Senate." Now, there isn't a senate in Kuwait and the article isn't even about the Middle East. The priest in question is not a priest in the Catholic church. Nope, not Russian Orthodox either. Father Miguel de Oxum is my kind of priest. He has a drag persona named La Miguela (another Michelle) and he runs a gay bar in Montevideo, Uruguay. He is a priest in the Umbanda cult, an Afro-Latin type thingee (!!!) that probably has something to do with drums, dancing in body paint, and live chickens. Nothing wrong with that. Sounds like a night in New York City.

Father Miguel has been picked to run for a Senate seat in next year's election by the Progressive Republican Party. The article says that most members of the party are former policemen, military men and homosexuals.

Think of it! A Republican Senator, a priest and a businessman. How prestigious can you get? I knew the seasons were reversed south of the equator but it seems other things are kind of upside down too. How many Republican Senators in North America do drag in gay bars? Guess we'll have to hear from our Washington correspondent before we can give you an accurate count. (I only know of four.)

By the way Billie, Michelle [REDACTED] is the Tapestry cover girl. I'm on page 25 of Issue #17 of Ladylike.

WHY DO THEY CALL THOSE ISLANDS VIRGIN?

The next item on our world tour of clippings comes from farther north than Uruguay, in the lovely Caribbean, mon. My friend Jayne has been relaxing in the Virgin Islands and she sent a clipping from their local paper, The Island Trader. It tells us that Henkell Trocken Champagne presented the Queen Brie Revue at a bar called Wet Willy's. Willy's went so far as to air condition the back room so the local and imported drag queens didn't lose all their makeup through sweat loss.

Since the show was opening right around Halloween they had a costume contest with big prizes. Grand prize was a trip to Puerto Rico. (Kind of like a commuter flight from Philly to New York.) The ad in the

Trader and the article also make a point of saying that special security will be on hand nightly. It doesn't say who security would be protecting. The audience, the performers? Both? If you want to know or if you're retaking a holiday in St. Thomas and would like to drop in for some of their future shows (If you've got the air conditioning you gotta use it) then you can call Wet Willy's at 774-8769. That's area code 809.

BIG TIME MEDIA

Beth Marshal, who isn't on vacation, although she does travel a lot, (Fooled ya. I replaced the parenthesis with commas.) sent us two clippings from the top of the heap in journalism. First was a rather large review from the August 30th New York Times. It don't get any bigger. The review was of "The Opposite Sex Is Neither" by none other than home town girl made good, Kate Bornstein. Several of the Renaissance GPC girls caught Kate's one woman show when she appeared here in Philadelphia. I saw a write up about the show when I was in London and now she's off Broadway in New York. Actually I think it was off Broadway first since this review is from August. She was in London while I was there but unfortunately I didn't get in touch.

In any event, the Times review is very favorable and at the end they say Kate should have her own television show. Write to NBC. They're looking for someone to take over Later from Bob Costas. I think it would be refreshing if the host was transgendered and the guests were just plain folks. Good luck Kate. (Ms. Bornstein was a founding member of Renaissance.)

Beth's second clipping comes from The Wall Street Journal. Now

this is the kind of stuff I want to see. We're not talking World Weekly News here.

The Journal article is about the "gay" Ken doll. His real name is Earring Magic Ken and the Journal reports he's so hot that retailers are marking him up six to thirteen dollars more than Earring Magic Barbie. This particular Ken has an earring, faux leather vest, lavender mesh shirt with rolled up sleeves, black pants and a two tone hairdo. Mattel won't admit that the doll is aimed at a gay market but they do say they don't mind and are rather happy if gay guys find something to enjoy in Mattel products.

Be that as it may, I think I'll stick with Earring Magic Barbie. I just love to put her into those little fish nets and pumps.

RETURN OF THE CD SOLDIER

We've mentioned the fact that soldiers in the Middle East have been crossdressing to sneak up on the enemy. Terri [redacted] of the South Jersey Chapter sent in a clipping from the Courier Post that shows just how good at being feminine these soldiers can be. Remember when camouflage was wearing some burnt cork and leafy branches?

