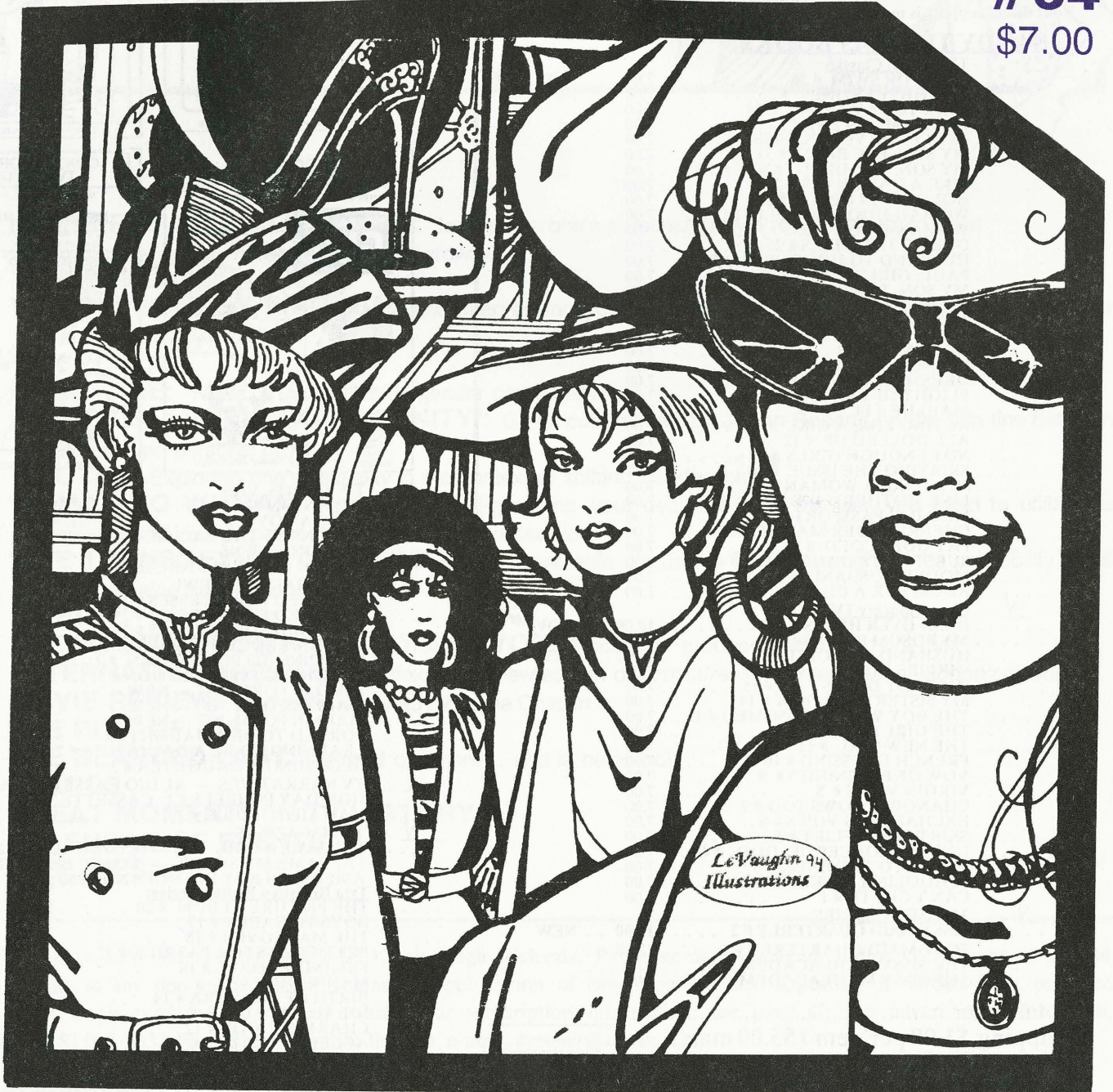


# CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#64

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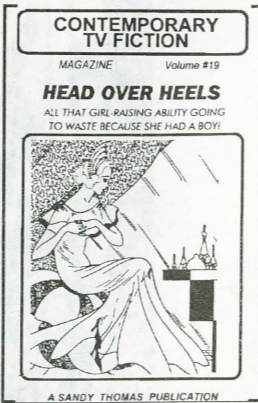
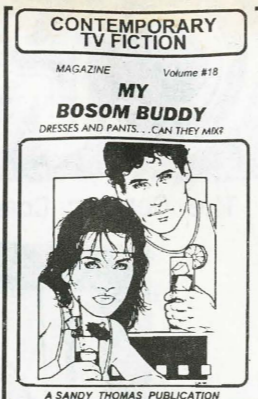
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# CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

FEBRUARY 1995  
 (ISSUE #64)



- 2 **KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD:** Sometimes, one's personal growth requires them to shed commitments they made earlier in that growth
- 3 **The NewsQueen**
- 7 **VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA:** You keep asking yourself "why" ... actually, you should be asking four versions of "why"
- 9 **VOX POPULI**
- 10 **NEWSWIRE:** News of the worldwide gender community
- 13 **"POLITICS: LIMITING COMMUNITY":** Guest commentary by JoAnn Roberts on the thin line between altruism and personal profit
- 15 **T NOTES:** Exploring one's sexuality in the context of shifting gender roles
- 17 **WOMAN TO WOMAN:** To avoid second-guessing your decisions after the fact, you need to utilize the resources at your disposal to help make a good decision
- 19 **"THE TRANSSEXUAL DYKE ISSUE":** A roundtable discussion by gay women on the probability of TS women being true lesbians
- 26 **HotBuzz**
- 29 **THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY AND YOU:** Discussion groups conducted by e-mail
- 31 **ALTERNATIVE PRESSES:** Review of the new edition of *Crossdresser's International Shopping Guide*
- 32 **MOVIE REVIEW: Stargate** reviewed by Diane Chaplin
- 33 **THE DIVA OF DISH**
- 34 **THE BEARDED LADY:** It's cold out there ... and in here, too!
- 35 **COMICS**
- 37 **GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY**
- 38 **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**
- 39 **HOTLINES**

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## KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

### THE AFTER-EFFECTS OF GROWING UP

by Kimberleigh Richards  
Publisher & Managing Editor

Some wise philosopher once said that "Life is about learning from experience". I believe that's even more true when you spend your life transgendered.

I will complete a half-decade of living full time as Kym this summer, and I spent over a dozen years getting to that transition in the first place. I learned a great deal about



**"More often than not ... growth takes you in directions you never anticipated when you started."**

myself in those years leading up to 1990, and I have learned even more in the five years since. However, the most important thing I have come to realize has nothing to do with my journey through the gender community, and that is to be true to yourself.

That seems so simple. After all, the very essence of being a crossdresser, a transgenderist, or a transsexual is to act upon one's internal feelings and to integrate them more fully into the person you present to the outside world. And this unification is most decidedly a growth process, added to by the events you experience as you express your transgendered nature. More often than not, though, that growth takes you in directions you never anticipated when you started exploring the nature of your internal feelings.

Such is the case with your humble correspondent.

Although my journey went from novice crossdresser to wanna-be transsexual (and I spent three years of my life exploring the transsexual option before deciding against it), and then to closet denial before joining Tri-Ess in 1987, it has resulted in my being in a place where I never imagined myself being. I am a genetic male, with the appropriate genitalia, yet I live as a woman and am even accepted by the lesbian community as one of their own.

I have also risen to a position of prominence within the gender community -- not necessarily "importance" -- as a result of my work with **Cross-Talk**, Tri-Ess, the Congress of Transgender Organizations, and California Dreamin'. This "brand name recognition" has resulted in my being invited to participate in this month's educational seminar on crossdressing and transgenderism sponsored by

California State University Northridge, and in being invited to be a workshop presenter at next month's IFGE convention in Atlanta. But with prominence comes a responsibility to the entire spectrum encompassed by the gender community, and it is there that I have encountered a dilemma.

My true roots in this community come from Tri-Ess: It wasn't until **after** I had explored transsexuality that I came to realize that there was such a thing as a "gender community", and since I was perceiving myself as little more than a crossdresser and knew that I was not attracted to men (in fact, that was the key

factor in my deciding that I was **not** TS; remember, the concept of a lesbian transsexual was frowned upon back in 1982, although it is accepted today), Tri-Ess was the perfect entry point to the community for me. Kimberleigh Richards and Tri-Ess have proven to be a good match over the past seven-plus years: Many of my accomplishments in this community have Tri-Ess as a foundation. The rebuilding of its flagship chapter, Alpha ...my service as a member of its board of directors, including serving as parliamentarian, budget director, and interim treasurer ... even **Cross-Talk** has its roots in Tri-Ess, having started life as a five page, bimonthly newsletter for a now defunct chapter.

The dilemma is that my need to serve the **entire** gender community has begun to place me at odds with my service to Tri-Ess. I have on more than one occasion found myself self-censoring my words and actions in order to keep from being misinterpreted, since I am also a Tri-Ess national officer. Just as Jane Ellen Fairfax is always known to be both the chairman of the Tri-Ess board of directors and a member of the IFGE board, so am I always known as a Tri-Ess officer and as the publisher of **Cross-Talk**. It matters not if either of us are speaking in those capacities or if we are not ... what we say and do will be automatically associated with the positions of prominence that we hold.

I can no longer censor myself. To do so limits my ability to serve the community. And thus I have had to make a difficult decision. Since I cannot easily shed my duties as publisher and editor, I must instead *(continued on page 14)*



## The NewsQueen

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

The estimated 6,000 transgendered folks in San Francisco got a **very** early Valentine's Day present from the city's Board of Supervisors; by a unanimous vote in December, the supervisors approved what is probably the nation's strongest ordinance to specifically protect the civil rights of transgendered people. The ordinance adds gender identity to the protected classes in the human rights law.

Under the law, transgendered residents of San Francisco are protected from discrimination in the areas of housing, public accommodation, employment, and social services. Similar ordinances exist in Seattle, Minneapolis, and Santa Cruz, Calif. But "our ordinance has teeth in it," says legislative analyst Shelley Elvira Salieri who helped write the San Francisco law.

Complaints will be heard by the city's Human Rights Commission. "We don't always have the power to enforce a remedy," said the commission's Larry Brinkin, "but we are usually pretty successful when we intervene in a dispute."

The new law came as the result of hearings last spring which documented the extent of discrimination against transgendered persons. Not surprisingly, discrimination occurred in many areas, ranging from medical care to law enforcement. But most of the complaints involved on-the-job discrimination.

However, the new law will not automatically wipe out all employment discrimination. This is because in California, only the state can enact civil rights in employment laws.

Salieri pointed out another of the ordinance's limitations. "We can't include every transgendered person under this ordinance," she said. "You can protect someone who is going to be consistent in their gender presentation, but society at large is not going to buy flip-flopping. An employer has to be able to expect what his employee is going to look like."

Societal limits also forced another compromise in the legislation, concerning bathrooms. While recognizing that "if privacy in a bathroom can be provided, no one can discriminate," Salieri notes that the ordinance makes an exception for gang showers and where there are no doors on bathroom stalls. "You can only push society so far," she concludes.

There are many cities across the nation where such an ordinance is needed. Some have been in the news recently.

A restaurant owner in Salem, Mass., has been prohibited from holding weekly drag shows because, as a city official allegedly said, the shows would attract "those type" of people, meaning drag queens, gays, and transvestites.

When David Arsenault purchased Carmelina's restaurant and bar last summer, he assumed it came with entertainment licenses allowing a disk jockey and karaoke. So a drag show was a natural. That was until the chairman of the licensing board chairman saw the advertisement and nixed the idea. Later, a member of the Salem Police Department told Arsenault that a license for a drag show would be approved because the show would attract "those type" of people. The officer denies making that comment.

Arsenault and one of the female impersonators who was booked to perform at Carmelina's "Stars on the Waterfront" show plan to file complaints with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, claiming that the present licenses for recording music and karaoke permit a lip-synching drag show, and that action by the licensing commission is anti-gay, which is prohibited in the Bay State.

Last month, we reported about the county judge in Tacoma, Wash. who was accused of violating the canons of judicial ethics by his treatment of two transsexuals who appeared before him last year seeking to adopt women's names.

You'll recall that Judge Alan Hutchinson refused petitions from Dominic Scellato and David Pryor to change their names to Gina D'Shirico and Catherine Matthews even though both transsexuals presented letters from their therapists stating that they were candidates for sex change surgery and were beginning their real-life test. The two transsexuals complained that the state judicial review commission which summoned Hutchinson to explain his actions.

The judge admitted that he told the transsexuals that their desire to become women was "evidence of a diseased mind," and he defended his words by telling the commission that sexual reassignment surgery is "a mutilation and I regard mutilation as an unnatural act. That's the way I've been educated."

A staff attorney for the commission called for disciplinary action against the jurist. "The judge was not acting like a judge," he said. "He was acting like a preacher or policeman."

Some transgendered people (Ms. Sinclair included) have used laws banning discrimination on the basis of gender to obtain protection for crossdressing. One Boston man is using the Massachusetts law to complain that his employer suggested he wear a push-up bra to work or have a sex change.

The man, Tracy Tinkham, is one of eight former employees



of Jenny Craig International, the weight-loss firm, who are suing for sex discrimination. They claim that they were denied promotions, forced to do menial work, and were the object of sexually suggestive comments. As an example of the anti-male environment present in diet centers in the Boston area, Tinkham says that a meeting with a female supervisor to discuss an open position ended with the supervisor telling him that the only way he would be promoted is if he bought a push-up bra or had a sex change. Later, when Tinkham was having a bad day at work, a fellow employee suggested he use Fem-Cycle, a Jenny Craig product to relieve menstrual stress. The men also complained that male employees were forced to wear the same uniforms as the women: white coats and pale blue Jenny Craig neck scarves.

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination recently found probable cause to hold hearings in several of the cases.



Discrimination against transgendered persons is not an uniquely American phenomenon, as a quick flip through the international section of any newspaper will confirm. Here is just a sample of stories from around the world:

The Netherlands, which is known has a generally tolerant country, has deported about 90 male-to-female transsexuals back to Ecuador, Columbia, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. The transsexuals were working as prostitutes in Amsterdam.

"We do not want this sort here just at the time we are trying to make prostitution into an ordinary business," said a spokesman for the Amsterdam police department. He blamed the transsexuals for a rash of fights, thefts, and disturbances of the peace. "There have been many complaints about fights breaking out when a customer finds out he's dealing with a man," the police official said. "The transsexuals are also aggressive to female prostitutes."

The transsexuals were believed to have relocated to Amsterdam after a police crack-down drove them out of Paris' Bois de Boulogne park.



Given the record of several South American countries, it's

no wonder that Latin American transgendered people would want to live in Europe. Violence against them -- and even murder -- are so common in their native lands that Amnesty International has gotten involved.

In a recent report, the international human rights organization says it has grounds to believe that authorities in the Mexican southern border state of Chiapas "have failed in their obligation to investigate" the murders of at least 16 transvestites and gay men over the past three years. Police inaction, the report said granted "virtual impunity to those responsible."

Victims include Neftali Ruiz Ramirez (also known as Vanessa) who was the vice president of the local gay/transvestite group. Witnesses say she was killed by a member of the State Judicial Police.



But there are bright spots overseas as well. For example, Denmark (site of Christine Jorgensen's sex change surgery) has deleted transvestism from its official list of mental disorders. By doing so, Denmark is disputing the mentally disordered diagnosis promulgated by the World Health Organization and accepted by most nations.



Although not universal, British Commonwealth nations generally do not recognize that a transsexual has changed his or her sex. Even after surgery, they retain their birth gender on official documents such as passports and birth certificates. Therefore, men who become women cannot marry men and women who become men cannot marry women. But two recent events from the Southern Hemisphere may reverse that traditional view of transsexuals.

The High Court at Wellington, New Zealand has ruled that a male-to-female transsexual was legally married to a man and so was entitled to a divorce.

"Once a transsexual had undergone surgery, he or she is no longer able to operate in his or her original sex," a court justice wrote in the opinion. "There is no social advantage in the law not recognizing the validity of the marriage of a transsexual in the sex or reassignment. It would merely confirm the factual reality."

The justice noted that some people have a compelling desire to be recognized and to behave as members of the opposite sex. "If society allows such people to undergo therapy and surgery to fulfill that desire, then it ought also to allow such persons to function as fully as possible in their reassigned sex, and that must include the capacity to marry."



The notion of allowing transgendered people the ability "to function as fully as possible" seems to be catching on in neighboring Australia where a lawmaker has introduced a bill outlawing discrimination against transgendered

people.

Clover Moore, an independent member of the New South Wales state parliament whose district covers the majority of Sydney's gay and transgendered communities, introduced the measure as a companion to the present law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Her bill defines a transgendered person as anyone who assumes the characteristics of the opposite sex with the help of medical intervention or other means.



Elsewhere below the equator winds of change are blowing. The end of apartheid and breaking the iron grip of the conservative National Party has opened up South African society in a way not envisioned by political observers. As well as giving the vote to all citizens, the end of white rule has brought a rapid relaxation of the sexual taboos enforced by the old order.

Dali Tambo, who hosts a talk show that regularly tackles sexual subjects, says that before the new government, South African society was "primitive, Calvinistic, and Victorian, a spiteful, angry, intolerant culture."

