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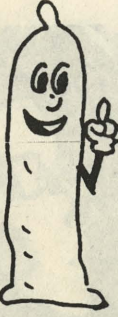









Gender **EXPRESSIONS**

February 1989



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Letter from the Publisher

Larry Latex Sez:  PUT A SOCK ON IT!	Larry Latex Sez:  PUT A SOCK ON IT!	Larry Latex Sez:  PUT A SOCK ON IT!
Larry Latex Sez:  PUT A SOCK ON IT!	Dear friends, AIDS is no laughing matter. Larry Latex is our way of reminding you to take safer precautions in your personal life. Don't trade a few moments of pleasure for a life of regret.	Larry Latex Sez:  PUT A SOCK ON IT!
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Welcome to *Gender Expressions*, an innovative publication designed to deal with gender issues in an empathetic, nonexploitative manner.

What are gender issues? By definition, it is believed to be **crossdressing** and **transsexualism**. [Don't worry if you are unclear as to what these terms mean, bear with us and the terms will be explained. - Janet] We believe the arena of gender issues to encompass much more than Gender Dysphoria itself.

There are differences in opinion regarding treatment, attitudes, and approaches to daily life in the so-called Gender Community. *Gender Expressions* will be an outlet for balanced discussion concerning these basic issues. This publication will also promote dialogue on other issues affecting the Gender Community and the general Community, such as rape, addictive behavior (drugs, alcohol), incest, physical abuse, pedophilia. We plan to present our material free of the usual sociological and psychological jargon - we will speak plainly and clearly.

The issues facing the spouses and families of gender dysphoric people are also of major importance to the staff of *Gender Expressions*. How we relate to ourselves influences the way we relate to our families. Many crossdressers, when

first "coming out" overemphasize their need to be their feminine selves to the extent that their feminine expression overshadows every other consideration in their lives. Thus, we intend to offer information and articles in support of the "significant others".

That's the main course intended for readers of *Gender Expressions*. For "dessert", we plan to publish **fiction, satire, poetry, cartoons, and humor** - all relevant to the major theme of *Gender Expressions*. The dessert cart will further serve the reader up to date **listings of Gender organizations** nationwide, with a capsule description of services provided, contact information, and membership fees (if any). **Personal Friendship ads** will be accepted (instructions and fees are listed elsewhere in this issue). These ads are to be nonsexual in nature and are subject to rejection by the advertising staff if the guidelines for advertisers are violated. The cost of these Friendship ads has been set to defray the cost of administrating the forwarding service only.

Gender Expressions wants to be present for the many gender dysphoric people or their spouses or families, who need a resource to refer to in their quest to understand their "uninvited dilemma".

We intend to discuss gender issues with class and style. We

further intend to be available for purchase in legitimate bookstores and newsstands alongside publications such as *Psychology Today*.

We will work with University Psychology and Sociology departments on a nationwide basis to have our material used in classes where appropriate.

We have gathered a distinguished list of helping professionals who will advise and consult us on issues raised by our contributors and readers.

Letters from our readers: your input is vital to the success of *Gender Expressions*. Although it may not be possible to print every letter we receive, we will make every effort to reply to your letters in a timely fashion. In addition, we **WILL** print both the complimentary **AND** the critical letters. We want all points of view to be heard. Let us know when we do good; let us know when we screw up. Future plans include a type of Reader Feedback card and polling system.

This, our first issue, is just a sample of *Gender Expressions'* potential. Let us know what features meet your needs, what we have left out, and what you could live without. We respect your opinion.

- Siobhan Donovan

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SPECIAL THANKS to Board members for their support

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

Gender Expressions is a serious forum for balanced discussion about issues concerning the Gender Dysphoric individual.

The founders of *Gender Expressions* came together with a singular purpose in mind: the creation of a publication with high professional standards which would address specifically the informational needs of the Gender Dysphoric community.

It was distressing to us that the only national non-sexually-oriented publication with the stated purpose of serving the Gender Dysphoric community had two serious flaws -

1. it was no longer publishing according to any set schedule of issue (that anybody could discern), and
2. it was generally available only in adult book stores

It is very limiting to restrict your target audience, by default, to patrons of adult book stores. In many instances, a Gender Dysphoric individual may not be inclined to seek out such information in an adult bookstore at all. Furthermore, the other material available in that setting is misleading and unreliable at best. (Referring of course to the sexually oriented material that is that type of establishment's stock in trade.)

The most horrible feeling for a Gender Dysphoric attempting to sort out their uninvited dilemma is the feeling of isolation. *Gender Expressions* can attempt to mitigate that isolated feeling by providing a more accessible forum for discussion of gender issues for ALL interested parties.

Since the goal is for *Gender Expressions* to be generally available, it is conservative in design. Someone buying a copy of this publication should not feel stigmatized by the choice of reading material. Therefore, photos will be reproduced solely in the context of a news article.

To further lend credibility to this project, we have established a Board of Advisors. Our Board of Advisors is composed of respected professionals having experience with issues relevant to the Gender Dysphoric. Our contributors, respected members of the Gender Dysphoric community, professionals, interested individuals, Feminists, activists, and conservatives, represent varying points of view within that community.

We are hopeful that as *Gender Expressions* grows, it will be as widely distributed as other specialty publications such as *Psychology Today*.

Your support is crucial to the success of *Gender Expressions*. It's time to cease sniping at what others have failed to do. It's time to push forward with *Gender Expressions*. We have the capability to make this dream a reality. **Won't you join us?**

Editorial Policy and Guide for Submissions

Janet Christon

The stated policy of *Gender Expressions* is to foster the free and unbiased exchange of information, opinion, and resources for the Gender Community and helping professionals. To that end, submissions from the readership are encouraged. Your article must not be libelous nor sexual in content; other than that, you have free rein in your original article, reporting, fiction, opinion, humor, poetry, or artwork. For a more detailed explanation of submission requirements and a *Gender Expressions* release form, send a SASE (Self addressed, stamped envelope) to *Bisley Enterprises, 6A Glenville Ave. Allston MA 02134*.

Articles must be submitted typewritten and double spaced (or equivalent on a PC printer). In addition, you may accompany the printed material with an ASCII file of the article on a 5 1/2" MS-DOS disk or a 3 1/2" 720k MS-DOS disk. Please include return postage if you wish the disk(s) returned.

Included with your submission must also be a completed *Gender Expressions* release form (available from the above address).

Alphabet Soup Explained

If you're puzzling out this alphabet soup we have here, help is on the way. Here's a guide to those little abbreviations sprinkled liberally throughout the text of this publication. The abbreviations are not intended to demean anyone, they are used by the initiated to save time. We will be collecting more as we go on, so this list will be updated regularly.

AN	androgynous
BF	born female
CD	crossdresser
FTM	female to male
GG	genetic girl
MTF	male to female
RLT	real life test
SO	significant other
SRS	sex reassignment surgery
TG	transgenderist
TV	transvestite
TS	transsexual

One of the ways to control thought is to create a debate that appears to embrace many opinions, but actually stays within very narrow margins. You make sure that both sides in the debate accept certain assumptions - and that those assumptions are the basis of the propaganda system. As long as everyone accepts the propaganda system, then debate is permissible.

