

PRES: William M. [redacted] MEMBERSHIP \$ 1 5 PER Y RNEWSLETTER EDITORS Helen and Wilma [redacted] Albany, New York PHONE: [redacted]

***** Hi: To all The Girls somewhere out there in T.V. world.

For it being St Paddy's Day we had sixteen girls here to spend the night. I saw some of the girls wearing green and enjoying themselves. We had a new member with us again last night. Jeanette from Schen., N.Y. nervous at first but it was good to see so many go to her and make her feel comfortable and welcome. This is good for new T.V.'s who come for the first time to be accepted and treated as though they had been coming here for a long time. This is why this group has existed as long as we have, every one does her best to see that no one is left to themselves, it would be the same as still being in the closet with no help coming from anyone. So sisters when you see a new member extend your hand in friendship and offer help, remember when you first came out you looked for help and felt better when others took you in and made you feel comfortable and relaxed. It is easy to say it is not so bad coming for the first time to a gathering, but I know it must be a nerve wracking experience. I as the Hostess was nervous when we first started these monthly meetings, not knowing the T.V.'s I wondered how would they take me, Did I really accept them or would I think they were some kind of freaks. So many things went thru my mind, but on seeing them as they came in full of spirit and the feeling that at last they had some place to go to meet with others who had been doing the same thing they were doing, mainly dressing and wanting to be accepted by the public. Well maybe the public didn't accept them as yet, but at least they can come here and meet without harrasment. You take people like Ariadne and Betsy who are doing their best to bring the T.V.'s out to the public and to be accepted for what they like to do and not degrade them. It can sure make one feel that they have gained a giant step.

***** The girls who made the meeting were: Dennie and Michelle Ann from Somerville, Mass., Jean and Linda from Springville, N.Y., Joan from Colonie, N.Y., Francis from Henrietta N.Y., Kathy from Camilus, N.Y., Winnie from Schenectady, N.Y., Jeanette from Schenectady, N.Y., Jean from Peru, N.Y., Elanda from Rome, N.Y. Sally form Binghampton, N.Y., Renne from Stratford, Conn., Patricia from Camden, Maine., Wilma and I.

It was a first for Patricia from Camden, Maine but somehow I got the feeling that Patricia had met some of the sisters before and was more at ease than most that have been coming here.

If you notice that Dee Dee and Vi are not on the list of guests, I must tell you that Dee Dee is under the weather from a head on collision she had after she had left Vi off for work. Thank God that they wern't both in the car at the time the car was hit. Dee Dee we all missed you for being such a lovely girl, you are a lovely couple and an asset to any group. Do hope you will be well soon and back with the girls.

Anyone wishing to send Dee Dee a get well card may do so to help her get back on her feet. Mr. D. [redacted], Hartford, Conn., 06106

***** The meal tonight was: Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Bean Casserole, Corn, Cole Slaw, Jello fruit and chbese salad, cake and coffee.

For those who wanted to come and couldn't we missed you all, maybe the next time.

Sally did you see how I spelled your city, Thanks for the Kobasi, and will be looking foward to the Periogi if you are making the next meeting. You keep bringing this good food down and you will see Wilma and I take a vacation up your way.

***** Did you know that Kathy had her car banged up also, she wound up with a new Chrysler. Could there be some kind of conspiracy with the T.V.'s getting there cars banged up. First it was Francis, then DeeDee and Now Kathy. Girls look in your mirror when you are out driving and be careful, we want you with us for awhile.

***** You know when I start out writing this sheet I really don't know what I'm going to write, but it seems once I start the words just flow and I rattle on and on. Believe me what I say comes from the heart, as I hold all you girls dear to me as I hold my Wilma dear to me.

Untill next month I say Peace and Good Health and Happiness to all.

Love to all HELEN

W I L M A ' S V I E W S

This month I have donated this page to a letter written by Ms Leslie L. Phillips that was published in the OUTREACH July 1978. The Outreach is published by THE OUTREACH FOUNDATION, SUIT 433, 102 CHARLES ST., BOSTON MASS. 02114.

THE HARDEST DECISION: Ms. Leslie L. Phillips.

I am often asked, "Was it a hard decision to make?" I used to answer, almost without thinking, that it certainly was. That is, until I was recently put through the mill by a newspaper reporter. I now realize that the decision--- at least the decision that people generally are asking about, i.e., 'going the TS route' -- was incredibly easy, and, indeed, made many years ago. It was the secondary decision of effectuating the drastic change that I had already decided upon, that was the hellish one, and which finally required the dramatic setting of a sleepless night in a hotel room in Istanbul, with the Golden HORN outside my window steadily growing lighter, to come to grips with.