Perhaps there is no clearer indication of how much things have changed that Evita Bezuidenhout's television show on the nation's M-Net cable network. Bezuidenhout appears to be an old-line Afrikaner matron who does Barbara Walters-type interviews with the leaders of the new government including President Nelson Mandela. But appearances can be deceiving, for beneath the bouffant wig and the floral print dress is a man? playwright and satirist Peiter-Dirk Uys.

Bezuidenhout has been part of Uys' stage routine since 1981, and so had become something of an institution. But it wasn't until Mandela came to power that government leaders actually wanted to be seen with her. Non-white officials welcome the opportunity to show their human side to the network's mostly white 876,529 subscribers while white holdovers from the old era gain a measure of hipness to offset the taint of having served apartheid. One

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recent guest was Pik Botha, the longtime apartheid-era foreign minister who survived into Mandela's Cabinet as the minister of Mining. He played along with the idea that he and Evita had been longtime secret lovers.

Evita has also appeared in the United States. Recently, after an appearance in San Francisco, Uys found himself on a plane sitting behind President Bush. During a conversation, Uys explained his program and showed a picture of Evita to Bush. "Nelson Mandela talks to HER?" Bush said. Yes, Uys replied, and she may want to come to visit you.

"We'll clear that with Mrs. Bush first," the former president reportedly harrumped.



We'll end our globe-trotting junket in Thailand -- a paradise for the people we call "sexual minorities," but who in Thailand are referred to simply as other humans.

In fact, categories that are so important to Westerners seem to have little meaning to Thais, who may say they are gay and yet are planning for sex change surgery.

"I never try to hide," says 24-year-old Kongsak Boonyamwong, a cashier in a large department store in Bangkok. He openly wears powder and eyebrow pencil on the job. "I like to act like a woman. I like having long hair. I like to walk like a woman. I have practiced a long time until it comes naturally."

"I wanted to be a woman since kindergarten," says Chanchai Triwachirangkoon, 21. "My parents said to me 'whatever you want to be -- a man or a woman -- go ahead. Just be a good person.' In Thailand, so many men want to be women," he adds. "It's fashionable."

The acceptance Chanchai has received from his parents is not unique. Sarawut Thamme is a cabaret dancer in Bangkok. He has taken hormones and lives as a woman.

He says that every time his father is in Bangkok, he comes to see his son perform as a woman.

Buddhist theology seems to be at the root of Thai acceptance. They believe that people are they way they are



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because of their karma. They generally don't judge them for being different, but attribute it to actions in their past lives.



Basing explanations of the way people are on past lives may work for philosophers, but scientists are looking for a more concrete cause. Recently, researchers at the University of Chicago have learned more about what turns a human embryo into a male.

It has long been known that from conception to about 35 to 40 days into its development, every embryo grows as if it were to become female with developing Fallopian tubes, a uterus, and a vagina. At that point, embryos that are destined to become males -- that is, those with an X and a

# GLOBAL MAIL

Global Mail is a listing of art projects, zines, archives, actions, boycotts, exchanges, networks, sound & video projects, mail art and collaborative events.

The latest issue is 16 pages, with over 500 entries from 45 countries. If you would like the latest issue, send US \$2.50. If you would like a FREE sample back issue, send two .32 stamps to: Global Mail, PO Box 597996, Chicago, IL 60659, USA.

Y chromosome -- begin to develop primary male sex characteristics. They do this because a gene called SRY on the Y chromosome switches on to start an embryo on its way to manhood. Just how that worked was a mystery until now. It was known that SRY starts the growth of testicles, which in turn start making testosterone, the hormone that causes the development of male characteristics -- the penis, larger muscles, and, eventually, facial hair. But what happens to the developing uterus and Fallopian tubes?

Dr. Michael Weiss discovered that SRY triggers another gene, called MIS that dissolves the female parts of the original embryo. He also said that a flaw in MIS is responsible for the genetic gender defect called "sex-reversed" females. They have the XY chromosome combination of males, yet have the bodies of females, lacking only functioning ovaries. With hormone shots and implanted fertilized eggs they are capable of having babies. Dr. Malcolm Low, a neuroendocrinologist at the Vollum Institute for Advanced Biomedical Research in Portland, Ore. said the original discovery of SRY was a big accomplishment, but there are still many questions about how one gene triggers another. The discovery of MIS he said "has laid the next step in the pathway."



Ms. Sinclair knows that some of her readers shuddered when they read the dread word "testosterone" in the previous item. Some transgendered folks she knows link every "bad" trait they have to the male hormone and every "good" trait they wish they had to estrogen.

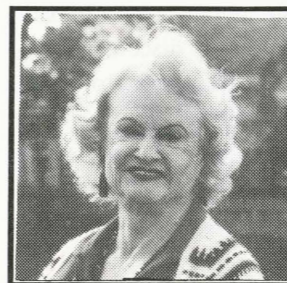
Researchers are now rethinking the idea that testosterone is bad for the heart, that is why more men have heart attacks than women. But a new study among men indicates that the higher the testosterone level, the less risk there is of heart attack and diabetes. Also, men with higher testosterone and lower estrogen tend to have lower blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, and belly fat. Men with lower testosterone also tend to have brittle bones or osteoporosis, similar to that of post-menopausal women. In fact, studies are now underway to determine if older men would benefit from testosterone replacement therapy the same way older women benefit from regular doses of estrogen.



Ms. Sinclair finds scientific stuff fascinating and can't wait until researchers find a link between testosterone and beer drinking, loud belching, and wearing pants so low a guy's butt crack shows. If you see a report of such a study -- or transgendered news items -- send them to her in care of Cross-Talk. Please note the name and date of publication.

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## VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

### WHY, WHY, WHY, AND WHY?

by Virginia Prince

There are four big **whys** in the field of crossdressing. **Why** in the sense of what causes it, **why** in the sense of "what do you get out of it", **why** do you continue to do it in the face of social and possible personal disapproval and **why** don't you just up and stop doing it?

You have all wrestled with these questions for as long as

**"The potential for girlish interests and behavior are like the load in a boy's gun: They just lie there waiting for the trigger to be pulled."**

you have been crossdressers. Probably you have worked out answers to some of the **whys** by yourself. Even so it might be instructive to match them against another view. You can adopt the views to be presented here or you can reject all or part of them, or you can take bits and pieces here and there and incorporate them into your own views. It's entirely up to you.

**WHY IN THE SENSE OF CAUSE:** Many people have come up with many ideas in this area ... some that are apparently reasonable, some that aren't. Two can, in my view, be discarded right away, although such an action may offend some of you who believe in them. I refer primarily to astrology and reincarnation: Both of these are simply belief systems and if they make their adherents happy, who am I to prick their balloon? But on any level other than belief, there is no evidence of any kind to support either of these systems. It would be difficult enough to prove that either the stars or a past life could affect the physical body and it's functions. But crossdressing is a sociological pattern which makes it even more difficult to relate it to these two concepts.

Next there is the matter of genes -- something everybody knows a little about, but in most cases not enough to really know what is involved. Genes do nothing but program the construction of proteins out of a mix of twenty-one amino acids. Each protein has to be built according to its own order and pattern of amino acids or it won't function as it should in the body. Proteins are either structural (as in bones, muscle, tissue, etc.) or functional (like insulin, pituitary hormones and many others). While these effects are real and demonstrable in the laboratory, they are

again limited to biological matters and there is no clear route from proteins to a psychosocial behavior.

"Ah," you say, "that is where hormones come in!" And they do come in, but they come in in a biological way. Prenatal hormones do take a real hand in producing the final baby which is born and they do determine such biological

matters as anatomical sex and even sexual behaviors. But if some hormonal abnormality exists, there is usually some visible physical or physiological evidence of their malfunction. If it should be argued that some prenatal malfunction was responsible for the psychosociological behavior of crossdressing,

one would expect to find some sort of structural or functional abnormality as well as the unusual behavior pattern. But we don't. Most of our people are physically, psychologically and sexually healthy functioning people.

So if we eliminate both genetics and hormones from the list of possible causes, what is left? Behavior is left and I think that is where the answer lies.

Animals show various behaviors in the process of finding food, avoiding danger or finding and copulating with a mate. Behaviors in these three areas are very ancient and they exist in man as well as in the monkeys and apes. But man has two other important things going for him. He has a thinking brain and he is self-aware. These two talents have enabled mankind to weave all kinds of theories, explanations, religions, philosophies, etc., about most anything you care to name. Both the developer and the believers in these mental constructs defend them vigorously and claim all sorts of triumphs for their point of view. Crossdressing has had its share of such pseudo-scientific explanations. So now I am about to give you another explanation ... but this one has the advantage of being based on some obvious facts.

The first of these is that the human mind is both versatile and malleable. Thus over our history of the last million or so years -- and particularly in the last twelve thousand centuries, since the advent of agriculture and living in villages, which is where real gender differences (as opposed to sex differences) first developed -- we have elaborated a vast variety of behaviors, expectations, and customs. But these are not always the same from culture to culture nor even in the same culture at different times.



Thus we come to the matter of potentials for various developments.

For example, there are hundreds of different languages in the world and they are very different in sound, construction and even in content. However, it has been demonstrated that a human baby is equally able to learn any one of them if it is exposed to it at the right age. This would seem to indicate that the baby has a variety of potentials for language acquisition and which one he learns depends on what he is exposed to. In the same way, each newborn baby has a series of potentials for human behavior and expression. Which ones he develops and manifests later in life depends solely on the circumstance of his or her childhood (which includes teaching and environmental factors) and which of these best fills the needs of that life.

Thus little males are not only different in their own innate behavior from little females, but they are exposed to different sets of expectations and requirements. From their individual sets of potentials they select and have selected for them, those which their parents, teachers, peers and, to some degree themselves, see as most advantageous to them. We are all aware of the opposite pairs of traits such as strong-weak, active-passive, leader-follower, extrovert-quiet and so on. And we tend to associate one of the pair with females and the other with males. But think a minute! Is there any real connection between these traits and the gender of the individual? Can't some males be weak, passive, quiet introverts? And can't some females be strong, dominant, active leaders? Of course they can and we all know people of each sex who manifest traits more characteristic of members of the other sex. So the

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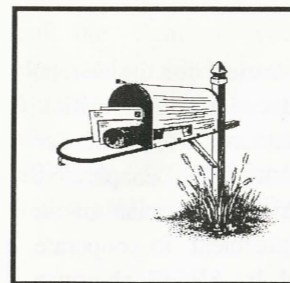
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connection between general potentials and the ultimate personality of the resulting adult is not easily discernable. But the important question is: What happens to those potentials that don't get called upon and developed in everybody? We all have a lot of potentials that we never develop and use. About 25 years ago Susanna in her column in *Transvestia* coined the expression "the girl within". It has been used many times since to refer to the ability of some males to call forth that collection of potentials which in this culture we associate with girls. I see a whole roomful of such people right in front of me. But now think of that "girl within" as a causative agent.

There are two aspects to any cause for anything. One is what may be called the "presumptive" or predisposing cause, and the second is the "precipitating" or triggering cause. If a gun has no load in it, pulling the trigger won't cause anything to happen. If on the other hand there is a load in the gun and no one pulls the trigger, nothing happens either. The load in the barrel is the presumptive cause of the explosion; pulling the trigger is the precipitating cause since it causes the powder to ignite and eject the bullet.

Now the presumptive cause of crossdressing is this set of potentials that all babies are born with but which are not brought forth, developed and reinforced in young males but are trained into young females. So the "girl within" is not just a phrase but a reality. She consists of all those attitudes, behaviors, expectations and requirements that go to make up a girl but not a boy. They remain dormant in all boys and men because they are born into them as human potentials. Thus such potentials as the desire to be pretty, attractive to other people, appreciated and willing to give of themselves to help others, are all part of "girlness" but not of "boyiness". But they lie fallow in all boys and men. The opposite is of course true of girls and women and in this day and age they are showing their "boy within" more and more all the time.

So the potential for girlish interests and behavior are like the load in a boy's gun: They just lie there waiting for the trigger to be pulled. And in all of us that trigger **did** get pulled ... in various ways and at various times, but it was pulled. Sometimes the event can be recalled -- a party or a play wherein a boy takes a girl's part and dresses appropriately ... a boy is dressed up by someone else ... he finds mother's slip in the clothes hamper or the sister's panties on the bed and so on. Clothing is the visible manifestation of gender and gender is the name we give to the collection of behavior patterns considered appropriate for males and females in a given culture. Thus when an item of feminine clothing is put on it moves the individual just a bit closer to the other gender and thus pulls the trigger on the repressed potentials that would go with the kind of person who would normally wear that kind of clothing; i.e., females, girls, women. Thus the trigger is pulled, and the individual starts out on the road



### Vox Populi

Letters to the Editor

There were no letters to the editor received for publication this month.

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. We suggest keeping letters to 400 words (one page typewritten or 2000 characters ASCII). **Cross-Talk** reserves the right to publish only those portions of a letter specifically addressing the issue. Personal attacks will not be published.

You may write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365; fax us at (818) 347-4190; or send e-mail to *Kymmer* via Cross Connection, to *kymmer@xconn.com* via Internet, or to *Kymberleigh Richards* at [1:124/3103] via Fidonet. We also accept DOS ASCII files on disk at our P.O. Box.

**VIRGIN VIEWS ... continued from previous page**

to getting acquainted with his "girlwithin".

**THE WHY OF DOING IT:** So much for the **why** of causation. What of the **why** of "why do you do it"? I think the answer here is really short and simple, though we have all tried to construct some long and tedious answers to the question. I think it is that in that "triggering act" we discover a part of our own true self that we did not realize was a part of us. To find more of your own self is a very satisfying experience. It is like tripping over a rock outcrop by your mountain cabin and observing that the piece that broke off was bright with real gold: You would certainly go and dig up more of it anytime you could. You would also carefully keep the discovery a secret lest everybody else came in and wanted some and told you that you ought to be ashamed for keeping it all to yourself. Then you begin to feel guilty. So the reason you keep on visiting the outcrop or your mother's closet is because both activities give you access to things you never had before.

Another more subtle satisfaction is that since "women just are and men are always trying to become", men live in an action mode and women in a being mode. When a crossdresser gets dressed he crosses the road between activity and just being-ness. This is what is going on when a dresser keeps on doing it in spite of social or personal disapproval. He says it makes him more "relaxed". Not relaxed like lying on the beach or reading a good book on a Sunday afternoon, but relaxed from the pressures of

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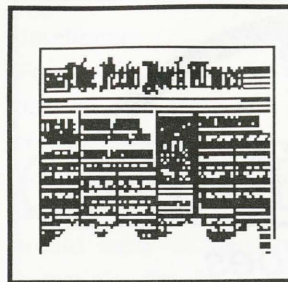
having to maintain the masculine front of being in charge, of knowing all the answers, of solving problems, of having to always act and **do** something. He has left the **active** mode and entered the **being** mode, and this is the greatest relaxation there is -- becoming a different kind of human being. So naturally he wants to crossdress more and more to enjoy this new relaxation.

**THE WHY OF NOT GIVING IT UP:** So finally, **why** don't you just give it up and get back to being normal? Might as well ask about the gold strike at the mountain cabin. Why don't you just cover it up and forget about it? It makes you spend a lot of time digging the gold out and it is tiring. And you have to go to great pains to maintain the secret. Other people would heckle and bother you if they knew you had the gold source. All you need is some willpower to renounce all the pleasures you get from having the gold and being able to spend it as you wish. In the economic world of today would anyone in his right mind give up the goldmine? Would anyone else who has discovered his mine of repressed potentials and the pleasures and satisfactions he has enjoyed while expressing them, want to just give them up? Parents, wives and psychiatrists would be the first ones to run to the gold mine if they knew where it was. As long as they don't know about their own mine of potentials they feel quite free to tell the crossdresser that he just ought to stop enjoying his relaxation, get back to work and be normal.

Do I hear any volunteers?

So there you have what I believe are the answers to the four **whys**. If they make sense to you run with them and stop fretting over various other proposed "causes". We have found our own goldmine so in the modern slang: "Let's just go for it!"





## "Cross-Talk" Newswire

News of the worldwide  
gender community

Ellen Summers, a co-founder of the NorthWest Gender Alliance, died December 17 after a prolonged and pain-filled bout with prostate cancer.

Summers served NWGA as president, vice-president, and secretary/treasurer during her long involvement with the group. She also served as the vice-chair of the board of directors for the International Foundation for Gender Education (IFGE) from 1987 until 1990, although she held her seat as a director until her death.

She was also deeply involved with Tri-Ess and served as the Regional Coordinator for Chapter Development from 1985 to 1987 and again from 1991 until the present. Summers was also given the Grande Dame award at the Dream Weekend in 1981, and was the first recipient of the IFGE Trinity Award in 1991. Last March, she became the eighth recipient of the "Virginia Prince Lifetime Achievement" Award, given each year to an individual who is considered to have given the greatest lifetime contribution to the gender community.

Summers is survived by her spouse Pat, daughter Susie, and sons David and Phillip. Funeral services were held December 21.

Cards, etc., should be sent to, P.O. Box 230172 Tigard Branch, Portland, OR 97223. In lieu of flowers, NWGA has requested that a donation be made in Ellen's name to the Winslow Street Fund, c/o IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland, MA 01178. A special grant from the Winslow Street Fund will be made in her name at next month's IFGE convention in Atlanta to a recipient to be decided by Summers' widow.

