

TV GUISE

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Cover Girl: Beverly [REDACTED]



Beverly [REDACTED] Transsexual Ninja, discusses Art and Life starting on page 6.



Billie Jean Blabs

Dear Darlings,

Golly, gee-whiz, whadda month. Deadline after deadline, and, I broke three nails the day before Ducal Ball 91. It's always the little things: the mascara that cakes when you're late; snagging your hose getting into the car; no fuel, no food, no parking, no barking—no, no, no: Take a deep breath.

All better now.

And, I met somebody special. But the bubble burst—only the memory remains. Remains—sounds like a cadaver, doesn't it? (Soon everybody knew the thing was dead) But it wasn't like that—it was a dance. The band took a break. The dancers parted. The world wobbles onward. Every exit is an entrance.

Damn, there goes another nail—tough break. Scuse me for a moment or two.

Ah, much better: it's amazing what a shower and nice lingerie can do to soothe my jangled senses—not forgetting this silky blouse and tight skirt. Umm-mmm.

Okay, I hardly feel like climbing up on my little soapbox, but I promised myself some time to blab about internal prejudice within the gender-related paraculture. To wit: the petty put-downs of people who express different behaviors. Every group I have ever been involved in, gender-related or not, has a segment that seems to spend the majority of its energy putting other people, other segments down because they (seemingly) express differences. I say seemingly because often the judgement is made by casual observation. For example: a first-timer at a gender-related social is often excluded from social interaction because their wardrobe, make up, comportment, etc. is "not up to standards." Golly gee-whiz: BFD (Big Fucking Deal). Most TV's are well versed in presenting a male role-model, and inexperienced at presenting a female role-model. I myself have forty years of experience in presenting myself as a male and a cumulative year's worth of experience in presenting myself as a fem person. I recognize my Jr. Miss status. That's the way it is.

I also refuse to get hung up on a single role-model: I have an extensive variety of male clothing as well as female clothing; I express a variety of male presentations and female presentations. My perception of life is this: If it isn't fun, it's hardly worth doing. My personal prejudice is against uptight, narrow-minded, hypocritical pinheads, regardless of what spectrum of the Human Rainbow they represent or present. So, sometimes it's very difficult for me to tolerate intolerance. And that's just one of my handicaps.

I wonder how many people really try to put themselves in another person's place? And, how many people with a gender issue, of any degree, understand their situation is both a handicap and an asset? The strongest people are those who have worked the hardest to solve their own mysteries; the weakest people exert very little effort. And there is a paradox involved that I call reverse discrimination. The paradox, for me, is how someone who has worked to overcome discrimination can turn around and discriminate

against another person. Example abound: Blacks vs. Honkeys; Womyn vs. Men; TS's vs. TV's; Gays vs. Straights—and within those segments you can find uncounted examples of internal intolerance: blue-black vs. brown-black, Slavic vs. Anglo-saxon; butch vs. fem; and on and on ad nauseam. It's a gigantic waste of energy.

The enemy is ignorance, intolerance, greed, and control.

Nothing will improve until individual self-improvement becomes the goal of each person on this planet. And, that can't happen if people spend their time bitching, pissing and moaning about other people.

A few years ago I read a self-help book that stated that fifty percent of the people you meet *won't like you*. Which meant to me that I won't like half the people I meet. So what happens when you don't like half the people you meet—and the half you like *don't like you*?

Well, that scared me, so I started learning to hold off judging people. Instead of deciding whether I liked them or not, I try to understand them. And, I try to be understood. It's not easy but it is a heck of a lot more interesting and exciting to discover different perspectives.

I believe one of the errors in attaining self-respect and self-worth is believing that we (the human spectrum) have a common basis of understanding—that if the same information was available to each person, we would individually agree.

That's bullshit. The same bullshit that is contained in every binary opposition set-up, such as: black or white, on or off, male or female, etc. The universe is far too complicated for such simplistic models—it is only our minds that can fool us to believe in such rigidity. The universe doesn't give a damn what we think, it flexibly flows ever onward, ever outward—tune in and find the rhythms you dance to. (The music doesn't come from a jukebox, it's everywhere.)

And the next time someone says (even if it's yourself) you're either part of the solution or the problem, try to understand their evolution is arrested—try to have compassion for them. That's what I am striving for in my imperfect world, because I know I am part of the solution AND the problem.

Gotta go now, that special someone just left a message to call or visit—I guess the bitch just can't make up her mind.

Luv,



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DSM-III-R COMMENTARY

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Not too long ago, Elaine Edwards from the Indiana Crossdresser's Society (IXE) tested a pet theory of hers; people will believe anything they read in the gender press. She created several false stories, had them published in the IXE newsletter and watched the stories spread from newsletter to newsletter as if they were factual. Well, I don't necessarily agree with Edward's method, but her point is very well taken. To wit...

We have within our community a few (thankfully) misguided individuals who think they are doing us all a favor by attacking the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and its *Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition-Revised* (a.k.a. the DSM). These people want to wage a "war" against the APA.

These people charge: (1) the words "transvestite" and "transsexual" are psychiatric terms, and (2) the words are derogatory and defame our reputation. They even want to ban the use of "crossdresser" claiming that it has become a synonym for "transvestite." The culprits, they say, are those people who use the DSM as a means of oppressing us, i.e., transvestites and transsexuals are mentally ill, perverts, deviates, etc.

Well, kids, I'm here to tell you that it just ain't so. Just to make sure I didn't shoot myself in the foot for this editorial, I went back to review the DSM myself. Here is a quote from the *Introduction* to the manual:

"Neither deviant behavior, nor conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are mental disorders, unless the deviance or conflict is a symptom of a dysfunction in the person..."

Did you understand the significance of that statement? The APA is saying if you feel *good* about yourself, even though you participate in a behavior that society may deem as "deviant," (statistically speaking) ***you are not mentally ill!***

I'd also like to point out that nowhere in the DSM will you find the words "transvestite" or "transsexual." The APA has been very careful to characterize behaviors, not people. Another quote from the *Introduction* will illustrate:

"A common misconception is that classification of mental disorders classifies people, when actually what are being classified are disorders that people have. For this reason the text of the DSM-III-R avoids the use of such expressions as 'a schizophrenic' or 'an alcoholic'... Another misconception is that all people described as having the same mental disorder are alike in all important ways."

Now, don't take my word for it. Go to the library yourself and look it up. Check it out. Then decide who knows what they're talking about.

It seems to me that the APA and the professional counseling community has been greatly misunderstood in reference to the use of the DSM and some people within the gender community owe them an apology. Instead, they're girding for an all out war with the APA based on popular mythology.