Oh, the mechanical part of it was simple enough. With each hormone pill and each injection, my resolve strengthened, and I knew that it was not only the right decision for me, but also the only one. But the social, and especially the professional, implications of change were not so easy to come to grips with. It is easy enough for the transsexual who has never really made it in the world; putting a professional career on the line is quite something else. I suppose that had I tried to logic the situation out, I might have come to another conclusion. But, being a lawyer, trained to expect (and prepared for) the worst, I never allowed myself the luxury of anticipating an atmosphere of professional acceptance.

Thus, it was not without at least a little surprise that I have found these past few months, as my professional 'coming out' has taken place, that one can do it and still function as a professional. The most common reaction has been praise for courage. (If anything, my losing forty pounds of excess weight about a year ago -- one of the first effects of hormone treatment for me -- provoked more direct comment!) Not that everyone has completely understood or agrees, but even some of those who obviously could not understand have gone out of their way to make me feel comfortable. I've even heard it expressed: "Well, some lawyer was bound to do this sooner or later -- at least it was a Philadelphia lawyer first."

I have been lucky, of course, in a number of ways. I am very fortunate that my new appearance is such that my friends and acquaintances immediately accept the logic of my change (especially those who have not seen me in a while) and that people who I meet for the first time find it hard to believe that I was ever anything else. And, it was also fortunate that, once I tentatively began the coming-out process, I was able to complete it relatively quickly. First appearing publicly "en femme" in the fall of 1977 (I am sure the editors of this newsletter would want me to mention that Fantasia Fair 1977 was one of the very first occasions!), by New Year's I was essentially leading a double life, and by the middle of March I was living and working professionally full-time in the female gender role. This point of transition seems to be one of the most important points of all (though some of my post-op friends disagree.)

A few days after that transition had taken place, after I had dressed up as a boy for the last time (appropriately enough on the occasion of my filing name change papers at City Hall), I was suddenly overcome by the enormity of it all. "My god," I thought to myself, "I don't have to go through that nonsense anymore--and I still have the rest of my life ahead of me just as ME!"

(Leslie Phillips is a pre-operative male-to-female transsexual, practicing attorney in Philadelphia.)

Well, the TV scene is here to stay. As some pull out, others join. Transsexualism has gained almost routine acceptance in society and has been constantly in the news.. Crossdressers still have a long way to go in presenting their case to the public, I think for many reasons: Too many TVs are content to exist in the closet and complain, while others feel that they are engaging in some sort of perversion. There are no outspoken advocates for the cause, & even if someone would try to put himself in that position, there would be so much in-fighting among heterosexuals, homosexuals, bisexuals, and other sub-groups that make up the TV scene that it wouldn't be possible to agree. Transvestites need some unity, not necessarily under one wing of one national organization, but at least allowing a spokesperson to come forth for the good of the whole scene, not just one fraction of it, and not just for profit or recognition. Sadly, at this point, I can't think of a single person who would be accepted or who could fulfill these criteria...and they say women can't agree on anything.....

M E E T I N G S :

The next two gatherings will be held on APRIL 21st and MAY 29th. Please let us know of your coming at least four days in advance.

N E W M E M B E R S :

I am pleased to announce the enrollment of four new members this month.

Patricia H..... Waterbury... Conn... & .. Rosemarie R.. New York... N.Y.....
Jennefer D..... Liverpool... N.Y..... & .. Lois W..... Jamestown.. N.Y.....

We all here at Tvic hope to see you new members at one of our parties in the coming months. Why dont all you members write the new members a short welcome letter. Just put your letter in a sealed envelope with a stamp and I will forward them for you. No charge involved. New members please answer your letters if only to say that you do not wish to correspond at this time. Thank You.

H A P P Y B I R T H D A Y G I R L S :

Here are the dates and names of the members who's birthdays fall in April.

April	1	Lee D	April	5	Stanly K
"	1	H. La	"	6	Jane W
"	4	David F	"	31	Paul R

If any one wishes to send a birthday card and they have mislaid the address You can send the card to me and I will see that it is forwarded also I will see that you get the full address (if permissible) with your April Journal.