The President of Israel was touring the West Bank back in July when he came upon an Arab woman cradling her baby. Aw, you guessed. The dotting momma was a male Israeli soldier undercover. The President said he had to knock on the babies head to convince himself it was a doll. The President is quoted as saying, "Hey, war can be a drag."

Maybe this kind of thing is the real reason they decided to sign a peace treaty. After trying to meet women for years and always ending up with an Israeli soldier in drag they're probably ready for anything.

TRANSGENDERED SUPER HERO

There is a male character in the SF series "Wild Cards" who has the virus and drug induced ability to transform himself into a beautiful, female, martial arts expert named Moon Child. I don't know who came first but she sounds a little bit like the Japanese cartoon hero Ranma. Like Moon Child, Ranma is a male martial arts expert. When he gets wet with cold water he becomes a beautiful girl. It seems most of the stories involve Ranma trying to avoid fountains, ice water and sudden downpours. It takes hot water to turn her back into a man.

Guess that leaves out any dates for the female Ranma that involve hot tubs.

Ranma 1/2 is out in the States as a graphic novel and it's also available in seven separate issues all made available by Viz Communications of San Francisco. Borders could probably order it for you.

Michelle [redacted] who sent in the Ranma info also included a clip about the crossdressing Ferengi on "Deep Space Nine." Her name is Pel and she, in disregard for strict Ferengi laws, puts on clothing (female Ferengi don't wear any) and uses prosthesis to make herself pass as a male. She keeps her prosthesis and a spare pair under her bed. Pel's falsies are ears. Males have large, sensitive ears but females have much smaller auditory organs.

The interview with the actress who plays Pel appeared in the Daily News on November first. Her name is Helene Udy and she is featured regularly with a little less makeup on "Doctor Quinn, Medicine Woman" as a prostitute. Well, Ferengi ... prostitute. Not much difference really. The show was not bad. Quark, the regular Ferengi on "Deep Space Nine" teams up with Pel to boost profits and then there's this strange attraction. Wally Shawn is great as the Grand Nagis and the door is left

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open at the end of the show for the Pel character to return. It'll no doubt re-run before the end of the season so keep checking your local listings.

MORE TVS ON TV

I love the John Laroquette Show. That means it probably won't be around too long so, again, check your listings and tune in.

On November 26th's show John was worried that he may be gay. He used to drink quite heavily and a gay man came into the bus station John manages and told him they had sex in Chicago while John was very drunk. To try to prove his manhood and hetero-ness John goes into the bar and vows to pick up and have sex with the next woman he sees. Of course she turns out to be the resident crossdresser on the Laroquette Show. Teddy, for that is her name, tells John that she takes it as a great compliment that he thought she was a sexy woman. He tells her that "his friend" has a problem and he has to find out if he's gay. The friend that is. Teddy gives John some good advise and is next seen in another scene with the two cops from the show. The male cop has his zipper stuck in the down position and doesn't know what to do. Teddy struts by, sees the problem and solves it by moving the cops' holster around

to cover his zipper. When he tells her how great this solution is she says, "Accessories are all important."

Let's hope the Laroquette show will be around for a long time and that other shows will start giving more exposure to positive transgendered characters.

BIG FOOT STOLE MY

PUMPS

I found this one in the Premier, an entertainment section put out by the Bucks County Courier Times. One of the stories in the November 4th edition is about how in San Francisco (if they'd done more research they'd find more places than that) some Bay Area merchants have started marketing their female shoes to men. It seems the stores started to notice that more men were coming in, especially around Halloween and buying women's shoes. This has led them to gear up a whole marketing campaign for men. See girls, I keep telling you merchants don't care who buys the stuff as long as they get the cash.

One store owner claimed that they had to shorten the heels on their pumps from six inches to four inches cause the guys couldn't handle it. Wimps! They should have seen my

waitresses at the IFGE Convention Casino Night. They could do it - why not guys in San Francisco? The article asked the store owner why the big guys wanted such high heels anyway? He promptly replied, "It makes their legs look firmer and just the extreme fun of it."