- Noam Chomsky

CRITICAL EXPRESSIONS: open debate

This is the first in *Gender Expressions* series of debates on issues relevant to us all. What is under discussion here is the concept of a closed membership policy fostered by **Tri Ess** (with membership limited to heterosexual crossdressers only) as opposed to an open membership (with membership open to all people dealing with gender issues). This particular issue surfaced in the form of an editorial published in *Renaissance News* and an article printed in *Alpha Zeta / A Rose Newsletter*.

Tri Ess, founded by Virginia Prince, was the first national organization of its kind, with membership limited to heterosexual crossdressers only, and was originally called **Tri Sigma**, the Society for the Second Self.

Renaissance Educational Association began over one year ago as a regional support group open to membership by all gender people and their friends. Renaissance has grown both in size and reputation since then. The Association is now chartering regional Renaissance chapters, and is qualified under 501(c)(3) as a non-profit organization.

The position in favor of closed organizations is being discussed by **Eileen McCleary**. She is a Tri Ess member in long standing, and is active in the Gender Community, and is a contributor to *Gender Expressions*.

The position in favor of open organizations is taken by **Joann Roberts**. She is a founder of Renaissance Educational Association, has appeared on local and national television and radio programs dealing with gender issues, has written *Art and Illusion - a Guide for Crossdressers*, is editorial director of Renaissance Newsletter, and runs Creative Design Services, sponsors of an annual Poconos outing.

It is our obligation to give both views of this issue fair exposure. The second installment with rebuttals from both writers will be published in our next issue. Your letters concerning this issue are encouraged, and will also be published in our next issue.

- Janet Christon

PRO: open groups

JoAnn Roberts, Ph.D., founder and first Managing Director of the Renaissance Education Association, Inc., a tax exempt, non-profit organization.

A quick True/False test on "open" groups and their members.

1. Open groups conduct regular sex parties:
2. Open groups have no "code of conduct":
3. Open groups have no security or confidentiality:
4. Open groups are immoral, amoral or somehow less moral:
5. Open groups have no concern for spouses or family:
6. Open groups try to convert TVs to TSs and vice versa:
7. Open groups try to convert heterosexuals into homosexuals:
8. Heterosexual TVs & gay/asexual TVs have nothing in common:
9. Heterosexual TSs & gay/asexual TSs have nothing in common:
10. TVs and TSs have nothing in common:

Answers are at the end of this opinion piece.

When I first came "out", my exposure to the gender community was through Joyce Dewhurst Pocono Fantasy Weekends and Lee Brewster TV parties. In those environments I met many, many people with a diversity of gender expressions. Some were transvestites. Some were transsexuals. Some were transgenderists. Some were heterosexual. Some were bisexual. Some were homosexual. Almost all were open and friendly. I learned something about myself from each of those people I met. I could see

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CON: closed groups

This is Eileen McCleary's article in favor of closed gender groups. Eileen chose to reply to Wendi Pierce's article which appeared in *Alpha Zeta & A Rose News* (and was reprinted in *Rosebuds*).

End of an Era - or Beginning?
Eileen McCleary (Tri-Ess CA-1771)

I read with great interest the article by Wendi Pierce regarding her feelings about Tri-Ess. Although I can't speak for Tri-Ess in an official capacity, I am a current member - nearing the end of my fourth year, I do have regular contact with the national office, and I have regular contact with a number of active members across the country. Therefore, I think I can speak knowledgeably.

If Wendi thinks that Tri-Ess is going through a difficult time over the membership policy, it is probably because she doesn't understand the role of Tri-Ess in the Community (in the "grand" scheme of things). Tri-Ess was formed to serve a very specific portion of the crossdressing community: the heterosexuals. There are myriad enterprises (I can't bear to call many of them "organizations") out there to serve the other elements of the Community.

Our chosen segment has its special needs for which Tri-Ess already struggles to meet - too often, in recent years, unsuccessfully. It ill behooves us, then, to undertake the service of a broader segment of the Community with needs even more divergent. In trying to expand the range of interests which we serve, we might well fall prey to the same stresses which destroyed the GGA. We cannot be all things to all people of the Community; if we try such an approach, we are inviting failure.

At a time when the Community as a whole is beginning to get some recognition, if not yet some respect, what is most important is for Tri-Ess to remain true to its founding principles and give its best efforts to more fully serving its target segment. If any expansion is justified, it is in the area of wives/significant others. Too many unions involving CDs are failing,

(Continued on page 8, col 2)

how I was both different and alike to them. Each person I met respected my right to be an individual, different from themselves. I made, and to this day maintain, many valuable friendships in this heterogeneous community.

In creating the framework for Renaissance, I wanted to capture that environment of diversity so that each newcomer would have the same opportunities that I had to compare and contrast themselves against a wide range of gender expressions. So many people just coming out are desperately seeking acceptance and asking themselves, "Where do I fit in here?" New people, knowing that they don't have to fit a predetermined mold to be accepted as a member, are more willing to come out, be supported and, in turn, be supportive. With an open policy, we need not worry about classifications and labels. Each person is free to discover who they are and what is comfortable for them.

An open policy works positively for our outreach activities. Non-discrimination is the cornerstone of our non-profit status with both the state and federal governments. Without it we would never have been recognized as a tax exempt, publicly supported organization. That recognition provides us with entrees into referral sources that might otherwise be closed to us. We are regularly given free ad space in both daily city newspapers and several weekly local papers. We are listed by both professional and community switchboard information services and with the local Bell Directory Assistance. Many crossdressers and transsexuals, when first seeking help, often go to gay/lesbian information sources. When they get there, if they ask about transgender information they are referred to us. Were we to be discriminatory in our member admissions, we would lose this valuable referral service.

Conversely, receiving such wide area exposure means that we receive an extraordinary amount of mail and phone calls (about 50 new inquiries a month) from people interested in cross-gender behavior. The majority of these inquiries are those seeking peer support for themselves or a family member. For those people seeking sexual gratification, they are told of our non-sexual nature and after describing our meeting format, they usually decline to attend. If possible, they are directed to other resources in the area more appropriate to their needs.

8 (Continued on page 9, col 1)

which otherwise might have benefited from decent support of both partners' needs. There are also many CDs who live frustrated lives because they can't share their feminine side with their partner in a comfortable (for both of them) environment. These are matters which Tri-Ess can address within the scope of its mandate.

What then of the "fractionation" of resources that concerned Wendi? May I suggest that we look at it as a matter of specialization, not diversification? One of the reasons given by Merissa S. Lynn for the formation of IFGE was to provide an "umbrella" organization (I use that term guardedly) which could help the various support groups to coordinate with each other, while maintaining their uniqueness. I suspect that the Community will not be well served by its components becoming homogeneous. Rather, it will be best served by a variety of supporting entities, each catering to the special needs of its target group - each working in harmony with the others, to yield a unified front on major public issues.