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Capitalizing on a first-ever joint effort by five gender community organizations to provide an outreach and education effort at the 1994 National Association of Social Workers conference, the five organizations have announced a cooperative effort to set aside philosophical differences in order to work together on further interactive participation in community programs and projects.

The Transgender Alliance for Community will form the framework for interactive participation in the form of sharing and exchanging services, information, and resources available to its partners. All non-profit and not-for-profit transgender organizations are invited to participate as a member of the Alliance, which will also develop programs and projects for minority interests that

are not served by other organizations.

The five core organizations are The Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess), Renaissance Education Association, AEGIS, the International Foundation for Gender Education, and the Outreach Institute. The cooperative effort for NASW was the idea of Tri-Ess chairman of the board Jane Ellen Fairfax, and the agreement to cooperate among the nationals was coordinated by AEGIS chairman of the board JoAnn Roberts. IFGE's Yvonne Cook coordinated the actual NASW exhibit. Further discussions following the conference between Fairfax, Roberts, Outreach chairman of the board Alison Laing, and AEGIS executive director Dallas Denny led to the Alliance proposal. Roberts and Laing are also co-founders of Renaissance, whose board of directors pledged its support at their November 13th meeting.

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The Tri-Ess Board of Directors, at their annual meeting at the November Holiday En Femme in New York City, elected three new directors.

Unanimously voted onto the board were: Fran Estes of Lambda Chi Lambda chapter in upstate New York; Dr. Peggy Rudd, past president of Tau Chi chapter in Texas, and author of the books *My Husband Wears My Clothes* and *Crossdressing With Dignity*; and Nicole K. of Phi Sigma chapter in Alberta. The vote puts the first Canadian on the board, and brings the number of genetic females on the Tri-Ess governing body to three.

The board also approved the organization's operating budget for 1995, and took the unusual step of requesting a donation of \$1.00 per copy from chapters and individuals distributing its new information brochures, the cost of which had exceeded estimates in the 1994 budget. The board voted to continue to make the brochures available free of charge on a single copy basis through Tri-Ess' California and Texas headquarter offices.

Also voted into effect were a new outreach fund, raised through donations, to sponsor Tri-Ess's participation in joint outreach efforts such as the recently announced Transgender Alliance for Community; a library information project, to place recommended books and other materials into libraries around the country; and the creation of a committee to research marketing the Tri-Ess national magazine, *The Femme Mirror*, publicly.

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The American Educational Gender Information Service has announced a new membership policy, after several years as a non-membership organization.

The proposed \$36 annual membership would include a two issue subscription to the magazine *Chrysalis Quarterly* and four issues of the new quarterly newsletter *AEGIS News*. Members would also receive a 10% discount on all publications sold by AEGIS, a member identification card,

and the right to vote for AEGIS board members. Membership will be open to anyone.

AEGIS is a 100% volunteer, non-profit information and education resource for all people and supports SSSS, HBIQDA, SIECUS and other professional organizations. It is an affiliate of the Renaissance Education Association.

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A new club-owned facility has been opened in Waltham, Mass. by pioneer gender community organization Tiffany Club of New England.

The new facility, which occupies 1500 square feet on the second floor of a building in a mixed residential/commercial area, includes a living room, office, kitchen area, computer and storage room, and makeup facilities. It will be open to Tiffany Club members on Saturday evenings initially, although representative Debra Berube indicates Thursday evening open houses will be added once enough members volunteer to hostess.

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International Foundation for Gender Education founding director Merissa Sherrill Lynn has proposed that the Congress of Transgender Organizations take responsibility for site selection of the annual "Coming Together -- Working Together" convention.

In a letter mailed December 9 to members of the IFGE board and CTO representatives, Lynn admitted she "had gotten [her]self into hot water by selecting Los Angeles for the site of the 1997 convention" and suggested that having the CTO choose the convention sites would better fit the definition of "the community's convention". Lynn also proposed that the CTO select the host committee coordinator.

Under Lynn's proposal, the CTO would select the site for the 1998 convention and coordinator by the end of the 1995 convention next month. Initial plans and personnel training for 1998 would also begin before the 1995 convention closed, by means of an interaction between the IFGE board and the CTO over a five-day period in Atlanta.

Lynn was to present a tentative proposal to the IFGE board at its January meeting, with details to be worked out with the CTO's officers in the intervening weeks between the board meeting and the convention.

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In a rare move, the board of directors of U.K. organization Gender Dysphoria Trust International have removed their administrative assistant from her position.

Alison Elder was discovered to be acting outside the scope of her authority by "liaising with individuals and groups in ways which were against the express wishes of the board of directors of GDTI and which were clearly not in the interests of [the] organization", according to a statement published in the December issue of the organization's magazine *Dys-Course*. Board chairman Paula McDowell stressed that no breach of confidentiality occurred, although the board did remove all GDTI records from Elder's residence in October and rerouted the organization's phone line to trustee Fran Springfield's home temporarily.

An accounting of the records revealed that Elder had failed to mail approximately 70 copies of the previous issue of *Dys-Course* to members, and that 25 letters requesting information on GDTI had gone unanswered. Several volunteers cleared the backlog within a week of the board's action, according to McDowell.

GDTI has since located a new and secure office within a building belonging to a local volunteer services agency.

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A new non-partisan coalition of grassroots advocates committed to civil rights for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people has included the transgendered community in its mission statement.

Through community-based chapters, Gay and Lesbian Americans intends to foster a grassroots advocacy network to act locally, regionally, and nationally to end government discrimination against citizens based on sexual orientation by helping to enact civil rights legislation, repeal sodomy laws, and fund research of gay and lesbian health issues.

GLA has no political party affiliation, and will evaluate political candidates by their measurable accomplishments on gay and lesbian civil rights issues, but will not make any financial contributions to politicians.

The organization was founded by Michael Petrelis, a well-known activist for ACT-UP and Queer Nation. He is operating an Internet mailing list at the [vector.casti.com](http://vector.casti.com) site.



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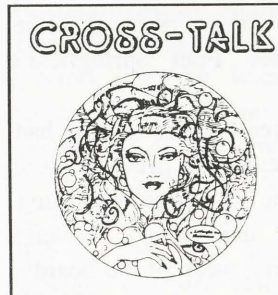
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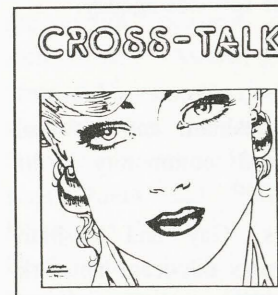
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**#60 (October 1994):** Editorial on publishers who steal copyrighted material; Bugs Bunny's history in drag; Commentary on the *DSM-IV*; Overview of computer BBS systems serving the gender community; Finding happiness in a marriage to a crossdresser; Review of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

**#62 (December 1994):** The dilemma faced by transgendered teenagers; Biblical references used against crossdressing and transsexualism and passages refuting them; The fight for transgender human rights; A patron saint for drag queens; Comparing "who" you are to "what" you are; Review of the movie *The Queen*.



**#63 (January 1995):** Why defending your viewpoint may inadvertently cause pain to others; Do therapists get a bad rap?; Why educational outreach may be a side benefit, rather than the intended goal; Crossdressers admire women and then want to emulate them; Partners setting priorities and making decisions to strengthen a relationship; Skin care advice for winter; Review of the movie *Ed Wood*.

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**POLITICS: LIMITING COMMUNITY**

by JoAnn Roberts

It is often said that politics makes for strange bedfellows, but it is just as true that politics creates a great deal of dirty, nasty, scandalous behavior. Once mighty and revered political figureheads are found to be no better than the average person and often are worse. The heady brew that is political power can twist even the most innocent of intentions into self-serving, ego-inflating special interest.

Politics is nothing if there is no money to go with it. Political power is influence and money certainly buys influence. Thus, money can buy political power. But the smell of money is hard to resist for some people, like cocaine and heroin. They become addicted to both the power and the bucks. It is a habit nearly impossible to break.

Politics, power, and greed are not common topics within the transgender community. It is so very difficult to imagine that any one of our sisters working in the community would be tempted by such things. We want to believe that every sister has our best interests at heart and would never stoop so low as to behave as scandalously as some of our national politicians do. Well, think again.

Anyone who becomes involved at the national levels of the transgender community gets an education in politics and power. They quickly learn who has the pull, the influence, and the money. Cross one of the power brokers and you'll be eaten alive, spit out and discarded. At the highest levels of transgender politics, money is the driving force.

The politics and the money are cloaked in a veneer of respectability behind organizations touting their not-for-profit purposes. Peel away the veneer and one finds the influence and money eating away at the integrity of the structure like termites.

There are several transgender organizations, all with high visibility, where the structures are rife with power-brokers and private-interests. It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to discover the root cause in each case - an individual who thinks the community owes them something extra. Since the community has not delivered the rewards these "special" people feel they deserve, they create organizations and events that will do it for them.

On the surface, we see activities that seem to serve the community's interest. Examined more closely, we find activities that almost always result in some personal benefit for the individual at the center. Any connection to community interest is secondary to the primary purpose of rewarding the individual.

There is nothing wrong with commerce and capitalism. Finding novel ways to make money is a great tradition in this country. Many a millionaire started with simply an

idea of how to do something better, or provide a service no else provided.

But, there is something morally repugnant about those who garner their rewards through the deception of people looking for help, support, and guidance. Jim Bakker knew exactly what he was doing siphoning money from PTL for

**Is the gender community immune to politics, power and greed? Undoubtedly not.**

himself. No one is really surprised that Dan Rostenkowski used congressional funds for his private interests. Why, then, if these very visible public figures can succumb to the lure of power and greed, is it so hard to believe that these same situations exist within the "hallowed halls" of some transgender organizations? It isn't, if one remembers that organizations are made up of human beings, not gods. The evidence is there should one look for it. Proof is another matter. There are always the excuses and the plausible explanations, but viewed in context over time, the conclusion is inescapable: there are a few rotten apples in the transgender barrel.

The scandalous behavior of the few are enabled by good people, mistakenly guided by a sense that unconditional forgiveness is preferable to accountability. Responsibility for one's actions is not a high-priority in this community. Victimism is rampant and those whose behavior is suspect are the most likely to yell "Victim" when confronted. In reality, they are not Victims, they are Abusers. They abuse our trust. They abuse our faith. They abuse our hope. They abuse our charity. People pour money into the coffers of organizations in the hope that somehow, someday, this community will become a better place for all transgendered people. What comes out the other side is a trickle compared to what goes in. They abuse our sense of community.

Who is to blame? We are. The very same people who give their unconditional trust and support are responsible for the continuation of the scandalous behavior. Trust, support, time, energy, and, most importantly, money should only be given conditionally. We, the community, should demand responsibility and accountability from our organizations. We must demand that no one involved in a not-for-profit venture derive personal benefit. We must demand that



governing bodies fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities to the community. We must demand that scandalous behavior not be tolerated. We must demand that our continued support of community organizations be treated with the respect it deserves. We must demand that anyone caught with their hand in the "cookie jar" be removed from office immediately.


Someone once said, "There is no greater treason than to do the right thing for the wrong reason." We must take off the blinders and recognize the most serious limit to the growth of our community - those who serve only themselves.

[This article previously appeared in Renaissance News & Views, Renaissance Education Association.]

#### KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... continued from page 2

resign my position on the Tri-Ess board. Thus this editorial serves as my public letter of resignation.

Of course, the dilemma stated above means that there would be those who would perceive my resignation as a statement that "there must be something wrong with Tri-Ess, otherwise why would someone as important as Kymberleigh Richards resign?" Which is precisely why this editorial is appearing simultaneously in *Cross-Talk* and the *Femme Mirror*. It is also why I have decided -- since, as



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a transgenderist I still qualify as a Tri-Ess member -- to keep my national membership in force. (I don't think you can get in trouble by being perceived as a Tri-Ess member!)

So, while I have grown as an individual beyond what Tri-Ess can do for me, I will continue to support it as a member, and I will be forever proud of what I have given back to it over the past several years.

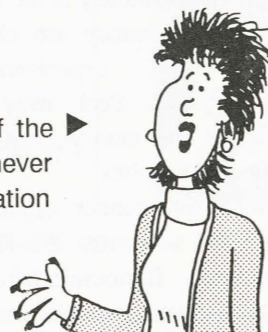
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#### T NOTES

### SHIFTING SANDS OF SEXUALITY

by Anne Vitale, Ph.D.

One of the most reoccurring themes in the gender community is the one of sexuality relative to gender identity. So I thought it was time that I chimed in with some facts and some observations I have gleaned over the years.

For purposes of this note, when I speak of sexuality, I am

**"People dealing with gender issues cover almost the same spectrum of sexuality as the general population."**

talking about one's choice of partners rather than the expression of the sex act itself. I am explicitly excluding getting sexually excited upon crossdressing and the whole range of possible fetishistic activities. All of that has its place and is another matter as far as I am concerned.

Although there are still some therapists who try to define gender identity relative to sexuality, that association has definitely weakened in the last ten years. I personally see no connection between who we choose to have sex with and what gender we believe we are. There are far too many gender congruent gays and lesbians in the world for that not to be true. What I have found instead is that people dealing with gender issues cover almost the same spectrum of sexuality as the general population. I say almost because, by definition, people who are in or have undergone transition have access to a physiologically larger selection of possible experiences and most of these people take advantage of the enlarged opportunity.

The most common report I get from my clients -- after they get to know me -- is that their primary sexual outlet to date has been masturbation while crossdressed. If crossdressing is not practical, masturbation in conjunction with crossdressing fantasies is a second choice. Some people report of masturbating five and even six times a day. This doesn't leave much of a sex drive to experience with a partner. So these people tend to report as being asexual. Because sexual activity all but terminates for MTFs upon transition, I believe that masturbation is a way of periodically relieving the pressures of gender dysphoria rather than being an expression of an autoerotic preference.

Upon presentation, approximately three-fourths of my clients report being "attracted" to women. Further examination reveals that for the MTFs it is a combination of the decades of watching women with secret envy, a deep distaste for the male anatomy that has been forced upon them and a need to separate their gender dysphoria from

male homosexuality. People also report of falling in love with the women who are providing a new found acceptance of their intentions to become one of them.

On the other hand, most FTMs report that an attraction to women seems natural for them.

They also report that their excursions in the male world are far more demanding on them than they had expected and that they are somewhat put off by the harsh energy testosterone imparts on their psyche. In addition, dating women is the new social expectation for them, giving them a chance to express what can only be described as an overstated chivalry. Those of you who have had the privilege of spending some time with an FTM, know what I mean.

Recent studies have shown that testosterone has been found to be the primary libido increasing agent in both men and women. Little wonder then that MTFs going on megadoses of estrogens, report a marked decrease in libido. Fortunately, along with the loss of libido comes a loss of anxiety associated with gender dysphoria. It is often reported by my clients to be a welcome relief. For FTMs the opposite is true and there is a marked increase in sexual desire. This, of course, can be quite problematic prior to surgery.

Hormones also have a peripheral side effect on sexuality when it becomes apparent that the individual is starting to draw "heterosexual" attraction. Given this new input, a reassessment of previous sexual preference is not unusual for people in transition. For the MTFs, the new feelings of being with an admiring man evoke feelings of femininity that are very hard to ignore. It is not unusual for people who once felt attracted only to women, to find themselves beginning to waver. For the FTMs having a straight woman flirt with him combined with all that unfamiliar testosterone, bolsters an emerging and welcome sense of masculinity.

There are some additional factors that influence sexuality



after SRS. Transition, by its very nature, tends to blur what society espouses as the absolute division between what a man is and what a woman is. Therefore loving and caring becomes far more important than gender when choosing a partner. A surprisingly large number of post-ops find other post-ops to establish long term loving relationships with. Perhaps that's because transition leaves one with the "wrong" past. In addition, there is often post surgical inadequacies that the individual feels might cause a problem with a non-TS partner.

The long and short of sexuality in our lives is that hormones and surgery force a paradigm shift upon our original desires and physical sensitivity while social expectations redefine what is "normal". There is absolutely no familiar or solid ground to stand on. What is one to do with such a panoply of shifting factors? My advise is to let it all go and follow your heart.

*[Copyright 1995 by Anne Vitale, Ph.D. Dr. Vitale is a psychotherapist specializing in gender related issues. She is an associate of the D Street Counseling Group, 610 D Street, San Rafael CA 94901, (415) 456-4452. Internet Address: annev1@aol.com. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Vitale's name and address appears with it. Other publications must obtain written permission from Dr. Vitale. A copy of any reprints must be sent to Dr. Vitale.]*

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## WOMAN TO WOMAN

### THROUGH THE DISTANCE OF TIME

by Linda Peacock

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, my husband and I made a fast-paced trip to the city from which we had moved at the beginning of 1994. Some financial situations had forced us to place our house on the market, and the trip was an urgent one. It was also the first time I had been back since I had left, and I found myself thinking of the old title "You

In our aloneness, we may allow the fear to overcome us, and we may be irrational. We may not realize that we cannot always "go home again" ...not necessarily meaning physically leaving the "home" we are currently living in; there is mental and emotional and spiritual "leaving," too. An example of this is the co-existence of two people who reside in the same house, but not in each other's hearts.

