CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

#56

$7.00

DO WE HAVE A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY?

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING AND BECOMING

REJECTING RACISM AND SHAME

STONEWALL: 25 YEARS LATER

THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY AND THE GENDER COMMUNITY

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CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

JUNE 1994
(ISSUE #56)

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COVER ARTWORK by Danielle Storm.

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY

by Kymberleigh Richards

A number of things have come across my desk in the past few months that have caused me to wonder if maybe we haven't gotten so comfortable with being more "out" that we haven't gotten a little overconfident.

In Nebraska late last year, Brandon Teena (*nee* Teena Brandon), a FTM TG was raped and beaten by two men who saw his "intrusion" into their world to be a punishable offense.

Later this month, a march on the United Nations is planned to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, in which many people were attacked because of either actual or perceived homosexuality.

I got another letter from Phaedra Kelly of International Gender Transient Affinity detailing more horrors in the Third World Travesti community.

Wendi Seabreeze of Swan's Inner Sorority wrote in their newsletter *Swan's Bauble* that one of their members was severely beaten while visiting Arizona on business. Wendi also noted an article we ran here several months ago on the Brazilian transgendered community in which we pointed out that we have it much better, by comparison ... yet she points out that we aren't any safer.

Well, yes. And no.

Yes, we are relatively safer than we were 25 years ago at Stonewall. Yes, we are relatively safer than the Travesti or the Brazilians.

But no, we are not as safe as we would like to **think** we are. Not when a Brandon Teena can pay with his life just for being true to himself. Not when someone visiting another state on business can be attacked simply for being herself.

We like to think that we have made progress in enlightening the outside world. We reassure ourselves that the outdated laws prohibiting crossdressing have been eradicated by a more enlightened society. We venture out to our support groups, to our community's conventions and weekend events and we mingle with a small cross-section of the mainstream in a controlled situation and we believe they understand us so much better now. We lull ourselves into a false sense of security ... and that's when it backfires.

Because the individuals who inhabit the real world don't necessarily agree with the changes we have forced onto society. They don't always like seeing us "out there". They want us to stay in the very closets whose doors we knocked off their hinges in recent years.

They still believe that their view is the only morally correct one, and that view does not go beyond male = man, female = woman, male + female = only possible relationship.

And like it or not, transgendered behavior is still, in their "morally pure" minds, equated with homosexuality ... even if **we** know that's not always true. And a quarter-century after Stonewall, it's still not 100% safe to be gay ... or transgendered.

No, things aren't that better off now than they were in 1969. The state of affairs is improving, mainly due to gay activists who take the risks necessary to enable change to take place.

Which brings me to my main point.

This is why I'm glad the organizers of Stonewall 25 finally agreed that the gender community did, indeed, have a place in this month's anniversary march and rally. Because it is only by working together than we can gradually eradicate the prejudicial attitudes that make possible tragedies like Brandon Teena and an anonymous member of our community ... both of whom just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time with one of the self-appointed arbitrators of what is morally right or wrong. Or the wholesale cultural tragedies like the Travesti or the Brazilians.

I have said before -- as has Anne Blackwood -- that living in Los Angeles makes being transgendered easier. But I still have to be on my guard every minute of every day that I'm out in public ... just as many in the gay community have to still watch their backs, especially if they can be easily perceived as gay. No, in 25 years, it really hasn't improved **that** much. It will, but only if we stop screaming so loudly that "transgender does not always mean gay" and work with the gay community that we are **perceived** by the masses to be part of, and start working together.

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.*

"Cross-Talk" Newswire

News of the worldwide gender community

Noted sexologist and long-time friend of the gender community Roger Peo, Ph.D., passed away April 7, less than two months after first being diagnosed with lung and bone cancer.

Dr. Peo was a member of the first IFGE board of directors and was one of the first psychotherapists to become actively involved with the gender community. His long-running advice column "Roger's Notebook" appeared in more than 40 issues of **Cross-Talk**, as well as in IFGE's *Tapestry* and various local community newsletters.

In an unprecedented move in recognition of his many contributions and achievements, the IFGE board of directors dedicated this past March's "Coming Together-Working Together" convention in his honor. IFGE founding director Merissa Sherrill Lynn is also proposing that a new award be established in his name to be presented each year to a helping professional in the community.

A memorial service was held April 17 at the Unitarian Church in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Dr. Sheila Kirk delivered the eulogy.

OOO

Responding to criticism about media coverage of last November's Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme", convention organizers have sent a survey questionnaire to all of the event's participants.

In the cover letter to the questionnaire, "Holiday" coordinator Kathy Helms asked for comments about the coverage, specifically asking for information from anyone who was harmed personally. Her portion of an interview conducted by local social activist Marlayna Lacie was also included with the survey, in which Helms reiterated her previous statement that to her knowledge "no one's picture appeared in the paper or on TV who did not agree to appear, nor was anyone forced to do an interview they did not choose to do."

OOO

A Canadian gender community organization's newsletter reports that the Canadian CrossDressers' Club has dramatically scaled down its operations and ceased publication of the magazine *The Canadian CrossDresser*.

According to the report in Monarch Social Club's *MiSs C's Musings*, Take a Walk on the Wildside, the Toronto-based boutique that housed the club, eliminated membership fees, a member merchandise discount, and overnight "bed and breakfast" accommodations. While semi-monthly Saturday night parties will continue, the fee has been increased and the club's makeup room has been converted to a combination meeting room and video studio.

Wildside's management, in announcing the changes, said that "the rate of new members ... has not kept pace with those veterans members who drop out, and many people no longer use the club as a 'dressing and makeup' place." They also attribute the looser organization of the club as a factor. While the article in the Monarch newsletter offered commentary in addition to the stated reasons, no further public statements have been made by Wildside.

The Wildside boutique is remaining open for business.

OOO

The Transexual Menace and Stonewall 25 have reached an agreement on promoting inclusion of the gender community in all Stonewall 25 events.

Stonewall 25 agreed to become more proactive in their inclusion of the Gender community following an April meeting with members from The Transexual Menace to discuss the concerns and needs of the gender community.

As a result of the meeting, Stonewall 25 will seek active gender community participation, denounce discrimination or exclusion of the gender segment of the queer community, increase visibility of the gender community's role in the Stonewall riots, and provide for adequate representation of gender community speakers at the Rally on June 26.

"My community has been excluded from the Queer movement in the past despite the fact that we were there on the very first night of the riots," said Denise Norris, a member of The Transexual Menace's Stonewall 25 Outreach Team. "They've opened the door for us, now we've got to show them our support."

Responding to gender community concerns that Stonewall 25 should adopt a more inclusive title for the march on the UN by adding the words "Transgender" and/or "Drag, Transexual Menace said it prefers a single umbrella term, rather than a long list of descriptive names, believing it more important that an organization be proactively inclusive of the Gender community then to have a name included in an event's or organization's title as an empty gesture.

OOO

Long-time Tri-Ess Chi chapter president Naomi Owen

has decided not to run for re-election, according to a report in the chapter's newsletter *The Chi Tribune*.

Owen announced at the March meeting that after 15 years as a member, nine as chapter president, that it was time for a change and that the chapter had become "too dependent" on her. She cited the numerous achievements of the chapter in the areas of events (both local and national), outreach, and community service. Chi has twice hosted the Tri-Ess "Holiday En Femme" and the "Be All" weekend three times, as well as its own "Puttin' on the Ritz" awards banquet, which has run for the past seven years.

Chi has been named Tri-Ess "Chapter of the Year" in the past and Owen has also received an outstanding service award from the parent national organization. She was also the recipient of IFGE's Virginia Prince Lifetime Service award several years ago.

Owen's announcement forced a delay in the chapter's annual elections.

OOO

The Tri-Ess national board of directors will hold its summer board meeting the weekend of June 24-26 in Memphis, according to board chairman Jane Ellen Fairfax.

Key item on the board agenda will be the finalization of the new 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation formed to improve Tri-Ess' non-profit status. IRS approval of that tax-exempt status is expected by the meeting date, Fairfax said. In addition, host chapter Mu Sigma will hold a dinner for the board Friday evening and a reception on Saturday evening.

According to the Tri-Ess by-laws, the board meets twice annually; once in early summer to conduct the major part of the organization's business, and again at the annual "Holiday En Femme" convention to deal with matters considered too urgent to hold for the summer meeting.

OOO

A survey of transgendered individuals either currently or formerly affiliated with the U.S. armed services is being undertaken under the auspices of the ICTLEP Military Law Project.

Project director Sharon Ann Stuart is gathering the information in order to better study and identify issues related to transgendered military personnel and to support efforts to initiate reform of military laws and regulations pertaining to them. In order to avoid prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Stuart has eliminated the identification portion of the survey for those currently on active duty, reserve duty, or in civilian military employment.

The final report will be prepared by noted gender community psychiatrist George R. Brown, M.D. Brown recently relocated to Johnson City, Tennessee, to become director of psychiatric research at the Veterans Administration facility there.

Those wishing to participate in the survey may contact Stuart at P.O. Box 930, Cooperstown NY 13326.

OOO

The 1994 "Dignity Cruise" sponsored by Dr. Peggy Rudd's PM Publishers has had a change of itinerary and dates.

Rudd, responding to numerous requests for another Royal Caribbean cruise, has arranged a four-day cruise August 5 through 8 from Los Angeles to Baja California, Mexico. She says the cost per person will also be lower than the previously announced October trip on the Delta River in Pittsburgh.

Cruise Ahoy in Houston, Texas continues as agent for tickets, and may be reached at (713) 556-1513. Rudd indicates that this will be the final Dignity Cruise, owing to her increased responsibilities as the newly-elected president of the Houston Tri-Ess chapter.

OOO

ETVC, the gender community social and educational organization serving the San Francisco bay area, has announced a major breakthrough in transgender rights under the city's Human Rights Commission.

According to ETVC transsexual committee chairperson Ayme Kantz, the HRC approved the creation of the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered Advisory Committee in February, and held a special hearing in May to hear testimony on the problems and discrimination faced by transgendered people in the areas of employment, housing, medical care, public accommodations and police treatment.

Several of ETVC's members are involved in the ongoing effort with the HRC to eliminate such discrimination, Kantz said.

OOO

IFGE has issued a call for presenters at the 1995 "Coming Together-Working Together" convention, to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, next March.

The IFGE programs committee hopes to broaden the scope of issues dealt with at the convention, which includes "matters of expression, transition, relationships and personal or community growth ... leadership or group development ... [and] social, psychological, medical and political issues." Programs will, as in previous years, range from one to three hours' duration, and will be moderated by helping professionals, educators, and gender community leaders.

Proposals must be made at P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778 by the end of June. The committee will notify those chosen by August 1.

OOO

The International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy is calling for the gender community to become more active in America's health care reform, citing potential exclusion from health care if they choose not to participate in the process.

Citing the Insurance Law Project report at ICTLEP's 1993 conference, executive director Phyllis Randolph Frye identifies the gender community's concerns as "universal access" meaning no exclusions, "basic health care" for the transgendered as "medically necessary", "cosmetic surgery" defined as medically necessary to correct an abnormality such as a genital birth defect, the definition of "health" including "capacity for social function" (i.e., employability), and the inclusion of transgendered health issues to decrease welfare dependance and yield quicker transition into productive wage earners and taxpayers.

Frye is encouraging the use of personal visits, phone calls or faxes, or letters to Members of Congress, Senators, key Congressional committees such as the House Ways and Means Committee's subcommittee on Health, House Energy and Commerce Committee's subcommittee on Health and Environment, Senate Finance Committee, and Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, regulatory agencies such as the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Secretary of Labor, and Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and President Clinton. She suggests contacting the local League of Women Voters or the government pages of a local telephone directory for addresses and phone numbers.

When offering input, Frye suggests participants be brief, identify themselves, say specifically what portions of health care reforms are agreed and disagreed with, and to write early and often in the legislative session. At the same time, says Frye, courtesy is of paramount importance, warning activists not to be rude or threatening, and also cautions against apologizing for "taking their time", beginning correspondence with a statement of "being a citizen and taxpayer -- they assume that -- or stating a hope that your letter gets past the staff."

OOO

A fundraiser in support of Camp Trans, the transsexual outreach camp operated across the road from the annual Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, has been scheduled for June 29 at New York City's Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center.

Camp Trans began operating in 1993 after Nancy Burkholder, a transsexual woman, was thrown out of the 1991 Festival because she was considered to be "still a man" by two Festival security guards and the unsuccessful attempt by supporters of transsexual inclusion who went to Michigan the following year in hopes of reversing the policy.

The fundraiser will help defray the cost of running Camp Trans at the 1994 festival, and will feature speakers from all areas of the Queer community who believe in unity and inclusion of all people. Included in the preliminary list of speakers are Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues* and playwright/actress Kate Bornstein. Burkholder is also expected to speak.

OOO

Two researchers at the University of California, Berkeley have begun to compile a collection of articles on lesbian, gay and transgender language.

"Queerly Phrased" seeks to extend an analysis of linguistics to include sexuality and gender identity, according to Anna Livia and Kira Hall. The collection will explore the relationship between language and gender positions in a variety of cultures and language groups, representing the diversity of language use within queer culture. Livia and Hall are looking for papers which incorporate recent developments in queer theory and feminist theory, as well as papers which draw on more traditional models of language analysis, in order to establish a place in linguistics for queer studies.

Hall, who is doing the majority of the transgender-related

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portion, may be reached at UC Berkeley Department of Linguistics, 2337 Dwinelle Hall, Berkeley CA 94720, or via Internet at khall@garnet.berkeley.edu.

OOO

The Human Outreach and Achievement Institute has changed its name to The Outreach Institute of Gender Studies because of the growing involvement of the Institute in a wide panorama of gender-related educational and research activities.

According to Outreach executive director Ariadne Kane, the Institute will continue to sponsor Fantasia Fair, the oldest gender convention of its kind in the world. In addition, Kane said, the Institute will continue to publish the *Journal for Gender Studies*, as well as operate an array of other educational and outreach programs directed at audiences including helping professionals, gender-conflicted individuals, their friends and loved ones, and the community in general.

The Institute has also relocated to Augusta, Maine, although Fantasia Fair information and registration will continue to be based in Boston.

OOO

The NewsQueen (Paula Jordan Sinclair) regrets the absence of her column this month, owing to the time taken searching for the perfect summer dress.