The arguments proposed by these "Dona Quixotes" are logically false. They've fallen into the trap known as the *fallacy of composition* where properties of the parts are attributed to the whole. It goes something like this: Since some transvestites and transsexuals are mentally healthy, then all transvestites and transsexuals are mentally healthy. Not true. Test that hypothesis this way: Since some people are mentally healthy, then all people are mentally healthy. You know that premise is false.

Ironically, they accuse the APA of the same fallacy in reverse. It is impossible to logically prove that all transvestites and transsexuals are not mentally disordered. All it takes is one transvestite or transsexual to exhibit a psychological dysfunction due to their gender identity to prove the claim false. Q.E.D.

So what's the ruckus about? The gender-warriors want the approval of the professional community for their transgendered behavior. They want their lifestyles validated by an outside agency, the APA, so they can point to a paragraph in a book and say, "See, it says here I'm not mentally ill!"

It's so sad. First, because the paragraph is already there if they'd just look for it and, second, because they think they need it at all.

The problem, of course, is not with the APA or the majority of counseling professionals, but with those people who *misuse* the information in the DSM. I'm sure there is a lawyer, somewhere, who used the DSM as a weapon in a divorce proceeding against a transvestite. Somewhere is an employer who used the DSM to label a transsexual as mentally unstable and fire that person. Somewhere is a "security" chief in a government agency on a witch-hunt for transvestites and transsexuals who represent security liabilities because (he thinks) the DSM says were "unstable." The "enemy" is not the APA or the DSM. The enemy is that segment of society that is totally ignorant about transgendered behavior

My daddy used to say, "Ignorance is temporary. Stupid is Forever." Ignorance is cured with education. Those who ignore the facts and refuse to be educated are not ignorant; they're just plain stupid. Don't be suckered into believing everything you read in these newsletters. Do some research on your own.

I don't need the APA to tell me I'm not mentally disordered. I've known that for quite some time now. Other professionals know it as well. Here are two quotes from recently published material by professionals:

(1) "This book addresses itself to the brain derived differences between the two sexes; in fact, assessed on brain sex and behaviour rather than on simple anatomy, there are many more sexes than the traditional two. And the evidence now points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that sexual deviance is as much a function of biology — as much a product of nature — as the orthodox sexuality which society accepts as 'natural'.

"We make no value judgements on sexual 'devi-

(Continued on next page)

ancy' — the word itself may seem to imply disapproval, but we use it in a statistical sense — because it seems pointless to judge the outcome of a biological process in moral terms. It would be equally absurd to disapprove of the fact that tadpoles turn into frogs."

"Brain Sex: The Real Difference Between Men & Women" —Anne Moir & David Jessel
Lyle Stuart Publishers, © 1991

(2) "We cannot reasonably understand sex or sexuality without recognizing the extent to which sexual mores express the specific sociology of a particular people in a particular time and place.

"Closer to home, in 1952, when the American Psychiatric Association published the first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), homosexuality, promiscuous sexual activity, fellatio, cunnilingus and masturbation were all officially designated mental illnesses. By 1980, 28 years later, the DSM-III-R, included none of these ailments. If Kinsey, Hunt and Hite can be believed, the behaviors had not changed, of course; human judgements had.

"... in fact, not only had masturbation, oral sex, and homosexuality disappeared from the DSM; at the same time, therapists discovered a whole new collection of sexual pathologies, including premature ejaculation, failure to achieve orgasm, fear of sex, and low levels of desire. Whereas in 1952 Americans were considered sick for wanting too much sex, by 1980 they were sick for wanting too little. Once again the specific nature of each behavior had not changed... What had changed was the sexual script — the human judgement — favored by the people who dominated social thinking in those years."

"The Myth of Sexual Addiction" — Wm. A. Henkin: Journal of Gender Studies, Vol XIII, #1, page 3, 1991, based on a presentation to the Western Region of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex.

See, not all professionals are as biased as some would have you believe. I'm going to put my efforts into educating the general public where most of the ignorance lies and I'll continue to work with the professionals to foster better communication, not generate confrontation.

—JoAnne Roberts

Note: Specially edited for TV Guise — A slightly different version of this article appeared in the Renaissance News, Vol 5, No. 9.

(JoAnn Roberts is the founder of Renaissance, publisher of many books and magazines [LadyLike & En Femme], and operates Creative Design Services [CDS:POB 1263, King of Prussia, PA 19406]. JoAnn's latest magazine is International TranScript [ITS], which will premier in October, 1991. ITS will cover news on an international scale with an editorial staff that includes many in the USA as well as the United Kingdom, France, Germany, USSR, South Africa, Australia and more.)

A GENDER CONCERN

© 1991 by Linda Phillips

Dear Billie Jean,

My personal area of concern for our community at present is really not the DSM-III-R, but what I consider the "epidemic" of SRS in the community! Up until lately I considered SRS a relatively obsolete procedure. However, after viewing the tremendous interest that was shown Stanley Biber's "dog and pony show" at the latest IFGE convention in Denver, and the enthusiasm by some of our community's leaders for same, I really am concerned that this may make us much more unidentifiable with mainstream society and convince the public that we really are "sick perverts" whose real desire is to "have an operation" to "become a woman" (a procedure, of course, which is realistically impossible).

I believe DSM-III-R has caused a great majority of us to decide to get SRS to escape the labels the "professional" community has tried to pin on us and simply "give up" and become "women," or in the reverse, "men," rather than what we are: Transgendered. (For my opinion of "professionals," see the latest issue of the Portland, Ore. newsletter, which was kind enough to publish my letter in response to Roger Peo's article condemning the attitude of wives like mine who are "positive," rather than "negative" example to the community.)

All the above, means I believe the real problem our community faces is lack of cohesion, not only in our groups, but in our individual purposes. Until we stand up in society and define (as the Gays have done) what we are, the rest of the world will assume us to be (as we appear) sick and confused. Then, and only then, will documents such as DSM-III-R become unnecessary to "define" what we are. My hope is that the dictionary (and all defining publications) you speak of will be able to list us for what we are — "Transgendered" (or any like term WE decide on).

Love,
—Linda Phillips

(Linda Phillips is the President of Heart of Texas Gender Alliance [HTGA], past President of Boulton & Park Society [B&P], active in many gender-related groups, and has been happily married for thirty-three years to Cynthia Phillips, who edits W.A.C.S Newsletter [Women Associated with Cross-dressers Communication Network] and is very involved with support groups for wives of cross-dressing gender benders.

The comments made were excerpted from Linda's letter of August 14, 1991. HTGA, W.A.C.S., Cynthia & Linda Phillips: POB 17, Bulverde, TX 78163. B&P: POB 700042, San Antonio, TX 78270.)