If Wendi feels "excluded", let her remember that she chose her life direction, already aware of the Tri-Ess membership policy. Maybe she needs to look at the matter from a different angle. Yvonne Cook of IFGE described Tri-Ess to me as another closet, to which I replied: maybe, but a much larger closet, and with a window! Folks can come out of their tiny personal closets, and try flexing their wings. They can look out and if they like what they see, they can move on. Remember, a very large number of those in the CD Community "emerged" by way of Tri-Ess. Most of the groups, chapters, and fellowships of CDs can trace their roots to a Tri-Ess chapter. The TVIC's of ten years ago were "independent" - of Tri-Ess!

Over the years, some members have stayed, others have moved on. Some consider themselves to have moved UP, to TS - or whatever. Maybe they felt that they had "graduated" from Tri-Ess. OK, maybe so. So, should I feel "excluded" if I am no longer eligible to participate in activities of the high school I attended some years back?

What concerns me in particular is that Wendi doesn't seem to recognize that she has been involved in one of the solutions to the dilemma which she articulated. Both her (former) chapter, and the Houston chapter (formerly Tri Delta) have divided into

(Continued on page 9, col 2)

PRO

Since our main purpose is education and information, we rarely, if ever, send anyone away empty handed, nor do we ever condemn anyone for their chosen lifestyle.

Every modern text on human sexuality instructs us on the difference between gender identity / role and sexual preference. We ascribe to this theory of separateness and our membership policy is based on it. Our sole interest is in gender issues. Sexual preference is a personal matter and is treated with the same confidentiality as one's home address.

Our open policy helps us to maintain member continuity. As Dr. Richard F. Docter describes in his new book, "Transvestites and Transsexuals: toward a theory of cross gender behavior", there are a certain percentage of transgendered males who begin as transvestites and eventually present as transsexuals. In an "open" group, there is no organizational problem with these people. They need not leave the group. They simply move from one special interest forum (TV) to another (TS) within the overall framework of the support structure. An open policy allows a large, diverse membership and, therefore, the viability of the group does not hang on the sustained participation of only a few people. The overall framework continues to exist while members may take advantage of the special interest forums as they deem necessary.

Another factor which helps to sustain us is our management team. The original Renaissance Board of Directors included both TV and TS (post-op), as well as gay and straight. These individuals set the "tone" for the group, insuring that all interests would be served equally. In actual practice, this is not always the case, but it is always the goal.

For Renaissance, an "open" membership policy is the foundation upon which our success has been built. It has allowed us to engage in an aggressive outreach program through avenues that would otherwise be unavailable. It has allowed us to grow in numbers as our members grow in self-awareness. As a result, we have signed over 230 members in 18 months and our monthly meetings draw from 70 to 90 people each month, consistently. Our members include TV (M-to-F & F-to-M), TS (M-to-F & F-to-M), undecided transgendered persons, spouses, family members and professional counsellors. In all this

CON

parallel groups, each to serve the needs of their members - with some overlap in membership - somewhat like "beginners" and "advanced" CD societies. In Houston, GCTC and Tau Chi now work together in relative harmony, including some jointly sponsored activities. It appears a like situation exists between Alpha Zeta and A Rose. From the sound of things, this may also occur with Delta Chi of Ventura, CA. This is not fractionation, it is growth.

We do not need to all be the same to work (and play) together in a kind, loving, harmonious manner.

Future expressions:

Relating to the Spiritual - reconciling religion and crossdressing

Feminist thoughts on Gender Issues

Report on the State of the Gender Community

What Support Groups Should Be Doing

Controlling the Obsession

Joann Roberts' monograph on Gender Definitions

Interviews with Community Leaders

Reviews of significant publications

time, we've never had to ask anyone to leave a meeting for inappropriate conduct. Our "code of conduct" is implicit in our philosophy and format, and explicit in our literature: respect the rights of every individual to be different and conduct yourself accordingly.

All answers to the quiz are FALSE. If you answered TRUE to any question, you should attend a meeting of an open group to get the answers for yourself and not fall prey to dogmatic rhetoric.

On the Inside: a personal account by Carmen M.

A lesson well learned is well remembered; a wise man can learn from a fool but a fool cannot learn from anyone.

I've seen and experienced the fast life in the streets as I've survived 14 years in the darkness of prison life. This is not a boast, on the contrary, it is an observation of the traps found on the streets and behind the prison walls that some people are faced with being a crossdresser or exhibiting feminine ways. I would like to reach out to the youths who are different from the norm and let them know that they are not alone but whatever they do stay off the streets. The streets are a sure way to prison.

I understand the difficulties in realizing that one is of the wrong gender: who do you talk to about this when you're 13 years old, your parents? I don't think so, most parents can't deal with that. Some people try to suppress the urge to let their feminine side free because of the fact that one's parents might not love them any more, might think them sick or some kind of freak. This is a most confusing time. You want some answers but you don't know where to look or who to ask. Water seeks its own level and birds of a feather flock together, so a person confused about his gender will start looking in the streets for someone who could

please tell him what the hell is going on! Here is where the danger lies -- the streets.

Our city streets have parasites, vultures and any other deviant you can think of, lurking in the shadows awaiting anyone they can exploit. I remember seeing what was called a "drag queen"; I later learned from an older person what that was and I sought out this drag queen downtown. I was fortunate because this preop transsexual wasn't into victimizing kids. She was able to tell me a little about these feelings and thoughts I was having. She really didn't have much time to talk to me but would every now and then. It was by her that I was made aware of how kids were tricked into doing things like selling their bodies out on the street.

Most queens on the street have pimps, when a youth engages these girls in conversation it is seen. The pimp is already interested by just seeing a kid in that neighborhood in the first place. These guys are masters of psychology and deceit. They have hundreds of ways to ensnare a kid into prostitution, drug addiction and death. They don't have any regard for anything but a dollar and will go to any lengths to catch you in their web.

I was fortunate as I stated, but what of those who were not, are not and

will not be as fortunate as I was? Where do they have to go to find answers about these feelings that they have about themselves? How do we as responsible adults reach out to these youths, keep them off the streets and out of the clutches of people who will use and abuse them?

We need the involvement of the Community, the churches, social services and the police to reach out to the youths that need the understanding, compassion and most of all, the time to find out about themselves. We must be there for them when we are needed, before the streets and prisons find them. And you better believe that the streets transcend the prison walls.

Prison is a living nightmare to a young person who is a crossdresser or exhibits feminine ways. Here only the strong or the academy award type actors, survive. Any sign of weakness shown here is pounced upon by any means possible, kindness is taken as weakness, right is wrong and some people become animals. They feed upon each other just like a pack of wolves. If you arrive in a prison young, dumb, knowing no one and unprepared to kill the first person who approaches you sexually, you will eventually become someone's "boy". A "boy" is someone's slave, sexual and domestic. Boys are

bought and sold here like shares on the stock exchange. It is a nightmare for someone who is a TS or TV and finds themselves in prison. One has to play all of the macho games in here. One has to be aware of one's gestures at all times; the way you stand, walk, talk, sit, hold your hands, everything. The prisoners don't miss anything.

