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Canada's Transgender Reader

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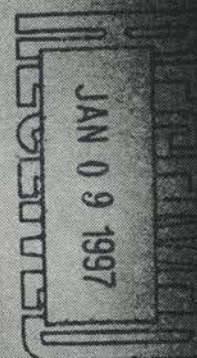
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Fall 1996 Issue #43. \$10.00

The Monarch: Canada's Transgender Reader Has a JOB for YOU!!!

We still need excited and exciting gals to help with our club publication.
This is your chance to give back to your community. Act now:

Director of Advertising

Solicits and coordinates advertising for TMR and X-files. The job involves contacting potential advertisers, negotiating rates, supplying copy, and follow-through on customer satisfaction. E-mail would be helpful. Short skirt even better. Anticipated workload: 10 hrs a month. Salary: twice what the editor gets!

Distribution Director

Locates retailers willing to shelve TMR, negotiate prices, follow up on replacement of issues and sales volume. Automobile helpful. Anticipated workload: 12 hours a month. Salary: three times editor's salary!!!

Writers

Please—submit material to TMR. To do so please (first choice) email it to the editor, Miqqi Alicia, at Gilbert@YorkU.ca. Or, (second choice) put it on a disk in RTF format, MS-Word or Wordperfect and plain ascii. Or, (last choice) typewrite it and hope one of our cute secretaries can key it in. If not email, phone 416 - 812-6879 or send it to TMR, PO Box 223, Station A, Toronto, Ont M5W 1B2.

Letters

Please send letters! We need to know you're out there, and what you want! Write to:
The Pretty Clever Editor, TMR, PO Box 223, Station A, Toronto, Ont M5W 1B2.

Xpressions is a non-profit, non-discriminatory social and support club for transgendered people of all kinds. The club aims to foster pride and self-confidence among the gender-gifted, whether crossdressers, transsexuals, transgenderists, or something in-between. Phone 416 - 812-6879 and leave a means of contact to find out about membership. Discretion is assured.

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services and functions.

PLEASE SUMIT MATERIAL
Instructions for submitting articles, stories and
news will be found on the inside front cover.

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The Cover

If you want to be a cover girl, call
the hot line and let us know.



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Dear TMR:

Congratulations on Issue 42 of the Monarch magazine. It's very good indeed. It was gratifying to see that you have built on the pattern established in the previous issues.

The new layout is certainly an improvement (credit Cynthia for that). Too bad you had to have black-and-white only; I guess cost was the consideration there.

It was thrilling to see my own name mentioned, and twice at that. A special thank you to Willi and Pamela.

Your editorial was just right - balanced and covering a lot of ground. Regards to all the Directors and keep up the good work!

Liisa

(Our sorely missed past MSC NL editor.)

Dear TMR:

Just a line to thank you for Xpressions and, perhaps some day, I can take advantage of it. However, I'm still in the closet, and do not get to Toronto very often. I enjoyed all the articles in the new magazine. Perhaps some day I can meet some of my sisters.

Love, Petra

Dear TMR:

I've always enjoyed receiving the MSC newsletter, but this last issue really bowled me over. I can only guess at the hours of work and effort that went into producing it. My bonnet is off to you and Cynthia and all your helpers.

Hugs, Carole

LETTERS

Letters to TMR can be emailed to gilbert@yorku.ca or mailed to P.O. Box 223, Station A, Toronto, Ont M5W 1B2.

And an extra note: J.F. Wilkins is looking for Lynda Henderson: "We corresponded regularly from 1970-1980 and became quite close... I miss Lynda and think of her every week." Lynda, if you're out there, get in touch with us, 416-812-6879, and we'll pass on Ms. Wilkin's address.

EDITORIAL

The Sum of All Its Parts

None of us has chosen, in a deliberate and conscious way, to become a cross dresser or be transsexual or transgendered. It's something that happened, maybe when we were very young, maybe a little bit later. But none of us ever sat down and thought, "Well, heck, I think I'll just make my life incredibly difficult and complicated by being transgendered." None of us are that stupid, and, anyway, it's just not the sort of thing one makes a choice about.

Since we are all transgendered to one degree or another or another we all suffer the slings and arrows, the approbation and disapproval, of mainstream society. Learning to overcome this, to disown the self-hate, feelings of shame, despair and loneliness takes a long time and much self-exploration. It is made immeasurably easier when there is help. This help can come from your partner, your friends, therapists, or your support group.

A club like Xpressions exists to assist its members become more and more comfortable with who and what they are. We are here to help each other understand, cope with, and explore our involuntary transgender nature, and learn to live with self-respect and dignity. In this issue you will find several articles written by members relating their own struggles and sharing their personal outlooks. These are precious gifts, and I hope you enjoy them.

You will also find the fascinating columns, Smalls and Hot Buzz. Smalls is culled primarily from Dallas Deany's AEGIS-News service transmitted over the internet, and offered free to everyone in the TG world. Hot Buzz is written each month by JoAnn Roberts for Renaissance News&Views and her CDS web site. She kindly lets TMR cull juicy bits from each month's column. Deep thanks to both Dallas and JoAnn.

Much of this magazine is written by Xpressions members. Adrianne, Laura, Glen, Sheila, Roxy and I have all contributed, so that TMR is not merely a compendium of clippings from other magazines. At the same time we have tried to find the most interesting bits and pieces from the world-wide TG community. Thanks go to my charming secretaries Adrianne and Melissa W. for cheerful and prompt transcription help. And, of course, without our beloved Cynthia, TMR would still be a typed, stapled and graphic-less hand-out.

When you read this issue, do be aware of how much work and effort has gone into it. Not because I or anyone else involved wants praise or thanks, but because it might make you wonder what you can give, what you can contribute to your club. The work involved in running Xpressions, includes mounting dinners, producing X-Files and TMR, putting on events, keeping track of members, liaising with other organizations, arranging shopping excursions, dealing with finances and banking, answering the telephone, setting up the new club house, participating in other TG events, searching for new members, answering mail and queries, organizing speaker and discussion evenings, and on and on. This is all done by volunteers. For you.

More will be needed. We are growing. Every time we acquire a new member, there is one less lonely TG soul in the world. Every time a new gal (or guy) joins, someone has taken a step toward self-respect and personal growth. When you help your club you are helping all those people who, like yourselves, would otherwise be alone.

What can you do? Well, if you read the Accessories section you may see a number of calls for assistance. On the inside cover you will see that we still need a distribution person and an advertising director. As the 1998 IFGE comes closer the need for gal-power will be enormous. Even just attending events like dinners, or Divine Lake and Pillar & Post, writing a letter to the editor, or befriending a new member are all ways of showing your commitment.

We need you. We need your energy, your warmth, your kindness, your wisdom, and your time. Don't hold back. Get involved. I promise you will reap more than you sow. ♣

Miggi Alicia, Editor in Chief



Charlady's Chatter



Well summer has finally arrived and like all of you, my summer wardrobe is out. The sun and warmth are marvellous, allowing us to unwrap ourselves from cocoons of winter coats, sweaters and boots, and enjoy all the wonderful colours and styles of Summer '96. I only wish that the Canadian summer would last longer than the few brief months allotted to us by mother nature.

Although some Xpressions activities take a much deserved rest during the summer, (like our organized shopping events,) the Board and it's committees have been hard at work planning events and opportunities for all members.

If you're reading this column, that means you have the most recent issue of The Monarch. Isn't it just amazing? My wig is off to editor-in-chief Miqqi Alicia and production and design chief Cynthia for putting out a truly Canadian TG magazine all members of XPRESSIONS will enjoy. Not surprisingly every copy is gone, and the reaction we have received is overwhelming. The entire run is sold out! The Monarch is your magazine, so all of you budding writers (fiction or non) send your contribution to our editor and let your community get to know you.

To update all of you on the IFGE '98 convention, in June I attended the '96 Be All in Detroit. There I made the formal presentation, on behalf of XPRESSIONS and our other Canadian TG sisters and brothers, to the IFGE Board of Directors in support of our bid to have IFGE bring their 1998 Convention to Canada, (and for those of you who know me, to party!). Many thanks to Nancy who came with me to the meeting. The IFGE Board selected Toronto as the site for the 1998 Convention! Alison Lang, Executive Director of IFGE is truly excited about this decision. She is looking forward to meeting many of you at our clubhouse, The Dolls House, in early September when she is here to inspect possible hotel venues for the '98 Convention. (For details check your Xpressions X-Files.)

I have written to the other Canadian TG organizations to seek their involvement in making this a truly Canadian TG event. The Xpressions Board is most interested in hearing from anyone who would like to volunteer to help out on our local organization committee. Don't be shy, we would like to hear from you, and very much need your participation to make this event a success.

Those who attended the Niela Miller workshops in June, had a special opportunity to learn and grow through interaction with one of the very special people in the TG community. Niela's recently released book *Counsellors in Genderland* is a must read, (my copy is already well-thumbed). Niela thanks all those who participated, and hopes to return to Canada again next year. Much thanks to

Paddy Aldridge and Wildside for the use of their meeting facilities for the event. Paddy has been a long time supporter and influence on the TG community, and I am sure many of you have enjoyed shopping at Wildside. Many of you are not aware that Paddy has donated a wealth of archival material for our Xpressions library. We hope to have the material indexed and available at the Dolls House for your use. (Are there any budding librarians out there willing to put in a few hours on this project?) Many thanks Paddy - we all love you!

You will have seen in the most recent X-Files a "casting call" for the Sunshine Foundation Fund raiser, November 30, 1996. This will be a fun event and any of you who have thought of showing your skills at performing, waitressing, or just want to "get out," this is your chance. This will be a wonderful opportunity for Xpressions to outreach to general community, and the ladies at the Sunshine Foundation are just thrilled with our involvement.

Speaking of outreach, my wig is off again to all the ladies of Xpressions who "manned" our booth at the Pride Day Celebrations. Every Xpressions brochure was gone, all TG Menace T-shirts sold, and many people visited the booth to find out more about who we are. Our presence and participation in events such as Pride Day is critical to ensuring that the TG community takes it's place alongside other marginalized communities to assert our rights to fully express ourselves regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Leslie Feinberg in her most recent book, *Transgender Warrior*, (a must read,) said it best: "The glue that cements these diverse communities together is the defense of the right of each individual to define themselves".

The quest for our rights is something to which Ariadne Kane, (our special guest at Spring Fling '96,) has dedicated more than 25 years of her professional life. Her achievements and contributions were recently recognized at a special testimonial evening in Boston. On behalf of Xpressions and all our Canadian TG sisters and brothers, and as a director of the Outreach Institute for Gender Education, I attended and brought our greeting and thanks. Ariadne sends her love to all of us.

By now you have all seen in the TMR and X-Files the announcements of the Mardi Gras event at Divine Lake, Oct. 4-6, 1996. We are expecting a record turn-out and Wilimena, Donna and the rest of the organization promise an event to be remembered. This event is being specially designed as a kind of TG/Cross dresser "boot camp," with sessions on everything from Drag 101 to makeup, fashion sense and comportment. For those of you less experienced, it is a "not to be missed" opportunity to learn, and for those more experienced, it's an opportunity to pick up new ideas and share with your sisters. I Look forward to seeing you all there, so pick up the phone and make your booking now. ♪

Much love to all my TG sisters and brothers.

Rumela G., President



Well,
girls, it's
time to hear
from the treasurer.

First let me tell you that I have been handling the finances of the club, since the Fall of 1994, when we first started Xpressions. At that time \$ 35.00 per member seemed like a good idea, in fact, I remember an initial \$ 50.00 from each Founder was suggested just to get the club started. However, with the enthusiastic response from the initial charter members and a (table napkin) budget the finances were set. The \$36.00 dues became a bench mark.

We set goals for the club, each to be gained as the club grew. For example, Janet initially offered the use of her PO box, Yolana discreetly photocopied newsletters from her work, as well as publishing her home number as a hotline. Today, Xpressions has it's own PO box, Voice Mail, and the Newsletters and Magazine are sent to a printer.

As the club grows, we find ourselves with new and exciting goals such as the TMR and the Doll's House. Expansion of the voice mail as well as outreach are issues that have been discussed. All of these costs money. Let me crunch some numbers for you. The estimated cost of the newsletter and magazine is approximately \$ 3000.00 per year, divide this by 100 members = \$30.00 per member. But this does not include outreach, PO box, voice mail, telephone costs, and so on. Remember, The Monarch Reader, which was not factored into the original budget, is about 2/3 of that publication cost. So on July 22, 1996, the board voted unanimously to increase the dues to \$50.00 per year. This decision was based on a carefully thought out budget—not one scribbled on a table napkin. Effective January 1, 1997 this will be the cost of new and renewed memberships.

Anyone who cannot afford to continue membership should contact me personally through the hotline. We will discreetly come up with a solution.

Let me tell you that I am very excited about this club and it's future, with our upcoming events, and with the new and dynamic people who are joining and getting involved. There is only one direction I can see the club going.... forward! ♪

by Victoria,
Treasurer



Best Wishes

I catch myself daydreaming. Not a good time to be preoccupied, traveling as we are at a rate of speed well above the legal limit for Ontario's highway 401. Suddenly more aware of my surroundings, I hear the sounds of Michelle Wright's One Time Around emanating from the CD player. I ease off the accelerator, letting the car coast to a more sedate 120 km/h and engage the cruise control.

I glance over at my passenger. Staring straight ahead, she appears to be deep in thought, her mind miles away. She looks great, dressed in her orange formal, classy high heels, dynamite make-up. A faint smile forms on her lips, and as she turns her head towards me, I swear I can see a twinkle in her eyes partially hidden by the sunglasses.

"What're you looking at?" She asks.

Rather than answering I reach over and take hold of her hand, and return my attention where it belongs, the road. She squeezes my hand softly.

We're on our way to a wedding. Friends are tying the knot today, and part of our preoccupation has to do with who our they are.

I first met Tony and Julie at Divine Lake, during Monarch's Mardi Grass '95, except that Tony was introduced to me as 'Tina.' We found to have more than a few things in common that weekend, and luckily we lived not too far apart. Later, my partner MarieTherese (MT) and I had the opportunity to get to know our new friends better.

Tony and Julie had met while in University. At some point in their courtship, Tina had revealed herself to

Julie. Rather than bolting for the next county, Julie researched the subject of transgenderism thoroughly, and wrote a paper for psych class. The research brought Julie to the conclusion that 'Tina' was an integral part of Tony, and that a lot of the qualities she liked in him were attributable to Tina.

On the forty minute trip to the church, I had ample opportunity to reflect back on my own relationship. Unlike Tony, I had not told my bride-to-be about my Tgism (hell, twenty-three years ago didn't even know the proper term). Perhaps I thought it would go away once I got married. Little did I know the feelings would only get stronger. Fortunately for me, MT proved to be, if not a fully understanding spouse, then certainly, a supportive one. Through the first seven or so years of our marriage, the dressing and changing, to the point of hormones and electrolysis, continued. That came to a sudden, or perhaps not so sudden, halt. At that point of time, we each needed to step back, re-group, and decide what direction each of us needed to take in order to be assured a happy and fruitful life. The summer of '82 proved to be the turning point for us. We, each on our own, decided that we wanted to share our lives together. I stopped taking hormones, and discontinued electrolysis. We concentrated on getting re-acquainted, and building our first business together.

