

CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#45

\$7.00



**NEWS & COMMENTARY
"HOW-TO" COLUMNS
PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS
FEATURE ARTICLES**

**PRODUCT REVIEWS
NEWSLETTER REPRINT SECTION
EVENTS CALENDAR, HOTLINES
READER PROFILES**

*Billy Tipton
was a jazz
musician.*

*He didn't give
up anything,
for he wasn't a
woman.*

*Billy was
married, with
three adopted
sons. His
family did
not know of
his female
anatomy,
but they
knew*

*When he died,
in 1989,
television
and
newspaper
sources
proclaimed*

Billy Tipton was a (choose one):

- a. woman
- b. lesbian
- c. crossdresser
- ✓ d. man

AEGIS
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Decatur, GA 30033

*him to have
been a woman
who had lived
as a man in
order to be a
jazz musician.
"He gave up
everything,"
they said. They
were wrong.*

*The gay
community
was quick to
proclaim Billy
as a lesbian.
They were
wrong, too.
Billy wasn't a
lesbian,
either.*

*something the
newspaper
and television
and gay press
didn't— that
Billy Tipton
was a man.*

Billy Tipton lived and died as a man. His life was not an imposture, and the notion that he was anything less than a man is a denial of everything that he was. Hands off! He's one of ours!

CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

JULY 1993
(ISSUE #45)



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**LOCALS
STUNNED**

**FORUM AT HEND
FORUM AT HEND
FORUM AT HEND**



SEATTLE

SAN FRANCISCO

The Boulton & Park Society (B & P), sponsor of the annual "Texas 'T' Party", is rewriting its bylaws to become an international umbrella organization for open support groups.

A B & P press release states that there currently is no national counterpart to Tri-Ess -- the national parent of 48 chapters and forming chapters serving heterosexual crossdressers and their families. Due to its focus, Tri-Ess is defined as a "closed" rather than "open" group. B & P is proposing a one-time \$25 chapter initiation fee, but no national dues for chapter members. However, chapters would be required to adopt "nondiscriminatory bylaws as peer support groups for transgendered people".

B & P president Tere Frederickson said that four existing groups and one forming chapter have expressed interest in joining the new coalition. "It seemed to be a natural evolution," she said. "Twenty-six percent of our members live outside of Texas. That's a significant number."

Officials of Renaissance Education Association, Inc., a membership-based 501(c)(3) organization formed in 1987, had no comment on B & P's plans. Renaissance has three chapters and two non-chapter affiliate groups, all of which have adopted Renaissance's nondiscriminatory policy.



Los Angeles social activist Marlayna Lacie has come out in strong support of Gender Bill of Rights author JoAnn Roberts' civil rights crusade.

In a statement sent to several gender community publications, Lacie said she feels "we all lose if the transgendered are left out" of the forthcoming Civil Rights Act of 1993. Roberts spoke about the Act both at this year's IFGE convention and at "California Dreamin". The text of her address appeared both in *Cross-Talk* #44 and *Tapestry* #64.

Although Lacie is best known for her monthly social

events in the Los Angeles area, she says she also wants to educate and inform the public about the discrimination in the "new political agenda", and that she intends to mobilize the silent majority of crossdressers and transsexuals who until now have only been interested in the "fun" aspects of the community.



The Prodigy computer information service has eliminated its "frank discussions" section, leaving the gender community without a forum on the service. Prodigy shut down the section early this year after the discussions reportedly got "a little too frank" for its owners, Sears and IBM. It has since announced an increase to \$3.60 per hour for use of the service's bulletin boards, affecting Tri-Ess members who had used on of those boards as an address for contact both between members and from potential new members.

Tri-Ess board chairman Jane Ellen Fairfax has made inquiries of Cross Connection BBS sysop Trish Anderson regarding Tri-Ess use of part of that system, but no formal discussions have taken place. The newly-reorganized Congress of Transgender Organizations also recently discussed the possible use of Cross Connection as a central forum and library.



Donations to the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) increased in 1992 by over 80% over the previous year, according to figures released in January to the IFGE board, and recently made public.

Donations in all categories totalled \$117,315 last year, compared to \$41,346 in 1991. The average amount of a single donation also rose, by 27%, and more than twice as many people contributed to the organization in 1992 than in 1991.

WANTED: Gender community-oriented boutiques and alternative press bookstores to carry "Cross-Talk" for retail sale.

On-going profit potential and attractive wholesale rates.

**Write: Kymberleigh Richards, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365
or call (818) 776-8503.**

IFGE receives the bulk of its operating income from such donations, with the remaining funds coming from profits of *Tapestry* and other publication sales.



Despite rumors that the event was dead after last year's relatively low turnout, the SouthEastern Regional Conference has announced a full program of events and seminars for the "Southern Comfort" weekend in Atlanta, Ga.

Among the workshop presenters and speakers will be IFGE chairman of the board Linda Buten, Creative Design Services owner/Renaissance co-founder/**Cross-Talk** associate editor JoAnn Roberts, noted sex reassignment surgeon Dr. Stanley Biber, Tri-Ess wives/partners director Linda Peacock, IFGE founder Merissa Sherrill Lynn, well-known vocal coach and musician Wendy Parker, and famed makeup artist Jim Bridges.

Both the Congress of Transgender Organizations and the ad-hoc F-M National Network plan meetings during the weekend, as does the IFGE board of directors. Keynote speaker at the Saturday luncheon will be noted attorney Naomi Owen, well-known for her involvement in both Tri-Ess national and the Chi chapter of Tri-Ess.

"Southern Comfort" will take place September 29 through October 3. Registration information is available by calling (404) 603-9426.



The 19th annual "Fantasia Fair" -- the longest-running event in the gender community -- has adopted a modular approach to this year's program.

"Fantasia Fair", which offers ten days of *en femme* living in Provincetown, Mass., has structured basic packages for one of two five-day periods or the entire ten days, and added a series of optional programs during the event's run.

The basic packages include such events as a fashion and beauty course, fashion show, luncheon seminars, and the "Fan/Fair Follies". Optional programs include voice and speech improvement, a couples workshop, developmental workshops on feelings and body awareness, gender attitude, and intimacy. Additional seminars have been scheduled on the topics of the cultural diversity of gender and the sociological perceptions of gender.

"Fantasia Fair" was founded in 1975 by the Human Outreach and Achievement Institute. They can be reached at (207) 621-0858.



IGTA UPDATE: The Dictionary Project has shown an active sense of humor. In Desperanto (Gender Transient language) we have also terms in English which have similarity to those in the article *New Terminology?* which appeared in **Cross-Talk** #42, except that we use them in half-seriousness. An example is "Hormone bomb", which is the GT/TS/TV/CD equivalent to PMT -- that moment when hormones take over and one can feel and see the foot going into one's mouth, but which one is powerless to do anything about other than open the mouth wider for the other foot.

We did get the Hijara language for the dictionary. Hijara is the Asian Indian ancient guild of eunuch GTs; similarly named guilds throughout India and Pakistan (where they are called Khusra) have languages that we have similarly incorporated. Many thanks to Leone Neil of Transcare New Zealand for providing this information, which we were unable to obtain from either the group Khusra of Pakistan or our Indian agent in Delhi.

I hope to go on a mission to Athens this summer, as Amnesty International has many needs of their own to address (such as conscientious objectors being abused) and Travesti is all but ignored by the rich, powerful and organized gay and lesbian community in Greece.

While in Athens, I hope to make contact with the TS group to the north that was mentioned to me by Istanbul Civil Rights, to lay down escape lines for our sisters and brothers in the war zone over the border. I also intend to research the leads gained from the British museum on the deity Hermaphroditus. There is an area a few miles outside Athens which mentions that now called "minor" deity; it is supposed that it was the site of a tomb for an obscure writer of satirical plays by the same name. I believe that, while it is logical that a satirist might adopt the name, it is just as equally possible that this IS the grave of the original Hermaphroditus, but no excavation has ever been done.

My project, as detective of local history and archaeology, is to explore for any and all evidence that might qualify such a dig. Perhaps, if I can trace a good reason for it, the British Museum might sponsor a dig or do their own.

Meantime, IGTA is always in need of contributions to continue these human rights and historical missions. In the U.S., you can send contributions to International Gender Transient Affinity, c/o Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. -- *Phaedra Kelly*



KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

-- *KyMBERleigh Richards*

My editorial last month on "contact" magazines caused a lot of backlash ... not because of what I said about those magazines, but because of my implication that those who participate in erotic and sexual activities are not part of the gender community.

The first (and loudest) outcry came from our own Virginia Prince, who impressed upon me the fact that the erotic sexual fantasy element has always been present to some degree in our community. Anne Blackwood reminded me that the original definition of "transvestite", as coined by Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, was "dressing in the clothing of the opposite sex for erotic or sexual purposes".

Even Billie Jean Jones, who in addition to publishing her own *TV Guise* newsletter frequently contributes items for my consideration, called to point out that the exclusion of the terms "she-male" and "drag queen" from our official stylebook seemed to reinforce the notion that sex has nothing to do with our community.

It appears to me that the problem is not what people in our community might or might not be doing behind closed doors, it's figuring out exactly **what** our community is defined as.

Something Virginia said sticks in my mind (especially since I received the FPE-NE magazine from Norway in the mail the other day): There is, in northern Europe, a recognized "Scandinavian community", which encompasses Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. Those who reside in those countries -- or have their ethnic origins there -- are referred to, correctly, as Scandinavians. However, the residents of Norway are, first and foremost, Norwegians, yet they are also Scandinavians. And the citizens of Oslo are Oslovians, **and** Norwegians **and** Scandinavians. (They are also, to make this even more confusing, Europeans!)

To apply the same philosophy to the gender community: I am a transgenderist, and am part of the TG community. But since crossdressing is a part of what makes me a TG, I am also a part of the CD community. A crossdresser is also part of the CD community, as is a transvestite (using Hirschfeld's definition). But a TV is also part of the sexual/erotic community, but probably not of the TG community. A she-male, though, is probably part of the sexual/erotic community **and** the TG community. A drag queen -- *(continued, next page)*

COGITO ERGO FEM

-- *Anne Blackwood*

What is the one thing that separates adults from children? I don't mean size, I don't mean age, I don't mean experience. Those qualities do not separate the two. Responsibility is what I'm talking about. Adults assume responsibility for themselves, for their children. Adults assume responsibility for what they do and what they allow others to do to them. Adults don't allow others to abuse them. Adults don't allow others to deny them their rights.

Isn't it time we grew up? Isn't time to stop hoping that someone will take care of us? Isn't it time we took responsibility for our own fortunes. Isn't it time we took an active role in securing our constitutional rights? You're damn right it is!

All the arguments about becoming open about one's crossdressing or transgendered nature are circular. Jane Crane won't go public because it's too dangerous, but it's too dangerous to go public because Jane Crane won't do it. There is too much risk to being openly a crossdresser because no crossdresser is willing to take the risk and be open about it. As a consequence the only open transvestites are drag queens and that skews the picture even more.

Time to grow up, kids.

Yes, discrimination is a real problem. Discrimination in employment, discrimination in housing, discrimination in finance, discrimination in the legal system. Yes, it is a problem. Guess what? It is not going to go away ... not on its own, it's not. You know what else isn't going to go away? Low self-esteem, shattered relationships, self-loathing, and even suicide will be with us until we see to it that no one can discriminate against us because we are crossdressers.

You know, Blacks and Hispanics and Asians have an advantage over us. "What, are you crazy?" you ask. I'll tell you why. It is because the first thing you see is their skin color. You can't hide that. Blacks don't come out of the closet because there ain't no closet to hide in. Gays do. We do. Because we can hide our difference we don't have to deal with it. Because we can hide our difference we can deny it, even to ourselves. Because we can hide our difference we can refuse to grow up and take responsibility for our predicament, and we do.

Time to grow up, kids.

No one is going to change the laws for us. No one is going to educate the public for us. No one is going to fight our fights for us. If we want our lot to

change we must take responsibility for it and take action. If we want to be able to walk the streets with our heads up, we must take responsibility for our treatment and change it. No one is going to pay for research to find out why we are the way we are for us. We must take responsibility for our own lives and affect change where it is needed.

Who will be the Rosa Parks of our civil rights movement? Who will be the Martin Luther King? Who will become so bone weary that she will say enough is enough? Who will have a dream? Who will take responsibility? I don't know who our Rosa Parks will be, I don't know who our Reverend King will be. I do know this: We must all be responsible for our own lives and we must live with the consequences of that fact. If you choose to do nothing about gaining acceptance for your lifestyle you'll have no one to blame but yourself for the situations you find yourself in.

When you look at the wreckage of the Soviet Union you are looking at the wreckage of a society that required that the individual abdicate personal responsibility to the state. When you give up personal responsibility you are staring disaster in the face. If we continue to abdicate personal responsibility for our lot the status quo will kill us by inches. Every moment stolen from us because of prejudice, every freedom taken by fascists is a small murder. If we don't take responsibility we are letting ourselves be killed bit by bit. We may as well

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... *continued*

since she is technically a crossdresser, but doesn't crossdress for sexual or erotic purposes -- is most likely part of the CD community, but not the other three. Technically speaking, transsexuals also belong to the TG community (at least, pre-SRS) and are, of course, a part of the TS community. Yet I really don't belong to the TS community, although some might erroneously place me there. And a she-male, although having some mutual characteristics, probably doesn't belong in the TS community, for many of the same reasons I don't belong there. And I haven't even sat down and figured out where Gender Transients fall among all the various communities. It's obvious there is a GT community, but what overlap there is to the others I don't yet know.

As you can see, this gets very confusing, because the all-encompassing "gender community" is actually a catch-all term for all the various communities that share flexible gender identities as a common ground. It's actually more complicated than my example of the residents of Oslo, Norway, because our communities aren't simple subsets of

commit suicide, except that action requires we take responsibility for our lives.

Time to grow up, kids.

I'm not advocating having the label "transvestite" tattooed across one's forehead. I'm not advocating walking up to perfect strangers and announcing, "I'm Bill and I'm a crossdresser." I am advocating honesty and openness. If someone asks, be honest. "Say Bill, are you a crossdresser?" "Yes, I am." A conversation will probably ensue. Share this part of you with mainstream friends. You need not tell all of them at once; start with those you think will most likely accept you for who you are. You'll be surprised. I was. All the "sweeps week" exposure has had an impact. If we each take small personal steps we can affect change.

Small personal steps will have more effect than all the marches ever can. Small personal steps will have more effect than all the grand rhetoric. Personal exposure to crossdressers can have an enormous impact. If someone finds out that a person that they've been friends with for years crossdresses what do you think is going to happen? Remember, I said friend ... not acquaintance, not co-worker ... friend. That person will either reassess their friend or reassess (*continued, next page*)

EDITORIAL COMMENTS? Write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365, fax us at (818) 347-4190, or send e-mail to "Kym Richards" through the "Cross Connection" BBS at (818) 766-TVTS. Letters received may be edited for length and clarity.

the whole; they are actually **interlocking** subsets, all of which are subsets of the main "gender community", but with both unique criteria and criteria shared with one or more of the other subset communities, depending on the individual member of that subset. (If this is beginning to sound like a flashback, it's because I remember all this from high school mathematics.)

