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THE TARTAN SKIRT



The Scottish Magazine
for the
Gender Community

New Series No. 12

WARNING

Regular readers will recognise this magazine as the authentic *Tartan Skirt*, published by ADF Editorial Services. Be advised, however, that another publication claiming to be either the *Newsletter of the SCOTTISH TV/TS Group* or *The Magazine of the Scottish TV/TS Groups* has recently appeared, copying both the title *The Tartan Skirt* and the cover and inside title page design of this magazine, and carrying neither the name nor the address of its publisher.

The Editor of the new *Newsletter* has been reminded of the existence of this magazine, and the fact that it is both copyrighted and carries its own International Standard Serial Number, and she has been advised that in its present form her *Newsletter* appears to breach our copyright.

Readers and advertisers are advised that the new *Newsletter*, which apparently has been circulated only at meetings of the Scottish TV/TS Group in Edinburgh, should not be confused with this, the real *Tartan Skirt*, which has been published and sold in bookshops, as well as distributed to subscribers throughout the UK and the USA, continuously for the last three years; nor should the style of the new *Newsletter* be confused with the reputation for production and content built up by this magazine since its inception.

Anne Forrester
Editor

THE TARTAN SKIRT

The Scottish Magazine for the
Gender Community

Editor: Anne Forrester

New Series No. 12

October 1994

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**WHY, OH WHY, MUST WE
 ALWAYS BE FIGHTING
 ONE ANOTHER ?**

by Anne Forrester

I guess that for most of you reading this, The Tartan Skirt is either the only gender publication that you see or it is one of a very small number. I am luckier than most in that I receive most of the main British and American magazines, and it is fascinating to see what topics engage the various editors and the groups with which they work. As I write this, however, I don't know whether to be puzzled or just plain cross at some of the goings-on within the gender community. So this is both an article to make you think about what is being done by others to improve society's willingness to allow you to be yourself, and also a sort of 'open letter' to leaders of the major gender support organisations, who seem not always to be on the same wavelength (or even on the same planet) as the rest of us.

Of course, as you all know, there are a number of organisations within the gender community, some local and some national, some catering primarily for crossdressers and some for transsexuals, and some for all points in the gender spectrum. What they all have in common, though (even although they may not all agree with this) is that they are catering for, and seeking to support and help, people who experience what used to be called gender dysphoria, but which is increasingly being known to health care professionals as gender identity disorder. In either case, the people referred to all have one thing in common - to a greater or lesser extent they find relief in the gender role that is opposite to that conventionally applied to their

genetic sex. (And it is because of the great diversity of situations that are included in this spectrum of activity that labels such as 'transvestite', 'transgenderist', 'transsexual', *etc* that seem to describe discrete and clear-cut identities for different groups of people are so unhelpful).

Nevertheless, because there are different needs depending upon where any individual may be within that broad spectrum, as well as locally-based support groups that are happy to accept and help all shades of gender diversity there are also national organisations that specialise in helping one or another category of what I prefer to think of (using another phrase of American origin) as the gender gifted. Thus there are organisations which cater exclusively for transsexuals, like the Gender Dysphoria Trust International and BM Gentrust in Britain, and the American Educational Gender Information Service - AEGIS - in the USA.

Similarly there are organisations that cater primarily for crossdressers, such as The Beaumont Society, Roses, the Northern Concord and the Scottish TV/TS Group in Britain, and Tri-Ess, Renaissance, and the Boulton & Park Society in America. (And despite whatever protestations these latter organisations may make to the effect that most of them cater for transsexuals as well as crossdressers, the truth is that any such catering may be either very minimal indeed, or sometimes may even result in practise in active dissuasion of transsexuals. No names no pack drill, but any transsexual reading this who has tried attending the meetings of some of these groups will know exactly what I mean !).

The other factor that we should stop to consider at this point is the leadership of the various organisations - and especially those which operate nationally. One phrase that I have heard used in America, too frequently and disparagingly for it to be either mere chance or simple joking, is reference to the 'Queen Bee' who runs this or

that organisation. Usually the people who make such remarks express themselves as profoundly dissatisfied with the way that the particular organisation is run, seemingly (if one is to believe the critics) as a one-woman band for the benefit of the aforementioned leader. However, all too often these critics are the very people who put nothing into the organisations themselves but are constantly asking what it can do for them. (There are some honourable exceptions to this, however, although sadly the reaction of this category of dissident seems to be simply to resign and get out, rather than to challenge whatever it is of which they disapprove and seek to change it). However, it must always be said that whatever else is or is not true of these leaders of the gender community, they are all completely confident in, and happy with, their own gender identities and sexuality - and that is more than can usually be said of all of their critics.

*"leaders of all sorts everywhere
do tend to lead from the front
rather than simply follow"*

Now the trouble with this proliferation of national organisations, each concerned with its own particular constituency and each run by individuals who are both comfortable with their own personal gender and sexual identities, is that they tend to see themselves as being in competition with one another. Indeed, these leaders (in the manner of leaders of all sorts everywhere) do tend to lead from the front rather than simply follow. This fact is complicated by two other factors, each possibly related to the fact that (with only two exceptions in Britain and one in America that I can think of) the leaders of the major gender organisations tend to be genetic males. Now this is a variety of the human species that has as one of its common denominators a (? originally testosterone-induced and then socially reinforced) drive to climb to the top of any

hierarchy in which it finds itself, and also a sharp competitive spirit that sees anything similar to what it regards as its own, as hostile competition that must be attacked and either rendered impotent or (preferably) destroyed.

Now maybe I'm going over the top a little with this simplistic view of genderland - but am I? The reason I ask, and what has prompted this discourse, goes back to two items that I found in those gender magazines I referred to at the beginning. Knowing of the sometimes bitter antagonism between some of the major American gender organisations I was delighted to read of a meeting in America of the National Association for Social Workers in Nashville with an exhibition booth run jointly by the American Education Gender Information Service (AEGIS), the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE), the Outreach Institute for Gender Studies, the Renaissance Education Association, and the Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) - the five major gender organisations in the USA who (with the exception of AEGIS) more usually seem to be more or less at one another's throats for much of the rest of the time. "Marvellous", I thought. "At last, here is a real coming together for the common good. Three hearty cheers".

So what have we to offer in Britain by way of sweet cooperation? Well, the answer to that lies in an exchange of correspondence published in another of the magazines that I received the same week. The Executive Director of the Gender Dysphoria Trust International (GDTI) had written to the other two major British gender organisations suggesting a meeting to consider "issues that are of joint concern" with a view to establishing links between the organisations. Both BM Gentrust and the Beaumont Society replied rejecting the idea of a joint meeting - and in the case of BM Gentrust in terms that could only be described as falling somewhere between curt and rude! "We decline your suggestion" they said, while the Beaumont Society replied that "we see no reason to meet". Such sisterly

concern for the gender community. Such willingness to cooperate for the general good of all gender gifted people. So charming!

Now this is where I shall probably be attracting a great deal of disapproval from those concerned. It so happens that I am on friendly terms with the leaders of two of these three organisations, and I am well aware that there is no love lost between them. Sadly, this is a personal issue rather than simply a matter of competition between the organisations, but it does seem to me that in this case personal ill-feelings are being allowed to spill over into the situation. Shades of that Queen Bee syndrome I spoke about earlier, I wonder?

For goodness sake, ladies, snap out of it

For goodness sake, ladies, snap out of it. Like it or not we belong to a persecuted minority. Never mind how many of us there are (and it may well be around four to four and a half million in the UK alone - most of them too scared even to admit to themselves that they *are* in a closet, let alone able to think about coming out of one); never mind what society claims to say (as distinct from believe) about tolerance; never mind what the churches say about "love thy neighbour as thyself"; and never mind about what we are told about Britain being a free country. **The overwhelming majority of people in Britain today are not only homophobic, they are also profoundly genderphobic, and they fear, and thus hate, everyone who dares to be 'different' - and that means all of us.** No matter that the leaders of our gender community are free to expose themselves in the media, in illustrated magazine articles and on television - for most gender diverse people in Britain the firmly closed door of the closet is about as far out as they will ever dare to come.

If the major gender organisations in America can come together to make common cause, even in a restricted venue like a professional carers' conference, then for goodness sake why can the major gender organisations in Britain not at least meet together to discuss making common cause? Frankly, not only do I not know but I simply can not make any sense of such apparent carry-over into the affairs of the gender community of what seems on the face of it to be motivated by personal enmity and fear of competition, and by people who would be described elsewhere as 'gender gifted'. OK, so we may not all approve of one another's approach to gender problems, nor do we even have to like one another very much, but surely we can at least just try to pull together, at least once in a while.

