

Renaissance News



Volume 7, No. 1

Vision - Integrity - Quality

January, 1993

FASCINATION: IF LOOKS COULD THRILL

by Dina Amberle

I was standing in the poolside reception area of our Renaissance Holiday Party when I noticed that some men - guests of a wedding party in another part of the hotel - were peeking in at us through the cracks in the double doors and a single pane of clear glass along one wall. Were they laughing? Elbowing each of their friends in the ribs at the sight of 100 crossdressed men having a fancy dress party? No. In fact, the look in the eyes I saw peering in at us is best described as 'fascination.'

If you've ever been to one of Renaissance's group outings, you have probably noticed this phenomenon: 'straight' men just can't keep their eyes off us. What does this say about them? about us?

The answer could fill a book. In fact, it probably has filled many books. But let's keep it simple for the purposes of this article and try to figure it out together. First, let's agree that the sight of 100 crossdressed men in party dresses is something of a spectacle. No surprise then that onlookers will gawk at us. And it shouldn't be surprising if some people react with a laugh or even make boorish comments meant to be overheard. The encouraging thing about our outings is that so many people do *not* react negatively to us. In fact, there is this fascination with us that is very apparent in the reactions and watchfulness of the male spectators.

What impels a man in mixed company to be so taken with the sight of a roomful of crossdressers that he will break away from his party to peek into our gathering like a child waiting up for Santa Claus? And it is hardly an isolated case. Whenever we've been in a public place - whether it is during one of our special functions in a hotel ballroom or after the meetings at The Ship Inn - we find men who are as compelled to watch us as we are compelled to dress in the first place.

I would venture to guess that many of these men never even gave much thought to crossdressing themselves. But the sight of us seems to awaken an interest in it on some level. The crossdressed male is a powerful image that goes way, way back and is a device featured in literature and even religion. There must be a reason for its longevity in popular culture. It has almost a primitive appeal and has a lot to do with repressed sexual feelings but probably also pushes some subconscious buttons in men who perhaps never considered trying to crossdress for themselves.

If you're looking for answers to the phenomenon, I have none. I think we can take some encouragement from it though because it indicates a latent acceptance - if not downright interest - in what we do. Crossdressing may never be a mainstream thing to do. In fact, I hope it never becomes a craze or fad for the masses. But every once in a while we see signs that public acceptance is growing. If you see some men staring at us, don't be intimidated or put off by it. They may very well be envious or experiencing some unfamiliar and unexplainable feelings as they peek in. They may be wishing they were on the other side of those doors - with us, instead of just watching.

Leadership Shifts In 93

by Angela Gardner

As we start a new year it's time to say goodbye to our old Renaissance leadership and welcome the new regimes. At the national level Angela Gardner retires to the seclusion of her country estate in order to begin work on her memoirs. The national Director position will be assumed by former LSV Chapter Leader, Brenda Clinton. Oops. That's Davidson. Brenda Davidson. Joanne White takes over as Treasurer. Angela Gardner will actually be returning to co-director of Outreach, a post she shares with Alison Laing. Angela will also continue as Editor-in-chief of the Newsletter.

Arriving on the National board as new Chapter Leaders are Maryann Kirkland from the Greater Philadelphia Chapter and Yvonne Sullivan from the Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter. The South Jersey Chapter has not given us any official notification of their officers. At this time we have an unofficial report that Emily Sheldon will be co-chapter leader with another party to be named at a later date. Or whenever they tell us.

GPC welcomes Bonnie Allen as their new secretary. Beth Marshal handles outreach. Joanne White continues to be the chapter treasurer and Michelle Lynn slides into the programs position.

LSV boasts Dawn G. (interesting last name; short, but interesting) as their new treasurer. Jennifer Michaels is the lady in charge of shorthand as official secretary and it looks like LSV meetings will start having programs since Chris A. is the new director of programs.

Welcome to all the new folks and hello again to the people have shifted positions. Good luck in ninety three.

Chapters & Affiliates

New Jersey

South Jersey: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, Inc. 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee, N.J. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Call (609) 641-3782 or write Renaissance SJ, PO Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ 08330. Kara Forward, chapter leader.

Pennsylvania

Greater Philadelphia: Meets on third Saturday of the month in King of Prussia, PA. Doors open at 8:00 p.m. Write to Renaissance PHL, Box 530, Bensalem, PA 19020 or call (215)630-1437. Michelle Lynn, chapter leader

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Meets on the first Saturday of the month at The Greens at Westgate in York, Pa. Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or call (717) 780-1LSV. Brenda Davidson, chapter leader.

Affiliates

MOTG: PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701

American Educational Gender Information Services (AEGIS): PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 939-0244

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Renaissance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing education and support to the gender community and the general public.

And, don't forget about...

Articles and opinion pieces for the newsletter are always welcomed. We want to hear what you have to say about what goes on in Renaissance and in the community at large.

Ideas for articles should be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief for approval.

Background Papers are available for \$1 each plus \$.25 postage for each pair ordered. Eight papers are available: 1-Myths & Misconceptions About Crossdressing, 2-Reasons for Male to Female Crossdressing, 3-PARTNERS: Spouses & Significant Others, 4-The Matter of Children, 5-An Annotated Bibliography, 6-Telling the Children: A Transsexual's Point of View, 7-What Is Renaissance?, and 8-AIDS & HIV Safety and Ethics. A paper on transsexualism is in work.