P A R T I E S :

I have been asked what is required to attend any of our parties. The only membership requirements we have at our parties is that you be a practicing TV, your dues paid up and a \$6 dinner charge. Wives and girl friends \$5. Guest \$8. The most important one is that NO one gets under the weather. Also you can dress in what you are comfortable in and no hanky panky. You must make a reservation at least four days in advance either by mail or phone.

ODDS AND ENDS SENT IN BY MEMBERS.

Kids are smart: A mother said to her daughter. "why can't you be like Mommy and wash the dirt off your face?" The girl said "I'd rather be like Daddy and cover it with make up.

One day Dee Dee went into the bank and asked the cashier to change a twenty dollar bill. CLERK: "Lady this is a counterfeit" DEE DEE: Oh my gosh I'VE been Raped.

When combing your hair, and it stands out like wire (due to static electricity) Run over the hair gently with a damp cloth. Your hair will lay flat and beautiful as combed.....

Winne dropped her contact lens in a wastebasket, which was filled to the brim. After she had searched diligently but in vain, the wife went through the trash and found the lens. "How on earth did you do it?" said Winne. "Well," she explained, "you were only searching for a tiny piece of plastic, but I was looking for \$125.".....

DENNIE: "Doctor, what is wrong with Michell Ann?" He keeps going to sleep on the chandelier?" DOCTOR: I wouldn't worry about Michell Ann, She's probably just a light sleeper.....

Joan was in a bar and bet a guy 10¢ that he could drink the mans Martini after he puts his hat over it without touching the hat or glass in any way. Usually the fellow would think about the challenge for a while and then agree, where upon Joan would pick up the hat, drink the Martini, then pay him a dime and say "sorry, you win". Where could you buy a Martini for a dime?.....

Did you girls know how SUSAN M. gets her Panty Hose? Well I hear that she ~~KIDS~~ crossed a chicken with a silk worm and got a chicken that lays eggs with Panty Hose in them. Thats great, now all we need is a chicken who can lay the inserts to a bra.....

Crystal S. said when she and her girl friend fell out of the sycamore, "This making love in a tree is for the birds....

Colleen & Eylane named the baby ONYX, cause it was onyexpected.....
Thats it for this month.. Love Wilma.

Dear Wilma:

I want to thank you so much for letting me join your TVIC organization again. I'm sorry I dropped out after 1975, guess I was a naughty gal, but I had a lot on my mind and needed to do some soulreaching, but now I have found myself and things are great and enjoying being a TV that I know I will be till the day I pass on, just love being a women and being single and liveing alone I can do as I please. I dress most of the day and I also belong to a club here, called the "Golden Gate Girls & Guys Club" in Hayward, Calif.

I have been going out dressed sence 1971 and enjoy it very much. I also have an extensive wardrobe which is hard on my budget, seeing as I am unable to work any more, bad back and legs, but my woman self come's before my man self.

I would like to hear from any of your members that would like to write to me. I promise to answer all with a picture of me and would love to have one of theris.

If any of the group should come this way they are welcome to drop in at Bernice's pad. LOVE... BERNICE G.... FAIRFIELD...CALIF.....

Dear Wilma:

I Don't mean to be such a nussince but I have moved again.

Please say hello to all the girls for me, I miss them so, and I really miss the parties.

I wrote to Francis in Henrietta, N.Y. but she did not answer my letter. I was very much interested in her removing my body hairs - as I hear she just received her registered electroloyest license. I gave up my job driving a truck and I am driving a Taxie. I've had three ½ hr. sessions at electrolysis at \$19 a whack... ~~W~~ Hurt...Pain...and expensive. I am invloved with a program here that envolves "Gender Identity" and can result in a sex-change for \$6,500. The doctors and coordinators are supper people interested and helping people get their lives straight. At the meetings I met more female to male than vice versa. This is a serious thing and a person needs a lot of help to go through it.

It is the best program for the sex change that I know of, and if any of the girls are serious and would like more information I'd be glad to put them in touch with the right people.

I am living like Rhonda more and more. I look like a fruit half male, half something else trying to look feminine. A complete 180 degree turn aroun from Ron to Rhonda.

The TVIC organization is important to help ones sanity. The mental stability it offers has probably saved a lot of marriages, and given quite a few males a faith in life again. The TV * TS * TG problem is really complex, and is in hiding now, but maybe someday it might be on the same level as the YMCA and WCA. It is something you cannot hide or repress, and only through expression can one reach a blance in life. I beleive this is a serious problem that many males face. Why should males have to go underground for something that is quite natural and part of a persons personality?

