

Owning Your Story

Callan [REDACTED]

"So, I found out that she had told her sister about my crossdressing, and then her kids knew, and they told other people, and without my knowing it everyone knew all about it,

said a crossdresser. He was feeling exposed, betrayed, like his life was out of control, that other people had taken charge of his secret. They had taken charge of his secret because he had not taken control of his secret. By leaving it hidden, he had ceded control of his story to others, who told it in their own way, with their own biases and subjective viewpoint. By believing that his story was secret, he felt he didn't have to face it. But when he told his wife, she had to cope with that secret, and she chose to share the burden of it, to get support.

The challenge we each have as transgendered people is taking charge of our own narrative, our own story, so that others don't take control of it for us. We want

people to understand our own motives and feelings so they don't feel compelled to assign their own view of our motives to our actions, and then, very possibly, judge us on those assigned motives. For example, if they decide we express transgender just for erotic purposes, then they may condemn our not stopping in the same way they condemn adultery, or they may be uncomfortable with allowing children to see what they consider erotic behavior.

It is a real challenge to find a way to tell our story in an honest and comprehensible way. There is no language in heterosexist culture for people who live between the poles, who are simultaneously "both" and

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TGIC Is You - You Are TGIC

Albany, NY - July 1, 1997 - It has been determined that *you* are TGIC!

"How can this be?" you wonder. After all, I'm not that involved in TGIC. I'm not an officer, I'm not on any committees, I don't plan any events, I don't write for the newsletter. It's not my responsibility -- heck, I don't even go to most of the meetings.

It has been determined that the number one complaint about TGIC is that not enough is going on. People should be more welcoming, the club room should be more inviting, there should be more events and information. People should communicate more, finding new ways to get together.

So, the number one complaint is "TGIC doesn't do enough," and most people think that "someone else" should do more.

Unfortunately, to all the other people at TGIC, you are "someone else." That means that you are TGIC.

So the next time you have a good idea about how TGIC could do more, from finding a new clubhouse to implementing a big sister program, remember that you are TGIC, and find a way to do it.

Because, after much more is said than done, **YOU** are TGIC.

Transgenderist Independence Club
PO Box 13604, Albany, NY 12212-3604
 (518) 436-4513 (live Thurs. 7:30-10 PM)

Transgenderist's Independence Club (TGIC) is a nonprofit, educational, non-sexual social support group for persons wishing to explore beyond the conventional boundaries of gender, including crossdressers, transsexuals and their friends.

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Readers are invited to submit articles relevant to the Transgendered Community for consideration. Preferred method is to E mail articles to: Jeeena@AOL.COM. The article should be part of the body of the e-mail. If you must attach a file please save it in ASCII format.

You may bring or mail typed pages for publication to the TGIC club room. Format should follow that shown in the current newsletter.

Regular Meetings are held every Thursday at the TGIC Club Room on Central Avenue in Albany, 7:30 - 10pm. Some come earlier and stay later, but it is wise to call if you are not a Keyholder or if it is your first visit. Come dressed either way, meet and talk with friends. Many continue to socialize at one of the local night spots after the meetings.

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From the editor.

The articles in this issue about coming out have a special meaning to me at this time in my life since I am currently

struggling with this issue.

I am sure every transgendered person reading this either has dealt with coming out, or is currently dealing with it, or will be dealing with it.

I am struck especially by the article by Callan on "Owning your story", since this was inspired by a conversation I had with Callan one warm evening standing outside Water Works Pub in downtown Albany. I chose to put this on the cover because I know others will find it informative.

This story is about me and about everyone. I am forced to face this issue now. Its scary and wonderfully exciting and liberating. I'm ready for the roller coaster ride it will bring and am making a choice to control it rather than have it control

me.

I have TGIC and its members to thank for the knowledge and confidence I have gained. I want to thank everyone for friendship and support. Thanks to Callan for free therapy. Thanks to Judith Emily and Jeanette for friendship.