Adrianne and MT live and work in Ontario. They'll celebrate their twenty-second wedding anniversary later this year. The only concession to 'femininity' I allowed myself was in my choice of undergarments and sleepwear.

Life was great. We made good life partners. Friends would comment that we spent more time together than the average couple. Living, working, and yes, sleeping together. It was a lot of togetherness.

Then I hit the wall. Christmas almost two years ago, forty something, despite being successful in business and happily married, I fell into a deep depression, the worst I had experienced in years. Returning from a vacation in

early January, I stopped at the Wildside Boutique in Toronto on the way home, and picked up a number of books and periodicals. Once home and unpacked, I spent the next couple of days sequestered, reading these publications on the subject of transgenderism. After a lot of soul searching and long talks with MT, we agreed that Adrianne could not be denied.

I grew my hair long, had my ears pierced, and MT helped me shop for a suitable wardrobe. I joined the Monarch Social Club, and made plans for Adrianne to go to Mardi Grass. As a result I met a great many like myself, and became good friends with a few. Today we were to witness the wedding of a young couple we'd grown quite fond of.

We met up with the groom outside a small country church about a half hour before the ceremony was to begin. Tony looked great, we shook hands, then hugged. A great deal of emotion passed between us. I felt happy for him.

Julie looked positively radiant coming down the aisle on the arm of her father. At the altar, they stood on high ground facing their family and friends as they exchanged their vows. At one point during this exchange, when they pledged we shall be as one, sharing everything...we shall never part, I swear, I saw Julie wink at Tony. At that, MT whispered in my ear 'until we're no longer able to fit each other's clothes.' We smiled at each other, and sat a little closer.

After the ceremony, we hugged and kissed our newly married couple, and stood back while they basked in the limelight of the moment.

That evening, after we had shared a wonderful meal, I had a private moment with the bride on the dance floor. Julie, already changed into her traveling outfit, smiled and winked, then asked, "Do you think Tony will like this outfit?"

All I could do was smile back, hug her and answer, "He'll love it."

During our drive home that night, or was it early the next morning, MT and I held hands, not saying much. Each of us, in our own way have said a silent prayer for these two. Hoping they would find their love enduring no matter what lay ahead.

Tony and Julie, we love you both. Best wishes on your journey together.

Smalls



This section is labeled 'Smalls' which is an old-fashioned polite British euphemism for lingerie. It consists of news briefs from around the TG world. Some are urgent and request you write a letter or send an email if you can. Others are simply interesting or amusing, but they all show how our TG world is so very connected.

Gay & Lesbian Centre Opens for Olympics

Atlanta, GA (EGCM) A gay and lesbian Visitor's Center will open in Atlanta in June to welcome the thousands of visitors coming to the city during the summer of 1996. The idea for the Visitor's Center was offered by Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell's Senior Advisory Committee from the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered community as a result of the group's ongoing dialog with The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games regarding the needs of lesbian and gay members of the Olympic family. Negotiations are in the final stage for the Center to be located just outside the Olympic Ring in the Center Stage facility at 1374 West Peachtree Street.

In addition to the Olympic Games, the Center will also welcome visitors to Atlanta during the Paralympics, the National Black Arts Festival, Atlanta Pride, Hotlanta River Expo, and Black Gay Pride, all taking place between June and September of 1996.

The 1996 Atlanta Games mark the first time that an Olympic host city's gay and lesbian community has come forward to address the needs of lesbian and gay athletes and coaches, and domestic and international visitors.

[AEGIS-News]

Fishy Gender Benders

Here is another animal example of adapting to social pressure. Imagine that you are a male gobi fish peacefully swimming with your harem in the tropical waters off Okinawa. Then comes along a more aggressive male

(or a conservative state legislator). What to do? You spontaneously change sex, that's what.

Scientists say that if something happens to the new dominant male, the transsexual female reverts to being a male. Biologist Matthew Grober of the University of Idaho has been studying the fish. He has told a meeting of the Society of Neuroscience that the gobi are one of the three species who can change sex repeatedly when circumstances require it. He said the discovery is significant because the region of the fish's brain involved in the sex change is the same region linked to transsexuality in humans. Grober has been able to induce the sex changes in the laboratory, where it has discovered that the fish have it better than humans. The average gobi transition takes just four days, and some accomplished it in two.

[Grober wants to experiment on humans. Any volunteers? Ed.]

Eurocourt Protects TGs

The European court has ruled that a TG individual who was dismissed after undergoing SRS was unfairly treated and must be reinstated. The court of justice has decided that the directive on equal treatment for men and women precludes dismissal of a transsexual because the person concerned underwent a gender reassignment.

The Court's reasoning: The principle of equal treatment 'for men and women' to which the directive refers means that there should be 'no discrimination whatsoever on grounds of sex. Moreover, the right not to be discriminated against on grounds of sex is one of the fundamental human rights whose observance the Court has a duty to ensure.

Accordingly, the scope of the directive cannot be confined simply to discrimination based on the fact that a person is of one or other sex. In view of its purpose and the nature of the rights which it seeks to safeguard, the scope of the directive is also such as to apply to discrimination arising, as in this case, from the gender reassignment of the person concerned.

Such discrimination is based, essentially if not exclusively, on the sex of the person concerned. Where a person is dismissed on the ground that he or

she intends to undergo, or has undergone, gender reassignment he or she is treated unfavourably by comparison with persons of the sex to which he or she was deemed to belong before undergoing gender reassignment.

[AEGIS-News]

TG Law Conference

by Vicky Kolakowski Bay Area Reporter [excerpted]

More than 80 transgendered, and supportive non-transgendered, attorneys and activists from three continents gathered in Houston Texas for the Fifth Annual Transgender legal conference, sponsored by the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, Inc. (ICTLEP). This year's event was the largest and most diverse in the conference's five year history.

In addition to the usual reports on the development of the law in subjects relevant to transgender people, such as insurance law, medical law, and international law, the conference for the first time held specific panel discussions on issues regarding female-to-male (ftm) transgendered people, transgendered people of color, and non-transsexual members of the transgender community.

Lesbian feminist law professors Mary Coombs of the University of Miami, and Elvia Arriola, of the University of Texas at Austin argued that issues of gender, sex and sexuality are connected, and should be addressed by lesbian feminists and transgendered people alike.

"Just as Adrienne Rich noted the compulsory nature of heterosexuality," argued Coombs, "transgendered people have experienced the compulsory nature of gender. Those compulsory rules are intertwined, as dykes and effeminate men know, and all our communities—gay, lesbians, feminists, transsexuals and other transgendered people have a common struggle to free ourselves from these compulsions."

Even the conference's social events had a political edge. The conference's annual dinner recognized British law professor Stephen Whittle, an ftm attorney and activist, as well as transgender lobbyists Sarah DePalma of Texas and Jessica Xavier of Maryland, who head local affiliates of the nation

Continued on next page.....

al transgender political group It's Time America! In addition to the annual dinner, a ritual declaring a Declaration of Gender Liberty was held on July 4th during Houston's annual fireworks display.

"This year's conference was an outstanding success!" exclaimed Texas attorney Phyllis Randolph Frye, founder and executive director of ICTLEP. "Our workshops on the concerns and needs of people of color and its men (fm) in the transgender community resulted in unprecedented participation in numbers and content by people of color and men. I certainly also learned things I didn't know before, especially about the legal needs of the non-transsexuals, that is the heterosexual crossdressers and the gay drag, even though I've been providing advocacy or legal services and education in the transgender community for over two decades."

[AEGIS-News]

Turkish Cops Tell TGs to Disappear

Turkish police muscled into Istanbul's drag bars June 10 to warn Turkish transgenders not to set up a booth at this month's international United Nations city summit. Instead the booth, decorated with gay rights slogans, sat empty among the hundreds of other booths. "We could not come because of..." says a single banner that activists left deliberately unfinished. Demet Demir, a spokesperson for a Turkish transgender group of 3000 members, claims police have torched the homes of three transgenders in an effort to make the community—in the words of the police—"disappear" during the conference. Many members of the community have left the city or are hiding at the homes of friends, Demir said.

[American Educational Gender Information Service, Inc.]

Cops Get Their Woman

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Police believe they have their man in a 17-year-old South Carolina killing, except the suspect is now a woman. Valerie Nicole Taylor, who police believe used to be Freddie Lee Turner, pleaded not guilty to murder Thursday, but the

judge was confused even though police say fingerprints prove that she is, or was, a he.

Judge Jacob Adajian referred to the defendant, who wore little makeup and has long brown hair, first as "Valerie Taylor" and later as "Mr. Turner."

At the hearing in Los Angeles Municipal Court, Adajian declined to set bail and in the meantime, Taylor was being held at a women's prison.

[REUTER via AEGIS-News]

Woman Fools Jailers

DeKalb County (GA) jailers learned this week that a person booked on auto theft charges and held in the male dormitory for more than two months is actually an 18-year-old woman.

The misidentification of Sydney Samauell Mitchell began when a DeKalb police officer arrested her March 26 and filled out the incident report describing her as a black male, 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighing 235 pounds. The officer took her to the male booking area.

Jail officials discovered the error earlier this week when a county pretrial coordinator interviewed one of Mitchell's family members and repeatedly referred to Mitchell with masculine pronouns, Cheatham said. The relative then said Mitchell was a woman.

[Christy Oglesby, Atlanta Journal-Constitution]

Court Strikes Down Anti-Gay Amendment

Washington, DC, May 20, 1996...

Today the Supreme Court ruled against Colorado's Amendment 2. The decision was 6 to 3, with Justices Kennedy, Ginsberg, Souter, Breyer, O'Connor, and Stevens ruling against Amendment 2, and Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas dissenting. The measure would have amended the Colorado state constitution to overturn existing protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and prohibit the passage of any such protection in the future. It was passed by majority vote in 1992.

[AEGIS-News]

TS Belly dancer

CAIRO, Egypt—A man who under-

went a sex change and now works as a belly dancer was sentenced to a month in prison Tuesday for performing in an indecent costume and making lewd gestures.

The dancer, known only as Sally, is well-known in Egypt. She was a former medical student at Egypt's conservative Al-Azhar University, but was expelled following her operation in 1989. She sued the university but lost, prompting a debate in Egyptian newspapers over the ethics of sex-change operations. Her costume was not disclosed Tuesday, but Judge Mohamed Hegazi said it was part of an act that included "vulgar, sexually arousing movements" during an appearance at a nightclub.

Belly dancers, some of whom earn the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, are a fixture of Cairo nightlife. But police have occasionally arrested even famous dancers for sitting on customers' laps or touching them.

[AEGIS-News]

Argentine TVs Punished

Sixty Argentine transvestites arrested in the city of Rosario were put on probation May 12 and ordered to clean and repair the police station where they are usually detained, reports correspondent Alejandra Sarda. They violated a city law that prohibits dressing as the opposite sex.

Rosario's Colectivo Anco Iris and the Asociación Travestis Argentinas held a press conference to denounce the sentences and warn that the transvestites would be verbally, physically and sexually abused at the police station.

[AEGIS-News]

"Priscilla" Get Dragged Into TV

LONDON (Variety) - The hit Australian drag queen movie "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" is being turned into a TV sitcom.

The spinoff may be about three drag queens who see "Priscilla" and become convinced that it is based on them. The movie's creator Stephen Elliott, came up with the idea last year,

and is due to deliver the first three half-hour scripts to London-based Working Title Television in the next couple of weeks. The initial idea is to do six episodes. Working Title is owned by PolyGram, which financed the movie. [Reuters/Variety via AEGIS-News]

Hair Removal Laser

BEVERLY, Mass., April 9 - Palomar Medical Technologies, Inc. (Nasdaq: PMTI) today announced that its subsidiary, Spectrum Medical Technologies, Inc., has received clearance in Canada to sell its new laser-based hair removal system, Epilaser. Palomar plans to market the system through Toronto-based Sigmacon, the largest distributor of medical lasers in Canada and one of the three largest in North America.

"We are pleased to announce our clearance to sell Epilaser in Canada, which we estimate to be a \$300 million market per year," said Steven Georgiev, chairman and chief executive officer of Palomar. "This is the first of what we expect to be clearances in many countries as we now begin to implement our worldwide strategy to address this enormous three-to-five billion dollar global market."

The system, developed in cooperation with Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), is currently awaiting Food and Drug Administration (FDA) clearance in the United States. The Epilaser prototype was unveiled at the American Academy of Dermatology meeting in Washington, D.C., in February. Palomar previously announced its strategy to market Epilaser through cosmetic surgeons, dermatologists, and other members of the medical community.

Korean TGs Raped

SEOUL, June 13 (Reuters) - South Korea's highest court has ruled that two men who sexually assaulted a female transsexual cannot be convicted of rape. The decision by the Supreme Court on Wednesday hinged on whether a man who has had a sex-change operation is legally a woman. South Korean law recognizes rape only against women.

"Though the victim in this case behaves as a female the person cannot be recognized as one because, among other things, his chromosomes remain

unchanged and he cannot get pregnant," Justice Chong Kwi-ho told the court. Chong upheld a lesser charge of sexual assault against the men who attacked the 37-year-old transsexual in April, a court official said on Thursday. The two were each jailed for 2 1/2 years.

[AEGIS-News]

TG Volleyball Anyone?

BANGKOK (Reuters) - The members of Thailand's top all-transvestite volleyball team say they have been kept off the national men's team because of their sexual preferences rather than a lack of skill.

The popular team of 12 men, who have had plastic surgery, grown breasts and wear heavy make-up, represents northern Lampang province. Last week, against most odds, they won the gold medal in men's volleyball at the national games.

"Although we act and look like women, I think we have every right to play on the men's team since we have not yet changed our sexual organs," Patphong Sriratham, the team's coordinator, told Reuters.

Patphong said when his players went to the recent national men's team try-outs in Bangkok at the Volleyball Association of Thailand, they were teased by other players. None of the transvestites was picked for the national team. "Winning the gold medal proves that we are second to none for volleyball in the country, but it is a real pity that we are never selected to play in the national men's team," he said.

[AEGIS-News]

CATS Rights Suffer

On July 6th, a Sacramento-area transsexual visited the "Water World" water theme park in Sacramento and got more than she bargained for.

It began as a normal enough day. "Mary,"* her son, a female friend and her daughter decided to escape the summer heat at "Water World," a water theme park here in Sacramento. While at the park, she tried on and bought (with the assistance of a "Water World" sales clerk) a bikini, and went to join the fun with every other attendee.

"Mary", though, pre-op is passable, and has had all of her California and other identification changed to reflect the female gender.

At around 4:10 pm she was confronted by three park rangers, one sheriff deputy, and three park employees including the general manager, and was told that there had been a complaint and that she had to leave. The sheriff referred to her as "a guy in drag," told her to leave the park, and accused her of lewd conduct for using the women's restroom. All these accusations were made in the public eye, and in front of her son and friends.

When the sheriff was told that her California driver's license states her to be female, his response was "well, we'll just take you into the restroom and have one of these ladies check you out" and that "whoever issued your driver's license didn't check you out good enough." The lady who lodged the complaint in the first place was asked if "Mary" appeared to be male and female, and her response was "I don't know."