Pen Pal Program - If you are willing to write letters to pen pals, please inform Maryann Kirkland or write to the main office, c/o Dept. PP.

Events Calendar



January

- 2nd Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
- 2th LSV meeting
- 16th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter

February

- 6th Ren. So. Jersey Chapter
- 6th LSV meeting
- 20th Ren. Gr. Phila. Chapter

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NOTE:

Santa and the elves were so busy working on the holiday gifts and picking out their dresses for the Renaissance Holiday Party that they let the printing schedule for the newsletter slide a wee.

ROGER'S NOTEBOOK (#75)

The transgender community is often ambivalent towards the helping professional. Some people think they have special insights which can provide answers to difficult life situations. Others believe they are insensitive those who wish instant happiness through hormones and/or surgery. They have been described as "gatekeepers" whose sole function is to control access to certain services.

At two recent professional conferences I had opportunities to discuss these perceptions with other professionals. I came to the realization that the fundamental issue is one of professional ethics. My dictionary defines ethics as "...the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions: medical ethics. Moral principles; as of an individual."

Throughout my education as a therapist, there has been a guiding principle: First, do no harm. The difficulty in applying this conviction is how to determine what might be harmful. It is crucial to protect and support my client but equally important to maintain my credibility and professional standards. As with all ethical/moral situations, there is no single

answer. Some would call this situational ethics but I believe that there have to be some underlying standards that remain inviolate. Most of us have such standards in our lives: honesty, integrity and charity come to mind.

Most often the reason someone goes to a clinician is because some aspect of their life has become unmanageable. The client has the right to expect that the clinician has experience and training which can help in their situation. If the clinician does not have the training, it is his/her responsibility to either refer the client or get appropriate consultations.

Even when the clinician has the appropriate training, there can be a conflict between what the clinician believes to be in the best interest of the client and what the client thinks is best. I believe that it is the clinician's responsibility to communicate the reasons why a particular approach can be useful while not shutting out the client's reasoning. Honesty is crucial here. To be honest, it is important that clinicians clearly and consciously understand their own values so that they are not unintentionally imposed on the client.

For example, it has been suggested that transgendered people are a "special case" whose difficulties are caused by society's rigid rules. All that is needed are some hormones and surgery, then everything will be all right. Suppose that were the case and further imagine that following such surgery the person's life was no better and might be worse. Who would be blamed? I believe that the professionals would be held accountable because they are expected to act in ways that prevent harm to their clients/patients.


What is the ethical clinician's responsibility? I believe it has two components: guidance coupled with restraint. In some ways, it is like a guide hired for a safari. The guide knows the territory and is supposed to keep his clients out of danger. For this to work, the client has to trust the guide. Without that, the client will ignore the guide's advice and perhaps get into serious trouble. Each safari is different, even when it covers the "same" terrain. The guide has to be flexible yet firm to get everyone safely home.



You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445; Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential. (December 5, 1992)



This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. Others must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of such a reprint should be sent to Dr. Peo.



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News Beat Reminders

by Angela Gardner

Happy New Year one and all! Let's hope for an improved economic environment, a cleaner world and a wonderful time at the IFGE convention this spring. And now, the news.

Sources close to the Renaissance News have informed us that noted television crossdresser, (Bosom Buddies) Tom Hanks will be at it again in a pic called, "Philadelphia", now lensing in the city of the same name. In a Halloween party scene Hanks will appear in a fetching frock. Some other drag queens may be featured since the Hanks character is a gay lawyer in the City of Brotherly Love. The scene will serve as a comic interlude in the court room drama that takes place when the Hanks character is fired by his firm after they discover he is gay and HIV positive.

In other entertainment news the comic strip "Ernie," featured in many newspapers around the country receives the official Renaissance Crossdresser Curtsy for bringing drag to the funny papers on a regular basis. Recent story lines have featured lead character Ernie masquerading as his uncle Sid's wife as they dine with Sid's old girlfriend. Most recently a character called Effie has returned to work as a psychic. Her first client is upset when Effie says she sees confusion surrounding the woman's daughter. You guessed it. The final panel reveals her daughter to be a crossdressed son named Stanley. Carry on "Ernie!"

The Philadelphia Inquirer ran a photo in their Newsmakers, (read gossip) section featuring Melissa Manchester and Miss America, Leanza Cornett. Between the two smiling ladies was another beauty I first mistook for Liz Taylor or some other raven tressed film star. Surprise, surprise as Gomer Pyle used to say. It was a drag queen. The gorgeous Lypsinka, a queen on the scene, known in male guise as John Epperson appeared with the two women at a post World AIDS Day observance party in New York. Lypsinka's star seems to be on the rise. She was recently featured in an ad campaign for The Gap.

Other transgendered persons that have been penetrating the straight world include Marilyn Monroe impersonator Jimmy James appearing as Marilyn in a print ad for L.A. Eyeworks. Statuesque New York personality Ru-Paul has signed a major label record contract and Connie Girl, who has been modeling in Paris for several years was featured in a George Michael video. Every where you look, there's a guy in a dress.

