

Cross-Port InnerView

P.O. Box 54657, Cincinnati, OH 45254

The next meeting is June 17 at 8:00pm

A New View

by Elaine

There were approximately 43 ladies and S.O.'s at the meeting last month's meeting. We wish to thank the new people that came to the meeting. Welcome to Don, Gina, Ron, Amanda. We hope they had a good time and hope to see them at the next meeting. We had a total collection for the donation to I.F.G.E. of \$260.60 congratulations to everyone who contributed.

I had an very good month as I became a Certified Image Consultant for Beauti-Control Cosmetics, I am now able to do color analysis, image consulting and make overs. I also have a full line of skin care and cosmetics items at a resonable cost. If you or your S.O. would like a Color Analysis and skin analysis. Please call Elaine at (513) 528-4980. I can do the consulting at your place or mine.

We of the newsletter staff would also like to inform you that Christopher's is closed. We do not as yet know the details but we will keep you informed as things

develope. As an alternate meeting spot we have choosen the **Golden Lion** in Cincinnati. If anyone has a more central location. We will look into all possibilities.

CROSS-SHOPING

By: Bobbi L.

The first of June a friend of mine gave me an excerpt from the May 29, 1993 edition of the Toledo Blade newspaper. The half page he gave me contained an article on flying. Little did he know that the one-column article next to it would be of equal interest to me. It was entitled: "Men's dirty little secret: cross-shopping." A portion of this Times-Post News Service item follows....

Michael Lewis likes nothing better than to spend time buying dresses for the women in his life.

Satiny ball gowns. Little black sheaths. Big skirts with crinolines bouncing underneath. Mr. Lewis loves them all, and in a recent confessional for The New Republic, the Washington essayist reports gleefully that he is not the only man who adores shopping for women.

"Some men still grow a little uneasy when you tell them

that you like to buy dresses," says Mr. Lewis. [But] others relax and say, "You, too! I thought I was the only one."

Cross-shopping - men buying clothes for their women, women buying clothes for their men - is probably as old as loincloths and coconuts. But thanks to the sexual revolution, the feminist movement - or, perhaps, just better marketing - men seem to be joining the ranks of cross-shoppers in record numbers.

While research shows that women still do most of the fashion shopping, men are gaining.

"Increasingly, we're seeing men in the women's depart-ments at times other than Christmas eve or the day before Mother's Day," says one Los Angeles retailer, echoing the impressions of many in the clothing business.

Mr. Lewis, who is divorced, and "definitely heterosexual," says he leaps at any opportunity to slip into a women's cloth-ing department. There, "I feel the same sense of wonder as when the dessert tray emerges at a four-star restaurant. The sheer range of human wants!"

Mr. Lewis and other men who enjoy buying women's clothes say the experience evokes a certain illicit thrill in being, as more than one man put it, "behind enemy lines." Much of the appeal of cross-shopping, says Mr. Lewis is that it "falls somewhere between outright taboo and simple convention."

Unfortunately, the remainder of the article was torn off by my friend. However, one further sentence suggested that the

remaining contents dealt with a negative aspect of cross-shopping: the desire to control one's partner and forcing her to assume "...an identity she really isn't comfortable with."

Well, Girls, perhaps those of you who are uncomfortable shopping for the "woman" in your life, should copy this article and carry it with you for moral support. There are just so many of us who enjoy the "dessert tray of life."

Book Review by Julie Roberts

The Male Crossdressers Support Group

This is a case of "you can't judge a book by its cover". If you are looking for a book about the adventures of other Male C.D.s, this isn't it! Except for a couple of brief references to a woman's T.V. roommate named Bobette, a little boy who is disguised as a ballerina and a brief encounter with a C.D. group in a bar, this book has nothing to do with C.D. . . . The main character of the book is a neurotic middle aged single Female who lives alone in New York who desperately wants to find a boyfriend but all she attracts are weirdos and sex perverts. As the book progresses the reader is convinced that this character is mentally ill herself. The reason she C.D.s at the end of the book is not because of a gender identity problem, but to return to the city where she is wanted by the police.