Anyone who is found to be different, nothing belongs to him but to anyone who is able to take the things away. The only difference between the streets and prison is that in prison your life is worth nothing. If you're killed here, who cares outside your family?

For a carton of cigarettes you can buy a "boy" or have someone killed. One has to keep in mind that nothing is unseen here, the walls not only have ears but eyes as well. Just doing time is stressful enough without having to keep a feminine side hidden. This is especially maddening when the feminine side is the dominant side. After a while you feel like you can't breathe.

I found solace when I stumbled upon the address of [a nationally known gender organization]. It was through my correspondence with a couple of members that helped me to turn this nightmare that I was living into a positive future. The outreach touched upon my life and brought into it peace of mind, acceptance of who I am and much love and concern. I have been fortunate in being reached, but I go back and wonder about those who have not.

Carmen is in the process of rebuilding her life and will be contributing further articles here.

EDITORIAL EXPRESSIONS: *Elitism*

Janet Christon

Welcome to the first issue of *Gender Expressions*. As the Editor and Design Director, I will function as your "hostess" to guide you through the world of *Gender Expressions*. In addition to coordinating the efforts of our nationwide base of contributors, writers and correspondents, I will be doing some writing myself. I am looking forward to hearing your suggestions, impressions and contributions. The staff will make every reasonable effort to be responsive to your needs. We are starting with an advantage - every member of the staff has or is dealing with a personal gender issue.

This month's editorial concerns self acceptance.

Self acceptance is perhaps the crucial detail in all our lives. Without it, all the support groups, helping professionals and outreach programs are useless. If we cannot accept that which is within ourselves, we doom ourselves to an intolerable existence, and those around us to misery as well.

As we live this life, we discover what it is about us that is different from others. When we finally discover "I'm like that" or "I have these feelings and desires", then in order for us to face up to them, we must give ourselves permission to have these feelings, permission to express these desires if we so desire.

So we experience a constant quest for self acceptance - which may come after years of denial - denying that we have these desires, thoughts

and feelings - and accept what we are. That may be all that one ever does. Or all that one ever need to do. Remember, the majority of people live their whole lives without ever questioning their gender or even thinking about it - taking it as a "given".

After self acceptance, some reveal their feelings to others significant to them. Again, it is a very complicated decision, to reveal this "secret" about one's self; and a calculated risk. What I've found personally is that an individual may accept the theoretical aspect of these feelings, but may have a different reaction when confronted with the reality of one's particular gender expression. Remember, though, once some things are said, they cannot be taken back.

Some more things that I feel need to be said:

There is a certain degree of elitism within the Community which, I suppose, is only a negative aspect of human nature. By drawing this situation to everyone's attention, I hope that at least some of this will come to a screeching halt.

The degree to which any of us realize their feelings should not confer upon us a "status" within the gender community. I say this at the risk of offending everybody. Does the fact that a person goes out in public fully attired as gender of choice make that person better

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The transsexual (TS) who is either in or contemplating the transition from one gender to the other will eventually be accused of hardness, selfishness, or similar - merely for making the transition itself. They should consider the source of the charges and the underlying meanings: no matter **who** makes them, such charges mean someone else would rather have a TS never alleviate her deep-seated needs and/or suffering, than to look at their **own** queasy sensibilities and preprogrammed notions. Each TS should be aware it's nearly inevitable that someone important to her, or that she must interact

a TS makes about who she is, and why she's doing what she's doing. Not statements in words so much as statements made in actions and the attitude she projects. The key is letting her inner convictions of her identity surface; and applying them consistently. None of the following should be construed as exact wording. (Though it might work at times.) With that in mind, some of these "attitude statements" a TS can make can be summarized as:

* My transition is not something I'm doing to you, or anyone else. I'm not trying to embarrass you, get back at you, or make your life

and unresolved forever: then I ask you, who is perverse?

* As a male, it wasn't really me. In some ways it was deceptive, and I've deceived you by living as such. Would you prefer I continue to live a life that is in itself a deception?

* I am in no way ashamed of who I am, what I am, and what I'm doing about it. Why do you act like you expect me to be ashamed?

* Knowing what you know about me, my condition, and what I must do about it (as mentioned above),

GENDER POLITICS we can be proud sisters...

Jan Redbear

with, will pull away. Again, for the same reasons.

Appeasing someone else on any part of the transition can make them feel justified in making additional demands on you not to go through with it at all. They may call it "compromise", which in this case is a weasel-word for what amounts to giving in and giving up. The attitude, though not necessarily the exact wording, is something like: -- "You gave in on *this*, so why insist on *that*, or *that*, or the *next thing*", ad infinitum...

What's the antidote to this attitude? There aren't any surefire "magic words". The antidote's in statements

miserable. If I wanted to, I could certainly think of ways to do so that wouldn't put *me* through all the hassles I'm facing.

* This is no whim, fantasy trip, or something I'm doing for kicks. I'm coming to grips with some deep-seated problems, and long-standing pain. I did not choose to be a TS any more than you chose not to be a TS.

* This isn't perverse, for the same reason it isn't a whim. I know exactly what my problems are; and I'm trying to solve them and relieve the constant pressure I've felt until now. If you'd have me back off, and live with it constantly present

your uncaring/hostile/etc. attitude indicates a problem much worse than transsexualism ever could be. That's by no means a complete list, but it's a start.

One question transsexuals must deal with repeatedly is, "How fast should I make this transition?" If you feel you're going too fast, then you **probably** are. Same for feeling you're going too slow. Something to watch for: someone influencing you to change your transition speed to one you're uncomfortable with. Look for motives. On a speedup, see if it's to get you going faster than you can; and possibly stumble. Also make sure that counseling caution or a slowdown isn't really

part of an agenda to put obstacles in your path. Both happen.

The TS, on her own part, must examine her own motives closely, and make sure her reasons for inaction or not going forward with the transition aren't just excuses.

You may, like many TSs, live in fear of not being able to handle it when asked about the changes in your appearance, dress, or behavior during the transition. If someone just comes out and asks you, you *could* concoct a cover story to explain it away, using the highly-praised "partial truths" technique which is so inspirational to some these days. That's also a partial lie, OR twisting truth itself to create a deceptive impression. In psychological warfare and propaganda there's a special name for that -- "**THE BIG LIE**"...

If it's as hard for transsexuals to cover their tracks as has been suggested, that "partial truths" structure will crash down sooner or later anyway. And then, either truthful explanations are required -- or more "partial truths" to prop it up until the next, larger crash. A losing game. The "winners" only defer losing for a while...

Or, if someone just comes out and asks, you could just COME OUT. And tell them. And why not?

IT REALLY IS OK TO BE A TS!