Ms. Sinclair apologizes for the inconvenience her absence has casued for those devotees of her monthly summary of the news, and promises that the lapse will be only temporary.

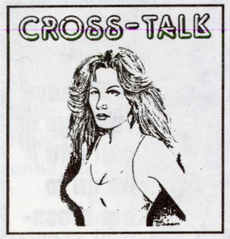
In the meantime, readers who discover news items of interest to the gender community may still forward them to her in care of **Cross-Talk.**

The new **Cross-Talk** style book is now available for those wishing to submit articles for publication. To receive a copy, send a #10 SASE to *P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills, CA 91365.*

JUST DISCOVERED US? WANT BACK ISSUES? READ ON!

If you've just discovered **Cross-Talk** and you like what you're reading in this issue, you might well be asking yourself: "How did I manage to miss this magazine until now?". Well, we don't know the answer to that question ... but we do know the answer to the second question you might be asking yourself: "How can I get back issues of **Cross-Talk**?" You can get them directly from us. (Well, you can get the ones we published in magazine format. The first 38 issues were in newsletter format and xeroxed at the local copy center, and we didn't make any extras. Sorry.)

The most recent issues we have available are:



#49 *(November '93):* Editorials on how quickly we accept people's self-identifying labels, transsexual parenthood legal battles; Dealing with a crossdressing fiance; possible biological/social explanations for crossdressing; science fiction conventions; coming out to your family; the Benjamin Standards as a safeguard for caregivers and consumers.

#50 *(December '93):* Editorials on lawyer involvement in SRS standards, role playing and public perception; using self-validation to accept crossdressing in a relationship; preparation for going public; gender expressionism; a crossdressed Christmas story; humorous version of the night before Christmas.

#51 *(January '94):* Philip Salem resurfaces; what if there were a pill to cure you of crossdressing?; the responsibility of leadership; biological vs. sociological causes for crossdressing; body language; movie review of *Mrs. Doubtfire*; debut of alternative press 'zine review column.

We also have a suffiicient stock of issues #38 through #48 available. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for a flyer detailing the contents of these. Issues 39 and 44 are out of print and no longer available. Look elsewhere in this issue for a special offer of all twelve 1993 issues, including #39 and #44.

Issues #52 *(Jan. '94)*, #53 *(Feb. '94)* and #54 *(Mar. '94)* are also available in extremely limited quantities (most of our back issues stock is made up of returns from retailers).

To order: Send $7.00 for each issue ordered, plus $1.00 postage per copy (up to a maximum of $5.00) **to Cross-Talk, Dept. BI, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.** California residents add 58 cents per copy sales tax; non-U.S. residents, add an additional 50 cents postage per copy ordered.

COGITO ERGO FEM

PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD (OTHERS MAY FOLLOW)

by Anne Blackwood

Like most people I send out Christmas cards (I call them "Exemas" cards). This past year, along with my season's greetings I also sent out an announcement to most of those who didn't already know, that I am transsexual.

Despite the positive response I'd enjoyed up until that point I was still apprehensive. No one wants to lose a friend, nor be criticized for being oneself. I wasn't sure what to expect from some quarters, the parents of a late friend with whom I still visit, for example.

Christmas cards from all over arrived, all addressed to Anne Blackwood. Some were no surprise, being from members of the transgendered communities; some were no surprise, being from friends who have known for some time about my situation. Some, however, **have** been a surprise ... my late friend's parents, for example.

Partly, I'm surprised at how so many people have taken this news in stride. Oh, I'm sure several people stumbled for a moment, but no one has keeled over with a coronary, and why should they? What surprises me most, and touches me deeply, is the expression of love and happiness for me. I don't even need to read the cards, the fact that they are addressed to Anne tells me everything I need to know. Still, to quote one friend, "I'm really happy that you've found your true self -- that's more than a lot of people can say." Of course the majority say something to the effect that "this is going to take some getting used to," and of course I expect that.

Why have I been so blessed? I know of people making the same announcement being disowned by family and many "friends". Although I have yet to tell all my family, those who know are very supportive. So, why have I been so blessed? I have picked my friends wisely.

It may sound simplistic to say who you pick as friends will determine how well they'll accept your gender status, but like many things in life that are true, they are also simple. I had an acting coach who said about acting that it was "simple ... not easy, but simple." Pick people who are broadminded and your difference isn't going to trouble them so much. Pick people who are narrow-minded and boy, are you in for trouble. But, maybe that's too obvious.

It may sound simplistic to say who you pick as friends will determine how well they'll accept your gender, but like many things in life that are true, they are also simple.

Beyond picking the right friends, how I approached the subject was very important, and more than one person commented on that. Quoting another friend, "I'm glad to see you've come to terms with your new lifestyle to announce it in such a healthy and humorous way." Now, I am a smartass and have difficulty taking anything or anyone solemnly; had my announcement had a somber tone to it, alarms would have gone off in my friends' minds and I might have gotten a very different response. However, my letter was in character, and to quote one response, "It showed the utmost respect for yourself and me ..." God, I'm getting a lot of mileage from my friends.

I have said in the past that because I live in Los Angeles my experience is going to be different than in many other parts of the nation. That being said, and acknowledging that many of my friends left their small town homes in the Midwest to come here because, in part, the small-mindedness of their home towns drove them off, I have the benefit of that migration. Still, where the media leads, America eventually follows.

The point of this column has not been to celebrate my good fortune, but to use it as an example of what can be accomplished. I grant you, and I have said it myself, that it is probably easier to be accepted as transsexual than as a crossdresser. Transsexualism is pretty clear cut, where crossdressing is (by comparison) pretty ambiguous. People don't like ambiguity. Although, if you say, "I'm a man, but sometimes I like to wear women's' clothes," well, why not?

The point is: If you know who and what you are, and you are comfortable with who and what you are and you present yourself in that manner, you greatly increase the odds that others will be comfortable with who and what you

are. Not that everyone is going to be crazy about seeing you crossdressed, but I own a couple of guns (yes, I was a member of the NRA) and have friends who are not at all comfortable around them, so I don't haul them out when they're around, but I make no secret that I own them.

Further, what you project to others affects how they think about everyone in your situation. I have a friend who labored under this misconception that I was a crossdresser, but I was honest with her about it and so crossdressing was no problem and because I'm a wonderful person, crossdressers are wonderful people. Now that she knows that I am transsexual, she loves having a new girlfriend and she is helping me become the best woman I can be. And she talks to people about me, presenting a positive image for transsexuals. So, my opening up about my gender situation (as I became aware of what it was) has had a ripple effect. Each of my friends passes their attitude about me along to other transsexuals. I'm not judged on my transsexuality, and so neither do my friends judge others on that score.

If you want your world to change, you have to change it. No one can nor will do it for you. With drag being the trendy pastime that it is these days, perhaps now is the time to come out of the closet. Hey, the worst that can happen is that you'll finally be hip.

[Anne Blackwood may be contacted at P.O. Box 1251, Beverly Hills CA 90213, or at anne@xconn.com *via Internet.]*

SPECIAL OFFER!

We have a limited number of complete sets of all 1993 issues of "Cross-Talk" (#39-50) available for sale to recent subscribers who may wish to read all issues published in magazine format. (Prior to issue #39, "Cross-Talk" was published in newsletter format, and back issues from that period are, unfortunately, not available.)

These complete sets contain ALL the 1993 issues, including the otherwise unavailable #39 and #44. However, we have less than 40 complete sets available, so we must operate on a "first-come, first-served" basis.

We have also specially priced these complete sets at $75.00, postpaid. (There is, sadly, an additional $5.00 charge for non-U.S. addresses.)

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VIRGIN VIEWS BY VIRGINIA

BEING AND BECOMING

by Virginia Prince

In whatever activity one chooses to examine there are roughly two kinds of people involved: Those who have arrived or become proficient or have experienced much of the values of the activity in question, and those who are on their way, who are learning, and who are gaining knowledge, insight, experience or whatever ... in short, those who **are** and those who are **becoming**. Thus we have the adult and the adolescent, the graduate and the undergraduate, the professor and the student, the married and the unmarried, etc. One of the other commonplaces of human behavior is that those that **are** tend to forget how it was when they were in the state of **becoming**. It is traditional for example, that adults think the younger generation is going to the dogs. They have forgotten how it was when they were young and how they looked to **their** parents. This all has to do with perspective. As we climb higher we experience more, can see further, and can broaden our conclusions about what we see and we forget that when we had less experience and couldn't see so far that our views and conclusions were necessarily limited. Because we forget how it was with ourselves we tend to be disparaging of the efforts of those who are still laboring up the slopes behind us.

> Because we forget how it was with ourselves, we tend to be disparaging of the efforts of those who are still laboring up the slopes behind us.

This doesn't sound like it had much to do with our favorite subject, but it does. In our group, as in all others, there are those who have had a lot of years of experience as CDs; those who have had opportunities to go out and express themselves; those who are blessed by nature with more appropriate physiques; those who have learned more about feminine impersonation and who have passed through the guilt and fear stage and come to accept themselves. These girls are CDs in **being**. This short article is a plea to them to remember those who are in the state of becoming and to be not only helpful, but tolerant. As we widen our scope, increase our circulation, help bring girls along to the state of **being**, we get frequent evidence in letters indicating a certain disdain or aloofness toward those less fortunate or less far along the road. We hear that a girl has met certain other girls and "they just wouldn't fit into the group". Now occasionally this is probably true, as the person met may be really not a member of our "set", or very uncouth, etc. On the other hand, she may be simply one who has not traveled as far or whom nature has given an outside that this is not as amenable to feminization as someone else. You older, and better adjusted and more fortunate girls should remember that you have some obligation to help others, to tolerate them while they improve themselves, and to assist them to find self assurance and peace of mind. Let's remember that we were all once less well-developed than we are now.

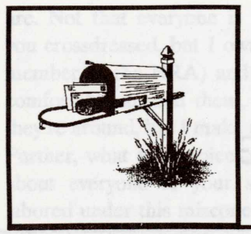
Helping, however, does not mean pushing or dragging a debutante into activities or experiences that she is not ready for. You can't make a woman from a pre-adolescent girl; nature will take care of this in good time. You can, however, help her in the many problems of **becoming** so as to make the road smoother and more fun. Those in **being** are always looked to as examples by those **becoming**, so it behooves the former to be **good** examples ... not just in "passing" but in the use of good sense and discretion.

[Edited from the FPE Femme Mirror, *June 1962.]*

Your letters to the editor are encouraged, and may now be sent to us via Internet e-mail to *kymmer@xconn.com*.

Internet is accessible via CompuServe, America OnLine, Prodigy, GEnie, Delphi, FidoNet-affiliated BBS systems, Internet-affiliated BBS systems, and various educational and governmental Internet-affiliated systems. See page 10 for instructions on sending Internet e-mail.

You can also fax us at (818) 347-4190, or write us at P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.



VOX POPULI

Reader letters and feedback

Re: Kymberleigh's Clipboard: "Frustration" (March '94):
I'm almost at a loss to find what I would call "serious crossdressers" ... just some girls to get together, talk and share with each other. The TV magazines all seem to show how to use makeup to excess and dress like a slut. I much prefer (and am very comfortable) to dress in clothes appropriate for my age, 52. I use makeup conservatively, or most times not at all.
I have responded to perhaps a half-dozen ads, and with the exception of one gentleman who accepts and understands me, most have only wanted a sex contact. There is **more** to life than just sex.
I don't have any problem going to stores and buying nice, comfortable clothes, but I am astonished at the prices some companies command for their merchandise, just because they think they are doing us a favor.
Ha!

Deena Curtis
Mesa, AZ

"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, (818) 841-8887, or to *kymmer@xconn.com* via Internet. (CompuServe, America OnLine, Prodigy, GEnie, and Delphi users: Follow your service's instructions to send Internet e-mail. FidoNet users: Send e-mail to 1:1/31, addressed to UUCP, and write *To: kymmer@xconn.com* as the first line of your message. If you are using any other Internet-affiliated system, ask your system operator for instructions.) We also accept DOS ASCII files on disk at our P.O. Box.

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WE ARE FAMILY

by Ellen Summers

As I accepted the Virginia Prince award at this year's IFGE convention, I thought of what the famous entertainer and song writer George M. Cohan said at the conclusion of his performances:
"My father thanks you, my mother thanks you, my sister thanks you, and I thank you."
Only ... my father never knew about me, my mother doesn't know, but your sister does and thanks you.
You will note that the key here is family. That night in the audience were my family: my supportive wife Pattie, and terrific daughter Susie. Also present were many of my local sisters and brothers from NorthWest Gender Alliance and Emerald City, and the sisters and brothers from the world wide family. What a great evening it was for me.
Let's discuss the characteristics of an ideal family. The ideal family expresses a love for one another, protects one another from harm, and pursues a common goal for the good of the whole family.
Sound a little Pollyannish?
Well, of course it does, because we all know families who certainly do not follow the percepts of the ideal family that I have previously described. However, I believe we all will agree there is a bond between a biological family not unlike the bond we share as a part of the gender community.
Of course, it is possible to forget our obligations to the total community in our territorial and ideological differences. Sometimes we forget the common goals of our community. However, the main objective is to gain acceptance for our life in the society in which we live.
We have come a considerable distance along this path toward acceptance.
I would like to take a little time to trace that path from the early days to the present. Some of the people who traveled that path almost from the start are still with us.
Some of us remember the first time we knew there were others out there who expressed the fact that they were unhappy with their gender. Many of us thought we were all alone. Yes, we had heard of the Chevalier d'Eon, the French Diplomat who lived -- and perhaps died -- as a woman, and Lord Cornbury, the Governor of New York who frequently was seen in public in women's clothes ... but:
In 1953 when newspaper headlines screamed the news of George Jorgensen's change to Christine Jorgensen, there was the dream of total gender expression and of practical sex change. Surgery moved into the current times. It had become public that there were some of us who were not completely happy with a one-sided view of one's total personality. There was another side of this personality best identified by those qualities expressed in the opposite sex. Many held these feelings of inadequacy. But in those days such behavior was totally unacceptable by society and the laws of the time could demand arrest for those emulating the female by crossdressing.
Down through the years we have seen many changes. It was during the early 60's one of the pioneers of our community emerged to form an organization of those person who shared a common view.

There is a bond between a biological family not unlike the bond we share as part of the gender community.