If not a dress then it's at least women's underwear. Our ever vigilant Dina Amberle, editor of the GPC newsletter saw an item in the Bucks County Courier Times back in November. A Langhorne, Pa. man was sitting in his car on an exit ramp of I-95 wearing a blue work shirt, white bra and pink panties. A State Trooper noticed the man and approached the parked car containing this fashion disaster. The undie clad driver made his second, (or third) mistake of the evening

and tried to get away. He was apprehended after a high speed chase and charged with driving under the influence, reckless driving, resisting arrest and numerous motor vehicle violations. The Fashion Police are also issuing a number of citations. Pink panties with a white bra?! Horrors!

Here's a note for all those interested in increasing the size of their bust. No, I'm not talking about the Mark Eden bust exercises. I'm talking about sun, fun and breasts. Reports published recently in a medical journal deal with the strange case of Mr.X. He returned from a trip to the US Virgin Islands and went to his doctor to complain about large, sensitive breasts. (his own, not a girlfriends.) After numerous tests the medicos determined that during his seven day stay he had consumed a large quantity of alcohol, which suppressed his testosterone production. The mammalian protruberences were then free to grow due to the large quantity of chicken containing growth hormones Mr.X ate. It seems that many chickens in the islands are shot full of steroids to produce large succulent breasts. Thanks to the rum punch Mr. X was well on his way to having his own succulent pair. Soon you'll hear members of the transgendered community talking about their chests and comparing which travel agent got them the best fare to the islands instead of which hormone doctor they patronize.

If the spirit of giving is still active for you after a hectic holiday season then here's another group that could use your

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help. We The People Living With AIDS/HIV of the Delaware Valley, Inc. is an organization operated by and for people infected with the HIV virus. Since people with AIDS often are not able to work, this organization provides food, clothing and a warm place to go. They have made it simple to help. Call their Contribution Line and a ten dollar donation will be automatically billed to your phone. The number is 1-900-370-PWAS. For more information on other assistance you can offer call them at 215-545-6868.

Remember, since the IFGE convention comes to Philadelphia from March fourteenth to twentieth the Renaissance GPC Will not have a regular meeting on March twentieth. That evening is devoted to the big IFGE banquet at the Hilton in downtown Philadelphia. You may attend the banquet even if you aren't planning on being there for the entire convention.

If you have gotten over the suburban crossdresser's innate fear of the big city and you've had a wonderful time at the IFGE convention in March maybe you're ready for the next big step toward total urbane drag activity. Moonlight in Manhattan. That's right, New York City! The Greater New York Gender Alliance, a coordinating body for various gender groups in New York is throwing Moonlight in Manhattan, April twenty third thru twenty fifth. This mini convention will include all the usual celebrities: Jim Bridges, Marriette Pathy Allen, Muriel Olive and more. For information call Linda Frank in the evening at 215-765-3561. Who know's, if you go on the

Friday night bus tour of the New York club scene you might run into me. Now there's a thrill. Not!

Attention glamour girls! This late breaking story just in. The official state preliminary for the Miss Gay USA Pageant is coming up soon. The Miss Pennsylvania USA Pageant will be held on Sunday, January thirty first at The Stonewall in Allentown, PA. Dust off your sequined pumps and shine up your rhinestones. Thousands of dollars will be awarded to the top four contestants and the winner and first runner up will compete in the National pageant in San Antonio, Texas this May. If you'd like info on how to get in the contest send a self addressed, stamped envelope to Miss Monique Trudeau, c/o 4 M's Productions, PO Box 366, New Hope, PA 18938. If you're not ambitious enough to walk the walk, you can be one of the excited spectators for just ten American dollars. The show should be fun with ever popular MC, Tinsel Garland sharing the hostess chores with Miss Monique. Call Bob at the Stonewall for ticket information. That number in Allentown is 215-432-0215. Good luck girls and this month, that's all she wrote!

The Renaissance Library

by Lee Escovitz

Bodyshock: The Truth about Changing Sex by Liz Hodgkinson, published in England in 1987, is a sensitive and well-written description and discussion of the transsexual phenomenon. Ms. Hodgkinson, an English freelance journalist with an excellent reputation as a writer and radio broadcaster on a wide variety of topics, leads the reader through a logical progression of perspectives on transsexualism. For example, she examines the experiences of both male-to-female and female-to-male transsexuals. She also compares transsexualism with transvestism and homosexuality. Ms. Hodgkinson, herself a genetic female and mother of two boys, provides a very sympathetic yet realistic view of transsexualism and leaves the reader with much food for thought. This book is very readable and includes several interesting photographs. I feel that *Bodyshock* should be read by anyone seriously interested in a basic understanding of transsexualism.

Since Ms. Gardner is so busy pursuing her exciting and glamorous show biz career, (reclining on the sofa, eating bon bons and watching re-runs of Hogan's Heroes) she doesn't have time to peruse all of the papers and periodicals for important gender related items to rewrite for inclusion in this column. If you, as an ever vigilant reader should come across a gender related article in any legitimate newspaper or magazine, (like Dina's in this issue) send it along and we'll use it if we can. No prizes will be awarded. We'll try to work your name into the witty rewrite. Don't bother with junk from the Globe or World Weekly News type of publications. Unless it's about a transgendered Big Foot who has Elvis's love child.