Who can argue with that? If you're in the City by the Bay and you want to shop for shoes up to size 16 visit Adler's Shoes, McB's Shoes (they have a private area in the stock room where you can try shoes on), Rolo, or Undercover. There is also Foxy Lady clothing in the Mission District and they sell lingerie for guys as well.

San Francisco is almost as enlightened as Montivideo! *Vaya con Dios muchachas!* Pass me that chicken will ya.



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Renaissance Bookstore; A Movable Feast

by Angela Gardner

Our full name is The Renaissance Education Association, Incorporated. That means that we're here to help people learn more about the transgendered human condition. One of the ways we work to get people information is by assembling and making available the materials in the Renaissance Library. (In addition to books we are working on getting the periodicals cataloged and getting clippings organized so they will be available to the public.)

Another way that we work to spread information to the masses is through the Renaissance Bookstore. Unlike the Library which is housed at and only available at the Greater Philadelphia Chapter meeting site, the Renaissance Bookstore goes on the road from time to time. Under the management of Beth Marshal the bookstore has become a self supporting arm of our Education Association. Each month Beth packs up thirty three magazines, thirty one books, and seven videos. Add in current and back issues of the Renaissance News plus our official background papers and you have quite a load of information touring the chapters and affiliates.

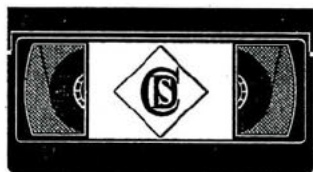
Due to the amount of work involved the bookstore

is most often available at the GPC meetings but contact Beth through our National phone to find out when she is planning a visit to your Chapter. Or, make your Chapter Leader work a little and have her contact Beth to make an appointment for a Bookstore visit.

By purchasing books, magazines and videos at the Renaissance Bookstore you are not only getting something you want, you are helping Renaissance and in most cases, getting the best price. See you at the Bookstore!

NEED A BACK ISSUE?

Selected back issues of the Renaissance News are now available for \$2.00 per copy. Send requests for specific issues to Renaissance, P.O. Box 60552, King of Prussia, PA, 19406. Attn: Beth Marshal. Include a check for \$2.00 per issue ordered plus another fifty two cents for each issue to cover postage. If the issue you have ordered is not available we will send your check back. You may also ask Beth in person about specific availability if you attend one of our meetings.



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Fantasia Fair

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For Immediate Release:

**November 1, 1993
Southeastern, PA**

Fantasia Fair Restructures Administration and Schedule

At the closing 1993 Fantasia Fair Awards Banquet, Saturday evening October 23, in Provincetown, Massachusetts, Alison Laing, Fantasia Fair Manager and Chair of the Outreach Institute Board of Directors, announced several changes in the plans and operations of the Fair for 1994.

The 1994 Fair (its 20th Anniversary!) will be held from Sunday, October 16 to Sunday, October 23. This is a decrease from the 10 days/9 evenings of the past to 8 days/7 evenings to reduce the cost to the participants. According to Laing, all major Fair activities are retained. Additionally, participants may arrive earlier and/or stay later by making their own arrangements with the various inns.

Also announced was a new Fair Administration by a group calling themselves "Friends of Fantasia Fair." Members of this group have assumed full responsibility for the registration, financial management, planning, promotion and marketing of Fantasia Fair. Ariadne Kane, Executive Director of the Outreach Institute, retains overview and some programing responsibilities of the Fair. Her responsibilities as Editor/Publisher of the *Journal of Gender Studies*, coordinator/implementer of the Outreach Institute's GARP (Gender Attitude Reassessment Program), and professional liaison activities remain unchanged

The new Fair Administration group is: Alison Laing, Fantasia Fair Director; Weslee [REDACTED], Registrar and lodging coordinator; Marsha [REDACTED], treasurer; Dotty Laing, Lunch and Banquet coordinator; and a Marketing/Publications team of Christine Howey, Dallas Denny and Janet Green. Niela Miller, Mariette Pathy Allen and Abby [REDACTED] serve in advisory positions.

Several special events are planned to celebrate the 20th Anniversary. There will be a "Thank You, Provincetown, for 20 Years" banquet, and a special Reunion brunch for returning Fair "veterans." Literally dozens of current and past Fair participants have volunteered to assist in the 1994 Fair planning and implementation.

