



News & views

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Renaissance

There Is No Transgender Community

by Angela Gardner

This article was inspired by an article titled **There is no Gay Community** in the October 10, 1994 issue of *Au Courant*, one of Philadelphia's two gay weekly papers. The authors, Professor Ernest W. Bartow and writer Rick Snyder, assert that the "gay community" is an illusion. To quote them, "When self-appointed gay leaders or activists need a constituency to represent, the term 'gay community' suits their purpose in exerting political influence. When people who feel alienated need a sense of belonging, the idea of 'gay community' has an irresistible appeal." Those thoughts might as easily be applied to the emerging concept of "the transgender community"

The term "transgender community" is certainly convenient when you're writing an article about all of the world's transgendered people but it is not an accurate use of the word "community." A community is not just a group or subculture existing within the greater society. Community is a relationship that includes commitment, trust, openness and honesty, just like any relationship. These characteristics must be there between all of the members of the community in order for there to be true community. The authors of **There is no Gay Community** have read **The Different Drum** by Dr. M. Scott Peck, which inspired Alison Laing to pen her article, **The New Beat: A March Toward True Community** in last month's *News & Views*. Alison's article touched on a few of Dr. Peck's points but the *Au Courant* piece mentioned a few more that are important to remember as well.

Community develops in four stages: pseudo-community, chaos, emptiness and true community. In pseudocommunity people within the community are pleasant to one another but "guardedly open and politely restrained in their interactions." This happens since everyone is busy "making nice." No one wants to cause a conflict or rock the boat. Our transgender pseudocommunity is slipping away as I write and we are moving into the next phase, chaos.

Chaos is a time in community development characterized by everyone shouting about how *they*

think the community's problems should be solved. Everyone has their own needs and expectations and they're not afraid to express them. After being subjected to a myriad of viewpoints, community members get frustrated with all the chatter and finally come to realize the necessity for the next phase, emptiness.

Emptiness occurs when community members give up their preconceptions and learn to wait and listen. The voices that then speak into the emptiness are truthful voices from members of the community expressing not just petty ambitions and plans to assure someone their slice of the pie, but deep thoughts and feelings. And the listening community benefits from hearing those voices by experiencing a period of healing.

Getting through these stages and arriving at the time of healing and connection is not simple or easy. It takes a lot of difficult work to forge a real community. It isn't achieved without some pain. Isn't it time we put an end to the period of chaos and arrived at a point where the entire community is ready to listen? The voices of reason are there. The community building pledge taken by AEGIS, Renaissance and the Outreach Institute is one step toward true community. Many individuals who are members of Renaissance are also members of other transgender organizations. Urge your other organizations to take the Alliance Pledge. In this time of Republican control of Congress, the rising power of an intolerant Christian Right and the rise of a whole class of people who get their opinions from radio talk show hosts, it behooves us to hang together or as a wise person once said, "we will hang alone."

*The article by Professor Bartow and Mister Snyder will appear as a chapter in their forthcoming book, **Free To Feel Good; Free to Be Good**. Check your local gay book store if you would like to purchase a copy.*

Join the Transgender Alliance for Community. Ask your organization to take the Pledge for Community. Contact Renaissance, AEGIS, Outreach Institute, or Tri-Ess for a copy.

Chapter & Affiliate Information

Chapters

Delaware

Renaissance Delaware Chapter: meets second Saturday of each month. Write for info to: PO Box 5656, Wilmington, DE 19808 or call 302-995-1396.

New Jersey

South Jersey/Shore Area: Write Renaissance South Jersey, Box 189, Mays Landing, NJ, 08330. Meets first Saturday of the month at the Atlantic Mental Health Center, 2002 Black Horse Pike, McKee City. Doors open 7PM. Call 609-641-3782 for details.

Pennsylvania

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

Lower Susquehanna Valley: Write Renaissance LSV, Box 2122 Harrisburg, PA 17105. Meets on the first Saturday of the month. Call 717-780-1LSV (1578) for location and times.

Affiliates

Georgia

Atlanta: The American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), PO Box 33724, Decatur, GA 30033-0724 or call 404-939-0244. Information resources.

Atlanta: Atlanta Gender Explorations (A.G.E.), PO Box 77562, Atlanta, GA 30357, 404-939-2128.

Louisiana

The Gulf Gender Alliance, PO Box 870213, New Orleans, LA 70187-1300. Local support group.

New Jersey

Monmouth/Ocean Trans Gender, (MOTG), write PO Box 8243, Red Bank, NJ 07701 or call 908-219-9094.

New York

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

Long Island - New York GIRL & Partners, 149 South Howell Ave., Centereach, NY 11720, Call 516-732-8219 for info.

Renaissance News & Views

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

Resources

Background Papers:

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

Significant Other Support

To network with other partners of transgendered people contact Evelyn Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940.

Pen Pal Program:

If you would like to correspond with other people around the country contact Pen Pals, care of Maryann Kirkland, PO Box 1242, Newtown, Pa., 18940. Maryann will put you on the Pen Pal List and give you a copy of that list so you may correspond with as many new friends as you like.

TransParent Forum:

If you are transgendered and have children, that makes you a TransParent. If you'd like to network with other TransParents contact Elsa [redacted], PO Box 2122, Harrisburg, Pa., 17105, attention: TransParent.

Events Calendar

March

- 4 Ren. South Jersey
- 4 Ren. LSV meeting
- 11 Ren. Delaware
- 13-19 IFGE Convention, Atlanta, Ga.
- 18 Ren. GPC
- 25 Balto. Affiliate

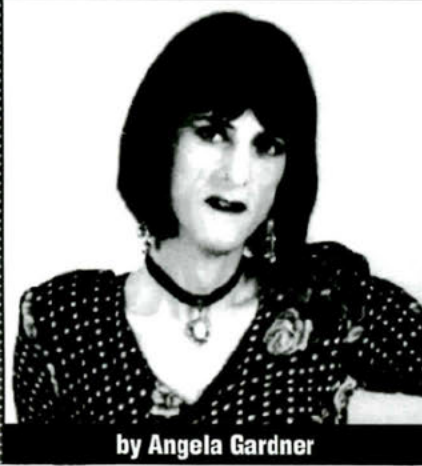
April

- 1 Ren. South Jersey
- 1 Ren. LSV meeting
- 8 Ren. Delaware
- 15 Ren. GPC
- 22 Balto. Affiliate

May

- 6 Ren. South Jersey
- 6 Ren. LSV meeting
- 13 Ren. Delaware
- 18-21 CDS Paradise In The Poconos
- 20 Ren. GPC
- 27 Balto. Affiliate

News Beat & Reminder



Reminder Beat

Another month—another frothy whip of words from the word processor of the queen of the comma, the princess of parentheses; Yes, it's time for Reminder Beat by me, Angela Gardner. So...hold on to your wigs, here we go...

DRESSING UP IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH

I started February by flying to Toronto on the first day of that frigid month and boy, are my arms tired. Sorry. I just can't resist a cornball joke. (My mother was frightened by comedians while I was in the womb.) I made the journey to appear on *The Shirley Show*. She's a top rated talk show host in Canada and her show also runs in the U.S. on a syndicated basis. My fellow guests were **Maryann Kirkland** and her significant other **Evelyn**, Tri-Ess honcho **Carol Beecroft** with her spouse and Dee McKay a "dresser" (her term) from western Pennsylvania. The expert on the panel was the Outreach Institute's resident gender specialist **Ari Kane**. The show was meant to focus on how crossdressing had affected people's relationships. I was there as the "single" crossdresser, to tell of the angst related to finding a special woman to love while burdened with the albatross of transvestism. Or something like that. Anyhow, we never really got around to anything of depth about relationships since shocked audience members started down that same old talk show road of "How can you dress like that? Blah, blah, blah."