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STORM OVER RUSSIA

by Phaedra Kelly

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

Last issue we began the report from Russia by Phaedra about Maggie, a Latvian pre-op transsexual now living in Riga with a F-to-M pre-op, Victor, and his wife. Maggie faces costly, painful, and by our standards, primitive surgery. Other than official recognition of one's chosen gender, life in Russia is socially oppressive for transsexuals

Newsletter Gremlins ate the last sentence of last month's story. We resume with a repeat of that paragraph, with apologies.

Maggie "very loves" her mother, who understands her child, and nightly says: "My darling, if it is tonight that you end it, wake me up, we do it together."

We left Riga in our male form but Maggie does not pass as a man at all, so the experience for me had the romantic conspiratorial drama of Dr. Crippin escaping by ship with his girlfriend disguised as a boy. But we reached Moscow in a night and half a day at a fare of \$0.70 each, where Maggie has less problems in assimilating into the crowd, where most young women are taller than she, lean and sporting microskirts and flat shoes. Many of them, while not unattractive, appear mannishly stern facially; Maggie's face is that of an elfin girl.

Her struggle, even there, has been hard. Trying to continue her intelligent family's tradition by a study of biology in university, the strain became too much and she tried suicide under a speeding car. For failing that she was put in a psychiatric ward and became one of 39 referred to be tested as transsexual, and of them all, the only one so chosen. Her lifelong trial had only begun then, and she has tried all she can to achieve her need, but has been abused at every turn. A Scandinavian magazine exploit her charms in glamour modeling but did not pay. A Finnish television company filmed her for six months, but again escaped paying or even so much as giving her a tape copy. The kid was unaware of contracts, being a Russian, but she knows better now.

Maggie is widely talented, a trained accountant, a very fluid dancer and a

unique poet and artist, but employment is sporadic and rare in Russia, and for her almost impossible. A multi-millionaire American company director (whose name is world famous) invited her to dinner and "understood" her problems well, but after he had what he wanted from her no longer associated with her. As she says: "Many European men maybe like exotic lady with penis. I am maybe only one in Moscow, or Russia."

She is modest and probably right, there cannot be many as attractive as she. But Maggie has no wish to become a prostitute - something which an ignorant proletariat constantly assumes of her. While straight gay is now and has for long got its own hard-currency making vice world there, the transvestite/transsexual world of Russia has little or no vice community - it is like our own in the UK and USA, and though God alone knows how it has endured thus even this long, it wants to stay that way.

The one transvestite Maggie in introduced me to, Marina, is bisexual and has lived en femme working by day in a hair salon. One day a militia man called out to her in the street that he would rape and beat her and Marina, quite rightly, thumped him for it, but it ended with her in an asylum. A second opinion got her out, a psychiatrist decided she was not mad, and she returned to work - to be told "No, come only as male." Marina now works en femme again, and so far, nothing has been said. She waits for the word on her fate. Maggie and I investigated a transvestite/transsexual group existing in Moscow, but found it to be corrupt and dangerous, run by an M-to-F transsexual, formerly a police officer, who many think is still an informant and, who spends the group's money unlawfully. So, Maggie has begun Ice & Fire, which we shall register with IFGE in the US which, once published will in turn aid her to register it officary with the Russian ministry.

Ice & Fire, with Marina as its Moscow secretary, will liaise with transves-

tites/transsexuals in all other Russian cities, and work to educate the authority and public, through any printed information our groups in world can send them, (so please donate information, books, articles, magazines, news.) They will also gather the names and details of transvestites/transsexuals still incarcerated, for the attention of Amnesty International. But we do also need, to begin to help them with a financial scheme of some kind, a trust fund for Russian sisters' surgery in Europe.

If we can publicly embarrass the Russian medical authority through the media, with news of Russian sister's successful ops in UK, Belgium and Holland then, they will HAVE to change. I know for a fact, that the private clinic in Hove and Prof. Dr. Gooren at the university in Amsterdam will gladly, use all the media influence they have to enable this. You might agree that as our first most significant contact and a very deserving cause, Maggie should be first to be helped by such a fund, a target initially for which to aid one test case person, would be \$4225, for op, flight and living costs. If the editor will agree to publish it, I have opened a building society trust fund account for Maggie, here in the UK.

Regard her beauty, her plight and, saving your tears, kindly contribute what you can to the salvation of Russia's premiere transsexual, which in turn, will work to save them all. Remember, they have endured long and hard to keep their virtue and identity, and with courage yet they are fighting to help themselves by organizing. They do not ask you, because they never once expected anybody to care. It is I who ask of you the measure of your conscience, now that you know the facts.

IGTA politely requests of groups in other free world countries, that they too establish trust funds for Russia. All group leader/overseas coordinator requests to IGTA for advice and data will be answered.

GPC Holiday Party a Hit!

by Michelle Lynn

"If you build it, they will come."