For more information contact: Alison Laing, FF94 Director, P.O. Box 941, Southeaster, PA 19399-0941

- More-

Participating Renaissance members at the 1993 Fair included Alison Laing and spouse Dotty, Emily Sheldon, Bonnie [REDACTED], Joanne [REDACTED], Lisa Martin, Susan S., Andrea Susan and Dallas Denny.

Hot • BUZZ

JoAnn Roberts

"A real Christian is the person who can give his pet parrot to the town gossip."

Hey kids, what time is it? Yeah, it's that time, the Holiday season, a good excuse to get out those sequins and beads. Check out the gold and silver glitter pantyhose from *Victoria's Secret*. Every time I call in an order, they give me the current sales spiel, even if that means three bras for the price of two. Hey, they're not stupid. My money is as good as the next girls'.

Love that RED nail polish but hate the stains it leaves behind? Try these tricks — buff nails smooth before applying any color—coat with a clear polish first or use a neutral base coat, then apply color. If you still have stains, after removing the polish, soak nails in undiluted Hydrogen Peroxide for one minute, massage cuticle oil into nails.

Sometimes to "glam-up" my makeup, I'll add a glimmer of gold lipgloss to my lip color. *Maybelline* eliminates that extra step with their new *Mono-Tri Part Lipstick* (ca. \$4.50). Try rich-red with gold or mauve-chocolate with silver.

Speaking of *Maybelline*, the one staple cosmetic that 98 percent of women use almost daily is mascara. Mascara-like products date back to the Egyptians and the pyramids. But mascara as we know it was invented by a man, T. L. Williams, in 1917. He named the product after his sister, Mabel, creating—you guessed it—*Maybelline*. Still the most popular mascara after all these years is *Maybelline's Great Lash Mascara* in the green and pink tube.

I've touted the usefulness of loose powders for some time now. Many makeup artists have recently discovered yellow-tinted powders to tone-down ruddy skin. But finding yellow powders has been difficult... until now. Yellow powders are available from *Bobbi Brown Es-*

sentials, M.A.C. C-Series, Estée Lauder Champagne, and Il Makiage Camouflage.

Powders are it this month. Here's another trick with loose powders. Use it as a blush. Most crossdressers and women haven't the foggiest notion of how to correctly apply blush and the look this season is subtle, not bright. Lea Siegel, makeup artist for *Glamour* magazine uses loose powder for dark skin tones as a very subtle blush. The powder blends better and the color range is much broader.

Last time I gave out an "800" number it turned out to be a Navy Base Exchange (Excuse me, do you have any ladies suits in blue serge?) But, let's try another. *Fashion Bug Plus* sells women's sizes from 14 to 28 and they've upgraded their image of late. These clothes look very nice for minimal cost. Call 800-FB-FITS-U for info. That's 800-323-4878.

Eyeshadow usage rules are pretty simple: anything goes except blue eyeshadow. The one problem with all color is that they

fade and crease due to oils from your eyelids. The very latest shadows contain oil absorbing ingredients to eliminate creasing. Check out *Clinique's Beyond Shadow*, *Lancôme's Maquiriche Creme Powder Eyecolour*, *Revlon's Day Into Night Shadow Stick*, or *Ultima II's Eyesexxy*. Your other option is a shadow base that does the same thing then use your own shadow over the base. Try *Ultima II's Fade Not Crease Not Eyeshadow Base*.

Well, it's a short column this month 'cause it's Christmas and all and the editrix says this is my vacation. (Ha!) Anyway, to clean up a few loose ends from past QwikiQwizzes: Alan Arkin played Inspector Clouseau in the eponymous movie, and the term "transsexual" was coined in 1949 by David O. Cauldwell writing in *Sexology*. Have a wonderful Holiday season. Stay frosty!