Most individuals involved, including the woman who lodged the complaint, refused to give their names, except for the sheriff. The sheriff did not take any formal statements in this case, including the information of the lady who lodged the complaint.

[AEGIS-News]

TS Hormone Info

MILPITAS, CALIFORNIA - July 10, 1996 - The world's most complete and popular source of transsexual hormone therapy information just got better.

The FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions): Hormone Therapy for Transsexuals document, a distillation of hundreds of anecdotal and medical articles, has been dramatically improved for the first time in over two years. There are now separate F2M and M2F versions for improved readability, comparisons of competing treatment philosophies, justified ranking of drugs, updated drug entries, wholesale pricing data, endogenous hormone level data, an online book nook (as an Amazon Books associate), links to other technical hormone web pages, and various other updates.

The web version is now at <http://www.savina.com/confluence/hormone>; the flat file is at <http://ftp.savina.com/users/confluence/hormone>.

Australian Bans TG

Hate

Last month, the parliament of the Australian state of New South Wales, where Sydney is, passed legislation banning discrimination against transgendered people. It also granted transsexuals the right to correct their birth certificates. However, sporting organizations were exempted from the laws, which were championed through the parliament by state Attorney General Jeff Shaw. Sydney will be the site of the Summer Olympics in 2000. "The days of institutionalized bigotry and punishing those who do not adhere to so-called gender norms are over," said Nadine Stransen of the Transgender Lobby Coalition. "This has taken five hard years of lobbying, so we are feeling ebullient."

Japan Urged to Legalize SRS

A Japanese medical ethics committee has urged the government to legalize sex-change operations as a justifiable treatment for people uncomfortable with their gender. The committee, at Tokyo's Saitama Medical College, said legal and other medical experts should encourage Japan to finally lift the ban on this type of surgery. Japan's Eugenic Protection Action prohibits "senseless" operations to go abroad. The committee stressed that sex-change operations were permitted in most Western countries, Taiwan, and South Korea.

Lady Chablis Fries Chicken

And not a minute too soon. Georgia's sweetest peach, The Lady Chablis, has a new book about her life hitting the streets this month. The tome, entitled "Hiding My Candy," features Chablis' long struggle from poor little drag queen dancing at Club One in Savannah, Georgia, to world-famous star of the must-read and still best-selling book, "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil," by John Berendt. Chablis' book features vivid photos of "The Doll," including a fabulous photo of Chablis glamorously frying chicken that opens the recipe section. Yes, it's a tell-all and a cook book! Dish's favorite Chablis story comes from Columbia, SC, where someone asked "The Bitch" if she ate pussy. To which Chablis replied, "Girl, I don't even know how to cook it!"



Be All Detroit 1996

Well, Be All in Detroit for 1996 has come and gone; another wonderful convention for those of us who would 'dare to be different' and challenge more commonly understood understandings of gender role behaviour in our Western culture. For me and DeeDee, (my 'dressing' friend from the USA) we had an opportunity to present our own seminar on gender expression entitled, "I'm not a woman; I'm a unique 'dresser.'" In fact, we had name tags made up and which we wore stating the aforementioned along with a place for the attendees name.

Overall, the seminar went well but, since gender is such a broad-based subject, it did float away from the original theme a few times. But overall, some new understandings of gender and sex behaviour were tabled. The session drew about 25 people in total including Dr. Richard Doctor and my old time friend, Virginia Prince. The session was very interactive and even Richard who has studied and written his own book on transvestites and transsexuals said of our theme, "Now this is an interesting point of view; let me think about it." Another professional stated, "Your theme was refreshing."

The key to our seminar was not to define everyone as DeeDee and I define ourselves. In fact, quite the contrary. It was to ensure that we do not define our behaviour of what our presentations in dresses and makeup mean to females but rather, to present what our presentations mean to ourselves as unique human beings. And that, of course, is what we continually hear from most in the gender community: "I just want to be me," and "me" is undoubtedly and ultimately, unique to all of us. After all as human beings, we are all genetically different; we all have different beliefs and attitudes and all of us have had different life experiences. The only thing any of us can ever be is unique to ourselves.

The point of our seminar was to table a posture that our 'dressing' behaviour is not done for current systematically understood reasons, nor is our 'dressing' behaviour a result of any genetically sexed reason. Our posture was that we do so for human reasons, and that all modes of presentation should be available to all human beings.

Like Kate Bornstein has talked and written about so often, call us creators of "a third gender" which is unique to only ourselves. Our theme aimed to ensure that we were not caught up in the double and often limiting gender paradigm of 'man/woman,' but rather, DeeDee and I have decided that for us, and many others in our community, our XPRESSION as 'dressers' is our own unique self expression. DeeDee and I postured that we have a great interest in 'dressing' in clothes which are more commonly attributable to the opposite sex, but are not necessarily exclusively attired as females.

At the end of the seminar, Richard Doctor asked that DeeDee respond to his research questionnaire, but was also open to any information that we may provide him regarding our unique viewpoint on gender; a viewpoint which acknowledges that overlap in human behaviour amongst the sexes is possible with both respect and dignity.

By the end of the seminar, we had approximately 10 attendees wearing the name tag "I'm not a woman; I'm a unique 'dresser.'" Later on that afternoon, a number of us headed out shopping to one of the larger malls in Detroit with our name tags on and met a lot of people who were extremely curious about our self XPRESSION as 'dressers,' every encounter was very friendly. In one picture store, we even had the manager sport a wig and he had his picture taken with one of the fellows. Further on in the mall, there was a circus being promoted, and DeeDee and I had quite a number of pictures taken with one of the clowns. Overall, we had a lot of laughs and a lot of fun.

Anyway DeeDee and I hope each of you have fun XPRESSIONING yourselves as unique 'dressers' too. {

Glen

M.A.C. MARCHES TO ITS OWN

In selecting RuPaul, that ultimate

advertisement for DRAG is FUN, to be its worldwideover girlmaverick

M.A.C. Cosmetics was once again scoring big by being unpredictable and unconventional.

Then, to carry it all a step further, they retained k.d. lang to be its voice to go along with its RuPaul face.

Born in 1984, M.A.C. -- Make-up Art Cosmetics -- the company has always marched to the beat of its own drummer.

The movers and shakers at M.A.C. followed their gut in building the firm, ignoring everything the big cosmetics companies did to make them successful in a highly competitive industry. Advertising and promotional freebies, a staple with the others, were shunned by M.A.C. Until RuPaul, M.A.C. didn't even have a spokesmodel.

RuPaul was chosen because she epitomizes the firm's mantra -- anyone can enjoy makeup. RuPaul is living testimony to that. Choosing RuPaul earned M.A.C. tons of bravos, as well as frowns.

And M.A.C.'s image of accepting all lifestyles was further enhanced by adding lesbian kd lang's endorsement. She isn't noted for wearing makeup and only uses it when necessary for performances. However, she has taken excellent care of her skin.

When she was unveiled at the gala opening of M.A.C. outlet in trendy SoHo in Manhattan's south end, the songstress quipped that she never expected to be a lipstick lesbian.

She decided to work with M.A.C. because of the firm's exemplary record on animal testing of its products and sexual stereotyping -- M.A.C. does neither.

M.A.C.'s approach has always been to demonstrate the product, not just to sell it. In department stores, all of the make-up manufacturers' stands are staffed by smart

DRUMMER

celebrities, including Princess Di, Madonna and a host of supermodels, using

M.A.C. and acting as living, high-profile ads for its quality. The company reached the make-up artists through the old Festival of Canadian Fashion, which gave M.A.C. an excellent platform to demonstrate its products to artists and models.

Where competitors pour millions into advertising, M.A.C. has mastered getting effective media attention by earning it with, sometimes outrageous, events and deeds.

look-
ing-
women.
But M.A.C.
counters are
staffed by artists of

different ages, genders and races, boasting a full range of M.A.C. looks that the customer can learn to replicate. M.A.C. has been known to have CDs, and guys in DRAB but wearing makeup, hard at work doing demonstrations. When you think about it, it's a darn good sales gimmick. Women are left with the impression that if the products can do that much for a man, it's bound to work wonders on a real woman.

The business began in a basement on Carlton St. in Toronto. By last year it had about \$150 million in retail sales. Sold at department stores and stand-alone shops, totally Canadian-made M.A.C. products, which have expanded from strictly cosmetics to also include skin care and other wares, are available nationwide at 110 outlets, with 30 more being added this year.

And it's a success story outside Canada, too. Besides being numero-uno at the Bay this side of the border, in America it's also a hot property -- the big seller at Saks Fifth Avenue, for example. Now, by working with Estee Lauder, M.A.C., long noted for its "matte" textures, high quality and excellent value for price paid, is poised to invade Europe and Asia.

M.A.C.'s initial fame spread by word-of-mouth through the international make-up artists' community and this resulted in

Adding RuPaul has simply augmented the positive publicity and image M.A.C. already had cultivated by supporting AIDS. RuPaul is the honorary chair of M.A.C.'s AIDS fund.

M.A.C. isn't so much selling makeup as it's pushing acceptance of all lifestyles -- "be who you are, not who someone else tells you to be." So bolstering AIDS and using a DRAG Queen as its spokesmodel, or a lesbian as its voice, are naturals.

And M.A.C. has worked hard not to tell its customers that they need its products. They've let the clients uncover that truth for themselves. {

(There is a MAC store at 233 Carlton St., and it is TG friendly. Ed.)

By Laura M.

Michelle Dubarry Stars in Toronto Life

Our own Michelle Dubarry was one of the headliners in a big feature in the June issue of Toronto Life.

The article and photos of Toronto luminaries in the periodical covered 13 pages and looked at the diversity of people with long-time connections to Toronto's Yonge Street on the road's 200th birthday.

Michelle has been around Xpressions since its earliest days. She's attended shopping parties, entertained us at some dinners and recruited other DRAG stars for shows. And most people who have attended parties at Wildside or visited any bars to see DRAG shows, have run across her.

She's been a great friend to the crossdressing community for years -- a bridge between CDs and the DRAG world.

In Toronto Life, her photo covers one-and-a-third pages. It's a striking black and white shot and Michelle looks quite glamorous in a leopard-print gown and fur wrap, her cleavage dramatically shadowed, and wearing a curly blond wig. She's cuddled up seductively beside a bar's draft dispensers for the photo.

Michelle is not merely the first grabber shot in the spread, she's also quoted extensively in two lengthy passages.

In one section, author Sarah Hampson describes Michelle as wearing a green gown and sparkling tiara while presiding over a Trillium Monarchist Society (TMS) fundraiser.

Readers also learn that Michelle was TMS's Imperial Sovereign Majesty, Empress IX; that she performed with the Great Imposters; and that she's the mother of many a budding young DRAG artist. She has taught them "everything she knows. What to wear. How to pad. How to make the most of fleshy pectorals in a Maidenform push-up bra. How to hide the male genitalia between the legs. Key feminine gestures. Walking in high heels."

Next, she talked about meeting Michelle another time. "You see Michelle Dubarry, a 64-year-old former shoe salesman at Eaton's. She does a demure finger-wave across the room and dons a plastic female smile, teeth and lips just so. And now -- oh my, hello! -- she's gliding over on her high heels, in a red, sequinned gown she sewed herself, with padded hips and shadowed cleavage, a marvellous red wig and a crown like a pearly gate."

By Laura M.



Denis or Denise ...Basketball Star

Hoops star slam dunks macho
world of sportsby unveiling Denise

By Laura M.

Transgenderism has invaded a bastion of machismo -- pro sports.

Dennis Rodman, 35, star rebounder for the National Basketball Association champion Chicago Bulls, has come bursting out of the closet in flamboyant style.

He appeared recently in the Windy City to autograph copies of his new book, *As Bad As I Wanna Be*, decked out in full face (makeup), his short hair tinted silver, a matching silver halter-top and hot-pink feather boa.

It wasn't the first time he's had his hair coloured an unconventional hue, either -- he has tried lots of other shades. During this year's NBA playoffs, he sported plenty of facial hair, a single earring in one lobe and several in the other, and in the finals he had a multi-coloured X's an O's motif for his short locks, which combined with his numerous tattoos, makes it seem likely that he curtailed his CDing with the arrival of warmer weather. Unless, of course, he's into rough DRAG, too.

Needless to say, he got lots of ink for his en femme book-signing effort; the wire services spread photos from the event far and wide. And one sports scribe dubbed Rodman "RuPaul's ugly step-sister" while another remarked that the hoops star is "sexually ambiguous."

So far, his CD lifestyle hasn't caused a lot of negative comments, although it did prompt the media to interview his aging mother in Dallas, Texas, to get her views on her "boy."

"If he was a kid under my regime, I would be reining him in like mad. But he's not. He's his own person," Shirley Rodman, his Ma, declared.

"I'm just proud that he has learned to speak for himself, because he's had a lot of personal things that hit him hard and a lot of people blame his parents for that. I think he's a wonderful young man.

"Everything is going beautiful for him. You can forget about the tattoos and all the hair and look at the person. The person is very happy."

There's been no movement by the media, fans or NBA establishment to have him ousted from the Bulls or drummed out of the sport. There has only been a scattering of media comments about Rodman being a "degenerate."

And CDing certainly hasn't hurt his endorsements.

He pushes burgers for McDonald's on the airwaves and soon will be helping another fast-food chain, California-based Carl's Junior, peddle their menu. Chicago McDonald's splash his photo, with white-silver hair, on its 32 ounce drink cups. Then, when the cold beverages hit the cups, Rodman's hair turns pink, green or blue.



In a recent look at Chicago sports stars, a big daily paper there concluded Rodman now has the highest public profile of all the members of the city's pro sports teams, including the Bears, Blackhawks, Cubs, White Sox and Bulls. He's even ahead of his superstar teammate Michael Jordan.

In his ghostwritten tome, Rodman reveals that he relishes donning dresses and going to Chicago gay bars where crossdressers, transsexuals, etc., are welcome. He's the star attraction in a gang of CDs that prowls the city. The book contains photos of Rodman in all the trappings of his alternate personality, Denise.

He also tells readers one of his dreams is to host a talk show, dressed as a woman. The inspiration for this girlish fantasy is undoubtedly fellow CDing book-hustler Howard Stern. He describes the caustic radio commentator, who appears in DRAG on the cover of his book, as a "cool dude who lives life his way."

Of course, MCing a talk show dressed wouldn't raise an eyebrow compared to one of his other goals.

When he's played his final match in the pros, he plans to stroll off the court doing a striptease, discarding his playing jersey, peeling off his shoes and socks, pulling off his shorts and jockstrap. The rest of his retirement exit would be made in the buff.

Where possible, he plans to autograph items of his sporting apparel and toss them to fans in the stands. He points out nobody has stripped on the court before and thinks this would be an excellent "parting shot at the NBA."

His relationship with the sport hasn't been trouble-free. When he played for the San Antonio Spurs, he was constantly in hot water with management for his many stunts.

While the transgendered might prefer that under his shorts Rodman wore pink panties with black piping for his basketball swan-song, considering all that he's made known about his CDing, wearing ladies' underwear at centre court wouldn't likely cause nearly as big a stir as being au naturel.