Gratuitious Filler

Back issues of **TV Guise** (April, May & June) are still available by mail for one dollar (\$1) plus one (29¢) first class stamp each. The July & August issues are available for one-fifty (\$1.50) plus one stamp (29¢, even though it costs 52¢ to mail). Also, for those may want **TV Guise** to continue, contributions (articles, letters, etc.), and faith donations (cash preferred) will be gladly, joyously, gratefully accepted.

TS COMMENTS

© 1991 by Lorraine H.

Dear Billie Jean,

It was especially nice to spend some time with you at DVG the other night. I really love TVG and did want to offer some comments on the July "Monthly Rag" column. I am sorry I didn't get them to you last month, but will go ahead and send them now.

For the most part, I would agree, we really do not "suffer a lack of rights," civil or otherwise; certainly not in California or the Bay Area. Whatever discrimination exists is strictly personal prejudice, and that cannot be legislated.

The buzzword today is education. Donahue, Oprah, Geraldo, etc. perform an outstanding service, educating a public that never knowingly have had any contact with X-Gender people, to the fact that we exist, are human and harmless. Incidentally, I understand the TV-TV shows (sounds like I stutter) are the most popular.

As a transsexual desiring to simply live my life in the role I have always known should have been mine: a normal, middle class, inconspicuous woman (ideally a suburban housewife), I believe I am among the majority of my sisters. Sadly, we are not the ideal candidates for these shows. Not to judge anyone, but the flamboyant, often less than lady-like types attract many more viewers. They don't really educate the public to what most of us are like, nor the hell we must endure. If anything, they are apt to engender more prejudice.

The problem lies mainly during the changeover period when we must face family, friends, co-workers and employers. Once our goal, to melt into the general populous, is accomplished, the problem should no longer exist, except perhaps for that nagging terror in the back of your mind of suddenly being exposed.

I do agree that some legislation bears modification—coming to mind immediately, concerning TS's, I would urge allowance for one to enter into a marriage contract more easily, even though, in the case of some states, it is impossible to change gender on the birth certificate.

Love,

—Lorraine (Quiche, that is.)

OUR PUBLIC IMAGE

© 1991 by Roxanne

Billie Jean:

Here is another tidbit for **TV GUISE**.

With the proliferation of clubs, talk shows, and public events, we will be receiving more attention each time we go out dressed, and we will be judged in the context of the image society has of us. Currently that image is created primarily by the police, the news media, the Hollywood film industry, and the psychology community. We need to take the responsibility, individually and as a group, to nurture our image in society, where I feel we are on probation.

If our increased exposure creates a positive image, we

will have an ever increasing freedom to express ourselves. Should cross-dressing be associated with sex, drugs, child-molesting, prostitution or other crimes, we will be shunned from the streets. Creating image means changing the minds of every person in this nation; not a small or quick task.

Many of us are just beginning to explore our own identities, and perhaps have little sense of our "community" at large and where it might be going. We need to experience our own fantasies, often unbounded by age, in the presence of others. Fortunately, we have two "open" clubs in the Bay Area where just about anything but sex goes. Use, to your advantage, these forums for self-exploration.

If you want to go to a "public" restaurant or bar with the "girls," dress appropriately for your age and size for that "public" event. Be aware at all times of our individual responsibility to enhance our "group" image in a positive way. Dress in a manner which is pleasing to anyone's eye, keeping sex and fetishes in the closet where they belong, for now. If it turns you on, think twice about it—it probably isn't feminine in the public's eye. Think "style and class."

Make up should be used appropriately; shave close, always use beard cover/foundation; rouge, eye shadow, etc. should be blended and of a color which matches your own skin. Avoid siren red lipstick and nail polish. Use shades of pink, orange, brown, etc. If going out after dark, you may use more make up to pull off the illusion. Practice putting on your make up, do it thirty to fifty times (no, I'm not kidding). Know your face. Memorize the colors of foundation that work for you, and the sequence used. Use daylight from a window, not light bulbs, to check your make up colors. Should you have to make up in a hurry, for some public appearance, it must go on right the first try.

Choose the right color wig for your "color palette," too. It should be very close to your eyebrow color. Most of us (99.9%) should avoid straight wigs, particularly if they are parted down the middle with no bangs. Otherwise, your hair will say, "I'm a wig, I'm a wig I'mawigl'mawig." Ask another TV which wig shop has an owner who will be truthful with you about how you look. Beware! Just because a clerk smiles at you and says, "That looks really cute on you," doesn't mean it does. They are in business to sell wigs.

Ask the "girls" whose appearance you admire how they do it. Have an experienced TV go shopping with you. Ask her to critique your presentation. Become a "girl watcher."

Use illusion and the gender cues to your advantage: Color, length and style of clothing; the right shoes and proper heel height; shaved legs; hip pads; make up, jewelry, and etc. Should you not "pass," leave no doubt that you are a class act anyway.

Take advantage of our "open" clubs, ETVC and RGA, to explore your fantasies. Practice your "street act" there. Then, when in public, help build an open-minded world where more of us, in more places, can experience the joy of "public" freedom.

See you soon,

—Roxanne

Conversation with Bev

TVG: "Hi Bev, how are you?"

BD: "Great! I feel like I'm probably the luckiest person alive. I really do. And, I think there's a tendency, for people born with this condition—or any of its variations—to say: 'Oh, poor me, look at what I'm suffering from, isn't this sad, I can't get any help, life is shitty and everybody craps on me.' I really think that's unfortunate, in that if you look at life as a great learning experience, then people like us are probably given more of an opportunity to learn and know who and what we are than most people."

TVG: "Specifically you are referring to 'gender challenged' people?"

BD: "Yes. I think most people simply accept the role they're given and never really examine what's going on inside themselves. They accept that they are a man, or a woman, because everybody says so. And, the culture gives us all these descriptions of the world that we tend to take on ourselves—but, when you get down to the true core of your being, you may find you don't fit that description, or that you are forcing yourself to fit. I think that when you are 'gender challenged,' as you say, you have to examine everything: Your self and the descriptions, and try to feel out what you really are, not what you fit into, not the neat little cubbyhole that everybody is going to be comfortable with, but what you really are and what your desires really are. I think there are a lot of people in this world that never ever look inside of themselves, and as a result, live a very frustrating existence."

"It's not an easy road to travel by any stretch of the imagination. If you look at life as an opportunity to learn—it's just like any college or university, the teachers that you learn the most from are usually the ones who are hardest on you, and I feel the same way about life: I feel very lucky to be 'gender challenged' because it has made it terribly difficult to survive, and you have to get strong to do that."

TVG: "So, are you saying that if a person doesn't examine their self and they take an easy path, they're taking a 'wrong' path, and instead, they should find difficult ways to go about doing things?"

BD: "Right or wrong is relative but I believe our job in this world is to be ourselves. What I'm saying is that a great many people deny themselves the opportunity to fully explore who they are by simply accepting the description they have been given as to who they are."