Virginia Prince, best known as the godmother of crossdressing, started the Hose And Heels Club in Los Angeles. To those meetings each member brought their own hose and heels to express their femininity in that fashion. This group later expanded into the FPE sorority, then into Tri-Sigma Sorority, and finally into its present name, Tri-Ess, with chapters throughout the world.
In the '70s and early '80s, various regional groups such as Renaissance Education Association, Gateway Gender Alliance (now defunct), and others were formed. Also local groups were forming, such as ETVC in San Francisco, CHIC in Los Angeles, PPOC in Southern California, Tiffany Club in Boston, and many others.
Our local sorority, NorthWest Gender Alliance (NWGA) held their first meeting with five members in 1980.
During the growth period of our community, national meetings and conventions were beginning to emerge. Some were strictly for business and others attracted those persons who wished to socialize with others who enjoyed indulging in their feminine persona. The earliest of these national events were DREAM, held on the West Coast, and Fantasia Fair on the East Coast at Cape Cod in Provincetown, Massachusetts.
I am familiar with the DREAM event since I was in attendance at three of the several DREAMs organized by Marilyn Irving. As a matter of fact, we held a DREAM reunion at the IFGE convention, attended by former Dream girls and those who were part of this wonderful event.
DREAM event was held in a lovely condominium setting overlooking the Pacific Ocean on our Oregon Coast. It reflected the cloistered atmosphere of those times. The

local residents of the area were not aware of our event or the crossdressing practices that characterized our outing during the nine days we were in residence. No one was to leave the area crossdressed. When we did leave the area in groups to attend dinner or classes at other locals, we were driven by bus. In spite of these restrictions, everyone in attendance, around 60 or 70 persons from all over the U.S., Europe, Canada, and even Austria, felt the warmth of sisterhood through the sharing of their proclivity. We were assisted by a professional modeling course in the art of feminine expression.

Although I didn't attend the early Fantasia Fairs, I am told the same types of activities did occur there also. However, the attendees at the fair had the whole town available as their arena. Provincetown welcomed the fair with open arms due to the nature of its residents.

The growth in the late '80s and early '90s saw more regional and local groups come onto the scene. Today there are over 100 local groups in existence throughout the world.

I would also like to mention two national organizations among several others who have come upon the scene. The Congress of Transgendered Organizations, formerly called the Congress of Representatives, was founded in 1990. Its main purpose is to represent the various local gender groups so as to bring them together to speak as one voice to the community. Their goals are also to help form regional coalitions to strengthen gender support groups in designated regions. Since they are not a tax-exempt organization, they can initiate political action if needed to benefit member groups and their goals.

Of course, the other national organization is IFGE ... a dream of its founder, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, that has become a reality. IFGE is a non-profit organization that serves two primary purposes: An educational resource for issues related to the crossdressing and transsexual phenomena, and a means for individuals and organizations worldwide who have an interest in crossdressing or transsexual phenomena to work together on project beneficial to all.

IFGE's international headquarters features a walk-in center, bookstore, professionally managed executive offices and business offices for IFGE operations, publications, and general business, a medical liaison and research department, reading library, archives, publishers clearing house, reference information processing and distribution, telephone hotline, and classroom. IFGE publishes the *TV/TS Tapestry Journal*, various books, booklets, and video tapes. IFGE directly sponsors programs such as the annual "Coming Together-Working Together" convention and outreach programs to the mental and medical health communities.

Since its beginning in 1987 we can point to several successes in its goal to serve our community.

IFGE has grown from the early days into an efficient professional organization despite limited resources and the lack of experience at the start. It has made *Tapestry* the best publication of its kind anywhere. The "Coming Together-Working Together" convention has done a splendid job of bringing groups of people in a community wide effort to attain our goals through cooperation. The convention is directly responsible for creating this spirit of cooperation among divergent segments of our community, which is a major accomplishment.

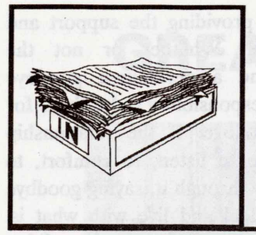
IFGE has discovered and developed a resource pool of knowledgeable and talented people. these people are its greatest asset and will provide wisdom, guidance and leadership in the future. They include such people as Dr. Sheila Kirk, director of medical liaison and research, and Laura Skaer, who chairs IFGE's fund-raising committee. I think we all owe Merissa Sherrill Lynn, Yvonne Cook-Riley, and their staff of Stacey Toon, Vivian Allen, Holly Cross and Joan Hoff a great deal of appreciation for making IFGE the success it is today.

I opened with the key word family. As I look out there I see a gender family who has grown beyond our wildest dream. Let's all try hard to make it even larger and more successful.

Receiving the Virginia Prince award was one of the greatest experiences of my life. So:

I thank you. My wife thanks you. My daughter thanks you. And your sister Ellen thanks you.

[This article was adapted from the text of Ms. Summers' acceptance speech at the Virginia Prince Award ceremony. Published with permission.]



WOMAN TO WOMAN

DIFFERENT KINDS OF GOODBYES

by Linda Peacock

Into everyone's lives come goodbyes. There is always a sense of loss with goodbyes, even temporary ones. You wave goodbye at the airport or train station to someone going off on a visit, and even though you know that person is coming back, there is a moment of loss, of missing that person.

There are the goodbyes that are more permanent ones -- when your child leaves the roost to live his or her own life, leaving you behind; the goodbyes caused by moving, when you, or a beloved friend move far away. Although you are friends, nothing will ever be the same, and there is the loss of daily or regular contact, of times shared, the physical presence of friendship. I am still experiencing this, after my move four months ago, and although I am dealing with it much better now, a voice from the past brings back memories and the sorrow at leaving. Recently, one of my friends, who is also a crossdresser, left a message on the answering machine, and just hearing his voice made me recall the weekly conversations, his sense of humor, his humbleness, his trust in me as his friend, and the emptiness in my life because we are now a distance away. My life is less because I don't have the physical presence of friendship with him anymore.

> I don't want to see people hurting because of goodbyes felt alone. If I can be a friend, someone to listen, to comfort, to be there, then my life is worth living.

There are the goodbyes that attack your heart, your soul, your very being -- those goodbyes of death, or of losing the love of man or woman you have a romantic relationship with. The loss caused by death is irrevocable -- there is not only a loss of the physical presence, there is the loss of the soul, the knowledge that you'll never hear that voice, never touch that face, never feel the warmth of the their body. It is a brutal slash of lightening into your inner self, and the pain seems inconsolable. Nothing can make it better but time.

So, often it is with the loss of a spouse through divorce or parting of ways in a romantic partnership. Having experienced such a situation when I was divorced from my first husband, I can well empathize with those who have or are undergoing a parting of ways. First comes the seemingly insurmountable pain and emptiness; then comes feelings of betrayal and anger; then comes self-examination for the self-doubt you are feeling -- what could you have done differently to prevent this? Finally, as time moves on, there is left a memory of the pain, a sense of loss, a sense of failure, a sense of what might have been. There is a song out by Patty Loveless, in which she sings, "How can I help you to say goodbye ... it's okay to hurt and it's okay to cry. Time will ease your pain ... life's about changing, nothing ever stays the same ... come let me hold you, and I will try ... How can I help you to say goodbye?" I find these words profoundly moving, from a personal sense as a woman and human being, and from the perspective of working in the gender community.

How often I wished that I had someone who would help me say goodbye when I was getting a divorce. But I had no one but myself, and pain hurts its worst when you are alone. Time eased my pain, that's true, but the memory of that pain sometimes hits me like a physical blow. How I wish I'd had a friend to help me through the pain, the anger, the despair, the sense of failure. But I had no one by myself, and pain hurts its worst when you are alone.

Perhaps the intensity with which I have surged ahead in my work in the gender community is that I don't want to see people who are hurting because of goodbyes felt alone. If I can be a friend, someone to listen, to comfort, to be there, then my life is worth living and is fulfilling to me. Personal experience and a human heart gives me the qualifications to do this -- it is not something I need a graduate degree in. I don't earn a living doing this, as a professional counselor would -- my payment comes in knowing I may be helping someone who would otherwise be alone. In our community, we see so many goodbyes. You see people say goodbye to themselves, the person they have presented to the world through the years, and in doing so, they say hello to the person who has lived deep inside for that lifetime. For the partner or wife of such a

person, the goodbye takes on an unreality, but the reality is that the man or woman they thought they loved really wasn't there, and the emotions they feel must be an acute sense of disbelief, loss of trust, and intense anger at their partner and at themselves. They witness the destruction of someone they thought existed, and who they loved, and it must be like experiencing a death, knowing that the person they thought was there wasn't and never will be.

For the wife or partner of a crossdresser, there often is the goodbye of trust. I cannot begin to count the number of women I talk with who have found out recently, after a long time in the relationship, that their husband/partner crossdresses, and the loss of trust is devastating. The defense that the husband/partner didn't tell her because he might lose her doesn't sit well with these women, and what they feel is much like what they'd feel if they found out their husband was having an affair. They cannot accept that he never shared that part of him; often, they feel they have lived a crock of lies, and all that was good is washed away in the flood of pain and betrayal they feel.

These women need a friend; they need someone to help them deal with this, and if they choose to say goodbye, they need someone who will say, "How can I help you to say goodbye ... it's okay to hurt, it's okay to cry."

Those of us who work with wives and partners in this community cannot allow our own acceptance to gloss over the needs of our sisters who hurt. We cannot put our own personal agendas in front, we cannot allow our personal tolerance to get in the way of providing the support and friendship these women need. Whether or not the woman's relationship ends, and a permanent goodbye must come to pass, we have a responsibility to be there for her, even at that time of goodbye. If the relationship continues, we need to be there to listen, to comfort, to encourage, as she works her way through it, saying goodbye to what was, and learning to deal and live with what is. She is getting something she didn't bargain for, didn't expect. If the relationship is well-grounded and strong, if the love exists between man and woman, there is hope, and we cannot abandon them as they struggle to renew the relationship.

Do we force ourselves on them? Never. We simply are "there" if they need us. Is our advice carved in stone, and always right? If we think it is, then it probably isn't good advice, and if we believe that, we shouldn't offer it. We also need to be open to different situations, just as the humans we support are different. The important thing is to be there: To be available to say hello to the new, stronger relationship that rises from the ashes ... or to be there to say, "How can I help you to say goodbye ...?" To be a friend who cares and who stands by, no matter what the outcome is.

[Linda Peacock is the director of wives' and partners' concerns for Tri-Ess, IFGE board member, and director of the SPICE board of directors. She also publishes The Sweetheart Connection, *a newsletter for wives and partners. She may be reached at P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221.]*

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 blushes all the way: some pages glow with the positive pride a cross-dresser may feel when found out unexpectedly.

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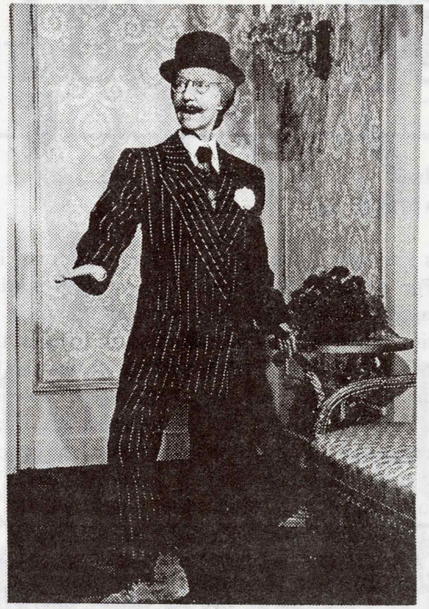
GREAT MOMENTS IN TV HISTORY

by Ralph Judd

3/8/62: The Wiere Brothers (Sylvester, Herbert and Harry) appear in disguises in an attempt to fool the members of a friendship club on *Oh, Those Bells!*, CBS.

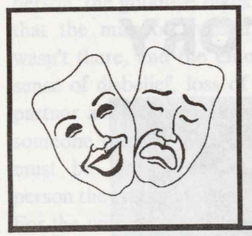


2/21/68: Granny disguises herself as a Beverly Hills gentleman to check on her matchmaking activities, on *The Beverly Hillbillies*, CBS.

9/29/75: Archie saves the life of a woman (Lori Shannon) who turns out to be no lady, on *All in the Family*, CBS.

5/10/78: The owner of the all-girl roller derby team (Terry Kiser, right) disguises himself as one of the players on *rollergirls*, NBC.

For similar craziness from Ralph Judd's movie photo archives, look elsewhere in this issue of **Cross-Talk** for information on ordering his books *Drag Gags* and *Drag Gags Return* and his postcard assortment *Gender Pending*.



THE BEARDED LADY

CLOTHES MAKE THE (WO)MAN

by Ricky Hunt
Illustration by Rita

Sometimes I wonder if the entire world is crazy or if it's just me. For quite some time now I have been staying home unemployed while my wife goes off to work or school. Being unemployed is not the greatest thing in the world, but it has given me a great deal of time to be dressed, and therein lies the source of my bemusement. Tuesday to Thursday I get up after everyone has left, Ricky gets dressed, and is alone until shortly before the school bus arrives in the afternoon. I am a solitary dresser, I'm not used to having anyone around when I wear a dress.

while back I joined the local CD club and attended a few meetings until circumstances forced me to drop out, but it's not the norm.

But now Mondays are different. On Monday my wife goes off to school. We rise and get dressed together, and that still seems strange. Not that we haven't done this before, but for 22 years of marriage we have assumed our public gender roles along with our clothing. On recent Mondays we have both assumed the feminine gender and it still seems a bit odd.

We both start out the same, in our skin, and don bra and panties. We both shake and shimmy to fit our breasts into the cups and laugh at this little dance. I can't help but notice my brasserie is about 4 times larger than the wisp of cloth that is so sexy on her, and my panties could be used as a sail on a small wind powered ship without anyone being the wiser. Why do I feel so feminine at these times? As we are approaching old fogeyhood we both favor plain cotton panties that allow air circulation at the cost of pretty fabric, and neither of us wears bikinis anymore.

Then the differences start to manifest. I raise my arms and shrug into a slip; she puts on her long underwear. (Remember, we live in the North, not in sunny California.) I snap up my garter belt and roll on stockings; she puts on socks. I self-consciously select a blouse and skirt, hoping my color and style combinations are acceptable; she dons a shirt and pants. I choose a pair of matching high heels; she puts her feet into sneakers. A quick brush of her short hair, no makeup to apply, and she is ready for the world.