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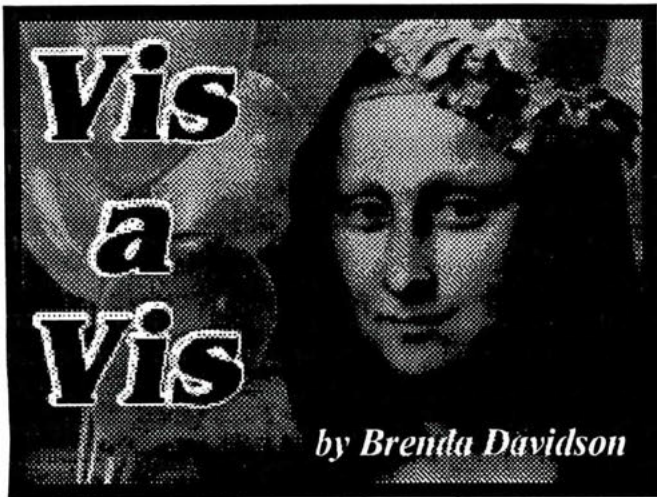
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by Dina Amberle

Guest Columnist

After my last stint as guest columnist for Vis a Vis I didn't think they'd ask me back again. But like a bad penny – and all the group newsletters from around the globe – I just keep turning up. I'm sure I speak for all of us – especially our Editor-in-Chief Angela – when I wish Brenda Davidson a speedy return to this column. So let me sharpen up my skewer and get right into our first item...

DISEASE...OR NOT DISEASE... THAT IS THE QUESTION

Whenever an artificial body of authority (like government) gets involved in people's lives, strange things are bound to happen. The Gender Identity Center Journal from Denver carried an editorial by Pamela B. dealing with Sex Reassignment Surgery and the new health care proposal by the Clinton Administration. As many of us are aware, there has been a move afoot in our community to have our "condition" removed from the DSM-III-R which lists it as some sort of dysfunction. After all, who of us considers themselves to have a medical/psychological problem because we like to crossdress?

Well, Pamela B. points out that by "de-pathologizing" transgenderism, particularly transsexualism, we are shooting ourselves in the high-heeled foot because without government and medical establishment certification that we are "sick," SRS will not be covered by the new health care plan. You see, it seems simple to say that we aren't medically dysfunctional until Uncle Sam

starts drawing lines about what they'll pay for – and what they won't.

Most garden variety crossdressers who would never consider SRS in their plans steadfastly support the idea that transgenderism is not a sickness. Pamela B. however goes on record by saying that she has a "disease" called transsexualism. She uses the word literally pointing out that being a female trapped in the body of a man is, in fact, a state of dis-ease, of "not feeling healthy, not feeling like oneself." She goes on to say that the condition is similar to a birth defect.

In a perfect world, transgenderism, no matter of what stripe, would not be a disease, or even on a par with the common cold. But we do not live in a perfect world. We live in a world where things cost money and we have institutions to make rules about even subjective topics like who is sick and who isn't sick. And we find ourselves reading and writing about whether we are in an afflicted group that needs treatment and, more importantly, who is going to help pay for that treatment.

As with so many things that government gets involved in, labels become important and debates about assigning the labels often obscure the underlying issue. Most of us don't consider ourselves diseased and we object to the designation by the institutions whose job it is to affix those labels. Does it really matter to us whether the government or the AMA or whoever it is who rides herd over the DSM-III-R refers to us as "sick?" Should we roll over on the issue so that our TS sisters can get the coverage they seek? Or fight on a new front to have SRS covered even if it isn't treating a "disease?" And one more thought: each of us whether closet queen, active crossdresser, or full-fledged transsexual is a taxpayer and we must all think about how and why the government gets involved in medical issues – and who ultimately pays the bills.

WHITHER THE SUPPORT GROUPS?

Cyndi [redacted] of the LA-based CHIC Diary wrote an interesting piece about the state of TV support groups. Her hypothesis was that, in an age of increasing mainstream acceptance of crossdressing, the traditional "support" groups may be a bit old-fashioned.

The support groups, she writes, became so successful during the eighties that many formerly bashful crossdressers learned how to step outside and enjoy public activities. The groups themselves, however, maintain a certain closeted-ness that some members

may have outgrown. The groups may merely be larger closets – offering some freedom for beginners but not enough dynamism for the “graduates” who move out on their own once they have learned the joys of a more public existence.