You know as well as I that you can throw the clothes away but not the feeling. In that respect I beleive it qualifies for support from Federal Agencies.

What a dream, oh well that's how I feel about it, and welcome any mail from Sisters who want some one to write to..LOVE..RHONDA..OKLAHOMA CITY..OKLA.

Dear Willma:

I want you to know how much I enjoyed visiting with you for the February meeting. I felt right at home, thanks to the friendliness of your group. The Birthday celebration added such a nice touch - those cakes were heavenly. My compliments to the baker Helen. And all this against a background of Dee Dee's music. Superb!

I don't know when I'll be able to get to another of the monthly parties, but be assured that I'll take advantage of the earliest opportunity to visit with the Albany Group again..FONDLY..ROSEMARIE R... N.Y.,N.Y.....

Mr. & Mrs. W. [REDACTED].

Dear Friends:

Last Mondayit was raining very hard when the mailman came. My neighbors mailbox was broken and the man didn't want their mail to get wet, so he asked me to keep it for them until they got home. Because of the dampness, the flap of your letter to them had become unglued. My curiosity got the best of me and I read what was in it.

As I understand it, you have a place where men can come who are forced by their wives to dress in womens clothes, and at the parties the wives make fun of their husbands and call them funny names. I think that is terrible!

But, maybe one of these poor creatures can help me. My hangup is dressing in armor. I am six feet tall and the last suit of armor I acquired was made for someone 5 ft. six in. tall. I can get into it but, the crotch just kills me. Maybe one of your he/shes can tell me how to overcome a pair of iron panties that won't stretch..RESPECTLY..SIR LANCELOT (DEE DEE).

Dear Wilma;

I would like to discuss how a transexual should approach life-both before and after surgery. Firstly, the transexual must give some thought to the future and what kind of a life the person wants to live. Most pre-operatives and many transvestites want to have surgery, but being a "post-operative transsexual" alone isn't all there is to it. It also means trying to find acceptance in society as a normal happening-a member of a true third sex. We must all work towards improving the legal aspects of our lives, and try to end the attitudes which will not permit us to be teachers or nurses. Someday we will have more access to the political structure and take part in it as candidates and seek elective offices.

In order to do all this, we must co-operate with each other, and not turn against each other in our desperation.

The reason so many transexuals become drug addicts and suicidal is not only because of the rejection by society but that government services are also often denied to us-help of any kind. There are government programs for addicts, alcoholics, mentally retarded, physically handicapped, but really none for us and some of us need help. Transexuals and transvestites have a lot of talent which society has lost because society will not let us in political affairs, but prejudice denied me a complete educational and the super-discrimination against us is far worse than that against people because of their race or religion. It might seem impossible that we will ever overcome these prejudices. I hope that in the near future there will be many collective efforts for those who would like to achieve greater status in society and we can help build one to provide many services for our people. SUE B...ST. PAUL,..MINN...

Dear Wilma:

I would like to get your opinion on fetishes related to travsvestism. What is your opinion on wearing rubber clothing? To me it is like second skin. I love the feeling of tightness and softness it gives me. To me it is like putting on soft, fresh skin of a woman. It is a feeling which excites me very much, not sexually but physically.

I hope you would understand, I know through my own experiences that there are many people who share my feelings toward rubber wear. Write soon and let me know if your interest are the same as mine...BERNICE B...TALLAHASSEE..FLA.

Dear Bernice:

Of course I Don't mind if you ask me any questions at all. I more than welcome any and all means of communications.

I have never tried wearing rubber clothing myself, but who knows after your wonderful letter I might try it myself.

When I first started dressing I have somewhat vaguely similar practice. I could cinch my waist in as tightly as possible with belts and straps. It was a very exciting feeling. I hope that I have answered your questions. Wilma

Dear Wilma:

Just a note of agreement about your words about the masculine side of it all. As you might remember, I had not had many experiences. I realize what my feelings were all about, that there were many others such as me with similar feelings, and that there was nothing homosexual about these feelings,.... I am learning make-up, wardrobe selections, hair styles, and all the other things which go towards making me become mirrored as my heart desires. I went out for a nice drive and a cup of coffee at a drive in restaurant. Although this might not sound so brave to an experienced "passer", this was quite a step for a heretofore shy TV. The wonderful evening ended all too soon, but the effects of it have only started. My interest in TVism has soared to new heights, and I am completely thrilled at the prospect of many years of being able to don my beloved clothes and venture into the outside world. Better yet, my life as a male has reached it's greatest heights in my 8 yrs. of marriage. Never have my wife and I had such complete fulfillment. Never have either of us been so happy with each other. My wife, a very non-understanding woman,
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"Organdy party dresses at home, little black evening dresses at the office—as a transvestite, my son is a joke."