Shirley went with the trend and the rest is history. The last sentence spoken as they started to roll the credits came from a young woman who ran up to the center of the audience and asked why people couldn't just dress like they want. That was a good close at least. The show will air in the States sometime early this month so check your papers for feature times.

It didn't turn out that bad but if I didn't make any scintillating contributions to the show it was probably due to jet lag. (Right. Same time zone, no lag. Think of another excuse quick, Ange.) Well, with all those experts on the same panel it was hard to get a word in edgewise. Yeah that's it. If you see the show send us a note with your feedback and if you're in Toronto check out a little restaurant and bar at 692 Yonge Street called The Living Well. The restaurant was on the first floor and after a tasty repast we climbed the stairs to the second floor where a chalkboard sign welcomed us to "**The World's Sleaziest Bar.**" It wasn't. I've been to the world's sleaziest bar and it's in New York City. This was a cozy little place with, at least for that evening, a Star Trek theme. The female bartender had her forehead ridged, like a Klingon. (I hope it was makeup. Plastic surgery would have been a touch extreme.) If you visit them bring your Klingon phrase book and impress her by ordering in Klingonese. The drink special was a *Beam Me Up Scotty*, but I didn't have one. I figured there was too much possibility of a transporter

malfunction so I stuck with 7 & 7.

Toronto seemed to be a very friendly and accepting town. Even the cab drivers will engage in friendly conversation. Try talking to a New York cabby. If you visit you can be your femme self practically anywhere and not have to worry about what people might do. Of course, it is the Great White North so those cold winds up the skirt can be a problem.

NOW THERE'S A GOOD SKATE, CHARLIE BROWN

No, the adorable Charles Schultz character is not a crossdresser. This bit has to do with the **World Figure Skating Championships** which were broadcast on January 28. Isabelle Brasseur & Lloyd Eisler crossdressed for their routine. That's right. I was working at my computer when the phone rang. It was **Lorraine Anderson**, owner and seamstress-in-chief of The Occasional Woman. She said, "Quick put on channel X." (I've forgotten which station it was on.) Quickly aiming and firing my trusty remote control I was confronted by the image of a man in a blonde wig and custom made skates that had been fashioned to look like black high heeled pumps. Lloyd, for it was he, also wore a traditional flouncy skirt skating dress. Isabelle wore a mustache and men's clothes, kind of like a barbershop quartet getup. When they completed their routine they skated over to the after-competition interview to await the judge's score. The judges gave the couple a 49 which didn't seem to please Lloyd since he made an "up yours gesture" at them. The female commentator in the broadcast booth said, "Not a very ladylike gesture." I guess it just goes to show you can dress them up but...

B MOVIE BABE IS BAD GUY

Surfing the Saturday afternoon "B" movies sometimes pays off with bonuses for those of us who get a kick out of finding crossdressers worked into the plots. I happened across a 1986 Sci-Fi, rock and roll movie called

continued next page

News Beat...

Riders of the Storm one recent snowy afternoon and fortunately didn't have to watch the whole thing to spot the crossdresser. I tuned in close to the end and knew right away that Mrs Westinghouse, the candidate for President, was really a man. She was running on a right wing platform, and a pair of platform pumps.

Dennis Hopper stars in this kernel of cornball science fiction as a Vietnam Vet who saves the country from the Right Wing. He and co-star **Michael J. Pollard** (remember him?) spend most of their time high, chemically, and in the sky. Their headquarters is a B-52. Mrs. Westinghouse is played by Nigel Pegram. I'm not sure, but I think Nigel was a rock musician at some point in his career. (Steeleye Span?) Either that or a British comic. Obviously, his career hasn't been doing that well but he made a cute little old lady in a gingham dress.

Hopper's career couldn't have been in good shape in '85 or '86 when he agreed to do this flick. I say rent it, fast forward through the worst spots and enjoy how the evil crossdresser is exposed at the end. Yeah, it's a bummer that the CD is a villain but hey, what can ya do?

MORE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

You say you want somebody you can look up to? A role model who won't be tempted by the dark side. How about a

secret agent who fights for good and happens to be a master of disguise. The old master of disguise routine always works for me when it's time for a good fantasy. Now **Get Smart** has Agent **O**. That's right kids, *Get Smart* is back in a new incarnation, Sunday nights on Fox. Maxwell Smart, still portrayed by **Don Adams**, is now the Chief of Control and his son is the agency's hot shot young agent. His partner is a beautiful blonde whose number is 69. Well, it is the Fox Network.

Agent **O** comes into the plot as the master of disguise who can transform himself into anyone. The bad part is, the character is played by various actors, male and female, who portray **O** in his different disguises. I think they should use a real master of disguise but they never listen to my advice. The show is just as stupid as the original and just as much fun. Tune in for a chuckle, see if you can spot Agent **O** and get a nostalgic thrill when they bring out the agent who was always inside a mailbox or suitcase. Of course Barbara Feldon reprises her old role and is just as lovely as ever.

OR, SUPER MODELS

Yep, another bit about **RuPaul**, but, he really is a major positive role model for young people who feel like dressing up. Billie Jaye [REDACTED] has been clipping again and sent an entire page from the *Arab Times*' News/Features section. Except for the Osh Kosh ad, it's all an article by Mary Harron on RuPaul. It seems Ms. Harron roomed with Ms. Charles back in the the days

when the supermodel was a down and out drag queen in New York. He hadn't fallen on hard times, he had retreated from the New York drag club scene to prepare for his big push to super-stardom. For RuPaul it was a time of study and preparation. How do you prepare to become a drag superstar? Well he did it by studying the performances of great drag queens; like Faye Dunaway as Joan Crawford in *Mommie Dearest*. Of her, RuPaul said, "...she's so Kabuki. Every gesture means something. She's a total drag queen." He spent his time watching performances over and over, reading and rereading star biographies and cleaning up his act. He gave up drinking, drugs and partying and took up aerobics. His drag queen peers thought he was nuts.

But, as we know, RuPaul's focus and determination has paid off. With his philosophy, which Mary Harron describes as a mixture of the Baptist church, self-help theory and New Age mysticism, RuPaul has gone on to become a true star. It's quite a trip from an Atlanta punk band called RuPaul and the U-Hauls to hit records, a part in *The Brady Bunch Movie* and headlining in Las Vegas. Now that's mainstream acceptance.

The article is full of cool information about RuPaul and I'd like to print the whole thing so you could read it but, alas, space is short. To sum up a few highlights, RuPaul's first experience with glamour drag came during his early performing days in Atlanta. Another punk band he knew was holding a crossdressed mock wedding

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and they asked RuPaul to be a brides maid. (Bet they'd let him be the bride now.) He said, "It was the first time I'd ever dressed up in glamorous drag, where I put in socks for breasts and shaved my legs, and really went all out for this. And the reaction I got from people was incredible, and from that moment I was hooked. From that moment I understood the power of drag, and could feel that power in myself." Even though RuPaul can feel the power he claims he is not a transvestite. He says, "A transvestite wants to wear what a real woman would wear: a smart little business suit." Sorry Ru, too narrow a definition. I find that "power" in lots of different outfits and I bet many of my readers do, too. It's unfortunate that our biggest, most successful representative doesn't know that his first transfigurative (no pun intended) experience was the same as our first experience with women's clothing. The "power" comes from our libido. However, we all use it in different ways, leading folks to think there is a difference between crossdressers, transvestites and drag queens. I know I'm on shaky ground with some of my readers and I expect to see some letters. I'll print 'em if I can read 'em.