Do you remember that old saying "United we stand, divided we fall"? Well, that means us, ladies. Think about it, and for goodness sake start showing us some real leadership in the gender community by all pulling in the same direction for a change. Either that, or you may find a groundswell of opinion asking you to stand aside and make way for others who will. ■



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RESCUE FROM MAKEUP DISASTER

So you are getting ready to go out, and then disaster strikes. Something has gone drastically wrong with your makeup, or you break a nail. **HELP!** Well, don't panic, there are a few easy solutions to some of the commoner problems, so read on.

Your foundation has gone streaky or patchy.

Well, it shouldn't if you have put it on carefully, but we all suffer disasters of this sort from time to time. Use a damp cosmetic sponge (and you should **always** use a cosmetic sponge to apply and blend your makeup, anyway). Blend the streaky or patchy areas into a smooth finish, and then lightly apply a layer of translucent powder and smooth it over with a large soft cosmetic brush.

You've used far too much blusher.

Always remember that with makeup the best motto is 'less is better' - it is always easier to add more than it is to take off too much. However, if you *have* used too much then use a tissue to blot off the excess colour and then lightly dust over the area with translucent powder before seeing if you need to re-apply a little more colour to match the other side of your face, or to get the overall effect that you are seeking.

You've plucked your eyebrows, and gone too far in your enthusiasm.

The answer to this one is the same as that used by those who haven't plucked their eyebrows. Use an eyebrow

pencil to fill in the shape that you want. Always use a pencil that matches the colour of your natural eyebrows, and apply gently with light upwards strokes, filling in any gaps so as to produce the shape that you were aiming for when you went overboard with the tweezers.

You've smudged your mascara or eyeliner.

This is one of the commonest problems, and especially if you are using a non-waterproof mascara. Use a slightly moistened cotton bud, dipping it into eye makeup remover if your mascara is moistureproof or waterproof, and carefully sweep away the smudges. A light application of translucent powder will help to cover up the repair.

You've smudged your lipstick.

Yes, it happens all the time, doesn't it? Once again use a cotton bud and carefully sweep away the smudge - and you will need to be **very** careful in order not to make it worse. Finish off by re-outlining the lip shape with a lip pencil, and adding a little more lipstick with a brush. (Actually the best way of preventing smudging in the first place is always to outline the lips first with a lip pencil and then use the same pencil to fill in the shape before applying a layer of powder to the lips *through* a single layer of tissue, and then finally brushing on two coats of lipstick before using a sealer over the top coat).

You've got the face right, and then broken a nail.

If the nail is just torn you may be able to fix it with a drop of nail glue from the acrylic nail kit that you should always keep handy. (There are several on the shelves of most large branches of Boots and Superdrug). If it is too far gone for that you may be able to trim it down with nail clippers and an emery board (and this is often the simplest solution). If it is *really* too far gone, however, and you are going somewhere where you really need good looking

hands, stick a new tip from your acrylic nail kit on to the edge of the nail with the glue supplied, buff down the ridges at the join and then coat the whole nail with liquid acrylic, and if you have already put on nail varnish apply another coat. If you haven't used nail varnish then try putting a coat of clear varnish on to the damaged nail as a final finish. (Of course, if it is an artificial nail then you simply put on another one - and it is a good idea always to have a spare set ready trimmed for your hands and kept in reserve. You may also be glad of these if you lose one of your nails).

AND FINALLY, if things go wrong, don't panic. The beauty of makeup is that it is all easily removed, either with soap and water and any simple cleansing cream (baby lotion is great for the purpose - and cheap, too). When it comes to the eyes, however, you may like to use a special eye makeup remover, and nail varnish remover pads are convenient and easy to use - but be careful to get all the coloured varnish off the quills at the base of your nails. So if all else fails, clean it all off and start again. ■

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FEMINIST CORNER

Can you blame them for getting upset ?

"If we had left it to the men *toilets* would have been the greatest obstacle to human progress. *Toilets* was always the reason women couldn't become engineers, or pilots, or even members of Parliament. They didn't have women's toilets". *Rebecca West (1892-1983)*.

"It is the highest and eternal duty of women - namely, to sacrifice their lives and to seek the good of their husbands". *Mahabharata (Hindu text c.400BC-200AD)*.

"If you have a female child, set her to sewing and not to reading, for it is not suitable for a female to know how to read unless she is going to become a nun". *Paolo da Certaldo (14th Century)*.

"The whole education of women should be relative to man. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to be useful to him, to make themselves loved and honoured by him, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be taught from her infancy. Woman was made to yield to man and put up with his injustice". *Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1728)*.

"Even if woman possessed a brain equal to man's - if her intellectual powers were equal to his - the eternal distinction in the physical organisation of the sexes would make the average man in the long run, the mental superior of the average woman. In intellectual labour, man has surpassed, does now, and always will surpass woman". *J.M.Allan (1869)*. ■

FULL OF FRAGRANCE

CHOOSING - AND USING - A PERFUME

by Anne Forrester

One of the nicest things that has happened to me while staying in a hotel *en femme* was when a maid came in to make up my room and spontaneously said "Oh madam, I do love your perfume; may I ask which it is ?". There's no doubt about it, for that special event or a special night out, when you are all dressed up in your finest party dress and laden with glittering jewellery, the ideal finishing touch is a hint of perfume. Not too much, you understand, but just enough for your escort and the men around you to cast appreciative looks. Perfumes are supposed to be the ultimate feminine touch, the indication that here is a woman of elegance and taste. Wrongly chosen or overdone, perfume can just seem cheap, but the right perfume for you, used discretely, can create an aura of absolute femininity that will leave you confident in your attractive appearance. Be warned, however ! Perfumes can often be seductive, and you must be careful not to give out the wrong signals to the wrong people.

Many crossdressers - and some pre-op transsexuals - are wary of wearing a perfume, often because they are worried that the fragrance will linger on and be detected when they have returned to being pumpkins at the witching hour; and that those who are not 'in the know' may then detect the aroma and suspect all sorts of things (including a wife's suspicions that there is another woman after all !). However, "be not afraid", for if you have been suitably discrete with your choice of fragrance and its application, a good hot shower or bath, and careful washing, will remove all traces of the scent. (Alternatively if you live alone, or

with an accepting partner, you can simply use a matching perfumed talc after your bath or shower).

So how do you know which of the many fragrances on the market to choose, and how to use it ? Well, first you must appreciate that a perfume consists of essential oils, fixatives and alcohols: it is how they are put together that makes them different. And secondly you must understand the different formats in which these fragrances are marketed: there is perfume (the real thing, and usually horrifically expensive), *eau de toilette* (sometimes called *eau de parfum*; somewhat more diluted with alcohols and much more reasonably priced), and bath oils and perfumed talcs (which scarcely count if you want to impress others - but lovely for pampering yourself with).

"...lovely for pampering yourself with"

The other thing that you must understand is that no perfume smells exactly the same on any two different people, and that your own skin's acidity - and thus its reaction with a perfume - can vary from time to time with age, emotion, and even hormonal changes. The final impression of the perfume will in any case change subtly over time as it is absorbed by your skin. In fact, it always takes a few seconds to get the first impression of the fragrance, and it may take several hours for the basic 'note' of the perfume to reveal itself. Consequently it is no use listening to the advertising 'blurbs' and picking one that is said to be 'sensuous', or 'summery', or 'like an autumn breeze' - or anything else that sounds exotic. On you, it may be something totally different and smell terrible.

It is also a waste of time going for the most expensive (if you can afford it), for a recent industry survey found that the price of a perfume is made up of only 2% for the perfume, 3% for the packaging, 5% for distribution, but

25% for marketing, and a massive 65% as sheer profit ! Also, the most expensive is not necessarily the most popular. Another recent survey in which four popular brands were tested 'blind' on a number of people at random found that the *most* popular was the *cheapest* of those tested (£3.55 for a 15 ml spray of *Ananya* from the Body Shop), while the least popular was the highest priced and one of the most 'hyped' by the marketing gurus (Elizabeth Taylor's *White Diamond*, priced at £19.50 for a 30ml spray of *eau de parfum*, and up to £150 for 1oz of pure perfume. It was described by one [female] tester who did not know what it was as "Disgusting - soapy, horrible").