Ready or not here I come out.

With this issue of *The Transgenderist*, I am announcing that my last issue as editor will be September, 1997. I have edited the newsletter since April, 1996 and although I enjoy it immensely, I no longer have the time or access to a computer on a regular basis. Vickie has offered to edit August's newsletter with a special theme issue on Transsexuality. She may well decide to take over after that however anyone interested should come forward and volunteer their talents. It is a rich and rewarding experience and I recommend it to anyone who has been wondering how to contribute to the club.

gina

(Story - Con't form cover) "none of the above".

We end up finding narratives that seem to work and then choosing the facts of our life that fit that pattern.

Winnie [redacted], in the June 97 TGIC *Transgenderist*, suggests a number of these patterns:

-- the "super-heterosexual" viewpoint: "I like women so much that I want to be one," or "I am a male lesbian."

-- the "in-your-face crossdresser" challenge: "I'm just a guy in a dress -- what's your problem?"

-- the "gay drag queen" perspective: "I'm just having fun but all my friends know what is under my dress."

-- the "classic transsexual" concept: "I'm a woman trapped in a male body"

These are all just starting points. We may want to say that our transgender expression is just erotic, or we may want to see our expression as the same as two-spirit shamans. We may be working for freedom of people to express the full range of gender, or work hard to maintain our claim to the privileges give to heterosexual men. We may see ourselves as transgressing gender, see ourselves as queer like gays, or we may see ourselves as expressing our true gender, ending our gender masquerade by expressing what we feel inside.

In any case, it is our story that we need to be concerned with -- what we want to say, how we want to say it, and what the long term implications of making those statements are. The classic "gender community" spends a great amount of time expressing and questioning the stories of transgender to see what the implications are. Does the story of one of us invalidate the story of another? Does focus on our dressing make it harder to have people accept that we are essentially transgendered? What does the word transgender mean?

Are TV & TS just different expressions of the same call, or fundamentally different things?

There are volumes written on these subjects, and we each have our own perspective. The reason that this is so hot is because our stories very much define who we are to other people, and we know that

we need to care about how people see us. To cede the right to tell our story to others, because we are keeping it secret means we cede the right to ourselves, because we are our choices: our words, our actions.

David Hare said "The act of writing is the act of discovering what we believe." Until we are clear on what we believe, we cannot expect others to understand what we are saying. This can be hard on people raised as men, who were not trained to express emotions and feelings as well as women. The partners of transgendered males often complain that they feel dumped on by the revelation of transgender in a relationship. Not only do they have to work though their own feelings, but they also feel an obligation to work though their partners feelings, to maintain emotional stability, and to keep an enormous secret from the

beginning to own our stories. To do this is to face the embarrassing, scary, shameful and guilt ridden truths of our lives and start to have some pride in who we are, in the choices we have made to survive.

How do we get to a point where we can simply be honest about who we are, where disclosures of our transgendered nature is not a big deal? When we have spent our lives hiding who we are, the notion of coming out into the light, of just exposing that part of us that we worked so hard to hide can be terrifying.

To tell our story, with truth and grace, we must be able to tell even the embarrassing bits, the pieces we have hidden to save face, so that others will not think badly of us. We have to give up our the false dignity that we have tried to construct though obscuring our messy bits and claim the true

dignity that we each have simply because we are a human. Achieving the impossible requires attempting the absurd, and as long as we reject the absurd, we reject our truths.

To be honest and forthright, to open ourselves to others, we must first take responsibility for our own stories, our own lives --- even the scary bits. We don't have to do it all at once-- for man y people, just knowing that we are

working on understanding, maybe with a therapist, maybe by writing, maybe with workshops, can be a big step. People understand ambivalence, and will respect it when you open to them.

The big challenge for every TG person is how out to be. The two extremes, hiding all the time, and telling everybody everything about your life, are not good choices. We each have to know who to tell what, where and when is appropriate. We have to listen to feedback and get more clear, both with who we are and to make sure that the language we use conveys the meanings that we want to convey.

