



News & views

Vision • Integrity • Quality

Vol. 10, No. 12 • December 1996

Community Organizations Support GPAC

[Nov. 2 – King of Prussia, Pa.] In what has been called the most important event in the history of the transgender community since the Stonewall Riots, and certainly the defining event of the decade, twelve transgender organizations representing national, regional, and local constituencies signed Articles of Association to form the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GPAC), a community-wide association dedicated to working issues of gender, affectional and racial discrimination at a national level. The significance of GPAC is its underlying foundation of support from a broad-based coalition of transgender organizations representing major and minor factions, and national and local organizations.

GPAC was started in June of 1995 as a loose-knit advisory committee to help raise money and direct gender activism. From the beginning GPAC was different from other attempts to create political activity in the transgender community. Rather than based on the support of individuals, GPAC was based on the support of transgender community organizations, and, in effect, automatically building a constituency and support structure. Slightly more

than a year after its formation, committee members saw the potential for this advisory unit to play a much larger and more significant role in transgender activism by creating a formal association of organizations with the specific purpose of advocating gender, affectional and racial equality as these issues affect transgendered people. So, November 2, 1996 was set as the date for a meeting to mobilize the community's organizations.

The meeting started with a series of brief greetings from advisory committee members and then the floor was opened to the group at large for suggestions, recommendations and issues to be discussed as the day progressed. The process took the better part of the morning.

After lunch the group reconvened to sign the GPAC Articles of Association. The signatories (and their representatives) of this historic document are: American Educational Gender Information Service [AEGIS]* (Dallas Denny); FtM International* (Jules Russell for Jamison Green); International

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The Last Word: Conversations Overheard

by Jessica H. [REDACTED]

The night had grown late. A chill rain swirled outside, the remnant of hurricane Susan (or some other such artificial appellation). Tired people – most in their feminine best – had passed through light chatter involving the overstatement of make-up, travel plans without the safety net of masculine attire, and the latest, hottest night spots ("Really, my dears, you just had to see this place. Mirrors and red velvet floor to ceiling. And the men... Well, I mean..."). The air hung heavy with the last haze of spent cigarettes, and, minds clouded from the dregs of White Grenache gallon jugs (the kind with screw caps – taste buds having long since passed discernment of the quality connoted by cork closures), conversation turned infinitely more intimate. Inner thoughts, even fears, revealed themselves against a tapestry of shared experience. This was a typical gender support group meeting, at the moment of ultimate realization; it would soon be time to remove the wigs, skirts and other finery, and return them (and the

person) to the closet for another week.

At this witching hour it is enlightening to wander through the various rooms in which the members reside, and hear snippets of conversations, principles left dangling in these unguarded moments. In a far corner, Amanda, large muscles rippling under her XXL blouse, wondered aloud to Sukie, whether her wife would ever understand. "She found out last week that I've been crossdressing all these years. She won't leave me, but we haven't slept together since." Serious stuff, this.

In another place, Carla, a transsexual long into her transition, is fearful that the underpinnings of her life will be removed. "Honestly, Karen, it's begun to feel like everybody in the office is looking at me lately. Do you think they may have read me? If they have it could cost me my job."

"Stay focused, honey," Karen placed an arm around the gentle Carla's shoulder, as if this alone

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Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Wilmington, Delaware: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808. Phone: 302-376-1990.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Write Renaissance GPC, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, Pa. 19087. Meets third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia. Doors open 8 pm all year 'round. Call 610-975-9119 for information.

Lehigh Valley/Pocono area: Renaissance Lehigh Valley, PO Box 3624, Allentown, PA 18106. Meetings on the second Saturday of the month in the Allentown area. Call for directions and more information, 610-821-2955.

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (780-1578) or send email to: <lsv@ezonline.com>.

Affiliates

California

Orange County: Powder Puffs of California, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, or email to <ppoc@aol.com>

Connecticut

Bridgeport/New Haven: connecticutView, c/o Denise Mason, PO Box 2281, Devon, CT 06460. Monthly newsletter and activities.

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 770-939-0244, or email to <aegis@mindspring.com>. Information resources & referrals.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 770-939-2128.

Illinois

Chicago: The Chicago Gender Society, PO Box 578005, Chicago, IL 60657, 708-863-7714.

Louisiana

New Orleans: The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 56836, New Orleans, LA 70156-6836, 504-833-3046.

New Jersey

N. Central Jersey: Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701. Call 908-219-9094. Email: [redacted]@aol.com

Titusville: Meetings are 1st Saturday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Washington Crossing. Call Terri [redacted] at 609-[redacted]

New York

Manhattan: Metropolitan Gender Network (MGN), write 561 Hudson St., Box 45, New York, NY 10014, or call 201-794-1665, Ext. 332.

Long Island: New York GIRL & Partners, PO Box 456, Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-5115 for info.

Long Island: Long Island Femme Expression (LIFE), PO Box 3015, Lake Ronkonkoma, NY 11779-0147. Phone: 516-283-1333

Oklahoma

Central Oklahoma: Sooner Diversity, part of the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA). Contact, Rachel [redacted], P.O. Box 575, Norman, OK 73070.

Electronic Subscriptions

You can get RenNews&Views by email every month delivered automatically right to your email box for only \$10 a year. That's half off the regular paper subscription rate. Send your \$10 plus your email address to the Ren national office.

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the transgender community and the general public. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, make your check or M.O., payable to Renaissance and send it to our National office. Your contributions will help us continue our efforts to provide education about transgender issues. Donations can also be made through your local United Way agency.

Local Calendar

December

- 7 Ren. LSV
- 7 MOTG - Dr. Stanley Biber
- 14 NJ Support
- 14 Ren. Lehigh Valley
- 14 Ren. Delaware
- 23 Ren. GPC Holiday Party

News Beat & Reminder



by Angela Gardner

Girls, let me tell you, it's cold. How cold? Cold enough that this month *Reminder Beat* is flash frozen. Brrr... We're havin' a cold snap and it makes me say Thank You Mister Macy for that bargain priced fake fur you sold me lo those many years ago. It looks like a million, only cost me fifty bucks and nobody knows how cheap it was. Oops, I just told the whole membership. Oh well, I'll just have to go shopping for another fur coat that I can say cost me a couple of thou. No doubt I'll be wearing it on the way to the GPC Holiday Party on the twenty third.

Since it is holiday time, and I'm inspired by all the holiday cheer in Dina's column let me take this space to thank everybody on the Renaissance team. Everyone whose name is on page two deserves a standing ovation for all the work they do to produce this newsletter every month, and there are a lot of folks who work behind the scenes to put the pages together and stuff them into envelopes. To all of you, and you know who you are darlings, many, many thanks. And now, on with the show.

Just a Dumb Girl

I've been a feminist since I was trained by my ex-wife back in the Seventies. She was very involved with the National Organization for Women and I learned quickly about the need for equality of the sexes, and all that stuff. I just couldn't learn to put my dirty socks in the hamper. But that's another story. Anyhow, as much as a man espouses feminist ideals, he really

doesn't have a clue until he walks a mile in a woman's shoes. (In the case of most crossdressing males the shoes are four inch, sequined pumps with an ankle strap.) Despite all the gains of the women's movement, lots of guys still treat women badly. I had occasion to purchase an ink cartridge for my inkjet printer in a large department store that sells all the name brands in one central place - if you get my drift. I happened to be crossdressed and passing well, I might add. The sales guy in the computer department said "May I help you ma'am?" I let the "ma'am" pass since at least he assumed I was female. A "miss" would have been better. I told him I needed an ink cartridge for my Apple StyleWriter II and he lead me to the proper area. I saw a large number of Brother cartridges and many HP cartridges but nary an Apple unit did I espy. Then I happened to see the colorful little Mac apple hidden behind some HP boxes. I pointed it out and my helpful sales guy picked it up. I read the box while he held it and it did say it was for StyleWriters. I pointed this out, and my sales guy did his best to avoid the sale by insisting that it wasn't what I wanted. Rather than be a pushy broad I decided to take my business elsewhere and successfully purchased a cartridge at a large office store down the road. Now, it's possible, and I can hear people saying it now, that I had been "read" as a guy in drag and the salesman wanted to get rid of me. I *really* don't think that's the case. He didn't seem uncomfortable and I never

notice any sudden start of enlightenment. I really feel that he thought because I was a woman I couldn't possibly know what kind of cartridge I needed. I could almost smell his superior air and hear him thinking, "This woman has no clue. If I sell her this she'll be back to return it tomorrow." If I went in to buy it dressed as a man I'd bet he would have listened to me when I told him it said right on the box it was the cartridge I needed. The point? If you are going to dress like a woman and experience the world from a feminine perspective you should be among the first men to be aware of the fact that women have to put up with subtle forms of discrimination that the majority of men have never had to put up with. It really makes you wonder why they didn't kill us all centuries ago. I've had it happen when I know the people involved are aware that I'm a guy in a dress. They assume that since you want to be feminine... you must be dumb. As we all know, this just ain't the case. (Of course some of us doesn't talk so good, and uses "ain't" and other slang expressions.) Don't forget what you've had to go through while being a woman when you deal with the genuine women in your life and never assume, cause you know what that does.

Another Bad Assumption

One would think that the most successful drag artiste in the country would remember her roots and reach out and touch the little queens who admire her. One would be wrong. I tried to get an interview with **RuPaul** as part of my editing duties with *LadyLike* magazine. Miss Charles was appearing in our town and I said "Hey, what a great idea. I'll interview her and we'll get a few shots for the next issue." No such luck. A call to her record company got me the number of her publicist. A young lady there said I had to fax the request for an interview on our *LadyLike* stationary. I put together a fax and sent it. Days went by and there was no reply. I told my publisher, JoAnn Roberts, to give them a

continued next page

News Beat...

try. When she called they said, "Sorry, Ru just can't do another interview now." Well, it seems the poor thing has worn herself out with all the interviewing and posing. While I can understand her stiffing a local weekly paper I have trouble with the fact that she didn't do anything for *LadyLike*. After all, we're talking about an interview for her people, others who are enamored of the world of glamma. It's girls like us who put her on that lofty pedestal and she should remember that. You're a meanie, Miss Charles. OK, hissy fit's over. I can now go on.

Change the Hair - Sell a Million Copies More

Our other tall, glamorous sister in the rarefied atmosphere of celebrity, **Miss Howette Stern**, has released her book, *Miss America*, in paperback. She sold gazillions of the hardback and now she's looking for deeper market penetration (oooh!) with the paperback. To make it attractive to folks who may have picked up the hardback and looked at all the pictures Howette promises 8 new full color shots that weren't included in the hardback. And, to add some collectability to the paperback it's been issued with Howard, I mean Howette, in three different hairstyles. Did you buy the blonde cover or the curly red head cover? I've got all three! The book comes wrapped in plastic so no one opens it and looks at the pictures without coughing up the cash. She'll need the money to pay for her online service. Miss Stern has said she spends a lot of time in the basement cruising the Net and engaging in pseudonymous chat. I bet she wears lingerie and calls herself Debbie. "What do you mean am I a woman? Of course I'm a woman."

Whatta Show, Girl Ya Shoulda Been There

JoAnn Roberts took me to see **Charles Busch** for my birthday. (30 years old... again.) Mr. Busch was performing as part of the American Music

Theater Festival Cabaret series at the fabulous Barrymore Room atop the Bellevue Hotel in Center City Philadelphia. We had some grub at this cute little joint just off Walnut Street, the Cafe On Quince, and then ankled it over to that posh downtown hotel for the show. It was really swell. When I think about a poor dame like me gettin' the chance to rub shoulders with the swells I get kinda teary eyed. Gosh, I never seen so many tuxedos without moth holes and the broads was all wearin' real rabbit coats. Oh, sorry. I was falling under the spell of Charles Busch. One of the routines he did was a tribute to the tough dames of the old time B movies. Let me get back on track and tell the tale from the start.