Of course, Rodman is hardly the first pro athlete who enjoyed dressing. When one in 20 men either CD or want to, it's a given that Rodman has had predecessors in perfume and lingerie on NBA courts, and other competitive venues as well. They simply stayed in the closet. Transgendered players were around, fans just didn't know they had another set of stats, such as bra size.

And, being a star on a team filled with superb players will make Rodman's positive impact on behalf of the transgendered

all the more forceful.

It might be giving Rodman a little too much credit, though, to say that he came out as a CD to advance the acceptance of all transgendered people.

This guy/gal is a self-promoter of considerable skill.

Who says so? None other than mommy dearest. She told the media her son appearing at his book signing dressed as a woman was a bit of "shrewd marketing. It didn't offend me in the least. It surprised me, but I thought it was funny. Over the years Dennis has had the oddest clothes because he always shopped at the oddest places," she explained.

As for his sexuality, she said "I know he's not gay. When I go out to dinner with him, we don't get to eat because there are no private moments. But when he goes with the gay friends, they let him be himself and he can enjoy his food." Mother Rodman apparently wasn't asked, and didn't volunteer, whether she thought her son was transgendered.

In his book, Rodman says "I came out of nowhere, like I do when I fly in for a rebound. Nobody made me, I made myself." That just about sums up his prime motive for exiting the closet. Still, he's bound to give transgenderism a higher profile. ☿

Murder of TG hookers shocks community



THE VICTIMS: Thomas Wilkinson, 31, left, Shawn Keegan, 19, and Brenda Ludgate, 25, probably didn't know death was imminent.

Shock ripped through our community in late May after the execution-style murder of three prostitutes, two of them transgendered.

Deanna/Thomas Wilkinson, 31, a transsexual (inaccurately called a transvestite in several media reports), and Shawn Keegan, 19, variously described in the same reports as a bisexual, a transvestite and a drag queen, were killed Victoria Day night as rain poured down and thunder and fireworks boomed over downtown Toronto.

Their bodies were found the next morning at 40 and 65 Homewood Ave., a residential area just north of Carlton and south of Wellesley streets well known as an extension of the infamous transvestite hooker track on Mailand, east on Yonge.

The third victim, prostitute Brenda Ludgate, 25, a genetic female, was found dead the same day in a parking lot in the vicinity of King and Bathurst streets on the extreme east side of the Parkdale area.

While police immediately linked the deaths of Wilkinson and Keegan, it wasn't until autopsy and ballistic reports came in that authorities concluded Ludgate had been murdered by the same killer. Police originally thought she had been beaten to death but it was later determined she had been shot with the same gun as the one used to murder the other two victims. And like the transgendered victims, she had been shot in the back of the head. Police said they believed none of the victims were aware that their deaths were imminent.

Later media speculation suggested that Ludgate had been mistaken by the killer for a transvestite.

Following intensive investigation lasting about a week, Metro Police issued a Canada-wide arrest warrant on three

counts murder for Marcello Palma, 30, a married father of a 15-month old child. After stops in Montreal and New Brunswick, he was apprehended without incident in Halifax. Authorities seized weapons and other evidence in his hotel. He appeared in College Park courts and was arraigned and denied bail. It will be many, many months before his trial, and before details come out.

Following the arrest, an unidentified drag queen told the press Palma had been known in the Church Street gay community and was interested in drag queens. The queen also said the accused made sexual advances when he/she was in drag.

The murders set off a media frenzy, reporters working hard to outdo each other in sensationalizing transvestites, transsexuals, drag queens and their lifestyles. The details of what the two "men" were wearing when they were killed was designed to titillate.

While both Wilkinson and Keegan were both described as transvestites at the outset of the saga, the former was eventually correctly called a transsexual in most reports. Keegan on the other hand would have different labels attached to his name on any given day.

The term crossdresser never appeared in print nor was heard over the airwaves. There was never any suggestion that all men who don women's clothing aren't hookers, abusing drugs like crack, or living on the street.

One headline blared "Transvestites endure poverty, scorn: Slayings rock out-cast community."

A radio commentator suggested that the murders would result in fewer men running around the streets of Toronto dressed as women, with the implication being the

only ones that do are prostitutes and the absence of men in dresses was a good thing.

Surprisingly, while the media paid little attention to other transgendered prostitutes, save speaking to one of Keegan's drag queen colleagues about their planned participation in an upcoming show at a gay bar, genetic female hookers and their tears in the wake of the murders received considerable play. It was as if their worries were more legitimate because at least they're "real" women.

The media coverage did nothing to advance understanding of transgenderism. In the wake of the sensational reporting, many people who see crossdressers these days undoubtedly assume everyone is a "lady" of the night. The still unenlightened public would be shocked to learn the vast majority of transgenderists are law abiding people with legitimate occupations, families and homes.

The murders and publicity about the Homewood-Mailand area brought many teens, as well as men who are older and definitely should know better, from the burbs to the normally quiet downtown neighbourhood to hassle those still out playing their trade.

Undoubtedly the incident unnerved not just some crossdressers, making them a little more wary about going out dressed, but also caused anxiety for their wives/significant others, especially prior to Palma's arrest.

To the credit of Metro Police, they treated the murders very seriously, went all out to crack the case, and said nothing to the media to help them denigrate the transgendered. ☿

By Laura

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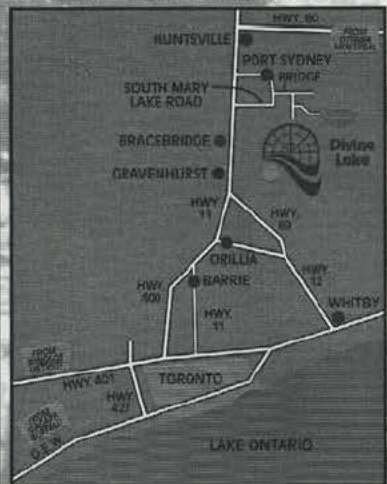
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for adults

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By Bus or Train: We will be happy to make arrangements to meet you upon arrival. By Train in Huntsville. By Bus (Grey Coach) in Port Sydney. There is also an Airport Service between Pearson International Airport and Port Sydney.

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This is our 10th annual event and it is filling up quickly! Don't miss this exciting experience: a paradise for cross dressers where we expect to have the whole resort to ourselves.

The picturesque main lodge is the focal point where our workshops and social events will take place. Accommodations are first class, either in the chalets or in the cottages. All the cottages have fire places or wood stoves and a fully equipped kitchenette. Both accommodations are only a few steps from the main lodge.

Our package also includes use of the following facilities: the heated pool, sauna, hot tub, tennis courts, canoes, paddle boats, windsurfing, fishing, bicycles, hiking trails, volleyball and badminton. Indoors there is table tennis, billiards, darts, TV/Video room, library in the Farmhouse Lounge and of course socializing at the Lakeview Lounge/Bar. And at modest extra cost there is the Roman Spa and the Health Club which offers massages, facials, mudpacks, manicures, pedicures and other beauty treatments. (Cost is extra.)

Bring your camera: the Muskoka colours at this time of year are spectacular!

We have a full programme so there will always be something to do. Dress is optional for this entire event, so dress "Drag or Drab" anytime you want.

A number of our members

come up a day earlier (on the Thursday) and enjoy the extra day to relax and make use of the great facilities. Some members stay over Sunday night and just wind-down from the event. It's up to you.

Time is running out to reserve for this memorable occasion, it's only once a year and the early birds get the best accommodations, so book now! The dates are October 4, 5 & 6.

Rates range from \$97.00 to \$122.00 per night, including breakfast and dinner and is based on our two night package. (The food, at Divine Lake, is absolutely fantastic!) There is a 10% discount for the third night. A daily rate of \$35.00 is available, for those who want to come for the Saturday only. This includes the Saturday workshops and the banquet dinner. For our American friends, the above is Canadian funds, so you can save about 35% on exchange.

If you haven't booked, call 'Divine Lake' now, mention 'MARDI GRAS 96' and book direct with them (\$100.00 deposit required and they accept all credit cards). It's a free call, telephone: 1-800-263-6600. Don't wait any longer!

Any questions about 'MARDI-GRAS 96' ??? Contact Donna on the internet at: [redacted] or telephone Willi at [redacted]

Feinberg, Leslie. 1996.
Making History from
Joan of Arc
to
Ru Paul
Boston: Beacon Press.
xvii+212.

[This review has appeared in
the Toronto Globe and Mail.]

Unbeknownst to most ordinary citizens, a revolution, often but not always quiet, has been slowly gaining momentum within the western world. The signs have been there for those who look for such things: talk shows, films, books, and television have increasingly been normalizing a previously marginalized population.

Riding, to some extent, on the coat tails of the gay and lesbian rights movement, and placing themselves under the umbrella of queer culture, the group author Leslie Feinberg calls "transgendered" or simply "trans" now wants to be heard from. The "transgendered" are citizens of the world who defy or deny traditional gender and/or sex categories by being men who live or dress as women, women who live or pass as men, or people who adopt whichever role suits their mood of the moment. These gender outlaws are transvestites, transsexuals, drag queens or kings, butch dykes, femme gays, gender benders, or intersexed (hermaphroditic) people who are now demanding the right to live as they please without either physical or emotional harassment.

While transgendered people have been with us for all time, and have been important subjects of literature and entertainment from Shakespeare to Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, they have, until recently, rarely been objects of serious study. In particular, the history of transgendered people has been ignored, overlooked, or misrepresented. In her book, *Transgender Warriors*,

Leslie Feinberg aims to reclaim the history of transgender activists and notables. Feinberg herself is a well known and long time activist. She grew up as an extreme tomboy suffering the slings and arrows reserved for those who do not fit neatly into society's bipolar gender system. As she grew older she first found a niche as a butch dyke in Buffalo's lesbian society, and then, in order to make a living and feel whole, moved to New York and began living as a man full time. Her 1993 novel, *Stone Butch Blues*, is a powerful and moving account of life as a transgendered woman within Buffalo and Toronto's lesbian community in the late-60's and early 70's.

This new book, like her novel and like so much of the writing coming out of the transgendered community, is highly autobiographical. But where *Stone Butch Blues* was her account of the emotional and social trail that led her to where she is today, *Transgender Warriors* is an intellectual rendering of that journey. Trans history is told to us via Feinberg's own recovery of that self-same history. It is the unfolding of her realization that she is not alone in the world, is not the only person ever to have felt at odds with society's genitally based gender categorization, that provides the impetus for her explorations.

Every marginalized group that begins to claim its societal space turns, sooner or later, to the reclamation of a history that has been ignored or suppressed by the mainstream academic and educational institutions. The reasons for this are simple but profound. When a group's history is incorporated and respected within the mainstream that group becomes visible and stands as a respected component of the historical fabric of a country or society. Young people encountering the stories can recognize

themselves as a kind of person who has a right to be proud, to belong, to be a part of the historical matrix. Black, Native Canadian, gay, and lesbian young people who see their groups identified as having traditions, personalities and history understand that they are not alone but have a self-identity and a past with which they can identify. Feinberg's motivation in writing *Transgender Warrior* is, in large part, to provide that kind of perspective for the transgendered and those connected to and interested in them.

"I was three years old when the news broke that Christine Jorgensen had traveled from the United States to Sweden for a sex change from male to female. A passport agent reportedly sold the story to the media. All hell broke loose. In the years that followed, just the mention of her name provoked vicious laughter. The cruelty must have filtered down to me, because I understood that the jokes rotated around whether Christine Jorgensen was a woman or a man. Everyone was supposed to easily fit into one category or another, and stay there. But I didn't fit, so Christine Jorgensen and I had a special bond. By the time I was eight or nine years old, I had asked a baby-sitter, 'Is Christine Jorgensen a man or a woman?'"

"She isn't anything," the baby-sitter giggled. "She's a freak." Then, I thought, I must be a freak too, because nobody seemed sure whether I was a boy or a girl. What was going to happen to me? Would I survive? Would Christine survive?"

That first major trigger for Feinberg, as for a multitude of others, was Christine Jorgensen's highly publicized sexual reassignment surgery in 1952. For most people the announcement was the occasion for ribald humor or straightforward derision. But for many, albeit secretly and without sharing with anyone, there was a recognition, a snap-to-attention realization that others shared one's gender discomfort and were not always happy with their birth designated

Transgender Warriors

MARDI GRAS 96

sex role. Of course, the sword that cut the knot of isolation was double-edged: all of the salacious and nasty comments were obviously intended to apply to anyone intrigued by Jorgensen's journey.

Feinberg points out that this derision was not always so. In numerous societies throughout the world, especially the ancient world, people who were transgendered or bi-gendered were often considered blessed, and frequently played an important role in the religious or spiritual life of the community. This was especially true in Native American tribes where two-spirited people (labeled 'berdache' by white explorers and chroniclers,) were an institution in their own right. Only in relatively recent history, with the forced intrusion of Judeo-Christian mores into native society have the two-spirited sometimes been shunned or excluded.

Christianity itself has had a very perplexing attitude toward its transgendered constituents, especially women who come to live as men. The church stands squarely against any softness toward the transgendered. And yet, the most famous

transgender warrior in all history was Joan of Arc who while first burnt at the stake, was eventually made a saint. Historically, her transvestitism is more often portrayed as an act of devotion rather than an essential component of self-expression. That she was put to death for refusing to cease wearing men's clothing (by priests wearing soutanes and monks wearing robes) is often viewed as merely an excuse and not as an integral component of her columnies.

The best chapters of Feinberg's book are those devoted to history. The others, those that are more straightforwardly didactic are weaker. With the exception of an excellent chapter on why the women's movement and the transgender movement share a lot, the chapters devoted primarily to her arguments about the nature of racism, discrimination and the roots of transgender abuse leave much to be desired. Too many of the arguments rely on suspect Marxist presuppositions, and too many others are not really explanatory.

Feinberg makes claims like, "It was the

overthrow of communalism and the subsequent division of society into classes that mandated the partitioning of the sexes and outlawed any blurring of those 'man-made' boundaries." But why? One can easily envision a non-communal society in which transgenderism was tolerated, but where justice did not prevail. The mere co-existence of two situations—private property and the binary gender system—does not mean there is a causal connection.

Feinberg has given us an interesting book that offers much food for thought and a great deal of fascinating information. It is not, unfortunately, the great transgendered history that is needed. That book still remains to be written. But it is a detailed account of the intellectual and emotional journey of one transgender warrior from fearful isolation to a place rich with pride and self-respect. {

Pride Day Is a Grand Success

There I was, your very own TMR editor, wearing my short white terry skirt and my Transsexual Menace T-shirt, proudly standing in front of the Xpressions booth on Toronto's ab-fab Pride Day. By the time I arrived, about 11 a.m., Cynthia had already set up a (blessed) awning to protect us from the sun and a table for our literature. Our location could not have been better. We were the very first table next to the entrance to the beer garden south of Wellesley St., right in the centre of it all. As people came by we would tell them about our club. A lot of

brochures went to gays or lesbians who have friends who are TG. We all know that many of us first "come out" to gay or lesbian friends on the (quite proper) assumption that they will be sympathetic. Let's hope those brochures go to people who have been searching for friends like us.

As the day wore on various members came and visited. Nancy, Donna, Victoria, and many others stopped by and visited for a while, usually lending a helping hand in the process. Later, when the Niela Miller Workshop ended, a whole gang came by for the wrap up. Of course, the real star was Micheline from Montreal who was a super show stopper in her Marie Antoinette costume—bustle and all.