It's fine to be out and proud. There's nothing so disgusting about TSism that requires it to be hidden, evaded, or swept under the rug, is there? Some do counsel TSs to pretend to be something other than a TS: and if she can't, then just make up something. You hear it from

individual TSs, and even hear it in support groups, in gender programs, and from "professionals" who supposedly do everything in our best interest.

Hey-- no matter who the source is, that's an oppressionist view: that we must not acknowledge in any way who and what we are. Except maybe in certain circumstances, and in some "safe spaces" (i.e.: contained spaces...) -- designated TS areas. It keeps us safely in the closet, unable to really break out, and fearful to work publicly with each other and those who'd support us. In the end, the "blend in and cover-up" game, and the "melt away and lie about it" game, no matter who plays them - even a TS - keep us ALL down. Weak and isolated, at the mercy of those who'd like us to stay that way.

A big choice for TSs. We can carry our closets inside us and be isolated clones, each looking out only for themselves.

Or we can be proud sisters...

This article originated on an electronic bulletin board dedicated to the discussion of Gender Issues. I prevailed upon Jan to allow us to publish it, what she has to say is food for thought and basis for discussion. I also promised Jan that we wouldn't "plunder" her bulletin board messages again. We shouldn't have to, because Jan has agreed to be our Political Editor. She is gathering a group of writers and correspondents to work with her. We are very excited that she and her friends are joining our effort.

- Janet Lynn Christon

Editorial Continued:

than the individual who may only go as far as to wear panties at home? Is a person undergoing RLT in preparation for SRS better than a girl who is "only" a TV, or a girl whose life situation will not allow her to even consider undergoing counseling and RLT?

I say only that these people are all different, not better.

The individual who goes out, fully "dressed" and madeup, is not intrinsically better than the individual who will not crossdress in front of others, even in a controlled situation. A transsexual is not better than a transvestite, just different. And just as human.

A person who has truly accepted themselves for what they are, will also accept others for what they are.

Thank you for listening to me. I love you all. Now getting down from the soapbox.

Faced with the internal struggle for ethical autonomy and the external pressure to conform, good, honest men bend themselves into pretzel-like configurations to stay on speaking terms both with their consciences and with the power establishment.

-Thomas M. Franck,
Resignation in Protest

FUTUREVIEW

FutureView - My personal wish list of where we could and should be going.

Joann Roberts

The following was written by Joann Roberts and distributed electronically via a gender support bulletin board system. I feel that the concepts presented deserve greater exposure and discussion. The piece is being published here courtesy of CDS.

For further information on accessing Gender Support Bulletin Board Systems, send a SASE requesting the Gender BBS Paper to Electronic Media ARTS, PO Box 150, Concord NH 03302-0150.

- **Civil Rights for TSs and TVs:** Guaranteed equal protection under the law against discrimination on the basis of gender-role, not physical sex or sexual preference.
- A gender-oriented BBS (Electronic Bulletin Board System) with a 1-800 toll free number.
- A national gender-oriented newspaper, not a sex rag. Start out monthly and eventually move it to a weekly.
- A national gender archive for books, articles, cartoons, other printed matter, videos, tapes, etc.
- A program to help TV and TS prostitutes get off the street. Teach job skills and provide job placement with sympathetic and knowledgeable employers.
- A voice in setting guidelines for TS reassignment.
- A proactive campaign against exploitation of our community.
- A national organization that has credibility **outside** the community.
- Removal of transvestism and transsexualism from the DSM-III-R. We are NOT mentally ill.
- A video tape produced by the community about the community for use on Public Television stations.
- More communication with lesbian, gay and feminist groups so that we learn more about ourselves and each other.
- More leaders, less rulers.

Editorial response

Janet Christon

I agree with Joann's presentation of goals for the gender community. She touches on virtually all of the issues that were discussed by the founders of Bisley Enterprises, publisher of *Gender Expressions*. (The majority of Bisley's participants are transsexually inclined.) We have developed short and long range goals. We have developed a business plan to achieve these goals.

Our first goal is to make *Gender Expressions* a vehicle for timely, accurate communication within the gender community. To support that, a cash generating business (private mailboxes) is being established by Bisley Enterprises. By treating the entire project as a BUSINESS, we can ensure that it will be self perpetuating, and not dependent on any charismatic leader. *Gender Expressions* will serve as a base for other outreach projects to follow.

I will respond to Joann's "wish list" explaining what Bisley's plans are for each item.

- Guaranteed equal protection under the law: **the current lobbying effort for the Gender Community is NIL.** We plan to work with local gender organizations to effect SOME type of lobbying effort.
- Gender oriented BBS with toll free number: as Bisley's finances permit, we plan to have an IBM Clone running QuickBBS, dedicated to a gender oriented message only BBS. If finances permit, an incoming WATS number would be installed. A toll free line would limit the logon time to about 15 minutes, though.

FUTUREVIEW

- National gender oriented newspaper: Though we call it a magazine, you're holding it in your hands. Non-sexual. We're bimonthly now, but we do plan one of two things: either (1) increase frequency of issue, or (2) publish a supplementary newsletter between *Gender Expressions* issues.
 - National Gender Archive: could we all work on this one together?
 - **Job training and placement for TV/TS:** not only street people, but also those undergoing transition. Unfortunately, federal and state assistance or incentives for employers becoming involved in training / hiring of gender people is not forthcoming. It won't happen by itself. In the first place, gender people are not considered handicapped under federal guidelines (but ARE considered mentally ill as per DSM-III-R. And, unfortunately the Gender Establishment counsels TS clients to expect diminished job status and income. This needs to be changed. That type of change won't happen by itself. That's where some LOBBYING effort comes in. Goes hand in hand with GUARANTEED EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER LAW.
 - Voice in setting guidelines for TS reassignment: one of the subjects scheduled for open discussion in *Gender Expressions*. The current dictatorial attitude of the Establishment perpetuates invalid gender role stereotypes, and prevents some valid cases from obtaining treatment.
 - Proactive campaign against the exploitation of our community: First is to lead by example. An awful lot of trash publications are aimed at gender people and those fascinated by the anatomical contradictions found in some of us. A prodigious amount of trash television segments present us as a "freak show". *Gender Expressions* will show the world the realities of the gender community. We refuse to participate in their freak show. We will give you the information you need to fight back.
 - National organization that has credibility outside the community: we're open to suggestion. We know that such an organization DOES NOT EXIST TODAY.
 - Removal of TV/TS from definition of mentally ill: Another lobbying effort with the medical establishment. Our current status is "in between", considered "mentally ill" but not "handicapped"...
 - Video tape produced by the community, about the community, for use on public television stations: The Community does have the collective resources, nationwide, to make this a reality. Perhaps dialogue could begin on a cooperative effort to make this happen?
 - More communication with Lesbian, Gay, and Feminist groups so that we can learn more about ourselves and each other: Individuals from these three categories are developing articles which will be published in *Gender Expressions*. Their participation is welcome and encouraged, and in terms of the community, long overdue.
 - More leaders, less rulers: unfortunately, some organizations will be motivated by a charismatic leader and not organized as a business. Bisley is a business first.
- Added Wishes:
- Elimination of the experimental label on the diagnosis of transsexualism. This would remove one of the insurance carriers' objections to covering the cost of reassignment.
- If the above does not materialize,
- Group health insurance for TS people covering reassignment surgery.
- What the individual can do: make your voice heard when TV/TS situations are used on television or movies for shock value (example: hired killer crossdressed as disguise). Support your local TV/TS organization. Stay away from exploitative books, magazines, videos.

