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NEWS & INFORMATION MAGAZINE



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CROSS-TALK

The Gender Community's News & Information Monthly

FEBRUARY 1993

(ISSUE #40)



THIS MONTH:

NEWS & COMMENTARY:

NEWSWIRE: Aftermath of the November election in Oregon and Colorado ... A prominent gender community businesswoman dies ... Tiffany Club wins anti-discrimination suit ... Facial hair out at the "Texas T" ... Empathy Press ceases operation ... National computer service adds CD forum ... Islamic gay/TG civil rights organization gains official recognition ... PPOC North effort stalls ... **pp. 2-4**

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THE MOST VARIETY OF
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PUBLICATION!

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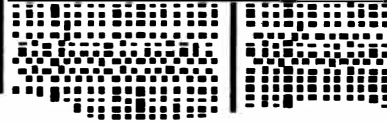
A NOTE TO OUR REGULAR SUBSCRIBERS: We appreciate your patience and understanding of the delays in production and mailing of Cross-Talk as we continue our transition to magazine format. Continued adjustments and refinements have caused us to repeatedly miss deadlines, which has adversely affected our ability to print and mail before the end of the month. Bear with us and we'll get back on schedule eventually! --KMR

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STUNNED

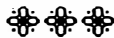
BERNARD AT HOME
LORDS OF THE FROG
BOOP FOR WASHINGTON



SAN FRANCISCO



Contrary to a published report in one national publication, the 1992 "Texas 'T' Party" has not changed its attendance policy to allow "bearded ladies", according to "Party" chairperson Tere Frederickson. Frederickson said that although the policy has not been explicitly spelled out, anyone who shows up at the event sporting both a beard and a dress will be told they are violating the portion of the attendance policy requiring "appropriate attire", and will be asked to either shave or cease crossdressing. "We'll probably explain to them that it's not very appropriate for a lady to have a beard," she said. "We don't know too many ladies who run around with beards."



Gender community leaders are expressing concern about attendance at this year's "Holiday En Femme" after the passage of an anti-gay measure (Amendment 2) in Colorado November 3. Although the Tri-Ess Board of Directors voted at their recent meeting to go ahead with plans to hold the annual convention in Denver, and the Delta chapter indicated that they intend to honor their commitment to host the event, many gender community leaders in the state have expressed concerns regarding the automatic misconception that all crossdressers are homosexual. Amendment 2 voids civil rights laws in Aspen, Boulder and Denver protecting gay and lesbian residents from discrimination, as well as overturning the Governor's decree creating similar protection throughout state government. The Tri-Ess board has decided to hold its July board meeting in Denver as well, despite objections by some board members who also wanted to move the 1993 "Holiday" to avoid potential legal difficulties. The Colorado Legal Initiative Project has filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Amendment 2, meaning that its implementation will be delayed pending resolution of the suit.



Following the defeat of Measure 9 on the November ballot, the Oregon Citizens' Alliance (OCA) have announced plans to

circulate another petition to place a toned down version of the initiative on the ballot in 1994.

The OCA was handed a setback recently by the Oregon Court of Appeals which voided their earlier victory in the 1988 election by overturning the anti-gay measure that overturned then-Governor Neil Goldschmidt's executive order barring state agencies from discriminating against gay men and lesbian women because of their sexual orientation. The Court, in a unanimous ruling, said that the measure violated state constitutional guarantees of free speech.

OCA Chairman Lon Mabon said the court's ruling underscored the need for a constitutional amendment to declare homosexuality abnormal and forbid government from promoting it. "We feel it's unfair for the court to overturn (the will of the people) with the stroke of a pen," Mabon said. The 1988 measure was approved by a vote of 56% to 44%. The recent measure was defeated 57% to 43%. Mabon predicted that the court decision would help the OCA in winning support for their revised version. The Northwest Gender Alliance (NWGA), which lent its support to the anti-OCA faction

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in the November election, is keeping its "No On 9" committee in place in order to monitor the OCA's announced action. NWGA donated over \$2400 and 300 hours of time to the campaign against Measure 9.



Gender community businesswoman Alicia Lichy has died of complications from a cerebral hemorrhage suffered on December 1. Lichy, owner of the Alicia's boutique near Los Angeles and publisher of the newspaper *TV Girl Talk*, was taken to Ontario Community Hospital after suffering the hemorrhage. She was subsequently transferred to Loma Linda University due to the gravity of her condition. She went into a coma almost immediately after being admitted to the hospital, and never regained consciousness. Funeral services were held December 16 at nearby Forest Lawn Cemetery.

All assets from both of Lichy's businesses were frozen under state law upon her death, and medical expenses are expected to eliminate any amount remaining after liquidation. The support group *Feminine Image*, which Lichy founded several years ago and which met at her boutique, has temporarily suspended operation pending the location of a new meeting location.



The national computer service Prodigy has added a crossdresser support bulletin board to its "Homelife" section.

The new CD area has been located under the topic "Fashion", after several attempts to create a BBS in the service's support group section

failed. Prodigy claims a user base of over 1.7 million computer users and offers access through over 600 local phone numbers nationwide.

Prodigy joins Compuserve as the second major computer service to offer a gender community-related section. Numerous smaller gender-oriented boards such as Cross Connection and JSS provide the majority of such service to the community.



Plans to form a satellite group to the Powder Puffs of Orange County (PPOC) organization have been temporarily halted after PPOC president Justine Sahnjay moved out of the satellite group's proposed area of operation.

Sahnjay, who had spearheaded the plans to form a "PPOC North" to better serve the membership residing in Los Angeles County, has relocated to San Bernardino County (east of Los Angeles) and was forced in the process to halt the search for a meeting location. That search has been underway for several months since the original announcement last summer. PPOC board member Barbara Van Dyke, who lives in Los Angeles' Westside region, has agreed to coordinate the search for a meeting location until a new group leader can be found. Cross Connection BBS system operator Trish Anderson has agreed to host a start-up meeting in the interim; Anderson is also a member of PPOC.



Although a formal announcement regarding the programs and speakers for this year's "Esprit 92" has not been made, Lee Reynolds of Phoenix, AZ has been invited to present a program, according to the Alpha Zeta chapter of Tri-Ess.

According to Alpha Zeta's newsletter *The Cactus Flower*, Reynolds will conduct two one-hour workshops on "Speaking More Like a Woman". Reynolds' videotape on the subject has been shown at several gender community organizations' meetings, and has been placed in the International Foundation for Gender Education's library in Wayland, MA.

Approximately 250 are expected to attend the spring event, according to the Alpha Zeta report.



Empathy Press, the Seattle-based gender community publisher, has apparently ceased operations, according to a published report in *Crossdresser's Quarterly*.

The report cites a major gender book retailer as saying that "Empathy is no longer printing



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books". The closure comes without notice and requests from their suppliers are going without notice, according to the report, which suggests that complaints be filed with the U.S. Postal Inspector regarding non-receipt of any mail orders placed with Empathy. Several mail-order sources, including Mags, Inc., N.S. Products, and Lydia's TV Fashions are still filling orders from existing stock in the aftermath of the apparent failure of Empathy.



A gender support organization supported by International Gender Transient Affinity (ITGA) has been included in a registration with the Turkish Ministry, according to ITGA's Phaedra Kelly, who visited the group last year (Cross-Talk, July '92).

Kelly, who says that the group Sexual Liberties supports gay/lesbian and bisexual factions as well as the TV/TS community, calls the registration as an "official organization" is a first not only for Turkey, but for the Islamic world. Sexual Liberties has incorporated the gender support group Travesty, making it the Islamic community's only unification of all sexual and gender minorities. A similar organization, Khusra of Pakistan, continues as Islam's first TV/TS politically active group. IGTA champions causes of human liberty throughout the world, centering largely on androgynous and transgendered organizations. Kelly has nominated Travesty's Demet Demir for a Trinity Award, presented annually by the International Foundation for Gender Education.



The Tiffany Club of New England (TCNE) has won a discrimination complaint against a Boston-area hotel that refused to honor a verbal agreement to handle a club function. TCNE's complaint, filed with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination against "an outside provider of

public accommodation for failure to and refusal to negotiate and complete negotiations," alleged that the hotel considered crossdressing objectionable, presumed that TCNE membership was homosexual, and presumed a mental disability on the part of TCNE members because of their crossdressing. The complaint was resolved prior to the Commission hearing, and TCNE was successful in obtaining restitution; however, the name of the hotel was not made public by TCNE. However, the parent company of the hotel released a statement stating that they "do not condone not tolerate discrimination in the provision of (accommodation and service) by anyone in our employment, with regard to ... sex, sexual orientation ... or any physical or mental disability." The statement went on to state that it was the intent of their non-discrimination policy to maintain the same posture to "cross gender dressing", although not specifically stated in written policy.

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THE ADVENTURES OF KAREN

by KAREN ANN MICHAELS





KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD

-- *Kymerleigh Richards*

Another disturbing trend is occurring in our community ... one that I had hoped we had gotten away from. That trend is to be wide open about our lifestyle at the expense of security.

Now perhaps the problem has been here all along and I have not noticed it until now, but on the other hand it is possible that as our community has matured we are throwing away the security we have always cherished in hopes for better acceptance by the masses.

Some cases are, to be sure, accidental. Recently a member of a support group that I am affiliated with participated in an "open phone" segment of a radio station talk show and revealed the group's meeting location while discussing how she had come to terms with her gender conflict. Although it briefly caused a problem for the group's leadership, the member was allowed to retain her membership since no malice was intended.

However, what is disturbing me is a practice that I had hoped would not spread here from the gay community. Yes, I'm talking about "outing".

The only reason that I have become aware that this is going on is that I have been threatened with it recently. And although the threat is meaningless to me personally due to my living full-time as Kym and my visible activism in the gender community, it is nonetheless extremely upsetting that the threat of being "outed" was made at all.

There is a small group of activists in the Seattle area calling themselves the Northern Lights Educational Association (NLEA) which in October began the production of a cable television local access program dealing with gender issues. Unfortunately, they chose as the name for their program "Cross Talk", which necessitated a polite request from yours truly to change the name to avoid potential confusion (infringement of service mark, in legalese).

The response I received from the producer of "Cross Talk" (the television program), Randi Leigh Dennis, avoided the issue of infringement altogether, choosing instead to educate me on the fact that a publication name could not be copyrighted and that their program content did not infringe on my copyright because they didn't use any of our material. Ms. Dennis then proceeded to assume (and you know what happens when you "assume" something) that (continued, next page)

COGITO ERGO FEM

-- *Anne Blackwood*

Although you've been reading my column month after month, the fact is that I haven't actually written one in some time because I'd gotten so far ahead. Well, now it's time to start back. While I have some ideas of issues I wish to address, today I feel like being a bit more personal.

I don't imagine I'm the only one that feels this way, but I don't much care for the "scene". This is not to say that there aren't people there that I like and am happy to see, but I don't really want to spend my dressing time with other crossdressers. At least not all of it. What do I want? I want to spend time with my friends doing those things that we usually do, only I want to do them as Anne.

Seems like a simple enough desire. Socialize with your "regular" friends in both modalities. Of course this means that they know about your crossdressing, and feel comfortable enough with it that they can spend time with you while you're dressed.

WHAT!?! TELL PHIL AND MARGE THAT I CROSSDRESS!?!?

Yup. Of course you have to use some discretion regarding whom you'd tell. Several years ago I'd decided to start telling friends about my cross dressing and I told a select few. One couple that I let in on my secret have me housesit for them when they go out of town, and the woman recently told me that one of the reasons that they ask me is that she figures it's a good opportunity for me to dress up (I live in a hovel).

Let me back up a bit. After I'd told this couple of my proclivity I had the opportunity to play a transvestite in a play. The woman, and a mutual friend, came to the show, and afterward she said rather emphatically, "I like you better as a man!" I thought, "She's not taking this well." However, some time later when I was over at their house she offered me a dress. It wasn't my size (nor style) so I declined; thereafter, she would show me catalogs she'd got in the mail that she thought I might be interested in.

Back to the present. More or less. Not long ago I was housesitting for them and was expecting them back late on Sunday afternoon. Now, I'm a late night kind of gal and didn't get to bed until four a.m. that Sunday. I was wearing a chemise and petticoat and had slapped on a coat of nail polish. Half an hour later I heard the door open and my friends, with children in tow, arrive. I was already essentially packed

KYMBERLEIGH'S CLIPBOARD ... continued

my letter was an attempt to force them to provide transcripts of their program for publication here. (I'm not certain why she thought I would have any interest in her program's content, but ...) She then threatened me with legal action from both NLEA and the cable system (I wonder who gave her the authority to speak on their behalf?) if I made "any attempt to reproduce (their) material". Then came what I presume was designed to be the strategic threat in their defense (or was it an offense?). I quote directly from Ms. Dennis' letter: "Attempts at claiming ownership of this program have already been made by other groups, and their leadership has been publically (sic) outed on the air prior to legal action being prepared against them." Never mind the fact that I never suggested claiming ownership of their relatively minor media production -- all I did was request that they change the name -- NLEA thinks outing members of the gender community is a legitimate course of action to take against someone they perceive as a threat!

COGITO ERGO FEM ... continued

up, so I changed and removed the polish and headed off ...without seeing my friends. Later that day I called. The woman said that I hadn't had to steal away into the night, but I said that I needed to sleep and that I figured the kids would be up and around early. I also told her that I would have greeted them when they got in, except that the kids were with them and I didn't think that their seeing me so dressed was a great idea. Later in the conversation, the woman said that the kids started school that week and that they weren't around in the mornings (the daughter only goes half a day), and that I could come by some morning, dressed, and we could visit or go to brunch or something. So we made a date. A week from the following Wednesday. Come the appointed day, as I finished getting ready, the phone rang, it was my friend. She asked if we were still on and I said yes, I was almost finished dressing. She said she had some errands to run, so could we meet at eleven ... oh, and her little daughter would be there too. Fine, I said. When I got to the house, my friend told me that her little girl had been told that I would be dressed up, but that it was OK. At first the girl was a bit shy (not the normal behavior toward me), but she warmed up later (I suspect that the preparation may have given her some notion that my being dressed up may be OK, but it certainly wasn't normal). I had decided that

My original letter had congratulated Ms. Dennis, et al, for creating what I thought was a valuable outreach resource for our community. I now find myself worrying that these individuals may not have the best interests of our community at heart. When I discussed this matter with Anne Blackwood, she and I agreed that you can't come down too hard on this despicable behavior. So much as I hate to make enemies, it becomes necessary to do so in this case. Actually, it's ludicrous for Ms. Dennis and NLEA to threaten me with outing, since they know absolutely nothing about my personal life to "blackmail" with, but that doesn't excuse their behavior in making the threat. And it's very, very sad that they have chosen this mode of operation rather than promote friendly cooperation between the many factions that make up our community. Threats like these haven't made ACT UP very many friends in the gay community, and I doubt they will make NLEA a lot of friends either.

whatever my friend was comfortable doing was what we'd do, and if that meant staying at her house, that was fine. Well, she said she'd thought that lunch at a well-known nearby restaurant would be a nice thing to do, and that is what we did.