Rachel [redacted] has argued that we must plan to come at least a little more out every year, to become more open and honest. That may start with a therapist, a partner or a support group, may move on to conferences, may include political action, or education in schools or other ways, or

"I like women so much that I want to be one."

support system they have built on trust and disclosure.

No one is responsible for our stories, our choices, our actions, our secrets and our happiness but us. We cannot cede that responsibility without losing control of our lives.

The process of understanding our stories is something that many people find useful to work with a therapist on. A good therapist can work with males to learn how to cope with feelings, will not try to cure our transgender but to help us integrate it into a full and happy life, and will provide a safe space to say our darkest and scariest thoughts and feelings so that we can explore and understand them.

At some point, every person who is transgendered sits down and writes out their story, what they want people to know about them. This process of exposing how we feel and helping others put it in context so that they won't have to make guesses that are often wrong is a key step in

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(Story - Continued from page 3)

just with our intimate friends. Anyone who comes out knows that there is nothing that feels as good as taking another step towards honesty, towards fresh air and light in our lives.

But the first step in taking charge of our lives is taking charge of our stories, sticking our heads out of the closet enough to tell people who we are, and to then allow them to feel free enough to start talking with us

about their feelings. Our being in the closet forces others around us into the closet, and we all know that being in the closet can build anger, fear and paranoia.



There is nothing more important than owning our stories, understanding our narratives and what they mean, to us, to our choices, to the people who hear them, and to our future. Our personal power in getting people to work with us is, in the long term, based on developing honest, open and resilient relationships. Our strength is in our defenselessness, in our truth, not our walls.

Understanding yourself, learning how to come from your truths, facing the things that scare and embarrass you in your heart is the first step to reclaiming your story. And reclaiming your story is the first step to reclaiming your life.

Isn't it Embarrassing?

CALLAN

Whatever else you can say about transgender, about the attempt to explore gender, it's embarrassing. The struggle to find oneself and one's self expression is never without its messy and embarrassing bits: ask any teenager, who knows what it's like to be growing every day, to have to try new things that you aren't very good at and keep practicing until you have some skill, work until they become natural.

Looking good, suave, elegant, pulled together, mature and sophisticated is something we learn, not something we are born with. Things that come naturally are things that we learned well enough to make them look effortless, like they are always a part of us.

Embracing transgender requires accepting the fact that we are going to look foolish doing it. Achieving the impossible requires attempting the absurd, and as long as we reject the absurd, we reject our truths. We have to give up our the false dignity that we have tried to

construct though obscuring our messy bits and claim the true dignity that we each have simply because we are a human.

While we may be able to find some way to put our embarrassing notions in context -- maybe by ignoring the people who try to embarrass and humiliate us or by putting on the armor of laughing at ourselves first -- the people around us often have more trouble with us embarrassing them.

The cry: "Whatever you do, don't embarrass us!" has been the biggest challenge to many dreams. It ignores the truth that we must always risk embarrassment to achieve our goals, that we will have failures, setbacks and other embarrassing moments before we find our success. To demand that someone we love not embarrass us is to demand that they take no risks, and in turn to demand that they not move ahead, not grow.

Instability is part of growth: "To walk, we have to learn to lean forward," says the British psychotherapist Robin Skynner, "lose our balance and begin to fall. We let go constantly of the previous sta-

bility, falling all the time, trusting that we will find a succession of new stabilities with each step. . . Our experience of the past, and of those dear to us, is not lost at all, but remains richly within us."

We must fall to move forward, learning to catch ourselves and walk again.

"The only time you have to succeed is the last time you try," says Phil Knight, founder of Nike.

Too often we avoid risks because to fail would be too embarrassing, to ourselves or to the people we love. To do that, though, means that we embarrass ourselves by not growing, not becoming more graceful and at-

tuned to ourselves and our world. Erica Jong: "And the trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you risk even more."