Get the picture? Many of today's women have abandoned the trappings of femininity that masculine designers had decreed for them and opted for practicality. While I have not undressed any women on the street lately to verify this, it seems my wife is not that unusual in her choice of apparel. I must specifically exclude the worlds of high fashion and suit-and-tie corporate business. Those types live a fantasy beyond the dreams of any crossdresser. It seems the only people who still wear slips and garters and corsets are crossdressers.

How did this come to be? As we sat down to breakfast this morning my wife commented on our apparel, noting just these incongruities. Struggling to keep breakfast crumbs off my bosom I found I had no answer, but it started me thinking. When we were married she would have been expected to dress much as I was now dressed, and to have long hair and makeup before appearing in public. Could it be that women's perception of what is feminine has changed over the last 20 years while our masculine perceptions have stayed fixed? Perhaps it is a result of women's liberation: The average woman has learned to trust her own judgement, not some external notion of fashion. Or is it that this frilly, lacy, impractical version of femininity has been reserved for special occasions?

When was the last time you saw a GG wearing skirt, stockings and garters outside a blue movie theater? And don't try to convince me you haven't secretly peeked above the knee when the opportunity presented itself -- you would know if those were pantyhose or stockings.

It's not that my wife or most of the other women I know never wear skirts or makeup or heels, and even in pants and a T-shirt my masculine side has no trouble appreciating their femininity. I guess I'm stuck with the idea of femininity I absorbed from my mother's lingerie drawer and the secret copies of *Playboy* in my friend's garage. Or perhaps the practical side of clothing doesn't affect me as much because I only wear feminine garb a few hours at a time. But as Ricky I still tend to dress in more traditionally feminine apparel than my wife. 'Tis a strange world we live in.

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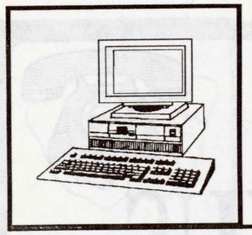

HotBuzz!

by JoAnn Roberts

"Those who are too smart to engage in politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber."

-- Plato

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If this is June, then the APA was here in May and the long-awaited and much discussed *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition* is on the streets. The *DSM-IV* has been extensively revised and as soon as I can get my hands on a copy I'll let you know what it says about transgendered behaviors ... However, there has been much attention focused on gender-identity disorders in children of late. Some of the research indicates that if a child receives therapy early enough feelings of gender dysphoria can be avoided later in life. Some patterns were noted in children with gender dysphoria. Most of the boys came from families where the mother was hostile toward men and the father was physically or emotionally absent. The boy gets a message that being male is not valued. Girls with gender dysphoria, on the other hand, came from families with a violent or abusive father and mothers who were severely depressed or emotionally preoccupied. One five-year-old girl wanted a gun and penis to protect herself ... The success of the treatment is time sensitive according to one therapist. Treated early (at age 4 or 5) and evaluated three years later, most children no longer exhibit cross-gender fantasies. In a follow up study of 50 early-treatment children, only five persisted with feelings of transsexualism. If treatment is delayed until age 9 or 10, success is much less certain, and beyond age 12, it is expected that a child will identify as a transsexual later in life ... Now this is an interesting premise because it seems to contradict the popular notion that gender dysphoria and transsexualism are biologically rooted, not psychological and it sure puts a dent in the oft-repeated argument that reassignment surgery should be treated like the correction of a birth-defect.

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Whatever the cause, those transsexuals (and others!) hoping for modest breast development through the action of female hormones might want to look at a new product from Sara Lee. No, she's not putting estrogen in the cheesecake. The pastry lady's holding company owns Sara Lee Intimates and they're bringing the Wonderbra to the United States from Europe. It's a long and complicated story but it goes something like this. Playtex developed the Wonderbra and introduced it in Canada and later licensed it to Gossard in the U.K. where it's been manufactured for sometime. Sara Lee bought Playtex in 1991 and the license to Gossard expired, so Sara pulled the little wonder back under its own wing. Gossard, determined not to be busted out of the market, introduced their own version of the bra (patents have expired) called the Super-Uplift. So what is the big deal? Both bras seem to be able to create mountains out of molehills. They push the breasts together and up to create what has been called "awesome" cleavage. One of my *LadyLike* readers reports that a little tape and a Wonderbra has done what all else has failed to accomplish for her -- boobs. According to reports from Saks, they sold $18,000 worth of the Gossard model in one day. Gossard's Super-Uplift is on sale now at $39.50, while Ms. Lee's Wonderbra debuted May 1 at $23. Now those prices may seem high, but it's actually very inexpensive for nice cleavage. Have you priced breastforms lately?

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The philosophy of many radical feminists seems to be: if you were born with a penis, you're evil. Lesbian comic, Lea DeLaria cleared up some of the confusion thus: "It's not that I don't like penises -- I just don't like them on men."

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What is it with *Playboy*? (Yes, I still read *Playboy*, most of the real queens do.) For the last four months RuPaul has either been mentioned or shown in this bastion of male heterosexuality. Ms. Ru either has a very good publicist or someone on the staff at *Playboy* likes the girly-men. I think it's a healthy sign of the acceptance of diversity. Check out this recent quote lifted from the pages of the magazine for men: "I wore a wig and a micromini. I was quite impressed with myself. It's actually a wonderful lesson if you're a man. Every man should try it. You don't realize the difference between a man and a woman until you try to be a woman." That was Michael Hutchence, lead singer of the rock group INXS. Michael missed the part about not realizing the difference until you've had another male mistake you for a woman and then treat you like an idiot or a piece of meat. Then you realize the difference.

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I stress negotiation and compromise in my book *Coping With Crossdressing*, but I am often surprised that manycouples don't understand those concepts. Often a woman feels that she's "lost" if she gives in to her partner's wishes, and many men think that they don't have to give something in return for getting their spouse to agree to "explore" crossdressing. And for some couples, negotiating for what you want never even enters their minds. Compromise only works when it's done freely.

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Stonewall 25 happens this month and it is billed as the greatest Human Rights event ever. But, as we saw last month, there are factions that don't like the notion of including "transgender" in the march. I certainly can understand that point of view. There were no "transgendered" people at the original Stonewall riots. Hey, some of those folks are still around. Go talk to them. They don't identify as "transgender." They were drag queens and maybe some of them were (are) transsexuals, but the concept of "transgender" didn't exist 25 years ago. While I believe we should be included in the march and the list of demands, I also think it is extremely arrogant of some to claim Stonewall was a "transgender" event. If that's what has the organizing committee ticked-off, I don't blame 'em one bit. On the other hand, I think it's exclusive and hypocritical to call an event a march for Human Rights and leave us out in the cold.

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As if the research about early treatment of gender dysphoria isn't enough to shake up the troops, now hear this. Estrogen may help prevent Alzheimer's disease. Recent research suggests that estrogen operates in brain cells throughout life to assure a certain level of enzymes and to maintain a dense mesh of connections between neurons. The research further suggests that when estrogen levels drop the connections diminish and the neurons die. The result of too many dead brain cells is Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's is more likely to strike women than men and dropping estrogen levels may be the reason why. But why don't men seem as likely to develop the disease? Because, my dear, testosterone that crosses the blood-brain barrier gets converted to estrogen. Since a male's blood level testosterone isn't radically altered as men age, the brain always has a sufficient supply of estrogen. Isn't that special? All those people who've attributed powerful, assertive behavior to the indiscriminate action of testosterone were wrong. In fact, the research shows that estrogen begins its work on the architecture of the brain in the fetus and continues throughout life. Estrogen ain't just a "female" hormone anymore. It has been suggested that doctors with male patients exhibiting early stages of Alzheimer's might look at the hormone levels to see if there is a testosterone deficit. So, all you post-op M2F transsexuals should plan on estrogen therapy for a long, long time.

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The **HotBuzz** on the newsstands is about 'zines. These are short-run, small press publications that may last for one or two issues, or get published whenever the publisher feels like putting one out. *Dragazine* is one of my 'faves. I got a look at another one recently titled *Holy Titclamps*. I wasn't so much impressed by the writing as by the extensive listings and reviews of other 'zines, including *Renaissance News*, *Dragazine*, and (trumpet fanfare, please) *Cross-Talk*. (*Tapestry*, eatcher heart out!) Betcha di'nt know we were a 'zine didja? I noted a few other 'zines that may be of

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interest to y'all: *GenderTrash* hails from Canada at Genderpress, Box 500-62, Church St. Toronto, ON M4Y 2E3 at $4 a copy ... *Girlfriend* is a drag-zine with a collection of quotes from drag queens and lots of SF scene news, Box 191781, SF, CA 94119, 44 pages for $4 ... *Girlymag* comes out of P.O. Box 151, Audubon, NJ 08106, 20 pages for $1 plus 2 stamps ... *The Nun*, newsletter of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, 8 pages for a dollar, write SPI, 584 Castro Street, Suite 392, SF, CA 04114 ... *Popcorn* is the complete drag scene guide to Atlanta, 48 pages for $4, write 325 Edgewood, Atlanta, GA 31312 ... and finally, *The Official Drag Queen Handbook* is available from 1800 Market St., #73 San Francisco, CA 94102. No price. (Kym has reviewed most of these in our 'Zine Reviews!" column, by the by.)

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Time to get out your writing sticks and talking paper, 'cause we're gonna write to our Congress-persons. Itwould seem that in this age of "enlightenment," we still have a few cavemen in our midst and in Congress. Rep. Jon Doolittle (R-Calif.) has introduced an amendment to a federal school bill that would require all education courses in receipt of federal funds to satisfy ten criteria in order to receive funding, including the criterion that they stress abstinence as the only contraceptive method 100% effective against pregnancy, AIDS/HIV, and STDs. The course material must also teach "honor and respect for heterosexual marriage." The Doolittle amendment conflicts with two current federal laws that preclude the feds from proscribing state and local curriculum standards. Over 30 national organizations have signed a letter to Congress opposing the amendment. And, as if that weren't enough stupidity for one session, Rep. Melton Hancock (R-Mo.) proposed an amendment to the same funding bill that would prohibit local education agencies from receiving funds if they conduct programs that encouraged or supported homosexuality. That would include curricula that might portray gays, lesbians and bisexuals in any positive manner. (I presume that includes us too) So, kiddies, put your pen to paper and write your congress-person to express your opinion, pro or con. (I should think my opinion is obvious.) Any rep can be reached by addressing your letter as follows: Representative (Name), Washington, DC 20515. Do it now!

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In the wake of the big drug bust here in Philly, folks have been buzzin' quite a bit. Seems the erstwhile druggist was caught in "her" knickers. Yep, he's a crossdresser. When the feds came knockin' at dawn, they found him in a teddy, allegedly attempting to destroy the evidence.

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Saw this sign: "Lord, grant me the courage to change the things I can, the serenity to accept the things I can't, and the wisdom to hide the bodies of those I had to kill because they pissed me off."

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IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SUPERHIGHWAY

by Marla Louise
[Part one in a series]

Are you a virgin? No, no, get your mind out of the gutter, I'm not talking about sex. No, are you a virgin to that buzzword of the media, "The Information Superhighway". If you are, it's time for your first kiss. The kiss of communication.

Why should you be concerned with the information superhighway? Especially, why are we bringing it up here in **Cross-Talk**? Well, the usual arguments that would apply to about anyone are there. But the one argument you are specifically interested in is that it will allow you direct access to a huge "gender community". There are literally thousands of "girls" (and "boys") from the entire transgender spectrum on-line talking and sharing and making friends.

Imagine a clubhouse (actually many clubhouses) where we can all get together, talk about our experiences, share our pleasures and pains, and learn of what in going on in Washington and maybe even Frostbite Falls, MN. Such clubhouses exist. They go by the names of Compuserve, GEnie, America On-line, Internet, Prodigy and hundreds of other names. They are the centers of the information age, Bulletin Board Systems (BBS), also known as Electronic Networks. From now on, I'll just call them networks.

What these networks consist of are computer systems especially designed to allow thousands of personal computers, and their users, to talk to each other. They also allow you access to all sorts of information like encyclopedias, news, the stock market or airline schedules. But it's the communication with other users that we are especially interested in. For with communication comes the knowledge, friendships and support.

How does one actually use one of these networks? Basically, you connect your computer to the computers of one of these networks. Once you have connected to a network, there are a number of things you might do. The first and most obvious is to talk to someone else through your keyboard. This is know as Real Time Conferencing. It's like a group of people getting together in a room and having a discussion. There may be only two individuals in discussion, or forty to fifty. The difference between Real Time Conferencing and actually having a local group discussion is that the people are spread throughout the world any you talk by typing and reading the screen instead of by voice.

The second major option is posting notes, or "bulletin boarding". All of these networks are subdivided into forums or roundtables where specific topics can be discussed. Discussions could cover anything from computers to model railroading, but in our case it also includes gender discussions. In addition, the categories will be subdivided in a roundtable to cover many specific interest under a general subject. For example, GEnie's "The Transgender Community" roundtable has sub-topics like "Introduction and Welcome", "The Media Image", "Support Groups", "Transition", "The Look", "Hormones" and "Reflections" to name a few. People then post notes under each of these topics. There, it is available for everyone else on the roundtable to read. It's like pinning a note on a public bulletin board (thus the name) and reading the notes previously posted by others. Then the next individual may respond by posting her note reflecting on a previous one or commenting on something new. In this way, many conversations with a great deal of reflection may be held. Friends can be made and interest shared.

Why should you be interested in the "information superhighway"? Because it will allow you direct access to a huge gender community.

Similar to posting, but more private is the e-mail (electronic mail) system. It's just like your local postal service but much faster since your letter is available for reading by the recipient almost immediately.

The final major resource for us are the libraries. Most of the networks have large libraries of articles, pictures and stories of transgender interest. One might find some fiction or a description of various therapists ... a picture of your friend from England or a poem that is sweet to remember. And they are all available at a stoke of a keyboard.

Now, how do you go about getting access to all this great stuff? First off, you need a personal computer with a modem. The modem is a device that translates computer signals to signals that phone lines can handle. In other words, a modem is a device that allows your computer to talk to other computers over the phone line. You will also need software to allow you to use the modem. Most computers these days include such software. In addition, many of the on-line networks will provide you with additional software, either free or at minimum cost. Your final need is money. All the networks, by necessity, are businesses that charge for the service. Normally, there is a monthly charge along with an hourly charge. The rates and

schedules vary, so you need to inquire on each network.