TVG: "Whether they're 'gender challenged' or not?"

BD: "Yes. You can see this when you find people who deny or are threatened that 'gender challenged' people exist. You see people who can't accept that possibility for themselves and they are threatened by any challenge to their own perceptions. What I am or what somebody else is should be no challenge to anyone if they are comfortable with themselves. I feel the greatest problem that most people have in life—and why 'we' get such funny feedback—is the fact that many people can't honestly face their own descriptions of themselves, and we threaten that. They don't want to look and see if they are men or women, or somewhere in between—or if they're bisexual or gay, or whatever."

TVG: "How long have you been living your life as a woman?"

BD: "Well, all my life—but full-time: Three-and-a-half years. And, I think that's rather funny in that a lot of 'gender challenged' people that I've met will say, 'I'm going to get electrolysis, get on hormones, do this and that, and then I'm going to start to live.' In a lot of ways, I think that's very significant: That you can't live until you make this transition—that is a reality for a lot of us."

TVG: "Are you saying that's your reality, or is your reality to live and take care of the details as you go along?"

BD: "The latter. You need to accept yourself and then act on it. It's really great, now—in spite of all the things I've had to go through."

TVG: "So, how long did you try to live as a man?"

BD: "I acted—and the operative word is *acted*—like a man for forty years. And, it was grand—I liked the person I was. I don't have any resentment of that. But then my background is a lot different than most people. I grew up in Salt Lake City, and being a non-Mormon, I was not only an alien in my own body but an alien in the culture I grew up in. I was always an outsider, and I always felt very fortunate about that because I never felt any regret at not belonging to the mass group. In fact, my family kind of took pride in not conforming. It was delightful in that you could form your own ideas and not be bothered by what other people thought; you don't feel that you have to be like everybody else in order to have validity. Of course, Salt Lake wasn't an area of the world where there was a lot of free and open sexual information, especially in the fifties when I was growing up."

TVG: "When did you first question your gender?"

BD: "From the time that I was around two years old, I knew there had been some kind of mistake made about me. I always had the feeling that I was female and that something terribly wrong had happened: Somebody upstairs had screwed up big time. In my early years I was very feminine, and probably what most people would refer to as a real sissy."

TVG: "Did you cross-dress as a child?"

BD: "I started cross-dressing when I was about seven—I took care of my younger brother and sister because my mother was an incredible hypochondriac; I had a wonderfully dysfunctional family in some regards. She would always plead her back hurt and go off to bed. My brother used to say, 'Mom can't lift a finger to do anything around the house but she can lift a stack of library books that would kill a mule.' So I took over the role of mother; that's what I wanted to be. Add to that the fact that my dad was a very masculine man and we were very close friends. My dad and I did male things together. He was a very good role model had I felt like I was a 'normal' male but I felt like I was a 'normal' daughter. I enjoyed being with my dad and doing the male things he wanted to do but I never felt like they were for me. I simply did them because I loved my dad."

"So that's when I started cross-dressing, and every night I would go to bed and pray that the thing between my legs would be gone—I never felt attached to it anyway—and I would wake up and become the woman I was; that ultimately

I would get married and have children. By the time I was thirteen, I realized it wasn't happening."

TVG: "The power of prayer wasn't exactly what it was cracked up to be?"

BD: "Hell no, the power of prayer wasn't doing a damn thing."

TVG: "Did your parents know that you cross-dressed?"

BD: "No. There was always that feeling in Salt Lake, where J. Edgar Hoover was an idol, John Birch was a god, and there was a commie behind every bush—you didn't say anything. It was a funny place to grow up. There was a lot of mind control—it's almost the equivalent of growing up in Russia in middle of the United States, although not quite, because Russia has changed marvelously and Salt Lake has changed very little."

"I didn't know the way I was coming across to people was that feminine until I got into junior high and started getting seriously beat up for being the way I was."

TVG: "Not because they knew you cross-dressed but because..."

BD: "No, I was very effeminate and the boys would wait for me after school every day and beat me up."

TVG: "Did you cross-dress during this period of your adolescence?"

BD: "No, actually that was the end of it in a way because I never knew there was anybody like me in the world. I thought I was the only one and something had just gotten real screwed up. At that point in time, after getting beaten badly, I went through some things and came to the idea that I had to do the best I could to act like a man because there was nothing I could do about it—there was no alternative. In fact, I never learned there was anybody like me until I was twenty-one, had already married somebody who was a very dear friend and had re-enlisted in the Air Force for another four years, and suddenly, I found out there was something that could be done. But, at that point in time, and ever since I was thirteen, I had made up my mind that maybe in the next lifetime I could get to be a woman and everything would be okay."

"In a way that's come true because at forty I got my second lifetime. I mean, how many people get to live two lives in one lifetime? It's great!"

TVG: "You told me once about a turning point in high school, that after being beat up, you were very sick, if I remember correctly, and because of your attraction to art, you had done some illustrations for school. Can you remind me of that?"

BD: "Sure. I was fortunate in that my dad taught mechanical and architectural drawing in a high school and he used to encourage my drawing. I used to go with him when he would correct papers and such, and use the equipment and paper—the greatest thing was to steal his mechanical pencils, which ticked him off a little, but he finally bought me my own. So, I began drawing at a very young age—free-form, that is. Ultimately, he went to work for an engineering firm, and I used to go with him when he worked overtime. I learned how to use the *Ozalid* machine, some of the cameras and other equipment—I wasn't attracted to mechanical drawing, though."

"Anyway, when I was about twelve, I was extremely ill. Our

doctor was an old country doctor and he diagnosed me as having 'rheumatic fever'—it actually wasn't that, and none of the later doctors ever figured out for sure what it was, either. The reality of what was going on with me was that the prayer wasn't working and I was in a terrible depression about the fact that I was a girl, and things were just not the way they were supposed to be. I just quit on life at that point in time—that's really what the illness was. I couldn't express that because I was afraid they would ship me off to Provo, which was the nuthouse down in Southern Utah."

"My parents moved out of the suburbs, into Salt Lake proper so I would be closer to the University Medical Center and the doctors there. They couldn't determine what I had other than it was very serious—which it was—and that it had left me with rheumatoid arthritis in my right leg. So, I was put on the State's crippled children list under the March of Dimes."

"Without my parent's realizing it, they had moved into a neighborhood where I would have to go to the toughest junior high school in the whole city. I had missed the last six months of the eighth grade and was very emaciated, very pale, a very effeminate looking little boy walking into the toughest school. I immediately became a target for a group of eight to ten boys who would beat me up every day after school simply because I was different."