My faux-pas, my embarrassments, are writ large in my mind. I know where I failed, where I was embarrassed. In one way that is good -- it helps me learn how to do things better the next time, for without hearing feedback we can easily keep on making the same mistakes over and over again.

"The only time you have to succeed is the last time you try"

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(Embarrassing Continued from page 4)

But I also know the limits of that, that when those past failures make me afraid of being embarrassed again I pull back, don't explore and exercise so that I can achieve some mastery. Children understand that in video games you have to die over and over again to learn how to get to the next life, but they are not embarrassed about losing one game -- it puts them closer to the position where they can win the next.

In "Learned Optimism," Martin Seligman argues that the difference between winners and losers is simple. Winners see loss, embarrassment, as a learning experience, making them better ready to try again. Losers see loss as a loss, making them afraid of risking again.

It's hard when you don't feel supported, when you feel others don't encourage you to take risks. For people trained as men, failing at a risk means losing face, being in a one down position, and knowing that others may lord it over you, may use that failure to make you look weaker and smaller. Winners know, however, that if they do take the risk, even if it takes a few pratfalls, they will be eventually achieve their goals and dreams. This may be the blessing of Bill Clinton -- people know he has fallen on his face numbers of times, but they also seem to believe that he has learned and gotten better at what he does because of it.

Thomas Watson, former head of IBM, was asked if he would fire an executive who made a wrong decision and lost the company \$1 million. "Why would I fire him?" he replied. "I just spent a million dollars training him!"

To boldly face the very real probability that you are going to look like a fool until you get it right is the challenge that all transgendered people face -- and the challenge that most of us shrink from. Some of just ignore the feedback, some settle for being foolish, and others just give up rather than look foolish.

Some of us, though, try, look foolish, pick themselves up and keep going until they actually get to a place that is strong, natural and graceful. And those are the ones who finally achieve their natural beauty.

PERSEVERANCE

(#15)

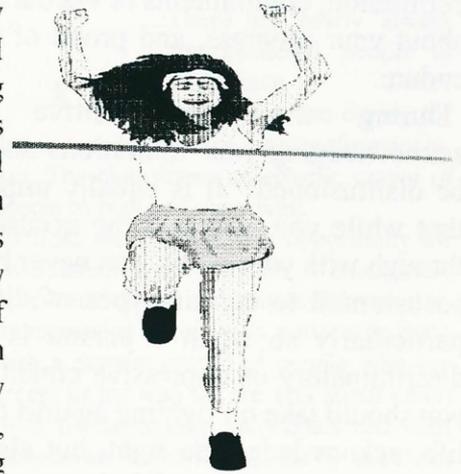
by Gianna E. [REDACTED]

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I remember years ago when I began my transition that there were days when the whole world seemed against me. After adopting my new identity, people who had never visited my office before stopped by to socialize. Curiosity seekers, this continued for several years. Often while passing through San Francisco's business and shopping districts, on

my way home from work I frequently was the only transgender woman I saw. At times I received disparaging comments from strangers, homeless people, even gays. On several occasions I was asked to leave both gay and straight business establishments. The request usually stated we do not serve your type of people here. There have also been times I was spat upon. Those early years were often very discouraging, yet I knew my self-identity was strong

and persevered on the only path I knew. This article's subject is on perseverance, and several of its key components. Perseverance is needed if you wish to be true to yourself and your goals.



Perseverance is very hard work. Its believing in yourself, your ideas and your goals. Often in the face of criticism and other's disbelief in who you are and in what you are capable of accomplishing. Perseverance is a commitment, a dedication to yourself and following through with your actions. One of the key elements which is needed in order to persevere, is acknowledgment. Whether a person is making a transition, coming out to parents, looking for a new job, or dealing with a difficult challenge, it is extremely important to acknowledge the activity and process.