Her disguise is soon discovered and she spends three weeks at Belevue.

As with other books or movies, such as "Silence of the Lambs", which imply that Cross Gendered people are mentally ill or are murderers, this book only serves to further mislead the public about what we are truly like, and I recommend you save your money!

Paris is Smoldering....

by: Bobbi L.

Last Fall I wrote about the award-winning documentary "Paris is Burning" which focused on the drag balls in New York. Jennie Livingston realized success with this vehicle and caught the attention of main-stream America by bringing to light the elaborate and extremely competitive world of high fashion "voguing." Not only were we allowed to glimpse this world of illusion but we peeked behind the scenes to become familiar with the competitors themselves and their "houses", especially the House of Xtravaganza and the House of LaBeija. All in all a very interesting and touching film.

Now, thanks to Kristine, who at the last Cross-Port meeting gave me an article from the April 19, 1993 New York Times, I have learned that all is not well in that community. The lengthy article, written by Jesse Green, begins by describing the memorial service for Angie Xtravaganza, the "mother" of the House of Xtravaganza. Only 27, Angie succumbed to an AIDS-related liver disease, leaving behind "her" family: the

"...rejected, wayward,...homeless children..." she had taken in, fed, and celebrated, all the while teaching them to "walk the balls" and compete in the various categories of drag fantasy. "Angie was legendary, a queen among queens, achieving in fantasy what had been denied in reality."

This was not the first tragedy for the House of Xtravaganza. Those of you familiar with "Paris is Burning" will recall that one of Angie's children, Venus Xtravaganza, who was prominently featured in the documentary, was found murdered, supposedly by a "john" who discovered Venus' biological gender. Mr. Green further reveals that of "...nine featured players [from the film], five are gone or going." "Death is unraveling the drag world depicted in the film...."

The implied cause of this unraveling is prostitution. The author interviews Dorian Corey, 55, "...by all accounts the star of [Paris is Burning]..." She claims that, in contrast to her youth, "...it's a new world now...." She believes that most of "the children...make their money turning tricks, It's that or starve." She, herself, reveals that because of the threat of AIDS, she now lives the love-life of a "VCR queen." Still, her torrid past causes her some anxiety. "And today, it's so risky..." referring to the habits of the young drag queens.

The article also exposes the in-fighting which occurred in the drag world because of the documentary. Various egos and several personalities argued that the drag community had been exploited by Jennie Livingston, the film's creator. Lawsuits were filed, settlements were reached, and money was squandered in an

attempt to pacify the complainants. In the end, few were satisfied.

The article concludes on a more upbeat philosophical note, however. Jeff Green observes that, though "...Drag is variously explained as destruction of the male within or the female without....-- for the subjects of the film..."drag is not a means of destruction, but of preservation.... At the conclusion of Angie Xtravaganza's memorial service, all present were asked to hold hands in a circle and to remember that '...we are all legends.'...."

INSIGHT #40

by:Barbara Jean

Hi girls this is Barbara back with more insight for you.I got a letter a few months back from my sister Jeanette in California that I often write to. Jeanette is a TS and she said that in her observation most of the mostly CD support groups were basically an extension of the closet.

Now while I won't go so far as to say that most of the CD support groups are an extention of the closet, many are. In the typical closet group the members will meet in a private home, a sympathic business, or even a motel suite where the members will come as males with suitcase in hand, then get dressed meet and then return to the maleself a few hours later. They are never seen by the public eye. These groups are ideal for the sister who is fearful of the public as only those like her will know about her or see her.

Then there are groups on the other side of the coin, groups like

the one I belong to. We gather enfemme in the main lobby of the hotel, we go out to dinner enfemme, we go on tours of the town enfemme. In short we are always in the public eye. We are out to have fun enfemme.