At first I was a bit apprehensive. I wasn't sure how well my friend would take seeing me dressed up outside of the theatre, despite all the odd sort of signals of support. This time she seemed to take it well (although later she told me that her willingness to spend time with Anne was intended to be supportive, not encouraging). She had some paperwork to finish up and fliers to mail out, so I helped her prepare those. Finally we made our way to the restaurant, stopping off at a mail box on the way.

Our lunch proceeded without incident; although the cashier was a bit nonplused. It was just two girlfriends having lunch, with one's little girl in tow. Of course I was a bit concerned when a platoon (all right, maybe just a squad) of police cadets showed up (but they were too preoccupied with food to notice anything else). Nothing unusual, and that is what is so remarkable. This is not to say that no one noticed that I was a man in a dress (as I don't present myself as such, I present myself as a woman), it's just that no one seemed to mind, or care if they did notice. So, isn't that what we're after?

It is this sort of outing (as opposed to the kind that Queer Nation advocates) that can lead to tolerance and eventually acceptance of us, the transgendered. To more we are willing to go out and do everyday sorts of things, the more exposure the public has to us do just those very everyday sorts of things. As it stands now, the public's primary contact with transvestites is with the drag queens working the street. Is it any wonder we are looked at askance?

Granted, it is not easy to get to the point where you feel comfortable going out into the general public (vs. the CD public). I won't say that I am there yet, but I am very close. And I am willing to "push the envelope". Like anything, the more you do it the more familiar it becomes, and so the more comfortable. I should also tell you that going out with a woman friend helps a lot. Again, living in a major metropolitan area, where everyone has seen just about everything is an advantage.

The whole point of all this, for me personally, was to try to give Anne a normal social life rather than confining her to the drag bars and TV clubs. It is good to know that one is not alone in one's abnormal behavior. For some of us the comfort of the community becomes stifling and we need other outlets. Those outlets, however, must be created by each of those individuals. One day, it is my hope, that no crossdresser ever feel shame because of what they are, and through that every one of us will be free to come and go as we please.

I have friends that I have yet to tell about the fem side of me. Some of those friends I plan to tell (one has eluded me on this score, as every time I plan to have her over for that purpose she has had to cancel) and others I don't. At least not yet. I have to use my judgement as to which will handle this new information about me well, and which will not.

Those that I plan to tell have proven their tolerance for alternative lifestyles over the years. Granted, that some will have some difficulty absorbing the new information, and will have the usual, "Are you gay?" "Do you want to be a woman?" type of questions. So, I have to prepare my Crossdressing 101 discussion. Of those who are not on my list of those to tell, one is

admittedly homophobic, and while I am not homosexual I am a gender bender and that puts me in the same class for those friends. Others I simply can't imagine interacting with as Anne, due to some intrinsic nature of the friendship, and so why bother?

Why bother? Well, an argument can be made that since I am a crossdresser and that is part of who I am, I should let them know. On the

other hand, don't we all have hidden aspects of ourselves that are only revealed to our mates? But on the first hand, if we keep this secret how will society change? If all our friends know at least one crossdresser, and like that person, maybe society will be the better for it. Sounds like I'm trying to convince myself, doesn't it? Perhaps I am. And you too. Double dare ya!

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

VOX POPULI: Letters to the Editor

Re: "Kymberleigh's Clipboard" (Sept. '92): What can we say except thank you. After almost a year of being chastised, upbraided, etc., someone actually got it right!

Your "guess" about why the basic change in the "Texas 'T' Party's policy came about is right on target. We lost our 1992 hotel because of the behavior and appearance of a very few exhibitionist drag queens who don't care what they screw up as long as it isn't THEIR back yard.

By going back to our old hotel (the only thing wrong with it? Not big enough ... we used 247 rooms in 1992 and our present hotel only HAS 182!) we, out of necessity can't be as big as we were. One of the reasons for concentrating on couples is we use less room. Since we had 76 couples (more than the runner-up events combined) we decided the couples event would work best. Before anyone jumps on us about why we don't use another hotel: In the city of San Antonio, occupancy rates run at about 87%. San Antonio is a hot tourist town ... if the hotel doesn't want your business, they don't take you. Right now trying to sell a hotel on a crossdressers' event here is akin to obtaining banquet space for a lepers' convention!

We were lucky to get back in the old hotel. Hotels have grapevines much more efficient than our community's, I can assure you. Don't tell us to sue them either, as the Tiffany Club did. We have neither the funds or inclination to sue a hotel over what we ourselves didn't like.

"Dragging" the lobby, wearing skirts short enough so as to leave no doubt about your anatomical sex, is not the way to win friends or make a positive impression on society. We call this "aggressive" dressing. It takes a lot of balls to appear in public this way (as any fool can plainly see!). And we must assume this is a very "male" activity ... sort of a substitute for watching the Bears play on Saturday

afternoon!

There are a great many men (and no other word suits them) who are either gay crossdressers looking for a date, or fetishistic dressers that want to "shock" society into accepting them. If these guys are married, the odds are that their wife has no idea they even crossdress or simply doesn't give a damn about their actions. Most ARE married but "don't want their wives to know". A few years ago these people would be safely tucked away in their little closets. Today they are out and about. We have seen one of the worst offenders at the "T" at several different events this year, always in the same offending outfit. (You would swear the guy must have no other clothes!)

Lest anyone think we are "down" on gay crossdressers or folks who like to wear spandex "till it hurts", we are not. One of our best friends in the community is a gay crossdresser, but I believe he would rather die than dress the way some of the drag queens do. Good taste knows no sex or gender. If fetish is your bag, hey, great! Just don't do it in public. (I presume these guys have bedrooms, or the money to rent one.) Don't do in public what you should do in private.

Yet, because we have chosen to come down on these folks, we have been accused of being homophobic, and have had a great many problems from fetish dressers, even in our own group. Proving once again that "no good deed goes unpunished".

As long as the majority of attendees of the "T" are some of the greatest people in the world, we are going to try and keep the "lunatic fringe" out of our Party. In 1993 the dress code is going to be mandated by our wives and partners, since they are the ones most offended by erotic dressing. Also, thanks to new and improved security, rules WILL be

enforced. If you come to the "T" and dress and act contrary to the tenets of good taste, you are history.

--Linda and Cynthia Phillips, Bulverde TX

Re: Ms. Binthar Dundat, "To Use Or Not To Use?" (Sept. '92): The author stated that if one were to seek out a plastic surgeon, that individual should ensure that the plastic surgeon has dealt with TV/TSs. This is a great idea but I have yet to find a plastic surgeon with such credentials. Since I live in an area with few plastic surgeons, I have accepted the fact that I must go to the plastic surgeon, no matter where. What I would like to see is a list of plastic surgeons that you or your readers have dealt with. Is there a possibility to publish such a list?

-- Julie Allison, Barstow CA

(Editor's Reply:) It is often difficult to determine what a surgeon's experience with the gender community is beforehand. For that reason, we have never attempted to compile such a list, either regionally or nationally. The best advice we can give is to make contact with TS-oriented support groups and gender programs, as they will have had repeated contact with plastic surgeons due to the high frequency of TS use of such services. Many TS-oriented support groups are listed in our national hotlines section.

Other sources for information of this nature are AEGIS, (404) 939-0244; IFGE, (617) 894-8340; and ATEC, (213) 469-4709. All have extensive listings of gender programs and helping professionals.

If all else fails, contact your local medical association, plastic surgeons' association, or the closest chapter of the AMA.

In any event, be sure to get a second opinion before proceeding with plastic surgery.

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

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LOCALS
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BERNINI AT THE
ROBBERS TAKE HOME
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SAN FRANCISCO

At the dawn of the '90s, columnists and pundits were predicting that the current decade would be a time for a return to "real" values and substance over style -- something like a shepherd's pie decade after the nouvelle cuisine/nouveau riche '80s. To those of us who see life in terms of gender role reversals, this seemed to portend a dowdy decade where men are men and they better be damned proud of it. Now, nearly a third of the way into the '90s, things are turning out better than we feared; drag continues to exert an influence on popular culture.

What better example can there be than that bastion of masculinity, *Esquire* magazine? The December issue featured a four-page layout of Lypsinka, noted New York female impersonator, modeling vintage clothes by Valentino. "Our lovely Valentino model is, of course, Lypsinka, who is either the quintessential ladies' man or, if you prefer, man's lady," *Esquire* notes. The magazine described her as "part Fifties-model Dovima, part Cruella de Ville, part Joan Crawford. On top of that, fellas, she's single."



But an even more masculine environment -- rock music -- continues to flirt with crossdressing in a much less exploitative manner than post-glam rockers like Poison and Boy George.

The British synth-pop group Erasure toured the U.S. last year, and lead singer Andy Bell delighted audiences by arriving on-stage wearing a showgirl costume complete with fishnet stockings and heels and draped with a giant feather boa. He performed a camp version of "Stand By Your Man" as "Tammy Whynot."

RuPaul Andre Charles has brought high drag to

cable's Black Entertainment Television. His dance single "Supermodel" has been described as "a haughty dose of runway parody and catwalk sincerity." In the '80s, the pretend glamour of the *Paris Is Burning* queens expressed their anger and frustration at being locked out of rich and famous lifestyles. RuPaul's glamour is confrontational in a self-deprecating, fun, way. To take a line from gay activists, "He's here, he's gorgeous. Get used to it."



The group U2 doesn't crossdress (at least when they're performing on stage), but that doesn't mean lead singer Bono doesn't have transgendered feelings.

"Being a rock 'n' roll star is like having a sex change," he told *Us* magazine. "People treat you like a girl. They stare at you, they follow you down the street, they hustle you. I know what it feels like to be a babe."

Maybe we should all form a band.



The dance clubs where RuPaul flashed onto the scene may be the prime incubator for transgender flirtation. But you don't need to be an aspiring diva to play with drag, nor do you need to suffer in high heels to be in la mode.

The current edition of the H.I.M. catalog ("The Catalog for the Gay Man") features the latest in clothing for "making the club scene scream." Tops on the list are "Garter Shorts" with "lingerie-style garter clips front and back, plus the added comfort of a covered elastic waistband." The shorts pair up nicely with "Guy Highs ... lean ribbed cotton thigh-high tights infused with clingy Lycra. Double-stitched top hems." Least you think these fashions are aimed at the swishy crowd, the same page also features biker boots and a leather harness jacket. By the way, the catalog comes from a company called the Catalog Fulfillment Center, One American Way, Roanoke, Virginia -- just a stone's throw from Jerry Falwell's Lynchburg headquarters.



All of this drag and proto-drag isn't greeted warmly by everyone. Quentin Crisp, the British expatriate, the Naked Civil Servant, and the darling of the New York's gay literati,



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recently observed the current crossdressing landscape.

"In olden days, men donned female attire in the hope (not always fulfilled) of looking attractive. I myself only put on a dress once in my entire life because I soon realized that it accentuated my maleness -- what there was of it ... Many of my friends seemed unaware of this adverse effect, or perhaps they didn't care. They may have worn women's clothes for the feel of them rather than their effect on others. They felt beautiful, so to hell with public opinion."

Nowadays, beauty is no longer the point. "This sad fact was brought home to me when I went to Limelight (a popular New York club) ... There amid the usual deafening music, the lurid lighting, and the decorations that prevented anyone from having a clear view of anybody else was a motley assortment of guests, nice young men casually dressed as though for an evening at home, real women scantily clad, and a throng of beings from outer space, glittering with sequins and fluffy with ostrich plumes. They wore shoes with heels so high that they could no longer brace their knees, and fishnet stockings through which whole haddocks could have escaped. Their faces were clown white, and their lips were the color of uncooked liver. The wish to affect allure had given way to the desire to appeal. Drag artists no longer wish to make us sigh: They want to make us gasp."

Just as crossdressing retains its popularity as a mode of expression in the '90s, crossdressers, quite unfortunately, retain their popularity among some as targets for violence.

From Atlanta comes the disturbing news that a serial killer may be stalking members of that city's transgendered community. Late last year, Anthony Swain, 36, was found dead in front of the Lamb of God Missionary Baptist Church, shot in the head at close range with a large caliber pistol. Swain was dressed in women's clothes and his body had been dumped on the church steps.

Atlanta police are trying to determine if the murder was linked to the 1991 slaying of three transvestites. But Sgt. Ted Hall of the Atlanta homicide squad said the only apparent connection is the way the victims were dressed. Swain's death was a year to the day after police discovered the body of Woodrow "Jean" Powell, 33, a chemist and a transvestite. The bodies of two other transvestites -- Hurriel Lockett, 28, and Ronnie Dean Lyles, 30 -- were discovered along Interstate 85 in October and November of 1991. Those cases remain unsolved, and

police never determined if they were connected.

Dallas Denny, director of the American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS), thinks that the victims may have been sought out by the killer or killers because of the way they were dressed. "These killings are common in large cities across the nation," she said. "But I think the murders (in Atlanta) are happening far too often to be random. It's either a hate crime or perhaps it's a serial killer."

Violence against transgendered persons continues in Latin America as well. As lesbians and gays slowly gain more visibility in Mexico, they are increasingly becoming the victims of a violent backlash from the macho society. And more and more, transgendered people are being caught up in the violence, reminding some of the Mexico City police "clean-up squads" of several years ago. In 1987, police were ordered to remove transvestite prostitutes from Insurgentes Avenue. In the following months, seven people were found dead, each shot in the right eye. Things aren't much better in Brazil where transvestites and gays from abroad are particularly vulnerable to murder. By one estimate, one such hate crime occurs once every five days in Rio de Janeiro. Between 1980 and 1991, a Brazilian gay group claims, 1,200 hate murders occurred throughout the country, yet only about 10 percent were seriously investigated by the police who have categorized most of the killings as robberies that resulted in deaths rather than murders.