Sometimes during a challenge or

crisis the simplest of tasks become extremely difficult. At these times it is important to recognize our actions as persevering, because it may take additional energy to stay with one's plans. Other times, if the work isn't actually difficult we may take our actions for granted and not recognize that there are benefits to our work. As a rule people tend to be success-driven, however there are often many reasons people show perseverance. As you develop plans it often helps to question your motivation in order to determine if perseverance is worth it. Am I doing this for my benefit? Am I doing this for others benefit? Do my plans have the

potential to hurt others or myself? What is the benefit of acting now, over waiting to act or letting someone else take on the responsibility?

In acknowledging progress or difficulties, do not be afraid to acknowledge when you are doing difficult work. Doing so provides an inroad to recognizing that you will become accustomed to the work you are doing, and that persevering will be worth it. When your challenges seem particularly difficult, remind yourself that you are human. Do not wait around for other's permission, compliments or encouragement. Feel good about your progress, and proud of the difficulties you endure.

During these feel-positive moments while acknowledging your limitations and successes, do not be disillusioned. It is equally important to recognize that while you may become accustomed to following through with your plans, one never becomes completely accustomed to certain types of difficulties.. This is particularly so when a person is persevering under discriminatory or oppressive conditions. Therefore, if you should take on fighting against these factors in your life, acknowledge the fight, but also acknowledge the feelings that go along with the process.

You can feel good about taking on a challenge, but also recognize when a situation is causing pain. If you are dealing with a situation that is particularly painful or challenging, do not hesitate to seek help in dealing with your feelings so that you move beyond the pain to complete your goals.

During counseling sessions I often hear people complain about the difficulties they are having, and rightly so in many circumstances. Sometimes the changes we need to make or conflicts we encounter are not a matter of choice. Such situations often come as a matter of circumstance.

Transgender issues, like many other issues in life, often present situations beyond our control. Fore example, we cannot always control whether people will accept us. Therefore, when we persevere through difficult times we act with the hope of improving our quality of life, even if it means being at odds with others.

Of the most common things I've noticed that people overlook is the role that not making choices plays when we are persevering. For example, when we are in the

SEXOSCOPE

Gemini women: Often the aggressor; you are never embarrassed by your behavior because you never adhere to any standards except your own. Your main requirement: a lover who knows how to take his time. You are a one woman harem, but a partner should be aware that in a relationship, the Gemini woman is looking for a combination of the spiritual and the physical, the romantic and the practical. You want to talk to the guy after you tumble with him! Best sex mates are Leo, Scorpio, Aquarians, Libra, and Aries. Favorite gadget: the vibrator.

Gemini men: He likes it with the lights on in front of the mirror. He can work any partner into the mood because he knows exactly how to evoke the right responses. Oral sex isn't his favorite pastime, but he will take his time with other preliminaries. Tends to be fast and furious, more concerned with satisfying himself than his partner, but he is more adequate in areas of lovemaking that are often neglected by other men. He can tell a woman exactly what she wants to hear. His erogenous zone: move your lips and tongue lightly up his arm.

EARS WANTED!

Transgendered? Transgendered friends?

Have you heard about:

- > abuse by public officials?
- > discrimination?
- > public harassment?
- > sexual harassment?
- > assault or rape?
- > remaining silent bothering you?
- > no help from conventional sources?

Network with us: (518) 432-7092

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Albany, NY 12206

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process of telling others about our needs, perhaps for the first time, we frequently forget what would happen if we did not make our needs known. Instead people generally spend a great deal of time observing how difficult it was to come out. Regrettably they often do not acknowledge that the effort was worth it because otherwise their needs wouldn't get fulfilled.

Choice also plays a key role in perseverance because as we encounter difficulties, sometimes we may wish to re-examine whether our efforts are worth it. During this process it is important to ask yourself questions?

Are you willing to settle for second best? If your efforts do not turn out exactly as planned, will the struggle still have been worth it? Will persevering now provide me the skills to take on bigger challenges later?