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter held it's annual Holiday Party on December nineteenth at the Great Valley Sheraton. We invited one and all to come, and they did, pouring in from everywhere. As far south as North Carolina and as far west as Utah. Nothing could stop them in their relentless quest for fun and the perfect party dress.

How determined were they? So determined that the Philadelphia Chapter was scrambling to accommodate people who responded past the deadline. So determined, that we somehow made room for two folks at the Sheraton less than an hour before the event (courtesy of a very forgiving hotel staff). One of

these last minute additions was a hopeful southern belle from the Old Dominion State of Virginia, who called from her hotel room, wondering if there was room for, "just one more."

They were so determined that after everyone was seated for dinner another would-be party girl appeared in the lobby asking if we could fit her in. It was *definitely* too late.

In all, one hundred twenty three members, newcomers, spouses and significant others attended. Festivities began with hors d'oeuvres at our poolside reception area. Everyone exchanged holiday greetings, compared party dresses and caught up on the latest gossip. Background music was provided by our favorite DJ, Marsha. Then, it was on to the dining rooms where the entree

choices included sirloin of beef, chicken cordon bleu or New Zealand roughly. (It's a mild fish, not a bearded foreigner.) The ladies found an additional surprise at their place settings. As a holiday present for everyone, the Philadelphia Chapter provided a Christmas mug containing assorted candies, topped with a candy cane.

After dinner the party descended to the reception area to work off those calories on the dance floor with some high octane music from Marsha. Some members wandered out to invade the lobby bar and chat with the regulars. By one AM of what seemed an incredibly fast paced night the last of the party had moved on, many to wreak their own brand of havoc on favorite local haunts such as the ever popular Ship Inn.

(continued on page 8)

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(PARTY, continued from page 7)

In the midst of the light hearted atmosphere some true Christmas spirit was evident as the IFGE planning committee took some time to announce the charity that Renaissance will be contributing to during the upcoming March, nineteen ninety three IFGE Convention in Philadelphia. The Make A Wish Foundation is known nationwide for it's work granting wishes to terminally ill children. To get the ball rolling, a drawing was held for donated bottles of wine and sparkling cider, a how-to video from Creative Design Services and a gift certificate from Macys. The ladies responded by opening their hearts and purses and when all the prizes had been claimed over three hundred dollars had been raised for this worthy cause.

There was a sad note in all of the festivities as Renaissance said goodbye to an old friend. Irene Mills, known for her glamour photography and informative, realistic courses in feminine deportment as well as her warm, gracious treatment of everyone, is moving to California. She was presented with a commemorative plaque and a single red silk rose in recognition of her many contributions to our community. Good luck Irene. You will certainly be missed.

The general consensus was, a good time was had by all. Some first timers expressed unabashed awe at the whole thing and I think those of us who have been a part of the community for a while can still remember the excitement of that first time.

Kudos to the Sheraton staff! Though understaffed and over worked they were always polite and responsive, providing a welcoming, comfortable atmosphere for everyone.

One final example will serve to demonstrate the lengths to which this group of party animals would go in order to make the night a success. One of our members was staying in the hotel and as she got out of the shower she slipped on the wet floor and struck her head. She recieved immediate attention from Evelyn Kirkland, a registered nurse who was at the party with her significant other Maryann, (new GPC leader). Evelyn sent the unfortunate individual to the emergency room by ambulance less than an hour before the event began. Nineteen stitches later there she was, enjoying a late dinner held for her by the Sheraton. Now that's the true Renaissance holiday party spirit.

(VIS A VIS, continue from page 14)

the story line centers around six characters in a small town dealing with modern society's problems. Problems being dealt with in this Christmas version seem to be common religious conflicts of the season. The Jewish community gets upset about the Christian theme of the school's holiday pageant and goes to court. All seems to be settled when it's discovered that one of the school's teachers (the one in charge of the holiday pageant) is a transsexual. As expected pandemonium wades through the small town and she is soon forced to appear before the town council con-

cerning her credibility. As expected she is found not to have any, after teaching in the school for the past seven years.

With the help of the female town doctor (who had always known of the person's "secret" and for added interest is married to the towns chief of police who sits on the town council), she appeals the council's decision, takes it to court and wins. All through the show the children she has been teaching can't understand why their favorite teacher can't be with them anymore and there was a cute scene where an older child is trying to explain to a younger child just what the teacher had gone through to become a woman. In the end the woman bends to the town's wish of her not being in the pageant but the children save the day by giving their own Christmas pageant version on why people should be more accepting of one another and bring her on stage as one of their own.

While I will agree that the ending of the story is a bit too fantasy-like, the message given by using a transgendered person in a positive way was quite clear. Looks like network television has some educational value left in it's soul after all.



Positions Available

The Chéz Renaissance Casino has openings for good looking ladies, over 21, to work as cocktail waitresses, Black Jack dealers, and other casino positions during the Renaissance charity benefit at the IFGE convention. Must be able to work in high heels, provide your own uniform (all black for waitresses, white blouse & black skirt for dealers). Employment will be at the Casino lounge on the second floor of the Hilton Hotel, at Broad and Locust streets in Center City, Philadelphia, from 8 PM to 1 AM, Friday, March 19, 1993.