Cyndi asks “What is the mission of TV social clubs?” How can the groups keep the more experienced members interested and still serve the needs of the beginners or those who don’t get a chance to get out as much and rely on the group meetings and socials as their only venue for crossdressing out of the home? Although she doesn’t address this question directly, one can also ask about the future of the groups in an age where cross-dressing is being appropriated by the fashion and entertainment world and the public at large has been familiarized with the concept of the heterosexual male who crossdresses as a means of self-expression.

If we ever get to a point where the existence of transgendered support groups is completely unnecessary then we can say that society has indeed come a long way, baby.

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL?

Jacqueline Richter has an insightful article in the Chi Tribune of the Chicago Chi Chapter of Tri-Ess. It deals with integrating cultural minorities into the mainstream culture. It’s been accepted belief that integration is preferable to segregation when it comes to minority groups but Jacqueline points out that integration may wipe out the interesting facets of these minority cultures as they blend into the vast whitebread of majority society.

Now before you get to thinking that Jacqueline is some kind of racist or bigot, let me defend her point by saying that she defends equality for everyone in the legal sphere but is dismayed at the prospect of losing the unique sub-cultures of certain groups in their mad dash to prove that they are “no different from the majority culture.”

In particular, she wonders if we really want to homogenize the transgendered culture by denying that we have any “differentness” from “regular” people. She thinks we can gain strength from identifying those things that separate us from the mainstream. The emphasis on “passing” will only make us invisible to society in general: “Don’t ask, Don’t tell.”

Most minority groups take pride in their own cultures and use that as a source of strength and base from

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which to fight for their rights. By trying to be invisible to mainstream society and minimize our differences with the general population, we are weakening our power base and keeping our identity hidden, making it easier for society to ignore us.

Some of us may never want to march in a colorful transgendered rights parade but Jacqueline outlines an interesting counterpoint to the usual approach to presenting transgenderism to the general population – and I think she may have the better idea.

PC IN NYC

Our sisters at the Metro Gender Network in New York City (they are a Renaissance affiliate group) had a draft letter to the Canada Dry Company protesting its commercial where they make a joking reference to “all the women who used to be men.” The voices in the chorus then sing in a faltering falsetto.

The author of the letter writes indignantly that it is insulting to members of “the gender community.” He/she (is that offensive to the gender community?) threatens a boycott unless some apology is tendered by the company.

Well, I understand the point they are trying to make but, really, can't we have a sense of humor about ourselves? Must we or any group - protest every harmless reference that doesn't contain unqualified praise? Lighten up, girls.

WE ARE NOT ALONE

Although it's fun to poke holes in some of the stuffed shirts at the other groups around the country, we do share some things in common with these other groups.

The “Serenity” newsletter out of Hollywood FL takes the time to address some issues that are familiar to our group. One author mentioned the de-emphasis of “support” in favor of a purely social meeting; that new members and first-time visitors were being “abandoned” and called for a “Big Sister” program to help new people; that rap groups should be encouraged; and that “cliques” of people were hurting the sense of community at the meetings. The Metro-Gender girls up in NYC mentioned the same type of problems and the importance of welcoming new members.

Boulton & Park Society's “Gender Euphoria” (now there's a title!) newsletter carried an article dealing with the plans for the Texas T-Party which they host each year. Apparently, they had a hotel all booked when the management came back and told them they had “over-

booked” and there wouldn't be enough space for the T-Party guests. That's familiar to us here because it happened to the Renaissance Holiday party two years in a row. Honest mistakes do happen but one wonders if perhaps these managements feel that we can be pushed around.

IF IT'S TUESDAY, THIS MUST BE...

The Gender Identity Center in Denver has a new schedule that features five meetings ... a week! They have separate meetings for full-fledged transsexuals, those in transition, your average crossdresser, an open discussion night, and something for those they call “the seekers” – who may be members confused about their gender orientation – or perhaps about what night their meeting is supposed to be.

It's an impressive lineup and they are rightly proud of their strength to feel the need for separate nights for the disparate elements of their membership.