Yet there are bright spots overseas. Recently, Charlotte von Mahlsdorf (a.k.a. Lorthar Berfelde), eastern Germany's best-known gay transvestite, was awarded the Federal Service Cross for founding the Grunderzeit Museum some 20 years ago. The award is Germany's

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highest civilian decoration. "I am not at all keen on medals," von Mahlsdorf said. "I find it even more important that a homosexual -- a transvestite -- is honored in this way." The museum, located outside what used to be East Berlin, preserves furniture and household appliances from the period 1870-1900.



Speaking of preservation, the late Doris Fish, San Francisco drag queen extraordinaire, is preserved (in a manner of speaking) in the film *Vegas In Space*. The film, co-starring Miss X, premiered at last year's Sundance Film Festival. The festival program notes described the film as "depicting the glamorous, politically erect behavior on a doomed all-female, fun-plagued pleasure planet in the 23rd Century."

Troma, Inc. of New Jersey will distribute the film.



The female impersonator firmament is also a little dimmer after the passing last November of Naomi Simms, a former Miss Gay USA, Miss Gay America, and almost every other drag title of note. Her death was AIDS-related. She was 39.



The queen is dead, long live the queen. Also in November, the new Miss Gay America 1993 was crowned in Dallas. She is Leslie Rage of

New York.



Miss Fish, Miss Sims, and Miss Rage bring us to the ever-popular celebrity section of this column. But alas, it is brief this month; our celebs must be believing that the '90s were supposed to be a dull decade. If it wasn't for Jessica Gray (who, the *National Enquirer* notes, "used to be a man") we would have hardly any news at all.

Miss Gray went on television last year to announce her other big secret to the world; she used to date Eddie Murphy -- after her sex-change operation. She also claimed to have dated Ken Norton, Lou Gossett Jr., and Muhammad Ali.

"I'm not saying I dated a transsexual -- and I'm not saying I didn't," Murphy said after Gray went public. "With all the plastic surgery done in Hollywood, who can tell anymore if a girl started out a boy?"



The age difference could have been a problem, but we think Eddie Murphy and Marvin Gaye would have made a lovely couple. No, the late soul singer was not a transsexual, but he did like to crossdress, according to Tony Turner's book *Deliver Us From Temptation: The Tragic and Shocking Story of the Temptations and Motown*.

"Marvin Gaye liked to dress in drag ... He liked the experience of having a woman's wig on his head, all rolled up -- but he didn't want it styled on a wig head, he wanted me to roll it on him, like he was in a beauty shop and this was his own hair. Some days I would do two or three styles for him," Turner wrote. "What he really liked were the bras, corsets, garter belts, and negligees that he would wear around the apartment with nothing else on -- just a wig on his head with rollers in it like any old housewife."



Almost as popular as the celebrity section is the "Medical Marvels" section of this column. This month's entry is a marvel indeed; the case of a man who went on a vacation and almost had an accidental sex change. Here are the high points of the report from the *Annals of Internal Medicine*:

After a week's vacation in the Virgin Islands, a man went to the Mayo Clinic complaining of swollen, tender breasts and nipples. He told the doctors that during his holiday he just about lived on grilled chicken, beer and booze. So why were his breasts growing?

The problem was caused by alcohol which impairs the production of testosterone and the

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chicken, which in some foreign locales are shot full of female hormones to stimulate growth. By combining the two, the vacationer almost became a changed man.



There is some new research that suggests that if the man had continued to eat treated chicken he may have lived longer, and we're not talking about cholesterol.

A graduate student at the University of Arizona says that producing sperm shortens a male's life. The budding scientist studied a tiny worm called a nematode and found that if he eliminated the male worm's ability to make sperm, he lived almost as long as a female nematode, about 14 days. Wayne A. Van Voorhies speculates that the production of sperm may involve complex enzymes or biochemical processes that have harmful metabolic byproducts.

Other scientists were quick to point out that it is reckless to infer that the same principle may be in play for males of other species.



And now, a new section called "Transsexuals in Strange Places."

Our first odd location is the Massachusetts House of Representatives where Republican Althea Garrison, 52, is now serving as the first known transsexual ever elected to the Bay State legislature.

Garrison won the race in Dorchester last November on a anti-taxes, anti-crime platform.



The second odd location is actually many places, roughly three quarters of the taxicabs operating at any one time. Here is the complete report from the *Weekly World News*: "A recent survey revealed that an incredible 73 percent of taxi drivers say they daydream about having a sex change."

Apparently, the survey didn't ask how many were from overseas and how many liked chicken.



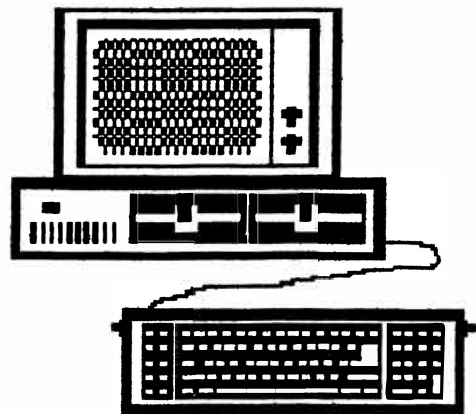
Anticipating a business boom, Miss Sinclair will soon be opening a string of KFC outlets serving only the finest in imported chicken and domestic wine. But she will continue to pen this column until she makes her first million. You can help. Send checks or clippings about crossdressing to her in care of this publication. If you are cheap and choose to send clippings, please note the date and name of publication.

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FOUNDATION BASICS

by Valerie Driscoll

Before foundation, check your skin to see if you will need a moisturizer. You should use a moisturizer everyday, especially around the eyes and mouth. If you see flaky skin, use a facial scrub first and maybe a mask. Your final masterpiece is only as good as the canvas you paint it on, so take good care of your skin. The purpose of foundation is to even out your skin tone -- not to change the color of it. It acts as a base for blush, lipstick and eyeshadow. It should not be applied too thick. A good rule of thumb is to dot the face all over with a moisturizer, pat in, then dot foundation and blend in with a makeup sponge or your fingertips. If you have dark facial hair or it grows quickly, use a beard neutralizer before applying foundation. Look carefully at the application to check for missed areas and smudges. Finally, set your foundation with loose powder and a puff, gently rolling it over your face.

Dear Val: I heard mineral oil, an ingredient in many cosmetics, should be avoided, but I like my oil-based foundation. Is it hard on my skin?

-- Judy, Connecticut

Dear Judy: You're definitely correct about mineral oil ... it's a cheap ingredient used by inexpensive cosmetics companies that does nothing for your skin. That's not to say you can't find good inexpensive cosmetics, but read the label! Remember that ingredients are listed in order of concentration on the label (the first ingredient has the highest percentage, and so on). You'll find that oil-based foundation doesn't necessarily have mineral oil in it.

My personal experience has taught me more than my twenty years as a cosmetologist. I used to turn my nose at oil-based foundation, especially since I'm prone to oily skin. But guess what? It seems to work the best. It goes on smooth, blends easily, and if you perspire, IT STAYS ON!

The best advice: Use ph-balanced products and avoid added fragrances and mineral oil.

Dear Val: I've been reading some of the makeup tips in the women's magazines, and they seem to contradict each other. Should I conceal blemishes, scars, etc. before or after I

apply foundation? For that matter, do I use concealer that's lighter or darker than my foundation? Should I apply blush over or under powder? I'm totally confused!

-- Debbie, New York

Dear Debbie: You didn't mention beard cover, but if you use it, that's the only thing you would apply before foundation. You could apply some concealer before foundation, but it usually gets smeared around if you apply anything over it. I assume you want to take the least amount of time necessary, so apply foundation first, then use concealer, highlighter and shading colors afterwards. Cream rouge should go on before powder, and powder blush should go on after. Powder is usually the last step of facial makeup -- before you put on eye makeup -- and is used to "set foundation" and make shading and highlighting colors appear to blend more evenly.

Dear Val: Is there a way to get rid of those dark circles under my eyes, pimples, or wrinkles? I heard that one way was to choose a lighter foundation color ... but I also read somewhere that using a moisturizer before foundation helps. And how do you blend cover-up makeup so it isn't so obvious?

-- Stephanie, Massachusetts

Dear Stephanie: If your "cover-up" makeup is too obvious, you're either not blending properly or the color is not quite right. For instance, if you are hiding the dark shadow beard growth under the skin, the color will be more intense than if you're covering under eyeshadow. The beard cover will be a deeper orange base color (to neutralize the blue cast from the hair beneath the skin). Dark shadows under the eyes can either be bluish -- in which case you'll use light orange to camouflage them -- or dark brown, where a yellow base cover would work best.

Next month, we'll continue this subject by talking about how you can determine the right foundation color for your skintone.

[Valerie Driscoll is a California licensed cosmetology instructor and owner of Hair To Wear Wigs in Torrance, CA. You may write her with your questions at 1716 Andreo Ave., Torrance 90501. Questions of general interest will be answered in this column.]

CROSSDRESSERS' CLOSET

STYLE vs. FASHION

by Bev Anderson

Style is different than fashion. Fashions constantly change. From season to season, hems go up or down, shoulders are padded or unpadded. Style, on the other hand, is consistent. Style is the foundation on which you build your individual look.

Style is achieved not only through the clothes you wear, but through impeccable grooming of skin, hair and nails. Your skin must be fresh, your hair must shine, your smile flash and nails must be well kept.

Getting dressed should delight you and everyone around you. Dress with a touch of pizzazz: Use a splash of color or an unusual piece of jewelry.

Every ensemble you create should have a focal point, like any piece of art, one point of emphasis. Plan the focal point. Is it your face? Then earrings, makeup or a specific blouse might be emphasized. Are your legs your best feature? How about a slit skirt ... or fancy heels that are especially attractive?

One of the most important principles is balance. For example, extra large hips might be balanced out with an oversized top. Wear soft lines and fabrics for large muscles. Professional advice is always a good investment, but if that's not practical, there are some professional "basics" to help you with your wardrobe planning:

- 1) Light colors make you look larger; dark colors, smaller.
- 2) Vertical and horizontal lines and large, spaced out print patterns are enlarging, while

small continuous print patterns have the opposite effect.

3) A light top with a dark bottom will camouflage a bottom heavy woman's appearance.

4) A longer jacket will reduce the appearance of height and a short jacket will create the illusion of height.

5) Attract interest to the bosom or hemline with additions of details such as lace, pleats or stripping.

Remember, these rules are basic. You must apply them individually and assess yourself honestly.

[Bev Anderson is the proprietor of Femme Development Services in Studio City, CA. You may send her questions about fashion in care of this magazine or send e-mail to "Bev" through the "Cross Connection" BBS. If you live in or plan to visit the Los Angeles area, you may call her at (818) 752-9266 to make an appointment for a personal consultation.]

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THE NAME GAME

by Lynette Tavener

It's not very often that any individual gets to choose their own Christian name or Surname, but we as TV/TSSs have this unique opportunity. Most of us have specific reasons for choosing the name that we now use. Maybe a very nice person of our acquaintance used that name, maybe you just like the sound of it, maybe it conveys a feminine image (to you at least) or maybe you chose it to match your male initials. For whatever reasons you chose your name, however, how deeply did you really think - and is now the time to revise your choice?

At Seahorse Victoria here in Melbourne Australia we have the same names repeated continually. This perhaps is because of what is known as the thematic approach to name forming or giving. This is the approach where we are specifically looking for names that match a given theme -- in our case the "stereotypical" female image. The names chosen often reflecting the age we were born in. We have the Pams and Lyns which were popular years ago and in all fairness do often suit the age of these individuals.

Maybe, just maybe -- we should have used some other theme, like flower names instead of this "stereotypical female" and selected names like Violet, Rose, Lily or Daphne.

Yet another possible theme for naming could have followed the types of popular cars with lovely feminine names like Mercedes, Triumph, Avante, Saab or Rover! Oh, so feminine!

Still searching for ideas? We could have used place names for our theme and selected names like Dallas, Paris, Adelaide or even Manangatang (sounds somewhat like a male gorilla) ... once again presenting an extremely feminine label for yourself.

Well, enough of that, let's look at some simple tips for name selections.

TIP 1: Always think of, and beware of, all the things that can be done to or with your selected name by Okkers (the Australian terms for macho males who can be found lined up along any outback Australian bar). Beware because Virginia becomes Virgin for short, Charlotte "the harlot", Vanessa "the undresser", and Pam becomes the acronym for Probably A Male.

TIP 2: Don't use family names. The name will most likely be old hat and anyway Aunt

Matilda may not appreciate the honor of your choice. Especially if you don't ask her permission.

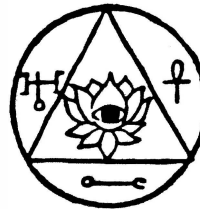
TIP 3: Read the birth notices in the paper for ideas but avoid using the most popular names as very shortly there will be a lot of little cuties running around with that name and you definitely will not be able to compete.

TIP 4: Do not look in a baby name book. The problem here is that by the time you get past the A's you'll have had enough and probably select a name from the start of the B's like Barbara or Beth.

TIP 5: Ignore your old flames' names as you'll most likely find "stacks of them being used by girls your age" and anyhow, what will your wife (if you have one) think of you calling yourself by your ex-friends' name?

TIP 6: Review your selected initials. Virginia Dunn, Barbara Ursula Moore and Tammy Isabel Travers-Smith are definitely not good names for girls. Who would like VD, BUM or TITS for their initials? One name that must be avoided at all costs by TV/TSSs is Amanda which rapidly develops the greeting "Oh! It's A MAN DEAR" or the equally acid "MAN DEE darling!"

Well girls it's over to you, but please don't take my comments to heart -- remember "I love you all".



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COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS, PART 3

by Roger E. Peo, Ph.D.

In my last column (#70) I explored how Deborah Tannen's book *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* contained useful insights for the crossdresser and his wife. By recognizing the different styles of conversation men and women use (and the motives behind them) there is the possibility of improve their interpersonal communications. This month I continue to examine Dr. Tannen's observations with a focus on the crossdresser himself.

One of the continuing concerns for many crossdressers is "passing". This may not be achieved even though the man's physical presentation as a woman is very convincing. Successfully masquerading in public as the other gender is a terribly difficult thing to do. As I have noted in other columns, the unique socialization paths taken by boys and girls leads to a variety of significantly (and subconsciously) different behaviors.

Significant practice can help a man learn to imitate the typical woman's body language. Much more difficult is the creation of a reasonable facsimile of a woman's speech patterns. Yes, vocal pitch is a part of this activity but much more important is how the words are used. It is here that Dr. Tannen's observations come into play. The crossdresser, venturing into public in his woman's persona, has to do two very difficult things. First, he has to shed his masculine conversational style that is largely automatic. Next he has to learn, to the point that it becomes automatic, the feminine conversational style.