Each casino worker will receive a mint set of 100 MONAS. Applications may be mailed to Susan Persing at the Renaissance National office or submitted in person at the February meeting of the Philadelphia Chapter.

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Hot • Stuff

JoAnn Roberts

“There is nothing more frightful than ignorance in action.”



Ever wonder why those models in those oh-so-bare strapless fashions *never* seem to have even the slightest hint of underarm hair? Ever try to wax your pits? Ow! Guess what: they use makeup to hide the shadow just like we do to hide a beard. Here's how it's done. After shaving, apply a clear deodorant that leaves no residue and let it dry. Apply a waterproof foundation one shade lighter than your skin tone and powder. That's it.



If you're trying to grow your own nails, here's a hot tip (thatsa pun — get it... never mind). You can stimulate nails to grow longer and faster if you tap them, like drumming your fingers, or better typing on a keyboard, even playing the piano makes a difference.



White HOT for the Winter season is white eye shadow. Apply to the inner and outer corners of the lid and use a warm neutral tone in the center. Works like a light frame on a photo. Try YSL Alabaster.



Are platforms shoes for you? Probably not. Besides being singularly ugly, the sole of platforms is not flexible, so you feel like you're walking in ski boots. Unless you find a really great bargain, pass up this fad. By next year they'll be gone. The best shoe for a sexy look is still a stiletto heel pump.



Self-absorbed. Exhibitionistic. Does that sound like any transgendered person you know? (How about all of 'em!) Those terms generally describe a narcissist and Goddess knows we're a lot of narcissists. But recent research shows there is a “healthy” form of narcissism. An autonomous or healthy narcissist transfers their “me” focus into productive self-reliance, intellectual curiosity, psychological reflection and creativity. So what about an “unhealthy” narcissist? The willful narcissist may achieve some success early in

life but their inflated sense of self and hunger for power usually blocks any kind of personal growth later on. Willful narcissists generally are impulsive and self-indulgent. Sounds like the FAB to me.



There are three (only three?) lipstick “sins” according to Letitia Baldrige: (1) indiscreet public touch-ups, (2) leaving lipstick on a cup or glass, and (3) bleeding teeth. Learn how to set your lipstick properly. The correct method is to line the lips with a pencil, apply a thin coat of color, powder, blot and reapply color.



How do you know if you're a “real girl?” Answer these questions: Do you wear Victoria's Secret or Jockey for Her? Do you call it lingerie or underwear? Do you think rejection is more painful than electrolysis? Do your workouts involve aerobic shopping or aerobic boxing? Is your role model Naomi Campbell or Naomi Wolf? If you answer the first choice in each question, there's no doubt about it, you're a real girl. At least according to Tracy Young of *Allure* magazine who considers drag artist Lypsinka a real girl. Says Young, “Real girls, evidently, are not so much born as made. Which means anyone can be a real girl — if she really wants to.” Right on, Tray!



I like a French manicure but the white polish is a real pain. It's thick yet it doesn't cover in one coat. So my French manicures end up looking like French pastry. Enter my bright, enterprising 18-year-old daughter with this hint. Use White-Out or Liquid Paper instead of polish. It's thin but opaque and covers in one coat. Use a tinted neutral base, apply the white to the tips, then go over with the base coat and let dry for at least an hour. Voila!



Sexy or sleazy! What makes the difference is often a matter of simply color or fabric, sometimes both. According to a survey of women taken by *Glamour* magazine here's the difference: short red satin tank dress — sleazy, same dress in black

— sexy; Strappy two-inch heels in black — sexy, same shoes in gold or silver — sleazy; Tight gold jeans — sleazy, same in black — sexy; a bra worn as a top — sleazy, but a tuxedo jacket with nothing underneath is definitely sexy.



Here are nine important fashion changes in the past ten years: Lycra, Washed Silk, Athletic shoes, Catalogs, The Gap, real style for large and extra small sizes, engineered fabrics like Gore-Tex, Washed Denim and bodysuits.



Every so often technology makes incredible strides and sometimes they make it in the arena of fashion. Last year saw a quiet revolution in hosiery with the introduction of microfiber yarns. Microfiber yarns are very much smaller than human hair, yet are quite strong and when combined with Lycra are almost indestructible. microfiber hosiery feels like second skin and wears like iron. The trade-off is cost. Last year's microfiber hosiery ran almost \$20 a pair. This year the cost is down to \$10 on average. My favorite is Donna Karan (\$8 – \$10) pantyhose.



Look out Mardi Gras Boutique! According to *Vogue* one of the HOTTEST exotic boutiques in the Big Apple is Patricia Field's over on Sixth Ave. Field says that as the world around her gets more conservative, she's determined to keep her store as sexy and startling as ever. Her clientele includes many TVs, TSs and people of indeterminate gender; all are welcome. Sixth Avenue seems a damn site better than the warehouse district, but I still love Lee's best.



Congratulations to Rachel McGregor Rawlings of Philadelphia. She was the first person to correctly answer the November Quickie Quiz: what does “k. d.” stand for in k. d. lang's name? The correct answer is: Katherine Dawn. Rachel wins a free copy of the CDS video *Speaking As A Woman* by Alison Laing.