Pride Day is an important event for us because it lets the community know we are out there. This gets us support, and aids in our mission of ending the loneliness and isolation of cross dressers and transsexuals. There's already talk of having a float next year. So when next Pride Day rolls around—be there! {



FANTASIA FAIR 1995 Part Four

Will You Go?

[Gilbert@YorkU.ca]

[Editors: in print versions please replace *asterisks* with italics.]

This is the fourth of four parts telling the story of Fantasia Fair 1995. This article is about deciding if Fantasia Fair is right for you, and making the decision to go

RECAP: In October 1995 I went to Provincetown, Massachusetts, a small picturesque town on the very tip of Cape Cod. I was there to participate in my first Fantasia Fair, a week long celebration of the feminine in the male, ranging from timid to committed cross dressers to long time transsexuals, with every stop along the way. The week consisted of workshops given by first rank professionals, lunches with speakers on fascinating subjects, wonderful banquets, exciting events, and some of the most warm and beautiful people I've met in my life. I could just give a diary of my own time in Ptown, but everybody's Fantasia is different depending on who they are, what they need, and how much they are willing to give and take. So, instead, I will take different aspects of the fair and tell you about them. The four parts of my story will be, 1) What Happens at the Fair; 2) Workshops and Personal Growth; 3) People and Parties; and 4) Will You Go?

Part 4. Will You Go?

Every decision begins with two parts: desire and capability. So the

first issue is, do you want to go?

If you've read the previous three parts to this saga, then you know that Fantasia Fair is a fun, friendly, growth experience that has the potential for making a major impact in your life. There are innumerable dinners, talks, parties, rap sessions, workshops, events, and just plain hanging out. Everyone who attends is a sister or brother or companion to one. The townspeople are friendly and go out of their way to make us feel comfortable and at home.

nights you can wear your nice stuff, and have a lovely dinner with friends. After you might make an early night, join a pajama party, or find a great house party. And at no time was there any reason to feel uncomfortable or awkward. Oh, I almost forgot. If a visitor gawks, just smile, wave and act like a tourist attraction.

So fear should not keep you from Fantasia Fair. There's simply no reason for it. And what other reason could there be for not wanting to go? I can't think of any. But I can think of reasons why you might not be able to go.

There are two main reasons you might not be able to go: time and money. Fantasia Fair lasts for a full week, and not everyone can take that kind of time, especially if it means vacation time without your family. The cost for a full week at the fair is not inconsiderable.

A single room is a little over US\$1,000. It's a very reasonable price for seven nights at a charming inn, all of your breakfasts and lunches, and most of your dinners, not to mention all the fair activities and events. But being good value doesn't mean you have the money. One alternative is to attend the second half, three nights and four days. That's half the price, half the time, and still gives you a good taste of what Fantasia's all about. But it's nothing like the full week.

Now here's a few tips for when you come. First of all, clothing. Take as much as you can. Don't be embarrassed. If you're flying you're allowed two suitcases—this time don't travel light. If you're driving—take it all. There are at least two really dress up nights, and other nights that nice outfits



This is where we stayed in 95

Fantasia Fair is set up to provide a safe and friendly environment that offers rich opportunities to someone who has been tightly closeted, and also has sufficient range and breadth to appeal to those who have ventured forth into the world before.

Imagine that you've never gone anywhere dressed before except, say, to a club meeting where you might even have changed on the premises. Then imagine waking up in the morning in a charming inn, dressing in a smart daytime outfit, and setting forth with total confidence. Then, sometime in the late afternoon you come back to your room, relax, perhaps have a glass of wine with your house mates, and then go and dress for the evening's activities. Most

are called for. Don't forget shoes—dressy heels to match your evening wear. But, bring flats to wear during the day and a bag to carry heels in. Those Ptown streets are not easy in four inch pumps. This year the fair is a week later, so some warmer clothing will be needed. I also recommend you bring a bottle of your favorite imbibe for festivities or for offering a visitor to your house. And, of course, your camera. There are privacy rules about cameras, but you will want some snaps of yourself and your friends.

Just about anything you forget can be had in Provincetown, so don't get too anxious about little things. If you can, bring some money for shopping. It's end of the season in Ptown, and there are real bargains to be had. Oh, and don't forget your costume for the Fantasy ball. Last year's first prize winner was our own Melissa whose Bo

Beep outfit was a hands down no contest winner. The room was full of leather mistresses, maids, pirates, princesses, a bride or two, and everything else under the sun. Use your imagination and let it all hang out.

Will you go? Should you go? The answer has to be, yes. If it's just not possible, then I'm sorry—we'll miss you, and look for you the following year. But if you can, then you owe it to yourself to have the most thrilling, rich, joyful, warm, and growing experience a cross dresser can imagine. Fantasia Fair will have a tremendous impact on you, and it will last forever. When you think of it that way, as an experience that will be with you always, then you cannot deny yourself. Go for it, girl! You deserve it. {

by Miqqi Alicia Gilbert

COUNSELING IN GENDERLAND

It has long been a problem for persons seeking counseling for gender issues that their providers know little or nothing about the field of gender identity counseling. Little wonder! It is not taught as part of any training or academic curriculum except as odd courses in scattered Counseling Psychology programs. Lately, more colleges which offer gay, lesbian and bisexual studies are beginning to include transgender ones as well, but we are still far from having this subject regularly represented in professional training programs.

What often happens is that clients end up spending their time and money educating their counselors and feeling resentful about it. This is why I set out to write a book about counseling crossgendered persons at the urging of my publisher, Jenny Stevens, (DIFFERENT PATH PRESS, Boston 1996) herself an author and a transgender person.

The metaphor, Genderland, is, of course, related to poor Alice, who went down the rabbit hole or through the looking glass, and arrived in a country whose rules, regulations, behaviors, and reasoning were entirely different from what she was used to in her orderly world.

The counselor who is confronted by someone who has a gender identity different from what would appear to be so by biological sex, or someone who is male but looks like a woman or dresses like a woman, someone who is in a marriage both as husband and as girlfriend—this counselor feels like Alice trying to figure out what's what in Wonderland.

Unless the counselor investigates her own sex and gender identity, understands her reactions to presentations or behaviors which defy her categorical thinking, enters into this new world to learn and grow herself, she will not be able to be of much help to her client.

I first encountered crossgendered persons at Fantasia

Fair in 1982. I had been invited there to work, at first, with the partners of crossdressers.

The first event I attended was a church supper. When I walked in I heard male voices all around me but saw women! I had arrived in Genderland. I have written elsewhere about what happened to me at this event. But I did want to mention that this was my introduction to a world unlike the one I was used to, where there were neat divisions between males and females. All of my assumptions and beliefs about gender and sex got thrown up in the air, and I had to start finding out what my strong feelings were, why I had them, and what to do about them.

In those days, I had no other colleagues who knew anything about this. There were very few books on the subject. So I had to learn from the experts in the community who were very generous in sharing their life stories and feelings. For me, it was very similar to having a daughter with a rare disorder called neurofibromatosis (she died in 1984), knowing nothing about the disease, knowing nobody else who had it, having no community resources—only one physician who finally diagnosed her correctly after we had lived with another diagnosis by another doctor for two years. What a tremendous relief it was when, finally, a clinic opened and a foundation was established which started bringing people together who had this disorder or who were related to the afflicted person.

The parallels are obvious. I understood immediately the sense of isolation and frustration experienced by T's (variously transgendered folks,) and their need to talk to someone who understood their concerns as well as the need for community. Just as important were the partners and other persons related to T's who experienced betrayal, confusion, frustration, bewilderment, and needed support in working through their feelings.

I am dedicated to bringing knowledge and understanding to counselors of T's and their significant others. They

ALL OR NONE? OR HAPPY ADJUSTMENT?

By Virginia Prince, Ph.D.

[Editor's Note: This month's article is a reprint of an editorial that appeared in the August, 1962 issue of the FPE Femme Mirror (#8). And was reprinted in Cross-Talk #79.]

In reading the letters that come in, I sometimes get the idea that the writers are striving for conditions that they will never reach. These conditions are of several types; personal appearance, public acceptance, and widely understanding.

Some of us seem to set goals for ourselves which are unrealistic and when we cannot achieve them we are frustrated and unhappy. For example, all American males have an ideal type of woman in their minds. We are all brought up on Shirley Temple, Deanna Durbin, Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe, or some other "sex symbol" ... then, as crossdressers, we try to conform to this ideal. Since few of us boast feminine enough faces, the chances of approximating any of these feminine ideals is exceedingly remote. But we keep trying to achieve the unachievable. If we happen to be a "gentleman who prefers blondes" we are liable to put a blonde wig on our femmefaces, whether or not it goes with the complexion, facial shape, age, or anything else. In doing this, we don't make the best of what we have.

We read about the adventures of some other girl who is more fortunately endowed (or, in some cases, more foolish or nervy) and we feel that we won't have arrived or earned the Order of the Black Garter unless we have succeeded in doing much the same thing. In striving to emulate others some of us abandon the more practical, safe and moderate existence we have led up to that time and sometimes find ourselves in trouble as a result. Some can "pass," other cannot. Passing and public adventures are not the hallmarks of crossdresser; true, they can be fun and satisfying, but there are other satisfactions.

With wives, the same applies. Some of us are fortunate in having wives that understand and accept in one degree or another. All of us would like to have this type. Yet, let us face it: women are not without worries, insecurities, and maladjustments. Thus, some of them can handle the cross-dressing relatively easily without a lot of explanation. Others can make an adjust-

ment of sorts, after they have been given a lot of reasoning about it. Other can deal with it by "ostrich principle" of knowing it is going on but not being able to participate visually in the experience. Some are so insecure in themselves that this would be the last straw on the camel's back.

It behooves every crossdresser, then, to evaluate all these factors for himself. Neither life nor our particular problems can be handled on an "all or none" basis and we should stop trying to force this condition. If you are 58 and look like a retired school teacher who never married, then do a good job of looking like a spinster lady of 58 and give up trying to out-Bardot Bardot. If your hands are too stubby, rough, or hairy, don't be foolish and try to cover them with gloves and go to a restaurant because you read about someone else doing it. Try to be satisfied in feeling like a lady, at home or at a group get-together ... but don't take a chance on getting into trouble by going out just because you read that "Miss X" did so.

In the matter of wives, you should not automatically expect your wife to be as understanding as others' may be. There may be things in some wives' backgrounds that give them a broader base of understanding than may be the case with your wife. I don't mean to say that you shouldn't try to bring her around, but don't push her too far or too fast. There is a lot more in a good marriage than having a wife who understands crossdressing, so don't jeopardize the rest by forcing the crossdressing further or faster than she can adjust to it.

In short, try to arrive at a position of the most pleasure and satisfaction with the least disappointment, frustration, danger, or domestic resentment. None of us can expect "all" and certainly very few are going to say that "I can't have everything, I will have 'none'." Usually we are left in the middle with a part, so the psychological challenge is to make the most out of that part with a good healthy try at achieving a "happy adjustment" within our own personal and domestic limitations. I recommend Confucius' "Moderation in All Things" as a very useful bit of philosophy. (Think about it.) {

Virginia Prince is a co-founder of The Society of the Second Self (Tri-Ess) and the former publisher of Transvestia magazine. She may be contacted at P.O. Box 36091, Los Angeles CA 90036.

do not have to start from scratch the way I did. There are now many resources available and the whole community is much more sophisticated than it was in the early 80's. Please encourage your counselor to take steps to educate herself outside of your office time with her. Ask her to speak to her colleagues, and raise consciousness about gender identity. Eventually, this will not be a closeted issue any longer and we will all be the better for it.

SIDEBAR- TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR COUNSELORS

1. Call IPGE (International Foundation for Gender Education in Waltham, Massachusetts) and get their list of publications or visit their new bookstore
2. Investigate the online gender groups
3. Attend gender conventions (listed in Transgender Tapestry magazine)
4. Subscribe to Transgender Tapestry magazine!!
5. Reflect on your own gender identity
6. Keep a journal of your thoughts, feelings and reactions to transgenderism in movies, plays, with real people
7. Pay attention to your dreams and what they can tell you about gender
8. Attend courses which include transgender studies
9. Make friends with a transgender who is not a client
10. Contact me for supervision

Biographical notes:

Niela Miller, MS is a licensed social worker and mental health counselor in Massachusetts. She has been counseling the transgendered for half of her thirty years as a humanistic therapist. She has been providing personal development workshops at every Fantasia Fair since 1982. She is now concentrating on making information, training and supervision available to mental health practitioners in addition to running a group for gender explorers once a month at the International Foundation for Gender Education in Waltham, Ma. {

To order the book, COUNSELING IN GENDERLAND, contact DIFFERENT PATH PRESS, Box 123, Boston, Ma. 02213

by Niela Miller

A Marvy Makeover

kirsch camouflage clinic

Tried of dermablend? Call these wonderful people today!

Here is an "afternoon episode" that happened recently.....

While I was surfing the net one day I noticed an interesting site with a Toronto address. The site referred to a makeup clinic and specialized in lessons as well as makeovers. I sent off an e mail and asked for a lesson that would give me as "passable" a look as possible.

A few days later the response came back with prices and times for the shop. The owner, Susan, described her studio: how beautiful is, and how much natural sunlight come through the big windows. The post went on to say that her company name was Kirsch Camouflage Clinic.

I called and made an appointment with her secretary. The gal asked me who the lesson was for and I said, "for myself." She arranged a time, and said her goodbyes.

I arranged to go to the Tuesday afternoon appointment with my wife, (she was intrigued by what I would learn and look like afterwards,) and we headed to the shop. I decided to dress in a pair of Hollywood jeans and a mustard, ribbed top, and I also took my wig, foundations and a feminine jacket in a bag. On the way up my wife and I discussed what we would do after the lesson, and I had told her we were invited to friends for a drink (and an inspection). We arrived at the clinic and were seated in the lobby where the secretary asked me a lot of questions about how I found out about the clinic etc. I found out that the owner Susan did not know that the site she was listed on was a TG site; they thought it was a mainstream one.

Susan was a pretty gal, got me seated, and in a very nervous way asked me what I was looking for...what kind of look? Why was I there, was the big question she wanted to ask but never really came out and asked it. I took over and explained a little about who I was, and she nodded trying to understand. I found out that I was the first TG that she had ever worked on. At first she was nervous but I never felt uneasy myself. She asked me more questions about the look I was after and started in on my makeover.

She asked me to show her what I normally used,

looked at my brushes, and made a few comments about foundations. I started by showing her how I taped my brows; she did one of my brows and got really excited saying that it would be an incredible "brow lift" for some of her older clients. She applied the foundation that she had developed, and as she talked she relaxed and told me it was now becoming a challenge. (she had slipped into the confident, professional artist I knew she was)

As we chatted she explained that she works with burn victims and had developed a foundation to cover disfigurements. It turned out to be an incredibly natural product. We chatted for another 1/2 hour as she showed me techniques and had me apply my makeup. By the time her secretary popped in to offer us cold drinks, (I think she was dying to see the progress,) I was feeling very comfortable with Susan.