So how do you set about picking the perfume that is right for you ? Well, the only answer is to test them for yourself, and you can do this in almost any large drugstore (such as the larger branches of Boots and Superdrug). The trick is to apply a small amount to the inside of your wrist or the back of your hand, and then leave it for a minute or two to adapt to your skin before sniffing it. However, the nose is a peculiar organ and rapidly becomes 'deadened' to new smells, so you really can not try more than two, or at most three, fragrances at a time. (Obviously, you should not be wearing any other perfume at the time). Consequently it may take several trips to the sampler bottles on the perfume counter before you find the one that you feel is really 'YOU'

So having picked your perfume, how do you wear it ? Well, there are two main points to consider: 1) where to apply it, and 2) do be sure *not* to overdo it. The classical answer to where to apply it is anywhere that veins are visible - or alternatively, on or near the 'pulse' points of your body. This generally means the inside of your wrist, behind the ears and the knees, around the neck (avoiding the top of the neckline), and also - for more sensuous reasons - between the breasts. You can also spray a little on your hair, BUT if you wear a wig be sure that the material will not be damaged by the chemicals in the perfume.

Trying not to overdo it is more difficult, as it is not easy to tell for yourself when you are wearing a noticeable, but not overbearing, amount of perfume. As with makeup, the safest general rule is that 'less is better than more'. A single short spray onto each of your pulse points will generally be sufficient, even if you do not think that you smell strongly enough. Remember, you are simply trying to apply a hint of an attractive aroma, and not to drown the smell of an unwashed body (we hope !).

When applying your perfume do be aware of the possible effect of some fragrances on clothing. Remember, they are basically mixtures of chemicals, and as they are oily they can also stain some fabrics. Try especially to avoid spraying any perfume on synthetic materials and furs. If you are fully dressed when applying your perfume, to be on the safe side spray from a distance for areas near your clothing.

And finally, do be aware that perfumes very readily 'go off'. They do not store well, and when opened and exposed to air they rapidly lose their character. Bottles should be stored in the coolest and shadiest places possible, avoiding any direct heat or light (for example, avoid sunny shelves by windows in the bathroom, or shelves on the top of radiators), and always screw the tops of bottles back tightly to avoid air getting in to the scent.

So there it is. There is a certain magic about perfumes, it is true; but you should not be afraid to go out and try them. Remember that you don't have to pay a fortune to obtain some very nice fragrances indeed - and for that special occasion it really is the nice finishing touch that makes you feel so utterly feminine. ♥ ☺ ♥



WHAT'S THAT WORD ?

- a wander through the alphabet

G is for Gender. Very different from 'Sex' - although even most health care professionals don't seem clear about that difference. Basically, while sex is what is between the legs, gender is what is between the ears. Sex is determined by your genes - so a 'sex change' is just not possible, and what is meant when people talk about this is *gender reassignment* (or, as many transsexuals would have it, *gender correction*). Basically, gender is about how you perceive yourself, and not whether you have outside or inside plumbing.

H is for Hormones. A range of complex chemicals that drive our behaviour and make us act in a typically male or female fashion. All males have some female hormones and all females have some male hormones - but in each case some have more of one than the other. The principal male hormone (and the cause of all male aggression - and thus of most of the troubles of this world) is Testosterone, and the principal female hormone is Oestrogen (or Estrogen if you went to school in America).

I is for Imitation. Described as 'the sincerest form of flattery', this is basically what cross-dressing is all about. (In the case of transsexuals, however, who are essentially individuals of one gender trapped in the wrong type of body, it could be said that their *persona* in their original genetic sex is the imitation !).

How true ! (seen on a button badge):

"Ignorance is the most dangerous thing in society"

PEOPLE MAKE TERMINOLOGY, THEN TERMINOLOGY MAKES PEOPLE*

by Virginia Prince PhD

Rather an odd title, isn't it ? But if you think about it a bit I think you will get the idea. Somebody invents a term that they think appropriate to describe some state, condition, or behavior manifested by humans. Then the term takes on a life of its own in the sense that it begins to be used in a lot of ways the originator never intended or expected. And people who really don't fit under the term begin to think it fits them and act accordingly. In turn, the term gets into the general public parlance and people to whom it doesn't really apply start to think they really understand its meaning and begin to throw it around indiscriminately. Next, people for whom it was not intended are tarred with the same brush and the term, instead of enlightening people as it was intended to do, begins to cloud the issue and confuse more than enlighten.

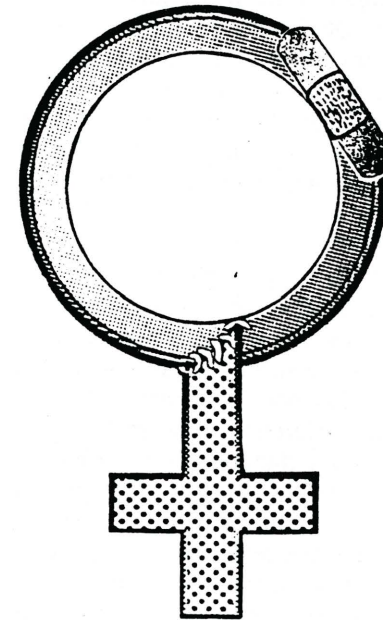
So what term am I talking about, you ask ? Before mentioning it I may point out that the above is a generalization, and many examples could be thought of to which this process would apply. In the case of the moment I refer to the term that almost everyone who is involved in crossdressing has been a victim of, and the clouding of the issues rather than the enlightenment intended by the inventor of the term.

Back in the late 60s or early 70s - I can't remember which - I was attending one of the early meetings of what later became known as the Harry Benjamin Gender Dysphoria Association at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

At that session Dr Norman Fisk, a psychiatrist at Stanford Medical School, delivered a paper on transsexuality because that was what the whole session was about. In it he presented his newly coined term of 'Gender Dysphoria'. I went up to him afterward and asked him the following double question:

Dr Fisk, If you believe that these people (the transsexuals) truly suffer from gender discomfort, as your term dysphoria implies, why is surgery indicated ? Gender is a psycho-social matter and no amount of surgery can directly change it. On the other hand, if you believe that sex reassignment surgery is really an appropriate treatment

for them, then why isn't the term 'sexual dysphoria' more appropriate ? Of course, I was only a lowly, non-medical person (PhDs don't count for too much to those with MDs) and on top of that I was a crossdresser, so how could anything I had to say be of any significance ? I don't remember his actual reply now, twenty years later, but it was clear to me that 1) he didn't really understand the point I was trying to make, because 2) he really didn't understand the difference between sex and gender.



Let's say a man (it could be you) is unhappy, uncomfortable and unsatisfied with having to live up to his expected masculine gender role. Wouldn't common sense

suggest that something should be done to counsel him in how to accept his socially expected gender role and help him to fit into masculine society comfortably ? Or, if that was unsuccessful, to assist him in changing his life style from the masculine to the feminine gender role and adapting "herself" to it ? How could cutting off his genitals help him in living that role ?

If, on the other hand, he insists that he doesn't like being a male and would prefer to be female, then such surgery might possibly help him. But since he was dysphoric about his sexual anatomy, and it is a change in genital anatomy that is accomplished in sex change surgery, why not call a spade a spade and acknowledge that he was really a victim of sexual dysphoria ? You, dear reader, if you are a crossdresser but not a transsexual, are truly gender dysphoric. I mean this in the sense that you are not totally happy with the requirements and limitations of your masculine gender role and thus opt from time to time to switch over out of the dysphoria and enjoy the euphoria of your feminine gender role.

So I am not unhappy with applying the term to crossdressing persons, but I am very unhappy with coining it originally for the TS population for who it is not a true or appropriate term. This just illustrates again that the professional people back then did not - and many of them still do not - understand the difference between sex and gender. So when I tried to point that out to Dr Fisk he couldn't get it. The result is that TVs, TGs and TSs are all tarred with the same brush (same term). This means that we are all taken to be much the same and there is no great attempt on the part of the psychiatric establishment to separate TGs from the TSs, or for them to work out useful counselling techniques for those not interested in surgery.

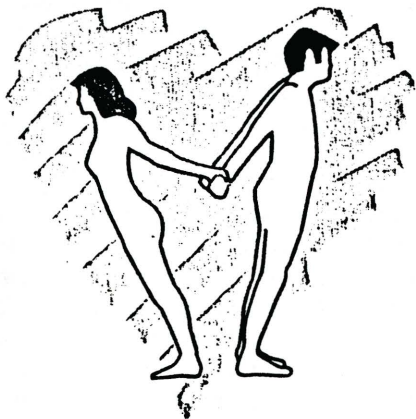
Now I don't mean to imply that there are not smart therapists of one school or another that do know the difference between TGs (transgenderists) and TSs, but they

are the exceptions, not the rule. Since, according to them we all have the same condition *i.e.* gender dysphoria, how can appropriate treatment for those seeking surgery be separated from the treatment for those that don't seek anatomical alteration ? The answer is that it isn't, because while individual psychiatrists and psychologists may make a distinction between these two types of people, the professionals as a whole do not. Clearly TGs and TSs are not the same, at least in their own self-designation. So terminology here obscures rather than clarifies. The profession is likely to consider that those requesting surgery are really latent homosexuals who can't bring themselves to have sex with a male while they are males themselves. But since persons with vaginas are expected to enjoy sex with males, when TSs have had their surgery they are expected to want to have sex with males like other vaginal persons. They either don't realize or don't want to acknowledge that there are a great many operated TSs that continue to be attracted to females, so there are apparently two types of TSs, those whose sexual orientation remains the same as it was before surgery and those who wish to become functionally female, not only anatomically but sexually.