While persevering, if you are engaging in something you believe in, that is your right. These days having the right to do or believe in something is often a much contested point. Sometimes people take their rights for granted, putting themselves completely before others. Other times people do not realize that everyone has innate rights as a human being, much like a -human bill of rights.- This would include the right to make choices and accept responsibilities is ours for the taking, insofar as we make every effort to not hurt others during the process. We also have the right to individual ideas and self-expressions, as long as we do not trample upon others ideas or expressions. Feeling you have the right to be who you are and pursue your plans play a key role in perseverance, because it provides self-confidence while you pursue your objectives.

I like people who persevere. They often having challenging stories and a vast wealth of ideas and experiences. People who persevere typically take ordinary skills and change our world for the better, in both big and small ways, instead of constantly complaining or criticizing. They also seem to have a unique ability recycle old ideas to create new poetry which rhymes with current times. And, while improving their quality of life, often set positive examples for others to do the same. If you look around our community, you should have no difficulty finding people who persevere. In fact, if you look in the mirror, I bet you will see one there. This article is dedicated to Larry Burton, Sr., who reminded me what perseverance is about and who inspires me. *****GIANNA E. [REDACTED]

provides nationwide telephone consultation, individual & relationship counseling, evaluations and referrals. She is principal author of the Recommended Guidelines for Transgender Care, writes Transgender Tapestry's "Ask Gianna" column; is an AEGIS board member and HBIGDA member. She can be contacted at (415) 558-8058, at P.O. Box 424447 San Francisco, CA 94142, or via e-mail at

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All dressed up and no place to go in the Mid Hudson Valley?

**** Ongoing TG Party at Invert ****



Transgender individuals south of Albany might consider attending *Invert*, "a club for gay, lesbian and bi-sexual people, their friends and admirers."

There are nearly always transgendered people in attendance. *Invert*

provides a live deejay for

dancing and there are drag performances, too. The club draws an eclectic crowd of people to play and party with.

It does seem the perfect opportunity for involvement, as *Invert* atmosphere welcomes those of a colorful, gender-transgressive nature. It's a place to party with a diverse crowd of people who can accept us for who we are. (It's about time!) Both transgendered individuals and their partners are welcome to come by and check out the scene. Dress the way you feel the greatest. Bring yourself closer to community. Show up when you will during club hours, and have a fabulous time.

Invert is there for us every Friday night from 10:00 p.m. onwards at *Pongo cafe* in Tivoli and it costs \$3 to attend. Directions: Route 9 to Route 9G, Right (West). In 7 miles, turn Left on Route 78. Once in the town of Tivoli, in a few blocks you'll see Pongo cafe on the right hand side. You'll find parking spaces available on the street. Pongo's phone number is (914) 757-4403. (Performers interested in doing a drag number at future *Inverts*, e-mail *invert club@aol.com*)



OUR GENDER FAMILY

MAY, 1997
by Rachel [REDACTED]*Creating a Gender Friendly World*

Society has created a firm but arbitrary connection between sex and gender and that link is THE MAIN SOURCE of our problems. Transvestite or transsexual, male or female, gay or lesbian -- all face the same issue. We know the role of outcast; someone who just doesn't belong. We have felt shame and fear of rejection because society says there is something wrong with us. We have learned to hide our true selves in order to achieve acceptance, but that level of self-denial creates unbearable internal turmoil. We share anguish, isolation, desperation. We share pain...

Whether the gender community actually exists is disputed by many, but most agree that the gay/lesbian community is real. Whatever their official status, the two groups have not effectively linked themselves as a unified force. Even within the groups, actions are often fragmented. Each includes people with significantly different views, life styles, personalities

and agendas that frequently lead to power struggles, petty-bickering, personal attacks, finger-pointing and fragmented actions. Attacks on individuals and groups are commonplace and ugly. Individuals and organizations act independently. Coordinated action is the exception, not the norm.

We do open battle with each other while complaining about the prejudice society shows towards us. From mainstream society's point of view, we appear as one ragged group. As they observe our internal squabbling, we extinguish any hope of their acceptance. We show disrespect to each other. Why should they respect us?