Charles came out in a black velvet top with a full length skirt lined in green plaid, which was open at the front to reveal a pair of black velvet evening pants. His opening number was all about his love affair with wigs and if the song is to be believed he must have more wigs than most of the female impersonators in the world. Let me stop right there and say that female impersonator is the improper term for Charles Busch. He prefers the politically correct term, gender illusionist. I did find it hard to think of him as "he," since the glamma was dripping off him. (Actual Black Glamma fur for the encore.) He makes a point though of being introduced as "Mister Charles Busch" and making sure the MC referred to him as "him." This is, of course, a show biz requirement. It's necessary to keep reminding the audience about what they're seeing so they appreciate the illusion that much more. JoAnn and I appreciated the show and I would love to see more of Mr. Busch in the future. (Thank you Jo.) His impression of a Long Island housewife's tribute to Edith Piaf was brilliant. I also found the reference to **Lypsinka** to be quite amusing. Busch claimed she was his governess. Catch him if he comes to your town.

Let's Strut And Fret Our Hour

No doubt you got the Shakespearean reference in the title of this section. I bring up the Bard since he's

got a new movie out. Well, Will had little to do with the production since he's been dead for hundreds of years but he wrote the play and they've made it into a movie. *Twelfth Night* is, and that's why I write about it, a story of crossing the gender border and the consequences. Viola is ship wrecked and must disguise herself as a man. Of course, another woman falls in love with her and there are all sorts of complications that get sorted out in the end. There is comedy involved but as *Entertainment Weekly* says, "under the masque of comic diversion, it's an exquisitely moving inquisition into gender and belonging." So kittens, if you want to add a little culture to your life slide on down to the cineplex and catch *Twelfth Night*. If anyone asks why you're wearing women's clothes to the movies tell them you're doing a little gender inquisition, and hit them with your whip.

Speaking of Whips...

and spurs and all that Country Western type stuff, it seems that Philadelphia is the home of another Diva. (*I'm The Diva of Dish for Transgender Forum on the Net.*) She's the **DJ Diva of Country Western Music** and she spins locally for several gay clubs who have Country & Western nights. Her name is **June Bromley** and I remember when she rode into her first Renaissance meetin'. That was awhile back. Then, she rode off into the sunset and we ain't heard much from her, till now. The national gay and lesbian Western magazine, *Roundup*, named June the DJ Diva in a recent issue and I've been meaning to get it into a column for a while but things have just been too busy. Congratulations June and I'm sorry I took so long to mention the honor. June describes herself as a "lipstick lesbian no-nonsense biker chick." She plays guitar now as well as working as a DJ so maybe the new year will bring some June tunes. If she does happen to be working on her own album, there's the perfect title, from one Diva to another. Good luck June.

Catch it On Video

The recent Cinemax documentary,

All Dressed Up and No Place To Go featured many Renaissance girls including a prominent display of JoAnn Roberts. Apparently the director felt that I was far too exciting to be dwelt upon for too long so my appearance was limited to one scene. I quite understand and fully realize that my radiance would probably be responsible for far too many television repair bills. Most picture tubes can't handle that kind of glamma for extended periods. At least I hope that's why I was only in one scene. In any event, the tape will be available for those who wish to purchase a copy sometime near the end of 1997. I'll be sure and let you know.

Some sneaky person is already having hours of viewing pleasure and if I find 'em I'll pull their wig out by the roots. JoAnn lent me a copy of the show and I left it in her mail slot at the Renaissance office. Before she could collect it... it mysteriously disappeared. Now I am forced to don Sherlock drag and ferret out the dastardly thief. To save me all that trouble, if you happen to have "borrowed" it - PUT IT BACK! I guess that's tellin' 'em.

Now, here are a few tapes that haven't been stolen and you'll be able to get right now. Available right now on video: *The Birdcage*, *La Cage Aux Folles 1, 2 and 3*, *Prime Suspect 3* (The British detective show about teenage prostitutes and crossdressers), *The Best of Kids In The Hall*, *Kids In The Hall* (Seasons 3 & 4), *Ed Wood*, *Glen or Glenda*, *Polyester* (with the fabulous **Divine**), *Privates on Parade* (with **John Cleese** - a theatrical troupe of British soldiers tap dance and cross-

dress their way through WWII), *La Cage Aux Zombies* ("the Naked Gun of drag queen movies," O.J. in a dress?), *Kids In The Hall - Brain Candy*, *You've Had Worse Things In Your Mouth* (a cooking show spoof with **Billi Gordon**, the 400 pound TS you've seen on greeting cards), *Black Lizard* (starring Japan's most famous FI as a villainous jewel thief), and many more including *The Queen*, the 1968 documentary of a drag pageant that starred Philadelphia's own **Rachel Harlow**. You can get a copy of the *TLA Video Holiday 1996 Gay & Lesbian Film Catalog* by calling them at 1-800-333-8521.

Some Quick Reminders

Remember, it's renewal time for *News & Views*. Fill out the Renewal Application you'll find in this issue and send it in with your check or money order. 1997 is Renaissance's tenth year. Our actual anniversary is in May but we're having a big party on June 21st as part of the **2nd International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues**. The entire Congress, including the Anniversary Banquet, is \$97 if you register before January 1st. (Lodging **not** included.) The Banquet itself is only \$37.00 and will feature **Kate Bornstein** as keynote speaker, a show (not a drag show), a DJ and a special quest that I can only hint about because our people and special's people are talking, etc., etc. The Congress, even with out the fabulous party is a great opportunity for the transgendered to mingle and enter into dialogue with therapists, psychiatrists and teaching professional

from all over the world. Registration goes up by \$20 after January 1, so get out that check book and sign-up today. Send your name, number of registrations desired and a return address (don't forget that check) to the Renaissance National Office. The address is on page 2.

If you want to hear a speech by one of the best snip and sew men in the business don't miss the seminar by **Dr. Stanley H. Biber** being present by MOTG on December 7th. Contact MOTG for ticket availability. They will only cost you \$15.00.

That's it for this year kids. Enjoy your videos darlings and have happy holidays Be sure to eat the low fat mashed potatoes and stuffing so you will fit into your holiday gowns for the many holiday parties you must attend. See you next year.



CLASSIFIEDS

Classified Ads are \$3.00 for 3 lines for 3 months.

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Apartment for rent. Private home in country setting. Credit and personal references required. Owner is Ren. member. Call 610-287-5989

Glamour photos for CDs by a CD. Makeup help available. Call 610-701-7613 for info. Ask for Don.

Mi casa es su casa. Need a place to change before the Renaissance GPC meeting? The perfect location awaits you just off exit 33 Rt. 76. Call CDTips 215-878-3383.

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Last Word...

could shore up the morale of a dear friend. "You've been so strong and come so far. You can't know what will happen tomorrow. But you've made it this far, you'll find a way. I'm there for you."

This is the moment which defines us. This is real life we're looking at—not a game of Scrabble in which, if a word makes no sense only a turn is lost. These moments, these words categorize us as human beings. Who can be relied on? Who has strength to share?

Conversations overheard just before conversation dies say a lot. There, in the center of the room, Aurora, neat plaid mini skirt barely covering knobby bowed legs, lifts herself, with the grace of one eight months pregnant, from the couch, stares longingly in the mirror (for the sixty-third time that evening), shaking her chest and adjusting her bra, and turns to enter the conversation with Marla.

Marla, a recent victim of the divorce court is struggling hard with her place along the gender continuum. She has recently run up against the emotional barrier of the Gender Divide, and dared to cross that fine line. She is frightened. She needs advice and a strong arm across her shoulders. I pause for what might be a defining moment. Aurora has not yet found a way to help other members deal with the essential issues. Could this be her time of maturity?

"I see you've started hormones."

Aurora begins without preamble. "I don't need those – wish I did. I just don't understand it. Neither do the doctors, specialist, really, I've been to."

Marla stares at Aurora without comprehension, but this does not interrupt the patter. "Yeah," Aurora goes on. "My body seems to have done this itself".

"What," Marla foolishly asks.

"Just stopped producing testosterone, and began to produce estrogen in such high levels, that my body is becoming like a girls. See, these are my own tits (she wiggles her chest again for emphasis). The doctor said I should have testosterone treatments, but, after all, they have unpleasant side effects, you know. I'm thinking of just letting my body do what it wants to do." Her peripheral vision catches me standing there mouth agape. "Right, Jessica?"

I, of course, am dumbfounded by the statement, and wondering how to usher Marla away and undo the damage which might already have been done. Somebody first microscoping the concerns of a newly admitted transsexual does not need to be subjected to someone else's flights of fancy, avoidance of reality, and avoidance of truth. Without the entirely self centered lenses worn by some of life's transgendered lost souls, anyone would realize that Aurora's "support" was having the completely opposite effect.

Some people don't – will never – get it. Yes, I recognized the lie in the story for the preposterous fabrication it is. In my immaturity, at a moment when I too would not have known the truth if I tripped over it, I had tried the same

line of reasoning on my family. If they bought it, I realized, I would not have to take responsibility for my actions. For my desires. For my own being. "It's not my fault," I cried that night. "Love me because I can't help myself."

Indeed.

In facing each transgendered other, there is no need for disguises. Nor for untruths. In fact, the fabrication frequently causes unforeseen harm. In this case the fear was that Marla might buy into Aurora's fable and be infected by the Prevarication Virus. And, almost as bad, what if this line was overheard by a partner?

In our lives, whether crossdresser or transsexual, truth is an essential, and self honesty, a matter of survival. Aurora may really be a transsexual. Only she will ever know whether this is just one more of her sexual fantasies (along with becoming the world's most successful female fashion model). However, there is a major risk inherent in the seductiveness of Aurora's flight. She might well believe it herself.

All who know me have heard me caution honesty in all things for our kind. Disaster hides in the wings of the lie. At the very least, the progenitor of the tall tale looks a fool, and loses the serious support so necessary to survival—that is, if her self-evaluation as a transsexual can be relied upon.

Especially in those special moments before dawn, the very nature of the individual is bared for all of the world to observe. Be cautious: someone may be listening. Be exceedingly careful: that listener may be you.



Hate Crimes Documentation Project for New York State

The Albany Gender Project announces the formation of a Hate Crimes Documentation Project for the State of New York. The project is the outgrowth of an alleged assault by a public employee on a transsexual woman in Albany, New York.

Jennifer Wells, Coordinator of the Project, explains that the Documentation Project will take complaints of all hate crimes, including abuse of authority by public employees, directed against transgendered or transsexual

people in New York. The purpose of the project is threefold. First, it will provide a distinct record of hate crimes against transgendered people in New York State. Second, the results will be tallied as support documentation in efforts to lobby at the state and national levels for the inclusion of gender or perceived gender language in discrimination, civil rights and other legislation. Third, and most importantly, it will provide a tool to investigate incidents, let the respondent reply, gather

statistical information, draw conclusions, list demands, educate, possibly publicize, inform, and otherwise incite to action hesitant authorities.

For more information on the Hate Crimes Documentation Project, the Albany Gender Project, or, to request a complaint form, contact via email: AlbGender@aol.com, or by phone: (518) 432-7092 or write to the Albany Gender Project, Hate Crimes Documentation Project, PO Box 6307, Albany, NY 12206.



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The Man In The Red Velvet Dress by J. J. Allen

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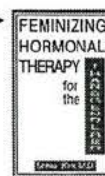
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Feminizing Hormonal Therapy by S. Kirk, M.D.