LYPSINKA SPEAKS

Since we're talking about famous drag impersonators let's ask the question, "What's good old Lypsinka up to?" Well girls, she showed up at an advance screening of the **Barbara Streisand/Glenn Close** production, *Serving in Silence: The Margaret*

Cammermeyer Story. There she mingled and cavorted with other celebrities like Babs, Glenn, **Elliot Gould, Matthew Perry, John Voight, Brenda Vaccaro** and **Liza**, with a Z. The film is about Margaret Cammermeyer's dismissal from the Army because of her lesbianism. When asked what she thought, Lypsinka, wearing a bobbed red wig and a copy of the see-through pant suit Barbara Streisand wore when she accepted the Oscar for *Funny Girl*, said, "I thought the movie was fantastic. I wanted to cry, but my eye-makeup would have run." Can't have our famous drag queens looking like Alice Cooper after a hard concert. Good work keeping dry eyes, Lypsinka.

What else has she been doing lately? Starring in a film for HBO titled *Witch Hunt*. Keep an eye peeled for it in your TV, that's television, schedule and check it out.

LENO SPEAKS

We're no longer the forgotten minority and we keep getting reminded more often every day. **Jay Leno** was doing his monologue on January 26th and he started to say something about pantyhose. He prefaced his remarks by saying, "Here's something of interest to the women in the audience, and the transvestites..." Now what talk show host would have bothered to mention us just a decade ago? First they start mentioning us in their monologues, then RuPaul shows up as a guest, what's next? I'm ready to hostess my own show Mr. DeMille.

Another sign of the acceptance of drag comes in *Backstage* magazine's Bistro Bits column from February tenth. Columnist Roy Sander reviewed three shows currently running on the New York cabaret circuit. The shows all had women impersonating stars of the past. He commented, and I quote, "Imagine, Totie Fields, Marilyn Monroe and Rita Hayworth all being portrayed by women. Next thing you know, we'll have a female impersonating Garland, which will be the end of Western civilization as we know it."

In related bistro news, *Backstage* handed out their **10th Annual Bistro Awards** in February. **Randy Allen** took the Outstanding Impersonation honors for his portrayal of Bette Davis in "Me and Jezebel" at The Ballroom in NYC. Congrats Randy.

NATIONAL GENDER PROJECT PROGRESS

The earthquake last year in California is still sending shock waves throughout the transgender community. What do earthquakes have to do with fellas in frocks you ask? Well, Northridge, California where the quake centered is the headquarters of Dr. Richard F. Docter, the man in charge of the National Gender Project. He has been working at Cal State for around a decade to answer questions about gender, in particular, what constitutes "gender dysphoria?"

A caller on the Renaissance phone wanted to know how the quake affected Dr. Docter's research. To get

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"Is that concrete all around... or is it in my head?" That line from Mott the Hoople's 1974 anthem *All The Young Dudes* (written by David Bowie) came across my car radio last night and seemed like a fitting intro for this column. You see, I just spent two weeks pouring over dozens of TG support group newsletters searching for thought-provoking material. And when I look out at a coffee table strewn with newsletters full of stolid prose about crossdressing, I can indeed wonder if that is "concrete all around... or is it in my head?" from trying to read them.

But fear not. I did, indeed, find a few signs of intelligent life in newsletterland. In fact, here's one right now...

Who You Callin' Queer?

The Philadelphia chapter newsletter of Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) carried an article by Laura Siegel who writes for the San Francisco branch of that national organization. The article was in the form of an interview with her homosexual son.

Mrs. Siegel recounted her son's request that she use the term "queer" rather than "gay" when speaking about him to others. She admitted that using the word queer made her uncomfortable and decided to interview him on his preferences for that label rather than the more accepted—and acceptable—label of gay.

Stuart Siegel told his mother that as soon as queer began to come into usage by more radical homosexuals he took to it immediately. To him, it signaled differentness rather than the false use of the word gay. "I always felt different, since I was a teenager," he told his mother. "I was taught not to feel differ-

ent, to try to fit in and be like everyone else. Even in the gay community, we're taught to conform."

Stuart goes on to say that the majority of the gay community is fairly happy with the extent of society's acceptance. (I don't know if I agree with that, but I understand the point he's trying to make.) Those who acknowledge themselves as queer are making a political statement demanding that society accept them on their own terms—not necessarily by trying to prove that they are no different from straight people. Queers are perfectly willing to tell society that they are different from the straight majority.

The Siegel interview parallels the movement in the transsexual community to forsake SRS and eschew "passing" to live as truly transgendered and demand acceptance on their own terms. In fact, most oppressed social groups will have a split between factions that wish to blend into the majority and those who wish to maintain a distinct, but equal, culture.

In the crossdressing community, our leaders generally preach a "blending" philosophy. Our desire to dress as women is couched in psychological terms; we make a point of telling the world how "normal" we are in spite of crossdressing. There is an implied "dress code" for non-fetishistic crossdressing; heterosexuality is played up very big, while bisexuality is practically never discussed.

Are there any radical crossdressers out there? Is there anyone willing to admit that beyond all the "pop-psych" explanations, they just like to dress as women and that's reason enough itself? Is there a movement—or a mini move-

ment—of crossdressers who purposely try not to "pass" in public? And if there is... what would they call themselves?

Fill 'Er Up With High Test(osterone)

The *MFGE News* out of St. Paul, Minn., carried a fairly long piece by Karla [redacted] called *Fascinating Facts About Testosterone*. That's right: testosterone, the "male" hormone. You'd maybe expect to see an article about estrogen (the "female" hormone) in a TG newsletter, so this piece was different.

The focus was the effect that testosterone therapy has on women's sex drive. Women placed on testosterone for medical reasons must contend with many side effects, the most interesting of which is increased libido.

One woman is quoted as saying the hormone's effect on her was dramatic. "Now I know what it's like to be a nymphomaniac. I'd walk down the street and wonder what everybody looked like naked, what they'd be like." But the novelty of those emotions had a price. Her husband "couldn't keep up with me," she said. In fact, she couldn't keep up with herself. "It became an inconvenience. If you could turn it on just for Friday nights, it'd be nice. But to think about sex all the time, every hour, I didn't enjoy it."

That type of reaction to testosterone was confirmed by Stephen Thorne, a female to male transsexual featured in *Harper's Bazaar*. Suddenly, she had to grapple with typical male horniness. Once in an office, a woman wearing a low cut blouse brought out an "instantaneous thought," Stephen recounts. His first thought was "gimme some of that!" It was a near comic reaction, he said, but the new hormone-induced inner feelings were now a part of his life as a man. "And I was a die-hard feminist," he told the interviewer.

How many times have we all heard women say that men are pigs for their outlook on female sexuality? And how often have some criticized crossdressers for being "just a bunch of men in dresses." I guess we can't help ourselves. It's just that testosterone stuff. Apparently, those few women who've walked a mile in our shoes by taking

testosterone have found out what a burden it is to be a full-blooded male. And wearing lingerie and high heels can't negate its effect. One could even argue that it magnifies it.

Grace, Lace and Common Sense

The *Grace and Lace Letter* is a Christian journal from the TG community published by Lee Francis out of Jackson, Mississippi. In a recent issue, Terri L. Main wrote an essay titled *A New Perspective*.

Terri relates a personal story of how she felt when she saw a fundamentalist minister ranting and raving on a talk show about the "abomination" of transsexuals. Terri's initial reaction was anger because the minister's hatred was being legitimized as the "voice of God" by dint of being on broadcast television. Her further thought was that even if transsexualism was a sin (which she doesn't believe), it "was hardly in keeping with the character and ministry of Christ to resort to name calling and venomous attacks."

From those introductory comments, Terri sets off on an analytical approach to dealing with blind hatred or rejection. Although she uses some biblical references, her major points work on purely secular grounds as well. Briefly, those points were: Don't confuse the weapon with the enemy, because the people preaching hate are only the instruments of evil and they are as much the victims of their own hatred as the objects of their attacks; Beware lest you become the thing you hate, meaning that if we respond to hatred with our own hatred, we have only become like our opponents. Terri has a nice line from Scripture: "Love your enemies... for if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?" and "Love is not an option" because the good person has no choice but to love those weak souls who have succumbed to hatred.