While we share strong underlying bonds, they are largely ignored. Each of us is trying to bend, shift, stretch or break that culturally enforced link between sex and gender -- the primary cause of our problems. We strive for self-expression. We want everyone to

accept our gender expression. But we quite often fail to accept other community members' expression because it differs from ours. What will it take to recognize and value our common bond?

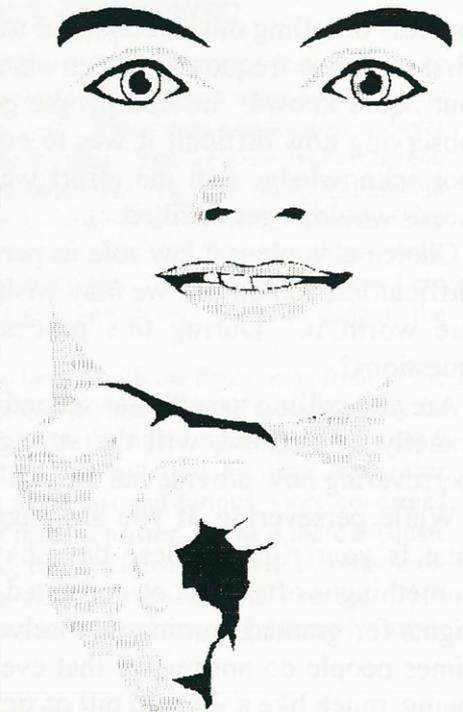
The ultimate sadness is that we consistently fail to take advantage of an obvious solution that would benefit all of us. Suppose we lived in a society where it was impossible to distinguish men from women based solely on their clothing, makeup or behavior. A world where no gender rules were attached to wearing dresses or pants. A place where labels such as transgendered, transsexual and transvestite were insignificant -- where no stereotypes were attached to bisexuals, heterosexuals or homosexuals. Then we could quit hiding and be ourselves. But everyone knows that's impossible -- isn't it?

That open society was envisioned when the International Bill of

Gender Rights was first drafted -- "It is fundamental that individuals have the right to define, and to redefine as their lives unfold, their own gender identities, without regard to chromosomal sex, genitalia, assigned birth sex, or initial gender role.... (and) have the corresponding right to free expression of their self-defined identity." Notice the statement extends coverage to everyone. Unfortunately society doesn't accept free expression.

Tragically, we don't either. How can we allow that to continue?

I know that we can't, but nothing changed for me until I realized that I personally can't allow that to continue! Converting generalized rhetoric into a personal commitment, is the key ingredient for change. The power generated by an individual acting with passion and principles, creates new realities once deemed impossible.



...we must accept responsibility for a problem before we can solve it. We cannot solve a problem by saying "It's not my problem." We cannot solve a problem by hoping that someone else will solve it for us. I can only solve a problem when I say This is my problem and it's up to me to solve it.

M. Scott Peck

The Road Less Traveled

The problems caused by linking sex and gender expression are my problems. My personal Objective is to work to educate people so that -- "The gender family is understood by and accepted into mainstream society."

I pledge to accept every individual who considers themselves part of either the gender or gay/lesbian communities as a member of my gender family. I will treat their view of gender expression with dignity and respect. When someone doesn't accept me, my view or my principles, I will explain my position and invite them to share their thinking. I will NEVER attack them or their position. I will seek to understand first, then to be understood. I will; however, insist that they communicate in the same constructive manner. If we cannot interact in a respectful manner, I will disengage as gracefully as possible while leaving the door open for future discussion. Inevitably I will fail to honor the pledge fully. When that happens, I ask that you remind me of my commitment.

Rachel [redacted]
March 30, 1997

Haircuts

The difference between men and women

Women's version:

Woman2: Oh! You got a haircut! That's so cute!

Woman1: Do you think so? I wasn't sure when she gave me the mirror. I mean, you don't think it's too fluffy looking?