Once you are set up with the proper hardware and software, you then need to join one of the networks. The ones with the most of offer the gender community are: GEnie (1-800-638-9636), America OnLine, or AOL (1-800-827-6364), and Compuserve Information Service, also known as CIS (1-800-848-8990). Upon joining the network, you will then need to familiarize yourself with the structure of the specific network. Once confortable, find and join that specific forum that we girls hang out on.

Note that each network has it's own unique personality. I am a member of the above three.

GEnie: The Transgender Community can be found in the Family Roundtable, Category 48. You do have to write a note to the management to enter since the Transgender Community is a private area. The number of active "girls" here is rather small, on the order of 30 or 40. But this lends to being a very friendly and caring community. Real time conferences normally occur on Tuesday nights. Of the three nets, I find this to be the friendliest and most caring.

America OnLine: If you are computer illiterate, this network may be the best for you as they supply some very friendly software for it's use. Here, you will find us in the "Gay and Lesbian Community" forum. The best of the real time conferences on gender subjects can be found here. Sunday nights at 9:00PM Eastern and Wednesday nights at 9:30PM Eastern, in the Lambda lounge, there is a very large conference which will see over 40 participants at one time. The library is quite good, but the bulletin boards are not used much and messages are spread sparsely through several sections.

Compuserve: CIS has -- by far -- the most active bulletin board postings. They can be found in the HSX200 forum, Section 9 Genderline. Because of the massive amounts of postings, there is a little bit of a less friendly feel here, but then there is much more information. They also have an excellent library.

A special note: As of this writing, both Compuserve and AOL have established policies that discriminate against the gender community. Of the two, I find Compuserve's discrimination to be more extreme. Their policy states that all members of the Human Sexuality Forum -- which contains Genderline -- who use names the opposite of their biological sex (post-ops and those in supervised RLT are excepted) must have a label of TV, TG or TS placed after their name. In other words, we are forced to wear a scarlet letter. This requirement is not placed on any other group of individuals on Compuserve including other minorities (such as gays) or those who are into shall we say interesting sexual alternate lifestyles. Only we are so marked. As such, I find this damaging to our community as it institutionalizes discrimination on individuals based on their gender identity. A number of the members of Genderline are currently trying to convince the powers-that-be to change the policy, but I am not very hopeful on a quick improvement.

The discrimination on AOL is less severe since it is less public, but it is no less real. In this case, public conferences which have any gender community label (such as "TV and CD Chat", or "Gender Forum") are prohibited. Such conferences must be made private, thus preventing anyone else from finding the conference. At the same time they allow rooms such as "Women Who Obey", "Exquisite Corpse", "Humiliate Me", or "Rock Hard". To quote an editorial by Mubarak Dahir of the *Philadelphia Daily News*: "It seems obvious that AOL is not offended by chat rooms of a sexual nature -- just chat rooms of people they consider 'abnormal', whether those people are talking about sex or not."

Consider the above when choosing a network. But consider also the possibility of joining one of those nets to actively fight the discrimination.

If you get on-line and get confused, or if you would just like to say hello, you can always drop me a note. My address for GEnie is *mb*, for America OnLine it's *MarlaB 01* and on Compuserve I'm *73637,3032*. Internet users can write me at *mb@genie.geis.com*.

[Next month, part two of our series on the "information superhighway" focuses on the Internet.]

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RADICALIZING STONEWALL 25:
GAY LIBERATION, QUEER POLITICS AND ANTI-AUTHORITARIANISM

by Julia

"We have got to radicalize... Be proud of what you are... And if it takes riots or even guns to show them what we are, well, that's the only language the pigs understand."

Jim Fouratt, Gay Liberation Front organizer, July 1969

As anarchists and anti-authoritarians, what do we want to make of the fact that the 1969 Stonewall Riot is generally seen as the "birth" of the contemporary lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender movement in the U.S.? Why not another significant event, such as changes in the psychological classifications of homosexuality? Or the abolition of sodomy laws? Or the institution of anti-discrimination laws? What understanding of homophobic oppression can we derive from the commemoration of Stonewall as the most fitting occasion for celebrating our pride?

Some queer activists/scholars object to mythologizing Stonewall as the pinnacle historical moment in the emergence of the contemporary l/g/b/t movement. They argue that this obscures the importance of other efforts, such as the '50s campaigns against the psychiatric establishment and the legal system. However, I believe that celebrating Stonewall as the beginning of a new kind of political empowerment for queers has the potential to radicalize the current movement. The problem in the way that Stonewall is commemorated is that it has been appropriated by the mainstream "leadership" of the lesbian and gay movement. This has emptied the event of its anti-authoritarian critique by reducing it to a focus on lesbian and gay visibility and acceptance.

The "hidden" history of Stonewall is particularly important today, when gays and lesbians have placed their faith in Bill Clinton's Democratic Party and in the capacity of the liberal legal system to provide legislation that will somehow eliminate homophobia while leaving authoritarian institutions intact. We need to trace out the implicit anti-authoritarian critique embedded in the Stonewall rebellion and in later organizing to illuminate the contradictions of the mainstream's exclusive focus on sexual identity and "coming out" within the various social hierarchies of this society. In contrast to this, the growing "queer" movement potentially contains a far-reaching understanding of gender, sexual identity and oppression that could constitute an important part of an anti-authoritarian revolutionary movement.

The Riot: Accounts of the June, 1969 Stonewall Riot usually don't position the Stonewall Inn and its customers within class and racial hierarchies, or within other hierarchies in the gay community. The standard story is that, for some unknown reason, this particular group of gay men and lesbians decided that they could not stand for another bar raid and so took to the streets to claim their right to associate freely, without the harassment of the state.

You wouldn't know it by looking at the touristy Stonewall Inn of today, but in 1969 it was a dive: a haven for outcasts and people who couldn't afford the more upscale Manhattan gay bars. Although, like many NYC bars, it was controlled by the Mafia, for three dollars you could stay all night. It was common knowledge that the Stonewall Inn gave shelter to many homeless queer youth.

It was because of its lack of economic clout, and because it was a popular hangout for drag queens and non-white queer folk that the Stonewall Inn was a frequent target of police raids.

It was because of its lack of economic clout, and because it was a popular hangout for drag queens and non-white queer folks, that the Stonewall Inn was a frequent target of police raids. The desire to shut down the Stonewall Inn and drive away its regulars stemmed as much from hatred of drag queens, non-whites, and poor people as it did from homophobia. It was no doubt this class and racial oppression, along with sexual oppression, that mobilized the Stonewall rioters.

One of the more well-known participants, a Puerto Rican drag queen named Sylvia Rivera (who helped found the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries [STAR] in the months following the rebellion), has tried to make this point in interviews with Stonewall historians: "The queens were ready to be in the front lines because we didn't have too much to lose and we knew about violence." Drag queens and butch/femme bar dykes were those who were especially marginalized at this time by the homophile "societies" such as the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, in addition to being the ones most targeted by straight homophobia. The homophile movement

sought acceptance and tolerance of homosexuality, and so attempted to hide aspects of lesbian and gay culture that deviated most significantly from white middle-class norms.

It was those on the outside of respectable middle-class society, with the least to lose in resisting the state, who began the Stonewall Riot. They were also the ones most targeted by the police that night: drag queens resisting the police used their heels and other weapons to unarrest themselves and each other. Along with this admirable show of militance and self-respect, the queens were the ones with a wry and witty perspective, chanting "We are the Stonewall Girls/ We wear our hair in curls/ We wear no underwear/ We show our pubic hair," in the midst of the crackdown by the riot police.

The drag queens at the Stonewall Inn that night were proud and defiant and well aware that they posed a threat to the patriarchal gender system. They had no illusions about being "accepted" into this society on its own terms. It is this kind of queer pride that we should commemorate at this year's Stonewall anniversary. Because of their marginality, however, these queers have lost the battle over the significance of Stonewall for informing lesbian/gay/bisexual political struggle.

Gay Liberation and Gay Rights: Very soon after the Stonewall riots ended, the Gay Liberation Front was founded. The GLF was inspired by other social movements of the late '60s and modeled some of its tactics and organization on these groups. Its founders thumbed their noses at the former leadership of the lesbian and gay civil rights movement, located largely in Washington D.C., who were concerned with acceptance and maintaining the favor of the establishment. While the leaders of the Mattachine Society posted signs after the riots, asking for peace and "reasonable behavior" among gays, the increasingly militant liberationists argued that they weren't interested in acceptance, but instead in empowerment and respect.

Inspired by the militant tactics and critiques put forward by other social movements of the time, many GLF actions supported organizations like the Black Panther Party, and they actively sought to explore the relation of homophobia to racism and sexism. Like many other '60s radicals, GLFers saw themselves as part of a revolutionary movement.

Meanwhile, gay-liberation theorists of the early '70s rejected understandings of homosexuality and the political agenda put forward by the pre-Stonewall homophile movement. Before Stonewall, the homophile leadership had argued for ending discrimination against homosexuals in public institutions and emphasizing the competence and capability of homosexuals to function "just like everyone else" outside of the bedroom. In stark contrast, gay liberationists argued for a gender revolution and an end of the sex-role system that sees masculinity and femininity as mutually exclusive. They understood homophobia as tied to this system, which privileges heterosexuality and men, and they sought to tear it down.

Because of the revolutionary focus of the GLF, the organization soon split, and some middle-class gay men formed the Gay Activists Alliance. It was the GAA that began to articulate the single-issue and legislative focus of the contemporary lesbian and gay "rights" movement. This approach was especially popular among white gay men, and picked up recruits rapidly. Many of the lesbian and gay organizations that were formed from this point on, particularly in the face of the demise of so many social movements during the course of the '70s, focused on legislative battles and discrimination against lesbians and gay men. Rather than trying to revolutionize American society, the movement increasingly sought gay inclusion into the existing system, with whatever minimal adjustments necessary to ensure "equal treatment."

It's ironic that it is primarily these liberal, "rights" organizations that have adopted Stonewall as a symbol of their pride, and that constitute the committees that make up "Stonewall 25." Indeed, the people-of-color caucus of Stonewall 25 had to fight to keep the rest of the committee from excluding transsexuals as official participants in this year's events. For the most part, "Stonewall 25" has become a marketing opportunity, with large contributions from corporations that see a certain stratum of the lesbian and gay population as potential consumers of their products.

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The "Stonewall 25" planning committee has catered to this image to the extent that it attempts to "put a good face" on lesbian and gay culture by sweeping undesirables under the rug.

Reformists forget that the Stonewall Riot represented an unwillingness to adapt to mainstream society to work for change. Unlike the tactics used by gay rights advocates (lobbying, letter-writing, "coming out" within corporate environments), the Stonewall rioters took an alternative path to political empowerment and self-respect by taking to the streets. So successful have reformists been in portraying Stonewall as the first step toward legislative changes of the "enlightened Gay '90s" that they have alienated more radical queers from participating in events that commemorate the Stonewall rebellion.

Queer Politics and Anti-Authoritarianism: The AIDS crisis and a "post-modern" political climate have marked the rise of a new tendency within the l/g/b/t movement. In many ways, today's queer politics hearken back to the rhetoric of the GLF with their "in your face" tactics and style. Reclaiming the label "queer" to embrace deviance and shun the drive toward liberal acceptance grew in large part as a response to the frustration of those who initially worked within liberal organizations for an end to the AIDS epidemic.

ACT UP was founded in 1987 by activists who could see that lobbying and letter writing was getting them nowhere, and who had begun to see how deeply homophobia was woven into the institutions that they were appealing to in the fight against AIDS. As a result of the AIDS epidemic, many gay men became marginalized from mainstream society as "pariahs" in a way that they hadn't been before. They had less of a stake in upholding the system that so clearly despised them. Like the Stonewall Riot, the formation of ACT UP marked a radical break from previous tendencies in lesbian and gay politics and embodied a more comprehensive understanding of how various authoritarian institutions intersect to perpetuate homophobia.

The growing queer movement has also attracted lesbians and bisexual women who are frustrated with the monolithic understandings of identity and restrictive ideas of community put forward by lesbian-feminists. In contrast to lesbian feminism, queer politics are committed to an appreciation of difference and an ongoing investigation into the ways that identity categories serve authoritarian ends by enforcing codes and norms. Queerness as an "identity," is something that exists mostly in the negative: it is not "straight," not in keeping with the prescribed gender roles that uphold hetero-patriarchy.

To embrace deviance in the label queer is to argue that it is only by undermining rigid understandings of sexuality

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and gender that we can create a free society. Holding up "respectable" models of homosexuality does not empower queers against homophobic oppression, but rather seeks inclusion within the institutions that keep us down. Instead, queers want to multiply gender options so that, for example, biological maleness is not necessarily linked to masculinity, nor biological femaleness to femininity. The popularity of drag and camp within the queer subculture calls into question the notion that any orientation or gender is authentic or natural, and forces us to rethink the roles that we have been socialized to accept.

In doing so, the queer movement provides space for a radical rethinking of social relationships and the complex ways that power dynamics come into play in these relationships. It allows for a nuanced and contextual look at institutions like monogamous coupledom, the nuclear family, the sex industry, etc. It challenges hetero-patriarchy at the level of lived experience by rethinking intimate relationships and by taking to the streets in acts of militant resistance. There is a recognition in the queer movement that society must be changed from the bottom up. That means creating now the kinds of relationships that will be the basis for the society we want to have in the future.

It is perhaps this awareness that led groups such as ACT UP and Queer Nation to be committed to non-hierarchical modes of organization and direct-action politics. Many of their members are not interested in creating respectable "leaders" that can sit on executive boards and mingle with corporate and governmental elites. Both organizations operate within directly democratic assemblies, and ACT UP has several working groups and affinity groups that target everything from legislative battles to homelessness and squatters' struggles to media campaigns around AIDS. In addition, ACT UP has actively sought to create counter-institutions to state-run social services treating and caring for persons with AIDS.

Like Stonewall, however, "queerness" has been adopted by mainstream lesbian and gay rights organizations. At the March on Washington in the spring of 1993, lesbians and gay men carrying signs announcing their corporate employer (AT&T is the first that comes to mind) shouted "We're here, we're queer, we're fabulous, don't f--- with us!" Queer slogans are becoming commodities marketed on the pages of slick magazines like *Outlook* and *The Advocate*.