An individual, then, can be a member of a single subset community, or he/she can be a member of multiple subsets. But every member of every community has one unifying criterion: All are members of the main set, the larger "gender community".

So where I made my error was not in condemning the "contact" magazines for misrepresenting our community. It was in not clarifying that their true fault is in appearing to represent our **entire** community; they do not ... they represent only **one** of the many communities within our community.

Now all I have to do is try to figure out how to rewrite the glossary section of our stylebook to make this clear ...

rossdressing. Odds are they'll keep the friend. But that doesn't mean they'll embrace crossdressing with open arms. They will, however, take an honest look at it. I can guarantee you this: Until a person knows a crossdresser they will only know the stereotype.

A few weeks after the Los Angeles riots last spring I was at a barbecue. I got into an argument with this woman who was describing Blacks in the most blatant racist stereotypes, the "lazy, shiftless, violent, get whitey" terms. Oh, but of course she did say hello to the Black guy at work. This woman does not know any people of color personally. She has no clue as to what they are about and what they suffer. Until she does get to know some Black person she will hold on to her prejudices. This illustrates why it is important that our friends know that they know a crossdresser. I am also sure that some will find a person who will accept crossdressing in an old friend, but not anywhere else. It happens. Nothing changes with out someone taking risks.

It is time for us as individuals and as a group to grow up and take responsibility for ourselves and our situation. Only we can do anything about it. Only we are motivated to do anything about it. Everyone wins when we do something about it. Time to grow up, friends.



VOX POPULI ... Reader opinions

Re: "Kymberleigh's Clipboard" (May '93): As Joan Goodnight and myself are the prime instigators and perpetrators of this plot, I feel 100% confident of expressing 50% of the issue and about 90% certain of expressing most of the other 50% (Joanie's views). I will let Joan speak for herself; I am speaking for myself and to the extent I represent them, my group. Just as a side note, my fellow Neutral Corner board members (Ann, Pam and Michele) generally endorse me and my coalition activities, but with a quiet "we'll see, Suzie" kind of disclaimer on many of my proposals.

All that said, Kymberleigh could not be more right about anything. In fact, your historical perspective on the matter just underscores many issues I have been struggling with as I think about the concept of a larger coalition:

1. Why wasn't this done earlier?
2. Why have attempts at this failed in the past?
3. Have other states or regions or the country (IFGE???) tried this, and if so, how did it go and why did it fail?
4. Can a "critical mass" ever be achieved?
5. What should we do then that makes sense and

will work?

The naturally parochial, localized nature of each gender support organization **must** continue to exist regardless of successful or unsuccessful attempts at coalitions and mergers. The thing we provide as support groups that is number one above all else is support to the "first timer". We are there to give them a safe place where they are accepted for the first time in their lives as themselves. This is the heart and soul of our individual groups. This will and must continue uninterrupted and unencumbered. This atmosphere is only obtainable through a group that is small enough where the members are generally well screened and the individual can be secure that everyone is in agreement on the issue of being found out. Security is tantamount, therefore discretion is the rule. We as groups tend to the underground rather than the public eye. We prefer stealth to confrontation ("Do I pass?", not "I hope they liked how manly I look in this dress"); drag queens we are not. We want to blend not be in people's faces. The toughest thing about this though is that we do not reach some who are in need of our services, because we tend to be underground. Granted we are rising more to the surface with each day, and it takes little to find us, usually a phone call or two and your are connected.

I guess I am trying to say that perhaps a strong argument can be made that we are reaching most all of the people we need to, so why worry so much about the ones who are incapable of doing the minimal research it takes to find gender support groups? I have heard this argument made and I have mixed views on the matter.

So what of Neutral Corner and PPOC and a Southern California coalition? Baby steps until things make sense, baby steps only. Moving Neutral Corner's meeting night is a rather benign gesture of good will to promote better participation from L.A. and Orange County folks at our meetings, and vice versa. Dee Grady and I have exchanged calendars of events. We had 15 people from PPOC and other L.A. groups at our May Neutral Corner meeting. This was a real show of interest with the possibility of potential Neutral Corner members. It also showed some of the San Diego folks that L.A. people are a bit more active than they are.

I think people from San Diego are starting to realize how much L.A. has to offer them (Jim Bridges, The Queen Mary etc). In time they will gravitate toward PPOC. In San Diego we offer a wonderful town, a nice place to come to as a break from the insanity of L.A., and a change of scenery. We do have a pretty damn good zoo, Tijuana can

be fun and our beaches are second to none. There are over 80 golf courses and much much more. Sight seeing alone in this town could take weeks. At our Saturday meetings we offer a nice, sit down dinner, a no host bar and some kind of program (makeup and hairstyle/wigstyle lessons, guest speakers, entertainment and parties) all for only \$15 per meeting and \$30 per year membership! Often friends will just hang out at the hotel until closing, while other times we adjourn to some of the local night spots. Neutral Corner membership offers a nice excuse to come to a very nice town for a day of fun then a night of being with folks you like.

If we advertise each other's activities, this gives our members an expanded choice on what they might do with themselves. We cannot be everything for our members when we act as an island. If we simply share information (God bless Dee Grady) with each other, then lo and behold we can be all dressed up and have somewhere to go! So we start this thing out by passing notes and phone calls back and forth between L.A. and San Diego. We advertise each other's calendars, all the time encouraging folks to join whichever organization suites their needs. We offer something for folks just about every week of the month. We expand our friendship circle to include more than just the people we meet at some monthly meeting. In short we become part of a larger community. So where will this take us? Maybe nowhere. If so fine. If not, and something more happens, fine too. I think Joan and I have a very realistic expectations that we will only do what is in everyone's best interest. We have to be cognizant of folks comfort zone and be careful not to move until such time as it seems like the right thing to do. Maybe nothing bold will ever be needed. Who knows? Who cares? For God sakes I have a life away from all this gender stuff anyway, who needs it if it becomes too much? It will not, at least if I have any say in the matter.

Will a super group form in Southern California? Maybe, but if it does it will only be because it was just the thing to do and it made perfect sense to do so. If it ever comes into existence it will not be formed overnight. It will evolve over time and be part of us before we even knew what hit us. About that time someone will wake up and say "Hey, do

you see what happened?" and we will all rejoice and gather round the coalition tree and sing carols of transgender days gone by and to come. I suspect the most we ever will do though is what we are doing right now, sharing. I think merging groups may be tantamount to herding cats. It is not in the nature of the beast to do so. We will see. Preserving our local identities is important. Forming a larger group might help draw more people, it might scare as many away, or **more**, though. I think we will know what is right as we muddle along from month to month and meeting to meeting. Neutral Corner is trying out the fourth Saturday format for six months. After that time the board will evaluate the effectiveness of the move and decide whether to continue it or not. Thus far the outlook is **very** positive. You are right in saying that things are "pretty much rumors at this point". We are keeping our eyes and ears open for now. Also for now our newsletter people are making a concerted effort to share information. Multi group participation is being encouraged, much as many good folks are in CHIC, Tri-Ess, PPOC and other groups at the same time. In the same vein we want to offer up Neutral Corner as another item on your transgender menu. We offer a very nice meeting setup, a good group and a beautiful town to come to. Join us as a guest or join our group and get the monthly newsletter and full voting privileges.

Joan Goodnight and I will continue our friendship no matter what happens with individual groups, conventions or coalitions. Likely things will reach a new, more open state as we share more and more with each other as groups. When in the Bay Area I plan to promote this low key approach to greater gender support group participation. I will gladly act as a lightning rod for San Diego. I think others in my group also are eager to make the best of intergroup contact. There is no magic, no hidden agendas and no power plays going on here. We are just talking. I think that in and of itself is pretty damn profound.

-- Susan Menger, Vice President, Neutral Corner
San Diego, CA

Vox Populi is the gender community's "town square" for the exchange of opinions and ideas. If you have a response to any editorial, news item, or article appearing in **Cross-Talk**, please feel free to contribute. Virtually all letters received will be published, subject to editing only for clarity, spelling/punctuation, and brevity. You may write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills Ca 91365; fax us at (818) 347-4190; or send us e-mail to "Kym Richards" at the Cross Connection BBS, (818) 766-8887.

**HAVE YOU HAD A "REAL-LIFE" ADVENTURE
THAT OTHERS CAN LEARN FROM?**

Please send it for consideration to **Cross-Talk**, P.O.
Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.

(Submissions on MS-DOS or Macintosh disk
preferred; otherwise please typewrite.)

LOCALS
STUNNED

FROM MATHIAS
REVEALS THE
TOP OF WASHINGTON

SEATTLE

SAN FRANCISCO

SEATTLE

Ms. Sinclair just loves holidays because they give her an excuse to dress up in a really festive manner. Christmas sees her as Mrs. Claus with an outfit more suited to the tropics than the North Pole. Easter brings on a beautiful hat. Memorial Day brings white shoes (which are promptly retired on Labor Day). And for Thanksgiving she dresses as the non-Puritan she is. And, of course, there is Halloween. She is always pleased to learn of new holidays that lend themselves to drag (Arbor Day just didn't hack it). So that was why she was so pleased to hear of the festivities in New York for Bastille Day this month. The Restaurant Florent on Gansevoort Street holds what is billed at the nation's largest Bastille Day party. The event has many attractions -- a horse-drawn carousel and a petting zoo. But most of the guests come for the crossdressing. Last year saw several ladies-in-waiting, a Madam Curie whose lab coat glowed in the dark, Josephine Baker, a Chanel fashion show with male models in drag, can-can girls, and Florent Morellet himself as Queen for the Day, Marie Antoinette.

"Drag is what the '90s are about," said Florent. "Everybody loves it, it's cheap form of entertainment, and its politically correct."



The wish to appear politically correct is probably the **last** reason Ms. Sinclair dresses up. And she a notion put forth by Boy George is just about as silly.

"Men are dogs," he said. "They'll go for anything in a heels and a shiny dress. So why do they like transvestites?"

"There's something about the vulnerability of transvestites that very appealing to men. It makes them either want to hug you or kick you. It gives the straight boys a real feeling of power."



Of course, money is a very good reason for crossdressing. Boy George knows that well, and so do Robin Williams, Johnny Depp, and Quentin Crisp. All get up in drag for screen roles.

Williams portrays a distraught man deprived of visiting his kids by his ex. So rather than take the case to court, Williams does the next best thing. He presents himself as an elderly British nanny and gets hired by his former wife. The film, *Mrs.*

Doubtfire, is like *Tootsie* on Geritol.

Johnny Depp revels in playing off-beat roles: Edward Scissorhands, Benny in *f Benny & Joon*. His next effort is really off-beat. Edward D. Wood, Jr. was arguably the worst film director ever. His body of work includes *Plan 9 From Outer Space*. But because Woods was also a transvestite, he brought us a movie so bad it's good: *Glen or Glenda*, a campy, sympathetic, overblown look at crossdressing narrated by Bela Lugosi. In the black comedic film *Ed Wood*, Depp gets to crossdress and act out Wood's fascination with pink angora sweaters. The third film is a transsexual gambol across the centuries -- the quirky Virginia Woolf story of *Orlando*. Orlando has the habit of popping up in one century and another either as a man or as a woman. Naturally, no noted actor would portray a woman straight, so to speak, so the lead went to Tilda Swinton. But there is a nice drag bit with Quentin Crisp as Queen Elizabeth. "No wonder Queen Elizabeth was always chopping people's heads off," Crisp noted after the film was finished. "She was in a permanent rage from having to wear those clothes."



Crossdressing in the movies seems to be happening all the time, but that frequency doesn't mean that it has lost its ability to titillate. Witness the snide comments after Disney's Buena Vista bought Miramax Films (*The Crying Game*). A California columnist had a lot of fun with the idea ...

"Imagine, Mickey Mouse and Jaye Davidson are now stablemates. What's next -- Transvestiteland?" The cross-pollination possibilities are mind-boggling:

"*The Crying Game Ride*" at Disney World: You go in a woman, dodge a few terrorist bullets and emerge a man.

"EuroDisney Is Burning": Drag queens vie for awards by dressing up as Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Belle at this annual event, which is recorded in a documentary that does not get an Oscar nomination because its subject matter is deemed too trivial.



Those ideas may be far in the future, but

entertainment-inspired crossdressing is taking hold in Middle American homes all across the nation, according to gossip columnist Liz Smith. The late-night CBS show *The Kids in the Hall* is inspiring teenage boys to dress up in their mothers' or sisters' clothes on Friday nights and to stay home to watch the numerous crossdressing skits. Concludes Liz: "Mothers, don't throw away those old gowns. Your sons may need them."



Funny, we didn't hear about the soap *General Hospital* starting such a trend back when Christopher Morley played killer cowboy Max and Max's alter ego, sexy bar owner Sally. But even though Morley is off the show, he has stayed with the female impersonation bit. He is reportedly performing in a drag revue at L.A.'s Queen Mary. Some would say that is a comedown from his \$500-a-week gig at La Cage Aux Folles. But Morley is said to be glad for the work; it's better than hustling burgers or other cuts of meat.



Still more news from L.A.: Luke Perry of *Beverly Hills 90210* has moved back with drag queen Alexis Arquette. The pair even showed up at a posh studio dinner with Alexis in drag and Perry saying they are a "couple." The producers of the show are furious that Perry is risking his clean image.



Drag queen Marc Hendley should worry about **getting** a clean image.

The first thing he should do is get new publicity photos taken that don't have the caption "Cook County Dept. of Corr. 9320454."

Hendley created a persona of fictitious and temperamental soap star "Tricia Tucker" of *All My Children*. Then, posing as both the president and secretary of a Las Vegas hotel he was staying in, he arranged for a free chartered jet flight to Chicago for Tucker, saying the hotel was trying to get rid of the actress because she was terrorizing the staff. After arriving in Chicago as Tucker, he toiled around town in limos dressed as a woman, telling the drivers to send the bills to ABC's *Prime Time Live*. The cops finally caught up with Hendley after a perceptive limo driver tipped them off. Hendley told police that he had used his disguise to sneak into the Academy Awards.



Apparently, a clean image was what prompted Arista Records to deny the *Jane Pratt Show* permission to play Whitney Houston's "I'm Every Woman" so New York dragster Princess Diandra

could lip-sync to the tune. As Diandra said, "I guess they don't want Whitney associated with anything homosexual." We wonder why?



Some people would prefer death to association with homosexuals. J. Edgar Hoover was one of those types of people. Some queers had their revenge on Hoover and his plot-mate Clyde Tolson during April's March on Washington.

While in the Congressional Cemetery for the dedication of a memorial to gay rights activist Harvey Milk, a couple of wags put a black dress, black panties, and a pair of white pumps on Hoover's grave.

Ms. Sinclair is scandalized. White pumps indeed, and in April, no less!



The delicate sensibilities of school officials in Knoxville, Iowa, were offended in May when Brett Martin showed up at his prom in a sequined dress, high heels, wig, and full makeup. They were so offended that they had him arrested for criminal trespass even though he had purchased a ticket for himself and his date, Terry Massick (another boy).