On reading this announcement in their GIC Journal, I had one burning question: at Renaissance meetings, the job of sweeping up after our once a month meetings falls on our Managing Director. Who, I wonder, sweeps up five nights a week at GIC?

(Bashing - continued from page 1)

Megan denied her chapter sisters their right of due process. Indeed, from my subsequent conversations with several chapter members, it is clear that it was never the member's intent to create an adversarial position between Alpha Omega and Tri-Ess. They thought they were voting to seek Tri-Ess approval of transsexual's membership, and were quite disturbed when Megan reported in their newsletter not only that the chapter had voted to admit transsexuals to full membership, but that the club had taken its first step toward autonomy!

Statement #2 – “It was then decided by the group (?) from the influence of a few (?) that the vote was anti-constitutional and declared null and void.”

The truth – Let's pass over the writer's evident opinion that a vote pushed by one is somehow more appropriate than a reversal pushed by “a few.” A glance at the above passage from the Alpha Omega Constitution suffices to show that the first vote was unconstitutional. Given time to consider its implications, the members simply changed their minds and reversed it; about what one can expect from people denied due

process. Jennifer herself, not consulted by Megan but horrified by what her sisters were about to do, protested that she had no intent to pull Alpha Omega out of the Tri-Ess family. At its June 12 meeting a motion was passed that all officers pledge to uphold the Constitutions of Alpha Omega and Tri-Ess. The implications of that action are obvious!

Statement #3 – “All this time Megan is trying to wake up Jane Ellen Fairfax, the Tri-Ess head-fez ... Megan has yet to receive a reply from Jane Ellen.”

The truth – Carol Beecroft, our Executive Director, and I each supervise half the departments of Tri-Ess. Neither of us is “head-fez.” We work as a team. The allegation that I neglected to reply to Megan’s letter is simply not true. The fact is, Megan mailed her first letter to the wrong address. There was no excuse for this; she has easy access to my mailing address. On June 5, I received my first communication from Megan, a pompous, accusatory letter dripping with crocodile tears for Jennifer. (How quickly those tears dried up when she found she could not use Jennifer to foist her private agenda off on the chapter!) Suspecting that the members of Alpha Omega had had no input into Megan’s rude letter, I “took my case directly to the people.” My interpretation proved correct. The sisters of Alpha Omega sent me a beautiful good will note, and passed a policy requiring the chapter leadership to review all letters before they are sent out in the chapter’s name. Not only have I communicated closely with Alpha Omega, so has Donna Marie, the Regional Coordinator. In her letter, she suggested ways to solve the transsexual issue without creating an adversarial relationship with Tri-Ess. Although the tone of her letter was friendly, she did state the consequences of willful disregard of the Constitution and Bylaws, and of misconduct in office. Megan interpreted this as “threats and innuendoes.” But consequences are threatening only to those doing wrong.

Now, ordinarily I do not respond to personal attacks or destructive criticism of Tri-Ess. I have come, however, to cherish the deepening friendship between Renaissance and Tri-Ess, and would not see it snuffed aborning. Out of concern for this wonderful friendship, I could not let these unfounded remarks pass unchallenged.

With the writer of “Vis-a-Vis” I would share these thoughts: Even if you must use crossgender support organizations as pinatas, you owe your readership a fair investigation of the facts. Talk with all sides, then flail

away if you must. But please sign your name to your articles. Before you attack, though, ask yourself, “What good do I hope to accomplish with my words? What effect will they have on a community already prostrate under the blows of divisiveness?” The right to disagree is a hallmark of freedom. But a sister’s thoughts and feelings are not “drivel.” There can never be a real crossgender community without mutual respect. “I understand just how you feel” – those empathic words can end the strife that keeps us apart. Try them; they work! You may find that planting rose-gardens of friendship is more fun than breaking pinatas.