Estrogen Therapy for MTF Transsexuals

Barbara Chambers

This article was originally written for the *ETVC Newsletter* and later appeared in the newsletter of the Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose. Reprints are available for \$1.00 and SASE; write to: Barbara Chambers, 10765 Vera Av. Felton, Ca. 95018. (Jun. 15, 1988)

This issue I thought I'd digress from my usual "do it yourself" topics to something you should not "do yourself" - the use of estrogens by transsexuals. Most of this admittedly technical information I obtained from research at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center library, though literature is scarce on the subject even there.

Estrogens are powerful steroid hormones, chemicals which affect the form and function of the body and its organs. There are three basic human estrogens: **estradiol, estrone, and estrial**. Estradiol is the most active form and estrial is the least active. In women, large amounts of estrogen are produced by the ovaries, and in men a small amount is present due to chemical conversion of testosterone. Once you are grown and genetic male traits are fully developed, the only way your body organs have of knowing what sex you are is by the levels of male and female hormones which are present. Changing the hormone balance from male to female with drugs causes tissues which are supported by male hormones to diminish and stop functioning and those which are supported by female hormones to develop and begin functioning.

If your doctor has prescribed estrogens for you, it is probably in the form of **Estinyl** (ethinyl estradiol), **Premarin** (conjugated estrogens, a mixture of the three estrogens plus estrogen breakdown products) or **injections** (such as estradiol valerate). Though it would seem to be desirable, no suppository form of estrogen is available except as in the form of D.E.S., a drug which is not in

favor today. The most powerful single oral dose is the 0.5 milligram Estinyl tablet, but faster results can be obtained by using two or even all three of the Estinyl, Premarin, and injections. Any of the three will produce in time a certain amount of bodily feminization.

(Note: Premarin alone has been shown to be unable to reduce blood testosterone levels to a female normal, though Premarin alone does produce feminizing effects, albeit slowly. Also: generic Premarin has become suspect as to its quality, potency, and purity - many pharmacists discourage use of the generic, or suggest that dosages of the generic be increased relative to the dosage of the brand name Premarin product.)

The effects include breast development (usually slight to average development; occasionally nearly none or quite a lot, depending on genetics and body type), reduction in size and firmness of the testicles and prostate gland, some reduction and repatterning of body hair, softening of the skin, recontouring of the body due to accumulating layers of feminine body fat, a considerable reduction or elimination of (masculine) sex drive, and improved effectiveness of facial hair removal by electrolysis. Testosterone levels in the blood drop to very low levels due to effects of estrogen on the brain and directly upon the testicles.

Since testosterone tends to fuel the male emotional characteristics of aggression and competition, many patients report feeling more mild or tranquil. Reduction of male hormone levels may also clear up acne and excessively oily skin. Little or no changes in voice quality can be expected, though sometimes a slight increase in range is noted.

The cost of oral hormone supplements is not excessive. Typical prices are: Provera 10 mg. 100 units, \$40 (generic medroxyprogesterone HCL is much less.); Premarin 2.5 mg 100 units, \$45 (generic less but not

recommended); and Estinyl 0.5 mg 100 units, \$55 (no generic available). Injections may run \$15-40 plus office visit charges. Black market prices for the above begin at about three times the pharmacy cost.

Choice of an endocrinologist is best made by personal referral, either by a friend or therapist. The regimen and requirements of doctors varies widely, as does their level of experience in this very specialized field. Many doctors require concurrent counseling by a psychiatrist or psychologist. If you experience any dissatisfaction with your therapist or doctor, a consultation with another may produce different results.

There is little concrete knowledge of transhormonal therapy in the medical profession, and research on the subject is scarce - your doctor's expertise is probably mostly due to his or her experience. At the very least, your doctor should have good general experience in the administration, effects, and side effects of female hormones, and be aware of the **Standards of Care** (the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association criteria for surgical and hormonal treatment of transsexuals.)

Your doctor may be cautious in prescribing large amounts of estrogens to you if you have any of the following history or symptoms: high blood pressure, any heart disease or defects, clotting disorders such as phlebitis, stroke or cerebrovascular disease, liver function abnormalities, a history of heavy alcohol intake, kidney disease, migraine headaches or seizures, diabetes, family history of breast cancer, obe-

sity, or heavy smoking.

Periodic checkups with your doctor are required to spot early signs of certain dangerous conditions. Among these are: benign or malignant tumors of the liver, breast, pituitary gland (in the brain), and kidney, along with phlebitis and elevation of blood pressure. Heart attack (myocardial infarction) and stroke have been reported in relatively young transsexuals receiving estrogens, especially those with clotting disorders. Changes in a part of the prostate gland known as the **verumontanum** can cause blockage of the urinary tract after long term use - this must be corrected surgically. Lactation or discharge

"Many doctors require concurrent counseling by a psychiatrist or psychologist"

from the breasts can be a sign of a potentially dangerous pituitary gland condition.

Your doctor will administer periodic blood tests and may check the following: testosterone (should be less than 85 nanograms per 100 milliliters), prolactin (should be less than 45 ng/ml), liver function scans, and clotting time. He may also feel your breasts for lumps and listen to blood flow in your major veins and arteries.

Once you have been using estrogens for a year or more, **some effects may become irreversible**

even if estrogen intake is ceased. Certain chemical processes in the brain remain in a female pattern permanently, and changes in brain wave patterns have been reported. These effects may or may not be associated with emotional and personality changes. Breasts and female fat distribution may not subside after administration of estrogens, and sex drive may remain relatively low. For these reasons, it is important to be certain of your commitment to feminization of your body.

Sudden changes in dosage of estrogens, either increasing or decreasing, have been known to produce severe mood changes. The effects may be likened to going through menopause, puberty, and pregnancy at the same time. Lethargy, depression, anxiety, difficulty in concentration, headaches, abdominal cramping, nausea, and other symptoms have been noted for periods of days or weeks. It may be wise to change dosages as gradually as possible. (Despite what your doctor may tell you!)

Changes in metabolism are common, with weight gain, water retention, and increased appetite as the major effects. Estrogen reduces the ability of the body to eliminate certain drugs such as Valium so that smaller dosages of these medications become as effective as larger dosages were before. This is also true for alcohol so be sure to reassess your limits - this explains why the tolerance for alcohol of women is typically less than that of men. Any physician you deal with should know of any medications you are taking - with surgery this can be critical due to the effects of estrogen on the blood clotting rate.