At the very same conference where Dr Fisk reported his new term I read a paper entitled "Transsexuals and Pseudotranssexuals". "Pseudo-" of course means false, and I was trying to distinguish between those who sought surgery primarily to become functional females and those who had it because their real motive was genderal; *i.e.* they wanted to be able to live as women and thought that the only way they could do that was to get rid of their male organs.

It is apparently very difficult to get the idea over to both professionals and lay persons alike that there are three separate *continua* that define people and not just two. Sexual anatomy is the most obvious, and sex object choice is the second. But gender choice and desired lifestyle is the

third. Any two will not do it; it takes all three to properly define and classify an individual.



Some of our own people are also not too clear on the differences between sex and gender either. Much concern is expressed by various members of the community about "transvestism" being listed in the *DSM-III-R (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders)* published by the American Psychiatric Association. I can't get worked up about the listing and I wish our well-meaning sisters would spend some of that energy trying to get the editors of the *DSM* to separate and distinguish between sexual dysphoria and gender dysphoria. When the two groups are referred to as transvestites and transsexuals the fact that they are not the same thing is clear because they have two different names. But when they are both listed under the same diagnostic term, *i.e.* "gender dysphorics", there is no apparent difference between them, except possibly in degree or intensity, and this just perpetuates the ignorance and confusion about crossdressing behavior.

The symptoms of headache, upset stomach and diarrhea are characteristic of a number of different diseases. But if all sufferers from such symptoms were classified as having

"HSI" (Head, Stomach and Intestine) disease, there would be little progress in medical diagnostics.

I am also not too happy with the term "gender conflicted", also used as a catch-all. It is reasonably appropriate for crossdressers who have not been able to accept themselves as they are. Until they learn to do so there is a degree of conflict between their masculine and their feminine selves. But once they come to realize that their feminine side is really just another part of themselves there should be no conflict. They then become true bigenderists, meaning that they are able to express both sides of themselves and do so comfortably. When they reach that stage there is no longer any conflict regarding the genders because they accept both.

All this is a perfect example of how badly we need either to invent new terms or make up a clear and clean glossary of the terms used in our total culture. We all seek some sort of understanding and acceptance by the larger society. But how can we hope to get it when we are all lumped into the same diagnostic system ?

Let's all be more positive. I suggest that heterosexual crossdressers - or what I have called bigenderists - disavow the use of the term "gender dysphoria". Let us do this 1) to get out from under the classification that usage has now made almost synonymous with transsexuality and separate ourselves as an independent phenomenon, and 2) to realize that we all cross-dress because we enjoy it and feel better when we do it. So, since we are not unhappy with our feminine gender, why not express our happiness and satisfaction with the role by referring to ourselves as Gender Euphorics, persons who suffer (?) from a condition of self-acceptance and feeling good about ourselves. Let's accentuate the positive, discard the negative and promote the new condition of "Gender Euphoria".

* Reprinted from Cross-Talk (Woodland Hills, Ca, USA), #54

YET MORE ABOUT LABELS

Yes, I know, we have all had rather a lot lately about the labels people put on us, but the following comments by Cindy, which originally appeared in the Minneapolis *CLCC NEWS* back in 1988, made a further very valid point and are worth pondering.

Cindy said "I have become disenchanted with...dividing ourselves into specific groups within the spectrum of transgender feelings...We proceed to apply labels and draw boundaries to ensure that everyone under a particular label knows what behaviour patterns are expected (in order) to remain true to his or her label...I have yet to find a label that truly defines my personal feelings...I see elements of myself under a variety of labels. By pinning these labels on ourselves we run the risk of compromising our own feelings, or channeling our actions (consciously or subconsciously) to fit the generally accepted definition of the label".

Cindy clearly felt that once given a label, we tend to behave in the way that others perceive to be the correct pattern for those carrying that label. In other words if one is labelled a "transvestite" then there is a tendency to fit the image of one who cross-dresses for sexually fetishistic purposes rather than any other motivation. And if one is labelled "transsexual" then one is expected to behave like a man who has had a "sex change" rather than as a woman - and all too often, sadly, this is what may happen.

The answer, of course, is to forget all about labels and just be ourselves. As Jed Bland said in his book *The Gender Paradox*, "I am not a label, I am a person". And Amen to that ! ♀♂

THE NAME OF THE GAME

by Anne Forrester

I know about me, but how do you like to call yourself ? Are you a *Miss* or a *Mrs* - or do you describe yourself as a *Ms* ? Personally I have never been very happy about this last one, as I shall explain later, but I certainly don't see why, unlike men, women need to have different titles depending upon whether we are or are not married.

I really started thinking about this at a convention in America a couple of years ago when I was honoured to be called on to say the grace before a large audience at a rather formal luncheon, and was introduced as "Miss". Now because that term "Miss" generally carries the connotation of a young lass I suppose that I was flattered - after all, if pushed on the subject I describe myself as "60-something, going on 40". However, as I was wearing a wedding ring on the third finger of my left hand, and because I had put in enough hard slog some years ago to have earned myself a PhD, I guess that I had expected to be called "Dr", or at least "Mrs", if not simply "Anne" - but no, it was "Miss".



So why do we use - let alone need - these different labels ? The English speaking world is certainly not alone in this: after all, the French distinguish between *Madame* and *Mademoiselle*; the Germans have their *Frau* and *Fraulein*; and the Spanish call their ladies either *Señora* or *Señorita* - so just what is wrong with *Mrs* and *Miss* ? Well, that was the distinction that troubled the first modern feminists of a few decades back when they

picked on the half-way-house of *Ms*. But as I said previously, I just don't like it - at least, not the way it is currently used.

You see, just as *Dr* is an abbreviation of *Doctor* (of either gender), and *Mr* is an abbreviation of *Master* (although originally applied only to those gentlemen who had a little education and had [at least a veneer] of manners - which today may eliminate quite a few of the not-so-gentle men amongst us), so *Mrs* is simply an abbreviation of "Mistress". Just where *Miss* came from I don't rightly know.

All right, so nowadays we tend to think of *Mistress* as a term to describe the female sexual partner of a man who is married to another woman. However, the word has a much more honourable antecedence, being the term used way back in the good old days to describe any lady who did not have a title (generally acquired through a man - either her husband or her father - naturally !). If you want an easy example, then just think of Shakespeare's *Mistress Quickly*. Well, as I see it, if a man who is the sexual partner of a woman who is married to another man can be described as her *lover*, why don't we simply use this word in both directions ? It certainly seems a suitably androgynous term for the purpose, even if the motivation of the relationship is more likely to be lust rather than love. In any case, such terms are pretty superfluous nowadays, and one simply refers to ones partner.

So what have I got against the term *Ms* ? Well, quite simply it is neither a word in its own right (like *Miss*) nor an abbreviation (like *Mr*, *Mrs* and *Dr*). Despite the fact that few people seem to bother about English grammar nowadays, you simply can not have a word in English that does not contain even a single vowel. (And if you don't think that this matters, just try pronouncing "words" like *DS* or *KP*): so how are you supposed to pronounce *Ms* ? All right, I know that most people say *Miz*, but if that is

what the "word" is, why not *spell* it "Miz", and give up the pretence that it is a bit of *Mrs* and a bit of *Miss*, but not really exactly like either ?

Much more to the point, coming back to what troubled our feminist sisters of yesteryear, why do we need separate terms in the first place to distinguish the married from the unmarried of one sex but not of the other ? Men seem to get along very well without this distinction, so why can't the superior sex ? I guess it really all goes back to the bad old days (at least 20 years ago - or maybe even last week) when men regarded women as mere chattels, and needed labels to indicate which of us were fair game for their philandering and which were the "property" of others. Well, I don't think that idea goes down too well with most women today, do you ?

So what can we do about it ? Well, as I don't go along with the idea of *Ms* as an unpronounceable word in its own right, why not simply adopt it as the abbreviation of the good old term *Mistress*, and let those who want to refer to extra-marital relationships do so in some other way. Then, instead of being addressed at work or in shops and restaurants as (*e.g.*) "Misses (*Mrs*) Smith" or "Miss Jones" - or even "Miz (*i.e.* *Ms*) Brown" - there would be the much more dignified equivalent of "Mistress Quickly", as was the custom in the highlands of Scotland until quite recent times, when one would be very likely to be introduced to the Minister's wife as (for example) "Mistress MacDonald".