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perhaps wonders why I have become such a masculine man around the house. although I cannot tell her it is because i now understand myself. I think that perhaps deep down she must realize that I am as I am because I understand what I am. Thanks again to you who have helped to make my life so complete...SUSANE B... STRASBURG...VA....

Dear Wilma:

This is the day I have been waiting for, for three months. Three agoniz-months of keeping Joan locked up in a suitcase. At last the day arrived for Joan to make her debut into public.

I woke up at 8:30 a.m. I was in the house alone. My parents had left on vacation the night before, and would not be back for a week. I got up, had coffee and two eggs, took a shower, and got dressed. By this time it was 9:00 a.m. and the stores were just opening. I jumped into the car and drove off to the nearest department store. I had to pick up a new pair of panty-hose, as my old pair was ripped to shreds. I must mention at this point that I did not keep Joans clothes at my own home. I am lucky enough to have a female companion who lets me keep my clothes at her house. I proceeded directly from the department store to her house and picked up my clothes. On returning home I remembered I needed false fingernails as my own nails were not in the best shape. I stopped at the nearest woolworth store, wich carries almost every cheap cosmetic you can dream of. As I walked over to the cosmetic counter, I had the distinct feeling I was being watched. I glanced over the counter and spotted several boxes containing false fingernails. I picked a box quickly took it to the counter, not looking up to see if anyone was watching. Once the article was paid for and wrapped, I rushed out of the store, got into my car and drove home.

By the time I got back from shopping, it was 1:30 and time for lunch. I also made a quick check of the house, and cleanedup whatever was necessary. After finishing lunch, I took my suitcases into my bedroom and eagerly opened them. There,- in each suitcase, lay an array of underwear, shoes, dresses, cosmetics and wigs. All of which I had been collecting for several years. I thought this would be a good timeto clean and press all of ~~the~~ Joans clothes. I pondered through each suitcase picking out eash of the dainty things which were to be washed and pressed.

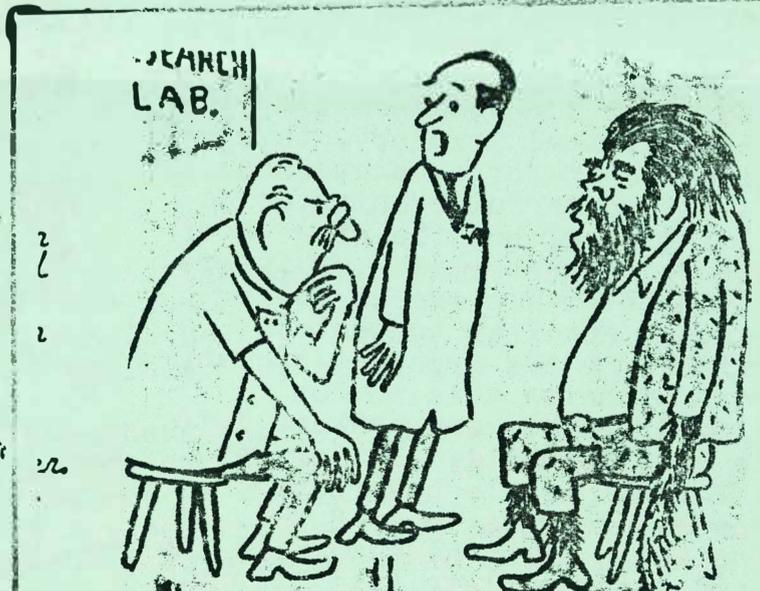
It was about 5:30 when everything was finished. It was a beautibul sight to see an array of soft feminine clothes spread out across my bed. I took a shower immediately. And after, with care, began to shave. Not only did I shave my face, but my legs, arms, and any other hair that might reveal my true sex. I dried myself, and walked into my bedroom.