"I wasn't doing real well because I was pretty much in a lot of physical pain, and I couldn't be what I was [a girl], and so I lived inside my head—my body wasn't inhabitable for me. But the one thing I did have—because I always read women's magazines and poured myself out through my art—was portraits of women and fashion drawings. My social studies teacher accepted anything for extra credit and I turned in some of these as the year went along."

"After a particularly severe beating, I was laid up for a while—I never told my parents about this because my dad had a very violent side and I was afraid he would get carried away trying to do something about the kids who beat me. So, I was laid up for a few weeks and what happened was that I attempted suicide. I was really discouraged because I was getting beat up for being something I couldn't help. I had a rope around the rafters in the basement, the noose around my neck, and I was standing on a stool ready to kick it from under me when the realization came to me that: number one, I really liked living—in spite of all the pain and agony—I liked being alive; and number two, if I did it, those boys would really win, and I couldn't allow that."

"I took the rope off, untied it, put it away, put the stool away, and did a lot of heavy-duty meditation. And I realized there was nothing I could do except accept what was, and try to make the best of it—I had to try act like a man even though I didn't feel like a man. So I determined to do that."

"I went back to school about two weeks later. I walked into the school and saw one of the guys who was part of the group that had been beating me up. He saw me, turned tail and ran. I thought he was going to get the rest of the guys. But as I went through the day, I saw more of the guys and they would all avoid me, mostly in fear. That really surprised me—I didn't know what the hell was going on. Then I found out that the

(Continued on next page)

Bev— (Continued from page 7)

social studies teacher had entered my drawings in a festival and they had been put up for the whole school to see. Evidently, they had been the center of attention because no one could believe a kid in the ninth grade could draw like that— students, teachers and parents alike.

"There was a real power to those drawings that had not come from me but from beyond me. Suddenly, those boys were afraid of me because I could do something they couldn't; something they couldn't even understand. I wasn't troubled by them for the rest of the year, and I did my best from then on to act like a guy.

"It taught me something about the way things are and the way perceptions are. I had gone back to school with all these mental pictures of how I would fight them back, how I would stand up to them, and how I would survive. And it turned out to be something totally unrelated to playing at being a man that saved my skin.

"From that time on, I started doing portraits of people, and when I was fourteen I went into business for myself doing freelance work. Besides portraits, I did architectural renderings of dams for my dad's firm and other engineering firms. Strangely enough, even though the engineers designed their structures from the top, the sides, and whatnot, they couldn't visualize what they would look like in three dimensions. I could look at their plans and draw it out in dimensional perspective. They would be amazed because they could see my drawings were correct but they couldn't do it.

"To me, it was something I had received to balance the fact that I couldn't be what I felt I was inside."

TVG: "So then you joined the Air Force?"

BD: "Well, yes. Being that I was a non-Mormon, I was going to be canon fodder. All the Mormon boys were exempted—the Mormons controlled the draft board."

TVG: "You're talking about the Vietnam war?"

BD: "Yes. The Mormon boys would go on a church mission, which exempted them, and when they got back, they would be immediately accepted into BYU. So there was a shortage of draftable bodies."

TVG: "But you were on the State's crippled children's list."

BD: "And I had twenty-four hundred vision in both eyes which, in any other State in the country, would have disqualified me— except Utah. I didn't want to go in the Army because some of my friends had and they all got a quick trip to Vietnam. So I was in the Air Force for six-and-one-half years. I was an illustrator and did pretty much what I had been doing. I had a blast, it was a great time, I really enjoyed it."

TVG: "So, you did the Air Force, got married, and became a commercial illustrator and graphic artist?"

BD: "Yes. Actually, I've been a graphic designer and illustrator for over thirty years now."

TVG: "And you went into business for yourself?"

BD: "I had a studio in Sacramento for more than eighteen years. I've done work for a lot of major clients: Weinstock's, KCRA, Coldwell Banker, Old Sacramento, the Railroad Museum, Cal Central Press, IBM..."

TVG: "All as a man?"

BD: "Yes. A very successful career as a man."

TVG: "Tell me what happened as the man becomes a woman: What happens to the career?"

BD: "Well, that was kind of fun actually. I changed when I was about forty. I fought it for a long time, I kept trying to act like a man and be a man. In 1977 I realized I couldn't go on and I applied for the Stanford program, and then got disillusioned: I was accepted but I didn't accept them."

TVG: "Why didn't you accept them?"

BD: "Because they seemed to have rigid, preconceived ideas about being a woman. They wanted me to be a June Cleaver clone and jump through hoops to prove it. They also seemed more disposed to collecting fees than helping people. Because of the fact that I had always been an outsider, I decided, in 1982, to find an alternate route; a road less traveled, if you will..."

TVG: "Ah, a literary pun!"

BD: "Hey! So that's what I did: I mapped out my own course and found my own sources. But there were circumstances: I was still married; she was a very dear friend; there's an incredible amount of guilt in having to be what you are and having to destroy something you've built together with somebody else, especially when you're good friends— that was a very difficult thing for me to deal with. I think that had I had to break up the marriage because of what I am we couldn't have stayed friends— fortunately, the IRS came along after I had a very good year, wanted more money than I could pay, and single-handedly managed to break up the marriage over financial matters since the following year was a depression year for the graphics industry. That pressure kind of shattered everything and drove us apart. We were able to become friends after that and when I actually did the change it didn't have anything to do with rejecting my former mate."

TVG: "So, in this case, the IRS actually did a big favor?"

BD: "I'm going to send them a thank you letter, some day."

TVG: "But, now here you are, a successful graphic artist as a male..."

BD: "Successful, yes. My best year I grossed eighty-one thousand dollars— that's why the IRS was after me. I reached a point that I knew I had to change; I'd been on hormones all along but hadn't pressed the issue..."

TVG: "When you say you'd been on hormones all along, what do you mean?"

BD: "Since 1982."

TVG: "And the IRS in what year?"

BD: "1986. It was in 1988 that I actually finally started living full-time."

TVG: "Six years after starting hormone therapy?"

BD: "Yes."

TVG: "What happened to your business?"

BD: "Well, I went around and talked to every one of my friends because I wanted to stay in Sacramento— I didn't want to move to San Francisco; that's what they tell you."

TVG: "Get out of the area where you live?"

BD: "Yes. Go to San Francisco, that's where 'people like you' belong. I've never been one to go where I belong; I want to be where I want to be. Anyway, I told all my friends and all my clients. And, to a person, every single one of them was

very liberal, open and accepting: 'Oh yes, we understand. Oh, what courage it must take to tell us all this.' And everything else. But with reality setting in—most of the clients couldn't deal with me. They started attributing stereotypical, negatives that had nothing to do with what I was doing. In spite of the fact that I'd been on hormones since 82, and the only thing that had literally changed were the clothes, and maybe I seemed to express my feelings more—suddenly, I was being told: 'You're really emotional. You're scattered. You're moody.' And all of this stuff. But nothing was different about my work or capabilities—I just wasn't the man I used to be, but then, I never was the man I used to be.