For that matter, what is wrong with our given names ? I have no problem with being called "Mistress Forrester", but I would much sooner simply be called "Anne" than "Mrs" or "Miss" - and definitely *not* "Miz" (or should it be "Muz" ?). And if we want a little more formality (and respect) from the menfolk, then they can treat me like they treat the Speaker of the house of Commons. Do you remember what she said when asked what she should be called ? She simply said "Call me Madam" ! ☺



HAVE YOU READ ?

Some Books Reviewed

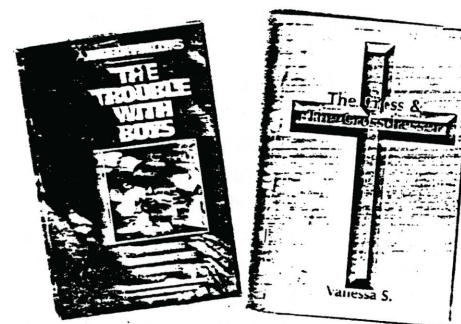
The Trouble With Boys by Angela Philips. London: Pandora (Harper Collins). 1993. ISBN 0-04-440870-6. £ 7.99. pbk.

I suppose that one thought that occupies us for much of the time is just why men are generally so very different in their manners and behaviour from women? Of course, we know that men are (mostly) rough, tough, self-reliant and 'macho', while women are (also mostly) quiet, gentle, and caring for others. Well, it will not come as any surprise to realise that we are largely what we have been made by our upbringing. We must all know small boys who are gentle and caring as well as those who are rough and boisterous - indeed, we were probably in the gentle and caring mould ourselves when small. This fascinating book looks at just why the gentle small boy may become a tough and uncaring tearaway, and then grow into the typical 'macho man'.

At first glance it seems odd that as boys are mostly brought up by, and in the company of, women when they are young, they then change completely into the typical male with all the associated *machismo*. Angela Philips believes that it is precisely because of the predominantly female surroundings of home and nursery school, together with the relatively brief presence of his father before bedtime (or not at all in the case of single parent families) that most boys are left without a role model of what it means to be a man - so they copy instead their peers at school. Here they find that those boys who have very 'macho' or ill-behaved fathers force themselves into positions as leaders of the pack, and they then act as the role models for the previously more gentle boys, who themselves then become rough, tough, and often ill-behaved.

So it seems that the few aggressively 'macho' males in the community pass on their behaviour patterns to the many of the next generation. Of course, if we could somehow break the chain we would probably find that genetic males, while more naturally aggressive than females (due to their much higher levels of testosterone), are also capable of much better behaviour than they generally exhibit under today's conditions. Just what we can do to bring this about, however, is an unanswered question.

This book is very readable and utterly fascinating, and will probably join a small number of others (*Sex and the Brain*, *Brain Sex*, and *You Just Don't Understand*) that should be required reading for all who are seriously interested in, or concerned professionally with, cross-dressing and transsexualism. Highly recommended.



The Cross and the Crossdresser by Vanessa S. Creative Design Services, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, Pa 19406, USA. 1993. ISBN 1-880715-15-5. US\$ 11.00. pbk.

Something that most worries crossdressers brought up in a traditional Christian environment is whether their cross-dressing is 'wrong' in the sight of God, as it all too often is in the eyes of their church. (Indeed, as with so many other matters, institutionalised Christianity has very much to answer for in its general intolerance of anyone

who dares to be 'different'). The churches usually base their attitude on a solitary Bible passage in *Deuteronomy*; 22:5 - "...neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God". Now there are many reasons why this should not concern crossdressers, not the least of which is that Jesus replaced the old Jewish covenant with a new covenant, which is the one that applies to Christians. Indeed, neither do the churches seem over concerned with the first part of *Deuteronomy*; 22:5, which says that "*The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man*; let alone other prohibitions in *Deuteronomy*, which include instructions to stone to death any woman who is not a virgin when she marries [22: 13-21], as well as *any* "stubborn and rebellious son" [21: 18-21] - which latter point might have cut short quite a few of our careers !

This short (48 page) book, written by a committed Christian, seeks to put the situation in perspective and to offer comfort for the Christian crossdresser who is torn between the teachings of his church and his need to cross-dress. As one who has long given up any belief that the institutional Christian churches have anything at all to do with Christian love and charity as Christ Himself taught, I find it hard to understand the complete lack of logic of Biblical fundamentalists, and so have little sympathy with views which place crossdressers (and others who fall foul of such views) in such a deep dilemma.

If you are yourself a committed Christian who takes the Bible as your rule of life, and also a crossdresser who has difficulties coming to terms with this conflict, then this book should most certainly offer you help, support and comfort. If your Christian beliefs are more temperate, and you realise the absurdities of some of the highly selective fundamentalist arguments against cross-dressing, then you may find it a little patronising. In any event, it will certainly be a valuable reference work for all those who are involved in counselling crossdressers.

BOYS AND GIRLS

*Some annotated quotations from the book
"The Trouble With Boys" (reviewed on page 28)*

"Why is it that, although men still control governments, industry and the law, one man in three (in Britain) will have committed a crime by the age of 30 ? Why do men so outnumber women among the down-and-outs while, at the same time, they still earn, on average, 25 per cent more than women do for an hour's work ? If men run society in their own interests why are our jails full of men ? Why are men more often victims of violence than women ? Why are more men than women murdered ? Why is it that more men than women take the way out of the totally desperate by killing themselves, and why do so many take out their frustration and despair on the women to whom they turn for comfort ?" (*Why indeed ?*)

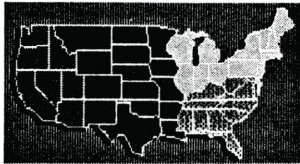
"What women have is power of a kind. It is a way of working that builds on mutual concern. It will create few stars because it is not designed to promote the few but to sustain the many. It is the power of intimacy that women have passed down in just the same way as men have passed down to each other the power that comes from distance. I suspect that this kind of power also does the women of these communities far more good than the power of the bottle and the fist does for the young men who roam its streets". (*Which is one reason why we envy them*).

"A girl can dress up as a fairy princess or wear trainers and jeans, or she can switch between the two and no one will worry about her 'femininity'. A boy is forced to sublimate all his love of beautiful colours and textures if he is to become one of the boys". (*Which explains a lot - and is another reason why we envy them*).

"For a boy, pretty is what you look at, not what you are". (*But we do try !*). ☺



FROM ACROSS THE POND



- A LETTER FROM AMERICA

By Bonnie Lynne Betz

Summer is coming to an end and thoughts are turning to Fall, which can be such a pretty time of the year here in the Eastern United States. This summer has turned out to be one of the hottest on record and normally I would be miserable about the heat. Oddly enough, I have been so very happy even with the heat. I did things this summer that I have never done before, and the heat did not bother me because I was doing all my new-found things as a woman. Things in my life have become so regular that work has become mundane again. Everyone I come into contact with has treated me with all the courtesy in the world. (I have even noticed how truly acclimated I am to my new life because I am being treated as a 'second class citizen' just like every other woman in the world. And you know what? I really enjoy it). I have moved into another phase of my life and the wonderful end is getting close at hand. Today is September 13th, and in five months I will complete my entire journey: I will have reached the end of the line and my train will go no further. I have found my station in life.

That brings up an interesting thought - when do you know what station is the correct station for you? After all, this is your journey into life and once past a certain station on the train route there is no going back. You must *know*, so that you don't become stranded with no return ticket. Let me try to pass on some of my thoughts and see if they help.

In our gender community we all get on the train together. As the train pulls out we are all a little afraid of the unknown, but we stick it out - at least as far as the next stop. While we are on this train we ponder some thoughts about ourselves. Are we along just for the ride? Do we want to get off again as soon as possible, only to try again and get off again? Or do we stay on the train longer than we should? Each time we stay on board we lose people and become more alone with ourselves, until there comes a point somewhere along the track that we notice the other set of tracks disappearing, and there is no way back: we are committed to staying on the train. Now comes the agony in all of us - how do we know which is our station? Let me try to help...

Think how you feel about the feminine person inside you. When you think about her do you *wish* you were her or do you really *know* you are that person? If you only wish you were a woman, then by all means never go on that train ride aiming to go all the way. You will be sorry for having taken the trip. Remember what words you use to describe the feminine side of yourself. Do you say things like "I *need* to be her because I am her", or "I *must* go all the way because I must do this for the real person", or "I *need* to live happily the rest of my life". The key words you are using here are "*need*" and "*must*", and these are telling you whether you are looking for some temporary emotional relief or if you want a new life that allows you to be your true self.