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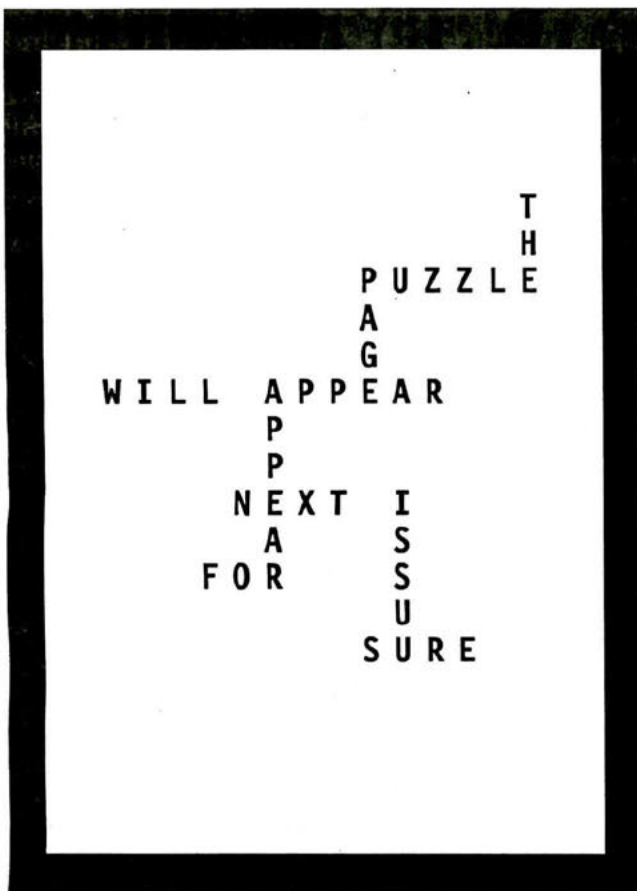
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SHOPPING WITH JACKIE

by Jackie [redacted]

How do you find out what's new, cute, in style or affordable? My solution is magazine subscriptions. There are several reasons why subscriptions are useful.

First off, the subscription rate is usually about one half the newsstand price and secondly, it's convenient to have it arrive in your mailbox each month. The big bonus of magazines, especially if you are on a budget, is the coupons. I can't begin to tell you how many lipsticks, perfumes, pantyhose and other things I get in the mail each month. It's fun to get new things mailed right to your door and mostly for the cost of a twenty nine cent stamp.

If you want to give it a try, browse your newsstand and scan through some of the magazines. See which ones you like. Most of them have a loose card inside to order a subscription. Either buy the magazine or find the loose card and send it in.

One of my favorite magazines is Mademoiselle. A twelve issue subscription is only twelve dollars. It's a real bargain with good articles and many good coupons. You can order it by sending \$12.00 to

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Speaking of bargains ... where can you get low-cost shoes at reasonable prices? One good source for shoes is Lane Bryant. I just received a sale catalog and they

have some really cute shoes and boots in sizes up to thirteen starting at \$17.99. Remember, ladies shoe sizes usually run about two sizes larger than men's sizes. [Ed. Note: I have found it to only be one size up but my foot is fairly narrow - A.G.) They also have nice bargains in other departments including good foundation garments and lingerie. I don't particularly care for their clothing (I think it all tends to be like a tent without shape) but the other things are good and as close as your phone. If you want their catalog, call 1-800-477-7070.

Many bargains are now to be had in the local stores. Winter things are being featured but keep your eyes open for summer and fall close outs and clearances. If you can afford it buy now for next year. Prices are great and if you are buying non fad items they will still look good next year.

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me so I can put them in this column. The whole purpose of this monthly exercise is to share information and help the community. Some of our newer members (OK, older too) don't know where or how to get the things they need. Our purpose is to help and we do try. Drop me a note at

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RAYON—Rayon loves dry cleaning. Some labels will say hand washable. If you do hand wash, dry flat to avoid snagging. Be careful when handling wet rayon because it weakens and stretches when wet. Don't machine dry it since it will mutate in the dryer. In any event you won't like it any more. Iron rayon on the "Permanent Press" setting while damp. (The fabric, not you.) Rayon is an artificial fabric made from cellulose fiber found in wood pulp and cotton. It was the first practical artificial fiber and was invented by a Frenchman in 1885. It took American ingenuity to mass produce and it was named rayon in 1924. Ray indicating the sheen of the fiber and on showing that it was cotton like. Remember, it's cellulose so watch out for termites!



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