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1. The Transgender Forum

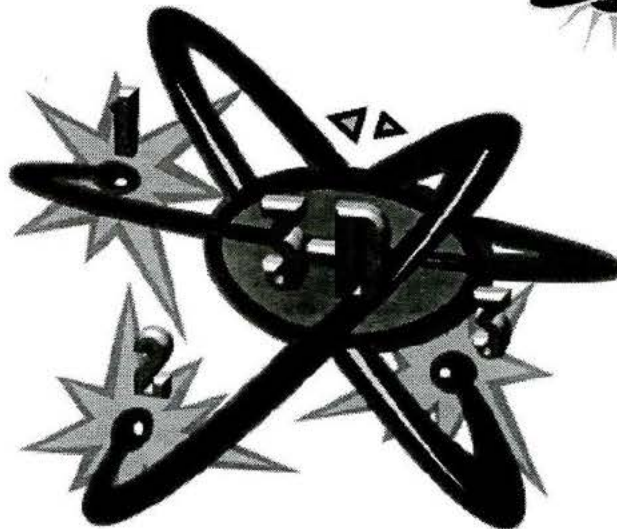
<http://www.tgforum.com/>

2. The TGF Resource Center

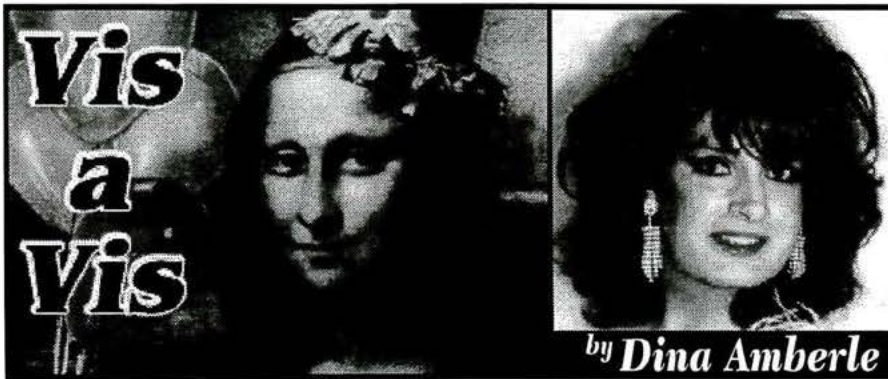
<http://www.tgfmall.com/>

3. The TGF Community Center

<http://www.transgender.org/>



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I thought I'd try something a little different this month. As an early Christmas present to myself, I'm going to forsake the usual fascinating recaps of support group literature which form the raw material of *Vis A Vis*. Been there, done that, will pick up again come January.

This month you'll be treated to some of my own general observations on various topics, all brilliantly referenced, of course, back to the cross-dressing angle that brings us together here in the first place.

But despair not, girls. Next month we'll be right back in the saddle again and I've already seen some arresting articles in the community literature like: "My First Trip to the Mall," another artfully conceived series on selecting the right foundation garments; some hot news on a new consignment shop in Mayberry; and a restaurant review that will have you licking your lips in anticipation.

If the foregoing sounds like I may be tiring of my assignment to read two dozen transgender support group newsletters each month, you couldn't be farther from the truth. No, with each shipment of our community literature, I am overcome with a range of emotions. I never know whether to laugh... or cry.

Within You, Without You

In my last column, I mentioned my respect for the creativity of the Beatles. As I was coming home from a night out recently, I was listening to some George Harrison songs from his post-Beatle releases and formed a few observations paralleling his work in and out of the Beatles with our con-

nection to the organized transgender community. A stretch, you say. Well, let's see...

George was the youngest member of the Beatles and had to take a back seat to the powerful creative forces of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. They would save a spot or two on each album for George's own compositions and it's amazing how many of those songs are memorable for the different texture they brought to those albums. Songs like "Think for Yourself," "Taxman," "Savoy Truffle," or "I, Me, Mine," had a harder edge than their Lennon-McCartney counterparts; "Within You, Without You" underlined the group's move into the psychedelic sixties with its Indian influence and George's mastery of the sitar; and classics like "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" and "Something" exhibited as much melodic genius as anything tunesmith Paul ever did.

It was after the band broke up that George could express himself completely. His work on his post-Beatle solo albums showcased his spiritual beliefs in very personal (and popular) songs accented with the slide guitar that would become his signature sound. And is anyone out there old enough to remember the "Concert for Bangladesh," the forerunner of all-star benefit concerts for worthy causes? His later work received critical panning but he was still capable of pulling off a "Ding, Dong, Ding, Dong," "Crackerbox Palace," or "When We Were Fab," the latter a humorous reminiscence of the Beatle days.

George's work in and out of the Beatle framework is similar in some ways to the phenomenon of personal

growth we experience in our support groups. As individuals we come into our groups after the founders and active members have established the tone of the organization. In the group, we develop ourselves, working on our own voices (figuratively and literally), hoping to find a niche for ourselves as individuals. But sometimes we need to get outside the group structure to express ourselves on our own terms. There has always been a discussion among leaders of transgender support groups about whether members – after a certain interval in the groups – must "graduate" and go their own way to achieve self-actualization.

I think there is a certain degree of truth to that belief for those who have the wherewithal to do it. But unlike the Beatles' situation, there is always the chance for a reunion after our solo projects. And that puts us in a position that even the surviving members of the Beatles might today envy.

Women We Can Love

Esquire magazine has an annual feature they call "Women We Love" in which they profile several women whose qualities men can admire. It's a shameless rip-off, but I thought I'd point out a few ladies whom we can admire.

Over the past year, I've become something of a fan of Hillary Clinton. Maybe it's because so many others seem to want to tear her down that I've taken a closer look at Mrs. Clinton. She's smart and strong (even the late Richard Nixon sized her up as wearing the pants in the Clinton household) and she's under as much fire as any political figure of our age. Hell, any age. But aside from that: she's kinda cute, with those apple cheeks and smirky lips. No, don't get me started. She is, after all, our First Lady.

The first time I noticed Fran Drescher was in the movie "Cadillac Man" where she played the New York-to-the-max paramour of Robin Williams' car salesman character. Now she has her own series, "The Nanny" and each week she showcases her unique personal style in dizzying ensembles of neon-colored spandex. Somehow she has risen above the self-parody of her

outrageous persona because it's clear to see that she's a pretty, smart and driven little cookie – with the most bitchin' bod on primetime.

I think every crossdresser should get on the mailing list of *Barely Nothings Plus Size* lingerie catalog. I don't know the names of some of the Big, Beautiful Women models who pose for their lay-outs, but they are inspirational, to say the least. As a group, we are always trying to minimize what we perceive in ourselves as less than the ideal image of femininity as defined by the mainstream. These pretty, plus-size women literally let it all hang out – except when they are squeezing their oversized frames into bustiers, teddies, and other shockingly skimpy boudoir attire. The visual effect transcends our tired notions of perfect sex appeal. Something, I think, we could use to promote our own unique take on femininity.

Bettie Page was modeling for pinup and bondage magazines before I was even born but her timeless appeal has gained her a cult following to this day. To see her All-American good looks, flashing eyes and inviting smile in fifties-style black-and-white lingerie and bondage poses is to fall in love with one of the great mysteries of underground culture. Bettie walked away from her fame after a battle with the censors forty years ago and has never surfaced to this day, except for a brief recorded phone call to (of all people) Robin Leach for "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" a few years back. Her timeless appeal proves that what is most fascinatingly sexy is the ordinary person who excels in the extraordinary. [Ms. Page was tracked down by *Playboy* magazine not too long ago and is living in southern California. – Ed.]

Dressing For Pleasure

Each autumn for the past ten years, Ms. Constance, the proprietor of the Dressing for Pleasure boutique in Montclair NJ, has put on a weekend of seminars, fashion shows and revelry for lovers of fetish clothing. This year's event, held on October 17-20, was the farewell weekend for this very special gathering. Constance is retiring – at least from the rigors of producing an

international event.

I've had the "pleasure" of attending the past three years of DFP weekends and their passing will be sorely missed not only by me, to be sure, but all the hundreds of people who had the unique opportunity to wear outlandish fetishwear in a busy metropolitan hotel.

They came from all over the world. From Japan to England; from British Columbia to Texas. Drawn by the opportunity to dress in leather, latex, and vinyl, and enjoy each other's devotion to their fetish of choice. And like our transgender conventions, there is a strong sense of community when so many people of a like mind meet in one place.

At this year's event, there was the bittersweet realization that many of us may never pass this way again. There are other fetish events around the world but none in anyone's mind that matched the warmth of Constance's Dressing for Pleasure weekends. There was an effort made to gather names and addresses for the future but no one as yet has stepped in to take on the mantle of producing a huge three day event like Constance's.

In the crossdressing community, there are at least five large weekend-long gatherings in the U.S.A. alone. The fetish clothing lovers should be so fortunate. Likewise, there are dozens of organized groups in this country alone for transgender folk. Those who wonder whether they "need" a group to belong to would be well-advised to consider what it would be like without one to fall back on after free-lancing for awhile. As someone who came to cherish the Dressing for Pleasure weekends as an outlet for my own interest in fetishwear, I can tell you that it is something that will be missed dearly.

Spinning The News

As I write this, the news of the rapes and sexual harrasment at the Army's Aberdeen Proving Grounds is in the forefront. In light of this disturbing development, as well as the Navy's Tailhook scandal a few years ago, is it time that the military give consideration to banning heterosexuals from the armed forces? Or perhaps institute

a policy of "Do Rape, Don't Tell?"

I was thumbing through a few months old issue of *Glamour* magazine and saw the results of a sex survey they conducted. One interesting tidbit was this: 13% of men said they had engaged in anal sex, while 8% of women said they had engaged in anal sex. Let's assume that the men who responded to this question did not have anal sex with other men, since the sample is primarily heterosexual. Given that, it seems to me that some of these women must be rolling over for more than one male partner. (By the way, there is a potential math logic error in this assumption for those astute enough to see it.) But still, it's a fascinating thought isn't it?

After all the years of health-consciousness foisted on the American public for the past twenty-five years, some people are fighting back. How else to explain the sudden chi-chi-ness of caffeine bars, cigars, martinis, and single malt scotches? If the martini, a cliché drink of our parents' generation, is back in such popularity, can the stiletto heel with pointy toebox be far behind? How about Playtex girdles and bullet bras? Finally, we may be making some progress in the nineties.

FA-LA-LA-LA-LA AND BLAH-BLAH-BLAH

This is the Christmas issue of *Vis A Vis* and I would be remiss to let the Holidays go forth without thanking and acknowledging some of the people who made this past year's work on the column seem worthwhile.

Angela Gardner, who edits this mess – only receiving it right up against deadline, and making a special trip to pick it up in person, yet still seems to like me (but then again, she is a professional actress), I will always thank for allowing me to perpetrate this column on the public.

JoAnn Roberts, who puts the whole ball of wax together and always has some encouraging word to give me about *Vis A Vis*, but more importantly is Renaissance's philosopher-queen and community activist – and she still

continued on page 15



Gender Reflections

by **Barbara F. Anderson**
M.S.W., Ph.D.

What About The Children?

One of the common issues brought to therapy by transgendered clients, their families or significant others, concerns disclosure to their children. Here are some of the questions I am faced with in my work:

- Should I tell the children about my crossdressing/ transsexualism?
- If I should, when?
- My child has suspicions about my crossdressing. What should I do?
- What's so terrible if the kids find out? What is the harm of keeping that part of my life separate?

Child rearing has many pitfalls, surprises and mysteries apart from the added stress of being a parent or partner of one who is transgendered. There are books to guide one through the maze of dealing with kids and divorce, puberty, anti-social behavior, moving, birth of a sibling, death of a pet, homosexuality, surgery and numerous other events that occur in a lifetime of parenting. I have never

heard of a book on the subject of parenting and transgender behavior. If you have, please let us all know. It may save many people time and money now invested in counseling as well as guide therapists who are not familiar with transgender issues to give appropriate advice to clients seeking direction.

In my research I have unearthed two monographs on this subject, both published in 1988 by the Renaissance Education Association. Paula Keiser, in *Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Commentary*, (Renaissance Background Paper # 6) believes that the success of disclosure rests mainly on the answer to the transsexual's query "How do I feel about myself?" In addition to guidelines about age ("The best ages for children to accept this information non-judgmentally seems to be when they are between 7 and 11) and gender of child ("My daughter accepts. My son, to a degree, rejects"), Ms. Keiser believes that the transgendered

individual's level of self-acceptance will predict the success of the disclosure. She ends with the recommendation to "...tell the children at as young an age as possible and from a position of confidence. Children are wonderfully resilient. Tell them as soon as you can. I did, and I'm not at all sorry."

The late, highly esteemed sexologist, Roger Peo, Ph.D. wrote about male transvestites' disclosure in *The Matter of Children*. (Renaissance Background Paper # 4.) He deals with the pros and cons of disclosure at each stage of childhood development. For example, he contrasts the young child's high capacity for acceptance with it's limited ability to appreciate the parental need for privacy. He highlights the importance of an already close relationship with the child and spousal acceptance of crossdressing for disclosure to the child to elicit a positive response. Dr. Peo also deals with the "planned announcement" versus the "surprise discovery" and useful strategies for each situation.