As you may have noticed, I did not once say anything there about the need to wear feminine clothes, or how comfortable you may feel in these clothes, or how much better you feel when you put these clothes on your body. Knowing you are indeed a woman, and that is your life, has nothing to do with wearing female attire: you wear female attire because you would look silly *without* any clothes on at all. In all seriousness, you wear female attire because

that is who you are. If you only wish or only think about how you would be as a woman, then make sure you never have your ticket punched to go to the end of the line. If you feel better dressing as a woman, or feel emotional relief in feminine clothes, then make sure that your ticket allows you to get off *before* the end of the line.

What I am describing can save you many more heartaches than you ever thought possible. Taking the train past a certain point on the line takes you beyond a point of no return. Certain decisions in your gender life do not allow you to return home. Going past the point of no return is travelling with a select group of people who do not want to return, and this group have stamped on their tickets one simple yet immense word...

TRANSSEXUAL

You can not afford to make any mistakes because this is your life that you are dealing with. The gender train stops at many good and wonderful stations long before it reaches the last few outposts. Ride the train in comfort, be who you are and be comfortable with that. If you are not part of the small group that is destined to ride the entire line **please do not attempt to persuade yourself that you are**. Be happy that you can return to your masculine side once your emotions are at ease. Be happy that you can experience your feminine side and still be able to function in society without having to take that long journey to the end of the line. Believe me, I do not wish what I am going through on anyone else, but for me this trip to the end of the line is the trip of a lifetime. In fact it is my life, and without this ride I would certainly never have the life that I was meant to have.

So to close this edition of *Across the Pond* the message is just be yourself and be happy with yourself. Don't ridicule others because they are or are not transsexuals, and do not wonder why others would have surgery to alter their

bodies. Allow everyone to live the life that is comfortable for them. When another person arrives at their desired station, make them feel that the trip was well worth it and that the people they travelled with were some of the nicest people in the world. If you are one of those who will go on to the end of the line and are just starting your journey, be happy in this knowledge - life will be so much happier than ever before. Look out of the window as things pass by, because you will never see them in the same light again. For transsexuals there is no looking back, only the hope of a bright and wonderful future.

Well, with that I will close this article and let you all know that I have met many wonderful people on the gender train, and have never once doubted their sincerity. I have made sure that I have bid all who have gotten off ahead of me a fond farewell and an enjoyable life. As for me, I have a clear track ahead 'to the end of the line'.

See you again soon.

Bonnie



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Who says I'm not a woman ?

"The state of my genitals is nobody's business but my own. It has very little to do with how others relate to me, or how I identify myself. *I am a woman* and I will not tolerate anyone either openly stating or indirectly implying that I'm not"

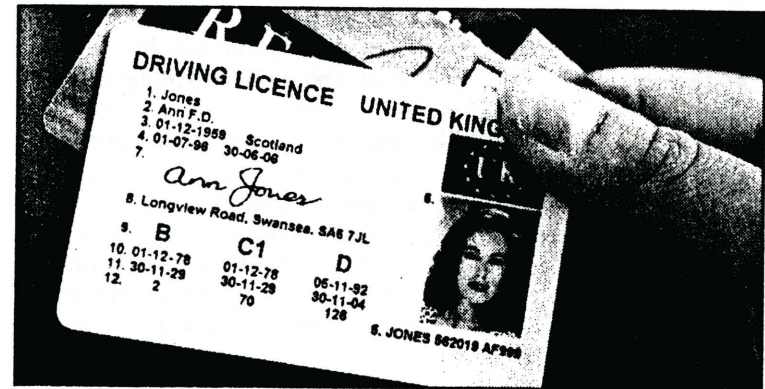
Sawn Koro

YOUR PHOTOGRAPH ON YOUR DRIVING LICENCE !

For any crossdresser or transsexual making their first journey outside it often seems safer to go for a drive in the car - and indeed, for most transsexuals and those crossdressers who go out and about frequently while dressed, driving a car is probably an everyday occurrence. The main worry for most people who drive while cross-dressed is that you may be stopped by the police - either as a result of an accident or a traffic offence, or even as part of a roadside check on vehicle safety. (I was once stopped at a road block surrounding the city, as a dangerous prisoner had just escaped from a local high-security jail, and *every* car entering or leaving the city was being searched). The worry then is that one may be 'read', and in any case asked for a driving licence. Usually this need be no problem. Of course, the answer is that you simply 'come clean' with the officer and give your true name and address, if necessary explaining your appearance in terms of your gender lifestyle (or, if it is in the evening and you are too embarrassed to do this, by saying that you are going to/coming from a fancy dress party). You then have fifteen days to produce your licence at any police station of your choice, so you can do so - well away from your home area if you prefer - and appear in the role of your genetic sex.

A recent announcement that in future all British driving licences will carry the owner's photograph must surely have set many of your hearts fluttering, as the photograph will be of you in your genetic sex 'mode', while you may well be driving your car while cross-dressed; and this could well lead to problems. The proposed design of the new driver's licence (apparently yet another aspect of

'harmonisation' with European Union practice, as seemingly it will also show the European Union emblem of a ring of gold stars on a blue background) will carry the owner's photograph, name, address, date and place of birth, date of expiry of the licence, and details of the classes of vehicle the owner is licensed to drive.



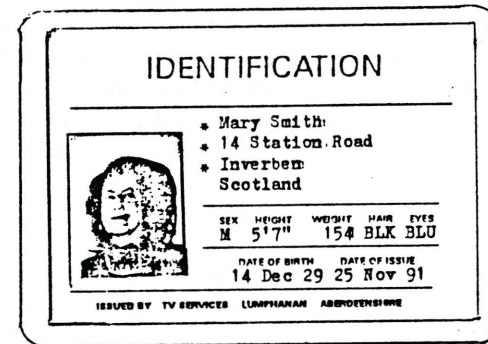
Of course, civil liberties groups have quickly risen and complained about the introduction of identity cards by a back-door route, but there are a few points to be noted. Firstly, Britain is one of the very few nations left which does **not** have a photographic driving licence, and our sisters in other countries where these have long been in use (for example the USA, Canada, and even within the United Kingdom, in Northern Ireland) seem to have no particular problem with the concept. Secondly, there are already other forms of photographic cards in use in Britain. For example, the Royal Bank of Scotland issues photo-ID credit cards to those of its customers who want them. And thirdly - and most importantly - the proposal is to *issue* photographic licences: there is no proposal (at present, anyway) to require that they be carried at all times. Hence, as long as you have given your true name and address you will still have those fifteen days in which to go home, change, and present yourself at a police station of your choice in an appearance that matches the photograph on your licence.

Of course, there are a number of more general worries that will concern many people, irrespective of gender orientation. Cards of the type proposed - similar to a credit card - can be fitted with a memory chip to turn them into a 'smart card' that would enable police to have instant access to a driver's record. These 'smart card' chips could hold not only details of previous motoring convictions, health problems, wishes concerning organ donation, *etc.*, but could in fact carry up to 22 pages of text with anything at all about you that 'Big Brother' wanted to have on record. However, that is an issue that may have to be argued separately, as would any proposal that cards must 1) be carried at all times, or 2) that similar cards should be issued to all non-drivers, to provide a *de facto* national identity card. (And remember, only around half of the British population have a driving licence anyway, so at present there are around thirty million British people who will not be affected).

The new type of driving licence is due to be introduced in about two years time, at first to provisional licence holders and then subsequently to existing holders of full licences, and they will be renewable every ten years to allow for changes in appearance with the passage of time. However, because of the increased value of the new licence as a potential means of identification there will be more stringent checks on their issue, similar to those required on issue of a passport (*i.e.* production of a birth certificate and signatures of authenticity from a doctor or magistrate, *etc.*).

If you are worried about the problems the new licences may pose if you drive a car while cross-dressed (for whatever reason) remember that you will not have to carry the thing with you unless you wish to, that you can produce it at a police station later while dressed to match the photo, and that there is in any case no legal reason why you should not go out and about dressed however you like, as long as you are neither engaging in any illegal activity nor acting in such a manner as to cause a breach of the peace.

If you want a separate photographic identity card for your *femme* appearance then these are available from ADF Editorial Services, as are special identity documents clearly indicating your two gender appearances, names and signatures, and which you can have certified by a notary public or Justice of the Peace. These latter documents have proved extremely effective when passing through immigration controls both in the UK and the USA (also see the advertisement in this issue). Professionally diagnosed transsexuals can also carry certificates from their psychiatrists, indicating their situation.