While Susan was getting ready for my lipstick I went into the next room and put my foundations in and my wig on and brushed it out. upon returning all Susan could say was "Wow!" She was so cute, she couldn't keep her eyes off me for the rest of the lesson. I caught her stealing glances and we both felt great. We talked a little about Xpressions and about some of her most unusual clients (Funeral home makeup lessons...Yikes,) and I ended up buying her M.A.C. cosmetics. The best thing she left me with was a pictorial diagram of a female face with the exact makeup on the areas that she put on me with the names of the makeup.

I felt so accepted and comfortable with her that I have decided to go back for a few more lessons to hone my skills.

The rest of the day went well, drinks with two very close friends and dinner with my wife downtown. It was an incredible experience and day.

[The shop is Kirsch Camouflage Clinic, 175 Willowdale Ave, Willowdale Ont. M2N 4Y9, and their phone number is, 416 590-7733. The aesthetician's name is Susan.]

Shiela M.

A C C E S S O R I E S

Club happenings

(ours and others) of the recent past and near future.

Toronto Wins Bid for IFGE '98

Xpressions has been successful in it's bid to host the 1998 Annual IFGE convention here in Toronto. The event is attended by several hundred IFGE members, TG activists, researchers, executives from other TG clubs, experts, and plain ol' gals like us. The hotel is yet to be selected, and currently research into the best location is ongoing.

Needless to say, the work involved in mounting a conference like this one is enormous, and that means your help will be needed! Watch our next issue for a major story on the event, and start to think how you can help.

Thursday Night 5 September

Alison Laing Inaugurates Doll's House

As a result of Toronto winning the 1998 IFGE convention, the Executive Director, Alison Laing, will be visiting Toronto in order to inspect a number of hotels and venues. Alison has told us that she would be delighted to meet with Xpressions members at the Doll's House, our brand new club house. We have set a meeting at 7.30 p.m., on Thursday night 5 September. There will be no charge (or only a few dollars for pop and juice), and Alison will tell us all about the history and work of the IFGE, the International Foundation for Gender Exploration. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the Doll's House on it's inaugural event, and find out why everyone is so excited about the 1998 convention.

You will have received direction to the Doll's House in the last newsletter—please keep them, or call the hotline if they are already lost. And remember, as always, you are very welcome to come either drag or drab. However you're dressed—we want you.

Play in the Sunshine

On Saturday night November 30 Xpressions will be performing in St. Catherine's at the local Optimist club in a fund raiser for the Sunshine Club, a charitable organization that raises money to make critically ill children happy. The show is called, An Evening at La Cage, and will be performed, produced, and managed by club members. That means we need you!!!

The producers are looking for talented, energetic gals for many jobs both on and off stage. We need, **stage performers **hostesses **coatcheck girls **ticket takers **club management **technical support

If you are willing to help with any of the above please call the Xpressions hotline, 416 - 812-6879, and leave your name, a means of contacting you, and an indication of what you want to do. This is a wonderful opportunity to give something back to the club and help a worthy cause at the same time.

Club Dues to Rise

The Xpressions board of directors voted a rise in annual club dues at the last board meeting. The cost of mailings is a major factor in this increase, as is the desire to increase even further the services offered to members. Dues will go up to \$50, which is still quite low. Of course, membership includes twelve issues of X-Files, and all four issues of TMR.

When dues notices go out they will state that any member for whom the raise causes hardship should contact the treasurer personally. This has always been the case, and always will be the case.

Divine Lake Looks Even More Divine

Mardi Gras '96 is shaping up to be another smash success. You know from the special mailing that there's a terrific lineup of workshops, speakers, and happenings to keep you busy and amused for hours and hours. The Mardi Gras takes place at lovely Divine Lake resort which is totally private and self-contained. You and, perhaps, your partner can get really involved in the numerous activities, or just enjoy the beautiful Fall colours and lovely rustic setting. The dates are October 4, 5 & 6, and you can make your reservation by phoning 1-800-263-6600. Further information can be had by phoning the club voice mail, 416 - 812-6879, or email Donna at [redacted] No one should miss this wonderful opportunity to dress, enjoy, and share in the love of the feminine.

Watch our Ads!

Members should remember that the merchants who advertise in The Monarch Reader are all TG friendly. Not only do they help Xpressions by paying for their ads in the X-Files and Reader, but they are eager for your business and will treat you with respect and courtesy. Feel free to phone first and make personal contact. Through these stores you can buy clothing, wigs, lingerie, numerous TG accessories, books and videos. Please frequent them with confidence, and make sure you mention Xpressions.

Xpressions has a web page!

Hey, who says we gals aren't right with it? We're as up to date as you can get. To find out, just crank up your web browser and scoot on over to the Xpressions web page. The address is, <http://www.yorku.ca/academics/gilbert/transgen/tgxr1.htm>. Take a look and send some feedback. If you've got a web page, let us know and we can link you up.

Hotline Troubles Are Over

We have been promised that our hotline troubles are over. Our new telephone gal swears that messages will be passed on to the correct board member or committee chair ASAP. Remember, the number is 416 - 812-6879. You can use it to request more information about an event, make a suggestion, leave a let-

ter to the editor. And please, if you do have problems or feel a response is too slow, make sure we know about it. We're trying as hard as we can.

The Doll House

September begins mid-month meetings at new venue. At long last we have a nice place where we can gather and interact at little or no cost. Possibilities for the evening include discussion sessions, guest speakers, pot-luck dinners, coffee klatches, rummage sales, and anything else you can think of. The organizers are trying hard to find furnishings that will make the place nice for us. Plans are afoot for a change room, meeting area, and kitchenette. We need,

- Mirrors
- Counter tops
- Stools
- Drapes
- Makeup lights
- Kitchen stuff: microwave, old fridge, or so on
- Paint, wallpaper, cleaning stuff, clothes racks
- An abandoned stereo CD set or parts thereof

If you have any of these items, please phone the hotline so they can be collected and put to good use.

Get Online, Girl!

Everyone's heard about the Internet and the worldwide web, but the international TG community has embraced it with a vengeance. There are numerous web sites devoted to transgendered issues, information and concerns. You can shop for everything from books to lingerie to breast forms. You can find out exactly what the Henry Benjamin Standards of Care are, get the latest gen on hormone therapies, find out when the big events are taking place, stay in touch with political action and TG happenings, receive free newsletters, and converse with sisters all over the world. So do it: get your modem, contact a server like netcom or sympatico, and join the E-revolution.

Albany NY Area: TGIC-Online

All transgendered people in the Albany NY area are invited to join TGIC On-Line, a very informal e-mail network sponsored by Transgenderist Independence Club (TGIC) an over 30 year old organization for TG people. TGIC meets every Thursday night at a private clubroom in Albany, and then many go out to The Playhouse on Central Avenue at about 10PM.

Messages exchanged on TGIC-Online focus on events of interest to transgendered people in a region from Lake Placid to Kingston.

If you are interested in joining the network, or want more information about

items, as well as enjoy the canapés and drinks provided. It was delightful to be able to shop and browse without worry, as well as being able to get expert advice. I bought a lovely Lejaby bra, and others bought bras, teddies, waist cinches, and even a bathing suit. And the gals who just window shopped also had a fine time socializing with their friends. Thanks to Sophia, her staff, and the organizers for a fine and fun evening.

IFGE Opens TG Bookstore

On January 2, 1996, the IFGE. opened its doors at its Waltham HQ for direct walk-in-customer sales of books, videos and periodicals and an "On-the-Road—Traveling" bookstore for organizations in the vicinity. The bookstore, Synchronicity, is under the management of Vanessa Murray, who has been working part time as a volunteer for the IFGE. over the last nine months.

There is no other book store anywhere like it. Synchronicity will serve a wide variety of customers: Transgendered

individuals seeking self-understanding and help with the issues they face. Professionals in the medical, mental health and outreach fields, seeking to deepen their understanding of crossdressers, transsexuals, and other transgendered individuals. Journalists and academics looking for a one-stop source of up-to-date books and publications about the various aspects of transgender phenomena.

The opening of Synchronicity is representative of change in the community and the world. Greater acceptance of diversity is happening all around us, and transgender people are less fearful of openly learning about themselves. Although there are other groups selling books to the community, some of these are for profit enterprises. The IFGE is a non-profit organization, and the net proceeds from sales goes to

outreach, building bridges with other minorities, educating helping professionals, and research.

Bookstore hours are: 10-4 M-Th, 10-7:30 Fri., Sat: TBA. Walk-in: 123 Moody St., Waltham MA

Fantasia Fair Is Upon Us

Time to register to attend the 1996 Fantfair in Provincetown, MA (Oct. 20-27) is quickly running out. There are at least six Xpressions gals attending this year, and we expect to have a ball. Miqqi Alicia will be house mother of Fairbanks House, our Canadian consulate in Ptown, and she will be ably assisted by Melissa, your membership chairlady. Pamela, your Charlady, Karen and Micheline will also be there. (We have high hopes for Micheline's Marie Antoinette outfit to take first prize at the Fantasy ball.) If you're coming, let us know—there's room for you, too! Call the club hotline if you need more info.

Great Dinners Coming

The August 31st dinner will be a special one. It will be held in Hamilton—the first time we've had a dinner out of Toronto. It's going to be at Fran's in the Howard Johnsons on King Street. The time, as always, is 8 pm, and we hope you'll be there.

The September dinner will be back in Toronto at Bumpkins located at 21 Gloucester St., just east of Yonge. We have our own private dining room, so, if you're thinking about finally coming out to a dinner, this is a nice discreet one. And the food is really good!

In October we'll be back at Southern Accents on Markham St., just south of Bloor. We'll once again dine on fabulous Cajun food in our own room. If you missed the last one, then you should make

it this time. They really loved us!

Shopping Resumes!

The summer hiatus is ending, and shop till you drop nights are returning. Plans are for shopping nights to be organized about every second month. Locations include Addition-Elle, Big Time, and His & Her Wigs. So start dropping loonies into that piggy bank—you'll need them.

Niela Miller Workshops Great Success

Judging by the excited and wondrous glow emanating from all the gals who attended the Niela Miller workshops that last

their self-image and self-understanding. "It was emotionally exhausting, and sometimes even scary," one participant said, "but I learned more about myself, and who I am, and what I want than I ever thought I could."

Niela's visit is an exciting new step for Xpressions. If the club is to branch out into growth areas that explore more than the (very important) social aspects of our lives, then support for such activities is vital. I know one goal we all have is to learn more about ourselves and who and what and why we are the way we are. Workshops like these afford us opportunities for doing just that. Congrats to the organizers!



TGIC, drop a line to Gina at [redacted]

Lingerie Looniness

It was a lovely Sunday night in June. Mysteriously, along the Danforth a surprising number of largish women slowly made their way to a store that had a sign in the window saying, "Closed for private function." Inside the gals who gathered there were agog. The shop, which is Toronto's largest lingerie store, is at least 60 feet wide by 80 feet deep, and covered floor to ceiling with racks and racks of scrumptious lingerie.

Sophia's Lingerie, 542 Danforth Ave, (461-6113), was the location for our June shopping event. Sophia and her staff were on hand to help us find the best fitting

Style

I hope everyone has noticed by now the style of the reader has changed a little.

How do you like it?

Cynthia has just purchased some new software and decided to show it off for this issue.

Please feel free to comment on any part of the reader and its contents.

Email the editor, write, phone the hotline or see us at an event.

We need feed back!

New name, new look for the bible of the world's transgendered

By Laura M.

The International Foundation for Gender Education's (IFGE) premier educational tool has a new name and look. With issue 74, winter 1995/96, TAPESTRY Journal became TRANSGENDER Tapestry. But much more than just the periodical's nameplate has changed.

Apparently to draw second looks on North American newstands, the front cover photo in the first two issues under the new format has featured famous film TGs — Patrick Swayze in *To Wong Foo*, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar, and Julie Andrews in *Victor, Victoria*. Both stars, and their films, are hailed in the magazine as having positively portrayed the transgendered. Previously the cover spotlighted genuine CDs and TSs. It remains to be seen if this switch in cover emphasis is permanent.

A roster of headlines giving the reader a hint of what there is to read inside has also been added to the cover. This is particularly useful since often times the magazine is sold in bookstores and TV boutiques inside sealed plastic sleeves.

On the inside, the magazine now sports full-colour photography. In the past Tapestry didn't have colour beyond the cover and back page. And its black and white pictures were flat and grey. Except for those taken by Mariette Pathy Allen, they were usually quite amateurish and not particularly interesting, focusing on TG events in the United States.

There are still photos from TG events, lots of grip 'n' grins and award presentations, but also some engaging pictures. Both the colour efforts and the black and white shots demonstrate more thought is going into the selection of pictures and the cropping. Photo reproduction has also been enhanced, to a degree.

Speaking of photos, there are still tons of faces of TGs with personal ads. But they are being printed now in a special centre pull-out section on a different paper stock than the rest of the magazine. And one of the most passable advertisers stars in the full-page cover shot introducing this part of the publication. This section also contains news tid-bits from TG groups around the world, the traditional directory of organizations and listing of major events, a sprinkling of short articles, and a few ads.

Xpressions and Monarch have a profile in Transgendered, especially gratifying since the publication is American TG community dominated.

Several people who have been, or are still, involved with the clubs, advertise in the personals — Robyn V., Dawna Tracy, Glen M. and Robynn Marie Layne from Canada and Janice from New York state. Three of them mention their Xpressions membership in their ads. In a story about *To Wong Foo*, there's a

quote from the old Monarch mag's review of the film. And the fall *Mardi Gras* is also plugged. Both clubs are included in the directory of organizations.

Many magazines aimed at TGs and their admirers have strong sexual overtones. To be sure there are a few, such as *LadyLike*, that have avoided the trash, but this genre of magazine is rare. The old Tapestry never stooped to smut for the sake of selling magazines and Transgendered has maintained that tradition. Thankfully, it's not a publication designed to titillate.

However, Tapestry always seemed a little too serious and quite clinical. And too often it overemphasized transsexuals and TG politics. There was too much weight given to honouring community leaders and the magazine used to leave the impression there was no fun involved in being transgendered, just trials and tribulations.

The revamped magazine is attempting to inject some fun into its pages with items such as advice columns for CDs, a quiz to help people decide where they fit in the broad spectrum of TG behaviour, information about make-up, etc. The balance between CDs and TSs has been improved and coverage of F2Ms has been beefed up. There's also film and book reviews, stories about TGs in history, people items and some fiction.

Long interviews presented as verbatim questions and answers with major players in the community, such as a leader of Tri-Ess, look to be becoming a staple.


Certainly, some of these types of material were in the old Tapestry, but they got lost in all the preaching. The lighter touch now given to the magazine's content, from front to back, has made the total package more inviting and enjoyable.

"It's a better read than in the past."

Applause for the new format, as evidenced by the letters section in issue 75, is running about 10 to one.

Of course, there is still room for improvement. For instance, continuations from the end of one part of an article to the rest of the piece, still send the reader to the magazine's back pages too frequently. And sometimes the directions aren't accurate — the reader turns to page X and the material there isn't a continuation of what he/she was reading. In one case, the meat of a photo/type feature is on the back half of the jump, not at the start, as it normally would be. In fairness, this is partly because of where the colour positions fall in the publication.