**"As we make personal choices ... how helpful it would be if we knew that there are others like us!"**

As we make personal choices -- as we make serious decisions about our transgendered relationship -- how helpful it would be if we were aware that there are others like us, many of whom face the same decisions! What a relief

Can't Go Home Again." By returning to my old home, I went back to memories, good and bad, but I found myself seeing things through different eyes. I had made a very quick decision to sever ties that dated back many years, to take on new job duties and move to a city I had been through only once before in my life. Now I found myself a different person, and realizing that what had been home was no longer home ...that home is within myself and is not a "place." I was looking back "from a distance of time."

In each of our lives, there come times when we all must make serious decisions which will affect our lives. We may be torn, unsure of making the right decision, fearful of making the wrong. We often don't have the gift of time to evaluate the entire situation, and we step out in faith, hoping we're doing the right thing.

It is often long after the decision is made that we get the opportunity to look back, evaluate the situation and decide for ourselves if we chose the right or wrong path.

In our community, and especially as wives and partners of transgendered persons, we are often forced to place ourselves in situations we do not want to be in. We run the full gamut of emotions, from anger to fear to pain to emptiness to despair ...and we are not emotionally ready to make the decisions we need to make. If we make a decision in haste, or in anger, or in pain, we may make the wrong decision and regret it later.

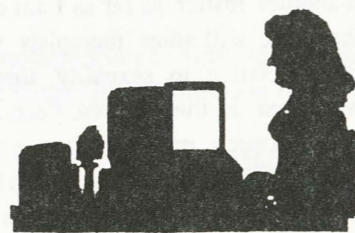
We don't have the luxury of quiet reflection, for our emotions may well be controlling us. Nor do we feel that we have a safe outlet to turn to ... how many wives/partners feel completely, totally alone? I think there are many.

if we could rationally talk to someone who knew first-hand what we were feeling! So many women don't find out about their partner's transgenderism until after a permanent commitment is made. Not only are they dealing with the shock of finding out their partner crossdresses, they are dealing with a loss of trust, with feelings of betrayal, anger at being lied to through the years. They know nothing about gender issues except the sensationalism of television talk shows, and they have no idea who to go to or where to seek information about gender dysphoria. As far as they know, no one else in the world has the same problems ...they are alone.

If that is the bad news, then here is the good news. As this community grows (and it is growing, by leaps and bounds) we are finding more and more educational outlets, such as the International Foundation for Gender Education and AEGIS. These are clearinghouses for education materials, i.e., books, articles, video tapes, about the varied gender issues. Fortunately, these clearinghouses go out of their way to publicize their existence and what they can do to help the transgendered person and his/her partner. They stock quality materials, constantly updating with the newest and best of materials. IFGE provides grants through its Winslow Street Foundation for efforts dealing with gender issues. Best of all, they act as referring agencies for those calling them for help. Such clearinghouses provide the caller (and that includes the wife/partner) with the names and telephone numbers and addresses of people who can help. This is a vital service to us wives and partners, for having the name and phone number of someone who is also a wife/partner and being

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able to call this person can be the lifeline to a woman in crisis. Even though she is a stranger, she nonetheless understands being in a relationship with a transgendered man. From personal experience, on both ends, I can honestly say that there is a definite bond between two such women; there is the sense that here is someone you can trust with this secret you dare not share with anyone else. I received much help myself in such situations, and now I find myself on the giving end, and it is a true blessing in my life to have these women share with me.

Support organizations such as Tri-Ess and Renaissance offer support through newsletters and partners support groups. To a woman dealing with gender relationship issues, the "safe" environment of a partners support group is another lifeline.

Publications such as the *Femme Mirror*, *Cross-Talk* and *Tapestry* all provide articles by and for wives and partners. Gender conventions virtually all provide wives and partners programs. You can pick and choose amongst many, beginning in February with the Texas "T" Party and continuing through the spring, summer and fall, with some of the other best conventions being California Dreamin', Be-All, Southern Comfort, Holiday En Femme and Fall Harvest. These are conventions which are offered for the transgendered person and provides fun activities as well

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as serious programming, including partner's programs. There is one conference, however, which is specifically designed for women who are partners of heterosexual, transgendered men. Called S.P.I.C.E. (Spouse/Partner International Conference for Education), it is offered once a year and provides intensive programming by professional therapists, sexologists and counsellors, as well as by wives/partners leaders from around the country. Men are allowed to attend, and S.P.I.C.E. does provide a full agenda of programs for them, but there is absolutely no crossdressing allowed, and the emphasis of the conference is on the well-being of the woman, and deals with her needs as a partner of a transgendered man. It is unique in that it is for us, the women!

All of these are tools to be used to help us make our decisions in a rational, knowledgeable manner. If we allow ourselves the time to learn, to listen, to think, then we can look back through the distance of time and know we did all we could to make the right decision. We have a choice in making decisions about our relationship. We have a right to make those decisions, but instead of allowing the emotions of fear, anger, frustration and pain to make the decisions for us, we need to work through these emotions first, then make the logical decision for ourselves. We do ourselves a disservice if we do not utilize the tools offered us: The gifts of those who are there to listen and gently counsel as a peer ... the quality educational materials offered through clearinghouses such as IFGE and AEGIS ... the support groups which exist just for that purpose -- support ... the wives/partners programs offered at conventions and at S.P.I.C.E.

I urge you, the wife/partner, to seek help through these sources if you need it. Do not be afraid to step out. It is a terrible thing to find yourself in the closet when your partner has escaped his; you need to escape your own darkness, and the community offers you a lighted way. Don't live your life regretting a hasty decision -- seek the help that is so lovingly offered by others who have been there.

[Linda Peacock is the Tri-Ess director of wives' and partners' concerns, an IFGE board member, and chair of the SPICE board of directors. She also publishes the quarterly newsletter for spouses and partners The Sweetheart Connection, and may be reached by mail at P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221 or by phone at (501) 227-8798.]

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## THE TRANSSEXUAL DYKE ISSUE

Edited by Kimberleigh Richards

In September of last year, a discussion of transsexual lesbians took place on the Internet mailing list *sappho*, in the aftermath of several "TS dykes" being allowed to enter the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival for the first time in MWMF history.

The resulting discussion -- predominantly between lesbian women, some genetic females, some transsexuals -- is adapted here in "roundtable" format; that is, responses by a list participant to another's comments have been inserted into the original message to appear in proper context. Participants are identified only by first name, except where a last initial was necessary to further differentiate between participants.

This is a complete transcript of the discussion, except that comments were not included which strayed from the main

topic, such as a series of messages discussing the actual process of a transsexual's shift from male to female.

Otherwise, the only editing was to correct spelling and to expand Internet "slang" into full definitions. Where a contributor preferred the term "womyn", it has been left intact.

**Karen T.:** This situation really forced questions of definitions. Does an intersexed person with both female and male genitalia "qualify"? Does a pre-op transsexual "qualify"? Is it fair to establish a policy for women who aren't transsexual to have a space for themselves?

**Kathryn:** Well, my feeling on it is that I am positive that a post-op transsexual should qualify, even though there are some I know whom I do not perceive as women. That's my issue, not theirs.

As far as intersexed people go, why not include them, especially if they were raised as women? If they were raised as men I have a bit more trouble. I guess it would depend on how the particular intersexed person identifies. There's a neuter person who works here at Kansas University. This person uses male pronouns on the grounds that they're at least nominally generic and he refuses to be an "it". So even though I don't think male pronouns are particularly generic, I'll use them for him. He's a militant neuter and does not identify as either male or female. I don't think he'd want to go to the

MWMF and I'm not sure he should "qualify".

I have a hard time with the pre-op question. Some TS women can't afford the surgery. Others want to remain non-op for other reasons, such as great fear of anesthesia, a dislike of most SRS surgeons, or some philosophical reason like not wanting to muck about with equipment which, while undesirable, works in the hopes of getting more desirable equipment that might not work nearly as well.

This also relates to the whole issue of the function of womyn-only space and of single gender universities and such. What purpose is served by the MWMF that requires the exclusion of not only men but also people who have had some kind of male upbringing? The question is somewhat rhetorical, but I think it's an important one



anyway.

**Chel:** Are the PC police now going to require a gynecological exam to get into MWMF? Do we have to bring a birth certificate or a letter from our mommies? Where is all the outrage that would be generated if they tried to exclude another group because of their heritage or deformities? If a person self identifies as a woman and is post-op, in my opinion she is a woman. This is no more of a whim or a choice than being a lesbian is.

**Debra:** As a pre-op TS, I respect the rights of the separatists and I have no political agenda of my own. However, I really question the logic and practicality of the separatists. Transsexuals are not men who dress as women to take advantage of the unsuspecting. Mentally, I have always been a woman. That's the part that is impossible to fake.

**Chel:** in my opinion we spend more time fighting among ourselves than fighting our common enemies. Maybe it's time that all parts of the community -- separatists, dykes, S/Ms, transgendered, and bis -- just accept each other and fight the battle for our civil rights. We have enough enemies on the radical right and supposed Christian action groups; we don't need to alienate part of our community. We are all part of the rainbow of diversity.

**Kimberleigh:** As a non-op transgenderist, I have to agree.



Am I less of a woman because rather than surgically change my body I choose instead to simply deny a stereotypical male identity and live as a woman 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year?

I believe gay/lesbian rights directly affect the transgendered community as well ... mainly because even straight transgendered people are **perceived** by the masses as being part of the gay/lesbian community.

**Hillary:** I respect that being transgendered is a difficult road and I think there is a unifying issue between lesbians, gays, and transgendered folks. I'm glad there's a "queer" umbrella under which we all stand.

**Kathryn:** I agree with you and I think that more lesbigay and transgendered/transsexual folks are coming to that conclusion as time goes by.

**Hillary:** I have personally known only two transsexuals, both MTF. I still feel that there should be **some** space which is respected as woman-born and/or lesbian. I'm not advocating any qualifying membership proof such as exams,



notes, cards, etc., but I think that individuals who are not woman born and/or lesbian should respect that there are people who would feel safer in some situations without their attendance. If it were **my** festival. I would invite women who self-identify as women, regardless of gender issues **but** I would support women who wanted to create meeting/event/support space within the festival structure which would politely request honored separation.

I don't self-identify as a separatist. However, I **do** think that opting to be a separatist (in whatever manner and intensity) should be as viable a choice as opting not to be. Much of the talk of "PC police" seems silly to me in the context of "reverse discrimination" toward individuals and groups who **want** separation part or all of the time.

**Erin O.:** I can live with a "separatist space" at MWMF. Don't they have a S/M space and a mom's space and a clean & sober space? But to say that **no** TS women should be allowed, case closed/no discussion, is, in my opinion, a rather bigoted approach.

**Linda:** Should a "no blacks" space for those uncomfortable around blacks also be offered?

**Kim:** If so, is it okay for women of color to ask for woman of color-only space ... that is, to set rules that say "No white women"? If so, why? I think it is ok and I choose to respect it, even if it doesn't always make sense to me or seem

appropriate or necessary. That's not my decision to make. I don't think the exclusion of white women is meant to be hurtful or hateful, but that a space is being sought where black women, or Asian women, or any "women of color", can have space that feels different from what they normally have to put up with.

Along the same lines, is it okay to say "women-only" or "no men"? Is it hatred and bigotry to exclude men, or is it about something else that is powerful and special to us? I don't hate men and I'm not a separatist, but I cherish time spent at women-only events. There is a sense of enhanced safety that I feel when I'm in women-only space. It is **not** an absolute sense of safety and there are no guarantees ... but nonetheless, there is a different sense of safety at an instinctive, gut-level. There is a letting down of the guard to another degree than what I usually allow myself to do.

**Erin O.:** This anti-TS BS is pure and simple bigotry that comes from ignorance and fear. And why the hell should TS people have to educate the ignorant? With this kind of

belligerent attitude no one learns anything, no compromises get made and I seem like an a\*\*hole to many.

But I do agree, those same women that don't allow TS women at MWMF wouldn't dare say "no blacks" or allow a "no blacks" space at MWMF. When couched in those terms you can just **feel** the hate and bigotry, can't you?

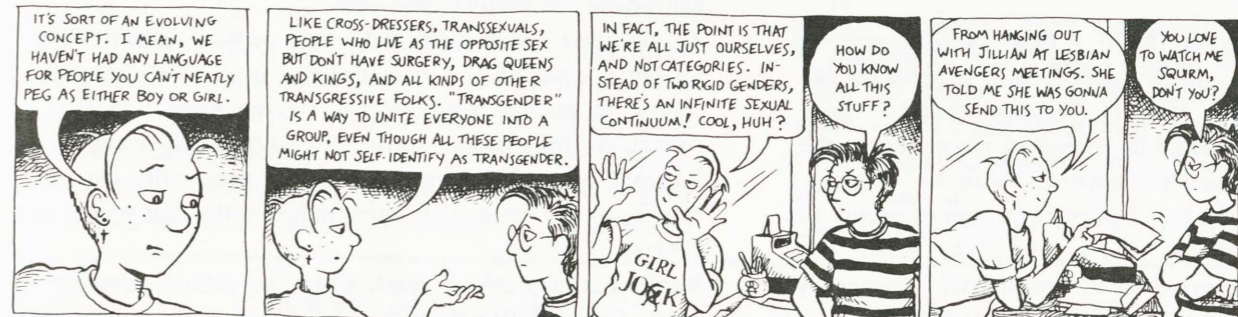
**Hillary:** I agree that it would be bigoted to create a no blacks, no Jews, or no Catholics space. But I go to a women's music festival for space **away** from men, space away from how most men treat women ... even nice men aren't immune from their upbringing ... and space away from ingrained responses of giving men more room, more recognition, more money ... **plus** I also go for space **with** women and all the positive and wonderful insights we have -- with our guard down and the way open. I'm still in a transition of seeing someone born and raised male as female. I'm more inclusive toward someone born male being a woman if she has made a commitment and gone through hormone therapy, surgery, living in society as a woman, etc.

But I do still see that being raised as a man is different in our society. How can you quickly separate from being in such a privileged group and treating others as such?

**Samantha:** I was born male in body only, and yes, it does

take some work to recognize and rid ourselves of some of the BS we learned, but what group of womyn is that not true of? True, we face some different challenges, especially the one of dumping our poor opinion of ourselves. However, looking for evidence of coming from masculine privilege and trying to weed it out can definitely get out of hand. At one time I worked so hard on it that I was phobic of being strong on almost anything. I became almost totally ineffectual during that period. At what point am I acting as a good healthy lesbian should act, and at what point do I slip into exhibiting my male privilege upbringing? I think you can see that this is not a simple -- and perhaps not even an answerable -- question.

**Hillary:** I remember that there was a TS woman -- I don't know which -- at the West Coast Women's Music Festival when I went two years ago. I often saw her because we had the same taste in events and workshops. It was a great growth experience for me as I came to see her more as a woman by the end of the festival than I did at the



beginning. At a separate event -- which was an S/M discussion -- a few years ago, I had an opportunity to be in a group with a TS woman. I found her arrogant, confrontational, and belligerent. I couldn't see her as a woman. She reminded me of what I consider the most unpleasant characteristics of a man.

**Karen K.:** And if this individual was a genetic female, would you have made these same generalizations about women who share another trait in common with this one? Was she a redhead? Tall? Large breasted? You make the jump so easy between one woman who acts this way in **one** setting, and an entire group of people? If I see one lesbian who is arrogant, confrontational, and belligerent, is it okay for me to assume that all are, and make that same generalization? Those kinds of generalizations are what the queer community has been trying to dispel for years. The African-American community and other non-white communities also fight these kinds of myths. Not all conservatives are pro-Ollie North. Not all women are pro-Ann Richards. Not all men exhibit the qualities you feel are unpleasant characteristics of men. Not all women exhibit what I feel are pleasant characteristics of women. The context doesn't change the gross unfairness that is happening in making such a generalization.

**Hillary:** What I meant was that there was little room for

other's opinions in the room with her and she took an attitude of being more intelligent than any other woman in the room. I attributed it to her upbringing as a privileged white male who earned more money and had more opportunity than the rest of us.

**Samantha:** Why do you make that attribution? Just because she happened to be TS? I know many genetic womyn who exhibit similar traits at times. I'm really not trying to denigrate your experience but only to point out that you may be seeing some of this through a particular filter.

**Gloria:** Yes, there are genetic womyn like this. Sisters we may be in body but not always in spirit.

It does seem that the point about these womyn not ever being part of the "privileged male class" even though they are genetically men was absolutely correct.

**Hillary:** I'm aware that there will be trans women I don't like, just as there are individuals of whatever persuasion and opinion whom I don't like, but it is **really** a challenge to separate the "someone I just don't like" idea from

seeing someone as representational of their "group" which I may be uncomfortable with or dislike.

**Karen K.:** It is a major challenge for everyone and it is a lifetime

challenge to see people as individuals, and not color hordes of different people with different beliefs, experiences, opinions, etc. with the same swipe of the brush.

**Robyn:** Personally, I have no problem with people who wish to not hang out with me. I do have a problem, however, with women who extend their own feelings about transsexuals as a blanket over others. This is what happens at the MWMF. The separatists are in charge of the festival, which is generally promoted as the largest women's music festival in the world. If they wish to have it the largest women-born-women -- a nasty phrase if I ever heard one ... I was born a woman, albeit with the wrong phenotype, and I am a woman now ... they can't even bring themselves to use the word "transsexual" in their brochure -- let them promote it as such.