Finally, **DON'T** ever be tempted to give false details regarding your genetic sex, name or any other information, either to the police or on an application form for a driving licence or passport. This would be illegal, and could get you into *really* serious trouble. ♥



GUIDELINES FOR A GENDER SOCIAL AND SUPPORT GROUP

All gender social and support groups work in different ways, but they all have the same concerns for security to protect those attending the meetings of the Group, as well as for a reasonable standard of behaviour. When admitting new members it is not always easy to explain clearly what is expected, not only in the way of conduct of each member but also as a means of reassuring nervous newcomers, who are often only just coming to terms with their gender dysphoria and who are scared stiff of entering a room full of other people while dressed. Knowing that everyone who will be present is bound to a certain standard of conduct, and of the standards of security that apply, helps to reassure anyone who is still firmly 'in the closet'

The following (slightly adapted) 'Guidelines' are used by the Grampian Gender Group, and a copy is handed to all potential newcomers before being admitted to their first visit. They are offered here as a model that others may care to use as a basis for constructing something suitable for their own situation.

GUIDELINES

Every person attending any meeting of the Group is requested to adhere to these guidelines regarding conduct, which are designed to ensure the safety, security and comfort of all members of the Group and all visitors.

1. The Grampian Gender Group is a social and support Group for all members of the gender community, and is open to crossdressers, transgenderists, transsexuals, and their partners, as well as to well-disposed friends of the community, male or female.

1a. Admission to meetings of the Group is also open to members of the other Scottish gender Groups and, on production of a membership card or other satisfactory evidence or form of identification, to visitors from any other gender support Group or Society.

1b. In order to establish their *bona fides*, potential new members will first be met by an established member of the Group before being granted admission to any meeting.

1c. Other than with prior consent from *all* present, no-one is allowed to attend any meeting who is representing, or intending to report to, the Press, Radio or Television, or who intends to make any record of what takes place at any meeting for any other purpose, except as provided for in paragraphs 2 and 2a below.

2. Reporting of the proceedings of the Group is not allowed except in general terms in the form of a report to another gender support Group or - with prior agreement of the Convenor - to a recognised publication for the gender community.

2a. No such report may identify any person other than by a single forename (male or female), nor may any photographs of individuals be taken, and neither audio nor video tape recordings may be made, whether for private or academic use or for publication, without the express consent of each individual concerned.

3. The Grampian Gender Group is NOT a sexual contact organisation, nor do fringe sexual interests play any part in the Group's activities. Sexual approaches or conduct between members at meetings are strictly forbidden.

4. A confidential professional counselling service is available to members of the gender community and their relatives and partners who are in need of help or advice.

5. An attendance fee, as may be determined from time to time, will be requested of all those attending meetings of the Group, to help defray the costs of meetings. Moneys so contributed will be devoted in the first instance to the cost of providing refreshments at the meetings and of any other legitimate expenses, and the balance put towards an annual donation to the owners of the premises, in lieu of rent.

6. It is hoped that everyone will observe these few simple rules, but anyone not doing so may be excluded from the Group pending an undertaking with regard to future conduct.



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"NEVER MIND THE WHY AND WHEREFORE..."

OR PERHAPS WE SHOULD

by Anne Forrester

Fans of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas will recognise my title as a quotation from *HMS Pinafore*, which ran on to explain that "Love can level ranks and therefore..." there was no reason for class distinction to come between true love. In the present case, however, it is neither class distinction nor true love but true gender feelings - and in particular other peoples' interest in them - that I want to consider.

In a recent issue of a magazine aimed primarily at the fetishistic transvestite market there appeared the results of what was called "a quiz" but was actually a questionnaire for its readers, aimed at finding out "about transvestites, what they are like and what they want", as well as about the magazine's readers' likes and dislikes about its contents. In itself it was a harmless bit of fun that suggested amongst other things that most of the transvestites who responded to the "quiz" (and it was not made clear just how many did so) are young, heterosexual, live in the south of England, and with only a few claiming to be "closet TVs", or to feel moved by compulsions to dress permanently or to live a feminine life style. Of course, this "quiz" reveals more about the readership pattern of this particular magazine than it does about the gender scene in general.

Coincidentally, however, around the same time one of the American gender magazines published a summary of a fairly detailed and much more soundly-based study of "Childhood and Family Dynamics of Crossdressers",

undertaken by a an academically reputable psychologist who is himself a crossdresser, and intended for eventual publication in *Archives of Sexual Behavior* - an eminently respectable professional scientific journal. And again at about the same time (isn't coincidence a wonderful thing ?) I had myself received a questionnaire from two nurses in California (who gave female names but no indication as to whether or not they are genetic females) who said they were "trying to learn more about cross dressing and other behaviors that are not well understood". As each of them also has a PhD I guess that most of those who received this particular questionnaire would again assume that it was a well-designed academic study, and treat it correspondingly seriously - but read on !

Actually this was by no means the first such questionnaire that I have received. Being included in several listings of members and leaders of the gender community, both in Britain and America, it is not surprising that my name finds its way onto the distribution lists of any serious enquirer studying gender diversity. And there's the rub ! An awful lot of people do seem to be studying gender diversity at present - and not always for the best of academic reasons.

The first such questionnaire that I recall receiving came from Dr Richard Docter (yes, really, Doctor Docter !), a Professor of Psychology in California with whom I had already had a long discussion, and who is very well known in America as a well-informed friend of the gender community with a serious academic interest in, and knowledge of, gender diversity. The questionnaire was well-constructed, unambiguous and designed to further serious academic research into the phenomenon, and with the intention that the findings would be published in an appropriate professional journal.

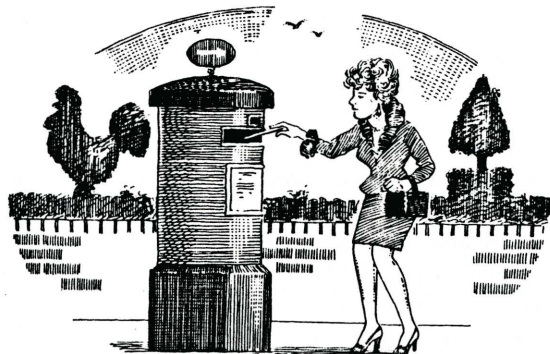
Now as a scientist myself I am well aware of the pitfalls laying in wait for anyone constructing a questionnaire on any subject, let alone one such as gender diversity where

the respondents are not monitored, are reporting self-identified diagnoses and feelings, and may have well-based reasons for giving the answers that they think they would like to have recorded rather than those dictated by their true feelings. By the choice of questions and of their wording it is all too easy to manipulate any questionnaire to produce the overall picture that those constructing it decide in advance that they want. Similarly, for the unskilled and unwary it is all too easy to construct a questionnaire that seems superficially sound but which because of its defects gives false results just because those constructing it are *not* aware of the problem. And here is the source of my concern.

As I said earlier, at present there do seem to be an awful lot of people studying gender diversity and lifestyles - and not all of them are experienced, knowledgeable and reputable academic researchers like Richard Docter. Let us take, for example, the two nurses who sent me the recent questionnaire. Who are they ? What is the reason for their interest in the subject ? *Why* are they "trying to learn more about cross dressing" ? What do they intend to do with their findings ? Why should I go out of my way to help them ? And will their survey help our community ? All questions to which I have no answers except the single one - "I don't know". And when I came to look more closely at their questionnaire I became really worried.

This particular questionnaire started off simply enough with such matters as age, occupation, childhood experiences, sexual orientation, *etc*; and then it became much less straightforward. For example, "How old were you when you first ejaculated cross dressed ?" - a question that takes it as read that *everyone* who cross-dresses does so for sexual stimulation, which is completely untrue. "Have you had any sex change surgery ?". Well, firstly, one can not change sex, which is determined by ones genes as two nurses with PhDs should certainly know; and secondly, lumping together individuals who get male-type sexual

kicks from cross dressing with true primary transsexuals who will often have been through gender reassignment surgery and are either heterosexual females, lesbians or completely asexual, is also complete nonsense. On the evidence of questions like these the two questioners would clearly do better going back to some of the excellent books on the subject of gender diversity and dysphoria **before** setting themselves up as knowing enough to enable them to construct a questionnaire on the subject.



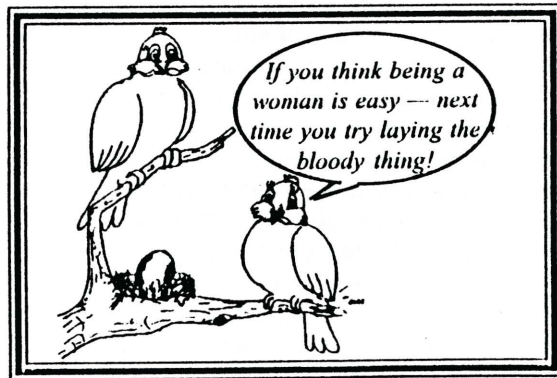
More recently a young woman has been present at meetings of one of the Scottish groups, sitting at the table all afternoon with a tape recorder running, picking up the general conversation around her. I understand that she is a student writing some sort of thesis on gender diversity, and that this was part of her 'research'. (Speaking academically, if I were her supervisor for this project, on learning of her so-called 'research methods' I would immediately instruct her to stop and to start all over again, preferably in a library in the first instance and then by directly interviewing experienced members of the community with their informed consent, and not covertly taping a miscellany of 'off the record' conversations).