Something else "gets in the way" of this transition ... boys are often reprimanded if they "do girl things" so they have tried all their lives not to do anything effeminate. This extends to ways of talking. The value of Dr. Tannen's book is that she clearly describes the differing techniques of communication. Simplifying, perhaps too much, there are two differences. The first is perhaps style the way in which a conversation proceeds. Women are more polite. They wait for the other person to finish before beginning to speak. Men will often interrupt the speaker. The other significant difference is the underlying

motivation of the speaker. While masculine speech tends toward an assertion of dominance over others, feminine speech is more often directed toward establishing rapport with the listener.

Within each general pattern are subtle nuances in the use of words and inflections. These help form an overall impression of the gender of the person who is speaking. All of these attributes form a pattern in our minds about how we should speak and what we can expect, depending our perceived gender of the other person. We automatically compare the other person to these patterns. When there is a significant mismatch we look for other clues to help us determine the person's gender.

How important is this to the typical crossdresser? It all depends on his goals. If the only places he plans to crossdress are with other crossdressers then there is little concern. If, however, he wants to spend time with the general public without detection, then a knowledge of conversational patterns and training to make them automatic seems a necessity. Dr. Tannen's book can provide the knowledge of the patterns. Only long practice can make them second nature.

[You may contact Dr. Peo at P.O. Box 4887, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602 or by phone at (914) 452-8405. All communications are confidential. This column may be reprinted in any non-profit organization's newsletter if Dr. Peo's name and address appear in the reprinted version. All others must obtain written approval. A copy of such reprints is expected.]

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BEING PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING

by Cynthia Phillips

Dear Cynthia: I have been married for over 20 years. We have two grown children. I work outside the home in a job I love.

Sometimes I feel as if the roof is caving in on me. I have known about my husband's crossdressing for several years. It mainly remained an in-the-home routine. Since we've found others who do this too, much has changed. Both of us are disappointed after attending several meetings, because we could only be in contact with these individuals at meetings. He needed more contact and, to be honest, so did I. There weren't many supportive wives, and therefore, not too many people to talk to about my feelings (let alone all the questions I had.) We are now involved in a Tri-Ess group in our area. We have met some great people. I enjoy talking to others and trying to help them accept themselves. I really feel inadequate at times though. Here I am sometimes wondering about my part in this. And at times, I feel really resentful because my husband's crossdressing seems to be the driving force in his life. He hardly thinks about anything else, and I do grow weary of it after awhile. Maybe this is normal. What is normal anymore.) One thing I did know: I love him/her very much.

You and Linda seem so very happy. Your outlook on life is wonderful. I love reading your newsletter. I just hope that I can grasp half of the understanding you have.

-- Anonymous

Dear Anonymous: Thank you so much for your letter. Crossdressing does take a lot of a

crossdresser's time, energy, and money; especially when they first get "acceptance" from their wives. It seems after a time that the "frantic" side of it seems to taper off. Once they "OD" on their dressing and realize there is more to all this than merely "dressing up" and "playing woman", things become much better. I will tell you it takes a lot of courage and humor to go through some of those phases. But I will also tell you it is worth it. You will never find a more loving, faithful husband than a transgendered male. I have never seen any of them "play around" on their wives (as long as the wife "knew".) They are loving and faithful, actually almost to a fault. Some wives feel smothered with affection.

Encourage and help your husband to get in touch with his feminine side. Believe me, you will be the one to profit from it. Let him know there is more to being female than just dressing as one. One of the reasons we have been so happy in our relationship, is my Linda expresses "her" femininity by helping me in all my tasks by actually doing the things I hate to do. (I hate to do floors and windows), this makes her feel needed as part of the "solution" to housework and also she feels more feminine doing it. (Why anyone would feel more feminine by doing floors escapes me, but she thinks it does, and who am I to ruin a good thing?) We have done everything together all these years, from being in business, to spending 24 hours a day together in retirement, (a real test of a relationship!)

I really believe that my husband being transgendered has made this marriage work for us. You are going through a rough time with the crossdressing, but trust me, it will get better with just a little work and effort on both your parts. Remember communication is the key word in any good relationship.

[Cynthia Phillips is co-director for wives' and partners' concerns on the Tri-Ess national board of directors. She may be reached at (210) 438-7604 or by writing P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163.]

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FINDING MORE IN COMMON

by Ricky Hunt

I recently got the new issue of the Tri-Ess Directory, and it set me thinking of all the people I have written to over the years. When I first learned there was an organization of people interested in crossdressing I wrote to anyone and everyone without any particular expectation other than to learn what other people with this particular urge had to say. I got my first shock when only one in ten even bothered to write back. While I am a master procrastinator I feel it is common courtesy to answer any letter my sisters send me, the one exception being the sexual come-ons that appear in the mailbox on occasion.

But those that answered my letters were princesses among the masses, voices from afar in my isolated rural home saying "You are not alone." While, unlike many of my sisters, I had never doubted that other men had the same urges I did, it was pleasant and a relief to have it confirmed. We exchanged life stories and opinions, got to know each other, and then gradually faded out of each other's lives.

It's the same old problem that I face each time I sit down to write one of these columns: What can I say that is new, that hasn't been said a thousand times before? Once you have passed the introductions and told your tale of becoming a crossdresser, what do you have in common to keep a correspondence going? I was forced to realize that the connection of crossdressing simply is not enough to sustain a friendship.

Crossdressing is only one part of my life, growing bigger or smaller as conditions change, but never the driving force. It can never be eliminated, it can be a major compulsion if I can't dress for a prolonged period, it can even become somewhat of an annoyance as it is now. I have been traveling for a good month now, spending night after night in motel rooms and dressing every night. At first this was great, but after 2 weeks or so, I got back to the motel and didn't have the slightest urge to dress up. I simply wanted to go home and see my family and all the bras and garters in the world couldn't change my mind.

So just as there is a saturation point in my dressing, there comes a time when there is nothing more to write about this single shared

interest, and the letters stop coming. As I look back over my past letters, still hoarded in a box even after years of gathering dust, I find that there is only one person I still write to regularly out of the 40+ people who have answered me. The answer lies in the breadth of subjects we discuss: philosophy, motorcycling, family, social theories and social workers, medicine, computers, music, events in our past that have influenced our present and even a bit of meaningless chit chat. In other words, there is a wholeness in our interests that transcends our one common interest in wearing women's clothing.

This became very apparent earlier in the year when I joined the local crossdressers club, but soon dropped out. They were nice people, but we had very little to talk about in common, and since the meetings were mostly talking it soon became more effort than it was worth to shave every day for one or two excursions a month. Quite frankly, there are too many other interesting things going on in my life to spend more time dressing than I had been before joining the club.

So what I guess I'm getting at in all this rambling is a plea for those of you out there who will answer a letter to expand your horizons a bit, share something other than your need to dress, and maybe present yourself as the whole person you are, and not just the slice that has dominance from time to time. Maybe then the letters would keep coming.

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IN SEARCH OF A COMMUNITY

by Nancy Cole

For the past three years I have had the privilege of moving about this country and attending many of the events that have been sponsored by national, regional, and local support groups that are part of what we have come to call the transgendered community (or "The Community" for short). In the beginning, I was no different than any other person looking for themselves. Like you, and thousands others like you, I met many people who represented many different views, organizations, and forms of expression. While I never used a simple mechanical method, each time I met a new person or came across a new group within the community, I looked at them, their issues, and the lifestyles they represented in an effort to find kindred spirits with which I could both identify with and sympathize with.

At first, my efforts were quite selfish. I was a simple wanderer, looking for myself and my place. While in pursuit of this self-fulfilling effort, I found myself drawn into the activities and the work of the community. From doing simple, rather menial tasks, to running workshops, I started to become a part of it, this community. But what, I have recently asked myself, have I become part of? What, in short, is our community?

Though I have heard this word "Community" thrown about in articles, in speeches, in debates, and in discussions, no one, to my satisfaction, has been able to convince me that

we are, in fact, a community. Rather, I have come to the conclusion that we are a collection of disjointed groups and individuals who have only one issue in common, the gender issue, and no agreed upon method or forum for collectively addressing it or dealing with it.

For those of you with a really analytical twist of mind, the word community comes from the Latin word *communitas*, meaning fellowship or common. As the word was passed down through the old French language and then over to middle English, the word made it into our language with several meanings. The ones that appear to me to apply to our community are "A group of people living together as a smaller social unit within a larger one," and "Similarity, likeness." Of these two, as our community and the numerous organizations that populate it stands, neither of these meanings apply. This leads me to the conclusion, therefore, that we have no community. Let me explain.

At the last Be All weekend in Detroit, Michigan, Dr. George Brown gave a wonderful keynote speech entitled "CD 2000". Dr. Brown used the results of his research to trace the evolution of the crossdressing community from its birth as a community in 1962 to the present in an effort to predict the future. Now, although he used the term crossdresser, transsexualism was as much a part of his address as was crossdressing. As I listened to him, I was fascinated by the clarity with which he saw the evolution of our community and the devastatingly simple and clear conclusions that he drew from that study. In short, he was not only able to see where our community needed to go, but how it should get there. What appalled me, after I had thought about it for a while, was that a relative outsider, a person that was not the head of one of the many super groups that duel with each other for primacy within the transgendered community, developed this speech or theory.

Now I do not wish to denigrate Dr. Brown. On the contrary, I applaud him. What he said and what he did for us in that effort needed to be done. What I find bothersome is that we did not, with all our collective skills, experience,

and talent, develop a CD 2000 theory first. There are, I feel, many reasons, none of which are good, for this failure on our part. And it is time, I believe, that we look at them coldly and

objectively, for if we do not, we will never be able to create that which we are striving for ... a community working together in harmony for the benefit of all people who have gender issues that need to be addressed. The points listed below are in no particular order of importance or precedence. Each one, in itself, is a contributing factor that helps to divide, rather than build, an effective community.

We are a collection of disjointed groups and individuals.

THE MALADIES

Competition amongst organizations. This, of all our problems, is the most visible and most difficult to deal with. I have seen competition at all levels; national, regional, and local. Many of you have seen the same. For example, how many times have members of an open local support group actively campaigned to discredit a newly founded Tri-Ess group in the same location? How many times have you heard members of a TS support group mock the members of a CD support group? If you have

never heard any of this, you are either lucky or you live in Montana.

At the national level, it is no better. We have, at this time, a number of organizations, each with its own agenda, each with its own by-laws, constitutions, board of directors, publications, etc., all, in theory, working for the benefit of the gender dysphorics that populate this country. I have had an opportunity to travel to many of the conventions and events sponsored by these organizations, listened to their rhetoric, read their publications, and speak to their leaders. For the most part, their words and ideas are good and well meaning. Unfortunately, far too much effort, especially in the private conversations and written print, is taken up condemning the actions of an individual of another organization or the organization as a whole. Now, since I am as guilty as anyone else of participating in this useless and corrosive pursuit, I know of what I speak.

Now there is a need for diversity, for our community is a very diverse one. The transsexuals have many issues that are foreign to the married crossdresser and vice versa. There is no crime in this and there is no crime in having an organization that tends to the needs of a select group within the community. Where the crime comes into play, in my opinion, is when a group pushes themselves and their agenda forward at the expense of another group and their agenda. This has happened, it is happening, and, unfortunately, it will continue to happen so long as we allow our national level organizations to deal with each other in a win-lose manner rather than working for a win-win solution that would benefit all and not just the few.

The problem here, unfortunately, is that there does not exist, at this time, an effective forum or method with which all of the national level organizations can come together to discuss and work on common problems and resolve differences or issues. Tri-Ess has its national

event "Holiday En Femme", and a follow-up board meeting to discuss their issues. Outreach has "Fantasia Fair" at which it does likewise. IFGE attempted to create such an affair, but due to conflicts between organizations and individuals, the "Coming Together/Working Together" is not, at this time, an effective forum in which this community can come together and work. So what we have is a number of groups, to which I can add Boulton and Park, Renaissance, PPOC, ETVC, and AEGIS, all of which have national recognition and a national voice, but none of which have common ground on which they can all gather to discuss their differences and develop a unified agenda that would benefit the entire community instead of the small segment of that community which each of these groups serve.

Our community is a very diverse one.

The cult of the personality. This, of all the problems that our community faces, is the most crippling handicap that we must deal with. There are, scattered across this country, a number of people, some of them self-appointed prophets and spokespersons, who have been elevated on to pedestals or have climbed upon them under their own power, and preach down to the members of our community. Now, let me soften this some by saying that there are people who have given this community birth. People like Virginia Prince, Carol Beecroft, Merissa Sherrill Lynn, Betty Ann Lind, Ari Kane, Lee Brewster, and many others suffered terribly and sacrificed much to give this community form, dignity, and purpose. To each of these people, and the many whom I have not named, I give them their dues.

Neither I nor anyone else in this community, however, have to grovel at their feet for eternity, accepting every word that rolls off of their tongue as gospel. For many people at the local, regional, and national level who have done much for the community have lost touch

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with goals that were once lofty and worthy. In the place of these goals, they have built themselves tiny castles and surrounded them with moats to protect the fiefdoms which they built with their own hands. From their castles they hurl words, spoken and written, against any and all whom they feel have come to rob them of a dream and vision they lay sole claim to. Rather than work with others to train and prepare them to take on leadership roles within the community of the future, the lords and ladies of these castles cling to their power and prestige, kicking down any one who dares challenge them and building about them a loyal core of mindless lackeys who will take their abuse and do their bidding. While many may say this is a bit harsh, I contend that this analogy is too frighteningly true. For those who doubt this, all you need to do is to pick up some of the national publications circulating these days and count the number of poisonous darts being tossed about by those who are proclaimed to be the leaders of our

In this war of words, we created a source of division that separated, rather than unified, our community.

community. *War of the words.* There is, it seems, an overabundance of people in our community who have a burning desire to invent new words to define problems and issues that have already been defined. In the beginning, there were transvestites and transsexuals. That, for most of the world, was satisfactory. We, the community, however, needed to educate that poor ignorant world and prove to them that "transvestites" and "transsexuals" were not only wrong words, but totally misleading. So we started, at some distant point in the past, an arms race of sort. But rather than building new weapons, we built new words. Into the English language, our self-appointed educated elite began a proliferation of new words to define gender dysphorics that would make the US-USSR arms race look like child's play. Transgenderist, femmiphile, "T" person, genderist, crossdresser, F to M, M to F, CD, TV, TS, TG, androgyne, male lesbian, and a whole herd of other words and terms were created and unleashed to satisfy peoples' desire to make themselves more respectable to someone else. In this war of words, we created a source of division, a division that separated, rather than unified, our community. I make a point of this seemingly trivial issue because there

has been more time spent debating and writing about this foolish pursuit of the perfect word or term than there has been in trying to deal with community building. Again, if you find this hard to believe, read some of our community's publications and newsletters.