**Debra:** As often as I have heard the phrase womyn-born-womyn, I can't help but wonder why it is used in preference to something like the more precise genetic female.

**Erin L.:** Probably because it also isn't precise. I have a friend ... I believe that the organizers of the MWMF would refer to her as a womyn-born-womyn. However, her genotype is XY. When she was born, she was physically more "female" than "male" so her parents and the doctor



made the decision to "make her a female." So, lots of little surgeries followed. When she was at the age that puberty normally takes place, she was placed on hormones. During this entire time, and until she was 23 or 24, she was told simply that she "had female problems." Her parents and the doctor were never honest with her ...not until the day she came out as a lesbian to her mother. In her anger her mother screamed something to the effect that she "should have known this would happen" and then proceeded to tell her why.

I once used an analogy during another discussion about how people easily accept that people will have varying heights and varying eye color, etc. So why do people not as easily accept that people may have varying gender or sexuality?

**Lillian:** Sometimes I get the feeling that the powers that are in charge of the MWMF are not just **plain** separatists but **lesbian** separatists who should really label it as a lesbian music festival ...sort of like they are afraid to use the L-word.

**Samantha:** As a post-op MTF I find myself largely in agreement that there are occasions that it is perfectly fair to request that only genetic females attend. Those occasions in my view should be limited to groups where the work only applies to genetic females. Those are relatively rare. Now, I do support the right of any group of people to try to exclude whoever they want -- the right to exclude, but not the right to be **respected** for it. The MWMF is obviously not a place for a general exclusion of non-XX females.

**Laura:** My question here is why is MWMF **not** such a place? Isn't it a privately funded function held on privately owned land? So, why shouldn't the organizers be able to exclude whoever they want?

**Samantha:** You misunderstood me. They have that right in the sense I spoke of above but **not** the right to be respected for it. MWMF is obviously not a place where such an exclusion makes any sense, as it is obviously not a place where only XX womyn can benefit or make a contribution. However, some particular talks or workshops might be. Only when an event is obviously only pertinent to XX females would I consider such an exclusion a respectable thing.

**Hillary:** What "occasions" in which it is fair to request that only genetic females attend? I think our opinions differ on the finer points in this area because, for one, I agree there would be few occasions in which the work only applies to genetic females. I see visions of varying levels of separatist women saying that non-genetic women don't have the issue of being treated like women all their lives, which makes for a very broad "occasion" in which to exclude.

My suggestion to give space to women who wanted separation from one thing or another was to honor their need for separation, **not** to determine what constitutes an **appropriate** reason for separation. By way of example, let me use the S/M thing. Although I am a leather dyke from

way back myself, I understand that some women feel S/M is an expression of violence and imitates the patriarchy. I personally feel that S/M is not violent, because it is consensual. I also feel that it is not patriarchal because it is consensual and I see it as a lesbian archetype in the context I use it in. **But** I respect that some women do not agree with me. I do not camp in their space or attend their events when I want to play because I honor that we disagree. This is the attitude with which I think separate events and space should be approached. It honors that we do not **have** to agree, we do not **have** assimilate, and we are welcome to have separate opinions.

It's also like the concept of sexual harassment in the workplace. If I feel harassed, it is less important whether the harasser thinks he/she has harassed me.

**Karen K.:** The organizers of MWMF have every right to exclude anyone they want. It is their event, they have nurtured it to where it is today, and they deserve a lot of credit for all that MWMF offers to the multitude of women who attend the Festival each year.

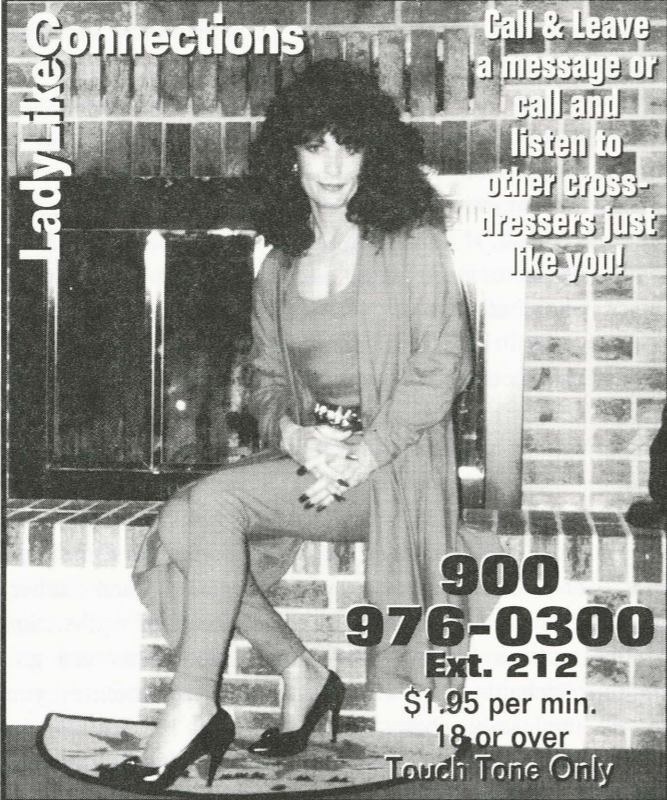
To me, their "legal right" and doing perhaps what is right for our community in our community is at odds when they choose to exclude some persons in the greater women's community from taking part in their women-only event.

**Laura:** I agree. The "legal right" is not necessarily the best or the right or the most positive thing for the community as a whole.

**Karen K.:** In previous years, when the festival organizers were faced with opposing views between groups of

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attending women, a good faith effort was extended to both groups of women, and a result was worked out that tried to accommodate both groups of women's right to attend the festival. This has mostly taken the form of separate spaces for women inside the festival, should they choose it. By creating spaces inside of the larger festival, women with differences could still enjoy what the festival had to offer, and no one group was denied in a recurring pattern ...meaning that while excluded for a year, something was worked out so that exclusion did not occur for years and years as policy.

The greater cause, a **for women** festival, was respected, with no single group of women making all the decisions over another group or groups of women -- and by group, I mean more than just "festival organizers". This is democracy, where everyone gets a voice, and the majority-rules mentality is kept to a minimum. The number of voices one way or the other was never the deciding factor previously. We as queers know that our rights here in the U.S.A. are inherent to us as citizens, and should not be up for vote.

**Laura:** Knowing how the MWMF organizers had dealt with dissent in the past gives me a basis from which to start. It seems as though it was a benevolent dictatorship, with the dictators respecting the wishes of the masses. Unfortunately, whether due to fear or ignorance or peer pressure or power, this method of dealing with conflict was

tossed out the window for certain issues.

**Karen K.:** Yes. Suddenly, an identifiable group of women are being denied access to the festival. No good faith effort is being extended to be inclusive, and this is what stands out to me. A tradition of inclusiveness is suddenly not being followed, and I have to ask myself why, and whether or not this is the correct path to take.

**Laura:** Good questions. And, in my opinion, the right questions to be asking. I wonder if anyone has posed these questions to the MWMF planning committee.

**Karen K.:** As Hillary suggested, some space could be made for those women who don't want to risk camping near a TS woman. That is how these conflicts have been resolved before. Why isn't this the way to resolve the TS issue now? My guess is that we have come upon a major bias of the organizers.

**Laura:** I would have to agree. Is there S/M space provided at MWMF? Or is the discrimination there a more subtle variety?

**Karen K.:** Just because someone is in charge of a company or an event doesn't mean that everything they do shouldn't be questioned, and it doesn't mean that their choices are "right" no matter if they are legally right. We all have biases. I have a pile of my own. When in a situation where a bias colors the outcome so, it shouldn't be out of range for examination.

**Laura:** Very true. We all have choices, and need to be

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prepared to live with the results of those choices. Yes, questioning the policy is a good thing. **Karen K.:** If the best that people who wish to exclude TS women from MWMF and other women-only spaces can come up with for excluding some women is "it makes me uncomfortable", then that is a bias that just isn't good enough to warrant excluding people, in my opinion. It is not enough for white women to exclude women of color, and it is not enough for vanilla-sexed lesbians to exclude S/M lesbians, and it is not enough to make some women put their tops back on so as not to offend women against piercings. I'd like to pull back into the greater society, and point out that not too long ago, today's "mainstream" lesbians and gays were considered "The Other". And as "The Other", people thought they were justified in treating us differently. Now, it seems that as mainstream lesbians and gays have become more accepted in this society, we are now pointing to groups that we used to welcome as "The Other". The S/M people, the TS people, the promiscuous people, the fetish people, to name a few. It's as if we are willing to sacrifice some of our own for that *Newsweek* cover, for the little acceptance we have been given. As if being mainstream is worth it in the U.S.A. today.

Do we have to do only what we are comfortable with? I am uncomfortable around giggling women who suck up to men in an unflattering manner, so I change my life to avoid them when possible. I do not work to get them denied into places that I frequent. I can't stand the fact that my boss is constantly twisting hairs on his beard and can't keep his hands off of the damn thing, but it is not for me to make what he chooses to do illegal or grounds to deny him anything. I wish that the organizers of MWMF would understand that there are experiences that they themselves have not lived, and which may prevent them from understanding what other women have come to know. But this non-understanding is not grounds enough to deny the other women's experiences.

**Laura:** I keep hearing people say that MWMF is not a place where discrimination should happen. I agree, but I also see no provisions being made by the organizers of the festival to deal with this discrimination.

Did the festival start as a money making project? Or a "let's help the community" project? What is it now? I think this is where some of my confusion is. In my mind MWMF

is the pet project of two women. It does not belong to a democracy. It is a dictatorship. And as such, on private land, the dictators have the right to make perfect a\*\*holes of themselves. in my opinion. I guess I'd much rather see a different festival created. One where the rules of engagement are clearly laid out. Where the purpose of the festival is clearly defined. Is MWMF clearly defined? Anyone know the stated goals of the festival?

**Linda:** The problem comes up with that definition of womyn and men. What constitutes a womyn? Was I always a womyn? Does the fact that I've changed my name, attire and shoe size make me a womyn? Does it come down to genitals? Was I **born** this way? My parents tell me I've been unwilling to conform to my "role" since earliest childhood -- not exactly female behavior, but unwilling and/or unable to adopt male enculturation. Perhaps I was dropped on my head at age six months.

**Laura:** And who is to do the defining? In general, I don't know. For the specific instance of MWMF, it seems that Bo and Lucy did the defining. Right or wrong, they made a definition. Now, their definition is not a terribly clear one. That is the point I have issue with. But, knowing their beliefs, their "rules", I can choose to ignore them, or choose to try and change them.

I guess I don't see MWMF as a public venture. I see it as a private one. And that alters how I look at the discrimination that goes on there.

**Linda:** If I had a conference and called it the WorldWide Human's Conference, but denied black people entrance on the basis that they were not really "human", should they be offended? Should the conference organizers be able to exclude such folk?

**Kymerleigh:** I believe that **anyone** who identifies as a woman regardless of op status -- and I define "identifies" as "lives full-time" -- should be allowed access to MWMF and any **other** event that celebrates being a woman.

If subsets of the set "woman" want their own space for their own focus as part of the larger event, I not only respect that but encourage it. I believe it is healthier for us to be united in the larger picture and unified in our separate interests than to be exclusionary in trying to make our separate interests the larger picture.

**Karen F.:** Though I tend to agree with Kymerleigh -- that's probably one of the more sensible solutions I've seen

to this issue -- I wonder: How many womyn are we talking about at an event such as MWMF? How many are TS? What sort of percentage? My impression is that its not all that large.

Sometimes it seems like an awful lot of energy and verbage and arguing has had to do with a very small minority in the wider womyn's community. Another question that comes to mind is: How would one define those areas or events that TS womyn would not be invited into, other than negatively? For example, a space for womyn of color is **for** those womyn as opposed to being **against** white womyn. That doesn't imply that white womyn are less female. Yet, by comparison, any way I can think of to indicate that a space is to be for non-TS womyn only such as saying it's for "womyn-born womyn" tends to suggest that TS womyn are less womyn than non-TS ones.

**Megan:** While I agree, I don't feel that this excludes MTF folks who identify as lesbians.

Once I was happily BBSing on a gay board, chatting with people all over the world -- specifically women -- in the appropriate chat base. I made friends. One day, a woman arrived in the base, calling from another local board. We chatted. We hit it off remarkably well, and decided to meet face to face; we lived right around the corner!

Just before we met, I got a private note telling me that she was MTF transgender, and that if I didn't want to meet, it was okay. Well, I'll admit, I was flummoxed. And uncomfortable. So I thought about it a bit, and I went back to my new friend's posts, and I called her and talked about it, and you know, she is a woman! Writes like a woman, talks like a woman, thinks like a woman, flirts like a lesbian! Whatever was on the outside, on the inside, this person was **dyke woman**.

I believe that these folks are born women where it counts -- on the inside.

**Sharon:** I'll respectfully disagree. The MWMF is one place where I would draw a line between pre- and post-op TS women attending. Many women attend the festival as I understand it topless or in total nudity. The women I've spoken with who have gone have told me that the freedom from male eyes and male bodies are some of the most empowering and liberating aspects of attending the MWMF. And if I were in that kind of situation unlikely,

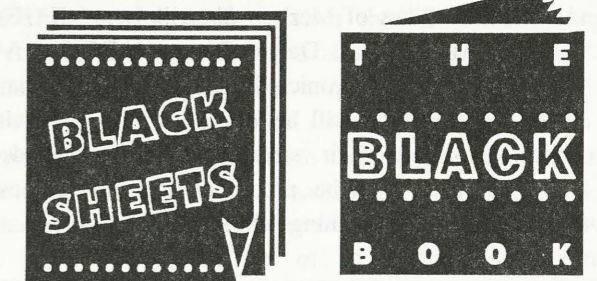
since I don't much like camping, I would feel extremely uncomfortable about sharing that space with someone inhabiting a male body. I accept that one may be a woman inhabiting a male body. But I don't want to be in a "women-only space" and have that space populated with male bodies.

**Erin O.:** I don't know why the lesbian community has spent so much of it's time kicking women out. In the Boys community they'll take just about anyone -- the more the merrier! I do think that as the Religious Right gets more organized, it would be beneficial for all of us queer folk to get together as a united front and protect our rights.

[Continued next month. "Dykes To Watch Out For" cartoon Copyright 1994 Alison Bechdel and reprinted with permission.]

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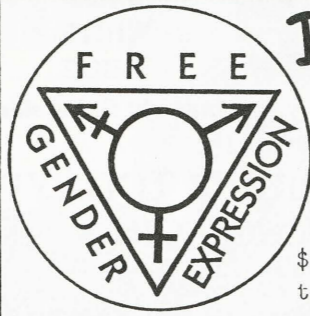
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## HotBuzz

by JoAnn Roberts

"Twish people who have trouble communicating would just shut up."  
-- Tom Lehrer



Let us hope that communication is the rule and not the exception at what seems to be a gathering of eagles on the West Coast. The first International Congress on Gender, Cross Dressing and Sex will convene Friday, February 24, in Northridge, Calif. The partial list of participants received in early December reads like a Who's Who of both the transgender community and professional care-givers. Presenters are coming from as far away as China and as close as the next valley. The congress will mix and match the likes of Merissa Sherrill Lynn (IFGE), Stanley Biber, Anne Bolin, Dallas Denny (AEGIS), Ari Kane (Outreach Inst.), Veronica Vera, Bill Henkin, and many more. Yours truly will be doing a workshop with professionals exploring their stereotypes of transgender folk. The conference will be preceded by a Welcoming Reception on Thursday evening where all the participants can mix. The conference, to be an annual event, is presented by The Center for Sex Research at Cal State Northridge, and is co-sponsored by AEGIS, FTM of Northern California, Outreach Institute, Quad-S, Renaissance, Tri-Ess, and IFGE. A more impressive array of useful information and content will not be found anywhere.



Since I am sometimes referred to as "that bitch from Philadelphia" you can imagine my pleasure at finding the following t-shirt:

*I am not a bitch.  
I am The bitch.  
And to you...  
I'm Ms. Bitch!*



I've been roaming the Internet quite a bit lately and it seems that TG resources are increasing rapidly. I am partial to the World Wide Web because it is graphically oriented and at least we now agree that a graphical interface is the way to go. Anyway, there are several TG sites on the Web, so if you can access the Web, try these URLs. The Transgender Page, <http://rniles.pnw.net/transgen.html>; TStar, <http://travesti.geophys.mcgill.ca/tstar.html>; Tina's Page, <http://www.ifi.uio.no/~tina/> (where you'll find a complete list of CDS pubs with graphics).

Other resources include: Julie's Page, <http://www.betaxs.com:8080/~julie/>; and the Queer Resources Directory, <http://vector.casti.com/QRD/html/QRD-home-page.html>. The QRD is interesting because it has a lot of political action information, as well as many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender organizations. More GLB groups are adding transgender to their names.