And Transgendered, while bolstering its photography, still looks pretty grey because there's too much type and not enough art. The magazine's management would be well advised to borrow an idea from Joanne Roberts' *LadyLike* and invite readers to send in their own pics. Page reproduction is also flat, there's little or no contrast.

But, overall, the new publication gives readers a better bang for their bucks. 

HOT BUZZ

JoAnn Roberts

"Everybody knows the world is full of stupid people." — The Refreshments "Bandito"

First some fashion news... Want a little philosophy with your cosmetics? Stila cosmetics packs a bon mot with each of its products. For example, inside your face powder you might find, "It is never too late to be what you might have been." That by George Elliott.

Bob Mackie is back into the "special occasion" dress market. Mackie took a side trip into less extravagant couture, but found that he wanted to return to his first and most successful love—beads. Mackie says his new line will be much less expensive than his previous creations with some dresses selling for as "little as \$700." Hey, Bob, ship me a dozen of those beaded numbers.

"A fetishists dream come true," is how one friend described Barb Wire starring the mammillary-enhanced Pamela Lee Anderson. Corsets, fishnets and thigh-high boots everywhere. Even under limited release (less than 1000 theaters), the movie is raking in the dough. Just wait until it hits video.

Joining RuPaul as a spokesperson for M-A-C cosmetics is the unlikely personage of one k.d.lang. I say "unlikely" not because lang is a lesbian, but because up to now her "look" has been fresh-faced and sans-make-up. I guess she's working on a new look.

The newsgroups alt.transgendered and soc.support.transgendered were aflame for most of February and March when the two groups were (some would say) "invaded" by transsexual absolutists. These absolutists claim there are only transvestites who are men and "true" post-op transsexuals who are women. A trans-genderist is really just a transvestite playing at being a woman. Now, I haven't been on the net that long, but I have been in one or two flame wars myself and I've observed several, but the nasty, mean-spirited rhetoric coming from both sides in this so-called debate could have stripped the epoxy paint off a ship's hull. The real extent of the damage was revealed in a private post by a newbie who was afraid to attend a local support group meeting for fear it would be a hostile environment. Fortunately, she was convinced it would be safe and enjoyed her first visit.

You heard it here first. Two new transgender books have hit the street. Leslie Feinberg's *Transgender Warriors* was pre-released by Beacon Press in time for the IFGE Convention in April and is in bookstores now, we've also got it in the Mall at the CDS Bookstand for you now (see review in this issue, Ed.) However, we've got the scoop on an even newer book, *The Man In The Red Velvet Dress* by J. J. Allen, a member of the community. Allen's book explores the transgender community with an insider's eye and a critical one at that. This book is going to whip up a storm of controversy and discussion. It's 216 pages with 12 pages of photos (yours truly is included). Look for it at the CDS Bookstand now.

While I'm on the subject of dresses... There is often confusion between Misses and Womens sizes, so let's try to clear that up. Womens sizes tend to be shorter through the trunk, as much as an inch or more. And, Womens sizes are designed differently. Typically, a Misses dress is designed as a size 8 and is then scaled up to an 18 and down to a 2. A Womens dress is designed as a size 20 and then scaled up and down. The result is that the proportions end up quite different. A Womens 14 (14W) is really much closer to a Misses 16 than a Misses 14.

To help you squeeze into that Misses 14 is a whole new array of foundation garments from the likes of Nancy Ganz Bodyslimmers Hourglass Dress slip, corset-like body briefers from Natori, and Miracle Slips from Victoria's Secret. Even the Hane's One Place catalog has a corselette. On a recent visit to Lee Brewster's *Mardi Gras Boutique* in NYC, Ms. Brewster steered me to an industrial-strength corselette by Jezebel that is just fabulous and it's really pretty too. Ask for item #751. You'll love it. The boutique is located at 400 W 14th St, near 9th Avenue, 212-645-1888. Lee will be opening a store-front in the Shopping Mall soon. Keep watch.

Cosmetics haven't made it big time on the Internet yet, but there are a few sites for cosmetics. Aveda and Biomedic are two that are online, and Clinique cosmetics can be found at www.univbksr.com/clinique/ although it is not an official Clinique site. Cosmetics specifically for the transgender community are sold by Genteel Products. Tell Cindie I sent you.

Revlon's new ColorStay foundation. I haven't tried it yet, but I did get email from Nicole who did and she liked it... a lot. She said it was as good as the Max Factor Active Protection base I've been touting for years. There is one negative. She says it takes tons

of makeup remover to get it off. Better your face than your clothes.

MTV announced they're giving Chicago Bulls star Dennis Rodman his own show. At a press conference where Rodman was wearing pink nail polish, he said, "I could be [transmitting] in a gay bar, dancing with gay guys, even kissing a gay guy." When asked if he was gay, Rodman said he wasn't. Interestingly enough, the gay/lesbian community seems to understand Rodman quite well. One lesbian activist said Rodman was a transvestite and that was just fine with her since he is calling attention to people of difference. Rodman may be the greatest thing that's happened to this community since RuPaul. Someone ought to invite him to a gender event. (See article on Rodman in this issue, Ed.)

There's been a mini-explosion of tg related vendors on the net. Just last month Lee's *Mardi Gras Boutique*, Lola Inc., and Melody Products International, opened online stores associated with the TG Forum Shopping Mall at <http://www.cdspub.com/vndr.html>. There are now 11 vendors at the Mall and you can buy just about anything you can dream of online and discretely. There's nothing quite like surfing the net at 2 AM in your nightie searching for fishnet hose. Visit Lee's at <http://www.lmgny.com>; Lola at <http://www.lolainc.com>; and Melody at <http://www.melpro.com>.

The Second International Congress on Sex & Gender Issues is coming along nicely. Registrations have started coming in and Sheila Kirk reports that a major name in transgender research has agreed to be one of the plenary speakers. Watch for an official press release in September. By the way, should anyone ask, the deadline for program and workshop submissions is Jan. 15, 1997.

Okay, onto kewl stuff... Hair fashion for Fall is the slicked-back look. I envy those who have their own hair they can pull back into a bun or chignon. That look is so elegant and graceful. I've seen this done with a wig, but in order to pass close inspection at the hairline, we're talking mucho dinero and a custom-made hairpiece. Most of us can't afford that cost for realism. Other fads we'll be seeing are military looks and lots of metallics, especially gold.

Sexy shoes seem to be back in the Fall lineup after several seasons of what amounted to combat boots with heels. The latest Spiegel catalog has a pair of high heel in sizes up to 12 medium and 11 wide for about \$65. In fact, ankle strap heels are among the really hot items for Fall. The styles range

Blame it on brain sex

By Laura M.

Proof that transgendered behaviour stems at least in part from what is popularly termed "brain sex" could be just around the corner.

Pioneering research of global significance is taking place in Canada, with scientists slowly unlocking the mysteries of the mind, including how differences in brain construction impacts on sex and gender differences.

One of the most important of these medical scientists is psychologist Sandra Witelson of Hamilton.

Demonstrated variations between left and right brain functions in males and female has shown that brain sex plays an enormous role in the behaviour differences between the genders. Biological differences in the brain account for behaviour — not just social conditioning.

There is concrete and mounting evidence that physical brain differences, and how the minds work in response to stimuli, don't just account for the behaviour variations between men and women but also between heterosexuals and homosexuals.

Here's just a few example of the brain structure differences uncovered so far. The brain hypothalamus in transsexuals is far closer in size to that of a woman than a man. And women's are smaller than men's. In one area of the temporal lobe of the brain, the part of the brain used for language skills, women's brains typically contain about 11 per cent more brain cells than men. And as men grow older, the corpus callosum shrinks while there is no loss in size of this region of the grey-matter in women. In homosexuals (male or female), the corpus callosum is about 13 per cent larger than in heterosexuals (of the same sex). The hypothalamus, an area of the brain directly involved in sexual behaviour is a different size in gay men than it is in straight.

There are many other cases of all or part of the left or right hemisphere of the brain varying in size between different groups of people. But it's more than just a region or part of the brain being bigger or smaller that makes people different.

The research shows there's a correlation between these size differences and groups of people. For instance, dyslexic children have fewer differences between their two brain hemispheres. And what differences do exist are more pronounced in boys than girls.

As Ms. Witelson told Maclean's recently, conventional wisdom was always that "except for anatomical differences in men's and women's bodies, everything else is supposed to be the same, except where things have been distorted by social forces." However, with new brain structure differences being constantly discovered, "it may be better to recognize this and deal with it, rather than pretending that we are all the same."

So what does it mean to the transgendered that there is proof now that men's and women's brains "are actually different in some of the ways they are put together, anatomically and chemically"?

It strongly suggests that in time medical scientists will find that there are profound structural differences between the brains of CDs and other transgenderists and other men. Likely, they'll determine that some parts of a CD's brain more closely resembles a female brain.

However, biology probably isn't the only reason for behaviour differences, it's just one of the reasons. Ms. Witelson notes that "upbringing and other environmental facts do play a tremendously important role" in shaping a mind and the behaviour it controls, including sex and gender identity. ¶

THE DUAL ALLIANCE

Author: Stephanie Castle
\$19.95 PERCEPTIONS PRESS,
Vancouver, B.C., 1995.
Reviewed by: Roxy Wildside.

This is an help/hope book for the transsexual. On the surface, the story line seems simple, uncomplicated and, sometimes, naive if not totally unrealistic. But, I suggest, do not be fooled by this "fairytale" approach. Beneath the surface there is a warning in this book. If you are transsexual or think that you are, beware. Transsexualism can be a socially destructive condition. Throughout this work of fiction, as with non-fiction books on the subject, the transgendered condition is consistently treated in a constructive and intelligent manner with understanding and compassion. Yet, from time to time, the reader must leave aside the medical and academic treatment of the subject of gender dysphoria and face the prejudices of the "real" world.

As with all fiction, the underlying truth powers the narrative. The author, Stephanie Castle, is a post-operative transsexual, who takes the reader into the personal lives of two transsexuals from totally divergent social and religious backgrounds. The warning for the transsexual reader lies in what I term to be the "what if" factors. Stephanie's protagonists are facing work, family and individual settings in a cultural climate that eventually pans out to be totally enlightened and ideal. But, "what if" the reader is transsexual and has none of the physical and mental attributes that bless the "perfect" duo? "What if" there be no family or work place support? Herein lies what I believe to be Stephanie's wisdom. She shows that expert counsel can and should be sought from medical, psychiatric and legal professions as well as from peers. Do nothing rash. Be patient. Focus on the bottom line of future health and happiness. ¶

Brace yourself if you are religious, a transvestite and/or gay. The two protagonists generate credibility and empathy for their gender dysphoria by continually reassuring their families and co-workers that they pose no economic or moral threat because they are not transvestites and most certainly not gay. Remember that there is an heterosexual, "straight" universe of people (possibly some 90 per cent of humanity) that needs to be educated and sensitized to the reality that there are people whose gender does not match their sex and people whose sex is biologically wrong.

In conclusion, despite some personal difficulty with the unrealistic ease afforded the protagonists in their pursuit of good health and happiness, I did indeed find the support material in this book to be most informative with respect to the biblical, moral, medical, psychiatric and legal assessments of transsexualism. ¶

Becoming A Man

Albanian virgin, 55, has 'not had bad life as a man'

by Barbara [redacted]
TORONTO STAR - July 2, 1996

LEPUROSH, Albania - Sema [redacted] was 14 when she decided to become a man.

It was a sacrifice dictated by the harsh circumstances in which her family found itself.

Her father had died, leaving his widow, four daughters and a baby son to cope on their own. In these pitiless mountains choked with rock and brush, it was unthinkable to run a household without a man in charge. Sema volunteered for the job.

She cropped her hair short and donned trousers. She went to work in the fields. She changed her name from Sema to its masculine equivalent, Selman, and her mother and sisters began referring to her with the pronouns "he" and "him."

"I've lived my whole life as a man. I've got the habits of a man...If anybody has a problem with it, I've got my gun to deal with them," said Selman [redacted] now 55, with a blustery gesture to the back pocket of her baggy gray trousers.

What's remarkable is that nobody here has a problem with it. The men in the village accept Selman [redacted] as a man among equals. In this deeply conservative culture, her decision to become a man flows from a centuries-old, noble tradition.

In a 1909 book about Albania, British travel writer Edith Durham describes the tradition of "Albanian virgins" - women who take an oath never to marry to fill a void left by a dearth of males. The folklore of northern Albania and bordering Montenegro is rich with heroic accounts of these avowed virgins who sometimes became fierce warriors or village chieftains. Until recently, when Albania reopened to outsiders after a half-century of Stalinist communism, it was widely believed the tradition had died out.

[redacted] was born here in 1940, the youngest of four daughters. Older girls were married or engaged and the brother a baby, when their dad died. She gradually assumed responsibility for tending fields and for making the arduous, three-hour trip by mule to sell crops in the nearest city.

Rolling a cigarette, she explained that "Until I was 18 to 20, I had proposals of marriage. My brother was old enough to work and my mother said I should follow the fate of my sisters and get married. But, once something is decided, you can't undo it and I already thought of myself as man."

As head of the household, [redacted] took responsibility for selecting a wife for her brother. She wore a suit and tie at his wedding, assuming the role of father of the groom.

"I've had to work very hard to earn bread for the family and to be honest and correct in my relations with others," she said. "But no, I never regret the decision. I've not had a bad life as a man."

She happily acknowledges her life is far easier these days. Her brother, Elez, has four sons - two abroad who send money to the

family and two who work the fields. So much of her time is spent smoking and drinking "raki" brandy with the men of the village.

Elez [redacted] wife, Hasije, does all the housework and looks at the woman she refers to as her brother-in-law with just a hint of envy. "There is no doubt that the woman's life is tougher. I have to do everything - the laundry, the cleaning-up, the cooking for six men," said Hasije.

Selman [redacted] is the first and only avowed virgin in her Muslim village. The tradition is more common among Albanian Catholics.

Hasan Xhaferaj, 60, tells how his mother, Sugare, transformed herself into a man after his father was killed in a fire in 1941. She was 28 and eight months pregnant with her fourth child. Having no brothers or grown sons to run the family, she assumed the role of a man.

"She had to work as a man. She wore man's clothes to show that she was not available for marriage. The other men addressed her as a man - she was equal to everybody - and we kids called her father," said Xhaferaj, who still lives with her in a remote village, Uji I Shenite (Sacred Water).

Sugare, now 78, resumed wearing women's clothing only four years ago, her son said. ¶



Laser's Edge

Mary Roach
[Excerpted from Vogue Magazine.]

Imagine a spa devoted to permanently vaporizing unwanted body hair: Vogue Magazine's Mary Roach checks into Spa Thira and lets a laser do her legwork.

Nikolai [redacted] is a man with a funny little secret. He has one hairless leg. It's his right one, from just above his loafer to his knee. He achieved this himself, to test the hair removal laser he has developed for a company called ThermoLase. [redacted] is one of the world's many laser experts who have turned their estimable talents from national defense to important peacetime pursuits, such as tidy bikini lines and smooth, comely underarms.