Lastly, I refer to my previous article "Keeping Secrets" in which I defend my thesis that, in general, the older the child, the more supportive the partner, and the greater awareness the child has of the existence of a secret, the more appropriate is disclosure.

Of course, without self-acceptance, one cannot presume to elicit the same from others. If you are connected to a transgender community network, this is the time to make it work for you. Talk with those who have gone before you. Learn about their experiences, their reasons for considering disclosure to the children in their lives and the outcomes of their decisions. Take from them what is appropriate and tailor it to meet your situation.

If you do not feel there is anyone to whom you can talk or that no one's situation is sufficiently similar to yours, consider a consultation with a counselor familiar with both gender concerns and family relationships.



Resources



Background Papers

- Background Papers are \$1.25 each:
1. Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing
 2. Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing
 3. PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others
 4. The Matter of Children
 5. Annotated Bibliography
 6. Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View
 7. Understanding Transsexualism

Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, 987 Old Eagle School Rd., Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087.

Pen Pal Program

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country, contact PenPals, attention Georgia [redacted], PO Box 10723, Midwest City, OK 73140-1723 or email to: [redacted]@compuserve.com>

How Big Is Your Gender Family?

by Rachel Miller

Five years ago I began a quest to understand my crossdressing. At that time all I wanted was to feel better about wearing a dress. I was only interested in satisfying my needs and didn't care about the gender community, gender family or anyone else. Fortunately others weren't so selfish.

Tapestry Journal introduced me to a number of incredibly supportive transvestites who freely gave of themselves to help me. Through their correspondence I found that I wasn't alone, that I wasn't a bad person and that there was hope for me. Their willingness to help made me feel guilty about my self-centered approach and caused me to include other transvestites in my view of the gender community.

As self-understanding and acceptance improved I recorded my observations and my book began to form. During one of the endless manuscript edits I recognized that the principle of integration applied to everyone in the gender community: female-to-male crossdressers, pre-op and post-op transsexuals, anyone who was transgendered in any manner. Although I only understood the other groups in an intellectual sense it was enough to see that our common points were more important than our differences. My sense of inclusion was growing.

In time came the realization that homosexuals also needed to be added to my view of the gender family. [For a mind-expanding view of this issue read Dallas Denny's article *Heteropocrisy – The Myth of the Heterosexual Male Crossdresser*.] Previously I saw great differences between the gender community and the homosexual community but one day I looked at us from the view point of society and realized that to them we are virtually indistinguishable from each other.

Why hadn't I seen our linkage before? Was it my prejudices? I thought that I had overcome most of my homophobic tendencies years ago, but my religious background kept raising possible Biblical implications. I found

the two most commonly quoted verses on the issue...

"Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination."

Leviticus, Chapter 18, Verse 22

"If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."

Leviticus, Chapter 20, Verse 13

By themselves these verses were horrifying but I remembered Doctor James M. Gray, author of *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. His advice was to avoid concentrating on small portions of the *Bible* to draw conclusions. Instead we should use multiple verses to obtain a comprehensive knowledge and place individual verses in their proper perspective. I followed his advice and read all the verses inbetween. They are filled with prohibitions some of which seem rather odd today:

- Don't harvest all the grain but leave the edges of the field as food for the poor
- Don't cross-breed animals
- Don't plant 2 types of seeds in a field
- Don't wear clothes of two different kinds of material
- Don't eat the fruit of trees until the fifth year after planting
- Don't follow pagan practices of magic, cutting hair in certain ways or tattoos

I was uncertain how to interpret them and realized that I couldn't take everything literally. I also noticed that the two main verses referred to men not lying with other men. They neglected women lying with other women. Does that mean that being a lesbian was okay but being gay was not? Clearly, thoughtful study would be required to understand these passages as they were intended.

On the other hand there were many other prohibitions that were quite applicable for today that we often tend to ignore or treat as less serious -

- Respect your mother and father
- Don't steal or cheat or lie
- Don't swear falsely using God's name
- Don't take advantage of anyone
- Be honest and just and show no favoritism in legal matters

- Don't gossip, bear a grudge, take revenge
- Show respect, honor for elderly people

I have failed to live up to many of those laws countless times and continue to fall short. How could I pick two of those 59 verses to judge or condemn someone else when the Bible says that God will only forgive us if we forgive others and that He will judge us as harshly as we judge others. It asks why we are so worried about the small indiscretions of our brothers when we ourselves have major problems. The message to me was to worry about how I am behaving and not to be concerned about how others are behaving. [For an in-depth discussion of the religious issues check out Dr. Joseph Murphy's home page at <http://w3.trib.com/~murphy/>.]

So where does this discussion leave us? Well, there may be separate gender and homosexual communities, but we have much more in common than we have to separate us. It is foolish for us not to work together to achieve our common principle of integration. A good question to ask is - How big is YOUR gender family?

"There can be hope only for a society which acts as one big family, and not as many separate ones."

Anwar al-Sadat

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The Principle of Integration

I believe there are three levels at which we benefit from integration rather than separation, and this principle is the core of all my messages -

1. Many of us have split our lives into distinct gender compartments and we would be healthier if we became a complete person.

2. Our community exists outside of the mainstream, and we gain greater freedom to be ourselves if we are an integral part of society.

3. Individuals and organizations often act independently, and we would achieve more if we cooperated fully on joint issues.



Hot-Buzz

JoAnn Roberts • CyberQueen



"Dieu, gardez-moi de mes amis, mes ennemis je m'en charge." Loosely translated: "God, keep me out of trouble with my friends; I can take care of myself with my enemies."

— French Proverb

Some folks got upset that I mentioned **Phyllis Frye** last month in a less than positive light. First, I trust that Phyllis as an attorney has a thick skin and can stand a little criticism. Second, I make comment on behavior not personality. Third, I went back over my columns for 1996 and found the following: Positive remarks about Phyllis/ICTLEP-1. Neutral remarks about Phyllis/ICTLEP-1. Negative remarks about Phyllis/ICTLEP-1. Now, that's what I call balanced reporting. Finally, anyone who makes a public statement has to expect some criticism now and then (even me), otherwise keep your mouth shut.

Maybe that's what Sarah DePalma should have done... kept her mouth shut. But, no, she wanted to make a "statement." To say DePalma resigned in a huff as Executive Director of **It's Time America! (ITA!)** would be an understatement. In a blast hot enough to keep the Goodyear blimp suspended over the AstroDome through halftime, DePalma took to task the "activist leadership" in the community. Based on "hundreds" of inputs received as part of her Houston-

based radio program, DePalma claims the "average" tg-person could not care less about activism and reviles the activists working for transgender rights. And she gave that as a major reason for her quitting ITA! Then DePalma delivered the coup de grace claiming that **Gender-PAC** was being run by "...two or three individuals whose main goals appear to be attracting publicity to themselves and figuring out how they can get their hands on your money." Of course, DePalma has no concrete evidence, information or even gossip to support her allegation. The fact of the matter is the "two or three individuals" who have been pushing very hard to make GenderPAC a multi-diverse organization of organizations have spent more money out of their own pockets than GenderPAC has collected in its brief 18 month existence. I might also add that the feedback I get from the community is just the opposite of DePalma's allegation. This column is read by close to 6,000 people each month (both paper and electronic versions) and the overwhelming opinion of its readers is that they appreciate the work our rights activists are doing, both on the local and national levels. And, if you're doing gender rights activism because you think you're going to be appreciated by the community, get a life!

Now this next item just is not going to go away by itself... **Virginia Prince** took a shot at all transsexuals in a piece she wrote for **Cross-Talk** #84 (Oct. '96) titled **Gender Fundamentalists** in which Virginia likened transsexuals to right-wing religious fundamentalists. All of this was in reaction to a letter by **Dallas Denny** of the **American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS)** sent to the **Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess)** challenging their membership policies. Ironically, Virginia was spouting her own form of gender fundamentalism which is very anti-transsexual. But it didn't stop there. After publication in **Cross-Talk**, **Anne Lawrence**, a trans-

sexual physician, put out a notice on the Internet asking people to send email to the **International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE)** which sponsors the Virginia Prince Lifetime Achievement Award, and to **Kymberleigh Richards** the publisher/editor of **Cross-Talk** in protest. And, just as that furor was about to die down, Ms. Denny returned from a vacation to find the article in her mailbox and started the message cycle all over again. What is interesting and ironic at the same time is that Virginia got very little direct flak and Tri-Ess virtually none. Kym got the most with IFGE coming in a close second. Hopefully, the final chapter has been written on this war of words. *Mea culpa's* should be forthcoming.

A quick note from The **Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter** of Renaissance. They have a new email address <lsv@ezonline.com>. Also, they're having a Going Away/Christmas party at their December meeting since it will be their last meeting at 1800 Kenneth Rd., The Greens at West Gate in York, Pa. Everyone is asked to bring a covered dish of food, and everyone is welcome. Also, the **Greater Philadelphia Chapter Christmas Party** is Monday, Dec. 23rd at the **Ship Inn**. This is a private party and the Ship is opening just for Ren members. The cost per person is \$37 and includes a buffet feast. You have until Dec. 16th to make a reservation. Send you check or money order to Renaissance 96 Xmas Party, care of the National Office (see page 2 for address).

This was kinda strange. I got this note over the Net from **Shannon** at the **Indiana Crossdresser's Society (IXE)**: "Just a note, we have been having non-members and ex-members contacting people and groups and saying that they represent IXE. They have then been using this forum to say bad things about past members or other groups. This is to inform you that no person from IXE has

HOT•BUZZ

this authority nor would we do this. Any person contacting you saying they represent us, other than a current Board member (names on request) or having the e-mail address of ixe@aol.com, is not telling the truth. These persons have been doing great harm to our group for their own personal gain. If anyone contacts you in this manner, let us know."

Some time ago, my wife and I were visiting with a couple who know about my crossdressing. My buddy is a real motorhead and we talk cars all the time, but he also has this thing for teddy bears. My wife was saying that I should find something other than crossdressing since it's become so passé. So, we got to joking about starting a support group for men who dress as teddy bears and the women who love them. Then I read the following in the *New York Times*: "You think you're obsessive about your Halloween costume? Meet **A. J. Skunk**, the anthropomorphic alter-ego of **James Firmis**. Firmis is part of a growing national subculture (some might say a *paraculture* - CQ.) of furry-suit hobbyists who don pelts, whiskers and tails year-round. They hold conventions - called conFURences. What's the payoff? The cathartic release of a hidden self, says Firmis. "The biggest difference between A. J. and me," he says, "aside from the fact that we're not the same species, is that A. J. is more expressive about his emotions." I swear this is not made up. They're trans-specie-ists, I guess. See the photo below.



I think he needs a little more contour around the ears and that tail - Arggh - what a mop! I hear that Jacquelyn makes really nice tails, but they're expensive. So, what would you call a human male who dresses up as a female animal? Vewy, vewy, stwange.

Now for the good stuff... **Anne C.** sent me greetings from the Net and said that **Barb Wire** has been on video for about 5 months now, but is only available for rental, meaning if you want to buy a copy it's about \$100. However, she says that some video stores will sell used copies for about \$10, so watch for one.

Another note from the Net, this time from "**MJL**" out west. She writes: "I found a wonderful shop in Phoenix. I've included 2 addresses although the shop I went to was on Thomas road. A very nice [woman] there that will help you get the right fit for bras, girdles, all-in-ones etc. I bought a wonderful girdle called the Smoothie - very old fashioned - just like mom use to wear, open bottomed, 6 garters, side zipper, and metal stays. It's made by Stouse Adler Co. The shop is **CC's Lingerie**, 2335 E Bell Rd, (602) 971-2255, and 3247 E Thomas Rd, (602) 954-9400 Phoenix, Ariz. The address for Strouse Adler in New York is 990 Avenue Of The Americas, New York, New York 10018. Phone: (212) 947-5593.

Most everyone is familiar with **Neiman Marcus'** extravagant Christmas catalogue. You know, train sets for \$5000 and the like. Well, it appears that **Victoria's Secret** is getting into the act. The latest Vicky's catalogue shows **Claudia Schiffer** sporting a million-dollar cleavage and we ain't exaggerating. Ms. Schiffer's bustline is shown wrapped in a Miracle Bra studded with over 100 carats in diamonds, making the bra worth \$1,000,000. And if that's a little *too* rich for you, how about your own perfume blended just for you in Provence, France and stored in Baccarat crystal all for a mere \$75,000. Bon Marché.