Since I'm writing this month's column in December, the season for giving, I'll mention a few of my personal favorites for charitable giving. Top o' the list is Renaissance, P.O. Box 888, King of Prussia PA 19146. My second choice for donations is AEGIS. Dallas Denny deserves a medal for all the work she does for absolutely no compensation. AEGIS is in need of a new computer to compose *Chrysalis Quarterly* and its newsletter *AEGIS News*. If you can spare a few dollars, send it to AEGIS, P.O. Box 33724, Decatur GA 30033. My third choice is ICTLEP, otherwise known as TRANSGEN, the law conference. Phyllis Frye is another person who is laboring for no compensation. Send your donations to ICTLEP, 5707 Firenze St., Houston TX 77035. All donations to Renaissance, AEGIS, and ICTLEP are tax deductible to the extent allowed by IRS regulations. These three organizations are 100 percent volunteer, so every dollar you send end ups in a project or program, not in someone's purse.



Now for a little politics. There is no better revenge than to use an enemy's own weapon against him. That's what was suggested in the December issue of *Wired*. Seems the Rev. Lou Sheldon, leader of the Traditional Values Coalition, an anti-gay rights group, set up an 800 number so his followers could call their Reps in Washington to voice their concerns over gay rights amendments. But, since it is an 800 number, anyone can use it to call their Rep. So, call 1-800-768-2221 and let your voice be heard for gay and transgender rights. TVC will have to pay the bill.



Let's get serious. The **HotBuzz** for the season is corsets. Ah yes, I can see you drooling now. Believe it or not, corsets are the hottest fashion accessory. Just about every lingerie manufacturer has hauled out their 1950s corset and corselette designs and updated them for the 90s. The bod is back. Macy's in New York opened a corset boutique and sold half their inventory the first day. The best seller was a short seamless bustier with padded, push-up underwired bra by Natori, for \$48.



I have to relate this story because it's just too precious. In *LadyLike* #21, I ran a reprint of an article by Virginia Prince called "The Death Of Gender". In it, Prince laments the loss of femininity by genetic females. One

correspondent took exception to Prince's view and wrote that she could refute Prince's assertion with one word: WonderBra. Who says femininity is dead?



The latest actor to appear in a dress on the silver screen is Danny Aiello. Aiello plays a crossdressing fashion buyer in Robert Altman's *Ready To Wear*, a send-up of the fashion industry.



The latest lip rage is custom color, but you don't have to go to a salon or a professional artist. Try blending colors you already have in your makeup kit. By blending colors you extend the palette of colors available to you. Use a lip brush and work directly on your lips. Start with a lighter color first and layer darker colors on top. To tone down a too-bright color, apply a brown-based shade. To intensify a light shade, layer fuchsia or coral over it. Always line lips first.



Some fashion mavens predict that the current flirting with stiletto heels will give way to a more refined, and thicker, heel with just a bit of platform. Oh good! My late 80s shoes from Wild Pair will be back in style.



I caught *Inside Victoria's Secret* on Showtime in November. It was very interesting to see some of the inner workings

of fashion photography. For example, in almost every instance shown, the clothes were pinned, tucked, tightened, shortened and otherwise made to mold to the model's body in a way that the clothes alone would not do. In one shot, a model was wearing a sweater that had been cut up the back to make it fall better from the front. Ah, sweet illusion. What you see is not what you actually get.



A few people told the editors of *Renaissance News & Views* that they didn't take an article in the October issue about Premarin seriously. Well, don't say they didn't tell you first. The November issue of *Vogue* carried an article on Premarin that verified much of what was printed.










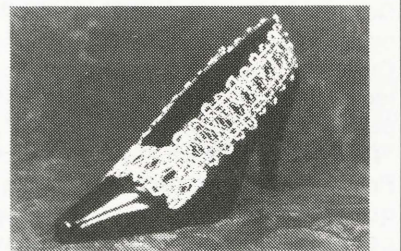
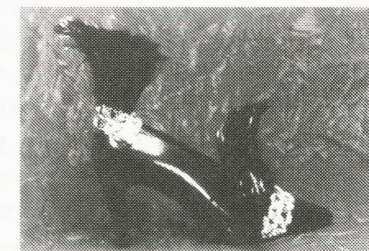
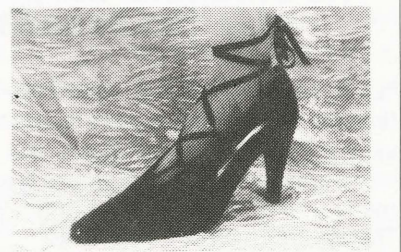
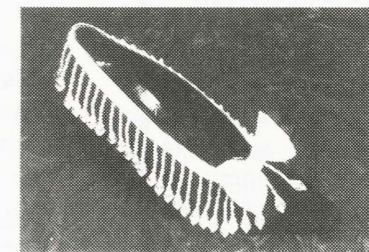
From *Allure* magazine, a few tricks of the trade; stand-ins when you don't have the right stuff ... Lipstick: Mix eyeshadow with Vaseline. Nail file: Use the abrasive strip on a matchbook. Blush: Lipstick blended very well to avoid looking like Norma Desmond.



**Buzzwords:** I remember when the Macintosh computer first came out. People talked about "mouseterbating." Now almost every computer has a mouse. But the coolest new word has to do with the computerized touch-ups that happen to almost every photo that now appears in print -- these pix are said to be "rasterbated." You can no longer

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It's official: the just-at-the-knee length for skirts and dresses is a total flop at the cash registers. Women are just not buying this length. The most often cited reason: too dowdy. Way to go girls. We know what we like and it ain't dowdy.



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and a post-op MTF transsexual. (You read about Stearns' legal battle to be reinstated in her job in these pages.) Stearns sent a letter to the editor of *Bazaar* praising the article the magazine did last September on a FTM transsexual in the San Francisco police department. Stearns wrote: "The manner in which police sergeant Stephan Thorne was treated should be the norm for transsexuals throughout our society. I think that your article has helped." If only more of us had the courage to be "out" and speak up for our brothers and sisters, we might accomplish more.



The word on belts is skinny. Yes, teeny, tiny, leetle belts not more than an inch wide. The big problem for us big girls is that we can end up looking like sausage casing if we're not careful.



Back to the bust. One of the nicest and sexiest bras I've seen in a long time comes from Lilyette. It's a convertible, strapless, padded push-up underwire, style 0853. For a free Lilyette catalog call 1-800-4-YOUR-BRA (800-496-8727).



Chanel wants to take you back to the future. They've introduced Le Regard, a line of single shade smoldering colors to create the HOT eye looks of the season. The little compact combines liner, shadow and cake mascara. Cake mascara? I haven't seen that since I played with my mother's cosmetics as a kid.

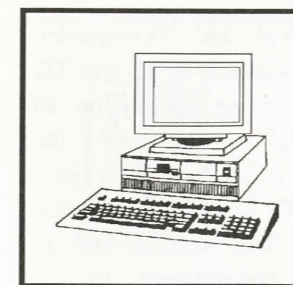


I've had a lot of fun on the Internet and I've found a lot of useful information as well. I've also made connection with some really nice folks. One of those people is Kalina Isato, the Sexy Vampire. I saw Kalina's e-mail posts in the newsgroup *soc.support.transgendered* and I noticed they were coming from Philadelphia. So, I sent her e-mail and we finally made a face-to-face connection at Henri David's Hallowe'en party. Kalina has written a book called *Tales of a Sexy Vampire* and it is just chock full of tidbits of useful information -- like, she plugs my books -- and how to be a "guidette" (that's the feminine form of "guido"). If you're interested in *Tales*, drop Kalina a line at TransVamp Publications, c/o Mary Lerario, 2300 Walnut St. #405, Philadelphia PA 19103. You too can be a Sexy Vampire in no time.



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If you see a news article relating to the gender community, please send it to us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365, or fax it to us at (818) 347-4190.



## THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY AND YOU

### MAILING LISTS: THE "EXCLUSIVE" DISCUSSION GROUPS

by Kimberleigh Richards

There is a lot of talk on the Internet about "newsgroups" or "forums", commonly called the Usenet. For the gender community, there are two primary Usenet newsgroups: *alt.transgendered* and the more recent *soc.support.transgendered*. There are also many more newsgroups for a variety of alternative lifestyles and sexual interests, such as *alt.homosexual*, *soc.bi*, and *alt.sex.bondage*.

But Usenet has a drawback to those who cherish their privacy and anonymity. These newsgroups can be read by anyone who has Usenet access, meaning that the discussion can be read not only by those who participate, but also by many cyber-voyeurs who can "lurk", virtually invisible, in the background.

Enter the mailing list, a sort of private cyberspace discussion group where only those who have specifically "subscribed" to the group can see any of the messages in the discussion. As the name implies, these are distributed by netmail, so this is also a great way to ensure that your mailbox will always be full. This should also be interpreted as a warning: If you are on a service where your incoming mail is restricted to a certain number of pieces at time, or you have a per-message charge for netmail, you may want to limit the number of mailing lists you subscribe to.

To lower the confusion level, as well as overcome their subscribers' netmail limits or charges, some of these lists offer a "digest" option, where several messages in a row are combined into a single longer message. A few enterprising list administrators have joined forces with online services geared toward the same interests and allow the mailing list to be carried as a "local echo" ...that is, all the subscribers to that online service can access it without individual netmail subscriptions.

Here are the mailing lists we're aware of that have some measure of interest to the gender community. The Internet address given at the end of each description is the address to send netmail to if you wish to subscribe; generally speaking, sending the message **SUBSCRIBE listname your name** usually does the trick, and if not, you'll usually get an information file back telling you how they want subscription requests to be formatted.

We've noted lists with a digest option and those with "local echo" arrangements with online services.

**ALTERNATES (Alternate Lifestyles)** is a mail list for

people who advocate, and/or practice an open sexual lifestyle. Its members are primarily bisexual men and women, and their significant others. Alternates is explicitly for adults who are interested in discussing alternate sexual lifestyles. It is restricted to those who are 18 or over, due to its very explicit sexual discussion of topics such as bisexuality, bondage, S&M, non-monogamy, polyfidelity and such. (*alternates-request@ns1.rutgers.edu*)

**BISEXU-L** is for the discussion of issues of bisexuality. Cordial and civilized exchange of relevant ideas, opinions and experiences between members of all orientations is encouraged here ...but the list is not intended as separatist from any other lists devoted to lesbian, gay and bisexual issues; rather, it is an additional resource for discussion of bisexual concerns. (*listserv@brownvm.brown.edu*)

**cd forum** is available in digest format only, and supports crossdressing, transsexuality, and other gender issues in friendly and frank discussions. Articles submitted for publication in the forum are stripped of header and signature ID unless you instruct otherwise. To subscribe, send a short paragraph describing your interest in cd forum, and where you heard of it. You will be required to submit an introductory article within one month of your subscription. (*cd-request@shell.portal.com*)

**DIGNITY** is a list for the members and friends of Dignity (Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Roman Catholics and friends). Subjects of interest include issues of spirituality and sexuality, the relationship of Dignity to the broader Church, ideas for chapter programming, innovative liturgies, chapter organizational problems, articles from local chapter newsletters, and chapter calendars of events. People are also encouraged to ask for prayers when they need them. (*listserv@american.edu*)

**GLB-NEWS** is a read-only repository of information for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and sympathetic persons. It is designed to present informational articles from a variety of source mailing lists in a single forum for quick and compact delivery. As articles are received by the editor-at-large, articles which would classify as information are posted to the list. (*listserv@brownvm.brown.edu*); GLB-NEWS is also available to America OnLine subscribers in the newsgroup *aol.lists.glb-news* and to Cross Connection subscribers in the News Services area.



**gender** is a list created for the purpose of discussing gender issues. The intent is to provide an open-minded forum for discussion of gender stereotypes vs. individuality, gender roles and particularly how people can get beyond these restrictions. Any related topic is fair game. (*majordomo@indiana.edu*), or in the /Gender forum on Cross Connection.

**LUTI** is for lesbian Christians (and other spiritual seekers) and is peopled by followers of the Christian tradition, as well as anyone who desires to explore their spiritual journey in the company of other seekers is welcome. The list does not proselytize, but rather is a place to discuss our own journey and listen to others discuss theirs. (*luti-owner@vector.casti.com*)

**POLITIDYKES** is intended to provide women who identify as bi, lesbian, or queer a friendly space for progressive political discussion. Members are encouraged to question, challenge, converse, share, and push the limits of their own understanding. (*majordomo@vector.casti.com*)

**QGV (Queer Global Village)** grew out of a meeting of technologists and activists at Creating Change. The goal of this list is to strategize the best ways to technologically empower activists and politically activate technologists. (*majordomo@vector.casti.com*)

**QN** is a mailing list for Queer Nation activists and for all interested in Queer Nation. The purpose of QN is to network among various Queer Nation chapters, discussion actions and tactics, and for general discussion of how to bring about Queer Liberation. (*majordomo@queernet.org*)

**QUEERPLANET** is a list devoted to organizing and networking among the international l/g/b/t/o communities. It will be a means to foster communication in an inexpensive matter between LGB activists, organizations and individuals all over the world in order to make the planet a queer one. It has a specific focus on topics of interest and importance in particular to worldwide LGB organizing, namely the state of gay/lesbian/bisexual life around the world; obtaining LGB contacts (online or otherwise) in as many countries worldwide as possible; organizing to improve nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation worldwide; improving interaction between the international queer organizations ILGA, LGHRC, IGLYO and AIMLGC and local groups and activists (and themselves); immigration issues as they affect queers of all countries; dealing with the worldwide nature of the AIDS pandemic. The list is not dominated by events/people in the U.S.; it is designed to foster networking between individuals and organizations interested in a Queer Planet. (*majordomo@abacus.oxy.edu*)

**Sappho** is for discussion of issues of interest to lesbians and bisexual women. All women (including pre- and post-op transsexuals) are invited to join, but only women (no CDs) may join. (*sappho-request@apocalypse.org*) or *majordomo@qiclab.scn.rain.com* for sappho-digest.

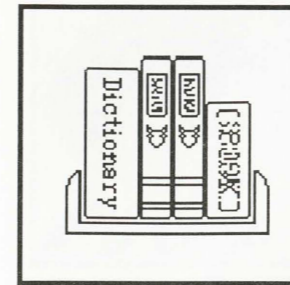
**TransActive-I** focuses on Transsexual and Transgender political issues. It is solely for the discussion of TS and TG political activism, strategies for educating society on an international, national, and local basis, and the empowerment of TS and TG people everywhere. The list is only for TS and TG individuals (MTF and FTM) who are living full-time in the gender of their choice, and to supportive others with a strong commitment to the betterment of society specifically regarding TS and TG peoples. It is not for those who are questioning their gender identity -- rather, it is geared toward those who have dealt with or are dealing with these issues and taking the appropriate steps toward resolution of these as well as post-transition political issues. (*listserv@netcom.com*)

**TRANSGEN** is a list specifically for and about people who are transsexual, transgendered and/or transvestites. Very similar to *alt.transgendered* and *soc.support.transgendered* but more private and with better rules of "netiquette". For example, people have been suspended from the list in the recent past for attacking individuals or entire gender community classes. Otherwise, everything from hormones and electrolysis to surgeons and support groups are here. Many "real-life" adventures. (*listserv@brownvm.brown.edu*); also in the /TRANSGEN forum on Cross Connection.

You may discover more mailing lists along the way; most new lists are routinely announced on existing lists with similar orientations. And with more and more of these lists making "local echo" arrangements, you might find some of them on your online service provider before you even have a chance to subscribe!

**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.)

**APR** *California* **1995**  
**CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'**  
APRIL 20 -23 at the Burbank Holiday Inn  
Sponsored by PPOC  
Co-hosted by the Southland Gender Groups  
For Registration & Information Brochure Write To:  
PPOC/California Dreamin'  
P.O. Box 1088  
Yorba Linda, CA 92686  
Or call (714) 779-9013 6 pm to 9 pm - Pacific Time



## Alternative Presses

by Kimberleigh Richards

As I was growing up, I was always told "if you're going to do something, you'd better do it right". Unfortunately, I've always expected the same of others, which has led to many disappointments in my life.

The latest disappointment is the *Crossdresser's International Shopping Guide* for 1995, published by the same people who produce *Crossdresser's Quarterly*. I remember when the first edition came out in 1989: Many of the listings came from the "Yellow Pages" supplement we used to publish when *Cross-Talk* was still a regional newsletter. The problem, as you will see, is that some of those listings haven't been updated in the six years since then ...

My first indication that something was wrong with the 1995 edition came when I noticed a listing for a local shoe store that went out of business over two years ago. The listing jumped out at me, because I remember them calling me the week before I was going to take the "Yellow Pages" to press to advise me that their listing needed to be removed because they were closing their doors in three weeks.

I am not unaware of the difficulties in preparing any kind of guide due to the inherent failure of people to reconfirm their information between editions. To be honest, that had a lot to do with my decision to cease publishing the "Yellow Pages" after last year's edition. After sending confirmation forms -- then ultimately having to telephone the 65% of the businesses that didn't send the form back -- we had the earthquake and several of the listings became obsolete after all. But after finding that defunct shoe store listed in the *Shopping Guide*, I had to investigate what else might be in error. Here's what I found:

By checking listings in Hollywood, Greater Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley against the Pacific Bell telephone directories, I found five listings with incorrect addresses and sixteen businesses that no longer exist (one which used to be at the earthquake-destroyed Northridge Fashion Center). I also found a listing for T. Daniels and Company in Pasadena, who ran their "going out of business" ad in *Cross-Talk* #51 last January. In the course of my cross-checking listings, I also discovered that Fashion Fantasy, one of our regular advertisers, was listed

by their address and phone number from two years ago ... that Pierre Silber Shoes -- who used to run advertising in *Crossdresser's Quarterly* -- were also listed under their old address and phone number (they moved this past summer) ... that the New York City location of A Different Light was listed under their old address (they moved last spring) ... and that only two of the five Transformation boutiques in the U.K. were listed.