The creation of subgroups within a subgroup. Those of us who have gender issues are, already, a subgroup within our own society. This brings us back to one of the definitions of the word community: "A group of people living together as a smaller social unit within a larger one." Now, a reasonable person would expect that since we are already a subgroup, and one that is not especially welcomed to start with, we should do every thing within our power to strengthen the bonds between us. We, all the members of the transgendered community, should be working our hoofies to the quick in an effort to present to our society in the best and most positive image of who we are that is possible.

That, however, seems to be beyond our capabilities at this time. While this is lamentable, what is inexcusable is the fact that we are going in the opposite direction. Rather than seeking every means available to bind ourselves together, we are working overtime to tear ourselves apart. It seems everyone not only want to have their own little castle and group, they want their own little well defined special interest group. We have, for example, the male-to-female transsexuals. They have their agenda, meet at their appointed times and places, and discuss their issues and needs. Alongside of them, we have the female-to-male transsexuals. They have their agenda, meet at their appointed times and places, and discuss their issues and needs. Off in another corner, we have the married, heterosexual crossdressers (or is it transvestite?), with their agenda, meeting at their appointed times and places where they hold discussions concerning their issues and needs. Somewhere around the corner are the female-to-male crossdressers, endeavoring to find their place to go off to and deal with their agenda. Spread across this whole landscape here and there are the transgenderists, androgynes, fetishes of every size, shape, and variety, and any number of other subgroup you can imagine. In short, we have a pulling apart, and not a pulling together. This, of course, is only natural, for when there is no respected leadership to follow or a caring community that can deal with their needs, people will wander off on their own and create

associations, no matter how fragmented, small, and narrow of view, that fills their needs. Hence, some of the problems discussed above impact down here and throughout this discussion.

Arguments for the sake of argument. Among the selected few who have their hands on the handle of the printing presses within our community, there are some who enjoy creating and perpetuating arguments, feuds, and conflict. Some call it yellow journalism. I would prefer to think of it as simply a person seeking a forum in which he or she can demonstrate either his or her command of the written language or to push forth their thoughts and ideas, regardless of how foolish or worthless they may be, consequences be damned, just for the sake of arguing. In short, many of those people in our community who write, edit, and, in theory, lead us, wastes more time hacking away at opposing groups or individuals then they do attempting to bring us together. Witty little zingers that slash across a person's soul are, to some, more important than words that can heal us together. If we were to take all the print wasted in character assassination and devote it to community building, we just might have something. Unfortunately, so long as we have people who prefer the poetic kill over the binding of wounds, we will all suffer.

SOME THOUGHTS ON SOLUTIONS

I have, by this time, offended many. That you are still reading this at this point is good, for it shows that maybe there is hope for us or perhaps you find some merit in my observations. Perhaps we can aspire to the theory that Dr. George Brown forwarded in his speech entitled "CD 2000." But, I ask, what can we do? What must we do? I offer some thoughts. I will aim high, at the national organizations, for they are, at this time, the fewest in number and easiest to gather together. I ask that those of you who are leaders of national or major regional organizations to open correspondence with each others. This approach, after all, was how the 13 separate colonies took their first tentative steps toward unity in the mid-1700s. Talk to one another. I mean really talk. For once, drop your rhetoric and past distrust and talk with your heart. Exchange ideas, thoughts, and, most important of all, accept the thoughts and ideas of those writing to you. Though I know it will be hard for some of you to push aside animosities, and in some cases, hatred, you must if communications are to be open and meaningful. Tell each other what you see

**Talk to one another.
I mean really talk.**

and what you truly believe, in your heart and soul. Perhaps you may find that your differences are not that great. Next, we must come together. We must have a true and effective coming together where we can talk, discuss, and work together. As the Vice-Chair of IFGE, I would like to invite all of you who consider yourselves to be leaders within our community to come to Philadelphia in March. Let us come together and talk. Though this smacks of self-promotion for IFGE, I can think of no other event or place where such a gathering can take place at this time. The original dream, shared by many, and not just one, was just for this very purpose. Perhaps this year, when we meet in Philadelphia, as our forefathers did in 1775 during a time of great crisis, we can overcome the many problems that face our community and forge an effective program that will allow us to work together.

For those of you who see merit in coming to Philadelphia, let us use the Congress of Reps, that political football much maligned of late and little understood, as our forum.

Alison Laing, a person of great strength and courage, is working hard to make the Congress an effective tool for the community as a whole and not just for the few. Its success, or failure, is in our hands ... our collective hands. Perhaps, if you believe in it, this would be a good time to come and make the Congress of Reps what it should be, a forum for the entire community. If, due to personal grievances, you find that you cannot bring yourself to attend an IFGE affair, then perhaps we can hold a meeting of the community's leadership in a neutral spot. The location, after all, is unimportant. Who sponsors this gathering is unimportant. What is important, what is critical, is that somewhere, somehow, those who claim that they are the leaders of our community come together, sit down together, and talk with open hearts and open minds. Some will call me a fool. Perhaps I am. Perhaps I am a fool for speaking out like this. But I think not. If there is any truth in what I said, those of you who have the good of the community in your heart will find some of that truth and, perhaps, a little merit in what I have said. If you do, please, talk to me, talk to others, and let's start doing something, together, to make this community a real community.

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IS CROSSDRESSING WRONG?

by Lauren Hotchkiss

Well, I'm really going to walk right in and put my foot into it this time.

I was told when I was young never to discuss politics and religion if I wanted to get along with people. Well, it's certainly already too late for the former; as a gender activist and Outreach Director of the Gender Alternatives League (now defunct) I am steadfastly violating the first rule, while with the risky title of this article, I am as certainly obliterating the second. I sure hope SOMEBODY still likes me when they've finished reading this.

During our journey along the path of self-acceptance most of us have experienced a good deal of guilt around the issue of crossdressing. Beyond the usual fears we all had in growing up, wondering if it meant we were gay or wanted a sex change, we also had to confront, at one time or another, our feelings regarding the issue of whether it was morally "right."

The Bible actually says very little on the subject other than a brief reference in Deuteronomy 22:5 which, in the King James version, states: "No woman shall wear an

article of man's clothing nor shall a man put on a woman's dress; for those that do these things are abominable to the Lord your God." It is a quotation that has been mistranslated and taken out of context from the original Aramaic Text, in which, in more literal translation, it would read: "No man shall put on a dress to enter the women's tent (fear of rape), nor shall a woman wear an article of man's clothing for the purposes of entering the holy temple (from which women were prohibited by ancient Judaic law)." Its change from a conditional to an absolute is reflective of both the political and moral climate of the times and of the translating body.

Somewhere along the line the whole subject of crossdressing was blown out of proportion and transformed into a societal taboo. The issue, I feel, is not one of what clothing we choose to wear upon our bodies -- I mean c'mon, God could care less -- but of how we feel about ourselves and the manner in which we treat one another. It is as "right" for us to express ourselves in the gender-expanded manner in which we do, as is others' choice to live a non-gender-challenged lifestyle. In my own experience I believe that I have grown as a person and in my spiritual awareness and ability to love, through the acceptance of who I am. I was much less at peace when I did not allow myself to express the true spirit of who I was. It interfered with my ability to connect with others from the heart.

Sometimes it seems very strange, when I stop to think about it, that most of us feel we need to "dress" in order to give ourselves permission to display what we have separated and compartmentalized as "feminine" qualities. Spiritually, as well as biologically, we all have both the feminine and the masculine within us; gender having very little to do with the sex of the bodies that we inhabit. This being so, the concepts of male and female are not the "opposites" that we have been taught, but are, rather, compliments; two parts of one complete whole.

It is true that the way in which we present ourselves is not consistent with the accepted role for our gender; however it is equally true that the role that we have been conditioned to accept for ourselves may not be in harmony with our spiritual truth. I would suggest that rather than being considered a losing proposition, however, it could be seen in the more positive light of expanding the entire gamut of gender and sexual identity, and

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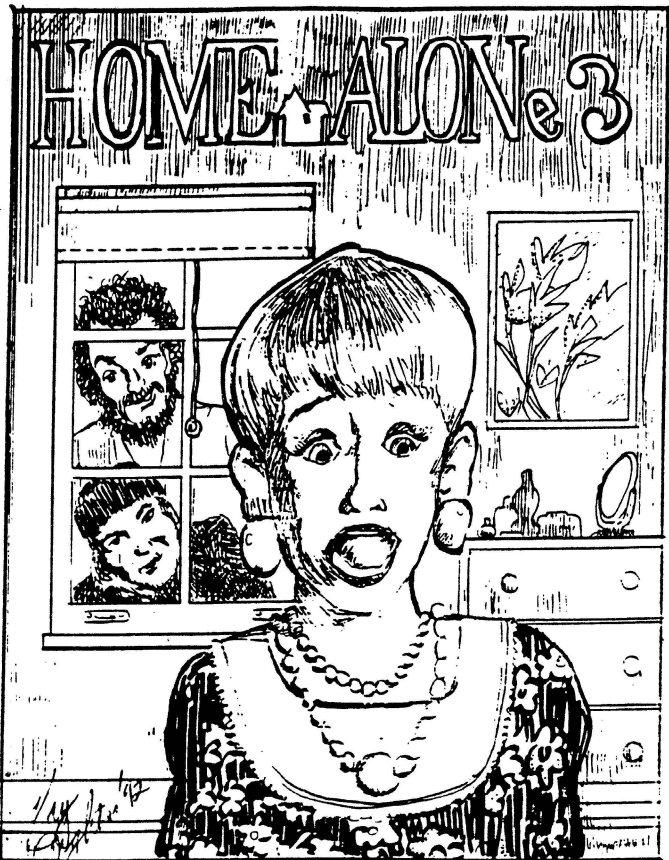
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opening the door to the forward path of human evolution through the integration and balancing of the masculine and the feminine. The societal separation of male and female, archetypally dividing the male as the hard "doer" from the female as the softer "planner", is an interesting phenomenon, as it was very much an act of humanity rather than of God. The Almighty never decreed, as far as I'm aware, that things in life be segregated from each other as being either male OR female behaviors. The fact that we accord certain rights and respect only to one "sex" while denying it the expression of emotion and display of more gentle behavior that we allow in the other is of little value in any real sense. Perhaps we should question the whole male/female relationship construct. Obviously it is not working when our entire society, its movies, books, and television programs are full of instances of the "opposite" sexes unable to relate to one another.

On the broader scale, the existence of war and aggression have much to do, I feel, with the sublimation and non-expression of the totality of the male/female balance within each of us. Perhaps the evolution (and the survival) of the human race lies in our learning to integrate the male and female within ourselves.

It has often been said that we of the gender

THE PASSING SCENE by Kay Lightner



community are not like other women and men, but such is often the way of change. It takes the few to lead so that the many will follow. Whether this involves, as it does for many of us, wearing a dress, or in just learning to see from others perspectives, it is all a part of our forward progress and growth as a society and as individuals. Possibly, in time, the whole concept of masculine and feminine will no longer be necessary. As we evolve as a species, perhaps we will get closer and closer to the unity of ourselves and of all, and as such a schism will no longer exist between the male and female essences of our being.

Hopefully the day will come when biological sex is no longer the arbiter of permissible dress and behavior, and it will no longer matter what we choose to wear, nor how we wish to behave, as long as we do no harm to others.

Whether we believe in God, the power of the universe, or the great Goombah is of little importance. It is faith that is important. Faith in ourselves and in the path that we follow. Isn't it time that we accepted ourselves and each other for whatever personal spiritual truth we are called upon to follow?

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"There is nothing more frightful than ignorance in action."

Ever wonder why those models in those oh-so-bare strapless fashions never seem to have even the slightest hint of underarm hair? Ever try to wax your pits? Ow! Guess what: they use makeup to hide the shadow just like we do to hide a beard. Here's how it's done. After shaving, apply a clear deodorant that leaves no residue and let it dry. Apply a waterproof foundation one shade lighter than your skin tone and powder. That's it.

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If you're trying to grow your own nails, here's a hot tip (that's a pun -- get it? ...never mind). You can stimulate nails to grow longer and faster if you tap them, like drumming your fingers, or better typing on a keyboard, even playing the piano makes a difference.

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White HOT for the Winter season is white eye shadow. Apply to the inner and outer corners of the lid and use a warm neutral tone in the center. Works like a light frame on a photo. Try Yves St. Laurent Alabaster.

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Are platform shoes for you? Probably not. Besides being singularly ugly, the sole of platforms is not flexible, so you feel like you're walking in ski boots. Unless you find a really great bargain, pass up this fad. By next year they'll be gone. The best shoe for a sexy look is still a stiletto heel pump.

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Self-absorbed. Exhibitionistic. Does that sound like any transgendered person you know? (How about all of 'em?) Those terms generally describe a narcissist and Goddess knows we're a lot of narcissists. But recent research shows there is a "healthy" form of narcissism. An autonomous or healthy narcissist transfers

their "me" focus into productive self-reliance, intellectual curiosity, psychological reflection and creativity. So what about an "unhealthy" narcissists? The willful narcissist may achieve some success early in life but their inflated sense of self and hunger for power usually blocks any kind of personal growth later on. Willful narcissists generally are impulsive and self-indulgent.

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There are three (only three?) lipstick "sins" according to Letitia Baldridge: (1) indiscreet public touch-ups, (2) leaving lipstick on a cup or glass, and (3) bleeding teeth. Learn how to set your lipstick properly. The correct method is to line the lips with a pencil, apply a thin coat of color, powder, blot and reapply color.

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How do you know if you're a "real girl?" Answer these questions: Do you wear Victoria's Secret or Jockey for Her? Do you call it lingerie or underwear? Do you think rejection is more painful than electrolysis? Do your workouts involve aerobic shopping or aerobic boxing? Is your role model Naomi Campbell or Naomi Wolf? If you answer the first choice in each question, there's no doubt about it, you're a real girl. At least according to Tracy Young of *Allure* magazine who considers drag artist Lypsinka a real girl. Says Young, "Real girls, evidently, are not so much born as made. Which means anyone can be a real girl -- if she really wants to." Right on, Tracy!

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I like a French manicure but the white polish is a real pain. It's thick yet it doesn't cover in one coat. So my French manicures end up looking like French pastry. Enter my bright, enterprising 18-year-old daughter with this hint. Use white-out instead of polish. It's thin but opaque and covers in one coat. Use a tinted neutral base, apply the white-out to the tips, then go over with the base coat and let dry for at least an hour. Voil!