The time was 8:30. This was the time I had planned to start dressing. I took a small bottle of perfume out of one of the suitcases. I then rubbed in the beautiful scent all over my body. The next step was to put on a bikini panty girdle. I then put on my new pair of opaque panty-hose. Next came my bra and padding. I then slipped on a flowered mini-dress. This dress made of soft orlon, slipped over my body, which gave me a great sensation of pleasure. The final and most important step was the make-up. I started with a light colored liquid make-up base, wich I rubbed carefully over my smooth face and neck. I patted dry with a pancake powder. I then applied a light blue eye-shadow - and followed up by putting on false eyelashes and darkening my eye-brows with a black eyebrow pencil. I then donned a beautiful, darkauburn wig. This soft wig came a little below shoulder length and fell around my neck and shoulders. I chose a luster frosty pink lipstick. It felt creamy and soft about my lips.

As I was about to congratulate myself on a perfect make-up job, I noticed my hands. "Yech," I thought to myself, "Those hands don't look very feminine to me!" I rubbed on my hands the same liquid make-up I used on my face and then put on my new finger-nails. The last step was to put on my semi-high heels and the transformation was complete. I walked back over to the full length mirror. The reflection showed me a beautiful young girl. I smiled, and said to myself Joan, you are beautiful.

It was about 9:30, and about time to leave. I had made a reservation at a local "gay" club. They were having a special Halloween Ball, wich included a "Drag" contest. On this special occasion; TVs, Drag Queens, and Female Impersonators were invited to come. I must admit I was quite scared of going to a gay club, as I had never been to one before. I was not and am still not a "Homosexual." I had fears of

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"Are you sure that was an estrogen formula?"

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getting picked-up or raped by one of the local gay boys. I had to take my chances in order to mingle with other transvestites,

Just before leaving the house, I made a final check of make-up, dress, and wig. I put on a three-quarter white cotton coat, picked up my purse, and walked out the door to my car.

I stopped the car three blocks from the club. My heart at this time was beating quite abnormally fast. The only way to get to the club was down a main street. I waited until the street was reasonably deserted of traffic. I got as far as two blocks, and had to stop for a red light. My heart was beating even faster now. All of a sudden a car pulled up beside me and stopped. I looked over beside me, and there were two young men smiling and waving at me. I was thrilled that they didn't even recognize me as being another male. The light turned green, the other car turned left and I went straight through to the end of the block where I made a right turn. Now having parked the car there lay before me my first test of femininity. I had to walk down the street from the car to the club entrance. Before I got out, I noticed three people standing just outside the entrance door. I could make out a man and two women. The man was in a dark suit and the two women were in evening gowns. This meant that they were either leaving or going to the same club I was. I got out of the car and walked down the street to the club entrance. The three people had their backs to me. They turned, and I almost fainted. The man was real, but the two women with him were Drag Queens. All three said, "HI," in deep masculine voices. I returned the greeting, and stepped into the entrance of the club.

I stood in the entrance waiting to check my coat. There were still two large wooden doors to go through. While waiting for my coat check, I could hear loud music and wild laughter. I received the stub for my coat and put it in my purse. I paused for a moment, and then opened the doors. There before me, were at least two hundred people, all beautifully dressed. The lights were flickering off and on and a live band was playing. As I walked down the aisle, I passed couples dancing. On the floor were men dancing with men and women dancing with women. I stopped and sat down at my reserved table. There sitting across from me was a very pretty young girl. The club was very crowded so I knew people would have to double up on tables. She didn't ~~mind~~ seem the least disturbed that I had sat across from her. We sat there for several minutes, glancing at each other occasionally. I was willing to make conversation, but did not know what to say. She finally said to me. "Hi, are you here with your boyfriend?" I realized she didn't know I was a male. So I blurted out in a deep masculine voice, "No, I'm not." She jumped back in her seat, and a few seconds later started to giggle. She was so overwhelmed at what a good make-up job I had done on myself. I told her I was a transvestite, and she seemed very interested in the subject. We danced a few times but talked most of the night. I might say I was quite popular with the gay crowd. I was asked to dance by four men and three women, but refused saying I had sore feet. I really wanted to talk with this understanding girl. In the middle of the conversation the Drag Contest was announced. Over twenty people were in drag that night. The competition was going to be rough. We were given points on poise, make-up and dress. Of the twenty contestants, I ~~was~~ came in sixth.