The comic-book-into-movie craze continues in Hollywood where my son recently worked on the film version of **Spawn**. Meanwhile, **Warner Bros.** is

trying to invade the fashion world with a line of **Batman** "couture." (Okay, so I stretched the use of couture.) The have everything Batman from a nylon bag by **Kate Spade** to a Batman belt and a satin Batman dress by **Jeanette Kastenber**. If you did not know the caped crusader was a crossdresser before, you do now. I want a Catwoman or Batgirl suit (and the body to go in them, too). Dream on!

There are fashion fads that come and go and there are fashion classics that are timeless. **Audrey Hepburn** knew how to dress in a way that always seemed at the height of fashion yet was timeless. So it's not unsurprising to see many fashion designers and fashion photographers trying to emulate that special Hepburn look today. If you'd like to see more and know more about Audrey Hepburn, check out her recent bio by **Barry Paris** published by Putnam Press (\$35).

I have to mention another book while I'm thinking of it, **Body Alchemy**. **Loren Cameron** is an FtM transsexual and a superb photographer. *Body Alchemy* is a collection of FtM transsexual portraits taken by Cameron. The photos are exquisite and the publisher, **Cleis Press**, in Pittsburgh, Pa., did a magnificent job reproducing the photos. If you'd like a copy, stop by my website at www.cdspub.com and pick one up or gimme a call at 610-640-9449 and we'll do the deal by phone.

Last month I mentioned that I ordered **Silicone Cup-Enhancers** for just under \$50. They arrived and they were very nice. But they weren't big enough for me so, I sent them back. They were smaller than I had hoped. But if you have any breast development at all, these would work very nicely and they're less than half the price other companies charge. Call Cosmesearch at 800-345-6602 if you're still interested.

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think true friendship transcends petty political BS and other mundane trivialities. Comments? Write care of this publication or email them to [\[redacted\]@cdspub.com](mailto:[redacted]@cdspub.com).

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Ms. Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

Making Sense Of It All

Gladness and Sadness

I am beginning this month's column on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the Jewish New Year, which is followed nine days from now by Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This nine day period is appropriate for reflection, a time for reflecting on the sweetness as well as the bitterness of life, a time for gladness as well as sadness.

As I look back on my life, not just during this past year but also during several decades, I can rejoice at the fact that I am at last living with a personal identity that is satisfying to me. I am glad I am no longer living in the closet of my soul, no longer harboring what I experienced for so long as a shameful secret, namely, my gender dysphoria.

I am truly glad and relieved that I can now live openly as a woman, even though I was born with a male body. My attitude, my natural inclinations, and my estrogenic progress have all helped me to function as a female in our bipolar society. I find myself relating more easily to people, being more creative, freer to think and to feel than ever before. I have less anger towards life in general and more love for myself and for others. I am glad to be feeling this way and thus truly thankful that all this has come about.

I also find myself able to celebrate my Jewish heritage with greater enthusiasm than ever before, for I am no longer ashamed of myself in the eyes of God. I feel that I am simply one of God's creatures, albeit different from the majority, but as entitled as any to live on this earth. So it is with a newly found enthusiasm, joy and a sense of dignity that I celebrate Rosh Hashanah.

At the same time that I am filled with gladness I am also filled with sadness. You may think that I am contradicting myself, for how can I be glad and sad at the same time? But the truth of the matter is that I have much sadness in my life at the same time that I rejoice in my personal emergence. For

most of my life I was accepted as a normal male, in the family, at work, and socially. In other words, I was outwardly acceptable. But on the inside, so to speak, I was terribly unhappy. However, although I am now more happy on the inside with my hard-earned self-recognition and self-acceptance, I am no longer as acceptable as I once was on the outside, whether in the family, at work, or socially. Now don't get me wrong: I am still part of a family, I do have work, and I have social involvements. But my various human connections are now more limited in scope than they once were.

For example, my three children, all of whom are adults over twenty, feel that I am great to talk to but funny to look at. As a parent I understand their chagrin at my gender change, but I do know they love me. They just have difficulty seeing me look more like an aunt than the father they once knew. I tell them I will always be their father, but of the three children, two of whom are male, it is my daughter with whom I have grown closer. She says that I am more present, more in the here and now, than ever before. But at the same time my relationship with her makes me glad, I am sad about the increasing distance between myself and my sons.

My wife loves me and is still with me, but she admits openly that my gender change is difficult for her to handle. We live more like two girl friends than husband and wife. Our social life together has thus become limited to situations where we are not expected to appear as a married couple. I am glad she loves me and is still with me, for I love her very much, but I am sad about our limited sphere of joint activity.

I am doing work I enjoy, but my history as a transsexual goes with me wherever I seek clients or employment. This does not mean that I go around announcing that I am a transsexual, but it lurks in the background and sometimes makes itself known in documents, as

well as chance encounters with people from my past. I find myself wishing that people's attitudes were more liberal now that I feel freer as a person to pursue my goals. I am glad to be functioning more effectively, but I am truly sad about the limitations imposed upon me by narrow social and legal attitudes.

I have learned that both gladness and sadness are part of life in general and part of my own life in particular. I have learned that the sweetness of Rosh Hashanah is inseparable from the bitterness of Yom Kippur. I realize more than ever that I encompass within my person all of my experience, the bitter as well as the sweet. When all is said and done, I am now more of a total person than ever before, because that totality incorporates the sweetness as well as the bitterness, the gladness as well as the sadness, of my total existence. It is this totality, this sense of oneness, a sense of personal integration, which at last I am beginning to experience and which I can now more easily claim as my own. Such ownership makes for a gladness no sadness can ever erase.



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Vis A Vis...

finds time to read *Allure* magazine and keep up with the trendiest color in lipgloss. Now that is "kewl."

Kalina Isato, who (sotto voce, please) "made me an offer I couldn't refuse" on her old Macintosh computer and got me at least peeking into the '90's.

Hal McKay, the piano player at the Ship Inn, in Exton, Pa. – the watering hole of choice after the Renaissance GPC meetings – who indulges my alter ego's alter ego, Dina Sinatra, in our monthly impersonations of the Rat Pack gone terribly, terribly wrong.

Veronica [REDACTED], Board member of San Francisco's ETVC group, and part-time print ad model, who has been nice enough to write to me a few

times and compare notes on cleavage taping, among other hot topics.

Barbara Jean Jensen, from Memphis' *Powder and Pearls* newsletter, who likewise chatted me up after reading a column item that piqued her interest.

Stacy Novak of TransEssex in England, who paid me the greatest compliment an egomaniac can receive by making me a covergirl on their *Reflections* Magazine earlier this year. Thanks a million 'luv.

Marisa Richmond of the Tennessee Vals, who I found out by accident is a big Beatles fan – and like the "lads" – buries references in her own newsletter column as her personal homage to the group. I wish I had thought of that.

And Holiday wishes also to a few friendly adversaries of this past year: Jane Ellen Fairfax of the Tri-Ess

Board; Phaedra Kelly of England and sundry ports of call in Europe; Kymberleigh Richards of *Cross-Talk* magazine; and Linda Phillips of Boulton & Park Society, all of whom I had minor disagreements with in this column, but all of whom I have respect for nonetheless.

My wife, Susan, without whose support and acceptance, I would be one of the "invisible crossdressers" I wrote about in last month's column.

April [REDACTED], my best friend of these past seven years, who leads me into temptation but delivers us to a good time on every night together.

And finally, to everyone who takes the time to read this column, my fondest wishes for the Holidays and New Year. In this one instance in my life as a crossdresser it's nice to be "read."



Dining In Drag With Babs & Carol

Tastefully Tacky?, Tacky With Taste?, And A Secret Revealed!

Lips, New York's newest and most impressive drag-queen-theme restaurant opened this past August in Greenwich Village. Fashioned after a Hard Rock Cafe, it features photographs and memorabilia from New York's most famous gender benders. Every drag queen who gave a signed photo or personal item has a dish dedicated to her. Plexiglass encased accessories that caught our attention included Joey Arias' platform shoes near the entrance and "Sweetie's" hat from the *To Wong Foo..* movie.

Decorated in an eclectic "nineties urban drag" style, we were impressed by the "fierce" jungle animal print pillows, chairs and umbrella ceiling fixtures which were creatively complemented by the red velvet flocked 1890s whorehouse wallpaper. Mirrors, yes, mirrors, the better to check our lip stick, of course. Bathrooms are private and bi-gendered.

Downstairs there is a banquet room which features, among other things, an impressive crown to honor Empress Ran-dee and past Empresses of the Imperial Court of New York.

Over the crowded bar area we noticed video monitors playing theme related movies, like *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Wigstock, the Movie*.

We were impressed by the friendly smiles and warm upbeat attitude of the hostess, manager and waitstaff as we made our "grand" entrance. We were made to feel welcome by all!

We did come for the food, and we were pleasantly surprised, for the place had not only style, but substance as well. For starters, the "Raven-O" soup of the day was a subtly flavored yet enjoyable white bean soup. "Hedda Lettuce" was actually a mixed green salad with tomato and an original sherry wine vinaigrette dressing. We were impressed by the "Mona Foot", a pleasant fried zucchini stuffed with crabmeat and scallops served with a balanced citrus sauce.. excellent!

Among the entrees we enjoyed the "Varla Jean Merman," a lightly seared tuna with marinated vegetables. The "Gloria Whole" was much better than it sounded, a tender poached salmon served with a semi-sweet orange honey and wine sauce, not the usual presentation, but another pleasant surprise!

For luncheons or a late supper sandwiches are available ranging from a "Delores," a lobster salad with healthy veggies to a "Sweetie" hamburger served in a Rubenesque queen size portion. Just reading the menu is fun! The wine list features a diversified

selection at reasonable (NYC) prices.

Saturdays and Sundays they feature a \$9.95 brunch starting at noon. It seemed the perfect place for our Dignity Cruise to Bermuda bon voyage party on "Almost-Wigstock Sunday." Fortunately we had made reservations for our group since the dining room filled up quickly. Except for those onions in Carol's omelette, we all enjoyed our choices which included outrageous combinations to classic brunch dishes. We washed it all down with a traditional wake-up Mimosa and lots of hi-test coffee. Our lovely drag waitresses still had time to lip synch a few performances!

Apparently owned by Yvon Lamé, a lovely drag queen herself (and currently featured on the cover of *Lady-Like* #28), who isn't afraid to jump in the fray to keep things going, Lips celebrates the flamboyant part of our gender community. Lips is fun! The food is original, well prepared and reasonably priced! What more can we say, Lip-smacking... Lip Shtick! Highly recommended! We plan on going back! You go girl!

Lips, 2 Bank St. (just off Greenwich Ave.) Greenwich Village, NYC (212)-675-7710. Reservations suggested

continued on next page

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Carol & Babs...

Victoria's Secret Revealed

Over the last 25 years we've seen many female impersonators including Jim Bailey performing Barbra and Judy at the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria, Jimmy Jones as Marilyn M. and many other talented professionals including the very popular RuPaul.

In one of the most popular night spots in the West Village, upstairs in the Cabaret at Eighty Eights, we think that we've seen a show that brings a new standard, not only to the art of female impersonation, but to cabaret shows in general! Perhaps we're a bit biased because we've known Victoria Westin a few years and have watched her perform her interpretation of famous divas, among them Barbra, Judy, and Bette Midler for various "Gender" functions.. always propelling her audience to their feet in appreciation.

What sets her apart is not just the voice, a versatile yet sultry alto, nor the songs, standards she has changed and cleverly adapted to this largely autobiographical act. Its not the flattering clothes, the expert make up, the outstanding wigs (yes, she told us what they cost)! It's the movements, the walk, the inflections, the whole persona that is projected. It's not a man in a dress, it's a woman baring her past in song and anecdotes with bitter-sweet humor and pride.

Born and raised in a very small

midwestern town, where being "different and vulnerable" no doubt had a profound effect on her character. She brings a refreshing yet earthy wholesomeness (not completely jaded) to the Big Apple. Her act is tailored for the cozy yet sophisticated Cabaret scene in New York City. Her act flows with her persona, leaving no low points.