Ms. Sinclair hates to burst the bubble of all of her readers who longed to attend their high school proms in drag, but Martin's excursion was not an exercise in self-fulfillment. Rather, Massick's original date -- a girl -- had canceled at the last minute, and he and Martin went together as a couple as a joke. Or at least they thought until school officials called the police.

The case was dropped after the boys explained that they were not trying to ruin the prom for their classmates, and, in fact, most of their classmates were supportive of the crossdressing lark. But Ms. Sinclair believes that the officials acted properly. She would have had him arrested when he first put his high-heeled foot on the gym floor, but not for trespassing.

She has seen a photo of Martin in drag, and this certainly was a case for the fashion police.



It is so frustrating to law abiding citizens when miscreants are arrested for violating a fashion dictum and then are released back into society by lenient judges. That is just what happened recently in Richmond, Va., when a federal appeals court dropped the discrimination case against a fraternity at George Mason University for staging an "ugly woman" skit that featured the frat boys done up in drag, some portraying racist and sexist parodies.

After students protested, the school imposed

sanctions on the Sigma Chi, which appealed citing free speech. One fraternity member appeared in blackface, and stuffed his dress with pillows to simulate large breasts and buttocks. That prompted Judge James M. Sprouse of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to write: "... it is obvious that the performance, apart from its charitable fund-raising features, was an exercise in teenage campus excess." But, "the low quality of entertainment does not necessarily weigh in the First Amendment inquiry."



Ms. Sinclair's readers who make purchases from Frederick's of Hollywood and use their male names may want to cite the First Amendment when they start receiving other sexy clothing catalogues in the mail and inquiring minds in the household ask how you got on that list.

It seems that Fredericks is offering to sell the names of **male** customers through a mailing list broker.

On the other hand, such readers may prefer to exercise their Fifth Amendment rights.



While Ms. Sinclair contemplates establishing a Constitutional law consulting service for mail order shoppers, kindly send clippings regarding crossdressing to this publication. Please note the date and name of publication.

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Cross-Talk is published monthly as an information and entertainment resource for the gender community. For subscription information, please see page 40. For information on advertising, please call (818) 776-8503.

MANAGING EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Kymberleigh Richards.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Anne Blackwood, Virginia Prince, JoAnn Roberts, Paula Jordan Sinclair.

REGULAR COLUMNISTS: Bev Anderson, Valerie Driscoll, Ricky Hunt, Ralph Judd, Roger Peo Ph.D., Cynthia Phillips, Lynette Tavener.

CARTOONISTS: Tasha Barnard, Sherri Belmar, Kay Lightner, Karen Ann Michaels, Nancy Wilson.

STAFF ARTIST: Rita.

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE: Joe Bob Briggs/*We Are The Weird*, Holly Cross, Tere Frederickson/Boulton & Park Society, Phaedra Kelly, Roni Lange/Northwest Gender Alliance, Peggy/Kappa Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lee Risemberg, Selena Anne Shephard.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: Trish Anderson, Teri Lynn Clemons, Chrys Julian.

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by Valerie Driscoll

Dear Val: In trying to find the right eyeshadow colors, I've experimented a lot and really haven't been satisfied with any of the results. I tried matching the color to my eyes, but it seemed to wash them out. I even tried two or three colors at a time, but either I picked the wrong colors (again) or I just don't know how to apply them. Or did I use too many colors at a time? And why aren't you supposed to use blue? -- *Susan, Ohio*

Dear Susan: You sure sound confused about eyeshadow! It's not as difficult as it may seem. There are a few general rules, but to be more specific, a trip to a professional cosmetologist would be the most beneficial. First, lighter colors look better right under the eyebrow arch and in the middle of the eyelid. Darker colors are better placed in the crease, extending up and blending toward the end of the eyebrow.

The main thing you need to consider is your eye color. Eyes can be any shade of blue, brown, green and hazel, but what you don't want to do is match the shadow to the exact color of your eyes. If your eyes are blue or green try gold, purple or brown eyeshadow. Brown eyes sizzle with deep blue, autumn green and turquoise.

The most flattering dark colors are purple, burgundy, autumn green and brown. Blue eyes can wear deep blue or turquoise in the crease or smudged over the lower lash eyeliner, but don't overdo it and don't wear it on the lid. Blue shadow does tend to wash out the color of blue eyes, so if you must wear it, be sure the shade contrasts with your eyes. Brown eyes can wear blue on the outer part of the lid, close to the lashes, but again don't

overdo it. Three different colors of shadow are usually the maximum, and sticking with natural earth tones is your best bet.

Dear Val: Even though I've followed all your suggestions about eye makeup (and my eyes look a lot prettier as a result), I have problems getting the color to keep from fading by the end of the night. I changed brands, but that just made the colors streak instead. Is there something I can do before applying my eyeshadow to keep this from happening? And are there any other tricks I should know to make my eyes look bigger? -- *Julie, Florida*

Dear Julie: Before you apply your eyeshadow, apply the same foundation as you use on your face. And before you apply foundation, use some moisturizer on your eyelids, under the brows and under your eyes. These areas do not produce enough natural oil; so even if you don't moisturize anywhere else, do it here every morning AND every night.

To make your eyes look larger, use the darker color slightly above the eyelid crease and blend upward. Use a cream highlight on the eyelid before you apply a light or iridescent powder shadow. Also, apply the lighter shade just under the arch of your eyebrow and blend out.

If you have thick, hairy eyebrows, **get them**



plucked by a professional cosmetologist. He or she will be able to fix them so they will still look natural even when you're not *en femme*. This will make

the most profound difference, but don't let them pluck **above** your eyebrows unless there are four or five stray hairs.

One more technique to create larger eyes is with mascara. Dot the base of the lashes five or six times with the tip of the mascara wand before you brush the entire lashes.

[Valerie Driscoll is a California licensed cosmetology instructor and owner of Hair To Wear Wigs in Torrance, Calif. You may write her with questions on makeup at 1716 Andreo Ave., Torrance 90501; or if you live in or plan to visit the Los Angeles area, you may call her at (310) 320-5015. Questions of general interest will be answered in this column.]

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CROSSDRESSERS' CLOSET

SUMMER SIZZLERS!

by Bev Anderson

Rather than try to write a column on summer fashions, this month I'm just going to give you some quick tips on the subject ...

>> Sherbet-colored suits with long tailored jackets, paired with baggy pants, gives career dressing a fresh new feel. Wrinkle-free fabrics will keep you looking crisp on even the hottest day.

>> Jewelry made from translucent glass beads adds coolness to any summer white.

>> Pleated floral shorts are romantically feminine and as comfortable as cut-offs. Top the shorts with the new tees, of eyelet, small straps, or tiny buttons.

>> Breezy full-cut pants are "thigh forgiving"; turned out in vertical stripes, they are most slimming.

>> Shady straw hats are the rage, from the beach to the office. A crocheted tote makes an airy bag, and is this season's smartest buy.

>> Summer's sexiest white is the ruffled poet's blouse. Soft for day, alluring for evening.

>> The sundress (in petite prints) can be worn on all silhouettes.

>> Skinny straps and below-the-knee hems add new meaning to the body-hugging "little black dress". Under a floral jacket, it's a cool approach to day style; at night, it stands alone.

Summer's wardrobe would not be complete without swimwear (yes, I said swimwear!). First thing you must know is that swimwear depending on the manufacturer, will always be one-two sizes larger than your dress size. Let me explain a few types of suits that most T's can wear:

1) Mastectomy suits are designed with prostheses in mind (a gift to our community). They have an opening on the side or top to insert the prosthesis. The armholes are cut higher than normal, less chance of losing a breast form and are generally "cup sized" for easier fitting. The legs are moderate to boy-cut which makes them quite practical for our uses.

2) Long torso suits are designed a half-size longer and are defined on the suit with a "T" (how appropriate!). The two manufacturers of these suits are Robby Lee and Roxanne. Stick to your original size suit and you should have a perfect fit.

3) Skirted two-pieces are the rage for summer; they

come in a large range of solid colors and a vast array of prints. For our purposes you'll need an underwire cup with a lot of coverage and a skirt that's long enough to cover your secrets.

How do you know it fits? If it hurts around your legs, it's too small -- move up a size! If the straps are too loose, but its fits everywhere else, have it (not you) slightly altered.

I owe thanks to my daughter Shauna for the information on swimwear.

Enjoy your summer!

[Bev Anderson is the proprietor of Femme Development Services in Studio City, Calif. You may send her questions about fashion c/o Cross-Talk or by e-mail to "Bev" via the Cross Connection BBS. If you live in or plan to visit the Los Angeles area, you may call her at (818) 769-0983 to make an appointment for a personal consultation.]

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MS. BINTHAR DUNDAT: TIPS ON PASSING USING THE LADIES' ROOM

by Lynette Tavener

Do you have trouble getting through that door for that most important function of all? Well, this month's tips will get you through.

TIP 1. If you have never entered the ladies' room before it is a good idea to have a certain amount of motivation. My tip here is to wait until you are completely desperate and in peril of soiling or wetting your undies. At this point your physical discomfort will very easily overcome your doubts of whether it's the right thing to do or not.

TIP 2. Pick one that is relatively well-used and of moderate size. Avoid large public toilets because your discomfort at your first visit will be directly proportionate to the number of people you encounter. It's very common in ladies' restrooms to have to wait for an available cubicle along with many other ladies (who may or may not be in the mood to scrutinize you). You may also be scrutinized by an attendant sitting near the entrance or in a glassed enclosure. Small toilets are equally uncomfortable as you may still have to join a queue and endure close scrutiny while waiting. This wait to use the toilet happens frequently, especially when crowds are present, such as at the theatre, football, dances etc. My tip: If you look like a lady use the ladies'.

TIP 3. Ladies don't visit the toilet "they just go". Therefore, it's not a sightseeing tour -- simply a mission to be accomplished in as short a time as possible. Definitely don't loiter, especiamly while plucking up the courage to go. (Unless you are observing the entrance from a distance. See tip 4.) The tip here is to dnter the first available cubicle, preferably the closest to the door, use it and leave.

TIP 4. It is a good idea to estimate the possible numbers you will encounter behind that door. A reasonable method of doing this is to watch the entrance of the toilet from a discrete distance and to observe an individual entering the toilet, counting the number of individuals who leave before she does. This is an approximate number of people using that facility at any given time and the number you could reasonably expect inside.

TIP 5. Always be aware that behind any door somebody may be standing. One of the most off putting situations occurs when you enter a toilet from a deserted corridor and behind the door encountes a group of young office workers grabbing time to have a quick cigarette. I once entered such a situation and the girls immediately sprang to attention thinking I may have been their supervisor: All faces turned to inspect the unwanted visitor. My tip here is to always expect to meet someone either coming out or waiting just behind the door. With this safeguard in mind you are at least prepared for an encounter and you won't look too startled.

TIP 6. Don't stand to attention at the bowl. Use the toilet like a lady. Sit. And most important of all, don't wet the floor or the seat. My tip is to never lift the seat and make sure your aim is good. Practice so that it sounds natural or silent and beware that no splashes come out between the bowl and the seat.

TIP 7. My final tip is "Don't be vain". Forget about adjusting your makeup -- because if it's not good enough already you shouldn't be there in the first place.



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ARE THE TRANSGENDERED HANDICAPPED?

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

One of the ideas that has received a lot of attention during the past couple of years is the contention that a transgendered person is handicapped and therefore needs both specific protection under the law and perhaps also special considerations by society. This concern was heightened by the recent and specific exclusion of transgendered persons from new laws enacted to protect people who are identified as handicapped.

As I thought about this situation, I wondered just what "handicapped" really meant. My thesaurus lists a variety of synonyms for handicapped: afflicted, crippled, disabled, disadvantaged, hindered, impaired and maimed. Then I thought about the community's recent actions to get all the gender dysphoric definitions removed from the *DSM-III-R*. The contention is that transgendered persons are perfectly normal. To list their behaviors in a mental disorder classification was considered both improper and unfair. Now there seems to be a conflict here. Either being transgendered is a problem or it isn't! Obviously, there is no neat answer to this conundrum.

In some cases a transgendered person is handicapped by the feelings and behaviors that accompany this phenomenon. This handicap can take a variety of forms. Perhaps the most severe is when the feelings are so overwhelming that they interfere with day-to-day functioning. In such cases I would describe the person as crippled or disabled. However, the solution is not a new law but rather assistance for the person so that they can learn to manage their feelings. This is analogous to the therapy a person might receive after a physical injury.

However, there is a more subtle disadvantage that many handicapped face. This is often described as discrimination. Sometimes this discrimination is unintentional. It is caused by not recognizing the "hurdles" some people face because of their handicap. For example, wheelchair-bound people need ramps and lifts to allow them equal access to public facilities. In a similar manner, persons known to be transgendered face social discrimination. For example, consider the ejection of post-surgical male-to-female transsexuals from the annual Womyn for Womyn Music Festival in Michigan. Even though these transsexuals live a woman's

lifestyle, they are not considered to be authentic women and so are barred from participation. Similarly, persons known to be transgendered can be evicted from housing simply for that fact even if they are model tenants.

Where does this leave the transgendered person? In a sense they are handicapped by society's generally negative attitude toward all sexual minorities. This leads to discrimination against them in a variety of overt and subtle ways. It is not clear to me that passage of new laws nor removal of transgender categories from the *DSM* will do much to change this situation. From my observations, it seems that the only workable strategy is education that will help the general public understand more about all aspects of human sexuality.

This course is long, tough and slow. It means putting yourself on the line in a variety of situations. Letters to the editor, pushing for appropriate sex education in the schools, speaking out against all forms of discrimination and becoming active in social causes for other minorities can all be effective. Eliminating discrimination is not accomplished so much through legal remedies as through demonstrating to others that they need to be considerate of those who are different from themselves.

[You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 3445, Poughkeepsie NY 12603 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are kept confidential. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. Others must obtain written approval from Dr. Peo. A copy of such a reprint should be sent to Dr. Peo.]



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A PROBLEM OF FOCUSING

by Cynthia Phillips

Dear Cynthia: My husband and I are slowly coming to grips with his crossdressing. I find that while I don't mind shopping for him, I do find myself fairly uncomfortable when he is dressed up. He states that I avoid talking to him or looking at him. This causes him to be uncomfortable, which I do not want to do. Can you give me some tips? -- *M.*

Dear M.: Your problem is not unique. Quite a few wives have trouble focusing on their husbands while they are crossdressed. A way to do this that has worked for several wives is this:

When "He" is dressed as "Her", think of it as his "other" personality. In other words, try to get used to thinking of him as girlfriend. When he changes clothes, he wants to change personalities, which is really what it is all about; the clothes just being a way of constructing that personality, which is the softer, gentler side of him. He is denied the opportunity to display this in today's society.

When he is dressed, try to use his femme name, and try not to think of him as male, then it becomes much easier to interact with him. For instance, when he comes home from work and wants to dress, he may say something like, "how about Ann (or whatever his femme name is) visiting for awhile?" If you have no problem with his dressing that evening, you would reply in the affirmative. When he reappears as "Ann", react as though it were Ann, a friend you are especially fond of. Don't worry about touching or showing too much affection at this point. After a few months of this, his dressing and showing up as "her" will seem less stressful to you. It is a form of "Let's Pretend".