After the contest was over, I returned to my seat where I was joined by one of the other contestants. We talked about dress and make-up. The young girl I had made friends with that night said she had better be getting home. I asked her if we could meet again some time, perhaps the next night. She said yes, and gave me her name and address. Before she left, I kissed her goodnight, forgetting that I too had on lipstick. We both laughed and said goodnight.

I thought I had better be going home myself before it gets too light outside. I said fare well to the people I had met that night, and thought of what a wonderful time I had. This night I would never forget - I would remember it the rest of my life.

JOAN B...ST. LOUIS...MO...

Dear Wilma.

In hot weather particularly, but any time for that matter. it is much easier to get a girdle on and off if a bit of talcum powder is dusted in first. This also serves to absorb perspiration and make it easier to launder. Personally, I find Quest, made by the Kotex people, to be very good because it has a mild deodorant built in the powder.

DINA C...FAIRPORT...N.Y....



"It all started when I slipped on my wife's maternity dress."

Confessions of a female voyeur

(Or Why Men Should Wear Skirts)

By Priscilla J. Kucik
of the Cardinal Staff

BILL CUSHING, A 34 year-old former construction worker in Kentland, California, draws stares because he prefers to wear a skirt. He admits this has caused problems in job interviews, not to mention his two previous marriages. But he feels his simple shin-length blue denim skirt (complete with fly) is more comfortable than trousers and he shaves his legs because he does not like the feeling of his skirt brushing against the hair. He sees himself as a pioneer of male freedom.

Cushing is probably the sanest person on earth. Skirts have been a male adornment since the first caveman donned a loincloth. Throughout most of recorded history, men have worn dresses of varying lengths. Egyptians had their pleated aprons, Turks their caftans, Greeks their chitons, Romans togas, Japanese kimonos, and Malaysians sarongs. Romans fought in short skirts and medieval men wore robes. Elizabethan men wore tights to display their legs under knee-length skirts. (Would you call Henry VIII effeminate?) Scottish men have always looked their sexiest in kilts. Even the Vatican, with its strong stand against homosexuality, dresses its clergy in long robes.

In the 4th century A.D., Roman law forbade the wearing of trousers, which were equated with barbarianism. In 800 A.D., when Charlemagne visited Rome, the Pope refused to grant him an audience until he replaced his trousers with a civilized Byzantine long robe. Even in countries where fashion favored trousers, men started wearing tights, and the trouser-like garment started to resemble a skirt.

IN THE FIRST half of the 18th century, men's long waistcoats still resembled full skirts. Around the middle of the century, coats became shorter for a while, but soon grew into the knee-length frock coat. Men wore nightgowns until the 1880s, when pajamas were introduced, and young boys often wore frocks until the age of seven.

One basic difference between men's and women's clothing throughout the ages was that men's garments were usually more seductive. While women's dresses concealed their shape, men's garments were designed to reveal their anatomy, especially their legs. During periods in history when women sought to assert themselves, they did so by imitating men's bifurcated garments or baring their legs completely. Early feminists wore bloomers; flappers wore short skirts; liberated women of the 60s wore miniskirts and (shudder) pantsuits. (In December of 1969, when U.S. Rep. Charlotte Reid dared to wear a pantsuit to the House, a male colleague yelled, "Hi, guy!", an indirect lesbian accusation.)

Until the 1880s, "good" women did not even wear underwear, since a bifurcated garment would violate the Bible's injunction against women wearing men's clothing (although in the 1850s, some daring women did adopt Turkish trousers under their dresses). When women began to wear drawers, it was considered so daring a statement of equality that it was muted by making the garments "feminine" with laces and ribbons. And thus underwear became "sexy."

When did men cease wearing skirts altogether and the trouser-like garments become considered exclusively a male form of dress?

At the end of the 18th century, men stopped using their clothing as a means of sexual allure. Sexual suppression led to rigid sex roles. Out went jewelry, lace, perfume, curled hair, tights and close-fitting breeches. Victorians decided that these items were "feminine." Trousers became

loose and non-revealing. The only chest ornament allowed was the phallic necktie. Jackets were cut higher; collars became stiffer. With the ramrod suggestion of men's clothes and the soft, straight-faced cut of women's clothes, any suggestion of similarity of the sexes was denied.



THESE DIFFERENCES ENTERED the very language of our culture. Men's clothing was equated with strength, women's with weakness. Thus, "wearing the pants" in a family meant being the boss, the male prerogative. A woman who wore slacks would "threaten" a man's authority. "Hiding behind a woman's skirt" denoted cowardice. "Tied to his mother's apron strings" was a euphemism for immaturity.