This is pretty heavy stuff, I know. And even if we scale back some more of the love/hate language, there are still valuable lessons in this article. We may not be faced with blind hatred or rage at what we do, but we do come across the sarcasm, the snub, and the whispers, as others react negatively against

crossdressing or gender-bending in public. Terri's essay reminds us that the sarcastic remark, the smirk, the childish reactions by other people often says more about them than it ever does about the target of their dislike. Contrasted against the pleasantness of acceptance and support, negativity will always make the perpetrator look more foolish than we ever will in dresses and high-heels. And if we are confronted with vocal abuse, it serves us better to maintain our dignity and keep smiling than to be drawn into a pissing match with half-wits. I don't think the Bible uses that sort of language, but Terri Main's article helped bring it into focus for today's modern crossdresser.

Drag Then... And Now

The newsletter of the Tennessee Vals in Nashville carried a reprint of an interview with one of Music City's well-known drag-queens, Harlowe (not to be confused with Philly's famous Harlow). According to the banter in the interview, Nashville has a rich history of drag in the '60s and '70s, something which seems surprising at first... but on second thought may not be out of character at all in that town.

Most of the old bars are closed now or probably reincarnated under different names and managements and Harlowe is semi-retired from performing. She has fond memories of the "old days" and compares today's shows with yesteryear's. "They don't do productions anymore. They may do a production, but it's not a real show. We always had an opening, a middle, and an end." She feels "a lot of the art of the business has been diminished by breast implants and facial implants. I think anybody should do what they think is best for themselves, but when you start reforming your body, you diminish the art of female impersonation."

Harlowe's comments crystallized a thought of my own that I could never capture before. The '50s, '60s, and early '70s were periods of glamorous drag mimicking the ultra-glamour of Hollywood and the fashion world of those eras. There was a certain dignity and aloofness in their look—just like their more famous counterparts—and aug-

mented with the formidable barriers of old Playtex bras and girdles, lacquered bouffant and beehive hairdos, and huge false eyelashes that told the observer "Look, but don't touch."

Today, we have she-males, who are a class unto themselves, and while often gorgeous, their features are not something we can hope to copy without the medical enhancements they have undergone. When we do see modern drag queens, the pageant contestants, the drag show performers, they often have that street-wise, bitch-goddess, Miss Thing attitude working and again we are left with nothing we would want to adopt for ourselves.

Only old queens themselves pine away for the "good old days" and I'm dangerously close to dating myself here. But if I had to choose, I'd pick the platinum beehived, organdy gowned, and butterfly eyelashed drag queen of 1962 over today's silicone-enhanced and attitudinally-challenged divas every time.

See, I Ain't All Bad

I've taken some shots for being too critical of some individuals and groups in this column at times, but I'm an equal opportunity gadfly and I'll prove it right before your eyes.

The Powder Puffs Of California ran a "Best & Worst of 1994" in their December issue. I've had my differences with those Powder Puffs, but I also sided with them on one important issue in late 1994. So, one of their "best" mentions was as follows: "Renaissance columnist Dina Amberle had something nice to say about PPOC." Fortunately, that wasn't the only good things that happened to them last year, but thanks for the mention, girls. And Cassie [REDACTED], one of my early victims as a columnist, had a piece in the Emerald City News recounting her Halloween adventures. The piece featured a photo of Cassie in her leopard print costume and it proved that Cassie is one fine lookin' feline. Grrrowwl You got it goin' on girl.

Now that I've been nice to a couple of people, the rest of you better watch your fine behinds, 'cause I can't keep this up forever.



An Interview With James Green

Workers World 2/9/95. *Kristianna Tho'Mas, a male-to-female transsexual, recently interviewed James Green of San Francisco, a female-to-male transsexual active on transgender issues. Reprinted by permission.*

KT – A number of victories have been won by the Transgender Community. Can you go into detail about what they are?

JG – The community worked closely with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Advisory Committee to the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. The committee added transgender to its name during the educational process after much testimony in private committee meetings from the community concerning discrimination against transgender people.

The committee advised the SFHRC

to hold public hearings to investigate discrimination against transgendered people and they were held in May of 1994. After the public hearings the commission issued a report that included extensive findings and recommendations.

Among the recommendations was that the city add gender identity to the list of protected classes of characteristics that a person might have for which that person cannot be discriminated against in housing, employment and public accommodations.

Legislation was brought by Supervisor Terence Hallinan and was voted on and passed unanimously by the Board of Supervisors, and signed by the mayor on Dec. 30. Therefore, it goes into effect in San Francisco on Jan. 30.

Basically it amended the administrative and police code to say that people cannot be discriminated against

based on their gender.

KT – You described one of the victories won, what is the other?

JG – The second recent victory is a little more private, in a sense. The National Lesbian and Gay Law Association recently held a meeting of its board of directors in the Bay Area. They have urged the inclusion of the transgender community, along with lesbians, gays and bisexuals, in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and other statutes, ordinances and regulations.

KT – What organized forces were behind the passage of the [San Francisco] legislative victory?

JG – The original driving force was Mr. Larry Brinkin, head of the HIV/AIDS unit of the Human Rights Commission. He was handed complaints over the years concerning

continued on page 17

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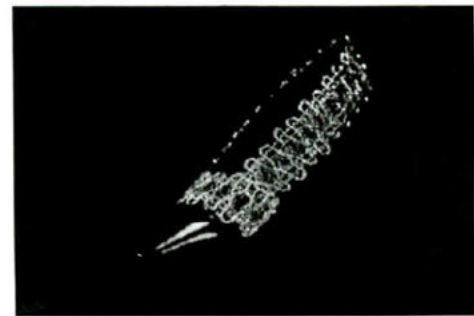
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HOT BUZZ

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"It is better to be hated for what one is than loved for what one is not."

— Andre Gide

The HOT BUZZ on the newsstands is the suspension of all publications by Tania Volen, Inc. In a brief message to advertisers, the publisher of the *Transvestian* and *Femarine* cited increased print costs, as well as problems with electronic typesetting equipment and personnel as reasons for the suspension. While some will say "Good riddance," the *Transvestian* was a major source of community information for a lot of people just coming out and the paper ran free ads for organizations like ours. Sorry to see them go.

The HOT BUZZ within the community itself is whether or not the IFGE convention in Atlanta will be a financial success this month. Early in January, the wires were singing with rumors the convention would be cancelled, but the IFGE board announced the convention would go on as planned. By mid-February, however, IFGE supporters were making personal phone calls asking people if they would attend to confab. It seems there was a distinct worry that IFGE would not make its room-night contract with the hotel. (IFGE just barely made its room-night contract in Portland last year.) Should IFGE not fulfill its contract, meeting room fees

kick in leaving IFGE with a whopping hotel bill. At the same board meeting in January, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, Founding Director of IFGE, was removed as Convention Director for the 1996 convention in Minneapolis.

A wonderful experiment is taking place in Oklahoma. The only group in the state, Sigma Beta, is contemplating a major restructuring that would result in three independent organizations united under a common umbrella of leadership. The concept is called the Central Oklahoma Transgender Alliance (COTA) and would consist of a Tri-Ess chapter for couples, a Renaissance Affiliate open membership group and a transsexual-only organization leaning heavily on AEGIS for support and information. An "executive" council of two people from each organization would coordinate the activities of the three groups. This experiment in cooperation and community could become a new model for organizing support groups. The COTA concept was developed by Vanessa Kaye of Sigma Beta with inputs from Jane Ellen Fairfax, Tri-Ess, me for Renaissance, and Dallas Denny for AEGIS. COTA does have its detractors, of which the most vocal are Linda and Cynthia Phillips of the Boulton & Park Society. Exactly *why* they are against COTA is anyone's guess, but then no one really cares.