If it isn't a good time for you to see him as "her", tell him. Such as "I really don't think tonight is a good time for Ann to show up." This lets him know you just aren't in the mood for "gender games".

Don't try so hard to look at your husband as a woman; it is too difficult to try and make that contrast, when you are fairly new at this.

Shift his personality over to another person, which is what he wants and needs to do, until both of you manage to blend the two personalities into one. Something that takes some time, depending on the amount of time he spends dressed and the amount of dressing you can handle.

Good luck.

Dear Cynthia: My husband crossdresses sometimes in the evening after our two children have gone to bed. I'm really trying to understand all of this, but I'm afraid I have a long way to go. He's very good to me, so I feel I need to make the effort.

My problem is the way he dresses when we go to bed. He likes to wear silky lace baby dolls or gowns, and he shaves his legs. I don't like him shaving them, because I am afraid all of our friends will realize he's a crossdresser. But that's another thing I'm trying to deal with. The REAL problem is the stubble on his legs when we are in bed together, if you know what I mean. Anyway, they hurt when they rub against me. I've tried to get him to shave them more often, but he forgets. Can you think of any solution for me? -- *Judy*

Dear Judy: I would tell your husband that if he is going to shave his legs, that he must do it every night, not just when he's in the mood. Your probably never notice that his legs are shaved, if he has no stubble. Stubble will give them away every time. If he doesn't want to shave, he can use an Epilady. They are painful, but they do work!

Most people don't notice a man's shaved legs, as many men simply don't have hair on their legs. My husband has shaved his legs for about 40 years, and not one person has ever mentioned it, nor has he ever had a strange look. (You would notice this more than society.)

[Effective next issue, Linda Peacock, national director of wives' and partners' concerns on the Tri-Ess board of directors, will take over this column.]

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by Ricky Hunt

Illustration by Rita

I am a hi-tech person. I work and play with some of the latest computers and electronic equipment, have stereo speakers throughout all thirteen rooms of the house, and can bore you for hours with torrents of jargon on just about any subject you care to name. When I don my feminine attire I have a fondness for synthetics, those modern wonders of the laboratories of some multinational chemical giant. Who else but those hi-tech wizards could turn a barrel of crude oil into nylons and rayons, silky smooth and feminine, modern and oderless. Be it the slight pressure of support hose on my legs or the caress of a long slip on my thighs, I am in love with those smooth molded and seamless undergarments.

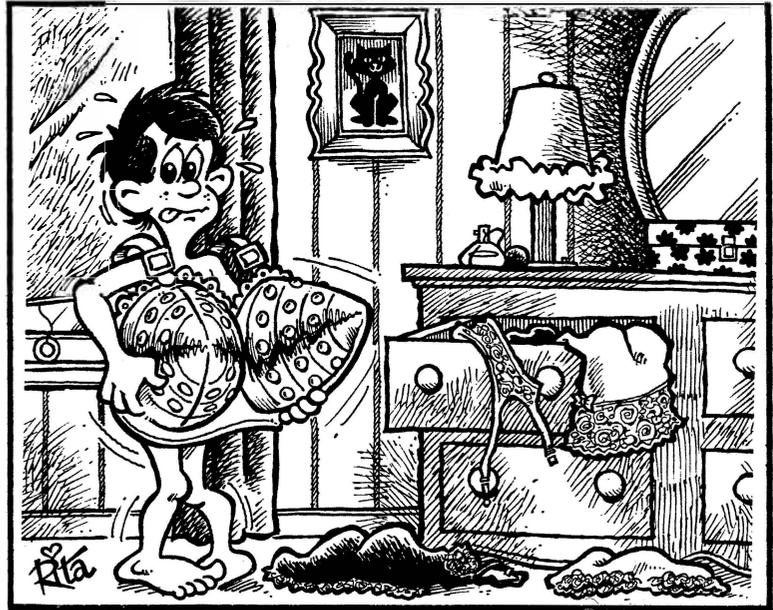
But sometimes there arises a problem. Those silky smooth bras just don't seem to have the hugging power needed to support a pair of rather heavy inserts, and somehow it just isn't feminine to be dragging up on your bra off your belly all the time. To solve this dilemma I embarked on a search for a bra that would support my purchased assets firmly and in comfort. Since I use a pair of mastectomy inserts (aha, hi-tech again) what better place to look than at mastectomy bras. But alas they don't seem to be made in my abundant size, so it was off to the Tri-Ess Shopping Guide. I soon had written letters to every supplier of feminine undergarments from Lane Bryant to Omar the Tentmaker. Upon cleaning out the old P.O. box (under the glare of an annoyed postmaster) and carting away the resultant mass of circulars, catalogs and come-ons I began the Search For The Perfect Bra.

As I spent many hours gazing at scantily clad women, a not unpleasant pastime in itself, I happily compared band thickness, color, lacy adornment, fabric, strap placement and other factors and emerged with a scientific conclusion. Lane Bryant had a half price sale on Playtex 18 hour bras that looked pretty good, so they won hands down.

I soon received the goods and, lo and behold, it hugged right, supported well and left me with my hands free to do something besides adjust my bra. But it also did something else. It smelled. The darn thing was made of real, honest to goodness rubber; a heady, pungent odor that took me back through the years. There I stood once again before my mother's middle dresser drawer, happily extracting one of her bras to take away for my own use while the family was away for the day. It was a heavy duty, industrial strength garment, providing the

kind of the support needed by Carrie Nation as she wielded her massive axe against a solid mahogany bar in a den of iniquity. Were it to be made of brass instead of the fruit of the rubber tree it would have not been out of place adorning a robust viking matron upon the stage of the Metropolitan Opera; circled in uncountable concentric rings of stitching running inexorably to the pointed center of the cup. I always had to fight the urge to paint a red circle in the center of that target, but common sense won out every time.

There were other wonders in that drawer. Garter belts, girdles and even corsets. They were much too large for me at that time, but I wore them anyway. I would spend hours on end enjoying the illicit thrill of those wonderful items of apparel. It was some time later that I found the old trunk in the attic



with the outgrown clothes of my mother's past and was able to both wear something closer to my size and not have to worry about Mom missing something from her drawer. I was able to sleep in a bra if I was careful to hide it in the hamper before bedtime and then return to the bedroom in the dark so as not to be caught.

Thanks to those barons of industry and wizards of science the world has changed and synthetics are the fabric of choice for the ILGWU, and I must admit that they look and feel more feminine than the cotton and rubber of my mother's underwear drawer. But it's strange how hi-tech just doesn't have the staying power, or the aroma, of good old natural rubber. Seems I've come full circle.

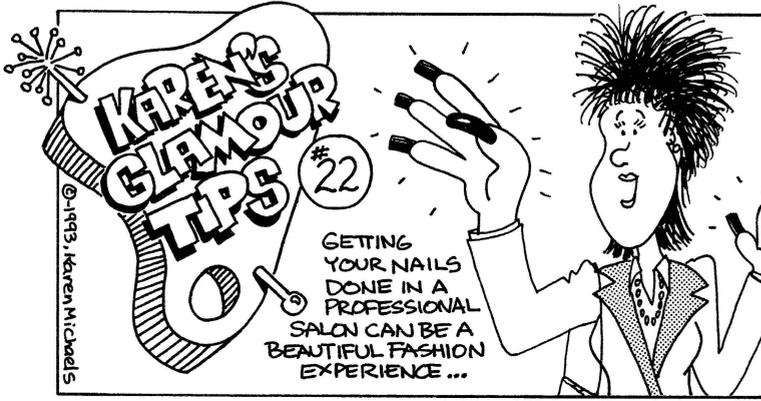


COMICS SECTION



THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



here in the (un)real world by Nancy Wilson



Tasha's World

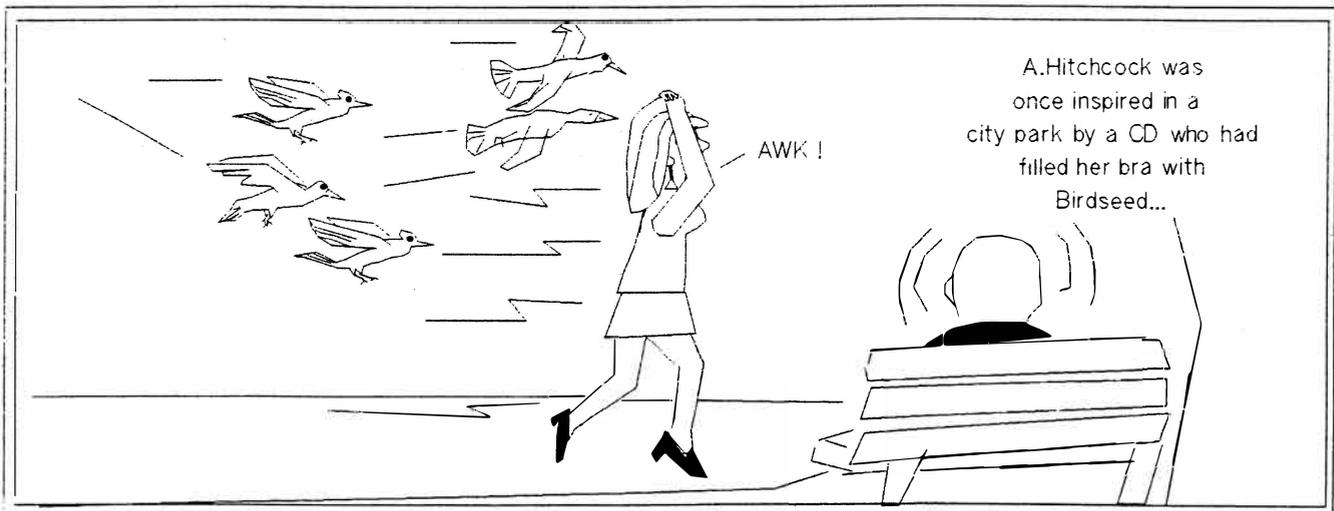


THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner



CD

By Sherri Belmar



LIFE AS A TRANSGENDERIST

by Kymberleigh Richards

I have, for several months, been intending to reply to a letter from one of our subscribers, who wrote to ask several very pertinent questions about living full-time as a woman. The only reason I never answered that letter -- although I twice dashed off notes apologizing for my not having yet responded -- was that I felt that any answer would require a comprehensive evaluation of my life in order to properly and completely respond. And, quite honestly, I have never been able to find sufficient time when I was not either working on **Cross-Talk** or one of my other responsibilities in order to undertake such an evaluation. Until a few weeks ago ...

At this year's "California Dreamin" I found myself in a very unusual situation. Having spoken briefly at the Friday luncheon in my capacity as the current president of the Tri-Ess Alpha chapter, taken part in discussions regarding the Congress of Transgender Organization's potential use of the Cross Connection BBS, and co-moderated part of a discussion group with my associate editor Anne Blackwood, I found myself emotionally detached from the event. Two hours before the Friday evening banquet, a full 24 hours before the Saturday evening banquet, I suddenly felt I didn't belong, and I had an overwhelming need to leave.

It was Chrystine Julian, who frequently keyboards articles for me when I can't get a computer disk from an article's author, who put her finger on what was bothering me. When I told her how I was feeling, she said, "Of course you feel like you don't belong! Your life has evolved beyond what these events are about, and you have less in common with those in attendance than you did a couple of years ago!"

Chrys was, and is, right. While our community's events are a wonderful opportunity for the members of our community to express their femininity, I don't need an event as an excuse. And as I realized that, while returning home, that is the essence of being a transgenderist.

For those of you who did not have the opportunity to read my assorted writings in these pages over its entire history, I will be celebrating my third anniversary of living full-time as Kymberleigh Meghann Richards this month. And while, looking back, I know I've changed a great deal in a variety of ways, I cannot honestly pinpoint any specific

changes -- only points in time where I realized how much I had already changed. It is my intent to answer my subscriber's letter through this article, and perhaps not only clarify what a transgenderist is, but how she truly becomes one.

My subscriber asked in her letter how I had found the integration into mainstream society. And to be honest, I don't think I noticed. At the time that I made my transition, I had already been publishing **Cross-Talk** (the newsletter) for almost two years, and my activism both in and on behalf of the local gender community was intensely consuming a great deal of my spare time. In fact, the decision to live full-time as Kym came at the end of a two-week

How did I find my integration into mainstream society? To be honest, I don't think I noticed.

period in which I shifted back and forth between gender roles ten (!) times due to my commitments to lecture at college classes, my attendance and participation in the meetings of our local community groups, and various other assorted events and happenings. Fame definitely had its drawbacks!

I was fortunate that, when I made the decision to transition full-time, I was managing editor of a short-lived music and arts newspaper in Hollywood. Since a large number of our staff were in the local rock music scene, they didn't exactly think I was overly weird (and besides, as managing editor they pretty much had to tolerate me or they wouldn't see print!). I was also fortunate that, after the newspaper's demise, I found employment as a telephone operator (yes, folks, I was connected with THE big long-distance company for a while) where it was considerably more important that I could perform my job functions than how I dressed while working. (In fact, my last assignment was with the hearing-impaired relay service, where we had an **extremely** high number of gay employees, and where some crossdressed male employees had worked prior to my arrival there.)

The net effect of being in those positions was that I was essentially isolated from public scrutiny, except while at the post office, the bank, and the grocery store -- the employees of which pretty much accepted my change of appearance without comment, except for the assistant manager of my

bank, who said (and still occasionally laments) that my legs are better than hers.

I think that most of my observations on the subject of integration have come in the second 18 months rather than the first, due mostly to my dependence on mass transit since the loss of my car in a traffic accident in late 1991. Obviously, I am subjected to much more public scrutiny now, since most of my time outside the house I am either (a) on foot, (b) waiting at a bus stop, or (c) on a bus as a passenger. I have found, interestingly, that most transit passengers are completely oblivious to the lives of their fellow passengers (with the exception of high school students, who can be avoided if you know how the bus system runs and determine what buses they are likely to be riding). The bus drivers tend to take me at face value for the most part, except for those based in the division closest to my residence.

My bisexual female friend Terri says she feels we wouldn't have been such good friends if I were still living as a man.

(Due to the knowledge of the transit network that I have acquired as a result of my dependence on it, my local drivers tend to treat me with greater respect than the other passengers. This places me in the interesting position of being respected in spite of my gender orientation!)

I have met a few passengers (all female) on the bus who have admitted -- after only a few minutes' conversation -- to being bisexual and who have expressed a curiosity about my life's style, but I find that (a) they are the exception, not the rule, and (b) their curiosity has never resulted in extended contact past the chance encounter on the bus.

As far as my business associates and friends accepting me: Most of my business associates are such because **Cross-Talk** is my business, so I don't think it would be possible for me to make a meaningful observation on that subject (nor would be fair to laud my enviable situation over those who read this article). However, I do have a few comments regarding friendships ...

Those who I have been friends with have, for many years, been either members of the gender community or have known of my crossdressing (pre-1990) or transgenderism (since then). I made a decision in 1987, when I first became an activist in our community, that I would not be secretive about my activities, only cautious about them. The result is that those who were my true friends prior to my

transition remain my true friends to this day. It has been said that the definition of a friend is someone who loves you, "no matter what". Being a CD or TG truly tests that definition.