It is said that crossdressers are their own worst enemy, and in reality no truer words were spoken. Many crossdressers fear emergence into public. They fear being recognized by someone that they know, or they fear social ridicule. I do not condemn my sisters for that, as I too have been there. For these sisters a chapter that is closeted is very much of a necessity.

But both of these types of groups have a lacking. The sister who is out of the closet does not want back in, she wants to go out and have fun, while the closeted sister will be afraid to attend a group that is fully exposed. oviously girls the ideal group will be somewhere in the middle of these two groups. Most closet crossdressers want out of the closet, but because of fear they remain locked inside. I think the ideal group will offer our sister the security of the closet as long as she needs, but will also be there for her and assist her in coming out of that closet when she is ready.

A couple of years ago the TRI ESS organization started what they call a big sister program. New members who requested a big sister would be assigned a big sister who was a member who volenteered for the job. The big sister would give a year of assistance (or more) to the new sister, answering questions on the organization, and would

even help with things like makeup, clothing, etc. I think a simular program is something that all groups need. The big sister would be a member who is out of the closet, she would assist her closeted sister in her coming out. To be effective the big sister will have to become close to her little sister, she will have to try and find out what her little sisters fears are , and then work with the little sister on those fears. Perhaps it may be makeup or clothing, or just being seen by someone she knows. The big sister will escort her little sister on her coming out. One question that has been posed to me in the past is "if we are heterosexual, why do we go to gay clubs?" Well girls not only is the entertainment at the gay club to our liking, but also I think it is about the safest place to take a newly emerging sister. There is little chance of a gay man hitting on our sister, for in short what I have found out is that what the gay man wants is a *real man*, and since the gays are suffering from prejudice they are more open to people who are other than the so called norm.

If our sister is fearful of being reconized by someone she knows, then a distant (but not too-oo distant) city is the place to take her for her first outing. The big sister will do whatever it takes to help the little sister feel safe and comfortable.

I think girls if you were to be a big sister the one rule that you will need to follow the most in bringing your little sister out is to be patient. She must be allowed to come out at her own pace. To rush her will force her deeper into the closet.

Now here is a very thought provoking scenario for you girls who are public. You are out in public when someone you know, but does not know about your femside recognizes you. "John, what the hell are you doing in that getup?" Do you have an answer ready on the tip of your tongue for them girls? Of course they will also have many other questions for you also girls. Have you practiced how you will respond to them? Do any of you do as I and carry a brochure of some sort that will answer their many questions? I think this is a good idea. I carry one that I prepared for the MU SIGMA group, and I think all groups could work on making their own, or you can get a good one from the Boulton & Park Society entitled "Information about Transgendered People" Carrying a few of these brochures will often times assist you in answering the questions that people may often ask you.

Social ridicule is another fear that the girl in the closet often has. Most of us who have been public know from experience that this is

only self perceived. From my own experience most ridicule will come from teenage boys, and girls will giggle. Peer pressure is very strong during those years and they want to show their friends that they are like their friends. Most adults I have found will often take a second look at us, only because they want to make sure that their eyes did not deceive them. Beyond that they simply go their merry way. Most will not even take the time to ask questions. Sales people are as helpful to us as to any other woman and are usually quite accommodating.

Girls look at the group that you are a member of, what kind of group is it? Is it a closeted group, an open group, or one that combines the good aspects of both. The sister who is in the closet really in her heart does desperately want out of the closet, but she need the help of her sisters who are out to do it. Remember you were there once yourself. Give your sister the help she is in need of. Listen to her fears and work to help quiet those fears. In doing so you will help not only her but yourself.

Well that is all for this month

girls. Do take care and be good to yourself. You are worth it. I love each and every one of you out there.

Publication Notice
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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, trans-sexuals and their family and friends.

Sounds like me!

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by Cathy Guisewite



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B.G.



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10-10



"He hasn't gained a pound! He can still fit into my old wedding dress."



"Is this your first time in a gay bar?"



"Go ahead, Mr. Abacrombie, get it off your chest."