Starting with "Hear My Song" from Sunset Boulevard, she continued with a medley which included "You Can Always Count on Me" and "Nobody Doesn't Like Me." She then comically explored her dilemma as a transgendered person, should she date a lesbian or should she date a man, singing "Which One Now?" To enhance her desirability to prospective suitors, she proudly announced in song, "I can Cook, Too!" Among the highlights was a humorous medley "her man" songs. We laughed along with "The Boy From Chelsea Gym" (sung to "The Girl from Ipanema"), "Nature Boy," and "Leader Act Up" (Leader of the Pack). She spun her tales in song with "I Can't Remember" (adapted from the Fantastick's "Try to Remember"), "Man Who Dates Men in Dresses" (He is the Man for Me), "Not at Home" and "Crazy World," among others. Yes, Victoria revealed her secret, well it wasn't much of a secret after all, most women sing and complain about... men! Yes Victoria, "Love Can Be a Four Letter Word!"

Her finale, triumphant and proud was all New York. From the little sissy boy on the farm, who was bullied and

humiliated by the ignorance of his peers, to the person of today who has appeared in movies, won talent competitions and the admiration of the many, but too few, who have seen her, this metamorphosed Monarch butterfly proudly sung to her childhood nemeses, "Baby, Kiss My Ass!"

Her credentials are impressive, she held the Miss Gay NYC crown in 1994 and 1995, has appeared extensively at Fire Island and in 1996 won the coveted title, Miss Fire Island-Best Professional. She's appeared in films such as "Johnny Suede" with Brad Pitt, and "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everthing, Julie Newmar" with Patrick Swayzee. Victoria is accompanied by her music director, Vernon Larson, who ably complements her on the piano and by Mary Rodriguez on the drums.

Victoria's two shows in early October were sell outs. As of November, she is performing Saturday nights at 11 p.m. at Eighty Eights, 228 W.10th St. Greenwich Village, New York City, (212) 924-0088 (no credit cards). This is a show NOT to be missed. The cost is \$20 (\$5 donation to AIDS charity) and a 2 drink minimum. Reservations recommended. Ms. Westin does request that her friends come "dressed" for the occasion.



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Tina Eckhardt



The First 12 Weeks

by Anne Vitale Ph.D.

As you might expect, the first couple of meetings in any therapeutic relationship are extremely critical. This is especially true if the presenting problem is a gender identity issue. As you might expect, people come in at varying stages of dealing with their gender issues and the work must proceed accordingly. A minor number of people enter the work expressing a clear desire to change their sex and want me to monitor their transition.

I am, of course, open to doing exactly that if all of the criteria have been met. Others are far less anxious to think that far ahead. In this column, I want to concentrate on those people who present at the outset declaring to be clear and ready to enter transition.

The first level of transition is psychological evaluation for hormonal therapy. In that regard, paragraph 5.1.2 of the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's *Standards of Care* states: "The patient must be known to a clinical behavioral scientist for at least three months and that clinical behavioral scientist must endorse the patient's request for hormone therapy." This is such an important and useful period, responsible gender therapists have come to interpret the three months to mean twelve weekly one hour sessions.

The first two or three hours are used to establish a therapeutic alliance. I realize that what is transpiring for my client is life changing therapy. It is extremely important for them to have as much confidence in me as I can possibly endow. This is done by clearly defining the ground rules in which we will be working. I also assure the client that nothing drastic is going to happen immediately. The two of us will take all the time necessary to work out what is right and take appropriate and controlled action as the therapy evolves. I find it useful to slowly reveal my in

depth knowledge and expertise in the field of gender transition while being very attentive and authentic in my listening. This is also a good time to take careful notes that can be reviewed and annotated between sessions.

When a safe, secure environment has been established and as we move on in the series of interviews, the depth of the gender dysphoria and its ramifications begin to emerge. Family, friend and workplace issues are examined. Often a joint session with the client's parents or significant other will be called for now. Questions about what the client might expect if he or she was to decide to transition are encouraged and answered honestly.

I also make certain to keep the client aware of the pacing of our interviews. Even though we start with me being in charge (i.e., insisting on following the *Standards of Care*, asking direct questions and strict adherence to a regular meeting schedule), I slowly shift the burden of responsibility for the client's work in therapy directly onto the client. I make it very clear that although I am there to help, it is he or she who will decide to enter and if he or she chooses, to complete transition. The pacing, of course, is dependent on the individual's ability to handle his or her particular situation. If additional time is necessary for any reason whatsoever, then we simply schedule in more time.

I've said it before and I will undoubtedly say it again: transition is hard. Very hard! The first twelve weeks should be the time when fantasies and misconceptions are tempered by reality. The range of transition that can be expected from the hormones and potential plans for surgery should be clear in the individual's mind before hormone therapy starts. Meeting others who have already started or gone through transition is usually the best way for the client to gain these insights. I

also arrange for the individual to meet, by mutual consent, others who are either dealing with similar special problems or have the individual participate in one of my gender issues groups.

At some point, usually after the first two months of therapy, both the client and I have a good idea where we are going and at what pace to proceed. If we are still dealing with fundamental fears and uncertainty, then there is naturally no talk of moving on in transition. If on the other hand all appears to be in order, I make a concerted effort to be very specific about what the client will expect physically and psychologically. To aid in empowering the client, I have him or her start thinking about what internist or endocrinologist they will want to work with. Here in the San Francisco Bay Area, we are lucky to have several physicians who specialize in hormone therapy. Each has a specific style and idea as to how fast transition should occur. Eventually the time comes when a referral for hormones is asked for and a letter is written. It may have taken twelve weeks or it may have taken twelve months. Either way the time must be right.

In essence then, the first twelve weeks are used to authenticate the transition, establish a bond between the therapist and the client, set the pace for the rest of transition, and importantly, empower the client by giving the client control over an element of his or her life that, till now, may have appeared impossible to attain.

(A substantial portion of this Note originally appeared in issue Number 76 of *Cross Talk*) Copyright, 1996 by Anne Vitale Ph.D.. Dr. Vitale is an associate of the D Street Counseling Group, 610 D Street, San Rafael CA 94901, (415) 456-4452, Internet: [redacted]@nbn.com>.





Letters to the Editor

Dear JoAnn,

In your October *Hot Buzz* column you mention the book *Hiding My Candy* by the Lady Chablis. I recently purchased and read it. Unlike people who have written (or been written about) in other books who have had major problems in their lives but are working to overcome them, the Lady Chablis seems to pride herself and feel justified in behavior which is inappropriate and unacceptable from anyone. Furthermore, since she is a member of the transgender community, her revelation of this behavior in her book might well work against all of the positive efforts we are making to gain acceptance from society as a whole.

The specific episodes I am writing

about are: (1) Breaking and entering another woman's residence and altering all of the woman's clothing because she had stolen Lady Chablis' lover away. She states that she would repeat this offense; (2) Suggesting that her readers go find a (specific) cookbook in their local bookstore and tear out a recipe which had been "stolen" from her.

These are the types of acts that brand transgendered individuals as criminals, weirdos and people generally not to be tolerated. This type of thoughtless short-sighted [behavior] on the part of Lady Chablis works against the rest of us who strive for positive outreach, education about transgender issues and acceptance by society.

Sincerely,

Stacy-Lynn Carlton

Dear Ms. Amberle:

I am sorry that Ms. Gardner and yourself failed to find the humor in the cartoon that appeared on the cover of the August '96 edition of *News Briefs*.

The gentleman (I will refer to him as a

gentleman as his actions have done nothing to lead me to believe otherwise) has, obviously, just walked into the shoe store. A quick glimpse at the open door clearly indicates that it is raining heavily. The gentleman is not carrying an umbrella and has chosen to protect himself from the elements with a raincoat and hat. The raincoat appears to be fully buttoned so I don't believe "flashing" is his intention. His mood reflects the somberness of the day. Like most of us, he takes a rather dim view of the prospects of a rainy day does not share Gene Kelly's passion for the rain and is not about to sing and dance. He is in the store to buy a pair of shoes for his femme side. Having been preconditioned by previous encounters with less than understanding clerks he adds, "And no smart remarks." It serves to point out the fright and frustration some sisters have with shopping and the surreptitious methods they have to employ. I found the cartoon very funny and the same time very sad.

continued on page 23



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Shopping With Jessica

by Jessica Brandon



Season's Greetings, girlfriends! May your holiday be merry and bright and your cosmetics remain at room temperature as Winter approaches! Christmas is a fun time of year for me as I get to shop for my two favorite people in the whole wide world, my boy and girl guises! For Jeff, he's finally gonna get himself an Apple Power Macintosh so he can stop drooling like a lunatic over the Mac catalogs that come in the mail! As for moi, well, I'm kinda torn between my first-ever gown for the upcoming Holiday Party and yet another suit. (Knowing my fondness for the latter, care to guess what I'll end up choosing, gang? Ha!)

Anyhoo, back to business. As I promised last month, I'm gonna rap about two items I said I'd experiment with. I ended up killing two birds with one stone by using both items on the same outing, and was pleasantly surprised with the results. The outing in question was the annual Henri David Halloween Bash here in Philly, and it gave me an opportunity to try out **Revlon's ColorStay** makeup which now comes in deeper shades for women of color. I tried mocha and it worked quite well. It's oil free, went on smoothly, felt light and comfortable and never faded during the course of the evening's festivities.

As you've read in previous columns, you know that I'm adverse to using drug store, five & dime cosmetics, mainly because you can't get assistance in getting the right items you need, but I must admit I was greatly impressed with Revlon's ColorStay products which do indeed perform as advertised. By the way, I also gave their ColorStay

Lashcolor mascara a try and it too passed my durability test. Revlon has a line of foundation and powder combos called New Complexion One Step Makeup (complete with deep shades for women of color), and I'll report on that next month.

The second item I tested was **Reliance Hosiery**. L'Eggs entered a contestant in the strong-but-sheer pantyhose competition, going up against Resilience from Hanes. Like a true woman, I demand a lot from my pantyhose; it's gotta be durable, fit like a second skin and, above all, make my already great legs look sensational. And Reliance turned in a winning score. The L'Eggs brand comes in four shades (I wore Suntan), came in the proper size for my height (the ranges are from 4' 8" to 6' 1") and looked pretty darn good on me. Furthermore, Reliance is competitively priced.

In yet another update, remember **Apres Noir**, the mail order company that sells lingerie for men? I got email from loyal reader Susannah [redacted] who reports bikini panties for men in, of all places, K-Mart. According to Susannah, these were made of silk in a wide variety of colors and are cut more adequately in front for us faux-girls than the real McCoy. The item is called "100% Silk Brief" by Sandro Rossini and are priced at \$5.99. At such a reasonable price, this might be worth investigating. Thanks for the tip, Susannah! You're a doll!

I've received the newest catalogs from **Sears** (1-800-783-7577 for ordering), **Newport News** (1-800-688-2830) and **Chadwick's of Boston** (1-800-

525-6650) and they all have loads of great holiday fashions. Sears has several great items like sequined silk chemises, iridescent fit and flare dresses and a killer red sequined jacket dress. Newport News has even more great stuff like a cool black evening jumpsuit with a colorfully sequined bolero jacket and a glamorous velvet top/ floor length satin skirt combo! Chadwick's ups the ante with plenty of delicious evening dresses and gowns. All three sources feature a wide range of sizes at great prices.

This last item I'm about to mention is ridiculous as sin, but I just *have* to give it a plug. A week or so ago, I picked up the holiday edition of the **Victoria's Secret** catalog and on the cover was a very special version of their Miracle Bra modeled by **Claudia Schiffer**. What's so special about it you ask? Just that the damn thing is studded with over 100 carats of real diamonds, hundreds more in precious stones and goes for the unbelievable price of one million dollars! That's right, girls, ONE MILLION DOLLARS! When I saw it, my jaw dropped to the floor like Wile E. Coyote in those old Roadrunner cartoons!

Now, I suppose I shouldn't be shocked at what I saw. After all, I work for a department store chain that sells \$4,000 Chanel suits, \$100,000 furs and puts out a Christmas catalog that has as one of the gifts this year a full size X-wing Fighter from Star Wars. But the \$1,000,000 bra blew me away! What woman in her right mind would buy such a thing, much less wear it? Even Ivana Trump would think twice, if not three or four times before making such a purchase. My first thought was that for a million bucks, Claudia better bloody well come with it!