Yes, I have lost friends because of my activities, but in retrospect, I realize that they weren't really my friends. And yes, I have had relationships break apart because of this, but how long could they have honestly lasted with my activism hidden? Not long, I would wager. The one advantage I have in this regard now is that a new friend or romantic interest likes me because of who I am. No secrets.

I think my friend Terri said it best a few weeks ago. Terri is a bisexual female, and although we are not romantically involved, we are very close friends, which she believes is due to the aspects of my personality that she can relate to. Terri shares practically every aspect of her life with me -- her

high points and her low ones -- and she says it's because I listen to her and give her good advice ... in short, being a friend. (When I asked her if I could mention her in this

article, she said it was OK with her, then added that she felt we wouldn't have been such good friends if I was still living as a man.)

Which answers another of my correspondent's questions: Do women accept me as a girlfriend? For the most part, yes. I have more female friends than male ones, and most of my male friends -- better than 98% -- are members of our community. Men (in the mainstream) tend to take me at face value, too: I find myself occasionally having to reject unwanted advances from men. (I find that telling men I'm a lesbian frequently ends their attention; it's only **then** that they look at me as if I'm from another planet.) This I find fascinating. I'm a little over 6' tall, and my preferred day-to-day attire is an oversized t-shirt over leggings and running shoes. Since, dressed in this way, I look like most genetic females my age, my height and husky (for a girl) build would, one would think, discourage men from "hitting on me". I guess they all want Amazons; I wish some of those bisexual women I meet on the bus did, too.

(By the way, **why** do Hispanic males think it's a compliment to honk at me or shout sexual advances at me when I'm walking down the street? I've asked other women and they feel just as frustrated about it as I do.)

My manicurist relates to me as a woman, too. In fact, she occasionally slips and refers to my period

when I have a burning reaction to the acrylic compound (apparently, females are more sensitive to it during that time of the month), then corrects herself when my blank stare reminds her what I am. She says I'm a "typical broad", and I am the only person in the gender community that she feels comfortable having as a client.

The funny thing is that, although I do wear makeup, I do keep my hair color-weaved blonde, and I do keep a set of acrylic nails (all of which "complete" my feminine appearance), I don't make that concerted an effort to feminize my voice *per se*. Most of the effort I make in that regard has less to do with pitch and timbre than it does with vocabulary: I

tend to use adjectives and

verbs that are more associated with the female of the species than the male, and I've been using that glossary for so long that I don't even consciously realize that's what I do. Yet, with the exception of the telephone, where there's no "face value" to take into account, almost no one seems to notice my voice is still within a male register!

But the most important thing I've discovered in three years of being a transgenderist is that I'm so comfortable with myself that I **don't care** if someone "reads" me anymore. And the reason for that is that most people who might realize the truth simultaneously realize that I don't have any problem at all being who and what I am. And that, to a large degree, inhibits people from saying anything.

So, why am I a transgenderist? Because I know I'm not a transsexual, yet I know I am a woman. I discovered, more than a dozen years ago, that you don't **have** to be a female in order to live in a gender role normally reserved for females. At one time I thought I **was** a TS, but 30 months of therapy with Dr. Bill Heard and conversations with Joanna Clark (now Sister Mary Elizabeth) helped me realize that sex **does not**, in any way, automatically define a gender role.

My social involvement with the lesbian community has reinforced this belief. Some of my best friends are dykes, and they tend to be among the most accepting of my lifestyle. (I personally believe that they view being a TG as being a parallel to their lifestyle; I live as Kym because I need to orient more toward my feminine personality aspects, and they tap more strongly into their masculine personality aspects.)

But it would be impossible -- as I indicated at the outset -- for me to directly contrast my previous life

as a CD with my present life as a TG, because the perceptions have changed gradually as I have adjusted to life as an ersatz female. I find that my thought patterns, my attitudes, my behaviors -- indeed, my entire life -- is more woman-oriented than "male in drag"-oriented.

My correspondent indicated that her situation is still a bit precarious; she has had to maintain a second apartment for her femme self because her wife is having difficulty supporting her and her two teenaged children are unaware of their father's predilection. She says she is "on edge" for a couple of days after each outing *en femme*, even though she does so two or three times a week, and has

Being Kym isn't being a TG; it's being a woman.

expressed an interest in living entirely as a woman outside of work. She wonders if this is a desire to live "closer to the edge" and to challenge the risks and goals of living as a woman, rather than a gender condition.

My reality is that I am Kym because I **need** to be Kym in order to feel complete as a person. I have no regrets about leaving Kevin behind, because there is nothing about that persona that I feel any need to emulate. So it's a gender condition, as far as I'm concerned. I don't present myself as an extreme of crossdressing, nor do I believe that anywhere near the majority of crossdressers will ultimately wind up where I am. But I do believe this is a logical alternative that should be considered by anyone who "thinks" they are TS.

So, since this article was, in some part, an answer to my subscriber's letter, I guess a little advice is in order. If you feel the need to express your feminine side, then crossdress. If you feel the need to be a woman 24 hours a day, seven days a week, then consider that you don't have to be a female to be a woman and look to my experiences as an inspiration: Be a TG. If you "think" you're TS, do yourself a favor and consider my lifestyle as an option to SRS (odds are you don't need the surgery anyway). But wherever you fall in the scheme of things genderwise, realize that the most important thing is to be **who** you are, not **what** you are.

Being Kym Richards isn't being a "transgenderist", it's being a woman. Maybe that's why I felt the way I did when I needed to leave "California Dreamin", because I have less in common with the crossdressers (and the "drag queen" mentality that seems to pervade these events) than I do with the women I interface with in my day-to-day existence.

It's not a fantasy to me. It's real life.

BACK ISSUES NOW AVAILABLE!

We are pleased to announce that a limited number of copies of "Cross-Talk" issues 39 through 42 are now available to our readers who may have missed these issues. (Issues #1 through 38 were published in newsletter format, and are no longer available.) If you have only recently discovered "Cross-Talk" and want to complete your set of magazine-format issues, now is your opportunity!



#39 (January '93): Advice for flying *en femme*; crossdressing in the opera; creating a more feminine body shape; avoiding masculine behaviors; developing a sense of self; feminization through meditation; part one of fiction story "Peter's Problem"; differing modes of communication between men and women.

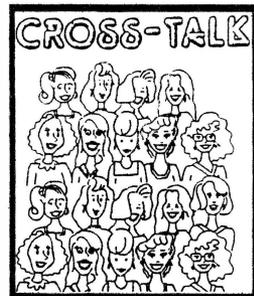
#40 (February '93): Nancy Cole's "In Search of A Community"; the guilt associated with crossdressing; methods for revealing CDing or TSism to family and friends; the differences between "style" and "fashion"; potential pitfalls in choosing a femme name; teenage TS expelled from school for crossdressing; reincarnation as a possible explanation for crossdressing (part one); conclusion of fiction story "Peter's Problem"; basics of foundation; female conversation patterns.



#41 (March '93): Feminine speech and vocal techniques; part two of reincarnation as a possible explanation for crossdressing; basic wardrobe building advice; the true story of a crossdressing Civil War hero; dealing with harassment, confrontation and violence (part one); tips on creating realistic bra filler; communication in and by the TS community; how wives can tolerate a crossdressed husband at a national event; Minnesota clinic charged with poor post-SRS medical care; relationship challenges for the transgendered; final chapter in the origin tale of "Khen-Draa" comic serial.

This issue was never made available at retail, and is in extremely limited supply.

#42 (April '93): Conclusion of harassment discussion; report on crossdressing models; female-to-male crossdressers; determining femme clothing sizes; highlighting and contouring your makeup; reincarnation (conclusion); sharing one's lifestyle with friends and loved ones; a tongue in cheek look at new terminology; answers to CDers most often-asked questions; how couples should go about setting limits; parallels between gays and the gender community.



To order: Send \$7.00 for each issue ordered (Calif. residents, add 58 cents tax for each issue ordered), plus \$1.00 shipping & handling per issue (maximum \$3.00; non-U.S. residents, send \$1.50 per issue) to "Cross-Talk", Dept. BI, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. Quantities are limited, so please indicate alternate choices in case your original choice is sold out when we receive your order.

(Please make your check or money order payable to Kymberleigh Richards.)

LOLA REVISITED

or

A GENDER A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR AWAY

... always explaining, defining, justifying, identities have their purpose, they can be (they are) very important in the scheme of things, but they can also be like lead weights dragging us down & keeping us from fully exploring trans-space, that phantasmagorical "space of desire" (thanks, Marjorie Garber) betwixt and between (more like, above and beyond) genders, sexualities, politics, atoms and eves, I'm tired of thinking "what will THEY think if I call myself this, what will they think if I call myself that, or, what will they think if I don't call myself anything at all," will they approve, f--k approval, I want to be respected, tolerance be damned, I want to be admired, understanding's not enough, I want to be worshipped (oh, sorry, I'm getting a bit carried away) ...

anyway, sometimes (more like, often) I think, if a person hasn't gotten it [you know IT, what this transgender thing is about, in all its many (wo)manifestations] by now, he or she will never get it, no matter how many Oprahs and Donahues they watch, no matter how many Dear Abby columns they read, no matter what image(s) we try to convey, whether "boy/girls" next door, pillars of the community who need to express our feminine sides on occasion, miss-takes of nature, or wild side walkers; and I don't have any faith that if scientists were actually able to find a genetic code for femme-manizing that it will really matter to those who despise anyone who is, in any way, different from "the norm" ...

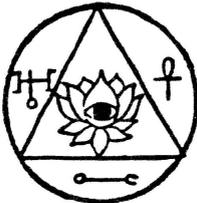
speaking of a DNA trans-gene (a queen gene, perhaps), even if it does exist, I won't celebrate the discovery; I just have little desire to reduce my fanciful femme self to a chromosomal twist of fate. Talk about taking the fun away, "I'm a trans-gene and what are you," give me a break, break on through to the other side, or to another side altogether; transgending is not a science, but a dance, a dance of beauty, a dance of mystery, a dance of passion, a dance of scandal, a dance of ecstasy, a dance of enchantment, a dance of abandon, a dance of grace, a dance of desire, a dance of provocation, a dance of sheer delight ...

remember, it's still a mixed-up, muddled-up, shook-up world, EXCEPT for Lola ...



Selena Anne Shephard
Transgend Dancer (an identity subject to change at any moment)

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LEATHERFACE IS A TRANSVESTITE

by Joe Bob Briggs

Reprinted from *We Are The Weird*

For about ten years now, I've been getting flack from various organizations of feminists, fundamentalists, mad mamas and psycho college professors, claiming that the movies I write about -- that is, the three B's, Blood, Breasts and Beasts -- are sick and demeaning and twisted and perverted. Of course they are. Why do you think I watch em? But there's other stuff they say that is **not** true. For example:

1. Slasher movies are demeaning because they celebrate violence against women.

I never understood this one, because I never

Jason and Leatherface are actually females disguised as males.

noticed a single movie in which more women were killed than men, **and** in 99 percent of them, the **only** person who survives is a woman.

2. Hard-core horror flocks cause crime.

If this is true, the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department should have a posse stationed outside my trailer house twenty-four hours a day, because **nobody** has watched more hard-core horror flicks than I have. Any day now I could go off the deep end and start flinging hatchets at old ladies.

3. Horror flicks are a way for rednecks (like me) to act out weird fantasies.

In other words, all of us out here in the boonies are like the cannibal family in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. We really **would** like to be munching on tourists. Otherwise, why would we laugh and hoot at the screen when Leatherface's family does it?

Anyhoo, I've talked till I'm blue in the face about this stuff. I've gone to seminars, challenged the National Organization of Women to a nude mud-wrestling match, faced off against that shrewd fundamentalist, Dr. Thomas Radecki, head of the National Coalition Against TV Violence. But nobody ever listens, because it's "just Joe Bob."

In other words, I'm too pitiful.

So I wanna say something here, and I want you to listen **real** carefully. I'm about to tell you about a book written by a Berkeley professor. This is hard for me. Large parts of my identity depend on **hating** everything that comes out of Berkeley. But I like this book so much that I almost don't wanna review it, because what if everybody says "Oh, don't read that. Joe Bob likes it!"

But it gets lonely out here. So here goes.

Men, Women and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film is written by Carol J. Clover, Professor of Scandinavian and Comparative Literature at the University of California at Berkeley.

Whew! I'm already exhausted. Carol, next time, when you write a book, study titles like *Jaws* and *It*. It's easier on all of us.

Anyhow, I'm not gonna try to analyze this whole book, because a lot of it, frankly, is over my head. (You scoff?) But it's basically about three kinds of

flicks -- slasher movies, possession films like *The Exorcist*, and rape-revenge films

like *I Spit On Your Grave*. In fact, I'm pretty sure this is the first serious book in the history of the world to do a complete analysis of the **plot** of *I Spit On Your Grave*.

But, from my selfish point of view, I want you to know a few things Professor Carol decided after watching about 200 of these movies:

1. Slasher stories are told **from the point of view of the woman!** In fact, the "Final Girl" -- or, as I call her, the Jamie Lee Curtis Girl -- is so much a part of the slasher film that the writer doesn't have any choice. You've got to have a Final Girl, and the Final Girl **has to be a girl**.

2. Since 99 percent of the audience at slasher movies is **male**, this means that all those men are **identifying with the experience of the woman!** They're experiencing the movie **through a woman's body!** ... In other words, the **opposite** of what the feminist censors have been saying for umpteen jillion years now.

3. Jason and Leatherface are actually **females disguised as males**. Kind of a transvestite deal. Think about it. Aren't these guys always real screwed up sexually? Don't they always have trouble **deciding** what they are? It's a tradition that continues right up through Jame Gumb, the psycho killer in *Silence of the Lambs*. So the original criticism of these movies -- that the killers are always male, and the principal victims always female -- is turned upside down.

4. The real villains in horror movies are **male rednecks**. "The rednecks have replaced the redskins," she says. In the old westerns, any Indian

who came on screen was **assumed to be violent and hateful and savage**. Today, any redneck who comes on screen is assumed to be violent and hateful and savage.

5. *I Spit On Your Grave*, which has been called the most disgusting film ever made (by Eggbert and Siskel), and which has been banned from cable TV for fifteen years, is actually told from a female point of view, so that the audience identifies with the ultimate triumph of the woman over the leering rapists. (As I've always said, what male could ever watch the bathtub scene and think the movie is in favor of violence against women? When I see that scene, I can't walk straight for a week.)

6. *The Accused* and *Thelma & Louise* are just watered-down versions of *I Spit On Your Grave*. And *Silence of the Lambs* is just another version of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*.

You think I'm oversimplifying this deal?

Yeah, okay, sure. Proibly. I'm probly gonna get a letter from the whole goldang Berkeley faculty, saying "You ignorant yahoo, that's not what it means."

But right now, today, after reading this book, I feel pretty good about it. Makes me think there's some hope. Makes me think some smart people will get their hands on it and become dumb like me.

Hundreds of dead bodies. No breasts. Academic Fu. *Men, Women and Chain Saws*, published by -- oh my God! -- Princeton University Press.