Okay, let's go on to the cool stuff!

Looking to "punch up" your image without spending a lot of money? Try recycling some of those older eyeshadows in your makeup kit by using them wet instead of dry. The water makes the colors go on darker and deeper. Sheer shades can become opaque and shimmer shades turn into solid metallics.

Does your makeup turn into a pool of goo after a few hours? Maybe you need to use a moisturizer under your foundation. Moisturizer doesn't put moisture

into your skin; it seals the skin keeping moisture and oils locked in. The oils in your skin can turn your foundation to shiny caked mud. Moisturizer may prevent this undesirable effect.

The thing for Spring about skirts is not length as it was last season. No, this year it's about silhouette. There are three designs being pushed down the runways: A-line, Pencil, and Soft. Of the three, the A-line is the most forgiving of figure flaws, but it must be the just-right length and width at the hem. A-line skirts should be made from substantial fabrics like denim or cotton piqué. The sexiest of the three is the Pencil skirt, but requires a great figure. A Pencil skirt is tighter and more fitted than a simple straight skirt and should be made from a fabric with some stretch to it, like a knit or something with a little Lycra. Finally, the Soft look skirt requires a fabric that drapes well like satin, chiffon or crepe. Bear in mind, though, shiny fabrics show every little bulge and flaw.

If you're not into skirts, perhaps slacks are your style. Slim and tight are the watchwords here too. Very popular on the runways was the return of "cigarette" pants that just hug your body all the way down to your ankles.

Below the ankles, just about any shoe style will work as long as it's shiny black patent leather. The fashion mavens are showing everything from flats to triple-strapped stiletto pumps.

In case you hadn't noticed, clothes cut close to the body are "in" just now, so a great body is required. All you Jenny Craig dropouts better get back in line.

I've mentioned under-color correctors many times in the past and in my *Art & Illusion* books. The most common correctors are yellow, green, pink and purple which are used on Caucasian and Asian skin. Now comes to new correc-

HOT•BUZZ

tors for darker African skin in Brick red and Black, however, these correctors get added to foundation, not the skin. The Brick corrector will darken and enrichen a brown foundation that is too chalky or ashy. The Black corrector is used to color adjust deep brown to black foundations. More shades are on the way. The Black corrector is available from Shu Uemura. The Brick is available from Shu Uemura, Mary Kay and Iman.

One great retro look that was long overdue for a comeback is the sweater twin-set. For those of you young enough to not know what this is, allow me to describe. A twin-set consists of two sweaters worn in two layers. The inner layer sweater is usually a sleeveless shell with a mock-turtle collar or gentle neckline. The outer layer is usually a cardigan of the same color and texture as the shell. The twin-set when worn with a pencil skirt can be devastatingly sexy.

Oops! I forgot to mention lips for Spring. Colors are very, very bold and bright. Matte lipstick is "out" and shiny is "in."

Given that the feminine figure in back in style, many women, especially our "kind" of women, need a little help with their figure and can find it in the venerable girdle. But the new breed of body shaper bears little resemblance to the girdle that mom used to wear. These lightweight beauties use microfiber and extra-strength panels to nip and tuck here and there. The Valentino Intimo Couture bodysuit is said to knock a full two inches off the waistline and for just \$100. More economical choices might be Bodyslimmers by Nancy Ganz for around \$35, Bali's Firm Control Waistnipper at \$21, or Wacoal's sheer net longline girdle at \$38. But the ultimate figure shaper is a corset and the new figure conscious fashions have revitalized the corset industry. Just about every designer now offers a corset or two. But, for my money, there's only one really great buy in a corset and that's from Axford's in the U.K. While a bit

pricey (due to import duties and exchange rates) Axford's maintains the highest quality. I know that Best Value Products, Wildside, and Lee's Mardi Gras all carry Axford's corsets.

Lemme make an observation here. The World of Fashion really has little relevance to reality. A majority of women in the world **do not** look like runway models. They have trouble finding clothes that fit *and* look nice. The women who look the most "put together" are those who find ways to adapt runway looks to their individual sense of style. They also know instinctively when to wear what (no fishnets at the supermarket). You best guide to dressing well is to observe real women in the real world and then adapt their styles to yours. However, there are times and places for wild fantasies too. Don't deny yourself those little pleasures.

Speaking of little pleasures, here are a few combinations that are knock-outs... Midriff-baring top over cigarette pants with patent mules... Bustier layered over a sheer Tee, button front short skirt, fishnets and ankle strap sandals... Shiny stretch Lycra dress that bares the shoulders over bare legs and spike sandals... Clingy zippered jacket top over hip-hugging mini, sheer hose and those ankle strap sandals, all in black.

Sky high heels are back and the feminists are fuming, but who really buys these shoes. The February issue of *Mirabella* gave a peek. It should be no surprise that the likes of Marisa Tomei, Vanessa Williams and Susan Sarandon have purchased stilettos, but would you believe the First Lady, Hilary Rodham-Clinton owns a pair of Bruno-Magli 4-inch heeled Napa leather sling-back Mary Janes? Why to go Hill! How about Princess Caroline of Monaco and 3-inch patent leather Mary Janes, or Jane Pauley and Paula Zahn with Bally 3½-inch kidskin pumps? Yes, children, real women **do** wear high heels.

Since shoes play such a large part in both fashion and crossdressing, many crossdressers are faced with the daunting task of locating feminine shoes for masculine

feet. You may have noticed a new advertiser in our pages, Queen Cushion Shoes. What makes QCS interesting is that they are manufacturers of women's shoes and they'll make women's shoes on a male shoe form. QCS, in business for the past 7 years, is a custom one-of-a-kind shoe manufacturer. One of the designers made a pair of shoes for a friend who is a female impersonator who showed the shoes to his friends and next thing QCS knows they're making women's shoes for guys. Prices range from about \$125 to \$175. This may seem high if you can buy your shoes in the local mall, but it's cheap if you wear a size 14 man's shoe. Call QCS at 1-800-422-6639 and ask for Athena.

The quest for Community continues. See Angela Gardner's article in this issue for her perspective. But the good news is two more organizations have signed on to the Pledge for Community. At its meeting in January, the Executive Committee of IFGE voted to take the Pledge which must be ratified by the full IFGE board at the convention in Atlanta. Linda Buten, Chair of the IFGE board, sees no obstacles and expects the full board to take the Pledge. Jane Ellen Fairfax, Chair of the Tri-Ess board, also informs me that a majority of the Tri-Ess national board members have approved a motion to take the Pledge and that as far as she's concerned, Tri-Ess is on-board. So, the Transgender Alliance for Community now has five national organizations participating. It is hoped that the Law Conference board will also take the Pledge soon. Any other organization that takes the community Pledge should notify either myself or Angela Gardner, care of Renaissance. A meeting to plan Pledge partners participation at various events will be held during the Be All in Cincinnati, June 7-11. Representatives of organizations wishing to participate in community-wide projects should come to the Be All planning session. So far, the partners will be attending the NASW and the AAMFT conferences next Fall.

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Scientific Study Proves Crossdressers Lie

Continued from last month

Investigative report by Linda Lee Darling, Sacto. Gender Assoc.

The scientific team doing the study has labeled this new phenomena and motive as: "Likeitus Inadressatus Alotamus" drawn from computerese called: geek, which literally translates to: "I really like wearing dresses a lot". In a follow-on disclosure the scientific group now under support of the Justice Department also said the term "Gender Dysphoria," widely used to cover this behavior, is completely false and those terms beneath it used to describe causes and triggers are totally bogus.