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Sexy or sleazy? What makes the difference is often a matter of simply color or fabric, sometimes both. According to a survey of women taken by *Glamour* magazine here's the difference: short read satin tank dress -- sleazy, same dress in black -- sexy; Strappy



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two-inch heels in black -- sexy, same shoes in gold or silver -- sleazy; Tight gold jeans -- sleazy, same in black -- sexy; a bra worn as a top -- sleazy, but a tuxedo jacket with nothing underneath is definitely sexy.



Here are nine important fashion changes in the past ten years: Lycra, Washed Silk, Athletic shoes, Catalogs, The Gap, real style for large and extra small sizes, engineered fabrics like Gore-Tex, Washed Denim and bodysuits.



Every so often technology makes incredible strides and sometimes they make it ion the arena of fashion. Last year saw a quiet revolution in hosiery with the introduction of microfiber yarns. Microfiber yarns are very much smaller than human hair, yet are quite strong and when combined with Lycra are almost indestructible. Microfiber hosiery feels like second skin and wears like iron. The trade-off is cost. Last year's microfiber hosiery ran almost \$20 a pair. This year the cost is down to \$10 on average. My favorite is Donna Karan (\$8 - \$10) pantyhose.



Look out Mardi Gras Boutique! According to *Vogue* one of the HOTTEST exotic boutiques in the Big Apple is Patricia Field's over on Sixth Avenue. Field says that as the world around her gets more conservative, she's determined to keep her store as sexy and startling as ever. Her clientele includes many TVs, TSs and people of indeterminate gender; all are welcome. Sixth Avenue seems a damn site better than the warehouse district, but I still love Lee's best.



Can't figure out how to tame those eyebrows? Help may be on the way. Makeup artist Eugenia Weston, who works with the likes of Bette Midler and Paula Abdul, has created an eyebrow template: a clear plastic stencil that is held over the brow and colored in with pencil and shadow. Look for Form-A-Brow at cosmetic counters in better department stores.



They keep asking the wrong people these obvious questions. For example, researchers at Marquette University in Milwaukee found that "androgynous people (including men who think it's OK to also have female characteristics) tend to be the most mentally healthy people in our culture." See, now there's a good reason to be a transvestite.



However, we don't want too much androgyny (is that an oxymoron?). Anyway, another study, this at Hahneman Hospital here in Philly, found that women with high levels of testosterone exhibited higher levels of depression than a control group. Treatment includes androgen blockers and the depression usually lifts.



Commentary: Here are a few more gems about Leadership, a quality that seems to elude some people in this community. If you don't trust yourself, you can never trust someone else. A true leader motivates and challenges. Good leaders are receptive to new ideas; they "build-up" not "tear down." Leadership is trusting in the "lower levels" where the real work gets done.



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(From "Transvestia" #67: Author unknown)

Peter looked disconsolately at his image in the mirror. Of all the stupid things! Not only had his mother given him a dress to wear, she had also insisted on his wearing girl's underwear, and was even now delightedly smearing lipstick on his mouth. But when she put the bow in his hair -- and truly it was long enough to warrant such adornment -- his self-control broke down and he cried.

Leaving their sobbing son, the Coopers went back downstairs. "Supper will be ready in half an hour," his mother had said, patting him on the shoulder as she left.

When he heard the hall door close, Peter hastily got up and ran to the closet. He wasn't going to wear these things, that much was certain! The third surprise opened the gate to more tears: someone (guess who?) had removed all his clothes. Instead, hanging there in the closet was a reasonably complete wardrobe ... of girl's clothing. Even his dresser drawers had not escaped. He was still trying to adjust to this when his mother called him for supper. Like a doomed criminal walking to his execution, he walked slowly downstairs. The rustling sound of the taffeta reproached him at every step. Shortly before he reached the bottom step he had come to the conclusion that even behaving was better than this!

Of course, he was not helped at all by the fact that his parents had company. The boss and his wife were waiting expectantly for Peter's grand entrance. What it lacked in grace it surpassed in embarrassment. "Absolutely delightful!" said the boss' wife.

All through the meal Peter sat very silently looking only at his plate. He discovered that if he moved very slowly he didn't notice what he was wearing as much. When the meal was finished he asked if he might be excused. "In a minute, dear." Several minutes later, he was accompanied back to his room by his mother and the boss' wife, who exclaimed over all the items in Peter's new wardrobe. Eventually, they left the boy alone. It was an act of mercy. Downstairs Cooper was saying, "You know, that's the first peaceful meal we've had in a long time."

"Amazing how fast it works, isn't it?"

Before they went to bed that night the Coopers looked in at their son, who was sleeping. "The boss knew what he was talking about, all right," said Mr. Cooper. "He certainly did," echoed

Mrs. C.

The next morning Peter was informed at breakfast -- which he attended in a pastel colored robe -- that he would attend school as usual, dressed in his conventional clothes. He greeted the news with a great sigh of relief, then he changed into his school clothes and ran off down the street. The whole affair had seemed a nightmare; maybe now they would leave him alone. He maintained an exceptional -- for him -- standard of conduct through out most of the day. Since it was a Friday, however, several of his classmates were restless and soon he was joining them in creating minor diversions for the rest of the class.

He was surprised to see his mother waiting for him after classes were dismissed. With an expectant smile she escorted him home and repeated the performance of the evening before impervious to his tears, exhortations and fervent promises to behave with the uttermost of decorum at every conceivable future point in time. Master Peter found all to no avail.

One might be tempted to speculate on the progress of this story if Mrs. Cooper -- and Mr. Cooper for that matter -- had acted with the same degree of firmness prior to this time of chastisement. It must be argued, however, that hindsight is a great deal more dependable than foresight. And twenty times as common.

After the first week had gone by, with Peter being allowed his rightful clothing only for the occasion of attending classes, he had begun to rationalize his parent's behavior. In view of past efforts on their part he felt sure that, like the many bans and removals of privileges effected against him, the present state of affairs would not last very long.

It was Peter's fate, though, to be disappointed, for each evening until the end of the school term in the summer his mother met him at the school door and escorted him home, and so on. Nor were weekends any different as Peter found out; furthermore, regardless of whoever might be present or expected Peter was universally attired in dresses. He very nearly went out of his mind the first Sunday when his mother very calmly escorted to church, a place where he was not very well known and so he was at least saved the additional agony of meeting any of his own acquaintances. But,

Mrs. Cooper was well known in her own right, and her son had earned a certain degree of notoriety so that those who concerned themselves at all with the situation understood, with varying degrees of insight, the meting out of justice which they were seeing. Not that there was universal approval nor acceptance -- for example, one might have noticed the shaken composure of the assistant pastor at his first sight of Peter -- but there was a tacit understanding that the Coopers had a "problem". It might have been noted -- as a further sidelight -- that after four or five such appearances certain unruly children whose parents attended the same church found their lives disrupted in an astonishingly similar fashion had anyone cared to summarize all the details.

On the last day of school Peter was surprised to find his mother going to school with him. Classes were to be held for only a half day and Peter somehow had a premonition that the end of classes meant an end to his strange captivity. Now, it must be noted that due partly to this self-same restriction of activity --

and the ensuing boredom -- the young man had actually found himself studying from time to time. In fact, this had such astonishing results that Mrs. Cooper had been requested to appear at school for a conference with his teachers. This worthy assemblage shared several distinct opinions: first of all was the fact that Peter's scholastic work showed a complete lack of content or merit, and as such it was felt that he should be required to repeat the year; however, it was pointed out that there had been a dramatic upsurge near the end of the school year, not enough to redeem the entire year, but enough to warrant further investigations before any action was taken.

Mrs. Cooper then told them of the plan of action they had followed; there were several differences of opinion regarding the merits of this, but all agreed that it had a most signal effect. After further deliberation they decided that, provided Peter followed a

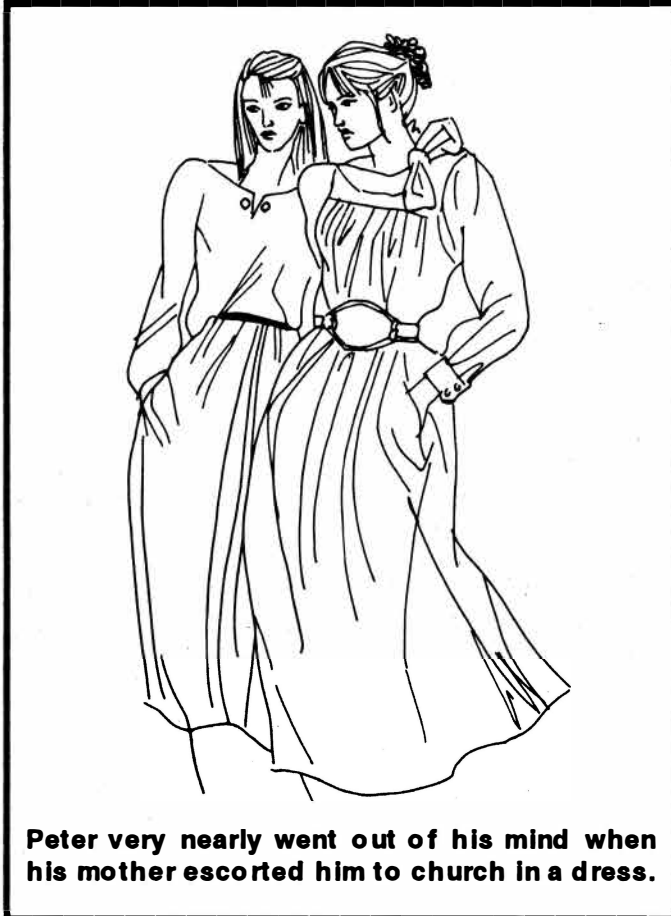
serious course of home study that summer -- a course supervised by one of the teachers present -- he would be allowed to go on. Even the most adamant of the critics yielded the point that once good study habits were developed they might well remain. Meanwhile, Miss Carson -- the proposed supervisor -- was happily discussing summer plans with Mrs. Cooper. When the bell rang announcing the end

of classes for the year they rushed off to tell Peter the good news.

As might be expected he was less than overjoyed. Not only was his summer to be ruined by the spectre of a continuation of studies, but he could read the handwriting on the wall. Nor was he helped a great deal when Miss Carson accompanied them home and waited discretely downstairs while Mrs. Cooper ushered him upstairs into the waiting confines of his other wardrobe.

Miss Carson was "enchanted". Peter was "nauseated".

The long summer loomed ominously in front of him with no sign of alleviation. Nevertheless, after several weeks Peter found that it was not so bad as he had anticipated.



Peter very nearly went out of his mind when his mother escorted him to church in a dress.

Not that it was very good, but at least it was bearable. The feminine clothing ceased being an agony, being more in the order of a nuisance, for Mrs. Cooper had insisted he take care of them as well as his own personal grooming. The latter became more of a problem because Mrs. Cooper steadfastly refused to let him get his hair cut and the long mass of hair was not only hot, it was full of snarls and the very devil to keep clean.

The greatest surprise of the summer came through the ministrations of Miss Carson. That devoted soul cheerfully gave several hours a day to the struggling student, and under her careful and competent tutelage he overcame the difficulties he had been faced with and to his surprise found himself very near to enjoying the schoolwork. Of course, part of this was due to the absence of the restricting confines of a classroom with its distracting constraints.

Furthermore, Miss Carson went so far as to suggest Peter come to her place on different days. The first few times she had to escort him there, but eventually he went alone.

The summer was about half over when the boss' wife called one afternoon "to see how that darling boy" was coming along. She and Miss Carson greeted each other familiarly for, "Miss Carson here did so much to help us with our son too, you know." Peter remained oddly calm under her close inspection.

It was about the time when Mr. Cooper began talking of vacation plans that a hint of uneasiness came over both of Peter's parents. There was the problem of what to do about Peter, they weren't sure whether or not to disrupt his progress in the make up school work, but on the other hand, they felt they would be needlessly cruel in denying him the chance to accompany them. They talked it over at some length, but reached no firm decision even though vacation was only a week away. The following day, Mrs. Cooper spoke to Miss Carson about it. Miss Carson felt that Peter had made great strides and should be accordingly rewarded; moreover, she was herself planning a trip and the entire situation would be self-resolving.

There was another area of doubt in Mrs. Cooper's mind concerning her son, a doubt that was both deepened and solved in a curious fashion when her son disappeared one afternoon. As he had been invited to the boss' place the day before, Mrs. Cooper felt he might have gone there and she telephoned the boss' wife. That worthy personage stated that although she had not seen him that day, she knew where he was and that Mrs. Cooper should relax because, "The dear has planned a surprise for you and I daren't spoil it for him."

The answer did not calm Mrs. Cooper that much and she couldn't help wondering about the nature of the "surprise." She hurried to the door when the doorbell rang expecting her son and was annoyed to see a tall young woman standing there holding several boxes. "I'm sorry, we don't want any," said Mrs. Cooper as she closed the door.

"Mother!"

"Oh my Lord!" she gasped. Peter had come home.

"It was really the boss' wife's idea," explained Peter as his mother slowly revived. "I was complaining about how terribly long my hair was and she suggested I get a permanent. In fact, yesterday she called up her own hairdresser and made an appointment for me. She even paid for it, and she insisted I go back there afterward so she could see how it looked. How do you like it?" Peter asked guilelessly as he gently patted the hairdo.

"It's ... fine. Fine. But those clothes you have on, they're not yours! And what are all these boxes for?"

"Well, that was her idea too, they used to belong to her son. You know, he went through the same thing."

Mrs. Cooper was not adjusting very well to her son's appearance. Putting him into dresses had been one thing, but she had never insisted on such close attention to detail. For one thing, the linen sheath was very chic -- and undoubtedly quite expensive -- and it hugged a figure of staggering proportions; furthermore, she felt that her son was a little young to be wearing high heels, never mind that they set off the

youthful curve of his ankle so well.

Mrs. Cooper was still not out of her state of shock when Mr. Cooper came home. He joined her forthwith. They were both nearly traumatized when Peter slipped back downstairs in the powder blue formal that had been included in the boss' son's clothing.

It must be said that the Coopers genuinely enjoyed their vacation that year -- all three of them. The senior Coopers were impressed with the fact that for the first year since they could remember they weren't encumbered with a holy terror who was whining

from minute to minute about wanting pony rides and hot dogs as well as making detailed inspections of every restroom along the route. Peter genuinely enjoyed the trip as well, he had taken the time to read up -- with Miss Carson's help -- on the route and area they were traveling, and he was a real source of entertainment for his parents, pointing out



Mr. & Mrs. Cooper were nearly traumatized when Peter slipped downstairs in a powder blue formal.

NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

February 26-28, 1993: "Texas T Party", San Antonio TX, sponsored by Boulton & Park Society. Information from P.O. Box 700042, San Antonio 78270, or phone (210) 545-3668.

March 14-21, 1993: International Foundation for Gender Education "Coming Together-Working Together" convention, Philadelphia PA. Details from IFGE, P.O. Box 367, Wayland MA 01778.

April 22-25, 1993: "Moonlight In Manhattan", New York City, sponsored by the Greater New York Gender Alliance. Information from Lynda Frank, 330 W. 45th St. #3E, New York NY 10036, or by calling (212) 765-3561.

April 28-May 2, 1993: "California Dreamin'", Burbank CA, sponsored by Powder Puffs of Orange County. Details from P.O. Box 1088, Yorba Linda CA 92686.

May 12-16, 1993: "Esprit 93", Port Angeles WA, sponsored by Cornbury Society, Emerald City, and Northwest Gender Alliance. Information from P.O. Box 873, Kirkland WA 98083-0873.

May 20-23, 1993: "Paradise in the Poconos", Canadensis PA, sponsored by Creative Design Services. Information from CDS, P.O. Box 61263, King of Prussia PA 19406, or by calling (215) 640-9449.

May 20-24, 1993: "Dignity Cruise IV" to the Bahamas, sponsored by Dr. Peggy Rudd. Information from Dr. Rudd, 1811 Crutchfield, Katy TX 77449, or by calling (713) 347-6563. Reservations through Cruise Ahoy (Attention: Anne), 11211 Katy Freeway #300, Houston TX 77079, or call (713) 556-1513.

June 9-13, 1993: 11th Annual "Be All You Can Be" weekend, Chicago IL. Co-sponsored by Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Crossroads, Paradise Club, and TransPitt. Details from Naomi Owen, P.O. Box 342, Chicago IL 60690, or by calling (708) 364-9514.

July 9 & 10, 1993: "S.P.I.C.E. (Spouses/Partners International Conference for Education)", Dallas TX, sponsored by Tri-Ess' W.A.C.S. (Women Associated with Crossdressers). Details from P.O. Box 17, Bulverde TX 78163, or call (210) 438-7604.

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

September 16-19, 1993: "Paradise in the Poconos" (see May 20-23 listing).

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

PETER'S PROBLEM ... continued

salient points that his parents had overlooked as they went.

Only one thing marred the trip, and that was a matter for debate. In Miami the elder Coopers had gone out for the evening and at Mrs. Cooper's suggestion -- insistence really -- they had stopped to view the crowd at a discotheque. It was only after several minutes of watching a girl in a black lace dress that merely skimmed her knees that they realized how much their son was enjoying the trip. Not to mention that he certainly knew how to do the frug and watusi very well.

On his first morning back to work Mr. Cooper asked to see the boss for a minute, privately. "Of course, of course! But please hurry, I'm expecting someone. So, how was the vacation?" "Fine ... that is ... well, that's part of it. You see sir, it's Peter ..."

"Ah, Peter! How is he?"

"Fine ... I guess. But there's something I wanted to ask you sir ... about your experience with your son, if you don't mind. I mean ... well, now he doesn't want to ... that is, he's decided he wants to ..."

"Ah, I think I see what you're driving at, Cooper. Well, let me tell you ..." As the boss rambled on about greater and lesser frames of value and references and modes of behavior -- turning his chair toward the window -- Mr. Cooper's eye was caught by the office door opening slightly and an extremely attractive young woman in a seductive mini skirt which

swayed way above her stockinged knees slipped through. Unnoticed, she slowly undulated her way toward the desk, the grace of a jungle cat in every movement of her shapely body.

The boss suddenly swiveled around and instantly recognizing the woman let out a great whoop.

"Jack! Jack, son! Sit down! How was Paris? I was just telling Cooper here about our little ... er, experience. Right, Cooper?"

Mr. Cooper might have been comforted by the fact that when he fainted he did it with the greatest dignity as he slowly and quietly sank to the floor.

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by Pieranna DiMartini

The one question which has always plagued me, and probably all members of the crossdressing community, is "Why do we do it?" This is not a question which can easily be answered. The explanation for the enigma of crossdressing has been searched for in many areas. Many theories and ideas have been proposed and juggled back and forth for years, and while some of these can, and have, provided some insight into our condition -- which appears to be much more widespread than any of us would have surmised -- they ultimately fail in satisfying all the questions. It is difficult for the individual to embrace theories which at best can only be taken in a general sense and apply them satisfactorily to him/herself. While some explanations may provide answers for some, others find them inadequate or at least incomplete. Each individual has his or her own motivations when it comes to the activity of crossdressing which may or may not be understandable to the crossdresser him/herself. Even if the motivations are understood, they usually are only to a certain extent. The crossdresser may accept his/her behavior by stating, "I crossdress because I have certain feminine/masculine qualities and feelings within me which need expression, and this is one way of expressing them." But once this has been affirmed, he/she may then ask, "Why do I possess these qualities when society says I should not, and why am I so compelled to express them?" This leads the individual in a virtual circle, and ultimately he/she gets nowhere. Some come to terms with their behavior, accept it, and reach a partial understanding of their condition. These are the lucky ones.

But there are those who do not come to terms with it, and who consequently torment themselves with fear and guilt and self-condemnation. These are the ones most in need of an answer, an explanation which can set their minds at ease and enable them to accept and understand their behavior and themselves.

It is difficult, and often useless, to try to construct one single all-encompassing theory and attempt to fit a wide variety of people into this one mold without running the risk of creating a stereotype. That is, unless there is one universal force at play which is endemic

to all crossdressers regardless of each individual's conscious reasons and motivations. We all know that we enjoy doing it, and certainly there are sexual and fetishistic aspects attached to the practice. But have we forgotten that there was another reason, probably not consciously known, that compelled us the first time we delved in such behavior? We found that we enjoyed it, and continued to do so because of the enjoyment, but we didn't enjoy it until we did it, and something made us do it the first time. Since most of us began in early childhood, at a time when we were unaware of the sexual realities we were to discover later on, we cannot diagnose sexual feelings as being the original cause of our motivation. Whatever new reasons motivate us to repeat the activity now are secondary; something else, something intrinsic and deep-rooted, provided the initial stimulus and set the course we were to follow. I believe that stimulus is inherent in every crossdresser and is, in fact, a universal condition. And I believe it involves the theory of reincarnation. I am treading on some very touchy territory here, as it has been my experience that religion is a subject most people take very personally, whether they hold a certain belief or none at all. In this article it is not my wish to impose my own personal convictions upon anyone else, but it is my wish to share with others who are in the same boat as I something which has helped put many things into perspective for me, and answered many of my questions. If in sharing these insights and information I can help others find answers that may also bring them understanding and peace of mind, then the benefits of what I have learned will increase a millionfold.

I will not attempt to give here a complete discussion on the subject of reincarnation; that would take an entire book. Many volumes have been written on the subject, and for those interested in studying further, I will recommend three. They are *Many Mansions*, *The World Within*, and *Many Lives, Many Loves*, all written by Gina Cerminara. These can be found at your local library. But in discussing some aspects of reincarnation and their possible link to crossdressing, I will explore a few basic tenets of the religion.

The theory of reincarnation has been with us since ancient times, and although most people

familiar with the term believe it to be specifically a Hindu or Buddhist doctrine, it is in fact implied in many religions. But nowhere is it more spoken of or universally accepted than in Eastern faith, and it is interesting to note that from this philosophy also came the idea that the universe is a balance of masculine and feminine energies, and that these energies exist within all human beings regardless of their physical gender. The basic premise of reincarnation is one with which most Westerners are acquainted, whether or not they believe in the theory that human beings live not one life but many. Obviously, if such were the case, the reincarnating individual would not come back as the same person, but as a different person each time.

This is where most Westerners shake their heads and scoff at the very notion. Firmly rooted in their own identity, in the person they see in the mirror and in the here and now, they cannot accept the possibility of having been and of one day being someone else. But therein lies the fault of their reasoning, for the theory of reincarnation does not claim that an individual will die and come back as someone else. Rather, what is at the core of the individual, the soul, returns in a different body, just as an actor adopts a different role or character when beginning a new play. Just as the actor beneath the disguise is always and forever the same identity regardless of what is temporarily visible on the surface, the true identity of the human being, the soul, remains the same regardless of the physical bodies it may don in its many lives.

Think of the human body as a vessel we climb into in order to journey through this condition we call life, just as an automobile is a vehicle we climb into to traverse physical distances in this life. You may be satisfied to drive a certain kind of car one year, then trade it in for a different model the next. Or you may be content to drive it until the engine simply won't run anymore, or until the car is wrecked irreparably, at which time you have to get another one. So you do. But does the switch change you in any way, are you a different person simply because the car around you is a different one? There may be some variations in how you drive the car, or in how and when you use it and what you use it for. And different cars may require a different approach, making it necessary for you to adapt accordingly. Certainly, there will be a noticeable difference in your attitude if at first you drive a conservative station wagon

and then get behind the wheel of a sleek, exotic Ferrari. But whichever car you drive, the essential you will remain essentially the same. And so it is with different bodies. The manner in which the soul expresses itself will depend on the type of body through which it is functioning, but its basic personality and traits, its identity, will remain the same. It will

I believe the stimulus inherent in every crossdresser is a universal condition.

simply be showing different aspects of its multi-faceted nature, just as people do in different circumstances.

The only other argument usually leveled against the prospect of reincarnation is that it seems absolutely ludicrous that a person could live more than one life at all. Our understanding is that we are born, we live, and then we die. But while most people think it absurd that a person could actually die only to be born again, it was Voltaire who put it perfectly, stating that it was more incredible to be born at all than to be born more than once. If it could be done once, then why not twice, or ten times, or ten thousand? If you accept this reasoning, you may then ask, "Why does a person need to be reborn so many times in the first place?" The doctrine of reincarnation answers that by stating that physical life as we know it is simply a classroom for the development and learning of souls, and to believe that any one soul could mature fully and reach its highest potential within the limitations of one specific lifetime and one specific life condition is ridiculous. In any one lifetime, each of us is limited in our range of choices: our interests and dislikes, our friends and enemies, our dedications and vocations. Some of our conditions seem already to have been made for us, such as our intelligence, our physical appearance, even our gender. When we compare ourselves to the many other people around us and the variety of life, we are hit hard with the realization that there are so many things which apparently we will never experience or understand, or even know of their existence.

But the purpose of life is to experience as many things as we can and to draw knowledge and growth from them. And this is impossible to do within the confines of just one lifetime, just as it is impossible for a student to obtain a fully rounded education by being removed from school after only the first grade. Each of

us must come back time and time again to the same school, like the student, and each time we will experience a new life condition toward the goal of rounding out our spiritual development. He who is poor in one life may be wealthy the next; he who is timid may come back and become president of a large corporation in order to develop strength of character and decisiveness; he who is a loner may come back and become a celebrity to obtain the personal growth that comes from interaction with many different people and situations. And he who is one gender, may come back as the other. From this we can deduce that the soul, regardless of the limitations imposed upon it by any one specific lifetime, is in itself limitless, possessing within it the possibility for everything that can be contained within an infinite universe. It is a chameleon.

[To be continued. This article originally appeared in Cross-Talk #3 (1989).]

girl," she said. "If I'm not going to be a boy for my mom, I'm not going to be a boy for the public school system."

She also said that she is making a point for other gender dysphoric students. "I want them (school officials) to say that a boy can wear a dress."

Ricks began to alter her appearance toward the end of her junior year, occasionally attending classes wearing light makeup and androgynous attire. More recently, she has begun hormone therapy and dresses as a girl all the time. When Ricks' gender dysphoria was first manifested, school officials tried to cooperate by allowing Ricks to use a restroom in an administrative area of the school after other girls complained about her use of the girls' restroom. She was also permitted to change her clothes in the coach's office for gym classes.

But when Ricks (who uses another surname which she refused to reveal) began dressing full time, school officials threw up their hands. "We weren't equipped to handle such a thing," Ackerman said. Ricks could be dressing as she pleases and attending an alternative school for students who have difficulty in "traditional" school, officials said. When Ricks turns 18 in a few months, she can enroll herself in the school.

She said she plans to have sexual reassignment surgery in a few years.

SPECIAL REPORT: TEENAGE TRANSSEXUAL SUSPENDED

by Paula Jordan Sinclair

(Atlanta, GA) -- Public school officials tried making special accommodations for a teenage transsexual, but when Nicholas Ricks, 17, started showing up for classes at Tri-Cities High School dressed as a girl, (s)he was suspended.

"Our school policy says that students shall dress in a way so as not to disrupt the educational process," said Atlanta school spokeswoman Elizabeth Ackerman. "This particular student has been identified as a male by our standards, and we must treat him as a male."

According to Principal Hershel Robinson, Ricks "will have to dress appropriately (like a male) until the medical and legal documentation came in to state that he was a girl" if she wants to attend Tri-Cities.

Ricks says that she wants the freedom to express herself as a female. "I feel just like a



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by Kymberleigh Richards

The latest issue of *Chrysalis Quarterly* (Vol. 1 #4) has chosen as its topic the social and medical realities of transsexual surgery. Before I go into detail, I must say that I very much appreciate AEGIS' concept of dealing with a single topic in-depth each issue, instead of following most publications' (including *Cross-Talk*) format of providing a broad variety of articles and topics.

To quote publisher Dallas Denny in the opening of her lead commentary, "Few things on the planet generate as much heat and as little light as the controversy surrounding sex reassignment surgery." It is well known that many self-diagnosed transsexuals have often lobbied for SRS "on demand", and I hope this issue of *CQ* will lead many of them to temper their emotional desire "to be complete" with the realities of the many problems that badly performed SRS can create. These problems, along with the tales of some positive experiences, are well-documented, with a great deal of factual information and realistic expectations.

While *CQ* is very much oriented toward the TS in this issue, it should also be read by those in the TV/CD and TG communities who have contemplated the possibility of crossing to the TS community.

□■□

The latest trilogy in Sandy Thomas' *TV Serials* collection is "Manicured to Perfection", "Primped to Perfection" and "Polished to Perfection". These three stories tell how Rob, a rather listless young man in search of a career, begins work in a beauty shop and in due course becomes a girl manicurist named Robin. Along the way, she goes blonde, has permanent makeup applied, and becomes a full female in order to marry a man she meets in the course of her transition.