"I had a very good friend who had worked with me for a long time. He was working with me when I went through the transition. He said: 'You know, you haven't changed a damn bit—how you're dealing with people, how you're doing your work, the kind of work you're doing; if anything, your work has gotten better, but people's perception of you is what has changed.'

"Basically, I lost all my business and have had a very tough time making it economically ever since. Here's what I like to say: In order to go through a change from living and being perceived as a man, to living as a woman regardless of how you're perceived, you get to wear uncomfortable shoes, become a second class citizen and have your economic earning potential cut in half—I mean, who wouldn't want to do it?"

TVG: "Do you have any regrets?"

BD: "From everything I had read about people who have gone through this, I knew it had to be as acceptable, to me, to lose all that business as to keep it. You can't really go back; you can't put everything back inside. I've even had people say: 'Why don't you go back to being a man?' And I said, 'I wouldn't do that for all the money in the world.' It was worth it to me to be who I am in this world. If some people can't handle it, that's okay."

TVG: "Some of the ways you deal with this world is through your talent for seeing, and finding alternate paths to get what you want; I also know that you study Ninjitsu. How long have been doing that?"

BD: "What really drew me to being a Ninja, and to Ninjitsu, was the idea of alternate personalities—that has a great deal to do with the art. Not the Hollywood bunk. The Ninja were a counter-culture in Japan during the warring states period when it was difficult to survive except as a pawn of some warlord. The Ninja evolved from mystics and warriors who had sought refuge in the Southern part of the main island. These people found there were other ways to resist other than mounting an army of their own. They found unusual and subtle ways to wield power that struck fear in the hearts of the great warlords over nine hundred years ago. Their manner of handling conflicts and confrontations gives you a different perspective on life. When I got into the martial arts it was an attempt to 'be a man.' And, ironically, that's what gave me the strength to become the woman I am now."

"For me, one of the revelations was to open myself to the flow of energy within me—whatever it is, and find the balance

within. And, to learn to simply allow my opponents to defeat themselves. Ninjitsu teaches you more than hand to hand combat. One of my teachers said that we often have more conflict inside of ourselves than exists outside; that conflict outside of ourselves reflects our inner conflict—the reality is that toughest enemy you will ever face is yourself. Until you can face yourself, and make peace with yourself, nothing outside will ever be settled."

"I went away from that lesson realizing that for all of my life I had been dabbling with this change I had to make, because of what other people might think. I sat down and decided there was no alternative for me but to change."

TVG: "To change, or to become?"

BD: "To become. To change directions. To let go and not think about what other people think. To accept what is."

TVG: "So how long have you been involved with Ninjitsu?"

BD: "Since about 1983."

TVG: "Had you cross-dressed since you were thirteen?"

BD: "No, but when I was twenty-one, and first found out about other people like me, the need to cross-dress became irresistible. I went through typical patterns of cross-dressing secretly on the side, having a lot of guilt about it, and going through periodic purges, saying: 'I'll never do that again.'"

TVG: "So you went through periods of cross-dressing and purging through your twenties; and into your thirties?"

BD: "Yes. But I wasn't hung up on the clothes—it wasn't a fetish attachment to the clothing itself."

TVG: "By the time you started hormones in 82 were you cross-dressing at all?"

BD: "Oh yes."

TVG: "But always privately?"

BD: "Always privately. I never actually went out in public until February of 88. That first time I went out in public, in a dress, was the first time I felt like a real man. Unfortunately—I haven't found one yet."

TVG: "We've had a couple of conversations in the past regarding DES (diethylstilbestrol). I believe you said that a lot of pregnant women were given DES in the forties. Blab away."

BD: "A lot of people who deal with 'gender challenged' people are coming to the view that there are more organic things going on than they previously thought. It used to be, when it [transsexualism] first came into notice, that it was considered a psychological condition—with all the attendant guilt for having to see a psychiatrist and the societal disapproval that entails. When I first saw a psychologist about this, he told me I was the sanest person he had ever met, and I agreed, I felt very clear about it. But I always had this feeling, even from my earliest memories that something was wrong: that I had a Cadillac motor in a Ford body. What's starting to come out now is that there is an organic basis. Of course, it's not just organic, I think it's a combination of things. But I think the organic is a pretty major influence."

TVG: "In your specific situation?"

BD: "In my situation, what my medical doctor told me, is that DES probably caused the baby boom after World War II. After WW I, a lot of horny GI's came home but there wasn't a baby

(Continued on next page)

Bev—(Continued from page 9)

boom. Miscarriage was the reason there wasn't a baby boom after WW I—a lot of women had problems carrying to term. In the mid-forties, a drug was developed and tested on laboratory rats that had a miraculous effect in preventing miscarriages. Suddenly, here was a wonder drug that would prevent that, and a horde of returning GI's ready to start families. DES was given out on a full-scale basis to any mother who might have a problem carrying to term. Doctors sometimes gave it without the mothers even knowing what they were getting. DES is pure, synthetic estrogen.

"We now know that the fetus is female for the first ten weeks of life, everybody is—even Arnold Schwarzenegger was a girl at one time. After that, the DNA coding takes over and triggers gender characteristics. The prevailing theory, in cases where DES is probably a definite influence, such as in mine, after my body began to form but before my brain was formed, my mother started getting her womb pumped full of DES.

"In the recent Time Magazine story on transsexual rats, they seemingly duplicated this effect on laboratory rats (of course, as everybody should know by now, the rats really just made a lifestyle choice). Anyway, that study pretty well indicates there has to be a lot of testosterone present after that point in time when a male child begins to form, in order for that formation to be completed."

TVG: "Or an absence of an overdose of estrogen."

BD: "Yes. There are other conditions of course, both psychological and in the environment. DES is not always the cause, but there is a general conclusion that there has to be some hormonal imbalance in the mother's womb that causes the baby's brain to continue developing as female."

TVG: "I believe in that same issue was an article dealing with a Southern California researcher who had preliminary findings that an area of the brain, related to sexual orientation, was the same size in gay males as in women, and suggested that brain structure may help determine perception and orientation regardless of biology."

BD: "Construction determines function."

TVG: "You had mentioned that DES was given out during a specific time period."

BD: "DES was given out from about 1945 to 1970. At that time, there were indications that DES may have been a causative factor in increased cancer rates of women born of mothers who had taken it during the first trimester. There are lawsuits still to be settled over that. And, DES was being given out well before the Thalidomide babies became the first indication that wonder drugs might not be so wonderful."

TVG: "Better living through chemistry."

BD: "Yes, now doctors don't even want women to take cough drops while they're pregnant."