"The whole of society has been kept from this by just a few individuals who have taken it upon themselves to maintain this secret simply for their own use and pleasures," cited the team leader who also added, "It's not clear

what charges will be used to prosecute these people but when it's done, local, state and federal governments intend to see them suffer for this deception." Asked about possible penalties, the team leader said, "In the worse cases, I see some of the leaders totally banned from wearing women's clothing for the rest of their life." In an emotional outburst, she cried, "It's obvious from my own experience with matching slips, bras and panties, these people are Gender Euphoric and have simply used Gender Dysphoria as a cover. They shall pay for their pleasures."

The whole thing became public while a few of the members, after a chance discovery, were being watched at their gathering place identified as Joseph's Marconi Harbor Bar And Grill. Several key witnesses have been identified as locals and their stories

were compared to the growing evidence showing a clear pattern of deception. "We're lucky," said one investigator, "Had this not been a mixed bar and questions raised by the patrons, we would still be on square one with this." He hinted they may even have enough on the head man to link him for once.

The ring leader is alleged to be Joseph, a.k.a. "The Tavern Owner," who keeps a low profile but his smile is clear evidence of the goings on. "He is the center of several alternate life style activities, but up to now has never been clearly linked with any of them because he usually just walks around smiling and laughing a lot. We would love to connect him with this," cited one Justice Department member.

This reporter tried to talk with

continued next page

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CDs Lie...

Joseph but was stopped by a henchman only identified as "Jeff the Giant" who looked like a billboard for some Brink's Guard ad only it moved.

Questions began to arise early as this information came under the task force study. The big break finally came when an insider was willing to come forth and substantiate what were then just rumors. "Had they not changed their meeting location, no one would have ever guessed they actually enjoyed it," some of locals noted with disgust. One said, "Hell, you see these people in dresses and your first thought is, 'Hey, that looks like it would be fun.' But then you ask them why they do it and the answers scares the hell out of you."

A local construction worker wiping beer off his tee-shirt said, "At first, I wanted to try it. But after hearing the reasons, I gave up. I did not have any of them Gender Dysphoria things. So when I first heard it, I felt sorry for them right off." The construction worker, who was one of the first to come forward when the study went public, added, "This one in a pink satin dress had told me it was because of a 'chromosome push' after his first six weeks of gestation which makes us boys rather than girls and his was a 'wuss- push' that made him now wear dresses." Growing angrier, he added, "Dang it, I believed it. If I'd known it was just for fun, I'd of run out and bought a damn dress just like hers. It's not fair. How the Hell could I know her arms had been shaved?"

"As each witness came forward, the list of excuses grew," said one of the scientists adding, "The list was so long, it just made us start to wonder." One

said it was because her dad did not give him his boy training.

Another local cowboy, who bumped into one, had also thought about wearing a dress right off but decided against it because he also felt he did not have any good reason saying, "Damn, I'd of slipped into something like that cute little filly dressed country had I known it was just for kicks, but I thought you had to have one of them darn scientific reasons she gave me. I believed her at first but I suspected right off, when I accidentally felt the satin of her dress, she was fibbing some. But she was seemed so darn sincere when she said it. We ought to spank the lot of them."

An unknown scientist standing next to the cowboy laughed sarcastically and added: "One even said that it was because of his role as a girl in a school play in college. Another said he bonded to his Mom rather than his Dad, like a duck or something. You start hearing them as a whole and it's obvious this is a well-orchestrated group and the reasons were developed simply to scare the general public and keep them out of it."

Another scientist agreed, holding recent photos. taken at the new meeting location showing several dancing, shooting pool, playing darts and in general having fun. He said, "Look at the evidence. It's clear these people are feeling good about it. You don't see a single individual showing any signs of stress." He pulled another photo and said, "Look here! See this little blond, going by the name of Laurie, the one serving them. She's laughing right along with them. The entire staff is in on it." He slapped his hand with the photos and added, "This whole thing about Gender Dysphoria is nothing more than a cover-up. It's time to expose the lot of them for what they are: Men having fun dressed as

women. It's down right criminal."

Another member of the Justice Department, sporting a new lace camisole under his shirt, said: "We're finding there are several organizations scattered throughout the Bay Area and these are networked with professionals as well as sister organizations throughout the U.S. and, in fact, the world. SGA will be our first target because they seem to be the focal point and are having the most fun with it. But once we've hit them, we will move to break the walls of deception throughout the entire U.S. It's time we let the truth be known and allow more men to wear girl stuff."

Another Justice member developing the prosecutor's case said, "Once preliminary trials begin, you're going to see a large shift in our society and I believe most men will wear dresses when evidence of how much fun it is comes out." He was sporting a new chiffon skirt and satin blouse with green pumps, noting that he had just bought it as a direct result of seeing the photos. "It's a little something for the holidays," he said, "I'm buying my first wig tomorrow. It's not clear where this will end but it's obvious that, like the President, some of these men are zipping their dresses up strictly for pleasure." Smiling, he turned and walked awkwardly back into the building.

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Unemployed? Underemployed?

Ben Franklin said, "The Lord helps those that help themselves." Renaissance is going to try and help the transgendered who are unemployed or under-employed. **Announcing: Renaissance Job Match**, a national employment resource center. If you are looking for work send a resume or brief description of what type of employment you want. Make sure you include a way for us to contact you. If you are in a position to offer employment or let someone know of a job opening send a description of the position. Maybe we can make a match. To be included in the Job Match files send your information to: **Renaissance Job Match, c/o Renaissance, 987 Old Eagle School Rd, Suite 719, Wayne, PA 19087**

News Beat...

the answer to that question I decided to blow the budget and call the good doctor. It seems quake damage put him out of business for several months. His office on campus was entirely off limits until December sixteenth and his home computer was demolished. To further delay things, after he finally had access to the school computers, he was called for jury duty. Five weeks of jury duty. (Thank goodness it wasn't the O.J. trial. Hey! That's the first time I mentioned it.) He is working at home and progress continues.

Dr. Docter also reported on his participation at the International Conference on Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender held at the Cal State Northridge Campus Center for Sex Research Crossdressing Sex and Gender. Vern Bullough, another gender expert in residence is coordinating the Conference. Dr. Docter told this reporter that he has been refining and extending his Gender Identity questionnaire but there have been no mailings to anyone since before the quake. Dr. Docter said, "I have been working on a here's-what's-happened letter but it's not done yet. When you don't have regular mailings you lose track of people."

I think I'm one of the people who got crushed in the quake since I haven't gotten a copy of the new questionnaire. Dr. Docter said he had just send out around three hundred when the quake hit. If you have participated in the National Gender Project at any time in the past decade and you haven't heard from them in awhile, please write Dr. Richard F. Docter, c/o Psychology-8255, Cal State Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330. Plainly state that you are writing to update your address. That way they'll be able to check the data base and make necessary corrections. If we help Dr. Docter with the research the research will help us.

FINAL TIDBITS

Caroline [REDACTED], the Editor of the *Renaissance LSV News* included an article in her February issue that offers hope for the hirsute among us. A company called Thermolase has developed a process utilizing a special cream and dermatological laser combination that can clean the hair off a woman's upper lip in fifteen minutes. Several male executives in the company have had test patches done on their legs and the inventor of the process treated his arm two years ago and has not had any regrowth. The company is waiting for FDA approval and determining exactly how they'll go about marketing this major miracle. They're not even sure how much to charge yet. Caroline points out that investing in the company is not a sure thing. In fact, it's down right risky. But boy, as a hairy crossdresser who knows what kind of market there is out there, I wish I had a few bucks to dabble in the market with. If we find out anymore you'll be the first to know...right after I get my treatment.