While the story will no doubt fulfill the fantasies of many CDs who wish they were TS but realistically cannot pursue the lifestyle, I personally find TG-oriented stories much more satisfying. But this trilogy by author D. Crease is very well-written and does not "bend the rules" as severely as many stories of this genre have in the past.

□■□

Wildside's *Canadian Crossdresser* #21 contains a report on last September's "Paradise In The Poconos", as well as a photo feature of Wildside's new home. But the standout article is an interview with the eleven-year-old

daughter of a crossdresser which points out the positive aspects of having a femme father as well as the difficulties. There is also some good advice (as always) in their letters section, including a reply to one reader's need for literature for his wife in which books by Virginia Prince, JoAnn Roberts, and Peggy Rudd are recommended.

□■□

Cross-Talk subscriber Charlene Day, inspired by the fun article "Gender Terms Mix-N-Match" in last August's issue, has created a clever computer program (for IBMs and compatibles) that takes prefixes such as "trans", "hyper" and "duo" and combines them with suffixes like "person", "vestite", and "morph" for new, strange, and frequently hilarious results. She is making the program available at no charge to readers for \$1.00 to cover disk and postage. Contact her at P.O. Box 3501, Arcadia CA 91066, and be sure to specify disk size needed. The program is also available in the IBM shareware library of the Cross Connection BBS as GENDER.EXE.

□■□

ADS WE'D LIKE TO SEE ... by Rebecca Ann Petersen

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KHEN-DRAA, TRANSGENDERED WARRIOR

by Kym & Beppi



THE STORY SO FAR:
A DYING WARRIOR FROM THE PLANET TZARHEE, MORTALLY WOUNDED IN EARTH'S MOUNTAIN DESERT, TRANSFERRED HER POWERS TO A SUCCESSOR... AN EARTH MALE NAMED MARK TAYLOR. WHILE HE AND TZARHEE CADET JHUU-LHEE EVADE THE ORIGINAL UHAR-ZHIL, WHO KHEN-DRAA HAD PURSUED TO EARTH BEFORE HER DEATH, MARK FINDS HIMSELF TEMPORARILY STUCK IN FEMALE FORM.



IT WOULD MOST LIKELY BE A GOOD IDEA IF I WERE TO ADOPT AN EARTH FEMALE APPEARANCE, AS YOU HAVE.

I PRESUME YOU ARE ATTRACTIVE BY EARTH STANDARDS?



I NEVER REALLY GAVE THAT MUCH THOUGHT... AFTER ALL, I'VE ONLY BEEN A GIRL SINCE THIS MORNING... BUT YES, I GUESS I'M PRETTY...

THEN I MUST ATTEMPT A SIMILAR APPEARANCE.



I DON'T KNOW HOW... YOUR EYES DEFINITELY DON'T BELONG ON THIS PLANET... AND IF YOU CAN'T CHANGE FORMS... BUT I GUESS WE CAN THINK OF SOMETHING!



WELL, I THINK YOU'LL FIT IN AROUND HOLLYWOOD NOW.

I ONLY WISH I COULD GO BACK TO BEING A GUY.

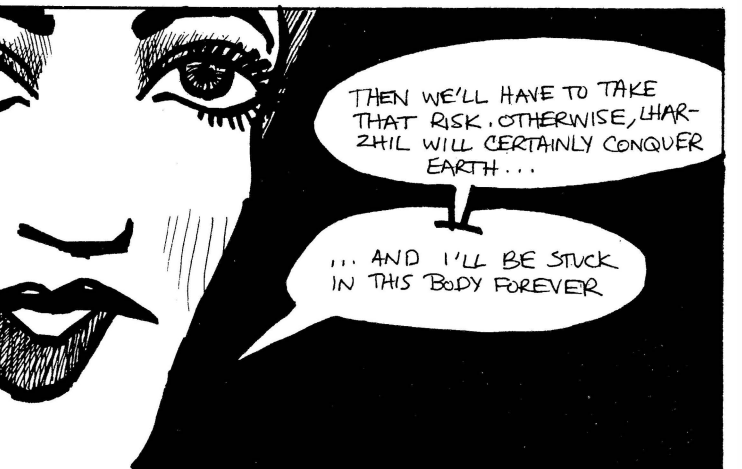
SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THANKS TO MARK'S ATM CARD STILL BEING IN KENDRA'S POSSESSION...



DO NOT GIVE UP HOPE. WE MAY YET BE ABLE TO RETURN TO YOUR SHIP AND RESTORE YOUR NORMAL FORM... ALTHOUGH I THINK I PREFER YOU AS YOU APPEAR NOW.

THANKS LOADS

DO NOT BE SO NEGATIVE. IN YOUR PRESENT FORM YOU WILL BE ABLE TO APPROACH UHAR-ZHIL WITHOUT HIM BEING AWARE OF YOUR TRUE IDENTITY.



TO BE CONTINUED!

COMING OUT

by Gianna Eveling Israel

When we think of communications, many thoughts may come to mind. Conversing on the telephone, chatting through computer modems, speaking to friends and family, or even our own gender leaders educating a group of budding psychologists, all these are different forms of communication. As individuals experiencing various levels of gender issues and self awareness, we often find ourselves becoming more in touch with our feelings and needs. Equally important to discovering new levels of self, is sharing the discoveries we have made, so that we may enrich our experiences and fulfill our newly identified needs.

"Coming Out" can be a powerful experience often serving as a catalyst in revealing our special secret self, while at the same time improving our overall communication skills. Sharing our gender and sexuality issues with people close to our hearts can be intimidating. In our preestablished relationships, i.e. family, partners and close friends, we often become comfortable in speaking about daily needs and occurrences. Often, overlooking communication as an important tool which cements our relationships together, at times assuming that those individuals "know what our needs may be." In revealing important issues, like coming out, we deal with the focus being directly aimed at us. We may draw on the fear of "I may be rejected," or "I feel a lot of shame surrounding this issue." Hence, we perceive "Coming Out", like other communication challenges, as risky business. In disclosing deeply personal issues, such as coming out, one guideline therapist Roger Peo endorses is the fundamental question, "Will this improve my relationship with this person?" This is an excellent measure in determining necessity versus risk.

Revealing our needs has always been a risky business. There are however a number of tools we can use in minimizing risk, which are

illustrated in the following:

PREPARE FOR COMMUNICATING. Much like going to a business meeting, it can be helpful to prepare a list of items you wish to discuss. Also, talking with a knowledgeable friend or counselor can be helpful. Dan, our imaginary gender person, is about to tell his wife, Karen, about his gender issues. Dan first spoke with his therapist about his feelings, then strategized a communications plan, and finally, he defined a level of confidentiality to request from Karen.

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT was the first thing Dan did by asking Karen whether she would feel comfortable talking personally over dinner.

VALIDATING THE RELATIONSHIP is an important door opener. It reaffirms that the relationship and its positive strengths exist. Dan stated, "Karen, I want you to know I've drawn a great deal of happiness from our eight years of marriage. What I have to share is very personal and I feel I can trust sharing it with you." Dan also sought a confidentiality agreement at this time.

RELIEVE STRESS BY REVEALING. Just about now, our imaginary character is starting to sweat a little. Like many great communicators, he found that by telling Karen he was feeling a little nervous, he had put Karen in an empathetic mood. Feeling a little more comfortable he now can move on.

SHARE THE FACTS. "Karen, I'm a crossdresser and even have thought of having a sex change." There, Dan did it! He then continued to share the facts he knew about himself, gender issues ... all the time respectfully answering Karen's questions. He also referred questions he didn't know to a future discussion.

AFFIRM THE OTHER PERSON'S BELIEFS AND FEELINGS. It is at this point that we "may not hear what we want." The other person does have the right to their own beliefs and feelings. Recognizing this can only serve to strengthen your communications. Dan followed this by listening while Karen expressed reservations about his crossdressing around their children. He told Karen he would talk to his therapist to see if crossdressing around children was harmful.

SEAL THE COMMUNICATION. Like any good communication. It's important to have a proper closing. Karen had stated, "I'm not very happy about this, and there is a lot I don't understand, although I am willing to learn

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READER PROFILES

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

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

Palm Springs, CA: Ayme, 36, M2F TS, living and working as a woman for the last two years. Tall, attractive, feminine, sexy. Confident and comfortable in any social situation. Interests in Macintosh desktop publishing, music, dining and dancing. Seeks male or female friends. Try the desert lifestyle anytime! #1187

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

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

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

Avon, CT: Michelle Kay, MWM, hetero, 5'10", 170 lbs., blue eyes, dark brown hair, '50s, very passable. Member Tiffany Club, co-founder of Connecticut Outreach Society (COS), participant P-Town outings, program chairlady of COS, director/founder of COS Couples Club. Wife is accepting and started COS wives support group. Interested in corresponding with and meeting other honest, caring, passable CDs or

couples. Interests include theater, music (jazz, classical and oldies), travel, cross-country skiing, swimming, boating and water sports. #1457 Michelle Kay, P.O. Box 679, Avon, CT 06001.

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

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

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COMING OUT ... continued

more without passing judgement." In closing Dan thanked Karen for being there for him, while restating that he valued his relationship with her, and then gave her a warm hug. Communicating individual needs, like gender and sexuality issues, won't always be this easy. However, you have just reviewed some powerful tools that you may include in your communications repertoire. With practice, as you increase your communication skills, you will find an increased sense of empowerment and satisfaction. Do remember that after

sharing something as stressful as "coming out", you may be well served by spending time alone, positively reflecting on your personal success ... and if you wish, rewarding yourself in a special way.

[Gianna Eveling Israel specializes in individual and small group counseling and education for those dealing with transgendered issues. She is also Western Regional Director for the American Educational Gender Information Service. She may be reached at (415) 558-8058 or by writing P.O. Box 424447, San Francisco, CA 94142-4447.]

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL 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.

NEW ENGLAND REGION:

CD Network, Rochester: (716) 251-2312
Chi Delta Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, NYC: (201) 663-0772 @
Connecticut Outreach Society, Hartford: (203) 371-6292
East Coast F2M Group, Cambridge: (413) 584-7616 #
Eulenspiegel Society, NYC: (212) 477-6588 %
Expressing Our Nature, Rochester: (212) 629-5750
Gender Identity Program, NYC: (212) 969-0888 #
Girls' Night Out, NYC: (212) 794-1665 ext 202
Harriet Lane's TV Set, CT: (203) 237-1968
Int'l. Foundation for Gender Education: (617) 894-8340
Long Island Femme Expression: (718) 446-6753
Metropolitan Gender Network, NYC: (201) 794-1665 ext 332
My Choice, Baltimore: (410) 732-4546
Outreach Institute, N. Portland: (207) 775-0858
Pink Flamingoes, Boston: (617) 536-5639
Renaissance Education Ass'n.: (215) 630-1437
Renaissance Greater Philadelphia Chapter: (215) 946-8887
Renaissance LSV Chapter, Harrisburg: (717) 780-1578
Renaissance S. Jersey Chapter: (609) 641-3782
Rhode Island Society, Newport: (401) 847-1035
Tiffany Club, Boston: (508) 358-2305
Transgenderists Independence Club, Albany: (518) 436-4513
Transpitt, Pittsburgh: (412) 781-0257
Transsupport, Portland: (207) 676-5870
Washington-Baltimore Alliance: (301) 277-5475
XX (Twenty) Club, Hartford: (203) 646-8651 #

THE SOUTH:

American Educational Gender Info. Service: (404) 939-0244
Atlanta Gender Explorations: (404) 962-3118 #
Beta Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Mississippi: (601) 982-7678 @
Black Rose, Arlington: (301) 369-7667 %
Carolina Trans-Sensual Alliance, Charlotte: (704) 551-8838
GDA North Carolina: (704) 982-1028
Gender Information Network, Gainesville: (904) 332-8178
Montgomery Institute, Augusta: (404) 603-9426 #
M.O.R.E., Ft. Lauderdale: (305) 966-2138
Mu Sigma Chapter Tri-Ess, Arkansas: (501) 972-1826 @
Phi Epsilon Mu Chapter Tri-Ess, Central FL: (407) 677-9540 @
Reality, Orlando: (407) 425-4527 #
Serenity, Hollywood: (305) 436-9477
Starburst, Tampa-St. Petersburg: (813) 685-9254
Virginia's Secret, Richmond: (804) 741-1187

MIDWEST & VICINITY:

Central Illinois Gender Assoc.: (309) 444-9918
Chi Chapter Tri-Ess, Chicago: (708) 364-9514 @
Chicago Gender Society: (312) 434-5445
City of Lakes Crossgender Comm., Minn'pls: (612) 229-3613
Cross-Port, Cincinnati: (513) 474-9557
Crossdressers & Friends, Kansas City: (913) 381-8887
Crystal Club, Columbus: (614) 777-0648
Crossroads, Detroit: (313) 537-3267
Gender Dysphoria Support, Shawnee Mss'n: (913) 371-0658 #
Indiana Crossdressers Society, Indianapolis: (317) 894-8109
Iowa Artistry, Cedar Rapids: (319) 842-2654
N.G.D.O., Detroit: (313) 842-5258 #
Quad-City Society for Sex. Ed., Davenport: (319) 324-9641
St. Louis Gender Foundation: (314) 567-8615
Sunday Society, Chicago: (312) 252-7024

SOUTHWEST/MOUNTAIN REGION:

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

PACIFIC NORTHWEST:

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

Alpha Chapter Tri-Ess, Los Angeles: (213) 876-6141 @
American Transsexual Education Center: (213) 469-4709 #
Androgyny, Santa Monica: (213) 467-8317
CHIC, Los Angeles: (310) 420-2580 @
Diablo Valley Girls, Concord: (510) 849-4122
Educational TV Channel, San Francisco: (510) 549-2665
Hawaii Transgendered Outreach, Honolulu: (808) 923-4270
Neutral Corner, San Diego: (619) 685-3696
Powder Puffs of Orange County, Anaheim: (714) 779-9013
Rainbow Gender Association, San Jose: (408) 984-4044
Sacramento Gender Association: (800) 585-7742
Society for the Second Self (Tri-Ess) Nat'l.: (209) 688-9246 @
Swan's Inner Sorority, San Jose: (408) 297-1423

CANADA:

Canadian Crossdressers Club, Toronto: (416) 921-6112
Club Met, Montreal: (514) 528-8874
Entre Femme, Quebec: (418) 529-1132 #
Gender Mosaic, Ottawa: (613) 749-5203
Illusions Social Club, Calgary: (403) 486-9661
Monarch Social Club, Ontario: (416) 949-6602

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