Hot • Stuff

No one, however, identified Howard Ellen O'Brien as vampire author Anne Rice. That's right, Ms. Rice's baptismal name is that of a male. Rice also writes some pretty Hot Stuff under the names A. N. Roquelaire & Ann Rampling.

Now for this month's QQ: Almost every-

one knows that the spacecraft designated NCC-1701D is the Enterprise from *Star Trek: the Next Generation*. But, what story gave us United Planets Space Cruiser C57D? First correct answer mailed to CDS:QQ, PO Box 61263, King of Prussia, PA 19406, will win a CDS video.

Commentary: What makes a person tell a lie? According to Fran Lebowitz in *Vogue*: "Lying is always [done] out of weakness. Always. It doesn't matter if it's the president or a three-year-old. People who are powerful don't have to answer to anyone, so they don't have to protect themselves from anyone [by lying]."



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Can't figure out how to tame those eyebrows? Help may be on the way. Makeup artist Eugenia Weston, who works with the likes of Bette Midler and Paula Abdul, has created an eyebrow template: a clear plastic stencil that is held over the brow and colored in with pencil and shadow. Look for Form-A-Brow at cosmetic counters in better department stores.

They keep asking the wrong people these obvious questions. For example, researchers at Marquette University in Milwaukee found that "androgynous people (including men who think it's OK to also have female characteristics) tend to be the most mentally healthy people in our culture." See, there is a good reason to be a TV.

However, we don't want too much androgyny (oxymoron anyone?). Anyway, another study, this at Hahneman Hospital here in Philly, found that women with high levels of testosterone exhibited higher levels of depression than the control group. Treatment includes androgen blockers and the depression usually lifts.

Commentary: Ballots for the election of IFGE board members were due out in December, but guess who's up for reelection and guess who counts the ballots? Yep! Same FAB person! Seem fair to you? Seems fair to her and that's what counts. This way she gets to find out who didn't vote for her. Waddya gonna do?

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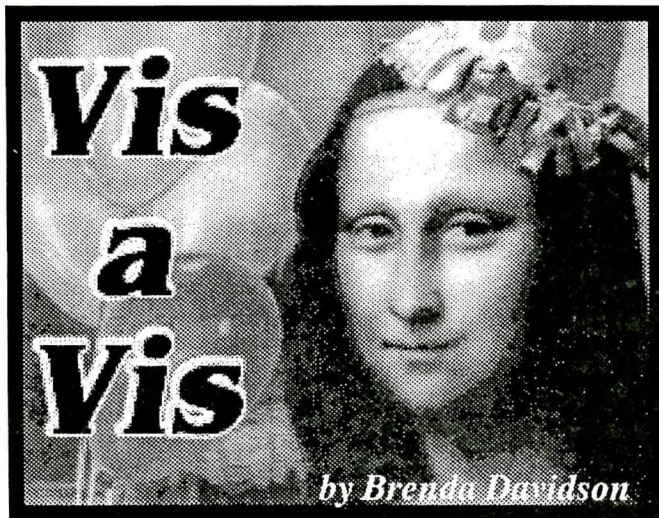
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Well, whadda ya know. Small town *goil* goes to big city and does good. "When you raised your hand and everyone else took a step back you should have known something was up, Costello." This old movie line comes to mind when I think about my evolution from the closet. One year ago National Managing Director was not even a thought in my mind. Three years ago Chapter Managing Director was put before me by someone (Elsa Larson), who had more insight and confidence in me as a leader than I did. Four years ago this GIANT SNOWBALL got started when I innocently took the initiative to obtain a meeting place for a couple of meetings. The "couple of meetings" in a local hair salon lasted for almost a year and suddenly I found myself cast in the most honorable position of Program Meeting Coordinator. Five years ago (this whole thing is starting to sound like a 60's tune), attending a local chapter dinner social for the first time, I will NEVER FORGET how hard the front door of my home opened. So, being an intelligent, ambitious, and always polite small town girl there will be no excuses accepted about my being unapproachable.

Un Huh, thought I was stuck on titles didn't you? Well, for those of you who don't know me better let's put that into cerebral neutral. For those of you who *are* stuck on titles, cover your ears while you read this next one. It's my turn.

NOMENCLATURE MANIA

Is it just me or is it becoming increasingly difficult to know when you're inadvertently offending some-

one. For instance, I walked into the room raving about the superb veal I had at the hot new *trattoria*, and you're losing pieces of molar and about to set a new blood pressure record because you haven't gotten the chance to tell me that you are a raging vegetarian who spends weekends stuffing mailers for People for Ethical Treatment of Animals. Everywhere I turn it seems quite a few things are no longer deemed appropriate conversation. I frequently find myself talking to people in this community who are drowning in a sea of earnestness because they never know when their words are going to hurt someone's feelings. Today, you can't even have an opinion on the weather lest someone tell you that you've no right to complain because the atmosphere has been raped by pollution and because of all the hairspray I use it's my fault anyway. The point being, it's impossible to speak to anyone if you insist on holding your special interest over your head like a crown of thorns or wear your sensitivities on your sleeve. Ah, but just a moment, I have an idea!