Vera Rae [REDACTED] and Barbara Jane [REDACTED] both sent in an article from the January 16, 1995 *New Yorker*. The subject of the piece was a Southern Republican business man named Neil Cargile who is exceedingly open about his crossdressing. He started slow, dressing up for costume parties, wearing a kilt at social occasions and then in 1979 at Nashville's Cumberland Caper, Cargile showed up in drag. When asked what historic character (it was a theme caper) he represented he replied, "...Neil Cargile in a dress." This one's worth running to the library for. I am out of space and can't tell you more so read it yourself. It's inspirational.

Oh no! The bottom of the column is rushing toward me. Can my cursor complete this one in time? I still have to tell you about comedian **Margaret Cho**. Joni in Ohio sent a clip from *US Magazine* in which the star of **All-American Girl** says she learned everything she knows about being a woman from drag queens. You go girl! Too bad the show stinks.

All dressed up and looking for an event? Try Xpressions First Annual Spring Gala at the Pillar and Post in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. That's Canada, ay. March 31st through April 2nd. They wanted to know if you wanted to go by January 31, but write them at: Xpressions, PO Box 223, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5W 1B2. Maybe they've got last minute space available. If you can't get into that one and you hunger for legal info outside of the famous trial that's been inflicted on us lately, try TRANSGEN '95, the 4th Annual Transgender Law and Policy Conference. (They're in the top five in the Events With Very Long Names Contest) The focus is you, the transgendered, and the law. Your rights, your job, your documents and other legal stuff. It's June 14th through June 18th in beautiful Houston, Texas. Contact Phyllis Randolph Frye, Attorney, Executive Director, ICTLEP, Inc., [REDACTED], Houston, Texas 77035-5515. And... that's it folks. The end is here. Keep those cards and letters coming and don't take any wooden pantyhose.

Cha, cha, cha!



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Letters to the Editor

Dear Angela,

I wanted to tell you and Dina how much I enjoy your columns in *News & Views*, and to make sure you both know that your contributions to Renaissance are appreciated by people like me. You manage to inject humor and perspective into something which tends at times to seem so complicated and grave. In large part because of the friendliness and encouragement of the two of you, I have attended a few meetings of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter. It is obvious to me that your personalities are firmly imprinted on the group, and the meetings have been wonderful experiences. There is always a period of time after arriving and before leaving when I realize I am not thinking about who I really am or how ridiculous I must look, but instead I am just enjoying myself.

Unfortunately, I still experience tremendous anxiety at the thought of leaving the house, such that not a month goes by when I am quite sure that I will never take the chance of going out again. I was surprised to read in your response to Lee Cashin in the last newsletter that at one time you felt the way I did. With your looks, you obviously had little reason to worry,

but is there some secret you can share? How long did it take you to get to the "bend in the path", because, frankly, my path is very discouraging?

By the way, I'm with you in loving the movie *Just Like a Woman*. True, it was not a great movie, but the people who made it understood and conveyed what is in the heart of a crossdresser better than anything I had ever seen before. If anyone knows where I can get a copy of the movie or of Monica Jay's book *Geraldine* upon which it was based, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Jenny M.

Editor's gracious reply

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your kind words concerning Dina and me. I'm flattered that you think we've been imprinted on the group but I have to point out that it's been a while since I was involved at the local level. Dina was Chapter leader last year and did a great job but that mantle has been passed to Elizabeth Jarrell and her team, who are more than equal to the challenge. They have a great year of meetings in store. Keep coming and keep enjoying yourself.

As for how long it takes to get to the "bend in the path," that's completely up to you. We all progress at our own rate. The problem is not how pretty you are or how "passable." We **know** we're men so we assume everyone else does. I still have nights when I stand inside the door for five minutes worrying that I'll run into someone in the apartment hall or outside in the parking lot. Other times I waltz on out without a care in

the world. If I **have** to go, it makes it easier. If I'm meeting friends or going to a Renaissance business appointment I can't just stay at home because I'm nervous. Plan ahead on getting together with some folks at the meeting and then going out after to the Ship Inn or another spot. If I feel like I'll be letting someone down if I don't get on the road it's much easier to take that step over the threshold. Hope to see you at the next meeting.



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AEGIS is a 100% volunteer, non-profit information and education resource for all people and does not discriminate on any basis. AEGIS supports SSSS, HBGDA, SIECUS and other professional organizations. AEGIS is a founding partner of the Transgender Alliance for Community and an affiliate of the Renaissance Education Assoc., Inc. Write or call today.

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Dallas Denny, M.A., Executive Director

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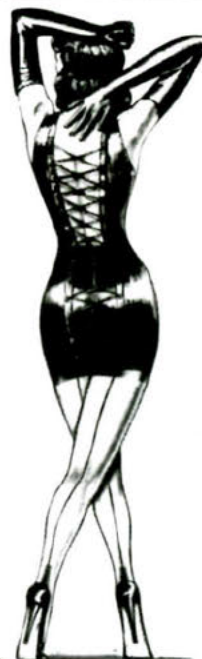
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Interview...

transgendered people. Mr. Larry Brinkin found that the conditions in which transgendered people were being persecuted were heinous and disgusting, but he had no law to back him up to protect transgendered people.

Mr. Brinkin had the advisory committee look into it, and the advisory committee contacted organizations like Transgender Nation, F2M International, and different gender-supportive therapists in the area.

KT – Is there a movement of unity between Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans communities?

JG – I know a lot of people are still resistant to trans inclusion. They do not see that the issues of oppression are similar to all. But more and more people are seeing that. Community United Against Violence is very supportive of trans people and has one

transgendered person on the board and one transgendered staff person. They are actively recruiting among the trans community for additional board members.

Other organizations have also added transgender to their name. The Pride Day Parade Committee last year in San Francisco did not approve adding transgender to the name; it was a very heated debate. This year it passed without too much opposition.

KT – What do you feel will be the impact on the rest of the country of these recent victories in San Francisco?

JG – I know there are other communities that have some type of legislation protecting transgendered people, but many of those communities don't have bodies assigned to monitor complaints brought under that legislation. I would hope that other communities would follow the San Francisco model, and perhaps go even further than San Francisco has gone.

I would hope that other cities, states and even countries would follow this

model and start opening things up for people. It is about people. It doesn't matter how you identify.

KT – Was the issue of the Drag Community included in the piece of legislation passed by the city?

JG – I wrote the report of the Human Rights Commission and I basically included drag in the definition of transgender. I included everyone in the definition of transgender. It doesn't matter what your sexual orientation is. It doesn't matter if you consider yourself transvestite, transsexual, drag or whatever, all that matters is that how you are perceived by other people and what you determine for yourself is the truth about who you are.

If there is a discrepancy in these things, that's too bad. It's nobody's business to come down on you because things don't line up the way they think they should. It is regardless of sexual orientation. It is regardless of a person's gender. You are still protected.



Bisexual Fruit Flies Give Insights Into Orientation

Washington (Reuters)

Bisexual fruit flies seem attracted to males and females with equal gusto, but scientists are still not quite sure if the genetically altered insects can even distinguish between the two sexes. "We don't know if they can't tell the difference between males and females or if they are equally attracted to both," New York University neuro-geneticist Ralph Greenspan said. Normally, male fruit flies court females and each sex has a very specific role in courtship and mating.

Greenspan and a research team created a bisexual fruit fly by triggering a female gene in the brains of male fruit flies. These "feminized" parts of the brains, include sections that analyze odors that send sexual signals. The team's work, aimed at better understanding the biological basis of sexual orientation and behavior, is being published in the February 10,

1995 edition of the journal *Science*.

Sorting out the nature vs. nurture influences in human sexuality is a difficult and controversial task, and Greenspan said he was doubtful that there will ever be clear-cut answers. But fruit flies, or *drosophila melanogaster*, have far less genetic diversity than people, and researchers can control their environment. So they make a good model for understanding how genes organize behavior, he said. Male fruit flies follow very specific, multi-step courtships, including a serenade produced by vibrating wings. "It doesn't sound like music to us, but it does to them," Greenspan said.