Four stars.

Joe Bob says check it out.

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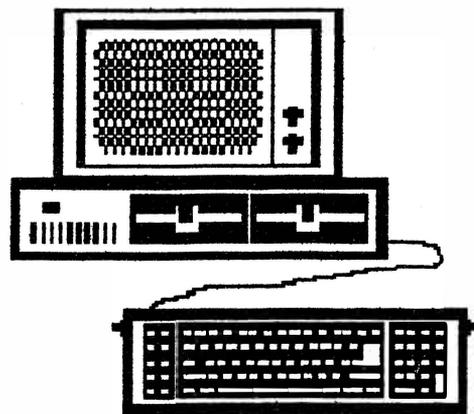
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THE NEED FOR "OPEN" GROUPS

by Holly Cross

In January I went to a Twenty Club meeting. My reasons were twofold: I thought I could find a dress at the JC Penney outlet in Manchester, CT, and from there the meeting is just a few miles further. I go to the XX Club several times a year, partly to find out what's happening in the transsexual world, partly to make sure that those attending know what IFGE's about.

One reason I went had to do with the calendar and my schedule (the Tiffany weekend coming up, then the Texas "T" Party and the IFGE Philadelphia convention, etc. meant I might as well get a dress not everyone has seen before, and **now**, since there would be little time later.) What really made my mind up, however, was the weather; we'd had a January thaw, not even a little bit of ice on the roads, and it was dry. The traffic on the 'Pike and I-84 moves very fast; at 65 one can expect to be passed by everyone, and although that does not bother me on a dry day, I have memories of driving those roads in rain or snow that include a few scary times. So I went.

There were around thirty there, only a few familiar faces. The usual mix of a few post-ops, many at the beginning of possible transition, and the bulk of those attending "in process". Introverts, extroverts, fairly young and some nearly my age. And of course, that kindest of men, Canon Jones. These days, compassion and sympathy are scarce.

Quite a lot of shop talk; who does what surgery, why he's best (how come the psychologists and

others like themselves. I'm not one of them: It is obvious to me that my gender identity is that of a male, but I like to think that I understand. I have solved some of the problems that they are or will be encountering: relations with (telling the) family (in my case, that I am a more-than-half-the-time crossdresser), credit, credit cards for both identities for those who are not yet "full time", and of course electrolysis. Most of those attending were aware that electrolysis is the biggest hurdle; costly, lengthy in terms of elapsed time, and something that **MUST** be essentially completed before "going full time", the real life test where the secret is out to employers, fellow employees and family (but **NOT** to the general public; aye, that's the rub!).

One of the reasons for IFGE and its six listed phone lines is to tell transsexuals that organizations like the Twenty Club exist. Many TS groups have come and gone in the brief ten years that I have been a member of the Tiffany Club. Even the Boston area FPE group of the '70s has died (it turns out that many of the early members have now had SRS; I believe anyone who "came out" at that time was really driven to find a group, and that they are driven more than most of us who simply wish to crossdress). Things are better now, and the TV talk (read "freak") shows have helped to spread public knowledge (and our phone number ... bless them for that!). My job as a volunteer at IFGE is to help lonely (perhaps suicidal) crossdressers and possible transsexuals (many of us start by thinking we are

TS) information on how to meet their peers, how to find medical and psychological help, and information on the safe way to emulate or to become a woman. With or

A great many of the crossdressers in the closet don't know that there ARE heterosexual TVs.

psychiatrists may be female, but surgeons -- at least talented plastic surgeons -- are all male?) and other less printable comments. Some years back, there was much less choice, and the surgeons really didn't want to admit they did such operations; we haven't come a long way, but there is hope.

For three hours, two discussion sessions, and gabfests before, at the break, and after, the talk continued. Anyone who cared to say anything got the floor, and during the break, the conversation reminded me of a party where everyone has had the second cocktail ... but these girls (make no mistake, they really **ARE** girls) were doing it on coffee and the euphoria that comes from finding

without help, it's not easy.

My argument for advocating "open" clubs is not quite the Tri-Ess party line. It goes something like this:

A great many of our sisters in the closet don't know that there **ARE** heterosexual TVs. There are more of us, but we don't make headlines.

Therefore, they figure they must be transsexual (I thought maybe I was, once). They look for a transsexual club.

Most transsexual-only clubs don't last long. The leader gets her surgery, and gets on with the rest of her life. The vice-president may take over, but soon she too leaves. Even Veronica Brown found there

was more to life than editing a newsletter for a transsexuals' club. TS-only clubs are inherently unstable. The members are self-centered; they can hardly help themselves, let alone others. What with medical and counseling and electrolysis and saving money for surgery, they are too poor to support the club.

Therefore we need "open" clubs. The males who crossdress are more used to cooperating in running an organization, but if it's an open club, policy should also cater to TSs. Some "open" clubs seem to TSs to be assemblages of crossdressers sitting around talking sports and smoking cigars (I'm against cigars, neutral on sports) but other self-diagnosed transsexuals may find that they have a lot in common with the "guys in dresses". I believe Harry Benjamin and his continuum is closer to the truth than any binary classification. I think that one of the problems of the couples-oriented clubs is that I don't have a wife; maybe if I had a wife I wouldn't have to go to conventions to have company.

But the point of needing open clubs is still that one shouldn't have to classify one's self **before** finding out about life out of the closet. Even in Tri-Ess one can find people who guessed wrong.

However, I joined Tri-Ess because I have been to a lot of clubs, and I ought to support any national organization which is doing things I believe in, even though those I support don't only do it the way I see it, in EVERY respect. Besides, I like the magazine.

[Holly Cross is a retired engineer (electronics and microwave) who spends time at IFGE in Waltham, Mass. answering letters and the telephones.]

IF YOU'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE AN ARTICLE TO "CROSS-TALK", please first send a #10 SASE to P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365 for our style sheet and guidelines. Thanks!

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THE SHOPPING MAVEN

by JoAnn Roberts

Product: *Hormones*, by Sheila Kirk, M.D.

Source: International Foundation for Gender Education, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778 (617)899-2212

Cost: \$8.00 + \$1.50 p&h

Rating: B

In the 1970's, Virginia Prince took a survey of Tri-Ess members and found that over 50 percent of the respondents expressed an interest in taking female hormones. Since then, much has been written in the "gender" press about the "wonderful" feminizing effects of these steroids. Most of this information is pure fantasy ... until now.

Hormones was written by Sheila Kirk, M.D., a retired obstetrician-gynecologist who is also a member of the board of directors of IFGE. Unlike other hormone information, this book is based on medical fact, published medical literature, and Kirk's expert medical opinion. It gives a balanced view of the pros and cons of hormonal therapy for both M2F and F2M clients.

The book starts out with an overview of the anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of both androgenic (masculinizing) and gynogenic (feminizing) hormones. The reader does not need a post-graduate degree in any of these subjects to understand what Kirk is describing, but it wouldn't hurt either. The book then goes into detailed and specific discussions on the effects of the three major sex hormones: Estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone.

Considering the brief length of this digest sized book (59 pages), Kirk has packed a wealth of information into it. Unfortunately, that information is not easily extracted by the reader, which is the reason this book doesn't rate an "A."

Kirk writes with the same style she uses in conversational speech. Having a conversation with Sheila is a pleasant and wonderful experience. Her speech is mellifluous. Set in type on paper, however, it soon becomes tedious and often difficult to follow.

Kirk is not to blame here. That's why books have editors. IFGE did a poor job in editing this book. In fact, I'd venture to say it was untouched. For example, on page one, we're told that the information for this book was taken from "creditable researchers." A competent editor would have caught the inappropriate word use and substituted "credible" instead. In another section of the book, Kirk says that the only way to narrow the male waist is by surgical removal of a rib. I don't believe that she seriously meant to advocate this procedure ... but it sure does read that way. The editor should have caught this and recommended its deletion. In several places the information presented would have been better handled in a few, well organized tables rather than lengthy text.

Finally, this is an ugly book. Almost every other sentence is set in boldface type negating its usefulness as an attention-getter. This is an excellent example of desktop publishing at its worst, but, thank goddess, that's not the subject under review.

Overall, if you have any interest at all in the effects of male or female hormones on the human body, you must have this book. It is the first book in this community to discuss the subject from a database of medical fact, not popular myth, and Kirk certainly has the credentials to back up her opinions where expressed. I commend Kirk and IFGE for making this milestone work available at an extremely reasonable cost. Perhaps the second edition will be an easier read.

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NATIONAL PUBLICATION REVIEW

by JoAnn Roberts

Editor's Note: This month, since JoAnn submitted not one, but TWO book reviews, I'm taking the month off from N.P.R. and running the second of her reviews here. -- KMR

Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender by Vern L. Bullough and Bonnie Bullough (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1993). Ah yes, I hear you now, Another one of those "professional" books. Dull, dry and boring! Not so. *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender* strives to be not only of historical value, but practical value as well. In that respect, it is written at a level that just about anyone can understand without resorting to a medical/psychological dictionary for every other word.

The book begins with the cultural and historical aspects of crossdressing. In ancient cultures and in mythology, most crossdressing was practiced by males, but (surprise, surprise) by the sixteenth century most recorded accounts of crossdressing involve females impersonating men.

The authors recount many stories of religious figures who crossdressed, most of them females. Perhaps the most famous female crossdresser in history is St. Joan of Arc who was burned at the stake because she refused to relinquish her masculine garb (seen as blasphemous at the time).

The re-emergence of male crossdressers began in the nineteenth century with a redefinition of masculinity and a rejection of the foppish male of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The authors also trace the development of the "medical model" of crossdressing up to Richard F. Docter's theory of cross-gender development.

Finally, the book tackles what to do about crossdressing -- a guide for counselors and therapists. The final section includes a list of resources that mentions publications such as *Tapstry* and organizations such as Renaissance.

Unlike Prof. Marjorie Garber's *Vested Interests*, which looks at crossdressing from a cultural, literary, aspect, *Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender* takes an all-encompassing view from cultural, sociological, and psychological aspects. From that standpoint, this book makes the perfect companion to *Vested Interests*, while being much easier to read. If the authors set out to create a definitive work on the current understanding of crossdressing

behavior, they accomplished their goal in this reviewer's mind.

I was most impressed with the "Acknowledgements" section of the introduction: "Particularly valuable have been the insights of the various cross dressers with whom we have discussed our ideas over the years including..." and the list that follows is a veritable Who's Who of the transgender community.

If I have one complaint (and every reviewer *must* have at least one complaint) it is the use of "cross dresser" as two separate words rather than the more accepted crossdresser or the less frequent cross-dresser. Perhaps the use of two words made it easier to typeset the text.

Aside from this minor nit, *Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender* is a fascinating read. I've had the wonderful experience and opportunity of meeting and talking with both of the authors. Vern and Bonnie have spent a considerable amount of time and energy researching the historical aspects of cross dressing, as well as the contemporary scene. The result is a highly readable, informative and entertaining work that belongs on the bookshelf of anyone with a serious interest in crossdressing and shifting gender roles.

The book is available from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01778, for \$16.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling.

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THERE IS NO "CURE" FOR CROSSDRESSING

by Lee Risemberg
Director, Pansocial Center

My husband of many years has just told me he is a transvestite. I think he is sick! I am so disgusted at the whole thing. I want to divorce him. Where can we go to cure him?

I will answer your question first and then go on to give my reasons. You want to know where to go to cure your husband, and the answer is: "Nowhere." You cannot cure someone who is not sick, and transvestism is by no means a sickness. I will grant you that many transvestites have a "problem with society", but it is society that created the problem for the transvestite. The best way to explain this is to discuss one of the theories about the process under which an individual develops as a transvestite.

We must understand that there are many personality traits that are not at all what society "expects".

Transvestism is directly related to gender identity but in a totally different way than transsexualism is; transsexuals and transvestites both have an urgent need to dress as for the gender that does not match their genetic body. In other words, a genetic male that is a transsexual or a transvestite needs to dress as a female; it goes without saying that some genetic females have the need, but to dress as males. For the transsexual, dressing is not enough; they must change the body to fit the mind.

It all starts at birth, when we begin life as bigendered human beings, bigendered being an individual who has all the attributes that society defines as male and as female, perfectly blended and in balance, making up our personality. During the first two to three years of our lives we receive innumerable messages, some subtle and others not so subtle; some of these messages tell us that it is acceptable to identify as male or as female, but not as both.

There are people who buy this message and put an imaginary lid on the male or the female aspect of their personality and function in society with the remaining part, the one they did not suppress.

Those who do not buy this message remain bigendered for life and do not give this matter another thought; they may go on for years not being aware of the fact that they are not exclusively male or female but that they are both, without any inconvenience.

The fact that they are bigendered, by itself, would not cause them any problems; but society has some other messages to give us, and one of them is that men must not cry, must not be tender, must not be nurturing, etc. In addition, we are told that there are certain chores men must not do, such as changing diapers, washing dishes, vacuuming the house, cleaning the toilets, and I could go on and on.

If a man who is bigendered "buys" this other message of what a genetic male may and may not do in this society, in time he will become very frustrated with a life in which he is suppressing and denying an important and integral part of his personality. Some will resort to

alcoholism, others to drugs and many to suicide; many more will resort to the one thing that gives them the relief necessary to survive and remain sane, "cross-dressing". These are the transvestites.

There are as many female transvestites as there are males, but society readily accepts the woman who dresses as a man. A transvestite will only crossdress for his or her own satisfaction, never to "get even" with their family as it is often claimed. We must understand once and for all that there are many personality traits that are not at all what different societies "expect" from every human being, but nevertheless they are as natural for those individuals as are the "expected" ones for others.

It is a matter of record that all these traits -- transvestism in particular -- have been with us since the beginnings of civilization, and that there are several cultures around the world that give very special meaning and respect to the individual that crosses the gender barrier. One clear example of this is the "berdache" among the American Indian who not only crossdressed but were expected to assume the full role of a (continued, next page)



NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

July 9 & 10, 1993: "S.P.I.C.E.(Spouses/Partners International Conference for Education)", Dallas TX, sponsored by Tri-Ess' W.A.C.S. (Women Associated with Crossdressers). Details from P.O. Box 7241, Tallahassee FL 32314.

August 26-29, 1993: Second International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policies, Houston TX. Write Phyllis Randolph Frye, 5707 Firenza, Houston TX 77035 for information.

September 16-19, 1993: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, sponsored by Creative Design Services. Information from CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406, or by calling (215) 640-9449.

September 23-26, 1993: Second Annual New Woman Conference, San Francisco CA. Information from NWC, P.O. Box 67, S. Berwick ME 03908, or by calling (206) 676-5870.

September 29-October 3, 1993: "Southern Comfort", Atlanta GA, sponsored by the SouthEastern Regional Conference. Write P.O. Box 33296, Decatur GA 30033, or phone (404) 603-9426 for information.

October 14-24, 1993: 19th Annual "Fantasia Fair", Provincetown MA, hosted by the Human Outreach and Achievement Institute. Information from 405 Western Ave. #345, South Portland ME 04106, or by calling (207) 621-0858.