Wouldn't it avoid a lot of political and sensitivity abuse if we wore our agendas on our sleeve, literally?

Let's start with a classic and add as necessary. Take a pink triangle (for gay) and trim it with lace if you're a gay crossdresser. For drag queens we'll just add sequins. Hetero crossdressers will have the same gay crossdresser trademark except in the center we will revive the crossed hammer and sickle.

Transgenderist will have a yellow (androgenous color) triangle with a question mark in the center and transsexuals will have a mainstream earth tone color that blends with anything but is easily identifiable to others.

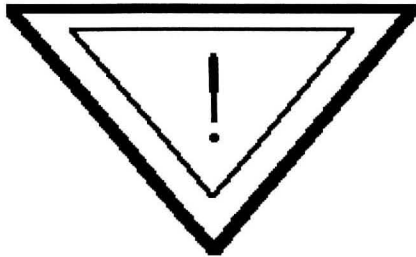
And let's not stop there. What about stamps or stickers to affix to anything you write? Let's say you write a letter to the editor protesting the fatuousness of this column. Just attach your label to the letter to assure your opinion is judged not on the merit of your argument but on the merit of your transgendered title.

Is your hair curling tight yet?

Somewhere, somehow this community finally caved in to society's label maker. I may be old fashioned, but I see straight through to talent and ability. We ALL have some. Let's start putting it to better use. Labeling, sometimes disguised as Terminology, has become quite the transgendered issue during the past few years and I'm surprised no one has thought of taking this one

logical step further. There might even be money to be made.

I wish I could take credit for this clever badge idea but unfortunately some insane German fellow with a bad mustache came up with it more than 50 years ago. With every victory you inherit certain qualities of your oppressor.



THE BLUE JAYS AND....?

Why, the Canadian Crossdresser of course. According to their front cover this is "Canada's #1 Quality CD Magazine." When I first read this I had visions of some guy with a selfmade fur coat and a very windblown wig stepping up to the local trading post counter and requesting, "Some ammo, some backbacon, those panyhose and that french underwire bra, Eh."

So hey, I watch too many movies.

Actually this is a very well done monthly with Toronto's Wildside's fingerprints all over it. I found information on all sorts of stuff I didn't know I needed to know. Mail your "cheque" (those silly Canadians) or money order for \$50.00 U.S. (for surface mail) to Wildside Inc., 161 Gerrard St., Toronto, CANADA M5A-2E4. I'll never steer you wrong, if Brenda says it's good, take it to the bank.

NO DEPOSIT, NO RETURN

Indirectly from our Canadian friends comes this story of an Indiana woman who tried to pass herself off in the courtroom as her husband. The ever so watchful bailiff spotted Linda Hendershott who appeared before the court with slicked back hair, work uniform, and boots. She was "almost immediately" detected

not because of her poor guise but from the fact that the bailiff recognized her from previous appearances on the same charge. Linda attempted the ruse to hide the forging of her husband Leroy's name on bad checks she had written and to keep these frequent courtroom trips from him. The charges were refiled in her name. But, is Leroy gonna be mad when Linda gets home!

COURTROOM TO CLASSROOM

In Hastings, Minnesota, a woman is suing school officials for \$250,000 because they caused her nine-year-old son to want to dress up in her clothes. Rochelle Rutherford claims that when the boy was in a pre-school program he was forced to use the girl's restroom, and when the kids played "dress up" in adult clothes, only women's clothes were made available. Rutherford claims those early childhood experiences have forced the boy into therapy for gender identity and crossdressing issues. Rutherford's lawyer noted that nearly five years later the boy "still has a preference for female clothing. He wants to wear not only clothing, but jewelry, makup and nail polish." The lawyer claims that the school district erred in not having men's clothes available.

The Minnesota Department of Human Rights has already ruled that the boy was discriminated against by being made to use the girl's restroom.

Not to belittle a serious issue but where was this pre-school when I needed it? I would have kept my mouth shut, Honest!

WORD TRAVEL

A male to female transgenderist who had difficulty obtaining a passport with photos showing her in the mode she would be traveling has convinced the State Department to change their policies concerning transgendered persons. The previous policy requiring photographs to match the physical sex was waived for pre-operative transsexuals with documentation for pending surgery. The Department recognized the difficulty in defining exactly what constitutes "male" or "female" and allowed the passport to be granted with current photographs of the TG installed but still listing "her" as male. A Department official noted she could still be denied access or risk deportation in
(continued on page 14)

(VIS A VIS continued from page 13)
 some countries because of the inconsistency.

MATERNAL INCONSISTENCY

A Syracuse, New York, woman who as searching for her natural birth mother received a surprise when she located the person who had given her up for adoption. Mandy Carter, looking for Martha, walked to the front door to meet Martin instead. Martin had undergone SRS and was now a man. After some apparent discussion Mandy stated that "no matter

what he was then or is now, he's still someone who loves me as his own." Love has no boundaries.

MARGINS OF LOVE

I happened to be flipping through the channels with the remote (a male trait my wife wished I would lose), when the December 11th episode of CBS's "Picket Fences" gained enough merit for me to lower my weapon. For those of you who haven't caught the show

(continued on page 8)

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