Well, girls, this is my last column for 1996. Wow! Where does the time go when you're having fun? If you wish to rap with me about shopping, drop me a line at the Renaissance Greater Philly address or at [redacted]@voicenet.com>. Until next year, be smart, buy smart and look smart! Merry Christmas and happy shopping, sisters!





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Letters...

Given these observations, I have a few questions to pose. What gives you the impression that this gentleman is, indeed, a pervert? Is it his manner of dress? Is it his demeanor?

Regardless of the reasoning, you seem to have formed an opinion of him based solely on his appearance. Do you always rush to judge others on appearance? Do you have some preconceived notion that every male in a raincoat is a pervert. An adverse judgment based on preconceptions is textbook definition of prejudice, pure and simple. Are you sure that this is the impression you want to leave your readers with?

Regardless of the disclaimer that appears in every issue of *News Briefs*, as editor, I consider myself totally responsible for its content and I am more than willing to take criticism, constructive or

otherwise, for the same. As a result, there have been two occasions in the past where I had deemed it necessary to print a retraction or an apology. In this particular case, there will be none. I am not willing to accept animadversion. I will defend both, the cartoon and its creator, Karen Anne.

By this time I'm sure that the editors of *Renaissance News*, know that several other organizations have chosen to re-run that very same cartoon in their own newsletters. Their editors obviously saw the same things that I did.

The final point of this letter is to suggest that prejudice, no matter where it is directed or the degree to which it is applied, is a counter-productive force and has absolutely no place in the community. Barbed comments serve only to feed the egos of those who utilize them.

Sincerely,
Carol Ann [redacted], Editor
cc: Karen Anne T.

Dear Carol Ann,

Excuse us, but it's obvious that you are **not** "willing to take criticism, constructive or otherwise..." and there's no need to get pedantic with the big words. If we saw something potentially offensive in the cartoon (and we've been accused by some of the strictest gender-fascist conservatives as being Liberal Easterners), then perhaps other people saw it as offensive as well.

The fact that other editors chose to include it in their newsletters is no proof it was not offensive. Many slave owners did not think they were doing anything wrong either. Being in a majority does not, per se, make you right.

However, we are pleased to see that our comments moved you to write us. We welcome all criticism, points of view and philosophies. Without criticism, all thinking would be similar, i.e., bland, boring and banal.



Heaven help us...
if we don't help ourselves.
Fight for your right
to be transgendered.

GenderPAC is about gender, affectional and racial equality. We're working for you every day at the national level to educate our lawmakers about transgender issues. You can help with a tax deductible contribution to:

**GenderPAC, PO Box 229,
Waltham, MA 02254**

This ad is presented as a public service of this publication.

WWW Places To Visit

Renaissance Web Site

<http://www.ren.org>

GenderPAC

<http://www.gpac.org>

TG Forum Resource Center

<http://www.tgfmall.com>

TG Forum Community Center

<http://www.transgender.org/tg/>

The New Cosmetics (Drag Troupe)

<http://www.hyperdigital.com/cosmetics/>

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<http://www.hedda.com>

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GPAC...

Foundation for Gender Education [IFGE]* (Alison Laing); It's Time America!* (Jessica Xavier); Renaissance Education Assoc.* (JoAnn Roberts); Society for the Second Self [Tri-Ess]* (Maryann Kirkland); American Boyz* (Gary Bowen); Intersexed Society of North America* (Martha Coventry); Transgender Health Action Coalition (A. "Dee" Stallworth); Transgender Officers Protect & Serve [TOPS]* (Tony Baretto-Neto); Deaf Transgendered Alliance [DTA]* (Jess Marlowe); and Expressing Our Nature, Inc., (Angela Brightfeather Sheedy). These organizations represent close to 10,000 transgendered people. Organizations unable to have representatives at the meeting included the Outreach Institute (which sent word it supports GPAC) and the International Conference for Transgender Law & Employment Policy [ICTLEP]. (ICTELP has

since signed the document.)

The activists then broke into two working groups for the afternoon addressing a variety of issues facing GPAC, after which the group held its first official board meeting and elected officers. Angela Gardner continues from the advisory committee as Chair of the board. Tony Baretto-Neto is Vice-Chair. Maryann Kirkland is Secretary. Joanne White (Treasurer of Renaissance National and the Treasurer for Fantasia Fair) was appointed to the board and elected Treasurer. Appointed Ex-Officio members of the GPAC board are: Riki Ann Wilchins, Executive Director of GPAC; Dana Priesing, GPAC Lobbyist; Pat Conover, Policy Analyst; and JoAnn Roberts, Policy Analyst. A list of nominees for appointments to the GPAC board of directors was taken under advisement. These appointments will be made to insure the board is diverse in its representation of the community.

During the day some discussion centered on a perceived "Northeast"

bias in GPAC. Considering the home base for each of the organizations comprising GPAC, the regional representations are: 2 organizations from New England (IFGE & Outreach); 3 Mid-Atlantic organizations (Renaissance, American Boyz & DTA); 2 organizations in the Southwest (Tri-Ess & ITA!); 2 organizations from the South (AEGIS & TOPS); and 2 organizations from the West Coast (FtM & ISNA). Angela Gardner, GPAC Chair, said, "GenderPAC will do everything possible to represent the diversity of the transgender community. For example, our next face-to-face board meeting should be out on the West Coast, possibly at the California Unity convention (April 15 - 19, 1997) in Long Beach, California. We'll certainly discuss it and other locales. Meanwhile, I urge each of the GenderPAC member organizations to appoint east coast and west coast alternates, so we'll be sure to have a quorum wherever we meet." The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.



INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELING ON THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF GENDER VARIATIONS

Lee Etscovitz, Ed.D.

HUMAN DIMENSIONS
PO BOX 471
Willow Grove, PA 19090
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P K Consulting Associates

Patricia Klein, M.S.

Sexuality Issues
Orientation • Gender Identity
Partners • Families

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Allentown, PA 18106

Box 3624
610-821-2955

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**Judith D. Dean
Ed. D., M. Div., M.S.**

Suite 110
55 Princeton-Hightstown Rd.
Princeton Junction, NJ 08550

(609) 275-6556

Transgender Health Action Coalition (THAC)

Washington West Offices
1201 Locust Street, 3rd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Survey Respondent:

The Transgender Health Action Coalition (THAC) is a volunteer organization run by transgendered (TG) people for TG people. Through the enclosed survey, we would like to find out what our community looks like and what its health care needs are. We will use this information to set up a referral network for affordable health care and to improve the quality of the care that TG people receive.

We hope that you will include your voice and experiences in this effort by taking a few minutes to fill out the survey and to return it in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope.

Although the survey asks many personal questions, please be reassured that **ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS AND CONFIDENTIAL**. We are required to ask that you fill out and sign the enclosed consent form, and we have taken steps to make sure that your consent form is not associated with your completed survey. After you fill out the survey, follow these steps when you get ready to return it to THAC:

- 1) Sign the consent form and place it in the **SMALL ENVELOPE** provided (it is labeled "Consent Form").
- 2) **SEAL THE SMALL ENVELOPE.**
- 3) Place the small envelope and the completed survey in the **LARGE ENVELOPE** (it is addressed and stamped) and drop it in the mail to THAC.

To make sure that your name is not associated with your survey, we **WILL NOT** open the small envelope when we receive it in the mail.

Thank you for completing this survey; you are performing a great service for our community by taking the time to fill it out.



Dee Stallworth
Transwoman
THAC Co-Director



Jules Russell
Transman
THAC Co-Director

The Delaware Valley Transgender Survey

Transgender Health Action Coalition (THAC)

I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. ZIP CODE: _____

2. AGE: _____

3. What is your gender identity? (Check the one term that best describes you.)

- ☐ 1) Male to Female Transsexual
- ☐ 2) Female to Male Transsexual
- ☐ 3) Transman
- ☐ 4) Transwoman
- ☐ 5) Passing Butch
- ☐ 6) Transvestite
- ☐ 7) Intersexed

- ☐ 8) Drag King
- ☐ 9) Drag Queen
- ☐ 10) Crossdresser
- ☐ 11) Male
- ☐ 12) Female
- ☐ 13) Transgendered
- ☐ 14) Transgenderist
- ☐ 15) Other (specify) _____

4. What was your physical sex at birth?

- ☐ 1) Male
- ☐ 2) Female
- ☐ 3) Intersexed (having physical characteristics of both sexes)

5. What is your current physical sex? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1) I have a vagina.
- ☐ 2) I have a penis and testicles.
- ☐ 3) I have a penis only.
- ☐ 4) I have breasts.
- ☐ 5) I have an enlarged clitoris.
- ☐ 6) I have a clitoris.
- ☐ 7) I have ambiguous genitalia. (I am intersexed.)

6. I am (check one):

- ☐ 1) Heterosexual
- ☐ 2) Gay
- ☐ 3) Lesbian
- ☐ 4) Bisexual
- ☐ 5) Celibate (I do not have sex with other people.)
- ☐ 6) I do not label my sexuality.
- ☐ 7) Other (specify) _____

7. What is your relationship status?

- ☐ 1) Single
- ☐ 2) Married
- ☐ 3) Monogamous relationship
- ☐ 4) Non-monogamous relationship(s)
- ☐ 5) Other (specify) _____

8. What is your racial/ethnic background? (Check one.)

- ☐ 1) African American
- ☐ 2) White (Caucasian)
- ☐ 3) Biracial
- ☐ 4) Multiracial

- ☐ 5) Native American/American Indian
- ☐ 6) Hispanic or Latino/Latina
- ☐ 7) Asian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ 8) Other (specify) _____

9. What is your religion? (Check one.)

- ☐ 1) Lutheran
- ☐ 2) Roman Catholic
- ☐ 3) Muslim
- ☐ 4) Jewish
- ☐ 5) None
- ☐ 6) A.M.E. Zion
- ☐ 7) Apostolic
- ☐ 8) Baptist

- ☐ 9) Buddhist
- ☐ 10) Atheist
- ☐ 11) Agnostic
- ☐ 12) Wiccan/Goddess Worship
- ☐ 13) Episcopalian
- ☐ 14) Methodist
- ☐ 15) Presbyterian
- ☐ 16) Other (specify) _____

10. How much education have you completed? (Check one.)

- ☐ 1) None
- ☐ 2) Elementary school
- ☐ 3) Some high school (no diploma)
- ☐ 4) High school graduate
- ☐ 5) High school equivalency (G.E.D.)
- ☐ 6) Some college (no degree)
- ☐ 7) College graduate
- ☐ 8) Some graduate school (no degree)
- ☐ 9) Graduate or professional degree
- ☐ 10) Technical degree (including cosmetology)

11. What are your current living arrangements? (Check one.)

- ☐ 1) Alone
- ☐ 2) With roommate
- ☐ 3) Hospice
- ☐ 4) Homeless
- ☐ 5) With significant other(s)
- ☐ 6) With family
- ☐ 7) Transitional housing
- ☐ 8) Vogue House
- ☐ 9) Other (specify) _____

12. Are you employed?

- ☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)
- ☐ NO (Go to question 12.)

a) If yes, how would you classify your job? (Check one.)

- ☐ 1) Factory or Manufacturing work (assembly line, etc.)
- ☐ 2) Service worker (Child care, waitress, cook, beautician, etc.)
- ☐ 3) Office worker (Clerk, secretary, word processor, data entry, etc.)
- ☐ 4) Sex Worker
- ☐ 5) Skilled Laborer (Construction, truck driver, mechanic, etc.)
- ☐ 6) Professional (Teacher, lawyer, nurse, computer technician, etc.)
- ☐ 7) Homemaker
- ☐ 8) Student
- ☐ 9) Artist (Creative arts: musician, painter, writer, etc.)
- ☐ 10) Government worker/civil servant
- ☐ 11) Other _____

13. Have you ever lost your job because of being transgendered?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO
- ☐ Don't know

14. What is your yearly income? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) I have no source of income | <input type="checkbox"/> 7) 15,000 to 19,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) \$1 to \$5,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) 20,000 to 24,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) 5,001 to 7,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9) 25,000 to 29,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4) 7,500 to 9,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10) 30,000 to 34,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) 10,000 to 12,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11) 35,000 to 39,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6) 12,500 to 14,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12) 40,000 or more |

II. GENERAL HEALTH CARE QUESTIONS

15. Where do you find information on services related to your transgender issues? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Doctor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Blue Pages in phone book | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Counselor/Therapist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Gay Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Newsletters | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) I have difficulty finding TG health care information |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 9) Other (specify) _____ |

16. Do you have any physical or mental disabilities?

☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)

☐ NO (Go to question 17.)

a) If yes, what type? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ 1) Physical ☐ 2) Mental

17. Do you have a regular doctor?

☐ YES

☐ NO

18. Have you ever taken hormones?

☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)

☐ NO (Go to question 20.)

a) If so, did a doctor monitor your hormone levels?