I have to wonder if editrix Danielle Alexis makes any effort to recontact businesses and update the information in her database for them. These errors certainly would not occur if she did, and if I can find this many such unconfirmed listings just by spotchecking the L.A. businesses, I can only wonder how much of the rest of the book is inaccurate as well.

But wait! -- as they used to say in Ginsu knife commercials -- there's more!

I also noted that among magazines, while the guide managed to list the now defunct *Our Sorority* (year of death 1989), *Gender Expressions* (1991), *Transie Times* (1992) and *Petticoat Junction* (1993), it failed to list *LadyLike*, *Tapestry*, *Chrysalis Quarterly*, *Dragazine*, or the magazine you're now reading. I find the omission of *Cross-Talk* particularly baffling, since I know Danielle has heard of us ... she was a subscriber at one time, was also an advertiser a couple of years ago, and we printed a letter to the editor from her within the past two years.

Particularly interesting to me is the comment in the introduction that "computer bulletin boards ... such as Cross

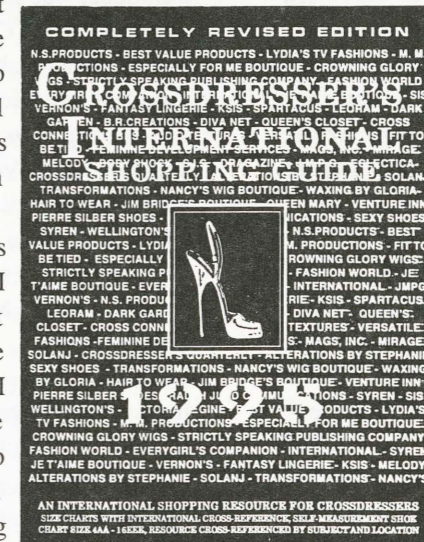
Connection, allow us to interact and shop by computer". Yet the only BBS listed in the *Guide* is one that hasn't even gone online yet! No Cross Connection, no Puss N Boots, no Feminet, no Jersey Shore System ... all of which have been online for years already.

Looking for a helping professional? You'd better know his or her first name, because 25 of those listings are alphabetized that way; i.e., Richard Docter, Ph.D. is under "R", not "D" and George Brown, M.D. is under "G", not "B".

As I said before, I am not unsympathetic with the difficulty in producing such a compilation of facts. But I can't justify the existence of a guide where so many of the facts were either in error or omitted entirely.

The *Crossdresser's International Shopping Guide* has gone from being a potentially valuable resource to a colossal joke. Don't waste your money, kids.

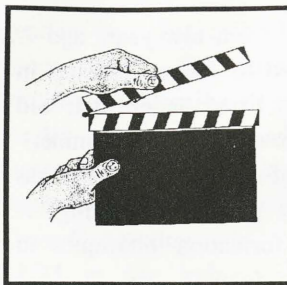
[Published by J.M.P.G., P.O. Box 7217, Burbank CA 91505. No price printed on the cover, but I estimate its value at somewhere around \$0.02...]



1995 Guide: Accurate?







## MOVIE REVIEW

# STARGATE

by Diane Chaplin

*Stargate* is the kind of movie where a soldier can be transported to "the other side of the known universe" in a whirlpool of bizarre special effects, step into a temple on an alien planet and say, "What a rush!"

It is also the kind of movie where the sun god Ra, who has harnessed the ability to traverse the universe at the speed of light, still needs slaves to build his pyramids. 7% where the local equivalent of a Nubian princess is sent into the chamber of the Earth visitors to pleasure them. Don't tell me there aren't any coincidences. The movie *Ed Wood*, about the worst director of all time, was made to prepare us for *Stargate*.

The movie opens with the title "Egypt, 1928." (Other titles say "Present Day" and "Military Installation, Creek Mountain, Colorado" -- the latter, of course, with rum-dummy-dum military music.) Scientists uncover a mysterious archeological find. Flash forward to the Present Day, where Egyptologist Daniel Jackson (James Spader), looking uncannily like John Lennon, explains his theories to a roomful of experts, who walk out after about two sentences.

Jackson, who is considered a crackpot, is obviously the man the U.S. government would choose to translate the hieroglyphics on the secret find of that 1928 expedition -- a giant circle of carved stone which is a stargate, left behind

by the builders of the pyramids. And of course Jackson and Col. Jack O'Neil (Kurt Russell) are the guys to walk through the gate, leading a squad of soldiers with automatic weapons.

The journey through time and space is done with the technique, but not the style, of a similar journey in *2001: A Space Odyssey*. On the other side, the Earth visitors find a desert planet ruled by the god Ra, who is played by Jaye Davidson, previously known for embodying the secret of *The Crying Game*. Here, dressed like a cross between a pharaoh and a Vegas showgirl, he rules a curious society in which spaceships use pyramids as landing pads, but the citizens live like desert nomads from *Lawrence of Arabia*. His voice is distorted by a synthesizer so that it drops several octaves and sounds like an elevator recording with a cold.

Let's say a stargate WAS discovered, allowing instantaneous travel across the universe, and opening onto a planet that could be inhabited by humans. What would the appropriate response be? Awe? Ambition? Curiosity? Not at all. Col. O'Neil's orders: "Track down signs of any possible danger. If I find any, blow up the stargate."

The movie is so lacking in any sense of wonder that it hurtles us from one end of the universe to the other, only to end in a gun fight between the good guys and the bad guys, while the colonel's bomb ticks down. (Like all movie bombs, it comes equipped with a bright red digital readout device that displays the countdown while beeping.)

*Stargate* is like a film school exercise. Assignment: Conceive of the weirdest plot you can think of, and reduce it as quickly as possible to action movie cliches. If possible, include sun god Ra, and make sure something gets blowed up real good.

*Rated PG-13 (for sci-fi action violence). Starring Kurt Russell, James Spader, Jaye Davidson, Viveca Lindfors, Alexis Cruz, Leon Rippey, John Diehl and Carlos Lauchu. Directed by Roland Emmerich. Produced by Joel B. Michaels, Oliver Eberle and Dean Devlin. Written by Devlin and Emmerich. Released by MGM/UA.*



Jaye Davidson as the enigmatic ruler, Ra.



## The Diva of Dish

by Angela Gardner

I guess I can finally admit it. After all these years, I still don't know what an "Auld Lang Syne" is. I'm not even sure I can spell it. But, another year has chugged on by at Bullet Train speed and here we are in 1995. Republicans are in charge of the government, Arnold Schwarzenegger (a Republican) got pregnant and President Clinton fired the Surgeon General cause she said teaching school kids about masturbation was a good idea. As The Wicked Witch once said, "What a world, what a world." Well, we'll just have to make the best of it ...



**ADDING THE SOAP TO OPERA:** Suzanne T., an old friend from pre-Renaissance days, sent a long letter filled with info. One of the reported items was about the soap, *Another World*. It seems the character Cass will don drag to go undercover and search for the abducted Felicia. His alter ego is Miss Krystal Lake and "she" was first introduced on the show ten years ago. It seems the fans loved him as a woman and that's why Krystal is coming back. If she has to do a lot of searching for Felicia then the story could drag (oops) on for weeks. I always find it interesting when the writers use an excuse like a male character going undercover to put a guy in a dress. Like that makes him more inconspicuous.

Stephen Schnetzer, the actor who portrays Cass and Krystal, has some tips for walking like a woman. "If you caress the inside of your thighs together, you'll get a sway and it works. (If you haven't shaved well you'll get a rash.) All you have to do is throw the shoulders and you're home free." Personally, I've always felt that in order to walk like a woman you have to think concave instead of convex. Ruminant on that for a minute.



**MORE SHOW BIZ DRAG:** Back on November 25th, I happened to catch the band called The Cramps on *Late Night with Conan O'Brian*. I've heard of them for years and may have seen them before but they have always stood out in my mind as being the band my friend Jane Peabody had on her T-shirt when she decided to dress like a punk. She did look great with spiked hair and a leather mini. She tied it all together with spike heels to match the spiked hair and that's what really got my attention as I watched The Cramps' performance; they were all wearing spike heels. Even the woman in the band. I can't really say if the drummer was, since he was behind his kit, but the singer

and bass player, both male, were wearing spikes. They were also attired in tight PVC suits, kind of Emma Peelesque. The female guitarist wore a PVC bottom with a velvet top.

All I can say is, if more bands would take the time to learn how to walk in heels then maybe more young men would give pumps a try and stop wearing those big, ugly sneakers. Speaking of big and ugly, did you catch *The Nanny* on December 12 where Cher (played by a female Cher impersonator) came to the Sheffield house to recover from plastic surgery? One wacky plot device leads to another and word leaks to the press that Cher is in the house. In an attempt to fool the media, Fran's cousin Ira was called upon to do his Cher impersonation. Fran said, "He's the best female impersonator to come out of Queens." I don't know about that Franny. Ira was about two hundred pounds heavier than Cher and nowhere near as good looking. (He was wearing spikes, too.) Mr. Sheffield said to Fran, "Before you came into my life, I never had the need for an emergency transvestite." What if Ira is just a crossdresser, Mr. Sheffield? Hey, what if Fran's actually a crossdresser? That might explain that nasal voice. It could be an attempt to talk like a girl.

RuPaul is back in pumps again. We reported a while back that she was going to try and get some recognition as her male-self. Didn't work. Amanda Grae has sent along a tabulation of Ru sightings which include promos for Comedy Central, in a Southern Belle outfit to promote their "No Scarlet Station", and a part in a movie with Madonna. It seems Wayne Wang has directed a film called *Smoke*, a pic about the goings-on in a smoke shop. Wayne had the kooky idea of doing a second picture based on the characters from *Smoke* and having them totally ad-lib their dialog. The result is called *Blue In The Face* and it features Madonna as a singing telegram girl. Miss RuPaul Charles sings her song "Stinky Dinky" along with a cast of hundreds. The whole film was shot in six days and it will be released this year along with the scripted film that spawned it.

RuPaul is also slated to appear in a motion picture version of *The Brady Bunch* as Jan's high school guidance counselor. I guess he'll be dressing like a boy for that one. If not, as Amanda said, "If I had a counselor like that in high school, I would have dressed very differently at my senior prom."

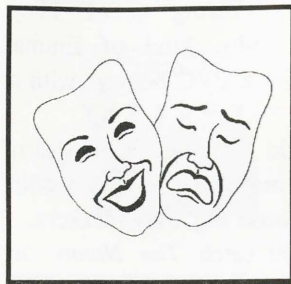
A movie version of *The Brady Bunch*? What's next... *The Flintstones*? **Willlllmaaaa!!!**



**RAP UP:** Happy New Year again folks and remember to keep those cards and letters coming. Let us know what you think and we'll share it with the rest of the world. Agree or disagree, as long as you have some kind of opinion, but try not to be judgmental.

See you next month, kittens!





# The Bearded Lady

by Ricky Hunt  
Illustration by Rita

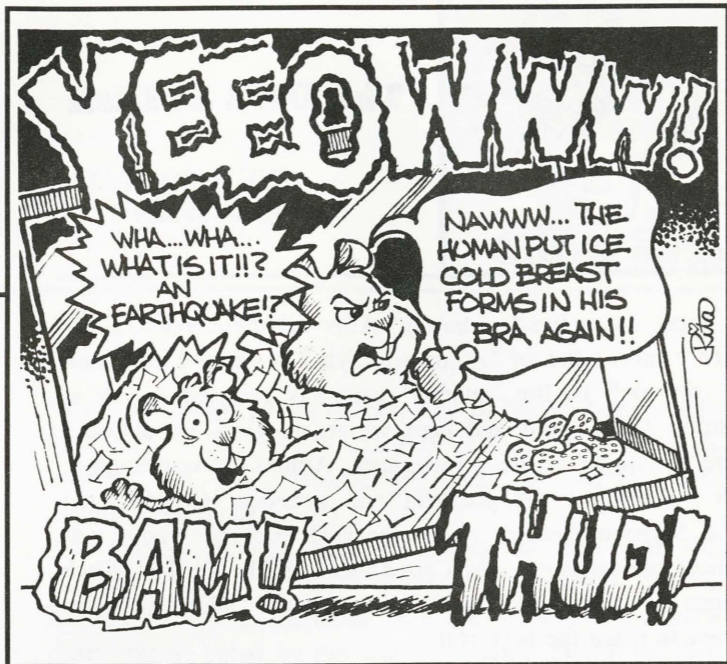
I am developing an acute case of envy for those of you who live in the sunny clime of California. Here in the Northeast, as I write this (it's October ... damned deadlines) the trees are turning colors and the frost is on the pumpkin. If it would only stay on the cussed pumpkin I wouldn't object, but it is also invading my apartment ...and wardrobe drawer. Cold weather crossdressing presents special problems. Have you ever joyfully dug through your lacies and unmentionables and pulled out your favorite girdle only to have it clasp a band of arctic cold around your midriff until your precious limited body heat can soak into it? That silky smooth slip that is so kind to the legs in the summer becomes a sheet of solid ice skating over your shaved shanks. There are some advantages to high heels in winter -- that pointy heel makes a great grip on ice and most of your foot is lifted off the cold floor -- but the thin soles of women's shoes will not protect your tortured toes from cracking off one by one.

And how in blazes can women wear skirts and hose at 15 degrees below zero? Is there a special brand of anti-freeze available only in shops that cater exclusively to genetic women ...places that must be completely invisible to those of us with a Y chromosome in our makeup! Do they give our TS sisters the secret once they complete their real life test? If so, how come not a single one has broken down and told the rest of us? There is no way on God's (previously) green earth I would venture outside into the snow in a skirt.

When I arrive at my frugally heated apartment in the mornings, my gerbils have moved all their chips to one side of the cage and are buried somewhere in them. It is somewhat sobering to know that those rodents are smarter than me. They only poke the tips of their noses out of their nest until I toss them their food, staying sensibly warm.

I have formed the habit of keeping my jacket on, taking my nightgown and bra from the closet and placing them on the radiator in the bathroom. By the time I have thawed myself in the shower they are warm enough that the residual heat protects me as I race for the electric blanket.

Try as I might, though, I eventually awake to cold reality and must get out of bed. Nothing in this world will wake you up faster than placing a silicone breast form at ambient winter room temperature against your unprotected chest. (Of course, I never remember to take them out of the drawer and warm them in the bed with me; that would take forethought and intelligence, qualities



that are sadly lacking in my makeup before crawling into bed in a cold room.) John Travolta has nothing on me as I dance around the room in reaction. Could his famous one hand in the air routine have resulted from trying to seat a frigid form in his bra?

Reaching for the sky does move things around a little bit, spreading the agony, as it were. Technology has provided an answer to this problem, however. Just as I can thaw out the supper I forgot to take out of the freezer in the microwave, about two minutes on high allows my breast forms to provide a shield of pleasant warmth between me and the cold, uncaring world.

Actually, this is not the problem it used to be. When I was on the road years ago, before I had the bread to purchase real breast forms, I stuffed my bosom with hot water bags filed with various semiliquid concoctions. Semiliquid, that is, at 72 degrees or so. When they sat in the back of the van all day they were rubber wrapped ice lumps in odd shapes created by the other items in my suitcase. Many was the hour I whiled away in a hot tub with two hot water bottles floating thither and yon like blue rubber duckies, thawing until I could safely put them in to my bra cup.

There is one upside to winter. There is no more delicious feeling than snuggling into an ankle length, long sleeved flannel nightgown. Flannel is one of the most comforting fabrics mankind has created, and it's almost worth putting up with cold to enjoy it. I have no idea why a flannel nightgown feels so much more comforting than flannel pajamas, but I can attest to the pleasure, even when the cold breezes sneak up my hemline.

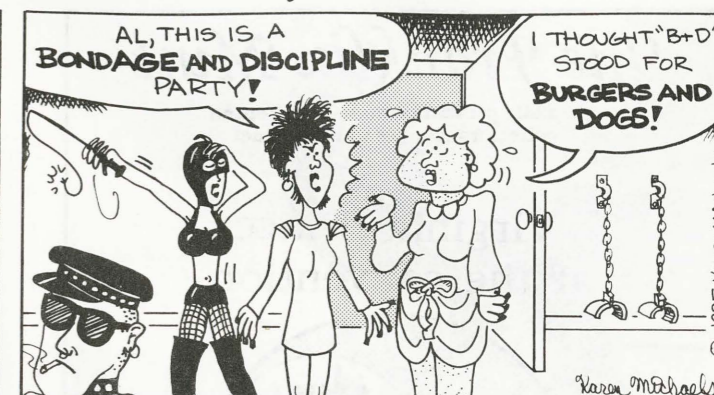
I have spent the last couple days at the sewing machine stitching and snipping to make myself a couple of snugly warm nightgowns. (Actually I ended up cutting out a flannel dress before I noticed the problem, but who will know the difference?)