October 28-31, 1993: "Fall Harvest '93 Weekend", Kansas City MO, hosted by the five MAGGIE groups (Crossdressers And Friends, St. Louis Gender Foundation, Iowa Artistry, River City Gender Foundation, Wichita Gender Alliance). Details from Fall Harvest, P.O. Box 35061, Overland Park KS 66214-5061, or call (913) 649-8878.

November 10-14, 1993: Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", Burbank CA. Event open only to Tri-Ess members or heterosexual crossdressers. Host chapters: Alpha, Omega Chi, Tri-Chi. Details from Holiday En Femme, 1757-D W. Carson St. #306, Torrance CA 90501.

February 25-27, 1994: 6th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", San Antonio TX, sponsored by Boulton & Park Society. Information from P.O. Box 700042, San Antonio 78270.

(Please send information on national gender community events to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.)

NO "CURE" FOR CROSSDRESSING ... *continued*

female within the tribe.

The history of the live theatre is brimming with tradition of the male "actress" -- males who performed female parts, notably Edward Kynaston -- as far back as the Elizabethan and Greek theatres, and more recently the Kabuki among the Japanese. The cases of males performing female roles and of females performing male roles abound in our own American theatre history as well as that of the movies.

The names of those who have performed in the other gender's attire sound like a list of the aristocracy of the performing arts: Sarah Siddons as Hamlet, as well as Sarah Bernhardt, Judith Anderson, Eva LeGalliene and Siobhan McKenna, all of whom played the Prince. Among the actors, who can forget Wallace Beery, Lon Chaney, Cary Grant, Charlie Chaplin, Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis and John Lithgow?

[Originally published in Cross-Talk #15 (1990).]

ARTISTS!

"CROSS-TALK" needs tasteful crossdressing oriented artwork for future issues' covers.

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MOVING?

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"It is difficult to see the picture when you are inside the frame."

OK, OK, OK ... the bitch is back! Happy Fourth and I hope the heat isn't melting your makeup.



Those of you who started the summer season with me in the Poconos were treated to an extraordinary workshop on the use and misuse of exogenous hormones. This program was put together by my good friend Dr. Delia Van Maris and if you have a chance to hear Delia give this workshop (like at Southern Comfort), by all means sit in. It could save your life. This program is light-years ahead of anything else I've seen.



The Hot Buzz in Virginia is Newport News and I ain't talkin' about the fleet. Avon Fashions has changed its name to Newport News but the quality of their clothing hasn't changed any and the prices are still mucho affordable. My pick from the latest catalog is a spandex tank dress with a special inner lining that will mold even the most stubborn figure, all at a modest price of \$45. Call (804) 425-4250 from 8:00 AM to Midnight (ET) and request your own catalog.



MSG could be Accent (meat tenderizer) but the accent here is on Miranda Sex Garden. (Where do they get these names?) Anyway, MSG is an all-female pop group variously described as haunting, euphoric, and divine. Check out their debut album *Suspiria* on the Mute label.



Renaissance isn't the only organization that is sponsoring the Make A Wish Foundation. Recently I saw a set of ads for a group of designers supporting Make A Wish, which grants wishes to terminally ill children. So, if you buy anything from the following list of designers, you'll be easing a child's last days: Dina Bar-El Fashions, 1928 Jewelry Co., and Nikki Originals.



Let's be careful out there, especially when ordering sexy lingerie or that really hot video. Many mail order companies sell their mailing lists. I've recently learned that both Fredericks of Hollywood and Intimate Treasurers (the catalog vendor) both sell their lists to anyone willing to pay the charges. So next time you order a Dream Dresser or

Spartacus catalog from a catalog supplier, you should specifically request that your name be excluded from any mailing list. They are required by Federal Law to delete you from any list they might build. As far as I know, no one from this community sells their mailing list.



My daddy used to say; "It's what you learn after you think you know it all that really counts." So, here's this month's lesson: everybody, **everybody** has both XX and XY chromosomes in their cells. It is the relative ratio of the two (and any other combinations) that determine whether you develop as a male or a female. Additionally, both males and females have both testosterone and estrogen in their systems. Testosterone is responsible for the sex drive in both species. And a metabolic by product of testosterone is estradiol which can cause problems like breast enlargement (gynecomastia). Ha! Some of us would not consider that a problem at all.



Get a head start on the Fall fashion scene with the latest eye color: Green. Green is one of the few colors that can be either cool (blue-green) or warm (brown-green). Check out Dior's Greenery #300, Origin's Kiwi, EstEe Lauder's Rivers or Givenchy's Jade. (Yes, dahlings, you must think at least one season ahead if you want to be a fashion maven like the Queen of Prussia. It's *de rigueur*.)



There's a new generation of long-lasting lipcolor on the market these days. First there's Ultima II's Lipsexxy (\$11) that goes on glossy but dries matte in about 60 seconds and wears like iron. Apply carefully or you'll have to scrub it all off to start over. Then there's Lancome's Rouge Absolu (\$15) which claims to be the first long-lasting glossy lipstick. Check it out.



Whoda think it that the Clintons' hair would be the subject of so much controversy. Billy-boy is gettin' his butt kicked because he let some \$200-an-hour Beverly Hills salon type cut his hair and Hillary is being pilloried for her new, shorter 'do. At least one wig company, Jacquelyn (my fave) was distraught of the First Lady's trim because they had

just released a wig based on HRC's pre-election style. Hair today, gone tomorrow!



Out of the mouths of comics: "The penis is now considered a birth defect."



More things you oughta know about takin' mones: if there's a high-incidence of breast cancer among the genetic females in your family, then there's a good chance that you will be at high risk for breast cancer too if you start taking female hormones. But, we're damned if we do and damned if we don't, 'cause the driver for prostate cancer in men is testosterone.



Speaking of giving, be very careful about giving money to so-called tax-exempt organizations. Only 501(c)(3) exemptions permit donors to deduct their donations on their personal income tax. There are only two national 501(c)(3) organizations at this time, IFGE and Renaissance.



Those of you who have followed the various incarnations of this column (yeah, I know, the title changes about as often as I change my hair color) may recall mention of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, a fiction with a transgender plot line. Well, for those who prefer novels served visually rather than on the printed page will have your chance to experience *Orlando* on the silver screen this summer. To recap the plot: Orlando is a young British nobleman serving as Ambassador to Constantinople in the 1700's. One morning he awakens to find himself transformed into a young woman. He/she then lives for 400 years without aging. (Where can I sign up for this treatment?) The title role of Orlando is played by British actress Tilda Swinton while the role of Queen Elizabeth is played by an old queen, Quentin Crisp, who, by the way, hated every moment in high drag.



Those fashion wonks are at it again! Haven't they got the message yet? Some of the recent styles displayed by Lagerfeld, Mizrahi, Gaultier, Valentino, and others shouldn't be worn by a mannikin, let alone a living person. I mean ... chiffon and black leather? ... sequined body suits with *trompe l'oeil* breasts and pubic hair? ... see through pants over over obvious white panties? What is fashion coming to? Why, it would make a Texas "T" Party maven just faint.



Another new-old product is Chanel's Lip Basics, a powder lip liner and gloss in a compact. The matte liner is applied with a wet brush and the gloss applied over the liner. It's been done before.



Stick foundations are on the comeback circuit, a la Pan Stick, but unlike that Max Factor standby, these new products are feathery light. Take Revlon's DoublePlay (\$9.50) for example. It glides on creamy and dries to a powdery fine finish. It can be used as foundation, concealer, or lipstick -- even bronzer.



Put this in your bag-o-tricks. Gotta go out tonight but there's that huge zit on your face? Get the red out with Visine. Yep, the same blood vessel shrinking action that gets the red out of your eyes will zap that zit and make it nearly invisible.



What's the best selling nail polish? Depends what part of the country you come from. Some examples: New York, Clairins Beige Naturel ... Dallas, Chanel Coco Pink ... Los Angeles, Revlon Pink Nude ... Miami, Chanel Coco Beige ... Boston, Chanel French Pink.



Have you seen some of the prices for events lately? I thought *haute couture* clothing was expensive. People are buzzin about the prices for the 1993 Fantasia Fair, sponsored by the Outreach Institute; over \$2100 for a single in the fancy rooms for the full 10 days. This includes three dinners and five lunches, plus admission to the Follies, Fashion show and Costume party (a \$30 value). Who are we kidding here? Is somebody trying to pay off the national debt? The other buzz is about Dressing For Pleasure, produced by Constance Enterprises. This two-day event will run you \$400 for registration plus over \$100 a night for your room. The registration includes a Fashion show with buffet, the Dressing For Pleasure Dinner/Ball, all workshops, access to the vendor area and one free DFP video. Workshops include School for Sissy Maids, Bondage, Piercing, Bullwhip and How to Cope (for the wives of TVs). I almost hurt myself laughing over that last one. I wonder who is giving the workshop, Vlad the Impaler?

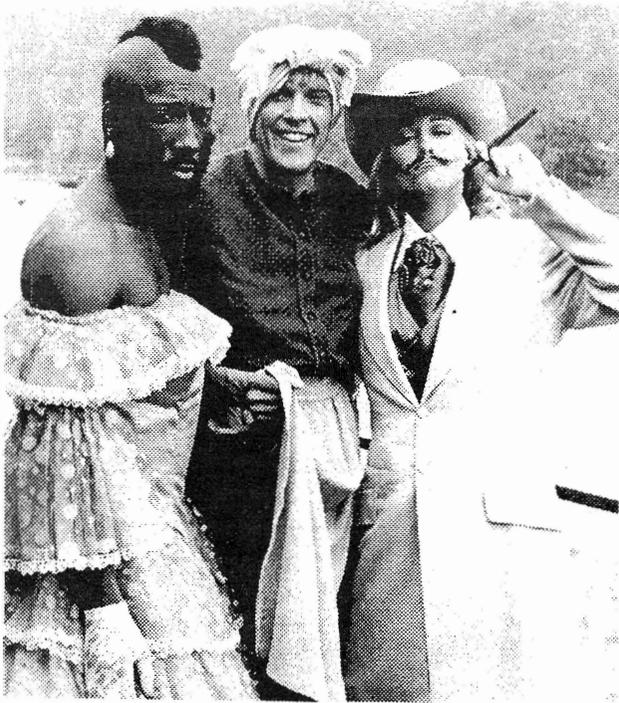


See you next month. 'Til then, stay frosty.

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GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

by Ralph Judd



11/16/83: Byron Allen (left) plays Scarlett O.T., Skip Stephenson (center) plays Missy and Sarah Purcell (right) is Rhett Butler in a send up of "Gone With the Wind" on *Real People*, NBC.



10/23/67: Don Rickles (left) and Danny Thomas are caught up in the spirit of a Hawaiian luau on *The Danny Thomas Hour*, NBC.



1/21/71: Flip Wilson's famous character Geraldine meets Muhammad Ali on *The Flip Wilson Show*, NBC.



6/30/76: Vicki Lawrence (left) as "Mama" meets up with Kelly Monteith in a dress on *The Kelly Monteith Show*, CBS.

"CROSS-TALK" NEWSLETTER NETWORK

Observations and viewpoints from the newsletters of gender support organizations

IT'S SAD

by Roni Lange

It's sad, oh so sad. What's a wife to do? After twenty or so years of marriage, the wife finds out that her husband is a "TRANSVESTITE".

Here all these years the husband has been deceiving her into believing that he is a fairly good husband with no deviant behavior. Now all of a sudden she finds out that she does not really know her husband at all. And to make matters worse, now that the husband has joined a crossdressing club, he has decided to go *en femme* to go to all the club functions. And even worse, he has decided to go out "in public" dressed as a woman. And the worst sin of all: The husband has prettier and sexier clothes than the wife does! So what's a wife to do???

Maybe the wife knew that her husband, years ago, shortly after they were married, did occasionally wear some female clothes, but seemed to do it only as a lark. At the time, it did not seem that he was serious about wearing female clothes, and she may have gone along with it for awhile. The crossdressing did not appear again for several years (that she knew of). But unbeknownst to her, the husband was continuing this charade behind her back.

When she did find out -- either discovering some evidence left on purpose by the husband or the husband telling her -- she was shattered to learn of the extent of his dressing *en femme*. (Sometimes, the wife does discover that there is something quite strange going on with her husband. At first, she may think that he is having an affair with another woman. She may confront him for the truth. At this time, he may confess that he was not having an affair with another woman, but with women's clothes!)

Usually, by this time he has joined a crossdressing club and discovered that he is not the only one in the world who likes to wear female clothes. He may have seen one of the talk shows and seen crossdressers in all their glory on television, but never in the world believed that he would be able to go out in public dressed *en femme*.

After joining the club, he has decided that he is going to "come out of the closet" and dress often. He tells his wife this bit of tragic (to her) news. She

is devastated, to say the least.

He tells her that now he has solved his problem; he is out of the closet and going out in public, that he does not have any more problems with this lifestyle and that he is "going for it". And furthermore, wife, if you do not like it then the only solution is a divorce, because I am going to dress as much as I like.

The wife's life is shattered. From one minute in a seemingly tolerable marriage to facing divorce the next is too much to bear. She may become very depressed and may try to get more of an explanation from the husband, and may even try to talk him out of this "crossdressing thing", to not avail: The husband will never give up this newfound freedom after so many years locked in the closet.

Poor wife. Now what is she to do since that &!%\$#@ husband is not giving in ... nor even talking to her in a civil tongue? Divorce seems imminent. The husband may say something about a wives' support group, but can she handle that in the emotional state she is now experiencing?

Most clubs, I believe, have experienced this type of behavior from new members. Some members, when talking to a new member that has been married for several years and the wife does not know, will advise the new member not to tell the wife about the crossdressing because nine times out of ten it leads to the previously described scenario ... that there is a strong possibility that the wife will not accept this type of behavior from a husband.

If the husband continues to insist on dressing *en femme* (which he almost always does) everyone will start hearing all kinds of excuses that the marriage was on the rocks already. Things like, "my wife never understood me"; "we never have communications about anything"; "we are always fighting about something or another, so why not get a divorce?".

It seems that the crossdresser wears his bra too tight, cutting off the flow of blood to the brain, and does not think clearly. All he can think of is himself, and "H E double toothpicks to everyone else", including his long time partner, his wife.

Some husbands and wives do muddle through this trauma, but life is never the same for the wife. The wife, considering the alternative, chooses to remain married and tries to deal with this situation as best she can.

So what is the solution? Although each case is different, some guidelines have proven to be effective in most cases:

1. Tell your soon-to-be wife, before you are married, that you are a crossdresser. Explain what it means and how it will affect her relationship to you and your relationship to her.
2. If you have been married just a short time -- say, less than two years -- tell your wife and explain how that will affect her relationship to you and your relationship to her.
3. If you have been married for several years, like twenty or thirty, expect the scenario described above.
4. If you have been married between two and twenty years, hope for the best -- it could go either way.

As stated before, every individual case is different. But generally speaking, this is pretty much how it happens.

If the husband wants to stay married and still crossdress, **COMMUNICATE** with your wife. Reach an understanding; compromise; **DO NOT** put all the blame on your wife. After all, she is not the one who has the problem, **YOU** are the one with the "strange desires"! Don't force the issue. Be reasonable, not demanding. (Loosen up your bra and let the blood flow.) And, for heaven's sake, talk to the successful crossdressers that have managed to hold their marriages together and still be able to crossdress. They know what it takes; believe them.