☐ YES

☐ NO

19. Have you ever gotten hormones from a source other than a doctor (from friends, from the "black market," or on the street?)

☐ YES (Go to question 21.)

☐ NO (Go to question 21.)

20. Do you plan to take hormones in your lifetime?

☐ YES

☐ Don't know

☐ NO

21. Which of the following services have you been unable to receive because of cost? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) General medical care | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Gender-related surgery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Prescription medication (not hormones) | <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Counseling/therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Hormones | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Dental care |

22. Do you have health insurance?
 ___ YES (Answer "a" and "b" below.)
 ___ NO (Go to question 23.)

a) Are you in an HMO?
 ___ YES ___ NO

b) Which of the following do you have? (Check all that apply.)
 ___ 1) Medicare
 ___ 2) Medicaid/Medical Assistance
 ___ 3) Neither

23. We would like to know what gender-related procedures or services you have received. Please check "yes" in the second column if you have ever received the service listed. Then, rate the quality of care on a scale from 1 to 5. Also on a scale of 1 to 5, rate how sensitive the doctor/provider was to you as a transgendered person. Circle 1 if the care was extremely poor, circle 3 if it was fair, and circle 5 if the care was excellent.

SERVICE	YES	QUALITY OF CARE	TG SENSITIVITY
Hormones (Endocrinologist)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Electrolysis		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Laser Hair Removal		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Psychotherapy		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Breast removal (mastectomy)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Construction of penis from existing genital tissue (metoidioplasty/genitoplasty)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Construction of penis from other, non-genital tissues (phalloplasty)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Silicone breast implants		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Saline breast implants		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Silicone injections		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Adam's apple shaving		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Vocal cord surgery		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Construction of vagina (vaginoplasty)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Removal of testicles (orchiectomy)		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Facial plastic surgery		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Removal of ribs		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Bones broken or shaved		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Liposuction		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Other:		1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

24. Have you ever been denied medical services because of being transgendered?

☐ YES ☐ Don't know
☐ NO

25. Have you ever had to lie about your sexual activity/preference in order to get gender-related services (from a doctor, therapist, or gender identity program)?

☐ YES
☐ NO

26. Which of the following types of counseling would you use? (Check one.)

☐ 1) Professional counseling only ☐ 3) Both
☐ 2) Peer counseling with TG person only ☐ 4) Neither.

27. Have you received mental health care not related to being transgendered?

☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)
☐ NO (Go to question 28.)

a) If so, has this same mental health provider worked with you on your TG issues?

☐ YES (Go to question 30.)
☐ NO

28. Have you ever seen a therapist to help you with your gender change?

☐ YES
☐ NO

29. Have you ever had difficulty finding a therapist to help with your gender change?

☐ YES
☐ NO

30. Do you know what the Harry Benjamin guidelines are?

☐ YES
☐ NO

31. Have you ever sought treatment for drug or alcohol problems?

☐ YES
☐ NO

32. Have you ever attempted to commit suicide?

☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)
☐ NO (Go to question 33.)

a) If so, was this attempt related to being transgendered?

☐ YES
☐ NO

33. Do you regularly have to educate your medical or mental health provider(s) about your needs as a transgendered person?

☐ YES
☐ NO

III. HIV/AIDS QUESTIONS

34. Do you know your HIV status?

___ YES (Go to question 35)

___ NO (Answer "a" below)

a) If you do not know your HIV status, why? (Check one.)

___ 1) I don't want to know.

___ 2) I am afraid of people knowing my HIV status.

___ 3) I always have safer sex.

___ 4) I don't know where to get free and anonymous testing.

___ 5) I don't want my health insurance to know whether or not I am HIV+.

___ 6) I don't care.

___ 7) I feel healthy, so I don't need to be tested.

___ 8) I am probably HIV -

___ 9) Other _____

IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 51.

35. What is your HIV status?

___ 1) HIV+ (Go to question 36.)

___ 2) HIV- (Go to question 49.)

___ 3) Don't know (Go to question 51.)

36. When did you find out that you are HIV+?

___ 1) Within the last six months.

___ 2) Six months to one year ago

___ 3) One to two years ago

___ 4) More than two years ago

37. How did you become HIV+?

___ 1) I don't know

___ 2) Unprotected sex

___ 3) Shared needles

___ 4) Body modification (tattoos or piercings)

___ 5) Blood transfusion

___ 6) Other (specify) _____

38. What was your most recent CD4 count?

___ 1) Above 500

___ 2) 201 to 500

___ 3) 100 to 200

___ 4) Less than 100

___ 5) Don't know

39. Are you taking any medications to treat HIV/AIDS?

___ YES

___ NO

40. Were these medications prescribed by a doctor?

___ YES (Go to question 41.)

___ NO (Answer "a" below.)

a) If not, where did you get them?

___ 1) Friends

___ 2) Black market

___ 3) Buyers' Clubs

___ 4) Holistic or Alternative Therapists

___ 5) Other _____

41. Has taking hormones and HIV/AIDS medication at the same time ever caused you any pain or health problems?

- ☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)
☐ NO (Go to question 42.)

a) If so, what happened?

42. Have you ever been unable to receive HIV care or services because of cost?

- ☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)
☐ NO (Go to question 43.)

a) If so, which services were you unable to afford?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) HIV/AIDS Primary Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) Medical Supplies (walkers, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) HIV/AIDS Testing | <input type="checkbox"/> 9) Hospitalization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Housing Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 10) Emergency Room Visits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Medical Testing | <input type="checkbox"/> 11) Counseling/Therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Nutritional Supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> 12) In-home health care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 13) Transportation services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) HIV/AIDS Medication | <input type="checkbox"/> 14) Other (specify) _____ |

43. Have you ever been denied HIV care or services because of being transgendered?

- ☐ YES (Answer "a" below.) ☐ Don't know (Go to question 44.)
☐ NO (Go to question 44.)

a) If so, which services were you denied?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Case Management | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) Information about Medical Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2) HIV/AIDS Primary Care | <input type="checkbox"/> 9) Entitlement Services (Social Security, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Housing Services | <input type="checkbox"/> 10) Food Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Financial Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> 11) Counseling/Therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Prescription Drugs | <input type="checkbox"/> 12) Support Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Medical Supplies (walkers, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> 13) In-home health care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> 14) Other (specify) _____ |

44. Have you been denied medical care because of your HIV status?

- ☐ YES ☐ Don't know
☐ NO

45. Have you ever been denied mental health care/counseling because of your HIV status?

- ☐ YES ☐ Don't know
☐ NO

46. Have you ever been denied sex reassignment (transsexual) surgery because of your HIV status?

☐ YES (Answer "a" below.)

☐ NO (Go to question 47.)

☐ Don't know (Go to question 47.)

a) If so, are you still committed to your HIV/AIDS treatment program?

☐ YES

☐ NO

47. We would like to know about the services you have received for HIV/AIDS. Please check "yes" in the second column if you have ever received the HIV/AIDS service listed. In the next column, fill in the name of the service provider. Then, using a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the quality of the service you received. Finally, also using a scale of 1 to 5, rate how sensitive you feel the agency or person was to your issues as a transgendered person. Circle 1 for extremely poor, circle 3 for fair, and 5 for excellent.

SERVICE	YES	AGENCY OR PROVIDER	RATING OF QUALITY	RATING OF TG SENSITIVITY
Case Management			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
HIV/AIDS Primary Care			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Housing Services			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Medical Supplies (walkers, etc.)			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
In-home Health Care			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Transportation			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Financial Assistance			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Information about Medical Resources or Referrals			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Prescription Drugs			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Entitlement Services (Social Security, Legal Assistance, Client Advocacy)			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Food Services			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Counseling/Therapy			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Support Groups			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Prevention and Education			1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

48. Have you ever used alternative healing methods to treat your HIV-related illnesses?

___ YES (Answer "a" below.)

___ NO (Go to question 49.)

a) If so, which alternative healing methods have you used?

___ 1) Chiropractic

___ 2) Homeopathy

___ 3) Acupuncture

___ 4) Massage Therapy

___ 5) Acupressure

___ 6) Herbal Therapies

___ 7) Meal Plans or Change of Diet

___ 8) Osteopathy

___ 9) Meditation

___ 10) Other _____

49. When was your most recent HIV/AIDS test?

___ 1) Within the last six months.

___ 2) Six months to one year ago.

___ 3) One or two years ago.

___ 4) More than two years ago.

___ 5) I am HIV+, so I don't get tested anymore.

50. How often do you get tested for HIV?

___ 1) Every six months

___ 2) Once every year

___ 3) Not often

___ 4) Rarely

___ 5) I am HIV+, so I don't get tested anymore.

___ 6) Other _____

51. Do you know anything about HIVB?

___ YES (Answer "a" below.)

___ NO (Go to question 52.)

a) If so, have you been tested for it?

___ YES (Answer "b" below.)

___ NO (Go to question 52.)

b) If you have been tested, what is your status?

___ 1) HIVB -

___ 2) HIVB +

___ 3) Don't know

52. Have you ever had a blood transfusion, received plasma, or any other blood products?

___ YES

___ NO

(Please go to the next page.)

53. We would like to know about behavior that may put you at risk for HIV/AIDS. In the second column, please circle "yes" if you have ever done the behavior listed; circle "no" if you have never done it. In the next columns, please indicate whether you have done the behavior in the last year or in the last month.

BEHAVIOR	HAVE YOU EVER DONE THIS?	Have you done this in the last YEAR?	Have you done this in the last MONTH?
Put my penis in a vagina without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
in an anus without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Received a penis in my vagina without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
in my anus without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Performed oral sex on a penis without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
on a vagina without a dental dam	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
on an anus without a dental dam	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Received oral sex on my penis without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
on my vagina without a dental dam	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
on my anus without a dental dam	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Had unprotected sexual contact with someone I know is HIV+	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Had unprotected sexual contact knowing that you are HIV+	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Had sexual contact while drunk/high	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Shared sex toys/dildoes without washing the toy or changing the condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Used female-to-male prosthetic penis without a condom	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Shared needles to inject hormones, drugs, or silicone	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
S/M blood sports	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No



**SANTA (AND MONA)
WARMLY INVITES YOU TO
THE 1996 RENAISSANCE
GREATER PHILADELPHIA
HOLIDAY PARTY!**

**PLACE: THE SHIP INN, EXTON, PA.
DATE: MONDAY DECEMBER 23RD, 8 PM TO MIDNIGHT
COST: \$37.00 PER PERSON**

A buffet feast awaits one and all this year, featuring:

TOSSED CAESAR SALAD

**SLICED FILET MIGNON WITH JACK DANIEL'S GREEN
PEPPERCORN SAUCE**

BROILED SALMON WITH DILL SAUCE

**CHICKEN BREAST GRILLED AND SERVED WITH CARMELIZED
RED ONION MARMALADE**

OVEN BROWN POTATOES FRESH GREEN VEGETABLES

ROLLS AND BUTTER ASSORTED CAKES AND PIES COFFEE AND TEA

Entertainment to be provided by Terri [REDACTED] and her blues band along with a DJ!
To secure your reservation, send a check or money order ONLY (made payable to
"Renaissance 1996 Xmas Party") to the Renaissance National Office, 987 Old
Eagle School Road, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19406 no later than December 16th!
No tickets will be sent out, but your name will be on a list at the door! So put on
your party dress and join us for a fun and festive holiday experience!

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CHECK ONE: I WILL _____ I WON'T _____ BE BRINGING A GUEST