Since men's and women's dress were clearly differentiated in times of sexual repression and rigid sex roles, it is no surprise that today people are adopting unisex attire (such as the student uniform of blue jeans and t-shirts) or that traditional men's and women's clothing are becoming interchangeable. Women now wear

slacks and pantsuits without fear of being considered "unfeminine." Men have changed their formal wear from stiff suits and phallic neckties to necklaces and open (plunging?) necklines.

So why shouldn't men wear skirts? It would be more comfortable and cooler in the summertime. It would also make female voyeurs happy who were hitherto limited to watching an occasional jogger. (Whoever invented trousers should be shot.)

Clothing itself has little to do with male dominance. Ancient Romans and medieval men and women all wore robes. In Persia and China, both men and women wore trousers. Yet men ruled, in spite of the absence of a distinguishable form of male clothing.

Perhaps a true indication of liberation is men and women feeling free to wear whatever clothes they consider comfortable and attractive, without regard to what is considered masculine or feminine. Why are unbifurcated garments considered feminine and bifurcated ones masculine? There is no logic to it, nor any historical precedent.

IF YOU DO not feel a man can be attractive in a skirt, attend the medieval festivities at the Memorial Union this Saturday (sponsored by the Society for Creative Anachronism) and judge for yourself.

Oh, for the good old days...

Men buy bras

GARLAND, Texas, March 18 (UPI) — Twenty thousand bras went on sale yesterday and most of the buyers were men.

The expensive lacey supportables made by Pennyrich International Inc., were ordered sold at public auction by Judge Elmore Whitehurst, referee in bankruptcy proceedings.

Five hundred of the kits, containing 32 bras each, sold for \$14,000. That's less than one dollar each for a patented product which retails between \$9.50 and \$20.50 depending on the size.

She was released after she and her mother, Mrs. Neoma Anderson, put up their San Diego homes as collateral.

THE FBI has accused a woman guard at a federal prison of falling in love with a female-impersonating prisoner and helping him escape.

The guard, Norma Jean Spearman, 30, of San Diego, Calif., is heartbroken because convicted con man Roy Madison Snipes, 40, jilted her after making his getaway, said FBI agent Danny Stovall.

"She was really in love with him," Stovall told THE STAR.

The cell block love affair occurred at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in San Diego.

Snipes is the first inmate ever to escape from the top-security center, which opened in 1974 and has held such notable figures as Patty Hearst, Eldridge Cleaver and Timothy Leary.

Agent Stovall said Snipes lost no time in forming a relationship with Spearman.

"In that situation, physical contact was difficult—but it could

have been possible," Stovall said.

In July, Spearman was assigned to another floor of the center, but she continued to see Snipes while working as a relief officer on his floor.

And she continually received love letters from him.

In August, Snipes was found guilty of interstate transportation of stolen goods and sentenced to 10 years. He stayed at the center while awaiting transfer to a federal penitentiary.

Stovall said that, late in September, Snipes told Spearman a friend, Vaughn Paul Morinville, 32, was coming to visit him on a Saturday morning.

She was told Morinville would conceal women's clothing and an auburn wig under his own clothes.

Stovall said Snipes promised Spearman if she helped him escape, they would meet in Mexico, fly to the South of France and buy a house together.

When Morinville arrived, Spearman took him and Snipes into a "pat-down" area, where Snipes put on the female disguise, according to Stovall.

She then took the two men down in a crowded elevator and Morinville distracted the lobby guard while Snipes got away, Stovall said.

"We found a number of love letters Spearman had written to Snipes in the effects he left behind at the center," Stovall said.

"She had been at the center since the previous November, and had no previous experience in correctional centers, so she wasn't too experienced with con men. Although at 30 years old she should have been, somewhat.

"When I spoke to her, she was heartbroken, that's the best way to describe it.

"Snipes said a car would pick her up at her home after he escaped, and would drive her to a rendezvous in Mexico. But Snipes never called."

Stovall said Snipes had been hunted by the FBI since 1971 on charges of transporting stolen goods over state lines.

He said Snipes had roamed the U.S. and Canada for several years, finding work at travel agencies and looting them of travelers checks and airline tickets.

Snipes used at least 40 aliases and sometimes posed as a woman, Stovall said.

Stovall said Spearman, who has three children, was on \$10,000 bond after being charged with conspiracy and aiding and abetting escape.