[Reprinted with permission from the Northwest Gender Alliance newsletter, Portland OR.]

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WHAT IS MASCULINITY? WHAT IS FEMININITY?

by Tere Frederickson

With tongue firmly planted in cheek, I wonder if anyone has wondered? Yup, I do believe the operative definitions of masculinity and femininity rank right up near the top of the \$64,000 question bank. In one of my weaker moments, I thought it might be interesting to try to wrestle with the question (for the thousandth time at least). This time I decided to try a different perspective based on some of my more recent personal experiences treading the line between man and woman out there in the real world; a perspective also colored by some recent readings -- *Gender Blending: Confronting the Limits of Duality* by Holly Devor and *Vested Interests: Crossdressing and Cultural Anxiety* by Marjorie Garber. Obviously, I offer no empirical evidence to substantiate my thoughts, so I'll caution first to take all this as categorical musings of one wandering around in genderland.

First, I'll say that when I go out and intermingle with the rest of humanity in casual everyday mode, I certainly in no way, shape or form resemble Raquel Welch (or any other "feminine ideal") or Burt Reynolds (or any other "masculine ideal"). So there I am in a discount store, trying to buy a hacksaw and some extra blades; not even thinking about one gender or the other. I'm dressed in jeans and a t-shirt (totally gender-neutral clothing). Why, then, did the clerk at the checkout perceive me to be a woman? And still persisted to think I was a woman after I showed her my driver's license with a

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man's name on it along with the big "M"? Why she even called her supervisor over to let her try to figure out the confused apparition standing before her? I've got two women on my hands who, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, still think I'm a woman! I wasn't using my "feminine" (if you want to call it that) voice; all I wanted was a hacksaw! (So you aren't left hanging, I finally did convince them that I was a genuine XY person ... since it seemed to be a point of great concern for them.)

It was after this incident that I really began thinking about masculinity and femininity in earnest. Why on earth do I get read as a "man in a dress" sometimes when I'm really trying to be perceived as a woman, and then when I'm not trying to be any gender I get tagged with very strong perceptions that I am a woman? What a puzzle! There had to be candle somewhere in this dark room ... Hmm, maybe I was trying to add something like "femininity" in an effort to be perceived as a woman. Yet, I soon found out that I probably have greater success in being perceived as a woman when I'm not trying to "add" anything. I'm sure most others of the male-to-female variety also believe that they have to add "femininity" in order to be perceived as a woman. I'm beginning to think that it's very simple to be perceived as a woman -- you don't add, you actually just subtract!

Well. Let's get into how I arrived at this momentous conclusion. We need to look at what constitutes masculinity first. Keep in mind we're talking about a society that is male-dominant society. In order to maintain a male-dominant society, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the male must **construct** a dominant role for himself. Get it? Masculinity is a totally artificial construct to carry out dominance -- on the other side of the coin, in a female-dominated society the feminine dominant role would be an artificial construct as well and follow close parallels to that of the male in our society. Since we know of both

male- and female-dominated societies, it just cannot be that the male-dominated variety is the "natural" scheme of things. In order to dominate in perpetuity, one must actively seek to dominate. When I think "masculinity", another word comes to mind: "machismo" (ya gotta love the Spanish for that one). O.K., so what if machismo describes a man with overexaggerated masculinity? It's a statement of what society seems to think masculinity is all about.

The postulation of femininity I'm now going to offer is that in our society femininity is the default **human** condition. Femininity is nothing more than a human behavior without the machismo. Most people can write a long list of behavior characteristics that they ascribe to masculine, and an equally long list of characteristics that they ascribe to feminine. And we've often heard it said that there is crossover in behavioral characteristics between men and women. In other words, a man can be caring and nurturing, but to do so he goes against the law of machismo; he must -- temporarily at least -- put the machismo away in order to express those behaviors classified as "feminine", even though they are quite natural behaviors for all **humans**. Hmm, is the candle lighting a little of the dark room now? Reflecting on my life, I remember several instances where I was told that I just didn't have machismo. So I artificially constructed it. Picture now the ballsy, swaggering fighter pilot who also rides motorcycles at breakneck speed (ask my wife; she's been with me on a motorcycle at over 100 mph). Remind you of Tom Cruise in the movie *Top Gun*? That's machismo -- "I feel the need for speed." (You can fill in your own picture of machismo here as well.) Now take away machismo and what do you have? A **human** being, which in our society roughly equates to "feminine".

So how do I get read as a woman? Quite simple, actually. First, I appear gender-neutral with no overt or strong gender clues (androgynous). Then I

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subtract machismo (actually, I pretty much abandoned it a couple of years ago). You can then see that my gender is quite easily perceived as "feminine". I act quite naturally with no affectations of any kind -- simply a **human** being, which defaults to "woman". Sure, I'll concede that there are some women who add "effeminate" (secondary definition) to the picture, but it really doesn't make them more feminine, and acting in an "effeminate" manner won't make a man feminine either.

I can imagine the Freudians having a heyday with my little idea of femininity. "Ah ha (and achtung)! Zince du zubtract to get zee feminine, du must haff zee caztration anxiety!" But I'll live with that. Freud was an overt oversexed male chauvinist anyway -- the father of psychoanalytic phallic worship. But having abandoned Freud and his ilk, where do I look for support of my concept of the feminine? We could look toward feminists (these can be either XX or XY variety) for some ideas. What lies at the core of feminist thinking? **Humanism**. It is a basic humanist approach that challenges both the affectations of machismo and effeminate. True feminism does not advocate that women adopt the affectation of machismo, as men in fear of losing dominance would have you believe. Feminism does advocate reduction in gender polarity to achieve a human egalitarianistic societal construct.

I'll be the first to admit that this little article doesn't go into great depth with lots of references to learned scholars of gender. From my perspective and experience, though, it does seem logical with apparent operative applicability. Men are constantly bombarded with the need to have the "right stuff" -- "machismo" -- male-dominant puffery. Is it any wonder, then, that without

machismo, I become "feminine" -- the basic human being?

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ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE ... by Peggy

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READER PROFILES

Anaheim, CA: Stephanie Marie, 31: I am a cabinetmaker and photographer. Have not yet been to any events; I have just made my first trip out to a nightclub and I am looking to become more involved in the gender community. #1478

Bakersfield, CA: Chrys, employed in marketing, and consider myself a writer. I regularly write for trade publications and have had numerous pieces published in "Cross-Talk". I am currently working on an epic-fantasy (dragons, magic potions, etc.). I like long walks and long talks and would enjoy corresponding with those with similar interests. #1144 Chrystine Julian, P.O. Box 60089, Bakersfield, CA 93386-0089

Palm Springs, CA: Ayme, 36, M2F TS, living and working as a woman for the last two years. Tall, attractive, feminine, sexy. Confident and comfortable in any social situation. Interests in Macintosh desktop publishing, music, dining and dancing. Seeks male or female friends. Try the desert lifestyle anytime! #1186

Redondo Beach, CA: Diva, looking for musicians to form a crossdressing rock/alternative band! #1201 D.P. Moore, P.O. Box 207, Redondo Beach CA 90277

Santa Ana, CA: Susan, 45, in business part-time. Enjoy sports, reading, chess and war games. Always dressed at home. Interested in hearing from others; also would like to have a serious relationship with a woman who understands me. #1323

Santa Clarita, CA: Bonnie, 40+, love tennis, golf, shopping, cooking, being Bonnie. Been out in public three times dressed and love it. Mother dressed me as a girl when I was a young boy (she always wanted a girl). Will write to all. #1248 Bonnie W., P.O. Box 801416, Santa Clarita CA 91380-1416

South Pasadena, CA: Christy, an educator and professionally involved with human diversity issues, especially the Berdache tradition. I'm going through my transformation, electrolysis, counseling and such, and am very interested in developing friendships with women, caring professionals and persons like myself for companionship and support. #1122 Christy Barron, P.O. Box 3402, South Pasadena, CA 91031-6402

Van Nuys, CA: Melissa, 44, electronic tech (repair VCRs, stereos, etc.). My passions are music, dressing, shopping, good talkradio. Guitar player for the past 25 years. I love a good 12-step program, the whole gender community, the hell I plan to raise over the next 20 years. I love kids and dogs and I send money home. #1469

West Hollywood, CA: Michelle, 37, SWM, Bi, 5'11"/150 lbs. TV since 11 years old, attending CD clubs last two years. Writer. Other interests photography, film and cinema. Would enjoy meeting other 30-something TVs, possibly for social outings *en femme*. #1355

Yucca Valley, CA: Elizabeth, 54, currently residing in Southern California. Work as a Supply Specialist. Interests include painting and bicycling. I've been away from our lifestyle for a number of years, so my experience level is re-learning it all. Would love to attend some of the national events in the future. Relationships none, divorced. #1506

Avon, CT: Michelle Kay, MWM, hetero, 5'10", 170 lbs., blue eyes, dark brown hair, '50s, very passable. Member Tiffany Club, co-founder of Connecticut Outreach Society (COS), participant P-Town outings, program chairlady of COS, director/founder of COS Couples Club. Wife is accepting and started COS wives support group. Interested in corresponding with and meeting other honest, caring, passable CDs or couples. Interests include theater, music (jazz, classical and oldies), travel, cross-country skiing, swimming, boating and water sports. #1457 Michelle Kay, P.O. Box 679, Avon, CT

06001

Heyburn, ID: Patience Moiche, 41. I have been attending some of the monthly meetings of the Salt Lake City group and really enjoyed them. I have been a small business owner working with industry, but I have a dream of going back to school and getting into counselling. I am single, enjoy life, and love and appreciate the feminine person I really am. #1305

Aurora, MN: Lynda, SWM, mid-30s, craftsman in design and building equipment, 20 years of all types of mechanical maintenance. Loves photography, martial arts, reading and writing science fiction. Degree in Art. Spend about 50% of my time *en femme*. Would love to correspond with anyone wishing to receive mail from a caring person. #1329

Kansas City, MO: Barrie, married, age 46. Hobbies include photography, writing, playing several sports, collecting antiques. Go to movies, dinner, dancing, shopping as Barrie. Member of Tri-Ess, RCGA (Omaha), and Sigma Nu Rho. Travel in midwest. Love to hear from sisters. Let's exchange photos. I answer all correspondence. #1203 Barrie James, P.O. Box 412948, Kansas City MO 64141

Roslyn Heights, NY: Jane, 34, married, Northern Italian. 5'7"/135 lbs. LIFE and Tri-Ess memberships (2 years). Also subscribe to *Renaissance News*. Interests: Travel, photography, sportscars, nature, skiing, gardening, music, dance, theater, swimming, art and earth sciences. Go out dressed day and night; dress flamboyantly as a guy when not working (Danskins, stirrups, parachute pants, jumpsuits, accessories). Travel throughout the US regularly. Lived in and love California, which I visit as often as possible. I am anxious to correspond with other TV sisters who would be interested in doing the same. #1348 J. Engel, P.O. Box 484, Roslyn Heights NY 11577-0484

Trotwood, OH: Fran, senior citizen living in SW Ohio, retired. Interested in most outdoor sports, writing and photography. Out of the closet once, years ago, but now in a small community and spouse not supportive. #1489

Amelia, VA: Laura, pre-op TS accountant wishes to correspond and/or meet with other TVs/TSs. I am 52, 5'7", 115 lbs., and wear size 6 clothing. I am interested in photography, collecting '50s rock & roll records, and dressing as my feminine self whenever possible. #1523

Merry Point, VA: Samantha Louise, 76 (going on 50), MWM, retired engineer. Interests: Amateur radio, Rotary, sailing, woodcarving. Attended "Holiday En Femme" in Chicago, "Coming Together" in Houston, "Southern Comfort", "Fall Harvest". Member of Virginia's Secret, DCEA, IFGE, Tri-Ess. Editor of "Secrets", newsletter for Virginia's Secret. Out of the closet since June 1991 and making up for lost time. #1416 T.W. Winternitz, P.O. Box 73, Merry Point VA 22513

Seattle, WA: Rose C'est La Vie, neophyte CD, seeking friendship, guidance and amusement. Divorced, 40, and just now learning the art of dressing. Interests include art (read art history, collect Northwest art), baseball, literature and music. I am a lawyer, taking a landscaping class, and write short stories. #1521 J. Hamilton, P.O. Box 2346, Seattle WA 98101

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HOTLINES

These hotlines are run by non-profit organizations, and may not be answered "live" at all times as a result. Listings followed by % are for groups known to be sexually-oriented; listings followed by # are for primarily TS-oriented groups; listings followed by @ are for heterosexual TV/CDs only. Most other listings are for "open" (both TV/CD and TS) groups. While we make every effort to keep this listing updated, phone numbers may change without notice. If you find an incorrect listing, please let us know!

NEW ENGLAND REGION:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 371-6292
East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 477-6588 %
Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
Harriet Lane's TV Set, CT: (203) 237-1968
Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
Long Island Femme Expression: (718) 446-6753
Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (201) 794-1665 ext 332
My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
Pink Flamingoes, Boston: (617) 536-5639
Renaissance Education Ass'n.: (215) 630-1437
Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (215) 946-8887
Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 641-3782
Rhode Island Society, Newport: (401) 847-1035
Tiffany Club, Boston: (508) 358-2305
Transgenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 781-0257
Transsupport, Portland: (207) 676-5870
Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:

American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
Atlanta Gender Explorations: (404) 962-3118 #
Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914
Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 982-7678 @
Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
Reality, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 685-9254
Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 741-1187

MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
Chicago Gender Society: (312) 434-5445
City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minn'pls: (612) 229-3613
Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 381-8887
Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648
Gender Dysphoria Support, Shawnee Mss'n: (913) 371-0658 #
Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (317) 894-8109
Iowa Artistry, Cedar Rapids: (319) 842-2654
N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #

Quad-City Society for Sex. Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 567-8615
Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024
SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:
Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 545-3668
CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 261-3253 @
Eta Tau Chapter Tri-Ess, Austin: (210) 438-7604 @
First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-3553
Heart of Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381
Help Me... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 404-1926
ReCast, Dallas: (214) 641-4842 #
Second Image, Austin: (512) 778-5460
Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Couples: (210) 438-7788 @
TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #
Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 988-8064 @
Tri-Plex Gender Association, Waco: (817) 867-1077

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071
Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 774-8463
Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #

THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
American Transsexual Education Center: (213) 469-4709 #
Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317
CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @
Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4112
Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
Powder Puffs of Orange County, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
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Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
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CANADA:

Canadian Crossdressers Club, Toronto: (416) 921-6112
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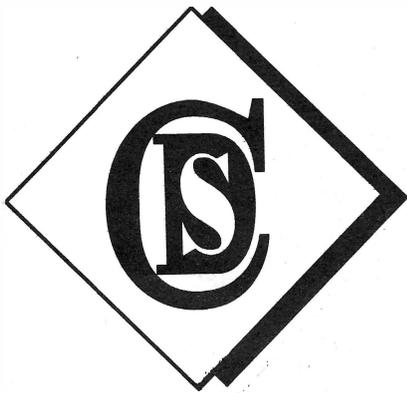
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