We should expose the contradictions of corporate lesbians and gays who shout "We're here, we're queer" at pride marches. In what way do these women and men see themselves as queer? And along those lines, how do they align their own struggles to be "out" in the workplace or to effect legislative changes as allied with the lesbians, drag queens and young men of color who participated in the Stonewall Riot? Rather than dwell on the frustrating capacity of advanced industrial capitalism to turn movements of resistance into commodified fashion statements, I think we should use these contradictions as sites of contestation and struggle. By bringing to light the radical history of Stonewall and the queer movement, we can force mainstream lesbians and gay men to ask themselves these questions as they commemorate the 25th anniversary of Stonewall this month.

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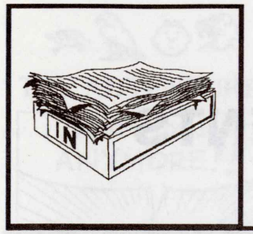

INSIGHT

WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT AN "F" WIFE?

by Barbara Jean Jasen

Let's try a little scenario: You have just told your wife that you are a crossdresser, or worst yet, she found out. You hear such phrases as "you queer pantywaist faggot", "not in **my** house you don't", "you need your fool head examined". Get the picture? This is not going to be one of those cherished "A+" type of wives. While we may have hoped for a better reaction, it looks like she will be a pure "F". What now?

A part of her reaction may be due to the initial shock, but the above scenario makes it pretty clear that the relationship with our wife or girlfriend has **not** been on sound footing; that there are other problems that as yet are unresolved. If we are to have any hope of our wife or girlfriend accepting our *femme*side, then we must resolve **all other problems** in the relationship. Perhaps it may be wise to seek the advice of a marriage counselor or other professional for the purpose of bringing those problems to the surface. It is important to recognize that there is **no** hope of your wife or girlfriend progressing past that "F" point unless we begin to work to resolve all other issues.

> If we are to have any hope of our wife or girlfriend accepting our *femme*side, then we must resolve all other problems in the relationship.

While I think it is a good idea to have books like Virginia Prince's *The Transvestite and His Wife* or Peggy Rudd's *My Husband Wears My Clothes* on hand, it is somewhat doubtful that she will even bother to look at them. I think it would be much better to give these to the marriage counselor so that you can be assured that he or she is informed on the subject of crossdressing. I would also urge you to direct the counselor to inquire of I.F.G.E. or Tri-Ess for further information. The Boulton & Park Society also has a number of good pamphlets that they may obtain.

I also think this is a time when you need to listen to her, to try and understand her feelings and her fears. Communication at this point is of the utmost importance. Try to find out what causes her objection.

You also need to be very careful with **who** you associate with. Now I am not saying that you have to abandon your TS or gay sisters, but it's probably best to not let your wife know what their exact status is, because it can further intensify any fears that she may have about your being a crossdresser. If you bring any sisters to your house make sure that they understand how your wife feels. It may also be wise to ask that they come dressed in male attire whenever possible. If the "F" wife ever does meet with one of your sisters, be aware that your sisters' actions will be a form of education for your wife about **you**.

I have a sister here in Memphis who is in the above situation. As a result of an auto accident Kayleen's wife found out about her crossdressing. Dora was anything but accepting of Kayleen; she would not even look at anything written about crossdressing. Kayleen and I are the best of friends, and Dora knows of my being a crossdresser, but for some reason she seemed to sense something different about me. It is as if that which she feared she did not see in me. Dora has progressed, and while I don't think she was ever a true "F", she did rate a "D" for a time. She accepted the fact that Kayleen was a crossdresser, but did not want anything to do with it. Today she will -- at times -- buy Kayleen a dress or other article of feminine attire, and she claims that she will not even look at a piece of crossdressing printed material, but she has been known to take a peek now and then. I think now we could at least give her a good "C" rating.

I guess if I played any part in Dora's progression toward acceptance, it is that she did not see me as a threat. One of the problems that we must battle is the one created by the old myths that people have created about us. You've probably heard most of them: That we are gay, or planning a sex change. As a result the wife often perceives that the other crossdresser is attempting to recruit her husband to these things. I firmly believe that the prime reason for a woman to enter into marriage is *(continued, next page)*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 8-12, 1994: 12th Annual "Be All You Want To Be", Pittsburgh PA. This year's host organization is TransPitt. Details from P.O. Box 23442, Pittsburgh 15222.

June 24, 1994: "International Stonewall Ball", New York City, benefitting the 25th Anniversary Stonewall March two days later. Details from Empress Nicole, (619) 692-1967 or Coco at (212) 475-0838, or write P.O. Box 33915, San Diego CA 92163.

July 6-10, 1994: "Spouse/Partners International Conference for Education", Chicago IL. S.P.I.C.E. includes members of Tri-Ess, Renaissance, Virginia's Secret, and IFGE, and is open to all wives and partners of crossdressers. Details from Linda Peacock, P.O. Box 24031, Little Rock AR 72221, or by calling (501) 227-8798.

August 5-8, 1994: "Dignity Cruise V", Los Angeles to Baja California. Details from Peggy Rudd, 1811 Crutchfield, Katy TX 77449 or by calling (713) 347-6563.

August 17-21, 1994: Third Annual "International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy", Houston TX. Information from Phyllis Randolph Frye, 5707 Firenza St., Houston 77035-5515, or by calling (713) 723-8368 (fax: 723-1800).

September 3 & 4, 1994: "GenDys '94", conference for professionals and others, University of Manchester, U.K. Details from BM GenTrust, London WC1N 3XX.

September 15-18, 1994: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA. See May 19-22 listing.

September 27-October 2, 1994: "Southern Comfort Conference", Atlanta GA. Information from P.O. Box 33296, Decatur GA 30033, or by calling (404) 603-9426.

October 16-23, 1994: 20th Annual "Fantasia Fair", Provincetown MA, sponsored by Outreach Institute. Write Alison Laing, P.O. Box 941, Southeastern PA 19399-0941 for details.

November 17-20, 1994: "Fall Harvest '94", Cedar Rapids IA, sponsored by MAGGIE. Host organization: Iowa Artistry. Details from P.O. Box 75, Cedar Rapids 52406-0075.

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.

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

INSIGHT ... *continued from previous page*

security. Thus, she may see our crossdressing as a threat to the security of her marriage. Remove the threat and the non-acceptance will diminish. Your first task will be to in some way assure her that your being a crossdresser does not threaten the marriage or diminish your love for her.

I think the one major thing that we must remember most is that our wife or girlfriend will **not** turn from an "F" to an "A+" overnight; rather it is something that will probably require years of work and co-operation. Will the "F" wife leave? That is a difficult one to call. I think it will depend on just how bad the other cracks are in the foundation of the relationship, and on how well she perceives her ability to survive on her own.

Next month we will continue this series with a column for those of you who are contemplating telling your children about your crossdressing.

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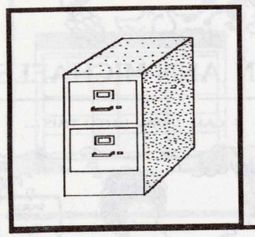

THE BEST OF *CROSS-TALK*

TRANSVESTISM: A FORM OF SELF-EXPRESSION

[Editor's Note: This reprint has never appeared in the pages of **Cross-Talk**, *but did appear in a reprint of articles that we made available to subscribers for a brief period in 1990-91. It is an article we made available from our former group "The Valley Girls" between 1989 and 1991, both to news media and to those inquiring about the group.]*

A literal definition of transvestism is "cross-dressing" (from the Latin *trans* = across + *vestire* = to dress). Not all crossdressers are transvestites. A TV is not, for example, the same as a "drag queen", a professional female impersonator, or a transsexual, although all these persons crossdress. Transvestism is a recurring desire, sometimes a compulsion, to wear the clothing associated culturally with the opposite sex, to impersonate that sex, or both. It is a way for a man to express affinity with the feminine. Certain specifics may be emphasized, such as high heels, lingerie or silk. A total "passing" look may be carefully sought, and is often skillfully achieved, since the natural expression of femininity frequently occurs almost instinctively. Today, most transvestites (TVs) are men, partly due to the greater freedom of women to select their "look". This information focuses on the male-to-female dresser.

> A transvestite is not the same as a "drag queen", a professional female impersonator, or a transsexual.

Most TVs are heterosexual, some are bisexual, some are gay. Dressing is sometimes done to enhance sexuality and is erotic. At other times, crossdressing may have no sexual context at all, but is indulged in for purposes of relaxation and well being. As the crossdresser comes to accept himself, he may embrace a wider range of dressed activities. Many TVs have a definitely masculine, non-effeminate persona, in addition to the feminine. In ordinary life, most TVs display no traits that would set them apart from other men. Yet they are different -- their orientation towards the female sets them apart from the "norm". Transvestism is not an exclusively modern phenomenon, for it has been a form of self expression in many cultures and periods of history.

Society has not had a chance to understand transvestism. Where does society get its information about TVs? Where did you? The image of the transvestite in the media is often exaggerated, or is a cue for laughter. Due to the shame our culture associates with crossdressing, and to the mistaken identification of transvestism with other types of behavior, few people have had unbiased exposure to a TV, or heard anything positive about the experience. Society has much to gain accepting transvestism:

*** By allowing its TV members to strive closer to their potential.

*** By learning the rich and varied stories of crossdressers.

*** By realizing all its members are hurt when squashed into narrow expectations.

People begin to crossdress for varied reasons. The causes of transvestism, variously theorized, remain one of life's mysteries. It's not caught, taught, or inherited; it's not anyone's "fault"; it's not chosen. Usually it's unrelated to what a parent did (or didn't do). Often, the TV is aware of his specialness at an early age. Although none of the following cause transvestism, one may have brought the desire to awareness:

*** Dressing as a female for Halloween

*** Playing a female role in a play

*** Losing a bet or taking a dare

*** Simple curiosity (e.g., finding Mom's slip in the hamper and wondering what it feels like to wear).

Transvestites are family members. Many transvestites are rearing or have reared children. Numerous people have a TV in their family -- husband, parent, brother, son, nephew, or cousin. His needs are the same as the needs of any family member -- to be both acknowledged and accepted. Rejection of a TV is a loss for every person in the immediate and extended family.

Crossdressing helps transvestites to be mentally and emotionally healthy. Transvestism is not a mental or emotional disorder in itself. A strong majority of TVs are responsible employers and employees who pay taxes, are cooperative neighbors, care about family and community, and are careful not to offend others when dressed. Unhealthy aspects of transvestism have largely been created by the negative and uninformed attitudes of our current culture. For many TVs, crossdressing is a solution, not a problem; it's an answer, not a question. Crossdressing is a release, a non-violent outlet for an agreeable and mellow attitude, natural expression and a way to be comfortable. People crossdress not to be like others, but to be like themselves.

The best solution is self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is greatly facilitated by a knowledgeable society. Many TVs have come to a peaceful contentment after years in their dual dressing roles. Methods for "cures" that have been tried and repeatedly fail to include:

*** Purging (discarding all female clothes, makeup, etc.)

*** Professional counselling to change

*** Growing a beard

*** Willpower

*** Immersion in career

*** Alcohol and/or drugs

*** Getting married

*** Getting unmarried

Over and over, partners and close friends of TVs learn that transvestism is a condition of life, that it's not going to go away. The transvestite is not going to outgrow his desire to dress in women's clothes. He cannot change his condition, although the chances are that he's tried hard to do so. The choice for the partner or friend is to leave, to tolerate it, or to accept it. Many who do accept it are finding numerous advantages in relating to a transvestite -- increased self awareness, opportunities for humor, new friends and sometimes more clothes. Some women, upon learning their "man" is a TV, feel a loss; others feel it would be a loss if he did not crossdress. Misinformation is steadily diminishing as more people come out of isolation into the large supportive community of TVs and their friends.

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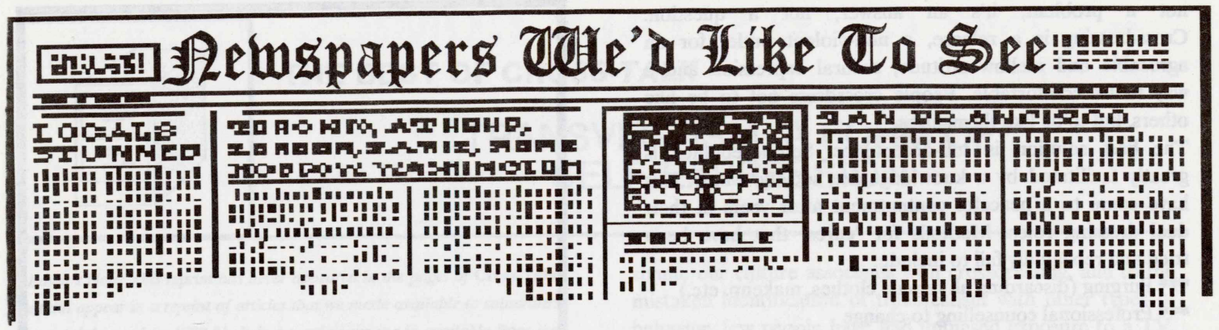


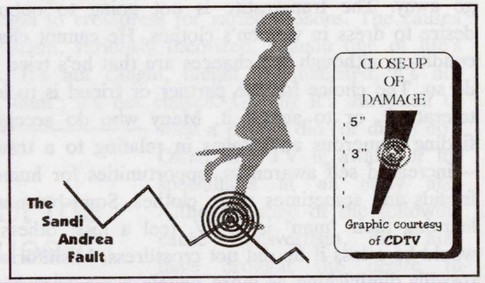
THE BIG EARTHQUAKE OF '94: LIVES TEETERING ON THE EDGE

Northridge, Calif. -- It was revealed only recently that dozens of crossdressers were injured during the big southern California Earthquake of 1994. The stress from the 6.8 magnitude quake on 90 percent of 5" or higher heels caused them to collapse from the stress.

The immense fall seriously injured hundreds of transgendered residents. The less seriously injured were treated, their makeup reapplied, and released from Our Lady Of Perpetual Femininity Hospital.

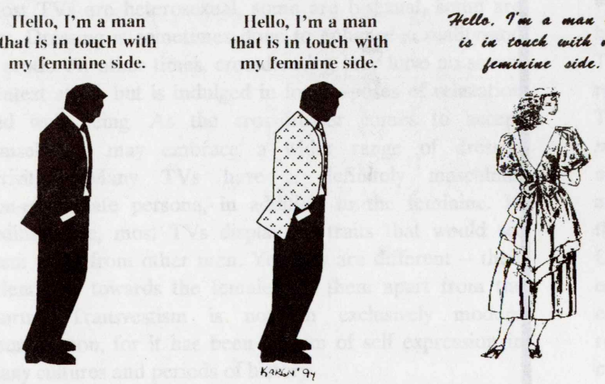
On a related note, Frederick's of Hollywood announced that they were retrofitting all of their high heels over 4 inches. Frederick's is also offering free of charge seismic upgrades on all existing pairs of their highest heels already in the marketplace.