After genital surgery, estrogen doses may be greatly reduced if the desired degree of feminization has been achieved. Since the testicles are now absent, it is no longer necessary to suppress testosterone production. Risk factors are believed to be in proportion to dosage, so the minimum effective dose is preferred for long term use. This means reducing dosage by a factor of one fifth to 1/20th of previous levels.

Risks of estrogen use can be minimized by having injections alone. Injections of Delestrogen, Estradurin, etc. cause the estrogen to enter the bloodstream directly, without the first pass through the liver. This means the liver works much less hard in metabolizing the estrogen, and can return to doing the normal work that the liver does in digesting food and eliminating toxins. Injections are given deep into the muscle tissue of the buttocks, once a week to once a month. The effects are similar to the higher doses of oral hormones, and sometimes it appears that feminization progresses further with injections than with orals. If the injections are done at a doctor's office, the costs may be about equal to the cost of oral pills - but individual doctors' rates and charges vary a lot in this area. Generally, an endocrinologist who prescribes injections can be persuaded to teach you to administer the injections yourself, with a short training session. By doing the injections yourself, and buying generic versions of the injectables, you can save up to 90% of the costs of oral hormones, making this by far the least expensive alternative.

If you are going to be using hormones the rest of your life, and wish the safest, most effective, and

cheapest method, then make self-injection your goal. It is thought that estrogens should be taken along with a progestin (a chemical with effects similar to progesterone) such as Provera (medroxyprogesterone). A progestin will tend to maximize breast development due to enlargement of the milk sacs themselves (as opposed to breast fatty tissue) and will approximate more closely the natural female hormone balance. A more natural hormone balance may provide some shielding against some of the hazards mentioned previously. Also progestins greatly reduce male sex drive.

I could find no agreement in the literature as to the recommended dosage but higher dosages seem to pose no known risk. REAL progesterone in the form of capsules is now available, but rather expensive (\$1.25 to \$5.00 per daily dose). Real progesterone is available as an injection also, at a very low price - the disadvantage is that the effects last only 3-4 days, so an injection twice a week might be

called for. Real progesterone has ALL the benefits of progesterone, instead of only some of them as with progestins.

Most doctors who give injections use Delalutin (hydroxyprogesterone caproate) instead of real progesterone, but the TS giving herself her own injections might consider using real progesterone instead, because of the reduced costs. Proper medical management of estrogen administration can reduce the hazards and maximize the benefits of transhormonal therapy. It makes good sense to know the facts and follow medical advice when using these powerful drugs.

Reprints of the Standards of Care are available by sending a #10 SASE to Gender Expressions, 6A Glenville Ave, Suite 241, Allston MA 02134.

Our thanks to Barbara for permitting us to publish her research here. We appreciate the time and effort she spent in writing this article.



AHFS 6E

CAUTION: Federal law prohibits dispensing without prescription.

DELESTROGEN® Estradiol Valerate Injection USP

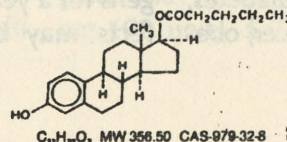
WARNING

1. ESTROGENS HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO INCREASE THE RISK OF ENDOMETRIAL CARCINOMA.

Three independent case control studies have shown an increased risk of endometrial cancer in postmenopausal women exposed to exogenous estrogens for prolonged periods.¹⁻³ This risk was independent of the other known risk factors for endometrial cancer. These studies are further supported by the finding that incidence rates of endometrial cancer have increased sharply since 1969 in eight different areas of the United States with population-based cancer reporting systems, an increase which may be related to the rapidly expanding use of estrogens during the last decade.

DESCRIPTION

Delestrogen (Estradiol Valerate Injection) contains estradiol valerate, a long-acting estrogen in sterile oil solutions for intramuscular use. These solutions are clear, colorless to pale yellow. Formulations (per mL): 10 mg estradiol valerate in a vehicle containing 5 mg chlorobutanol (chloral derivative/preservative) and sesame oil; 20 mg estradiol valerate in a vehicle containing 224 mg benzyl benzoate, 20 mg benzyl alcohol (preservative), and castor oil; 40 mg estradiol valerate in a vehicle containing 447 mg benzyl benzoate, 20 mg benzyl alcohol, and castor oil. Estradiol valerate is designated chemically as *estra-1,3,5(10)-triene-3,17-diol(17 β), 17-pentanoate*. Graphic formula:



A Look in the Mirror

A look in the mirror,
an image set forth.

A cosmetic sculpture of flesh and bone.

Be it so defined, it instantly construes the role I must undertake
in the caste-system of the world.

It defines what I am to like...

...leather or lace?

It defines what I am to wear...

...pants or dress?

It defines how strong I am to be...

...a lion or a kitten?

It defines who I am to love...

...a woman or a man?

But can't humans defy the natural? Defy the norms presented to them? Has not technology turned-the-tables on the limitations set forth from the Creator?

Ah, but a new question arises...

maybe not the obvious of "Who can I be?", but rather, a more simple question as spoken, yet holding a much deeper meaning --

"Who am I?"

"Who am I" Asked with no limitations. Asked in a world with no mirrors.

Be it so, there becomes a fascinating spectra of options.

Each becomes a designer... a designer of spirit.

To gather a combination of spices to dazzle one's home.

A body can be as strong as steel; while the heart can be as bendable and true as the purest of gold.

Curled and brushed, a made-up face, a delightful lacy dress...

all done with precision, to edify a beautiful being; but only for the proper time.

For the same spirit might rid herself of her stereotypical attire; unleashing her hair, cleansing her face, and pulling on her worn jeans, cut-off shirt, and leather jacket.

Either way, a fresh wind will dance through her hair...

gaily swishing her skirt into full rings as she walks through the park... reviving her being by the ushes of strength which hit her face, as she splits the air on her bike.

A woman be a woman.

A man be a man.

But what about a little of each?

But what about a world with no mirrors?

Michelle B.

August 4, 1986

Reader Response

As part of our effort to be of the most benefit to the Gender Community, each issue of Gender Expressions will include some type of reader response form. Information gathered will be used in designing and planning future issues. You will not be asked to identify yourself.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Age category 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56+

Do you consider yourself to be: Female Male TG TS TV
 (circle choice)
 Female to Male Male to Female Don't know

How much you spend per year on clothes for your "second self" \$ _____

Do you buy clothes primarily through Mail Order In person

If you buy mail order, which companies do you use? _____

If you buy clothes in person, do you shop at National dept store chain Regional dept store
 (circle all that apply) Boutique Specialty store

Consignment store Discount store

How much do you spend per year on cosmetics for your "second self" \$ _____

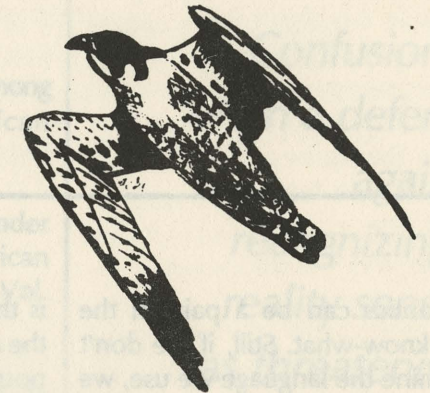
Do you buy cosmetics primarily through Mail Order In person

If you buy cosmetics in person, do you shop at National dept store chain Regional dept store
 (circle all that apply) Specialty store Cosmetics concession
 Drug store Discount drug store

What you liked or disliked about Gender Expressions: _____

Please return this form to
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Beyond Gender Dysphoria

Nicole Storm

Semantics can be a pain in the you-know-what. Still, if we don't examine the language we use, we can find ourselves saying things we don't intend to. Language shapes and is shaped by our attitudes; as the experience of the Women's movement shows, debates over semantics may be ponderous at times, but they are hardly irrelevant.