In this instance there were two things that disturbed me. Firstly, picking up the casual conversation - or even the serious discussions - that tend to go on at meetings of

groups consisting predominantly of crossdressers will tell nobody anything at all about the 'why and wherefore' of gender diversity. It can do no more than reflect the casual conversation of a number of people who are trying to relax and be themselves on a once-a-month basis. Secondly, it was profoundly disturbing to find anyone from outwith the community surreptitiously taping conversations amongst cross dressers (and a few transsexuals), most of whom are still firmly in the closet and scared stiff of anyone else finding out about them, and with nobody even warning newcomers and new arrivals that this was happening, let alone seeking their agreement. This strikes me as completely unethical and something that should never be tolerated. In the Grampian Gender Group, for example, there is a set of guidelines on conduct that all is given to all new members, who are expected to abide by them and which would specifically forbid such potentially worrying - and possibly even dangerous - activity. (And for the benefit of other groups, who may wish to use or adapt them for their own use if they wish, these Guidelines are reprinted elsewhere in this issue).

Perhaps my greatest concern, however, is not simply that a whole lot of amateurs with no specific personal interest in our community appear to be using us increasingly as tame guinea pigs for some project or other in their studies, but what will then become of their so-called 'findings' when they move on to some other interest? I worry that untrue and distorted results and images may find their way into print, possibly in the popular press or in some of the womens magazines, where they will further mis-inform the general public and distort our image. Even more seriously, some of them may also find their way into medical or scientific journals and then be given credence by others - including some psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers who (lamentably) are themselves totally ignorant of the subject, but who may be called upon to make professional judgments and pronouncements about us, and who could use such 'findings' as the basis for their actions.

There is an old saying that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing", and this is undoubtedly true when health care professionals who may have a responsibility for advising and prescribing for a group of people gain their only knowledge of that group from amateur studies made in inadequate, inefficient - or even frankly unethical - ways. My own advice to any of you who may be approached to complete any questionnaire on your gender lifestyle, or to participate in any round-table talk in the presence of a tape recorder, is to satisfy yourself about the academic credentials of the questioners, and the reasons for their study, **before** filling in a single line of their proforma or saying a single word within range of their microphones. And indeed, if you find a stranger wielding a tape recorder or notebook at your next group meeting, find out who they are, why they are there, who let them in, and whether they have a good reason for taking down your thoughts and feelings without first asking your consent. And if their presence worries or offends you, either insist to the organisers of the meeting that they leave or do so yourself, before you are compromised. ■



DEUTERONOMY REVISITED*

by Michelle Lynn

As William Shakespeare said, "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose". You have probably heard hard-line religious fundamentalists claim that crossdressing is a sin. "It says so in the Bible". This *rationale* springs from *Deuteronomy 22:5* which says a woman shall not wear men's clothing nor shall a man wear women's clothing. But what is *Deuteronomy*? Nothing more than the primitive desert code of conduct of the ancient Israelites. The ban on crossdressing was put in to stamp out its use during the ceremonial worship of pagan idols. Now, since there aren't a whole heck of a lot of transgendered support groups into devil worship, and since neither Harry Benjamin nor any other clinical researcher lists paganism as a root cause for transgender behavior, I think we are on pretty safe ground as far as *Deuteronomy* goes. Even sillier is the fact that this passage applies equally to women, effectively condemning every woman who wears pants or anything traditionally worn by men. It even applies to high heeled shoes since they were originally designed for and worn by males.

Biblical scholars established long ago that later passages of the Bible, and atonement through the death of Jesus Christ, did away with the archaic Mosaic laws of *Deuteronomy*. It's a good thing too, how could you enforce this one selective passage of *Deuteronomy* and ignore all of its remaining laws? Life wouldn't be fun for anyone, not even fundamentalists, if we had to live by *Deuteronomy*.

How about a few examples you say? How about these: Troubled by a rebellious son? No problem. *Deuteronomy 22:18-21* has the solution. If he isn't responding to discipline the son is taken to the town gates (try finding

them in your town) where the men of the town gather and stone him to death. End of problem.

Check your clothing labels. Besides crossdressing *Deuteronomy* makes other holy fashion statements. For instance 22:11 finds it sinful to wear clothes having linen and wool woven together. You thought the fashion police were tough. At least clothing doesn't have to be plain and boring. *Deuteronomy* 22:12 mandates that when you wear a cloak you must make tassels on the four corners. One Bible scholar calculated this would amount to about sixty four tassels. Liberace was obviously a very religious man.

Sexual promiscuity is a definite no-no (at least for women). *Deuteronomy* 22:20-21 decrees that if a man finds his bride is not a virgin, she is to be taken to the door of her father's house and stoned to death. This will purge the evil from the land. Women will be pleased to know that *Deuteronomy* takes a dim view of rape. According to *Deuteronomy* 22:28 if a man is caught raping a virgin (offer only good on virgins) he must pay a fine of fifty silver shekels. Then he is required to marry the woman he raped, with no possibility of divorce. (If I were a woman I'd rather be stoned to death than marry my rapist). You might also forget about the 13th Amendment (*to the American Constitution - Ed*) outlawing slavery. Slavery is not a sin according to *Deuteronomy*. If you are a man you can take captive among your enemies any beautiful woman who strikes your fancy (*Deuteronomy* 21:10-13). But now comes the breaking-in process. You must dress her in the clothes she was captured in, trim her nails and shave her head. If after one month you are not satisfied with your new, bald-headed slave, you can let her go.

Brothers must fulfill some rather kinky family obligations. *Deuteronomy* 25:5 tells us that if your married brother dies without fathering a son, the task falls on you. You must immediately marry your brother's widow and continually impregnate her until a male heir is conceived.

Fighting dirty can have dire consequences, as *Deuteronomy* 25:11-12 addresses the following situation: a husband is fighting for his life against another man. His wife, in coming to his rescue, seizes the attacker's most private parts. For this crime her hand must be cut off, and you are forbidden to pity her.

There are many more, but they don't get any better. Like any other book ever written, the true meaning of the Bible is understood only when read in context. Selectively quoting Bible passages out of context isn't new. It has been done to justify slavery, to hunt witches, to label blacks as evil, to devalue women and to exterminate the 'ungodly'. Of course, none of this was ever the intent of the Bible, which is simply meant as an instrument for worshipping God.

Unfortunately there will always be those who will seek to put a religious stamp of approval on their own narrow personal prejudices. So whenever you hear someone rationalize their hate by saying "I'm right because it's in the Bible" you can be certain they didn't bother to read it very closely.

Postscript: An additional information source used for this article was the Thomson Chain Reference Bible, a gift from my sister. Its inscription reads "God loves you and so do I"

* Reprinted from *Renaissance News & Views*, Vol 8, No 7.

NB. Also see the review of the book *The Cross and the Crossdresser* in this issue (page 29) - Ed.



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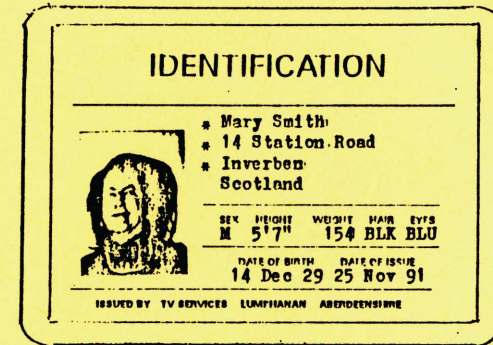
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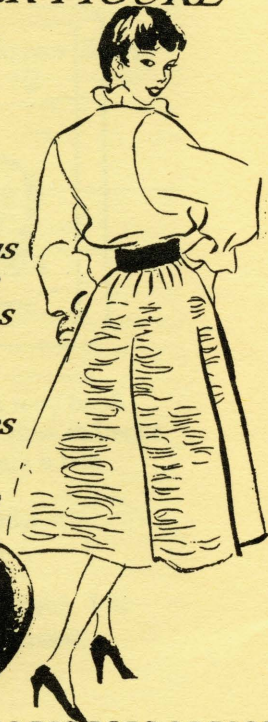
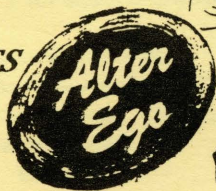
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