I may make it through the winter yet.

# "CROSS-TALK" COMICS

## THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS



## THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner



## here in the (un)real world by Nancy Wilson

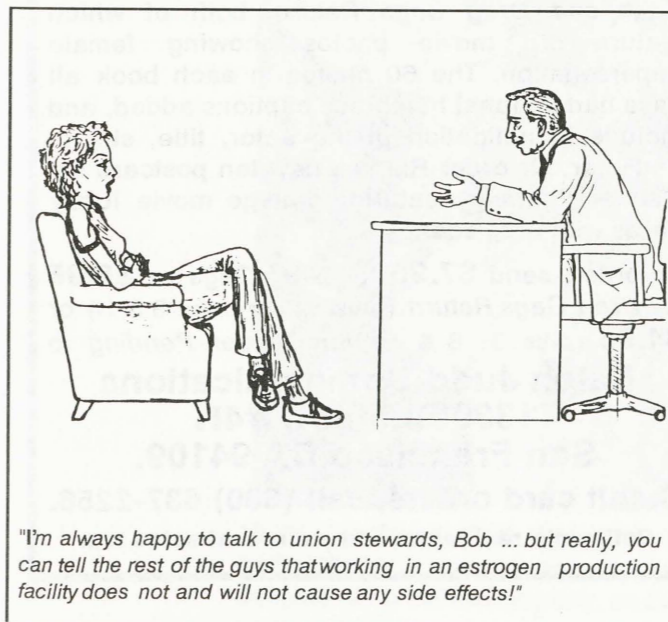


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## WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT? by Christine-Jane



## Tasha's World by Tasha Barnard





ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE by Karen Rusnak

## The Franklin Mint

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So if you think you can further enhance what many already call the gender community's best magazine, please send a sample of your work to:

**Kymerleigh Richards**  
**Cross-Talk**  
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## WHAT'S ON THE TV TONIGHT?

Cartoons by Christine-Jane Wilson

A book of nearly 100 cartoons drawn by Christine-Jane Wilson. In the magazine 'Forum', editor Isabel Koprowski wrote: " - the answer is not *East-Enders*, you'll be glad to hear, but delicious feminine clothing such as lacy bras, six inch stilettos and the sheerest of stockings.

"What's on the TV Tonight?" is a charming cartoon book depicting transvestites in a variety of amusing situations. Because it is the creation of a TV, none other than Christine-Jane Wilson, the editor of *The Glad Rag*, the book always laughs with, not at, transvestites. The author draws on her own experience, as well as her imagination, to produce cartoons showing the dreadfully embarrassing things that can happen to TVs, whether in social or family context. But it's not blishes all the way: some pages glow with the positive pride a cross-dresser may feel when found out unexpectedly.

"Transvestites will identify with the author and find the book reassuring as well as amusing. Everyone will be touched by the sensitivity and delicacy with which Christine-Jane treats the difficulties of being a TV".

## FUTURES EXCHANGE

A FANTASY OF CROSS-GENDER by Sarah Wood  
Charles Merchant, a life-long transvestite, awakes - in the body of his attractive personal assistant, Jenny Page . . . from there, Sarah weaves an intriguing and well-written story, beautifully illustrated by the talented Emma

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ALSO AVAILABLE: *Hell -- It's Heaven*, Christine-Jane's non-crossdressing cartoon book on the afterlife, with lots of cute angels and devils. \$9.00 US to the same address.

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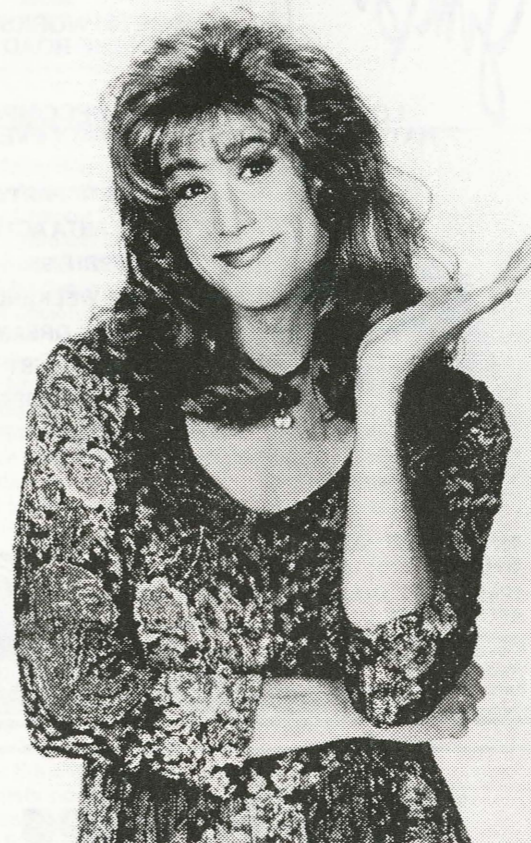
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## GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

from the archives of Ralph Judd

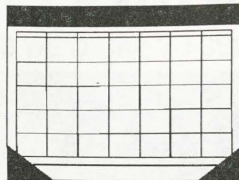


9/16/93: Herman (William Ragsdale) disguises himself as a woman to report on what single life is really like for the other half, then has to be rescued from a tight situation by New York Knicks basketball star Patrick Ewing (shown in right photo) on *Herman's Head*, Fox.



10/25/93: Wood (Burt Reynolds) dresses as the tooth fairy, along with Evan (Hal Holbrook), dressed as a candy bar, in order to accompany Wood's young daughter to a Halloween party, on *Evening Shade*, CBS.





## EVENTS CALENDAR

**February 21-26, 1995:** 7th Annual "Texas 'T' Party", San Antonio TX, sponsored by Boulton & Park Society. Details from P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163 or by calling (210) 980-7788.

**March 13-19, 1995:** International Foundation for Gender Education "Coming Together-Working Together Convention", Atlanta GA. Details from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.

**April 20-23, 1995:** "Moonlight In Manhattan", New York NY, sponsored by the Greater New York Gender Alliance (Cross Dressers International, Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Girls Night Out, Imperial Court of New York, Long Island Femme Expression, Metropolitan Gender Network). Write P.O. Box 61, Easton PA 18044-0061 for details, or e-mail via Internet to [skristine@aol.com](mailto:skristine@aol.com).

**April 20-23, 1995:** "California Dreamin'", Burbank CA, sponsored by Powder Puffs Of California and hosted in conjunction with the Southern California Transgender Support Network (PPOC, Born Free, Neutral Corner, CHIC, Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, and Ladies' Knight Out). Details from P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda CA 92686.

**May 17-21, 1995:** "Esprit '95", Port Angeles WA, sponsored by Emerald City, NWGA, and Cornbury Society. Details from P.O. Box 873, Kirkland WA 98083-0873.

**May 18-21, 1995:** "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, produced by Creative Design Services, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406. Information by phone: (610) 640-9449; via Internet: [cdspub@omni.voicenet.com](mailto:cdspub@omni.voicenet.com).

**June 14-18, 1995:** "Transgen 95: Your Jobs, Your Insurance and Health, Your Rights, and Your Documents", Houston TX, sponsored by the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. Details from ICTLEP, 5707 Firenza, Houston 77035, or by telephone: (713) 723-8368.

**July 26-30, 1995:** "Spouse/Partner International Conference for Education (SPICE)", Memphis TN. Information from Linda Peacock, P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72203, or by telephone: (501) 227-8798.

**September 14-17, 1995:** "Paradise in the Poconos". See May 18-21 listing.

**October 26-29, 1995:** 6th Annual "Fall Harvest", St. Louis MO, sponsored by Mid America Gender Group Information Exchange (MAGGIE) and hosted by St. Louis Gender Foundation. Information from SLGF, P.O. Box 9433, St. Louis MO 63117.

*(Please send information on national gender community events to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365. Listings must be accompanied by a written authorization by an officer of the sponsoring organization or be listed in their group newsletter. Information will not be accepted via e-mail.)*

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## HOTLINES

### NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132  
Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @  
Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 657-4344  
Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 570-7389  
East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #  
Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 388-7022 %  
Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611  
Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #  
Gender Talk North, New Hampshire: (603) 924-8828  
Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202  
Images, Hartford: (203) 779-9708  
Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9858  
Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340  
Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118 @  
Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 283-1333 @  
Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050  
Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858  
Reflections, Boston: (617) 323-6082  
Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (610) 630-1437  
Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578  
Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 435-5401  
Sigma Nu Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Trenton: (609) 586-1351 @  
Silent Passage, Rhode Island: (401) 438-7417  
Tiffany Club, Boston: (617) 891-9325  
TransGender Educational Ass'n, Arlington: (301) 949-3822  
TransGenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513  
Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 231-1181  
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 Exploration: (404) 875-9846 #  
Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %  
Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838  
Eden Society, Pompano Beach: (305) 784-9316 #  
Fantasia, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #  
GDA North Carolina: (704) 642-1914  
Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178  
Grace & Lace, Mississippi: (601) 362-6335  
Louisville Gender Society: (812) 944-5570  
Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #  
Montgomery Institute, Gainesville: (904) 332-6638 #  
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 @  
Phoenix, Asheville: (704) 253-9882  
Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477  
Sigma Epsilon Chapter Tri-Ess, Atlanta: (404) 552-4415 @  
Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 527-1012  
Tennessee Vals, Nashville: (615) 664-6883  
Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 222-6796

### MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Beta Gamma Chapter Tri-Ess, Minneapolis: (612) 870-8536 @  
Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918  
Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @  
Chicago Gender Society: (708) 749-1202  
City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minneapolis: (612) 229-3613  
Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557  
Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 791-3947  
Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267  
Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648  
Gender Dysphoria Support, Kansas City: (816) 753-7816 #  
Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (812) 876-5635  
Minnesota Freedom of Gender Expression: (612) 220-9072  
N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #  
Paradise Club, Cleveland: (216) 586-9292

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!

Quad-City Society for Sexuality Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641  
St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 997-9897  
Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024  
Wichita Transgender Alliance: (316) 682-9131

### SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:

Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @  
Alpha Rho Chapter Tri-Ess, Salt Lake City: (801) 553-8141 @  
Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163  
Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 980-7788  
CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643  
Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 264-7103 @  
First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144  
Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456  
Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 202-6466  
Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282  
Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 416-6632  
Second Image, Austin: (512) 515-5460  
TS Peer Support, Houston: (713) 333-2278 #  
Tau Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Houston: (713) 347-8747 @  
Texas Ass'n. of Transsexuals, Houston: (713) 827-5913 #  
West Texas Gender Alliance, San Angelo: (915) 944-1381

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

Emerald City, Seattle: (206) 284-1071  
Ingersoll Gender Center, Seattle: (206) 329-6651  
Northwest Gender Alliance, Portland: (503) 646-2802  
Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036  
Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282  
Trans-Port, Portland: (503) 774-8463  
Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #  
**THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):**

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @  
Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #  
Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317  
Born Free, Riverside: (909) 278-0958  
CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @  
Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 937-8432  
Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665  
FTM, Oakland: (510) 287-2646 #  
Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270  
Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696  
Powder Puffs Of California, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013  
Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044  
Sacramento Gender Association: (916) 482-7742  
Sigma Sigma Beta Chapter Tri-Ess, Lake Tahoe: (916) 544-2460 @  
Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @  
Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

### CANADA:

Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874  
Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #  
F.A.T.E., Vancouver: (604) 254-9591  
Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (819) 770-1945  
Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661

*[For a list of organizations outside North America that maintain hotline numbers, please send a self-addressed envelope and one IRC to Cross-Talk, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365 USA.]*

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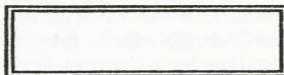
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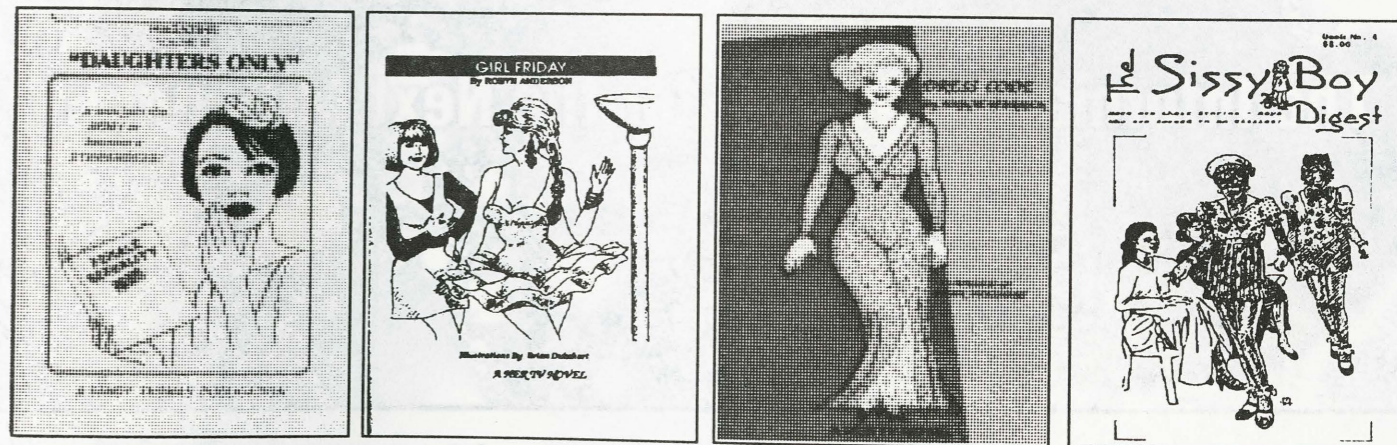
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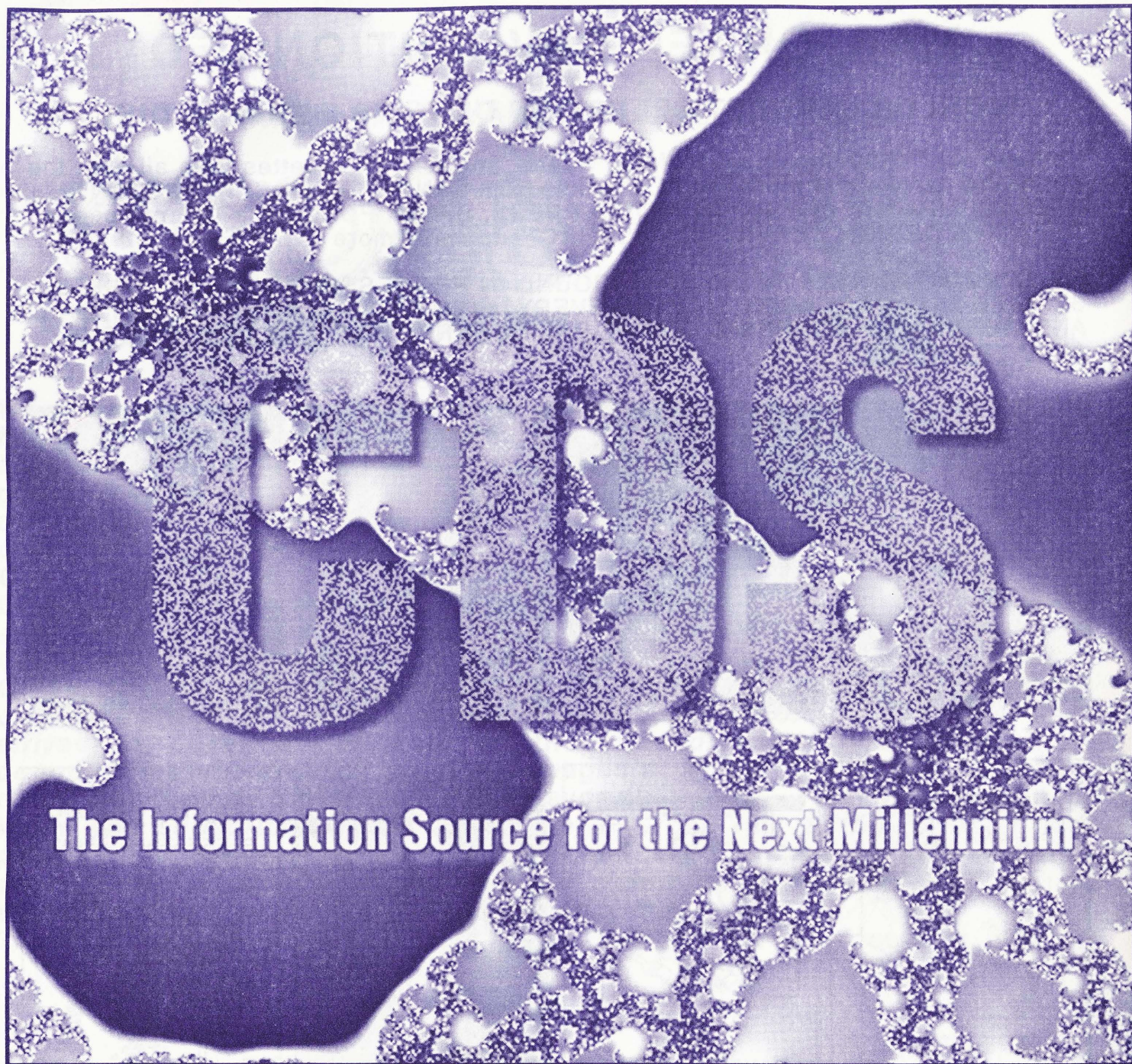
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