Gender Dysphoria is a phrase which deserves attention, I feel. Most of us are aware of this phrase, but are we really aware of what it means and (just as importantly) what it implies? As we shall see, when used as a synonym for transsexuality, it can have misleading and often damaging connotations. When used to describe a phase of a transsexual's experience, rather than as a psychological label, it does retain some usefulness; but when used improperly, it is pure psychobabble.

Let's begin with the word "gender", as the phrase does. Untold reams of paper, costing the lives of countless trees, have been used up in exposing the distinction between the words "sex" and "gender". Rather than take sides in this great debate, suffice it to say that there are differences in usage and definition. "Gender", for instance,

is the grammatical term used for the attribution of sexual identity to nouns, whether animate or inanimate. The Greek root is *genos*; meaning birth, race, kind or type; assimilated into Latin as *genus*; and closely akin to the French word *genre*, which is virtually interchangeable with the Greek *genos*. It could be (and has been) argued that transsexuals constitute a gender in ourselves; or rather two genders, one for male to female, and another for female to male transsexuals. In much traditional Native American thought, this is often the case; still, a male berdache is usually referred to in the feminine, and a female berdache in the masculine, except by Western anthropologists. [The term "Berdache" is likewise an invention of anthropologists and is not used by the Native American community to describe their gender people. - Janet] Gender as a category of sexual identity, and a person's gender membership, are dependent on cultural factors, rather than biological.

Now, let's look at the word "dysphoria". I've been unhappy with this end of the phrase in question for years. This seems appropriate, as Webster's defines

"dysphoria" as "a state of feeling unwell or unhappy". (Being labeled unwell or unhappy, simply by virtue of having been created with a transsexual nature, leaves me **semantically** dysphoric. But more on that later.) This word also comes from the Greek. In fact, the original word *dysphoros* comes to us virtually unchanged, except for the Latin suffix. It is a synthesis of *dys*, meaning "bad or difficult" (from the Sanskrit *dus*; same meaning); and *pherin*, meaning "to bear or carry". In short, the root of "dysphoria" means "hard to bear".

Well, I guess most of us can relate. When family, friends, employers, and even therapists insist on trying to shove us into a category we instinctively know we don't belong in, it can be pretty hard to bear. We know that we are being dealt with as a member of an inappropriate gender, and we are unhappy about this. If we proceed from the assumption that being comfortable and successful in gender role constitutes gender membership, however, then we can only be said to be gender dysphoric when we are in a gender role we are uncomfortable with. The other meaning, of being "unwell", is even more pernicious:

it labels transsexual nature as a disease. I'll discuss this further in another article, but for now, let's just say that to label a person sick simply by virtue of being different is a form of bigotry we need to look out for.

"Gender Dysphoria", properly used, is a perfectly descriptive phrase. The purpose of our transition is to move **beyond** gender dysphoria, to become acknowledged members of whatever gender we instinctively know we properly belong to. When we are adjusting well, and achieving success in whatever way we measure it, we cease to be gender dysphoric. We are at one with ourselves, spiritually whole, no longer at odds with our natures. To describe a person who has achieved this level of personal growth (whether operative, non-operative, post-operative, or pre-operative) as "dysphoric", is not only misleading, it is utterly ludicrous.

In summary, let me just state a proposition: Transsexuality is a state of being which has so far proved unalterable. Gender Dysphoria is a transitory condition in which a transsexual has difficulties coping with the realities of transsexual existence. In other words, a "gender dysphoric" is an unhappy transsexual. The rest of us are just transsexuals.

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Storm, Nicole "Cross Gender Behavior: An Ancient American Tradition", *Maine Progressive*, Vol. 2, #6, 1988

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Note: references made to sex/gender systems of Native North America are based on an extensive search of materials listed in William's bibliography. The reader should be advised that all generalizations, including these, should be taken with caution. Native American cultures are vastly different from one another, and anyone claiming to be an authority on "the Indians" as a whole sorely needs a lesson in humility. -N.S.

Addition to bibliographic references:

Midnight Sun (yes, that's really her name) "Sex/Gender System of Native North America" *Living the Spirit: a Gay American Indian Anthology*, St. Martin's Press, San Francisco, 1988

Confusion is
often a defense
against
recognizing a
reality sensed
as threatening.
If those who
are in
confusion are
also those who
are in power,
reality need
never be
perceived.

Diane Holman

RESOURCE GUIDE

This resource list was compiled from recent gender organization newsletters. Publisher assumes no responsibility for accuracy. If your group is not listed here, please send a group profile including type of organization, fees, contact person, and sample newsletter to: **Bisley Enterprises, 6A Glenville Ave. Suite 241, Allston MA 02134.**

Your group could be selected for a future group profile.

THE XX CLUB
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Springfield MA 01138

TRANSUPPORT
P.O. Box 17622
Portland ME 04101

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c/o Denise Mason
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c/o Ms Kimberly S. Grant
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Box 194
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Gender Community Advocates
c/o Ms Tauria Linala
512 W. Evergreen
Santa Maria CA 93454

ETVC
Box 6486
San Francisco CA 94101

Rainbow Gender Association
P.O. Box 700730
San Jose CA 95170

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Art and Illusion was written and published for the crossdresser by a crossdresser. Joann has been actively pursuing her art for over 20 years and she shares her methods and techniques in this book. Joann has appeared on the Phil Donahue show and on talk-radio. She is a frequent lecturer at universities on the subject of crossdressing. She is a cofounder of the Renaissance group in the Philadelphia area and has been voted "Best Makeup" winner at the Pocono Fantasy Weekends and has given makeup clinics there.

You'll learn everything you need to know to be the Woman you want to be!

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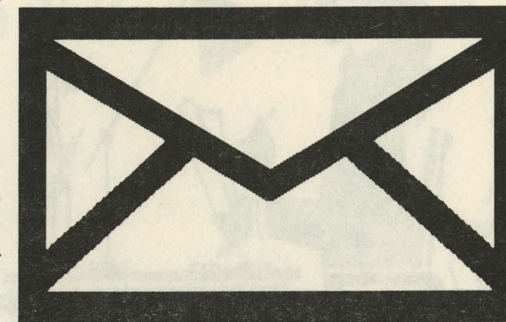
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