On various Saturday nights around Southern California, heels were the exception rather than the rule as aftershocks continued to undermine the confidence of novice crossdressers as they attempted to learn how to walk in high heels for the very first time.



The epicenter was located 3 inches from the base of the right heel. (See diagram.) Severe damage was done to the entire infrastructure of the shoe. The crossdresser at the epicenter suffered a catastrophic sprain of the right ankle and is expected to be off her heels for up to three months. -- *Karen Rusnak*

Only one of these individuals has come to accept themselves as they truly are!



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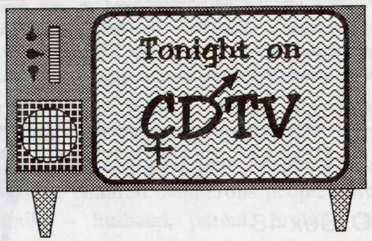


8:00 - Melrose Place
Alison comes to the realization that she feels like a man, and Billy admits that he prefers to be called Sheila. There is no change in their relationship.

9:00 - Northern Exposure
(R) Fleischman adds a few inches to the bustline of the local transsexual. Parental guidance and silicone are suggested.

10:00 - NYCD Blue
No decription available. Parental guidance is suggested as well as tips on proper makeup application for the male undercover cops.

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

by Dave Nurmi
Owner, N.S. Products

I receive many letters each day, week, month, and year and none has ever touched me like this one did. I have tried for over 10 years, to reach into the closets and reach the person that is feeling alone and unworthy. This came to light again this past March, when I was following up on an old mailing list. I was using the mailing to update and attempt to contact old customers and persons that I have not heard from in quite a while. I usually get back a large percentage of "box closed" or "moved-forward expired", but when I opened this letter, I was devastated. I only share this letter with you because I feel that we **all** need to do more in the outreach area.

Vendors, club members, even those that do not participate in organized clubs, all need to attempt to reach the people like the one described in this letter I received. I have omitted some information for the privacy of the family and I have changed the name of the family involved. Most of you already know me and understand this is an honest effort to open your eyes and take that extra step through what ever means you have.

Please read slowly and soak up all of the feelings. It will never leave your mind once you have read it.

What you are about to read will never leave your mind once you have read it.

February 28, 1994

You say it has been a long time since you have heard from my son. Well, I guess it has been. You say that you would like to have him back with you.
Well, so would I.
We found him dead (date). Your letter opened a lot of wounds again. My husband did not know of our son's crossdressing until we found him dead. In a wedding dress no less. I really feel sorry for the young and old who find the need to crossdress and the erotic sex that goes with crossdressing.
Please don't send any more mail to our home. Thank you.

(signed) Mother of "John Smith"

Well, there it is. My hands still shake every time I read it. What could I have done differently to stop this tragedy? What could you have done differently to stop it?

I am not trying to point blame on any of us, but maybe, just maybe, one of us, you or I, could have said one sentence to him to help him understand that he is not alone. He is not a deviant. He is not strange or alone. We are a community, and it is important that we all reach out, touch each other, and say, I am OK, we are OK, you are OK.

Well, enough of my preaching. Please, do not destroy this letter from wherever you obtained it from. Place it in a place where you can read it, see it, remind you about where you were as a young man, how you felt. Did you feel alone, different, maybe even suicidal? Not everyone is strong enough to stand up through that kind of pressure.

Take an extra step and distribute this letter through whatever means you have: BBS, letters to the editor, letters to "Dear Abby" or any publications, adult or regular.

Editor's Comment: When Dave first sent me a copy of this letter, I was very saddened, because I, too, am at a loss to suggest how this could have been avoided.

Unfortunately, what we do is **still** a social taboo, and that lead many of us to be ashamed of what we do. It also doesn't help that television -- with only occasional excceptions -- portray the gender community either for laughs (in prime time) or in a sensationalistic way (on daytime talk shows).

The tabloid press only reports on us when it fits their "news of the weird" format. The mainstream press covers us rarely, if at all, although they tend to be sensationalistic.

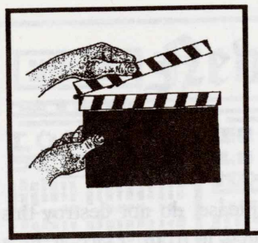
The broadcast news media has tried to cover us sympathetically, but most of us are too afraid of discovery to participate in that coverage.

And when a few brave members of society try to find out what we're really all about, what they find in abundance are the magazines I have spoken about in the past ... the ones that portray everything connected with crossdressing as pertaining to sex. How can society **ever** accept us if everything they see or read about us makes us seem deviant and perverse?

For that matter, we will never know if "John Smith", looking for proof he was OK, only found all the same material and -- probably not even aware of magazines like *Tapestry*, *LadyLike*, or the magazine you are now reading , or of organizations like Tri-Ess, Renaissance, IFGE, or the many fine local groups in our community -- felt that he was socially unacceptable.

So he killed himself.

What a waste of a life



MOVIE REVIEW

GRIEF

by Charlene Day

My main reason in going to see *Grief* was curiosity about the drag queen Kent Fuhrer, a/k/a Jackie Beat who has a major part in the movie. The story revolves around a television production company (notice I didn't say TV; I didn't want to confuse you) that produces grade Z scripts for a television series about courtroom drama. The writers are constantly striving for evermore fantastic stories and the reguglar flow of the movie is interrupted a few times with some outrageous "clips" from the show. The venue of the movie is mostly in a building in West Hollywood where the producer Joanna, played by Jackie Beat, and the writers work. One of the writers, Marty Levy, is still suffering grief from the death of his lover about a year before due to AIDS. I guess that's whence the movie gets its name. Other characters include Bill who is confused by his sexuality and his relationship with Paula and Jeremy who seduces Bill and creates friction between himself and Marty.

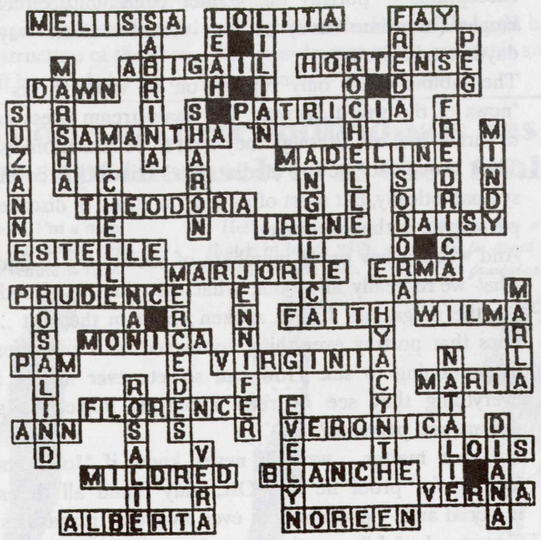
When Joanna announces that she is leaving the show to mary Mylos in Europe there is competition between Marty and Paula for the job as producer. The outcome of their competition is somewhat contrived.

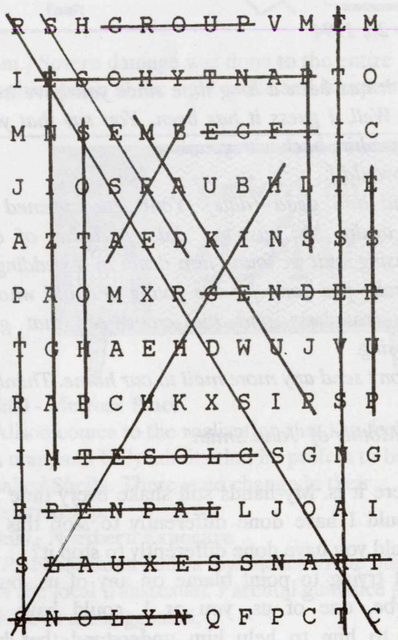
The show has some funny sequences and a couple of amorous scenes that appealed to the mostly gay crowd in attendance.

Fuhrer/Beat is a **very large** woman and he carries it off well. It should give encouragement to crossdressers that are concerned by their size that they can indeed project a womanly image.

I give the movie a two star rating.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE PAGE:





Look for more puzzle pages in future issues of **Cross-Talk!**

HOTLINES

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

NEW ENGLAND/NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONS:
CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2132
Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
Cross Dressers International, NYC: (212) 243-0837
East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 477-6588 %
Expressing Our Nature, Syracuse: (315) 475-5611
Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
Gender Talk North, New Hampshire: (603) 924-8824
Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
GLEBITS, Boston: (617) 323-6082
Images, Hartford: (203) 779-2465
Imperial Queens of New York: (212) 580-9862
Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
Lambda Chi Lambda Chapter Tri-Ess, Utica: (607) 547-4118 @
Long Island Femme Expression: (516) 538-5304 @
Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (718) 461-9050
My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
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 Explorations: (404) 962-3118 #
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) 462-4826 #
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) 259-9428
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) 320-8737

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, Shawnee Mission: (913) 371-0658 #
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
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

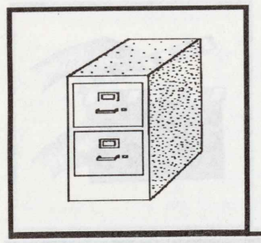
SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:
Alpha Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Amarillo: (806) 359-7714 @
Bluebonnet Coalition, San Antonio: (210) 656-4163
Boulton & Park Society, San Antonio: (210) 980-7788
CrossDressers International, Tulsa: (918) 582-6643
Delta Omega Chapter Tri-Ess, Dallas: (817) 261-3253 @
First Saturday, El Paso: (505) 434-5144
Gender Crisis Help Line, Tucson: (602) 293-3456
Gender Identity Center, Denver: (303) 458-5378
Gulf Coast Transgender Community, Houston: (713) 780-4282
Help Me ... Accept Me, Dallas: (214) 416-6632
ReCast, Dallas: (214) 994-9314 #
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) 435-7293 #
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) 774-8463
Rose City Gender Center, Portland: (503) 230-1036
Salmacis Feminist Social Society, Eugene: (503) 688-4282
Transsexual Lesbians & Friends, Seattle: (206) 292-1037 #

THE WEST COAST (CA & HI):
Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
Amer. Transsexual Education Center: (213) 389-6938 #
Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 856-4867
Born Free, Riverside: (909) 278-0958
CHIC, Los Angeles: (818) 248-9075 @
Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4112
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: (613) 749-5203
Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661
Monarch Social Club, Ontario: (416) 949-6602

[For a list of hotlines for organizations outside North America, send a self-addressed legal size envelope and an international postal reply coupon to **Cross-Talk**, *Dept. IH, P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.]*



'ZINE REVIEWS!

by Kymberleigh Richards

At the IFGE convention in March, one of the ongoing running gags kept happening at luncheons. Sheila Kirk would mention that **Cross-Talk** was available in the registration room during the convention, which was met by an anguished Billie Jean Jones crying, "What about *GenderFlex*?" This would be followed by my calling out in response "I have a better press agent!"

Well, Billie Jean got even by publishing a very silly photograph of myself an Holly Boswell "just hanging around" as part of her convention coverage in issue #20, so I'm going to get **more** even by reviewing *GenderFlex* again, even though we've reviewed it before. So there, B.J.

As I have said before, this is a very strange and wonderful 'zine. Which fits because its editrix is also very strange and wonderful. In fact, Billie Jean admits, in the second paragraph of page two, that it is "still 100% convoluted". I do still wonder though, how she manages to get through two pages without once mentioning anything related to the gender community. (This issue's incongruous column filler concerned something akin to turning the 'zine into a religion. I'm not really sure.)

Actually, Billie Jean did do a fine job of covering the ETVC Cotillion and the IFGE convention, with lots of photographs of each. And through some miracle she only appears in four of them. (Such self-restraint.) Hold it, I stand corrected. **He** is in the one with Virginia Prince.

Billie Jean also managed to publish the entire text of Phyllis Randolph Frye's luncheon speech ... probably to get an imaginary edge on us, since we're having to cut it into installments. (As B.J. would say: "Hmmf.")

Anyway, there wasn't as much nonsense as usual this time, since the event coverage ran rampant all over the place. But I'm sure there will be more than usual of it in the next issue to compensate.

And *GenderFlex* still has the best Northern California resource listing available. Probably because Billie Jean belongs to almost every organization up there ... with the possible exception of FTM.

She charges $2.00 each for as many issues in advance as you want to get. The same price applies to back issues #11 through 19 or *TV Guise* (its predecessor) issues #4 through 10. She also accepts cash donations from those who don't think $2.00 is enough.

[Billie Jean Jones, 3430 Balmoral Dr. #10, Sacramento CA 95821.]

□■□

On the other hand, *Transsexual News Telegraph* is a **very** serious magazine. The most recent issue, forwarded to me by Jill Enquist, who has contributed to our pages on occasion, had a lot of news and commentary of interest to the TS community. There was also a very interesting article on author Jerzy Kosinski's fascination with TS women, perspectives on "passing" (which, of course, is a life-or-death issue for a transsexual), and a review of a book dealing with First Amendment law as it applies to pornography.

TNT is even heavier reading than **Cross-Talk**, if that's possible, but for those seriously involved in the TS community, it's definitely worth having for all the information they don't tell you at the gender clinic.

I would like to make one contribution: In their news section, reporting that *Max Headroom* had found a rerun home on cable's Bravo, they lamented that no one had brought back *Eerie, Indiana*. Apparently the writer was unaware that reruns of that short-lived series have turned up very recently on The Disney Channel. (Perhaps the writer is saving the money from not having pay cable for SRS.)

Subscriptions are $15.00 for four (?) issues. $3.50 for a single copy.

[TNT, 584 Castro St. #288, San Francisco CA 94114.]

THERE'S *NO* GOOD REASON NOT TO SUBSCRIBE TO

CROSS-TALK

40 pages of news, information and commentary on subjects of interest to the gender community every month. Delivery in a plain manila envelope. A savings of 40% from the cover price. Order form, page 40.

(Boy, that's a lot of 40s ...)

MOVING? Please send your new address six to eight weeks in advance to *P.O. Box 944, Woodland Hills CA 91365.* Include your four-digit subscriber number.