If all goes well, my own calves will look just like [redacted] only fatter and without the natty dress socks. Following a meeting at ThermoLase in La Jolla, California, I will be whisked across town to Spa Thira, the firm's newly opened hair-removal spa. Like wiry chin hairs, Spa Thira will be popping up across the land, beginning later this year in Dallas and Beverly Hills.

[redacted] says two treatments with the laser rendered his calf bald, and that it has remained so for the past three years. I may or may not be as lucky as he has been. It sometimes takes four or five treatments. As with electrolysis, the hairs that are lying dormant in the telogen, or "resting," stage escape the blitzkrieg to grow in as they normally would, several weeks or months later. "That's why we moved in the direction of multiple treatments," says ThermoLase CEO John Hansen, who is sitting in on my meeting with [redacted].

The Spa Thira program works like this: In exchange for anywhere from \$1,400 to \$3,000, depending on the size of the body part and the stubbornness of the hairs (chin hairs are especially tenacious), Spa Thira will continue zapping any hairs that regrow for a period of one year. ThermoLase operations manager Mark Wurth (one of the few ThermoLase employees with all their original body hair) envisions a minimum of four treatments. The hope is that a year's worth of lasering will suffice to permanently disable all the follicles. If it doesn't—if you should have, as they say, a resurgence—the hairs can be treated during \$250-to-\$400-a-pop "maintenance" visits once or twice a year.

I have asked [redacted] to explain the technique. What exactly is this laser going to do to me, and how?

[redacted] begins. "The idea is simple." (Accent is Russian.) "You have white car and black car. Put under the sun. Which one will be hot? Black One."

Of course, now I see. They're going to upholster my calves in black vinyl and leave me in a parking lot while they run some errands.

"We have some special black lotion which we are rubbing into the follicles," [redacted] continues. "Black lotion absorbs laser energy. Energy goes straight to black; doesn't interact with skin, blood vessels, melanin-only follicles. So, inside follicle, we create a small explosion."

Hansen puts a hand on [redacted] arm. "Nick..."

"Like atomic bomb-phoo!"

"Whoa, Nick, let's not use words like explosion." He turns to me. "We like to say vaporize."

[redacted] sketches an explod...-er, vaporizing-cell. "What we have afterward is cell damage: temperature damage and mechanical damage-coagulated proteins and mechanical eruptions." Hansen winces quietly.

Despite the harsh vocabulary, FDA safety trials showed no damage to surrounding skin. The sweat glands still functioned, and there is no scarring or lasting side effects. In fact, [redacted] claims the skin looks better afterward—smoother, softer, and with smaller pores. So much better that studies are under way to document the laser's "skin rejuvenation" effects.

[redacted] pulls up his pant leg. "You want to feel?"

"That's OK."

Spa Thira is gorgeous. If you're going to have protein coagulated, you couldn't pick a nicer place to do it. Blond wood, soft lighting, lilies, and Perrier in the changing rooms. The Spa Thira experience begins with a consultation. My consultant is Celeste Amlicke, a flawless beauty with a glossy braid of think black hair, the sort of hair my own ignoramus genes opted to place on my calves and chin.

Celeste begins her spiel, telling me that the spa was named after the island Thira, in Greece, whose women were known for having perfect skin, and presently introduces me to Lilia, whose name tag identifies her as an aesthetician. "Lilia will be waxing your legs today," Celeste says brightly. I take her aside and carefully explain that, no, in point of fact, I'm here for the laser hair removal.

Celeste smiles patiently. For optimum effectiveness, she explains, my follicles must be empty vessels, wide open to receive the black lotion. So yes, in point of fact, my legs will be waxed. There is a certain nagging irony at work here.

Now here's the slowdown on laser hair removal: At its worst—in sensitive spots like the knees and ankles—it feels like someone snapping tiny rubber bands at your skin (a sensation the Spa Thira brochure describes as "a rather exciting tingle"). At its best—nothing for me was about 80 percent of the time—you feel nothing beyond a mild warmth.

The laser's giant advantage over electrolysis is that it's infinitely faster. The thousand or so hairs on an upper lip or armpit can be lasered in a matter of minutes. Doing it hair by hair via electrolysis takes months of weekly visits. Having your legs electrolyzed is simply beyond the boundaries of cosmetic sanity.

We're a quarter of the way through now. It's an interesting little scene. I'm dressed in a plush white Spa Thira robe and a pair of laserproof industrial safety goggles. My legs are coated with slippery black gunk. I look like a roughneck with a terrycloth fetish.

The laser work itself is done by a registered nurse rather than an aesthetician. The beam shoots out of a handheld tube and takes the form of a dime-size white spotlight on my skin. The spotlight eats a swath through the black, vaporizing the surface lotion the way Pac-Man gobbles whatever it is he gobbles. Undereath, inside my follicles, little white dots flash and fade, like the Gulf War Scuds as seen on CNN.

The entire process takes three hours. The nurse leaves, Lilia returns to clean and massage my legs, and that is that.

As for the results, I can't really say. I've had only one treatment, and it was just three weeks ago; waxing alone is supposed to keep the hair at bay for a month. So far so good.

My advice? Adopt a wait-and-see attitude. Wait for the price to come down; see if the treatment does indeed turn out to be permanent. My guess is that both will happen, and the Spa Thira will become as much a household name as Nair. {

Hot Buzz Continued.....

from the sexy (as above) to the utilitarian Mary Jane.

Some genetic women are just learning about a special kind of cosmetic surgery that many post-op transsexuals have known about for years—the labia lift. Yes, ladies, you too can have more sensitive labia with a simple operation. One woman reported she became so sensitive that every time she bumped against the washing machine while it was running, she just stayed there. Must take a real long time to do the wash in her house. And, just so you guys don't feel left out, there is a procedure that can lengthen and thicken the penis. Who says size doesn't matter?

The color of the season for Fall is brown and anything close to it. I always like chocolate and camel tan for the Fall. And, most browns are neutral enough they can be worn by anyone.

The metallic look is hot again (nothing in fashion is ever really new). If you have Fair skin try: Eyes—any gold eye shadow... Lips—Chanel Hydra Soleil Sheer lipstick... Nails—Only Bronze Metallic. If you have Medium skin try: Eyes—Guerlain Liquid Gold liner... Lips—Benefit SSHI lipstick... Nails—Maybelline 24K polish. For Olive skin try: Eyes—Maybelline Gilded Bronze shadow... Lips—M For Dark skin try: Eyes—Stila Kiiten shadows... Lips—Valerie Kissing Kit... Nails—Creative Nail Design Burgundy Foil.

The really HOT BUZZ for Fall is the pant suit. Remember in the '70s when women were being excluded from restaurants for wearing pants? I guess I'm old fashioned. I like skirts and dresses, but pant suits are hotter than ever. If you must be up-to-date, then it better be pants for Fall. The most flattering look is long, lean trousers under a tunic length jacket. You'll look tall and slender. The right shoe to wear with pants this Fall has a sturdy stacked heel and the pant cuff should fall just to the back of the heel.

With all the slinky new apparel made from microfiber, you have to be careful what you wear under it. Microfiber tops and dresses are very unforgiving and show every line of undergarments. That's why companies like Victoria's Secret and Warner have introduced seamless underwired bras and seamless panties, and now seamless

panty hose. Glamour staffers tested CK (\$10.50), DKNY (\$11) and Wolford (\$50) (that's not a typo) brands of seamless pantyhose and universally loved them. Believe it or not, the Wolford brand lasted longest and were, therefore, the least expensive on a per wearing basis (\$2.50/wearing).

First, there was the Wonderbra to lift your bust. Now, there is the Wonderbody shaper to lift your butt. All brought to you by those crafty folks at Sara Lee Intimates. Well, it makes some sense. They used to make buns and now they lift them.

While I'm on the subject of sizes, some manufacturers, like J. Crew, are actually offering size 14 and 16 Petite. Now a 14 Petite may seem like an oxymoron, but realize that Petite, in the fashion world, refers to height, not girth. A Petite version of any given size will have the same bust, waist and hip measurements, but the vertical distances between these measurements will be shorter, often by as much as an inch in the larger sizes. Fashion invades the WorldWide Web as it has everything else. Here, then, are some of the coolest and best of the fashion sittings...

Fashion Cafe

<http://www.nylink.com/fashion-cafe/>

The Fashion Page (original)

<http://www.charm.net/~jake/c/>

Made in Italy <http://www.made-in-italy.com/> Ocean Drive (Miami hip)

<http://www.oceandrive.com/Women's>

Wire: <http://www.women.com/>

So, those are my opinions, but, hey, what do I know? I think you make your own happiness. Comments? Write care of this publication or email them to CyberQueen@edspub.com. (c) 1996 by Creative Design Services.

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One of the most painful

aspects for some women who are involved with a gender-gifted man is the sexual side of the relationship, and how, if at all, the crossdressing fits into it. I think this is such a personal thing that there cannot be a generalized right or wrong; rather, each couple must individually confront it and deal with it.

One of my dear friends, Janie, is an extraordinarily open-minded woman. Her capacity for loving is amazing, and it surrounds the lucky recipient. Janie married her crossdressing husband last January, and, as she had been married previously to a crossdresser and widowed, I would have to say she has had some experience in dealing with the sexual issues in such a marriage.

Janie presented a Bedrooms Issues program at the Spouses Partners International

over and over again is that often a woman fears that she may have lesbian tendencies if she goes to bed with her partner when he is dressed as a woman, or even worse, that she could be turned on by this man in that state. Every article and book I have read emphatically states that this is not true. The majority of women in this situation

to mindless orgasms. They must be hairy, muscular, so very manly. Instead, we find ourselves in bed with a man who has shaved that wonderful body hair off, who often would rather be dominated than dominating, and who is wearing a lacy nightgown or a sexy little number that we would much rather be wearing. He's probably wearing a wig and all his makeup, too! It goes against everything we have been raised to expect in a man, and I can't blame any woman for going into major shock, and total sexual turnoff.

On the other hand, are we, as women, tuned in to our own bodies and needs? Do we understand that our sexual satisfaction rests solely with ourselves? This means reaching a level of maturity and a sense of

are not alluring enough to attract me, so I need to have the turn-on of wearing lingerie in order to reach satisfaction." It sounds very cruel, even abusive. However, again, I think it is going to depend on the man.

It may be that he finds his partner very alluring, very desirable, but the dressing adds spice to it all, making it all the more exciting for him. It does not necessarily mean at all that he does not find you, his partner, exciting.

And, if you have a reasonably communicative relationship, you can just ask him about it. Hopefully, he will answer you honestly.

If your husband or partner is a loving man, sensitive to your needs, then he will be honest about it. And, if you find that he does find you attractive, then it should put your fears to rest. Believe him!

If your husband is generally abusive to you, dishonest or unloving, then you might well believe that he is only being turned on by the lingerie, not by you, and that you are only a vessel for his sexual outlet. It is not making love at all. It is simply a physical act devoid of any feelings of love or desire or compassion for his partner. If this is the case, I urge you to seek counseling as soon as you can—you are being deprived of everything you deserve as a woman, and you need to find out why you are allowing it to go on. I think you need to learn to like yourself, see yourself as the special, wonderful, desirable woman you are inside.

If you can communicate in your relationship with your partner, and he tells you he does, indeed, want you, then you both need to be very honest with each other about what your individual needs are. Tell him that it doesn't turn you on when he's in bed dressed, that it makes you feel undesirable, and as though he is finding excitement in his dressing and not in you. Talk about what you

need, but then be willing to talk about his needs, too.

Try to come to some compromise that will be satisfying to both of you. Be willing to be open about your fantasies, and utilize your fantasies. In a loving and warm relationship, honesty extends right into the bed. You should be able to share those interesting thoughts that excite you. Offer to live out one of his fantasies in return for him making your fantasy come true. Find inventive ways to give each other pleasure. Allow the intimacy of the mind and heart to blend with the intimacy of the body.

I think it is rare to find a woman such as Janie who takes his excitement and turns it into her excitement, too. However, you need to know that Janie's husband is equally concerned about her needs, and is constantly trying to find ways to give her this happiness. Again, it is a two-way, not a one-way street. A one-way street only gets you to where you are going, but you can't use it to come back. So it is in a relationship—if only one partner is finding satisfaction, then there is no way to get back.

Both partners need to be satisfied, both need to care about the other, both need to be in tune with the other's needs. Don't let yourself be caught on that one-way street. Demand that you receive the happiness you deserve.

Only you and you alone have the capability of finding true satisfaction in you, relationship with your partner. If you don't let him know how you feel or what you need, he'll never know.

And he needs to know! ☾

(Reprinted from Tapestry Journal #66)

by Linda

Sex in Transgender Relationships

Conference for Education (SPICE) last July. During it she shared her own personal experiences and thoughts. One of the most thought provoking comments she made was that the most powerful, electrifying sexual experience of her life was when she willingly allowed her husband to act out his number one crossdressing fantasy.

It turned out to be just as fantastic for her as it was for him.

As I said, Janie is an extraordinary woman, and her openness about her husband's sexual needs is extraordinary. However, because it is right for Janie does not necessarily mean it is right for me, or for you. We all want to have electrifying, fantastic sexual experiences, but not all of us can deal with the idea of a man in women's clothing in bed with us.

One of the things you will read and hear

are not

lesbian,

nor do

they have

those tenden-

cies, and they

should just get

rid of this fear. If we

confront this fear and

dissolve it, it still brings

us to the fact that many of

us still have partners who want to wear lin-

gerie to bed and make love.

So many of us have been reared to

expect our husbands to be macho men,

very virile, dominating in bed, bringing us

self-

esteem. It

means changing

everything our

mothers taught us about

being a woman. I personally

believe that one reason a woman

cannot stand her partner to be cross-

dressed in bed is because she is relying too

much on his ability to arouse her. By being

in bed crossdressed, he is already making

a statement that it excites him.

If he knows that his female partner

doesn't like it, it shows a huge lack of sensi-

tivity to her needs, as well as tremendous

selfishness if he insists on it. To the female

partner, it is as though he is saying, "You

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Double*	\$850	\$1035
Single	\$1030	\$1545
Couple**	\$1595	\$1995

2. Minimum package;

4 days/3 nights (a day is 2 pm to 2 pm)

	Inn	Apt.
Double*	\$440	\$510
Single	\$520	\$770
Couple**	\$820	\$970

The price for an additional single day added to the 4 day minimum is one forth of the four day cost.

* Note that the double occupancy rate applies only if the room is occupied by two persons. If you sign up for a double room, but no one takes the other half, you may be asked to move or pay the single rate. ** We have a new Inn in the heart of town with large bright rooms for couples, as well as two apartment Inns.

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Complete and return with deposit or total payment, to the address below.

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Attending Spouse (or S.O.) Name: _____

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State/Prov: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Home Phone: area code: _____ Ask for: _____ Best time: _____

Single _____ Couple _____ Double (share) _____ With Whom? _____

Accommodations: Inn/Apt(name) _____ Rm # _____

Anticipated arrival date/time: 10/____/96 _____ Departure Date: 10/____/96 _____

Total Fee: \$ _____

Deposits & Credits: - _____ (\$250.00 min.)

Balance Due: _____ make payable to: **Fantasia Fair**

Balance due must be paid by September 5, 1996

Method of payment: Check ☐; Money order ☐; VISA** ☐; M/C** ☐; Donation**\$ _____

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