TVG: "Going back to your comment about exploring one's self—and I should add that I do believe the perception of gender is largely psychological and spiritual: I believe people should be free to explore their individual potential whether they decide to cross gender lines as you have or not; but living in a culture in which you have to deny the exploration of yourself leads to psychological aberrations of fetishism and

frustrated desire. I've read several horror stories in which people had SRS as quickly as they possibly could and then super regretted it because they were essentially in the wrong body again."

BD: "I think religion has a had lot to do with that because it sets up pair bonding as the ideal. I believe some of the people that have changed too fast, have done so as a rejection of a lot of those values and they get carried away without really knowing themselves. That's a real danger. I think we should be an open enough society to get rid of all this crap, this fear—or as much of it as we can so that a person can explore this for themselves and find out if it's right for them or not."

"One of the things that I questioned at first, was what one of my girlfriends calls 'The Real World Test,' because I used to have that kind of thinking: That if I could just get the money together, go get surgery and just start living, everything would be great. I think you know enough from having been out yourself—you start to get a feeling of what it's like; it's not that simple. When I started living full-time, in spite of the fact that I thought I knew everything, there were things I had to learn real fast. Some of them were real difficult lessons. I don't think it's very wise to do an overnight thing—that is sheer folly as evidenced by the number of people who have realized they screwed up big time. You need to test yourself, find out how you really feel about yourself, live full-time at least a year in my opinion, before you commit to surgery. The old saying: 'Fools rush in' is very true. Thinking you want to be this, so therefore you will cut your life as a man short right away, is foolish—or as the doctor says just before the surgery: 'It won't be long now.'"

TVG: "Ha-ha."

BD: "By the way, do you know what the tool is called that they perform the surgery with? A beaver cleaver."

TVG: "You're bad."

BD: "I know."

TVG: "Let me ask you a personal question you don't have to answer: You were married, as a male, to a female, and are divorced; had you ever had a desire to have sex with a man prior to changing?"

BD: "Not really. I didn't think about men, or for that matter, I didn't think about women, either. I wasn't very good in that regard—the body was willing but the mind just wasn't there. Asexual was probably the best description of me then. One of the fascinating things for me, recently, is that I find I'm very attracted to men, but I'm also attracted to women. I'm not preconceiving any kind of relationship but I am open. If I meet someone with a lot in common and we can work things out, and are whole people—I'm not looking for a better half because as we commented before: two halves don't make a whole in a relationship—then I think it could be a nice thing; something much more than two. But I don't need someone else to validate my life, and vice-versa."

"I live because I want to: I enjoy my life. Like I said at the outset: I feel very, very fortunate to be who and what I am. I have a lot of challenges ahead. What more could you ask from life? I mean the opportunity to go on learning and growing—it's too much fun."

Gender Organizations

C.G.N.I.E., Inc. (Court of the Great Northwest Imperial Empire, Inc.) POB 160636, Sac, CA 95816. CGNIE was organized to raise funds for charities and continues to do so. Primarily part of the gay community, membership is open to anyone with an interest. CGNIE maintains an active relationship with many other Court Systems in the western United States. Annual events include elections of Emperor & Empress, Grand Duke & Duchess with related campaign events culminating in Coronation Ball and Grand Ducal Ball; and other Balls as selected by the Court. A variety of other events and fund raisers are scheduled by the reigning Court. Court Imperial (general meetings) held on first Tuesday of the month at Faces, 2000 K Street, Sac, CA, 7:30pm. No door charge. Annual dues—\$22 (or \$2 per month).

DVG (Diablo Valley Girls)—POB 272885, Concord, CA 94527-2885. DVG is a non-sexual social club currently forming in the Concord/Walnut Creek area. Monthly socials held at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, CA on the third Monday of each month, 8pm. Write for details.

ETVC (Educational TV Channel)—POB 426486, San Francisco, CA 94142-6486. Phone (Hotline) (415) 763-3959. ETVC is a non-sexual organization with the purpose of serving the educational, social, and recreational needs of gender-challenged people, their spouses, significant others, family members, friends and professionals in the helping services. ETVC is the largest organization of this type in Northern California and provides a wide variety of support including: rap groups, a significant other support group, print & video libraries, outreach, education and lots of social activities, plus more. Theme socials the last Thursday of each month, Chez Mollet restaurant, 527 Bryant St., SF, \$3. members, \$5 non-members (certain event/themes may be higher priced). Newsletter every other month included with annual dues—\$20.

G.A.L. (Gender Alternatives League) POB 3392, Napa, CA 94558 Phone: [REDACTED]. GAL is a group attempting national representation of "Genderists." Predisposed to political activism, GAL is will also be publishing "The Genderist" four times a year—\$20.

Support Organizations & Services

ETVC/RGA Rap Group meets on the second Monday of each month at the New Community of Faith Church in San Jose, from 8 to 10pm. Contact Kim at (408) 243-3919 or Martina at (408) 984-5619.

A peer support group is forming for Transgenderists who have recently crossed over, or are seriously contemplating doing so. Contact: Boxholder 229, 3311 Mission St, SF, CA 94110.

ETVC's Significant Others Support Group meets the second Thursday of each month, from 8 to 9pm. SOS meetings are open to people involved with a CD/TV/TG/TS person, but who are not one themselves. Write ETVC, or call Ginny at [REDACTED].

SGA's SOS group had its first get together July 27. Persons interested in participating should call or write SGA.

Gender Dysphoria Support Group POB 1895, Sacramento, CA 95866. GDSG is a FTM (female to male) closed group. Write for details (formerly care of J.A.G.).

I.M.A.G.E. (I'm Making A Gender Expression) 2094 California St., Sutter, CA 95982 Phone: [REDACTED] between 6pm-11pm. IMAGE is a closed social club still in formation (started Jan. 1). The stated purpose is to: assist members in appearance; perform educational outreach; organize social and recreational activities for the enjoyment of members and friends. New members must be sponsored by an existing member and accepted by membership vote. Three classes of membership: Individual, Couples & Honorary. Annual dues not established.

RGA (Rainbow Gender Association) POB 700730, San Jose, CA 95170. RGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. Poker Socials, Rap Group (with ETVC), Computer Bulletin Board: [REDACTED] (300-2400 baud), plus more. General meetings twice a month (1st & 3rd Fridays at 8pm) at the New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Drive, San Jose. No dues or door charge; contributions accepted. Newsletter every other month for \$10 per year.