REJECTING RACISM AND SHAME

by Phyllis Randolph Frye

Racist attitudes were created by greedy, low-life slave traders, slave owners and slave breeders several hundreds of years ago. They promoted such attitudes in order to justify their actions. Racial slavery ended almost one hundred and thirty years ago, but racist attitudes remain.

Folks, we must learn to get along. We must, each of us, must affirmatively declare to become intolerant of intolerance. If someone says "nigger", then you must go through the awkwardness of telling that person that you do not approve. You are, after all, as a transgendered person, one of today's "niggers". Yes, you are because you a judged and deemed to possess a list of stereotypes because of one thing only -- your outward appearance. And if someone says some other racist comment, not quite as overt but just as racist, then you must go through the awkwardness of telling that person that their "white sheet" is showing and you do not approve.

You are, as a transgendered person, one of today's "niggers", because you are judged by one thing only ... your outward appearance.

At your next group meeting, look about you at the faces in the room. Where is the tapestry of color? Take steps to have your group begin to reach out through the Spanish, Asian and Black radio stations. Transgendered sisters and brothers are out there in the Spanish, Asian and Black communities. By their joining your local groups, you not only increase your group's numbers, you enrich your own life through learning, and you reinforce the argument that we are indeed everywhere and we are in every culture.

On the subject of shame: Shame is how **they** keep us down. Shame is how **they** keep us in our place. Shame is how **they** keep us in our closets. Who is this **"they"** that make us feel ashamed to be who we are?

They are the people who sing, "I've Got To Be Me. I've Got To Be Me." And **they** love the song, "I Did It My Way". **They** are the people who proclaim the virtue of being true to oneself. **They** say that the best of all things, is to be honest with oneself and honest with others. **They** teach that "Honesty is the best policy." **They** have Boy Scouts memorize that a scout is trustworthy. That means honest.

Time out! None of that applies if you are "queer"!

If you are homosexual or transgendered, **they** want you to lie about it, **they** want you to keep in the closet, **they** want you to be ashamed, **they** want you to feel guilty.

But, of course, "They" can justify divorce and infidelity. It is on television every night and in every movie house and magazine stand. "That's normal," **they** say.

Listen to me. You have nothing to be ashamed of. God likes variety. She created lots and lots of variety. You have the capacity to love yourself, to help others, to do good work. **They** have the problem, not you.

How many of **them** have you seen wearing country and western garb when they own no cows, no horses, no farm, no ranch? Ask them why they dress like that. "It's fun." or "It makes me feel good." or "It's the way I feel about myself." Those people who crossdress in western garb are the true trans*west*ites!

Someone wrote to me recently and at the end of the letter she stated how she was looking forward to an anonymous life after SRS in a new town and with a new job. That is nothing to look forward to. That's just another stretch of hiding. Why does she wish to hide? Because she is ashamed of who she is.

Never be ashamed. Never be ashamed.

[This is the second in a series of articles based on Ms. Frye's keynote speech at the 1994 IFGE "Coming Together-Working Together" convention, which itself was adapted from her seminar at the "Texas 'T' Party". Ms. Frye is the founder and executive director of the International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy. ICTLEP can be reached at 5707 Firenza St., Houston TX 77035-5515.]

This year's International Conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy will take place in Houston August 17 through 21 at the Hilton Hotel Southwest.

Topics to be addressed include employment law, personnel policy, equal employment opportunity, Title VII law, transitioning on the job, principles and standards of medical care, medical policy, insurance, definitions of health issues. gender rights, federal civil rights, military law, family law, crisis intervention, name and gender change, driver's licenses, passports, birth certificates, and other topics affecting **your** job, health, rights, and documentation.

Friday's luncheon will focus on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Saturday's luncheon, on ethics. Two awards banquets are also included to honor pioneers and advocates.

Cost for the entire conference (excluding hotel accommodations) is $144, with a 10% discount for registrations received before July 1. Registration is also possible for individual days' attendance, luncheons and banquets on an *a la carte* basis.

Contact Phyllis Randolph Frye at the above address or by fax at (713) 723-1800 for information.

HAVE YOU ASKED A FRIEND TO SUBSCRIBE TO **Cross-Talk?**

OH, MY GOD, IT'S BACK ...
PULLING NO PUNCHLINES, REVISITED

by Pamela Barnett

[Editor's Note: We are always looking for new ways to entertain and amuse our readers. This month, we turn to our past, when **Cross-Talk** *was still a newsletter, and reprint for your reading (and groaning) pleasure, the bst (?) of Pamela Barnett's "Pulling No Punchlines" humor feature, which ran as a filler in 1991 and 1992. Enjoy!]*

A volatile crossdresser may be referred to as a "tempest in a D cup."
Crossdressers are often found to be "ladies in waiting".
In the case of a crossdresser, "the clothes really unmake the man".
When it comes to crossdressing, there really is a "woman behind the man".
A crossdressing attorney often "miss-represents" herself.
If Saddam Hussein were a CD, his favorite outfit would definitely include a "tank top".
First impressions should be "miss-impressions" for crossdressers.
Stay away from the hearing impaired; they are experts at "lip reading"!
It is best to think of life as simply a "passing" fantasy.
Do CD accountants have the desire to "miss-appropriate" funds?
Can you imagine what a problem beard cover is for Amish CDs?
During wartime, CDs can have great difficulty when the order comes to "charge" ... they tend to pull out their credit cards.
CD holymen in India have been known to try to impress their peers by sleeping on beds of Lee Press-On Nails.
Do crossdressing mimes do "panty-mime"?
It's too bad that closed-captioning has made it virtually impossible not to read a TV.
When a CD has to return to a male role, this is called a "disillusioning" experience.
Remember: coats should always be double-breasted!
Never sit under a reading light!
Never ask someone to "read your lips"!
If there is communication through body language, does a CD with a great shape have a good figure of speech?
If Richard Nixon had been a crossdresser, would he have tried to make himself "perfectly Claire"?
CDs make great magicians. After all, we can make a woman appear and disappear at will!
Would you consider an essential part of a CD psychiatrist's wardrobe to be a "Freudian slip"?
Is double-talk the official dialect of crossdressers?
Does a CD beekeeper increase her potential for being read by wearing a beehive hairdo?
Is a CD philosopher the best person to debate the duality of man?
Is it possible that Sitting Bull was a CD? After all, he was a "Sue" Indian chief!
You can always spot CDs in the military. They're the ones who show up in formals for a dress parade.
Crossdressing Greek fishermen have a terrible time passing due to the scales in their fishnet hose.
CDs are gluttons for punishment; they all share the desire to be "miss-treated".
Would a CD contortonist be called a Twisted Sister?
When applying for membership, would you mind if your applicationwas "miss-filed"?
When a CD gives birth to her *femme* side, is this a "miss conception"?
CD actors tend to create a scene when they're read.
Crossdressing is very stressful. Most people attempt to get things off their chest, CDs want things to stay put there.
I always wanted a Living Bra, but I never knew what to feed it.
Crossdressers who are not easily read generally display a passive nature.
When a CD enters a new town, does it open up a whole new world of "passabilities"?
Does a CD keep a list of establishments wher she has never been read in a passbook?
If a crossdresser plans a sea voyage and wishes not to br read, should she book advance passage?
I wonder how many crossdressers live in Reading, Pennsylvania?
Before a Jewish crossdresser goes out, should she observe Passover?
Would a crossdressing electrician be classified as a transfiormer?
Would you refer to identical twin CDs as a "double-cross"?
CDs really give new meaning to the phrase "You've changed a lot since the last time I saw you".
Would you call a bar catering to the gender community a crossbar?

If a CD puts her false eyelashes on backwards, will she suffer from backlash?
To reduce the potential for being read in public, CDs should use passageways whenever possible.
When Norman Bates crossdessed, did he take long walks down the *Psycho* path?
Did you ever stiop to think how morbid CDs are? They're always talking about someone's passing before they're dead?
If a group doesn't have a sister named Hope, are they then hopeless?
If Uncle Buck was a crossdresser that passed well, then this could be referred to as Buck passing.
When a crossdresser is extremely nervous abut being read, this would be considered the "pass tense".
Do you think a Japanese crossdresser has a yen to buy a dress?
When a CD has surgery, should she ask the surgeon to use a cross-stitch to close the incision?
You've heard about the "face that launched a thousand ships". I guess they could only get a CD for the Titanic.
I wonder how many crossdressing executives favor an open door policy?
Do you think the headless horseman could have read a crossdresser?
Was pancake makeup originally manufactured by Aunt Jemima?
If a CD stuffs her bra with panties, would this be considered a "chest of drawers"?
Some crossdressers are read because they forget their passwords.
When to CDs get into an argument, would you presume that cross words are spoken?
If pets often resemble their owners, a CDs favoritre pet should be a chameleon.
Crossdressers should always avoid people wearing reading glasses.
Are CDs considered to be a major cross-section of the population?
You never have to ask a crossdresser if she knows how to make a face.
Would a CD photographer develop a negative self-image?
Is compound interest the result of a CD entering a bank?
Would a CD at a nudist camp be faced with an "impassable" situation?
Crossdressers can be lonely, yet imaginative. After all, most of their friends are made up.
Would an essential part of a CD lumberjack's holiday wardrobe be a Christmas tree skirt?
When a crossdresser moves, does she fill out a "change of a dress" card for the Post Office?
Would a CD librarian be read like a book?
Is an embarrassed crossdresser "read" in the face?
Should a CD magazine publisher consult a proofreader before going out?
If you're a crossdresser, avoid speed readers.
Ham radio operators must have trouble passing. They're always asking "How do you read me?"
Does a crossdressing actor have to be read for a part?
Must a young CD who suffers from insomnia be read to sleep?
Does a CD author take a novel approach to her crossdressing and generally enjoy being read?
Would an overweight crossdresser be considered heavy reading?
Would a surfer CD be more inclined to use an emery board?
I thought a heat pump was an insulated shoe ...
When a CD applies for a job, does she have to furnish cross-references from her previous employers?
Crossdressers always carry two-way mirrors.
Here's a good occupation for a crossdresser: School crossing guard.
If one CD stares critically at another CD, will she become cross-eyed?
If a crossdresser travels to Europe, is she considered traveling abroad, a traveling broad, or both?
Most crossdresser have healthy appetites -- after all, they're eating for two.

[OK, OK, we're sorry. We won't do it again.]

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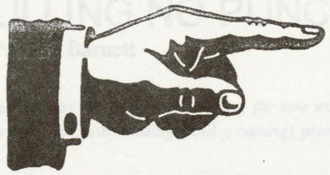

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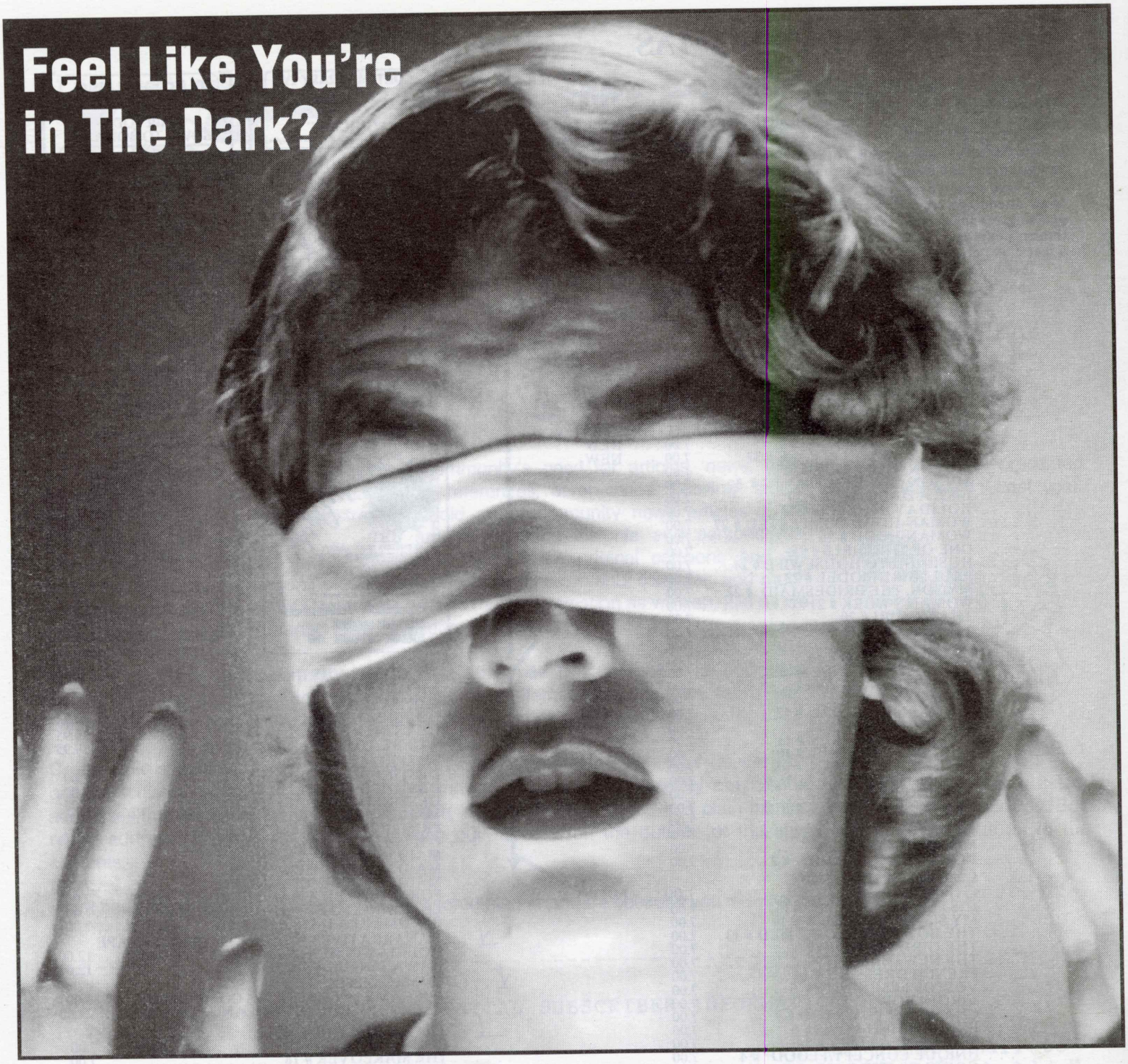

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