The researchers expected that by activating the female gene in some brain cells, they would interrupt steps in the courtship sequence. Instead, they found that the altered male, known as a mosaic, pursued males and females with equal aplomb. In fruit

flies, sexual attraction is triggered by odors, or chemical signals called pheromones. The male homosexual behavior occurred, Greenspan believes, because some or all of the brain structures involved in recognizing odors or detecting sex pheromones were changed, or did not develop completely into male structures. The "feminizing" gene affected sexual preference in brain cells of the antennal lobes, which analyze odor and in the "mushroom bodies," an association center in the brain. Neither region was previously thought to be a site of sexual differences. "We aren't sure if they can't tell the difference, or whether they are equally attracted to males and females — or whether in the mixed brain, you get both functions," said Greenspan in a telephone interview from San Diego.



Shopping With Jackie

by Jackie

Gee, it seems that we are heading back to Spring at last. This gal, for one, will be happy to get out the lighter clothes and put the winter things to rest for another year. I know you all stocked up on the Spring and Summer things like I told you last Fall (Ha, ha!) and can come into Spring with the confidence that you saved money (I hope).

There was more mail in the mail bag. Sorry for the delay but it seems my mail got snagged again. Hopefully, that's all corrected now and I can be a little more responsive. The following interesting items were sent to me from V.R.H. It seems there is a new hosiery system that works with the body to overcome the problems and discomfort of pantyhose. It's called **Scantihose**, and consists of a cute belt for around the waist, and separate leg hose that hangs from it by a single tiny hook. After buying an initial set, you can purchase belts and stockings as separate items. Belts come in sizes up to 50" and stockings are available from small to queen size, in a range of popular shades. Order from Scantihose, Limited Editions, PO Box 20, Farmington, CT 06034. They can be reached by phone at 203-677-9225. The belts are \$9 to \$19 and stockings are \$8 to \$10. They also have a cute selection of matching bras and panties. Ask for a catalog.

A day late and a dollar short... that's me, but for those of you who are interested, how about a special Christmas

tree topper for next year. It's a transgendered angel (named Kenny) in a beautiful wedding gown with angel wings and pearls. No, Kenny is not wearing a wig. The adorable little thing is \$29.95 plus \$4.50 shipping at 800-833-9691. Ask for the **Kenny Angel Treetopper**.

There's a gold mine in Hartford County, Maryland. A Company called **C-Mart** sells name brand items at 50 to 80 percent off retail. There are far too many items to list in this column. If you want to have a fun day, try shopping here. Major credit cards are accepted. To get there take the Baltimore Beltway to Exit 31 North (Hartford Rd). Go ¾ of a mile and turn right onto Joppa Road. Turn left on Belair Rd and go 14 miles to Route 24 North, then ½ mile to C-Mart. They're open Monday through Friday from 10-9, Saturday 10-6, and Sunday 11-5. Call 410-879-7858.

Jessica Brandon seems to shop as much as I do. She sends us information on two more large size shoe stores: **Tall Size Shoes of Fifth Ave.**, and **Claro Shoes**, 3 West 35th St., New York City. (212-736-2060). Jessica says she was treated well and tried on shoes while dressed in male attire. Prices are high, but if you need a large size (Jessica wears a 13. I'm a tattle-tale) and want quality, this may be a source for you.

Our dear Editor, Angela Gardner, suggests that if you're in the Philadelphia area you should take a trip to **M.J. Carroll**. They have better sportswear,

career looks, and party dresses. You can find great buys at 50 to 75 percent off when they have their clearance sales. Stores are in the Oxford Valley Mall, and the Cherry Hill Mall. She also mentions the **Burlington Coat Factory**, which is great for "more than just coats." They have clothing of all types and their sale stuff is very affordable. They have stores everywhere in the Philly area, but Angela likes the one in **Franklin Mills**, which she tells me is a holy pilgrimage for the shopaholic crossdresser. I received a nice letter from a gal who signs herself as "A reader in Texas." Texi (her new name) confirms our constant nagging that you shop the local stores for the best prices and quality. She tells us about **Fantasies in Lace**, a crossdresser owned and operated lingerie company at 305-581-8412, and **Support Plus**, a source for any type of body shaper or reinforcement. For girdles that girdle, and support hose that support give them a call at 1-800-229-2910.

And girls, don't forget to try the stores and people who advertise in our newsletter. They support us, we owe it to them to give them a try. Those of you who have shopped our advertisers could drop me a note. I would appreciate the input so I can report on them in this column.

So, until next time, snap your girdles, keep shopping, and drop me a line in care of the Editor.

Happy shopping!



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NLGLA Adopts TG Resolution

15 January 1995. from Phyllis Frye, Exec. Directore, ICTLEP

The National Lesbian and Gay Law Association today adopted a resolution that recognized the history of oppression that transgenders have received at the hands of the same people who oppress lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

With a unanimous vote, NLGLA voted to strongly urge (1) all persons, organizations and coalitions consider and advance transgendered persons in their programs and deliberations, (2) inclusion of the transgendered in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and (3) inclusion of transgendered persons in statutes, ordinances and regulations that positively affect lesbians, gays and bisexuals and other oppressed minorities.

The resolution read as follows:

Resolution of the Board of Directors of the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association urging the inclusion of the transgender community into the Employment and Non-Discrimination Act and other statutes, ordinances, and regulations along with lesbians, gays,

and bisexuals:

1. WHEREAS the transgendered have been legally defined in current favorable legislation to include those persons "having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness"; and

2. WHEREAS the history of oppression of the transgendered is similar to the oppression suffered by homosexuals and bisexuals, often by the same oppressors and often in a fashion that continues to pit transgenders and homosexuals and bisexuals against each other; and

3. WHEREAS the oppression in the area of employment of the transgendered is likewise similar to the oppression suffered by homosexuals and bisexuals and often by the same oppressors; and

4. WHEREAS lesbians, gays and bisexuals seek protection under the term of "sexual orientation" and transgenders seek protection under the term of "gender identification" and the four communities may seek protection under the combined term of "sexual or

gender orientation"; and

5. WHEREAS the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 1994 has excluded the transgendered from federal job protection; and

6. WHEREAS the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association recognizes the need for all sexual and gender minorities to have protection of employment; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, through its Board of Directors meeting on the 15th day of January 1995, (1) strongly urges all persons, organizations and coalitions to consider and advance the rights of transgendered persons in all their programs and deliberations, and (2) strongly urges Members of Congress to include the transgendered in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 1994 (ENDA) and any successor or amended bills, and (3) strongly urges members of state and local legislative and regulatory bodies to include transgendered persons in all statutes, ordinances and regulations that also or already positively affect or protect.



New Chapter Underway; New Affiliate Confirmed

Renaissance continues its expansion with the formation of a new chapter in the Baltimore, Maryland area. This group is a spin-off of the recently formed Delaware chapter, which itself is a spin-off from the South Jersey chapter.

According to Bobbie [REDACTED], a member of the fledgling Baltimore group, plans to incorporate at the state

level are proceeding nicely. [REDACTED] contacted the Renaissance national office for copies of the Renaissance Articles of Incorporation and the IRS letter confirming Renaissance's tax exemption.

At its January meeting, the national board confirmed the affiliation status of a new group, New York GIRL & Partners, in Long Island, New York.

With Baltimore and New York GIRL, Renaissance will have 5 chapters and 6 affiliates in 8 states, making it second only to Tri-Ess in membership.

Some Renaissance directors feel the time is right for the organization to host its own national event. Such an event could happen as early as 1996.



**Robyn Dormer's Comix Column and Dear Doctor will return next month.
If you have an article you's like to see published,
send it to the editor at the address on page 2.**