S.G.A. (Sacramento Gender Association) POB 215456, Sac, CA 95821-1456. Phone: [REDACTED] SGA is a non-sexual social club open to anyone interested in gender issues. General meetings are held on the fourth Saturday of the month at Joseph's Town & Country, 2062 Auburn Blvd., Sac, CA, 7pm if you want dinner, meeting follows, 8pm. \$2 door fee (\$4 non-members). General meetings usually include a presentation, such as make up, clothing, etc. SGA Executive Committee meeting held the third Friday, same location, 7:30pm, open to members and guests—free. SGA is currently trying to organize a significant others support group, and a drop-in rap session. Annual dues—\$20.

I.F.G.E. (International Foundation for Gender Education) POB 367, Wayland MA 01778. Perhaps the largest organization concerned with the CD/TV/TS Community. Publishers of TV/TS Tapestry Journal. Educational—write for details.

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute is addressed at: 405 Western Avenue, Suite 345, South Portland, ME 04106. (207) 775 0858. HOAI sponsors the following services: GAIN (Gender Awareness and Involvement Network), a service for helping professionals to access and share information relative to counseling and therapy; a Speakers Bureau; dozens of Seminars and Workshops; Information Packets and Periodical Publications; Fantasia Fair; and jointly with Theseus Counseling Services, HOPEFUL (Helping Our Partners Experience the Fullness of United Love), a program for couples who have learned to live with cross-dressing but who want more out of their relationship. Write for free brochures. Theseus Counseling Services is addressed at: 233 Harvard Street, Suite 302, Brookline, MA 02146. [REDACTED]

My Monthly Rag

(Coda: Ya know what a pinhead is?)

Gee whiz and golly-olly, there sure are a lot of different types of cross-dressers, ya know? It seems like the only thing in common (besides cross-dressing) is bitching about something or someone. Kinda like all the rest of American Culture. I wonder when cross-dressers will take notice of the fact that, as a group, as long as these internal wars rage on, there will be no compassion by the culture-at-large. Rather, the larger culture will only be too happy to have a scapegoat (okay, everybody line up and go "Baaaa").

I hope that enough siblings who are involved in the gender-related paraculture will realize the limitations of putting people down who don't do things the way they do, and begin to practice a compassionate policy of live-and-let-live before we all die.

Whatever the reason any one person cross-dresses, or crosses gender lines, should be of interest to everyone with a gender-related interest—even when it's not gender related (as in a feminine/masculine perception of the self). Whoa! What's that? Gender-related even if it's not gender related? Well, yeah. Listen, I've met a lot of men who cross-dress and say they are expressing their femininity, and yet, they do it as men do anything. In other words, I believe some siblings cross-dress as an expression of masculinity, not femininity. And these men get a lot of put-downs for being "men in skirts"; "bearded ladies"; etc.

And, to be honest, it can be real easy for me to think lowly

Upcoming (Mostly) Local Events

Sept. 19th through 21st— 4th annual PAARC (Performing Artists for AIDS Related Charities) Show at the North Sac. School District Auditorium, 670 Dixieanne Ave, Sac. A musical drama about people whose lives have been affected by HIV. \$15 donation, 8pm show, doors open at 7pm.

Sept. 20— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

Sept 21— SGA Executive Committee Meeting, 7:30pm at JTC. Open to all, no charge.

Sept 21— Toilet Ball V, "A Red Cap Affair," presented by The Sacramento Chapter of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, 8pm at JTC. Open to all, \$8.00 Donation.

Sept 26— ETVC presents "Ragpickers Ball," a bebeft for three women's shelters— dressing rooms avail. to try on bargain clothes. 8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. \$5 members, \$8 non.

Sept. 28— SGA General Meeting, 8pm at Joseph's Town & Country (7pm for dinner). \$2 members, \$4 non-members.

Sept. 28— "Erotic Flair 91" presented by Miss Leather at JTC: 6pm Crafts Fair (leather fine art, piercing + more), free; 9pm "Sacramento's Finest Entertainers," \$3. Benefits Hope House.

Oct 1— CGNIE Court Imperial Meeting, 7:30pm at Faces. Open to all, no charge.

Oct 4— "San Francisco is Burning," a drag ball at the Pleasuredome, 177 Townsend, SF. Trophies for "Realness" (men as women & vice versa); Leather; Slut Drag; Vogueing; and more. Cost unknown.

of those "men in skirts" when they act like men, talk like men, walk like men, and put-down women with comments like: "I make a better woman than most woman." Gawd. It sounds like another "my dick is bigger than your dick" story.

Look, you can't slip into some lingerie, a dress and high heels and "see things from a woman's perspective." Nor are you a man just because you don man-drag. You are what you are whether clothed in some kind of drag, or not. And just because you have a penis, or a vagina, does not make you a man or a woman, either. *Gender has to do with what you perceive your entire self to be.*

There are no limitations that count once you've opened yourself to who you can be.

The exploration of the self is an ongoing, infinitely rewarding adventure— how big you are depends on how far you push against your limitations. When you find that path, when you know you are on it, there is no need to put-down someone else.

Unless you're a pinhead.

Special Thanks

Special thanx to two sweethearts, Janet and Marta, for their \$5 faith donations at the August , DVG drop-in social; to darling Doreen for the \$5iver at ETVC; and to that Anonymous soul in Sacramento for her exceedingly kind letter and TEN DOLLARS! JoAnn Roberts for her article and kind words; Linda Phillips for her letter; Lorraine for her letter; Roxanne for her letter.

Oct 4— A "T" (Shirt) Dance presented by Sacramento Lesbians Creating Change (SLCC), open to all; prizes. Tuesday Club, 2722 L Street, 8pm, \$5.

Oct 4— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

Oct 6— Mr. & Miss Gay Sacramento Pageant at JTC, sponsored by Modern Star Images, Inc. 7pm, \$10

Oct 13— The Leather Follies (A Night of Comedy & Leather), Wreckroom, 2513 Broadway, Sac. 10pm Benefits Hope House, Fairy Godfathers. Raffle: 20" color tv.

Oct 18— RGA social, New Community of Faith Church, 6350 Rainbow Dr., San Jose. 8pm, donations accepted.

Oct 19— SGA Executive Committee Meeting, 7:30pm at JTC. Open to all, no charge.

Oct 21— DVG meets at Just Rewards, 2520 Camino Diablo, Walnut Creek, 8pm. Open to all, no charge.

Oct 26— SGA General Meeting, 8pm at Joseph's Town & Country (7pm for dinner). \$2 members, \$4 non-members.

Oct 26— CGNIE presents "Closet Ball" (for Men who would be Queen & Womyn who would be King— Contest, \$100 prize). Can't have done public drag before. JTC 8pm, \$8.

Oct 31 ETVC presents "Halloween" a night for queens and monstors to show off in the famous ETVC Costume Contest.8pm, Chez Mollet Restaurant, 527 Bryant Street, SF. \$5 members, \$12 non.

Every Friday Night— Cafè Lambda, smoke-free, alcohol-free— no door charge.