Woman2: Oh God no! No, it's perfect. I'd love to get my hair cut like that, but I think my face is too wide. I'm pretty much stuck with this stuff I think.

Woman1: Are you serious? I think your face is adorable. And you could easily get one of those layer cuts - that would look so cute I think. I was actually going to do that except that I was afraid it would accent my long neck.

Woman2: Oh - that's funny! I would love to have your neck! Anything to take attention away from this two-by-four I have for a shoulderline.

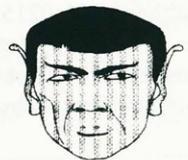
Woman1: Are you kidding? I know girls that would love to have your shoulders. Everything drapes so well on you. I mean, look at my arms - see how short they are? If I had your shoulders I could get clothes to fit me so much easier.



Men's version:

Man2: Haircut?

Man1: Yeah.



Tracy Oppelt

Master Barber and Cosmetologist
Located at:

Maria's Hair Care
1573 A Central Ave.
Colonie, New York
518-869-5604

Calander and Events

TGIC MEETINGS

- July 3** Miss Firecracker '97
- July 10** Policewomen Forever: Pepper, Honey & Love
- July 17** Flags High! The Yacht Club Dance
- July 24** SpandexFest II
- July 31** Too Slim: An Evening at the Fashion Cafe

- August 7-** Hot summer nights
- August 14 -** Miss Meteor contest
- August 21 -** Full moon babes
- August 28 -** Back to school in jumpers and pantaloons

BECOME AN IFGE MEMBER
 The International Foundation for Gender Education is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Basic membership is \$25 per year. Subscriptions to Transgender Tapestry are \$40. Brochures and forms are available in the TGIC Club Room. Call or write to:
 IFGE (617) 899-2212
 PO Box 229
 Waltham, MA 02154-0229
 The I.F.G.E. Internet version of Transgender Tapestry is available at:
<http://www.tiac.net/users/dba/ifge/ifge.htm>

ANONYMOUS HIV ANTIBODY TESTING
 Your regional HIV Counseling and Testing Program provides free HIV counseling and antibody testing, support and referral. No names will be asked. (NYS Health Department) Albany Area:
 (518) 486-1595 or 1-800-962-5065.

TGIC-On-line

All transgendered people are invited to join *TGIC On-Line*, an informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC). Messages exchanged on *TGIC-On-line* focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Newburg. If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about TGIC, send an e mail message to: TGIC-request@hartebeest.com with any subject line and in the message body, the text:

**JOIN TGIC
STOP**

(Please note: JOIN TGIC must be on line 1. STOP must be on line 2) You will receive an automated acknowledgment (Journal) of your request, which must be approved with the list moderator.

- July 16-20, 1997 FIFTH ANNUAL SPOUSES PARTNERS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR EDUCATION (SPICE) Peggy Rudd P. O. Box 5304 Katy, TX 77491 915-343-1953 (Mary Jane)
melp@phoenix.com www.pmpub.com
- July 26-30, 1997 19th NATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY HEALTH CONFERENCE AND NATIONAL AIDS/HIV FORUM Radisson Hotel, Atlanta, GA NLGHA 97 Conference P.O. Box 33022 Washington, DC 20033
- Oct 2-5, 1997 Southern Comfort-PObox 77591 Atlanta, GA 30357 404-633-6470
 e mail: ssccatl@aol.com WEB SITE: <http://members.aol.com/ssccatl>

TRI-ESS MEETINGS IN SCHENECTADY

No formal meetings of The Lambda Chi Lambda chapter of Tri-Ess will be held during July and August however anyone interested in socializing can still show up at "YOURS", a bar at 145 Barrett St. Schenectady at 7PM on the third Saturday of the month. (July 19)

Therapeutic Support Group

for Transgender/Transsexual F to M is now accepting new members.

Topics include Coming Out, Transitioning, Family issues, Jobs and Careers, Self esteem.

Contact:

**Choices Counseling Associates
518- 463-9152**